

MINUTES OF THE VCOG GOVERNING BOARD

REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 27, 2010

MPO & VCOG CONFERENCE ROOM
2570 W. INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY BLVD., SUITE 100
DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

MEMBERS PRESENT

Commissioner Cassandra Reynolds
Mayor Greg Northrup
Mayor Bob Garcia
Mayor Robert F. Apgar
Commissioner Herb Zischkau
Mayor Roland Via
Mayor Buddy Snowden
Mayor Harley Strickland
Mayor Fredrick Costello
Mayor James Sowell
Mayor George Locke
County Chair Frank Bruno

REPRESENTING

Daytona Beach
Daytona Beach Shores
DeBary
DeLand
Mayor Dennis Mulder, Deltona
Holly Hill
Lake Helen
Orange City
Ormond Beach
Pierson
South Daytona
Volusia County

Members Absent:

Mayor Mike Thomas
Mayor Adam Barringer
Mayor Darla Lauer
Mayor Tony Goudie
Mayor Allen Green
School Board Chair Candace Lankford

Edgewater
New Smyrna Beach
Oak Hill
Ponce Inlet
Port Orange
Volusia County School Board

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Mellon

REPRESENTING

EVAC

NON-VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT

Dan Scales
Mike Ertz
Harold C. Cohen
Ann Benedetti
Bob Williams
Howard Tipton
Gary Hiatt

REPRESENTING

Ponce Inlet Fire Rescue
TRI-DATA
TRI-DATA
St. John's River Water Mgmt. District
Daytona State College
Civic League
UCC (Unified Code Committee)

VCOG STAFF PRESENT

Mary Swiderski, VCOG Executive Director
Patricia Knabe, Recording Secretary
Susan Signer, VCOG Website Intern

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

At 5:02 p.m., Chairman Apgar called to order the September 27, 2010, regular meeting of the VCOG Governing Board.

The roll was called and a quorum was declared present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Apgar led everyone in the Pledge to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/PARTICIPATION

None

PRESENTATIONS**A. INDEPENDENT FIRE STUDY – Civic League of the Halifax Area**

Mayor Apgar stated that the Civic League of the Halifax Area has been working with the TriData Company on an independent fire study and have prepared a presentation with the results. Mayor Apgar welcomed Howard Tipton from the Civic League.

Mr. Tipton introduced the other presenters:

- Dr. Edward Cohen – head of TriData's section which is responsible for the systems planning of the study
- Mike Hurst - former fire chief of Port Orange and past president of the Florida Fire Chiefs
- Dr. Bob Williams – Senior Vice President of Daytona State College who was instrumental in helping with the computer components of the study

Mr. Mike Hurst presented the study results:

- Local government revenues are shrinking and will continue to decrease
- There are 13 separate fire/rescue agencies in Volusia County with unnecessary duplication
- In 2005 the Fire Chiefs Association reviewed a TriData 2002 non partisan fire services study showing that economies of scale could be achieved and this study arrived at the same conclusion. The study was totally objective and predominately targeted at merging fire services.
- All the fire departments and municipalities were studied and profiles included were:
 - Population served
 - Square miles served
 - Number of fire stations
 - Number and type of personnel
 - Data from operating budget. Capital budgets were not considered as they generally change year after year and do not necessarily reflect the operating mode of the budget and no debt service was taken into account
- Response time in the study is conservative, ranging from 4 - 8 minutes, depending upon the location of the fire stations. There are minimal population, rural and wet land areas where no service is available.
- Since 2002 the population has grown 8% and the cost of service 93%.
- Not all fire rescue incidents are true fire incidents. It was determined, after reviewing Emergency Medical Services incidents, there is a saturation of paramedics in our system, and this does not include the number of beach rangers. The staffing of paramedics increases the pension costs.

- The DeLand EMS Model was used as a good example for cost reduction:
 - Fire/Rescue has no paramedics
 - Uses EVAC paramedics
 - Has one of the County's best cardio rescue records
- A comparison of the staffing levels between fire services and EVAC found that:
 - EVAC staffs on demand
 - Fire Services have 24/7 staffing
 - In addition to salaries there is a pension cost
 - EVAC was found to be more cost effective than the fire services

Howard Cohen addressed the taxpayers' contributions to pensions:

- Different cities have different costs
- The State pension costs going up 29-30 %
- Increasing pension costs have created large unfunded liabilities. Unfunded liability is the actual pension expense which will occur in the future and there is no present funding to cover the cost. Money being put aside for the pension costs is not earning enough interest to pay the principle
- The State plan is not allowed to go into unfunded liability
- Cities with local plans need to pay off debt

Mike Hurst addressed fragmented systems consequences.

- Larger departments are subsidizing smaller departments--consolidation would resolve these issues
- EVAC would be the most cost effective for transport
- Fire/Rescue Staff Cost Comparisons were made:
 - Eliminate Fire Stations 31 & 23
 - Save \$5,700,000 of wages and benefits annually through attrition
 - 5% immediate savings on overhead in cities
 - No layoffs - staff reduction through attrition
- Unifications:
 - Consolidate 911 Dispatch under Sheriff's Department into one entity - information being dispatched to numerous stations can be misconstrued
 - Reduce paramedic overstaffing
 - Dispatch protocol – send the most appropriate unit which is closest

Mayor Via stated that it was reported that a paramedic makes an average of \$5,000 more than an EMT. Mr. Hurst said that is the case and if all the fire services were merged, including EVAC, a single fire rescue entity would be created and great savings would be realized as a result.

- Mr. Hurst stated that a dependent district was recommended. Independent districts are at least \$1 million less cost effective.
- The key recommendations were to merge all municipal fire/rescue departments with Volusia County as a dependent fire district.
- Merge all 911 dispatch resources under Volusia County Sheriff's Office
- Close two fire/rescue stations (#23 & #31 – both County stations)

- Relocate two fire/rescue stations (#33-DeBary & #68- Orange City)
- Recommended that station #68 be relocated to that area of 17-92 & Saxon Boulevard
- Recommended moving station #33 further down on 17-92 at Dirkson Road
- Not mentioned in the study was the recommendation to close down station #50 in New Smyrna Beach and relocate it to station #23 which would cover that particular area.
- Volusia County is currently working on creating a protocol where fire departments whose first responder vehicles have transport capability could transport patients under specific conditions approved by medical director.
- Overall conclusion:
 - With the county as a whole, the citizens could benefit from equal or better fire/rescue EMS services while reducing taxpayer costs by unifying these services into a single county-wide organization under a dependent district.

BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Commissioner Zischkau questioned how a unified Volusia County supervisory dependent board could be protected if there were some sort of fire pension? Mr. Hurst stated that a dependent district automatically places the control under Volusia County Council which does not have a pension board because it is the State.

Mayor Locke brought up concerns that were addressed:

- South Daytona is called out to assist Port Orange and Daytona and is not subsidized
 - Mr. Hurst stated the numbers will reflect more units coming in than going out
- The closing of two fire stations would immediately save \$5.7 million
 - Mr. Hurst stated that the \$5.7 million is recognized after attrition
- It does not appear that South Daytona would benefit from the merger
- The best support needs to be available at that scene of an incident

Mayor Costello stated he is in favor of the EVAC model and a dependent district having the oversight of the funding. He recommended that the VCOG Board would be the body to make recommendations from the cities to the County Council.

Mayor Garcia questioned if the response time would be greater with placing a fire station further down on 17-92? Mr. Hurst stated there would be a greater 4 minute coverage than what is currently present.

Commissioner Zischkau questioned if costs were considered for those cities with significant fire pensions and how EVAC's response times would improve if its model is utilized?

- Mr. Hurst stated there would be liabilities with people who are vested and retirees.
- Deltona would have a county fire ambulance responding to an incident out of its fire houses.

Mr. Mellon stated that EVAC has been a component of centralized communication for many years. This is the most efficient, cost effective system and communications are not lost. Volusia County has appropriated \$20 million to build a building which is now in the design phase.

Mayor Northrup questioned if the millage rate has been calculated for coverage in Volusia County. Mr. Hurst stated at present the millage rate would be 2.75. Population-wise, 2/3 would realize savings and 1/3 would have an increase.

Mayor Apgar questioned that of the 1% structural fires will the home remain standing if the response time is 3 or 7 minutes. Mr. Hurst stated he does not have a breakdown of total and partial destruction.

- Mayor Apgar stated there would be a challenge to demonstrate to the citizens of DeLand that the short term increase in costs will produce a long term reduction.

Chair Bruno questioned how instances like these in Volusia County have been previously addressed?

- Dr. Cohen stated that pension systems need to be revised and regarding firefighters he will provide information on what is termed the fire provocation curve.
- The studies show how much money can be saved but the difficulty is getting all the municipalities and county to reach an agreement and stated that now is the best time and opportunity to make a decision.
- All the recommendations made by the study were based on no layoffs and no salary reductions.
- The scheduling of firefighters works very well with shifts based on peak/load times.

Mayor Northrup asked how the merge would be implemented and if a city could opt not to be included? Howard Tipton stated that an individual city may negotiate an agreement with the county and then go into the program or not.

Mayor Locke questioned if any unintended consequences have been considered and what happens to the money in private pension plans. Dr. Cohen stated that the unfunded liability would need to be paid off.

Mayor Apgar stated that some cities have artificially low per capita costs because of unfunded liability. Mr. Tipton stated that it would be easier if an agreement was made with the county.

- Mayor Apgar stated if there is agreement to enter into the merge the County will need to take the approach that each municipality will need to negotiate customized contracts to make it feasible.

B. VCOG Website

Mary Swiderski introduced Susan Signer who is the intern from Daytona State College. Our website is now the first one which comes up when one goes on the internet looking for Volusia Council of Governments.

Ms. Signer presented the changes to the website including:

- MEMBERS PAGE
- SERVICES MENU
- CALENDAR
- LINKS
- CHECK IT OUT

Mary Swiderski stated that there is also a video regarding TABOR and there will be a presentation on it in January.

Mary Swiderski stated that there is an on-going slide show on the HOME page depicting areas of interest in the County with the intent of enticing people to visit Volusia County. The Smart Growth video shows the direction that Volusia County is taking on smart growth and green initiatives. The goal is to have members, staff and citizens refer to our site as the single tool to be utilized for linking.

Ms. Swiderski stated that Ms. Signer is doing a fabulous job and is working on the Leagues now.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes Of June 28, 2010
- B. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes Of August 23, 2010
- C. Approval of The Treasurer Report For June 2010
- D. Approval of The Treasurer Report For July 2010
- E. Approval of The Treasurer Report For August 2010
- F. Approval of The 2009-10 Budget Adjustment
- G. Approval of The Changes to VCOG Handbook of Personnel Policies and Practices
- H. Approval of Renewing Annual Contract With Mary Swiderski as Executive Director for VCOG through September 30, 2011

Mayor Apgar asked if there is a motion to approve items A through H on the Consent Agenda. **MOTION** by Mayor Garcia and **SECOND** by County Chair Frank Bruno for approval of the consent agenda items A through H, as presented; motion was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** on a voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

NUMERIC NUTRIENT CRITERIA RESOLUTION DISCUSSION

- Mayor Apgar stated that there is new legislation which requires local governments to make sure any water sent downstream is of the same quality when it was acquired. The EPA has basically required the State of Florida to be the first state to approach this problem on a very short time table. There is no technical approach to this issue and the cost for many municipalities would be very large.
- Ms. Swiderski stated that there is a resolution provided in the agenda packet which targets the concerns of many counties, cities and leagues that are supporting the resolution, especially due to the insufficient data available to formulate this law and the financial burden it would impose.
- Mayor Apgar asked if there is a motion to adopt the resolution.

MOTION by Mayor Strickland and **SECOND** by Mayor Zischkau to adopt Resolution 2010-04; motion was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** on a voice vote.

THE CHILDRENS' MOVEMENT OF FLORIDA – "MILK PARTY": SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR CANDACE LANKFORD AND VCOG WATER ADVISORY BOARD REQUEST FOR DIRECTION DISCUSSION

- Mayor Apgar stated that School Board Chair Lankford and Dave Denny were unable to attend this meeting so The Children's Movement of Florida and the VCOG Water Advisory Board request for direction discussion agenda items will be placed on the November VCOG Governing Board agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

UNIFIED CODE COMMITTEE UPDATE - GARY HIATT, FLAGLER COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTOR AND CHAIR OF UCC

- Mr. Hiatt stated that cities are looking at building departments to work with in conducting fire inspections with new construction, the site plan review, etc.
- Mutual aid assistance between cities has proven to be cost effective and allows for the continuation of services to citizens.
- Due to the lack of funding education regarding new requirements cannot be obtained. The UCC is the organization where communication of this information is provided.
- Continuing efforts will be made to receive input from industries and encourage the cooperation of inspectors and building officials in order to create consistency.
- The Port Orange Code Enforcement Department is being relocated to the Building Department which will improve communication and efficiency.
- Mr. Hiatt has been trying to contact New Smyrna Beach to become a member of the UCC.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/RECOGNITIONS

Mayor Apgar recognized Ann Benedetti from the St. John's Water Management District.

VCOG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

A. August Groundwater Report

- Mary Swiderski stated that the Groundwater report is in the agenda packet.

B. Substance Abuse Task Force Summary

- Ms. Swiderski gave an update on the Substance Abuse Taskforce
 - Walgreens has entered the taskforce as well as a representative from the School Board.
 - The proposed law which will be effective the end of this week included a database which was go on line the first of December. Due to funding this may be postponed.
 - Large pharmacies like Walgreens and CVS have an inner-connect with their own stores. The problem will be with the small stores.
 - Florida allows doctors' offices to issue prescription drugs and that needs to cease.
 - There is a video on YouTube entitled OXI Express which will be posted on the VCOG website and Ms. Swiderski encouraged everyone to take time to view it.
 - Ms. Swiderski stated that 11 people per day die in Florida due to prescription drug overdose which equates to over 4,000 people per year.
 - An article from Sunday's newspaper was provided which addresses prescription drug abuse.

- Because of the delay in funding the taskforce is encouraging cities to consider placing a moratorium on pain clinics. Ms. Swiderski emphasized the importance of the moratoriums in order to get the message out that these clinics are not wanted in Volusia County.
- Florida is the number one state to go to for prescription drugs.

C. Amendment 4 Resolution

- The Florida and Volusia League of Cities have adopted resolutions opposing Amendment 4. Ms. Swiderski provided copies of the resolutions and information on the legality of how to communicate information to constituents. Ms. Swiderski encouraged the County and the cities to post both resolutions on their websites or include them in newsletters so citizens can learn the truth about the Amendment.
- Mayor Apgar stated that the Florida League of Cities website provided information regarding what an elected official can and cannot do in terms of campaigning for or against a particular issue. Mary Swiderski stated that she will have the information posted on the VCOG website.

D. Matrix on Adult Book Stores Ordinances

- Ms. Swiderski stated that there is information provided in the agenda packet regarding Mayor Costello's request for adult book store information throughout the County. The information was compiled by VCOG's intern, Thomas Lutz, from Stetson University who will be receiving a degree in Political Science.

Ms. Swiderski handed out invitations to the Candidate Forum for those running for Volusia Delegation, Florida Senate and House Seats on Wednesday, October 13, 2010 at 11:00 A.M. at The New Club at Pelican Bay. Thomas Lutz went on line to find what their positions are on the various areas listed on the invitation and target questions. Ms. Swiderski encouraged everyone to attend the luncheon.

BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER HERB ZISCHKAU

- EVAC's concern may be with the need for more ambulances. He stated that the EVAC model may work very well and supports the proposal of consolidation.

MAYOR HARYLEY STRICKLAND

- Stated that it is imperative that a program be established for the proper disposal of unused drugs.

COUNTY CHAIR BRUNO

- The Florida Association of Counties is working with the State League of Cities in a concentrated effort to oppose Amendment 4.

MAYOR BOB GARCIA

- The Council approved the City of DeBary to remain on the VCOG Board and it is posted on their website.
- Consideration is being given regarding the pain clinics and disposing unused prescription drugs in the land use to discourage the youth from coming in.
- He thanked VCOG for enabling him to better communicate with his city.
- There is resistance to Amendment 4. He agrees there is not enough information being disseminated to the citizens.
- He thanked Orange City for the agreement and contract they have negotiated together.
- He thanked all mayors for their input at the VCOG Board meetings which has been very beneficial in communication to DeBary's citizens and the mayors' roundtables are working.
- Mayor Garcia stated that he spoke with Congressman Mica and they would like to schedule another summit regarding the bayou restoration and he is in contact with St. John's Water District regarding the Gemini Springs restoration.

MAYOR ROBERT APGAR

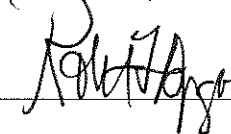
We are at the best time in our history to tackle fire/EMS issue. The leaders in the County need to address the issue of unfunded liabilities and reducing costs to the citizens. A specific plan will be required for implementation of the solution. If we do not proceed with this issue it will become the same problem for our successors to solve.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the VCOG Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

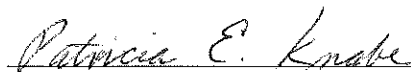
AS SUBMITTED, THE FOREGOING MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE VCOG GOVERNING BOARD WERE APPROVED IN AN OPEN MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2010, IN THE MPO/VCOG/WAV CONFERENCE ROOM AT 2570 W. INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY BOULEVARD, SUITE 100, DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA.

VCOG, INC.



Chair

ATTEST:


Recording Secretary