

**Board of County Commissioners  
Leon County, Florida  
County Commissioner 2009/2010 Retreat  
December 7, 2009**

The Board of County Commissioners met for the FY 2009/10 Annual Commission Retreat held at the Goodwood Conference Center on December 7, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. with Chairman Bob Rackleff presiding.

Present were Commissioners: Desloge, Thael, Dailey, Proctor, Akinyemi, and Sauls. Also present were County Administrator Parwez Alam, County Attorney Herb Thiele, Assistant County Administrator Alan Rosenzweig, Deputy County Administrator Vince Long, and Board Secretary Rebecca Vause.

Chairman Rackleff called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He welcomed fellow Commissioners and thanked staff for their hard work in planning the Retreat. He offered that the County faces unprecedented fiscal challenges and the briefing materials will attest to this, i.e., lower property tax revenue, lower sales tax revenue, etc.

The meeting was turned over to County Administrator Alam who provided opening remarks and reviewed the agenda. He stated that the Retreat process provides an opportunity for Commissioners to discuss and share ideas in an informal setting that are critically important to the community and added that at the end of the day staff are provided a clear direction by the Board of its priorities.

Background and updates on the following issues were provided:

- **Charter Review Committee (Vince Long):** The Charter Review Committee (CRC) conducted its first meeting in November and to date have received presentations from the County Administrator and Commissioners; presentations by constitutional officers and other entities is scheduled. The CRC has received the formal list identified by the Board as possible charter amendments and their adopted by-laws require that 10 votes are needed to advance an issue to the Board for consideration. A final report to the Board is anticipated in early March.

Commissioner Desloge requested that a calendar of CRC meetings be distributed and recommended that the Board respond timely to address issues brought by the CRC.

- **Budget Overview (Alan Rosenzweig):** The County experienced an \$8 million decrease in property tax revenue and \$2.6 in other revenues for the current year. This decrease was offset by a series of budget reductions as well as additional fees. Preliminary discussions with the Property Appraiser have revealed another drop in values for next budget cycle and another 2-3 percent drop is anticipated. He also provided information on the decreased revenue/millage rate, expenditure considerations, other revenue opportunities and other program funding considerations. He made the Board aware of the status of other special revenue funds and their impact on general revenues, such as transportation, stormwater, solid waste, growth management and probation funds which currently receive subsidized funding and advised that the level of subsidy has increased through the years.

There was discussion among Commissioners regarding the continued use of general revenue funds to subsidize these programs. Commissioners also voiced concern about the affect a user fee would have on residents and noted that should a fee be

administered there the public would need to be educated on why the fee was assessed.

County Administrator recommended that this issue be included in the Budget Workshop to be scheduled for January. This was agreeable to the Board.

- **Convergence of issues (County Administrator Alam):** Stated that an obsolete tax structure; aging population; health care costs; aging infrastructure; decreased housing market; recession economy and continued unfunded mandates and property tax reform all combine to create a "perfect storm" of issues and obstacles for the County to address.
- **Guiding Principles (County Administrator Alam):** A status report on the Guiding Principles that were adopted at the Board's 2008 Retreat was provided.

Mr. Alam provided updates on the following FY 08/09 priorities, upon which work continues:

1. Economic Development - Innovation Park, Enterprise Zone, Targeted Business Pilot Program, Community Redevelopment Area, Vision 2020, fast tracking of public projects, and \$97 million in accelerated capital funding in local infrastructure improvements are all examples of economic development activities. There was discussion on a dedicated funding source for economic development and on the Board's decision to repeal the Local Business Tax Receipt Ordinance. Chairman Rackleff asked that the issue be included in the January Budget Workshop.

Commissioner Thaeil recommended that economic development strategies include the promotion, strengthening and protection of the local state employment base and support of locally owned businesses.

2. Climate Change and Sustainability - much work has been done in this area and future considerations include: community gardens, EPA's Energy Star Program, building automation systems, "Green Business Certification" program, weatherization program, and solar installations.

Commissioner Thaeil initiated discussion on the issue of "loans" to residential homeowners for weatherization to be repaid through property taxes. County Attorney Thiele expressed hesitancy that private home weatherization would be allowed using non ad valorem assessments. The Board requested that Mr. Thiele follow-up with a memo to the Board on this issue.

Commissioner Proctor expressed that he would like to see the County move forward with its solar initiative especially in the Southern Strategy area and if necessary establish a solar commission.

Commissioner Desloge suggested that a list of County properties be developed to make certain that the property is being utilized to its best potential.

3. Revenue Diversification - Delivery of solid waste from Wakulla County, fire services fee, new BOA lease space, and sale of carbon credits were cited as efforts resulting in new revenue. Mr. Alam pointed out that the Board's consideration of a fifth cent gas tax, stormwater and solid waste fees and transit tax are all issues for future discussion.

4. Southern Strategy - Mr. Alam noted that development of the fairgrounds has been hampered by the current economic conditions and future discussions should include other improvement options for the site.

5. Wakulla Springs Protection – Staff efforts continue on this issue. Phase I Study will be presented for approval at the next Board meeting and matters for future consideration include identification of funding source to support the septic system loan and inspection programs and to support on-site treatment alternatives and management options.

Commissioner Proctor voiced that he did not concur with the proposed direction and opined that the appropriate direction would be the installation of a central sewer.

6. Countywide Stormwater Standards – The County continues to address the issue of unified stormwater standards. Staff will continue to monitor DEP's rule making process to determine its affect on local regulations. He pointed out that the Charter Review Committee is looking at this issue.

7. Functional Consolidation – Staff will continue to evaluate County and City services that can be consolidated, such as Animal Control, Parks/Recreation and Growth/Environmental Management. Mr. Alam advised that this issue is also being considered by the Charter Review Committee.

Commissioner Akinyemi asked that status of a Memorandum of Understanding with the City on Growth Management. Mr. Alam responded that Commissioner Lightsey had been authorized to work with the County on the Building Permit/Inspection program only. Commissioner Desloge indicated that he will continue to work with Commissioner Lightsey in consolidation efforts.

Commissioner Proctor asked the status of a consolidated MWBE program. Mr. Alam responded that the concern is the Disparity Study that the County updated just last year as opposed to the City who has not updated their Disparity Study in over 10 years. Commissioner Proctor suggested that the Chairman work with the Mayor on the consolidation of the City's and County's MWBE program.

8. Fire/EMS Merger & Joint Dispatch Facility – Construction of the facility is moving forward and work continues with the City and Sheriff on consolidation of joint dispatch functions.

9. Primary & Mental Health Care for the Uninsured – Primary and mental health care services to uninsured residents will continue. Discussion on the healthcare sales tax would occur later in the meeting.

10. Increasing Citizen Input – A list of accomplishments, continuing efforts and future considerations were provided.

Commissioner Thael asked Jon Brown, Public Information Officer, if social networking outlets were being utilized. Mr. Brown indicated that this issue is being reviewed and discussed with the County Attorney and is being approached very cautiously. Commissioner Thael requested that a timeline be established for the development of some type of policy on using these networking tools. Staff indicated that something could be brought back within six months.

Commissioner Akinyemi confirmed with Pat Curtis, MIS Director, that Webinars are available by contacting MIS.

Commissioner Desloge asked that the types of information available to the public on the County's web site regarding Board meetings be better publicized.

The Board broke for a short recess at 10:45 and reconvened at 10:53.

The Board entered into discussion on the following issues, which have previously been identified by Commissioners as areas for discussion:

1. Economic Development and Growth Management

*Commissioner Akinyemi moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Daley, to approve Option 1: Accept staff's status report on actions that have been taken to facilitate a positive economic development climate through changes to the County's Growth Management Practices. The motion carried 7-0.*

2. Policies to Keep Board Meetings on Track and on Time, While preserving Opportunity for the Public to Communicate with the Board

Chairman Rackleff suggested that the number and length of presentations be limited. The County Attorney indicated that he would follow the Chairman's lead on enforcing the three-minute rule for Commissioner Discussion Items. Commissioner Sauls commented that discussion on an agenda item can get redundant and Commissioner Akinyemi noted that there were processes in place such as Call the Question that can be utilized to stop debate. He also suggested that commissioners exercise "self restraint" in expressing comments and making points on an issue.

Chairman Rackleff asked that staff bring back an agenda item at the January meeting with recommendations to improve Board meeting time efficiencies through modification of the Awards and Presentations portion of the meeting agenda.

Commissioner Thael indicated that the number and length of presentation can be controlled by the Chairman, in conjunction with the County Administrator.

3. Consideration of Compressed Four-Day Work Week.

Commissioner Proctor shared that a previous survey showed that 86% of County employees favored a four day work week. He suggested that this could enhance the County's level of efficiency.

Commissioner Akinyemi requested that staff bring back options that include possible implementation on a trial basis during summer months (such as is done at the universities) and on working a 4.5 day work week.

Commissioner Thael commented that a four day work week could be a hardship on single parents and asked that the review include an allowance for employees to opt for eight hours of unpaid leave every two week pay period.

County Administrator Alam stated that an agenda item will be prepared on this issue.

Lillian Bennett, Human Resources Director, shared that employees continue to be interested in a four day work week. She noted that flex time and staggered hours are available to employees and managers are allowed to make these determinations for their departments. Ms. Bennett estimated that a savings of \$250,000 could be realized.

*Commissioner Akinyemi moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Proctor, to approve Option 1: Direct staff to bring back a Board Agenda Item on changing Leon County to a compressed work week with Friday's off. The motion carried 7-0.*

4. Mass Citizen Communication/Outreach

Mr. Alam announced that the initiative would require \$100,000 - \$300,000 in funding annually. He advised that this expenditure would be contemplated in the FY 10/11 budget cycle and thus the soonest it could be done is October 1, 2010, unless modified by Board direction.

There was Board concurrence to bring this issue back before the Board.

5. One-half Cent Indigent Healthcare Surtax

Mr. Alam reminded the Board that the citizens of Leon County voted this issue down in 2006. He advised that should the Board desire, the issue could be revisited and ready for the 2010 ballot.

Chairman Rackleff recommended that no action be taken on this issue until the outcome of national healthcare reform and its impact on local governments is known.

*Commissioner Akinyemi moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Desloge, to postpone any activity on this issue until federal healthcare debate is complete.*

Commissioner Proctor opined that staff should be directed to explore this issue in the event that local governments are expected or have options to participate with the new reforms.

*Commissioner Thael offered as a friendly amendment that the Comprehensive Health Care Plan developed by Mercer in 2006 be redistributed, not only to Commissioners, but throughout the community. The amendment was accepted by Commissioner Akinyemi.*

*The motion, as amended carried 7-0.*

6. Commissioner Proctor wanted to explore additional retirement benefit plan options that may be available for County Commissioners.

Mr. Alam responded that this could be done if it was the will of the Board.

Chairman Rackleff proclaimed that he was not interested in pursuing this issue and there was no support expressed by other Commissioners.

Mr. Alam commented that a complete list of on-going Board assigned projects was provided in the Board's packet.

Commissioner Sauls expressed concern about the expansion of the new Woodville Library as it seemed the library would lose its community room. She shared that the community room was used a lot and wanted to ensure that it remained accessible to residents. She was assured by staff that this was absolutely not the case and the intent is to maximize the community room's space. Staff was directed to bring back a report on the Woodville Library and its impacts to the Woodville Community Center.

At this time, Commissioners produced a list of 22 items which had been identified as potential County Priority Items; this list included the carry over of some 08/09 Priorities.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:20 and Chairman Rackleff reconvened the Board at 1:03 p.m.

County Administrator Alam facilitated the Board's ranking of the issues identified by Commissioners. Commissioners were asked to prioritize the 22 items to establish its top issues. It is noted that the Board re-established some FY 08/09 priorities as part of the FY 09/10 priorities.

After considerable discussion, the Board established as its FY 09/10 Board Priorities:

1. Economic Development, Business Incubators at Innovation Park, Micro Lending, Focus EDC Efforts on Supporting Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Manufacturing;
2. Climate Change and Sustainability, Solar Power, Joint Community-wide Climate Action Plan;
3. Protection of Water Bodies Countywide and Development of Countywide Stormwater Standards, and
4. Comprehensive Program to Address Recidivism Reduction, County re-entry Program for Inmates, and Diversion, Including Youth Programs.

*Commissioner Thaeff moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Akinyemi, to accept the list as the Board's 2009/2010 priorities for FY 2008/09. The motion carried 7-0*

The Board identified that the following issues to be handled administratively:

1. Strategy for Dealing with the End of the Stimulus Funding;
2. Pay Raises for Employees;
3. Sale of Excess County Property or a Program to Provide Excess County Property for Use by Small Businesses;
4. Growth Management Ombudsman;
5. Review of the Conservation Subdivision Ordinance, and
6. Public Works Program in which the County can engage, including MWBEs.

The Board determined that the following item should be removed due to Cost:

1. Woodville Central Sewer

Commissioner Proctor wanted to ensure that the record reflected that although the Woodville Central Sewer was ranked as #8 on the ranking sheet, was removed due to its \$120 million cost, not because of the lack of need.

The following issues were designated as on-going priorities

1. Southern Strategy
2. Protection of the County's Fiscal Health and Continue to Provide Core Services.

*Commissioner Thaeff moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Proctor to direct staff to bring back an agenda item identifying what, scientifically, is the best approach to take to protect Wakulla Springs from wastewater in areas not served by central sewer within the Primary Springs Protection Zone: do nothing, provide sewer, require performance-based treatment systems, require cluster systems. The motion carried 7-0.*

The retreat adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Rackleff, Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Inzer, Clerk of the Court  
Leon County, Florida