

Bryan's Brief
January 15, 2009

Happy New Year to all! Hope the holidays were relaxing and enjoyable! Winter and the cold weather have arrived with a vengeance, so stay warm! Now that the holidays are over, we're back in the trenches dealing with economic development, air travel (or the lack there of), the budget, infrastructure improvements and the list goes on. There's a lot to update you on this month - so let's get started!

Economic Development - Economic Stimulus - President-elect Obama's *American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan* tentatively proposes a \$675-\$775 billion stimulus package designed to create three million jobs nationwide. Congress is working with President-elect Obama's transition team in preparing the stimulus package for his signature shortly after the Inauguration on January 20. Final approval by Congress should occur in early Feb. I've held a series of meetings with community and regional leaders to develop a regional package of prioritized economic stimulus projects that will better position the capital area for lobbying the State and Federal governments for a major portion of the funding. Active regional partners include the City, the County, the School Board, FAMU, FSU, TCC, Gadsden, Wakulla, and Jefferson Counties. Phase I will include those projects that will be shovel-ready in 60 days and Phase II will include those projects that will be shovel-ready in 6 months. For more information, go to <http://www.leoncountyfl.gov/ADMIN/Agenda/meet.asp>, click on "Agenda for January 15" and agenda item 20

Air Travel

Air travel out of Tallahassee has long been a challenge and Mayor John Marks and I have regularly discussed the importance of the long standing challenge of making intrastate air travel more convenient and affordable to our citizens, businesses and the government agencies in the community. The City of Tallahassee's staff has been in discussions with air carriers to identify opportunities to increase air service to the Tallahassee Regional Airport. Delta is willing to consider providing turbo-prop service to Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, and Orlando if a \$2 million dollar revenue guarantee is in place. The State has agreed to guarantee \$1 million and it's proposed the City and County each guarantee up to \$500,000 ea. at this point to meet the deadline for lobbying the Legislature. Negotiations are continuing with Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Orlando, and the Economic Development Council (EDC) to reduce the guarantees of the City and County. The goal here is to improve air service and not spend any money and if ridership is as they project for those routes, we should be able to achieve that goal. For more information go to the same link as above and click on agenda item 29.

Fire/Emergency Medical Services Consolidation - The Interlocal Agreement for Fire-EMS/ALS services is currently in its final stages of drafting and will be presented for City and County Commission consideration on February 25, 2009 and February 26, 2009, respectively. More information is available on this item too at the same e-mail address - agenda item 21.

The Budget Process - The Legislature met in a two week special session and have cut their budget to by \$2.8 billion dollars to get them through the fiscal year. When session begins in March, we have concerns they're going to be facing more of the same and without doubt their options are just as limited as ours. We'll all have to get creative and innovative to get through the budget process again. I'll continue to look at ways to reduce our budget while trying to maintain the services that directly affect health, safety and our quality of life. I welcome any suggestions you may have and there are many ways to get to us now: direct e-mail to the Commission; Leon Listens and our Citizen On-line Problem Reporting system. All can be found at our www.leoncountyfl.gov location.

Infrastructure - Kerry Forest Parkway Extension Project - This is a City project, but jointly funded by the City and County. They had the option of completely closing the road for 4 to 6 weeks or for 6 to 8 months closing down to one lane of traffic only. Either way was going to create gridlock and both agencies agreed the one month would be the most efficient in the end. We're in the final phase of the

project connecting Ox Bottom to the new roundabout. This has been a tough two weeks for traffic based upon all the calls I'm getting, but as with Blairstone Rd, this should be a much more efficient and safe route for commuters and residents.

Traffic Signal installation at Meridian Road/Ox Bottom Rd and Meridian Rd/Bannerman Rd

Engineering and design work is nearing completion. Construction will begin when school is out - with bidding, ordering and receiving the materials, it will take that long, but it'll be completed before school begins.

Bradfordville/Centerville and Bradfordville/Velda Dairy Intersection Improvements - I'm sure you're aware the traffic signals are active and we're finishing up on a few minor details.

Pimlico Sidewalk - should be completed by the first week of February if there is no inclement weather.

I'm honored to serve as your District IV Commissioner and welcome your suggestions on how we can improve operations, services and ultimately our quality of life. I hope you'll call on me if you have further questions or concerns – deslogeb@leoncountyfl.gov or 606-5364. Be safe, stay warm and let me know if I can be of help!

Respectfully,
Bryan Desloge
Chair
Leon County Commissioner, District IV