

**HENDRY COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HENDRY AND GLADES COUNTIES JOINT MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 2018, 5:30 p.m.
CD 2018-09**

A joint meeting of the Hendry and Glades County Commissioners was held on Thursday, April 5, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. at the Emergency Operations Center in LaBelle, Florida.

I. Call to order

The meeting opened with prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Wills asked all of those in attendance to introduce themselves. In attendance:

Hendry County:

Chairman Mitchell Wills
Commissioner Darrell Harris
Commissioner Michael Swindle
Commissioner Karson Turner
County Administrator Charles Chapman
Deputy County Administrator Jennifer Davis
County Attorney Mark Lapp
Deputy Clerk Anita Bischel

Glades County:

Chairman John Ahern
Vice-Chair Tim Stanley
Commissioner Weston Pryor
Commissioner Donald Strenth
Commissioner Donna Storter Long
County Manager Paul Carlisle
School Board Member Mike Pressley
County Manager/Administrative Assistant Susan Whidden

II. County Administrator comments; Charles Chapman, Hendry County, and Paul Carlisle, Glades County

III. Approval of minutes from January 11, 2018 Joint Meeting

Motion made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Harris, called and unanimously carried to approve the minutes.

IV. Board Discussion

A. Review and consideration of action items from January 11, 2018

i. Discussions with education institutions regarding operations

Mr. Carlisle said Mr. Pressley, Commissioner Swindle, and Scott Bass, Glades County School Superintendent, met to discuss reaching out to Fort Myers Technical College and Florida Gulf Coast University. He reported Mr. Bass has contacted those schools and has been providing updates on those discussions to him. Mr. Pressley said a representative from Fort Myers Technical College will be coming on April 23rd to look at the Training Center and discuss some ideas. A representative from Indian River College satellite campus in Okeechobee has also shown interest in the Center. Mr. Pressley said Mr. Bass has also spoken to a representative from I-Tech Center in Collier County who is interested in the Center. Mr. Carlisle said Hodges University is interested but not sure they can participate at this time. Mr. Pressley said they plan to talk to Florida Southwestern College and added that Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) will be coming out on May 3rd to see what they can do. They are in the process of soliciting a grant to help with the teacher recertification program and would like to have classes at the Center.

ii. Interlocal Agreement between Hendry County and Glades County

In regard to the Interlocal Agreement Mr. Carlisle said they have worked out the language between Hendry and Glades Counties and their attorneys and said they can go ahead and process it and the funding. He spoke with Commissioner Swindle and Mr. Pressley and they think if they can get a college to run the facility then they may only need an administrative person at the Center to coordinate what goes on.

iii. Discussions of funding for position

The Counties and Workforce Development have already offered funding for a position which should be more than sufficient for an administrative person. Mr. Pressley agreed that this program should be run through the local education agency if they are going to procure educational funding. Commissioner Swindle said since they are going to a post-secondary type of institution it may or may not become a funding cow but nonetheless he believes it would be smart to go through the LEA (Local Education Agency) because there are so many unknown variables. This will be the mechanism to drive it one way or the other. Commissioner Swindle said the Memorandum of Agreement may need to be through the LEA and should be from each county to LEA and not county to county. He added that this may be a one or two year commitment that they will have to work through until it becomes a self-sustaining entity. Mr. Carlisle said they will have a Vista volunteer available through the Promise Zone to do community outreach and grants. Once someone is there to operate the building then the volunteer can provide additional services that will not cost the County any money.

For clarity Commissioner Turner said he understood that they are essentially putting the brakes on a director position and Commissioner Swindle will informally be in charge.

Mr. Carlisle said they are working on the funding in Senate Bill 10. He reported that Senator Grimsley's office talked to him about language Glades County might want to see in that funding. He replied that language was put in SB 10 because Glades County said it wanted it to support the rural agricultural areas. He does not want

the language for that money to be like the language for the \$85 million for the rural infrastructure because it required a college partner to do it. He wants it to be designated for the Glades County Regional Training Center.

B. Discussion of next steps

1. Business model development

Mr. Chapman said the number one priority is to see how the conversations will go with the institutes of higher learning. As a contingency plan they are looking at hiring an administrative person or director. He asked if it would be prudent to have a business plan that would also include a marketing plan component to give this person a road map when they come in. Mr. Carlisle responded by saying they have a draft business plan they did when the original discussion was that a 501(c)3 was going to come in. The plan could be expanded and these elements could be plugged into it. Commissioner Turner said he did not want to hire a consultant from the outside to tell them how to run the facility. Mr. Carlisle believes the prudent way to handle this is through Commissioner Swindle, Mr. Pressley, Mr. Bass, Mr. Chapman and himself.

Raoul Battaler, Hendry-Glades Sunday News, said in addition to hiring a director they will need a board of trustees to guide this person. Mr. Pressley said if an educational institution comes in then they want it to run the Center. He said the Center would be run on educational dollars and tuition. Commissioner Swindle said when a college or university comes in to hold classes then it would receive funding from the State Department of Education for the hours it provides training there. Mr. Chapman asked if there was a one or two year window for new programs in which they would have to front the funds. Commissioner Swindle said if Fort Myers Training Center (FMTC) came in then the local government would not have to fund it. Commissioner Turner would like to engage high school students to be involved in the Training Center.

In regard to a director or administrator Commissioner Storter Long said if a school comes then it would have a director and run all of it. She asked if the schools coming in would pay rent and maintenance fees. Mr. Carlisle said they would be expected to pay utility expenses. Commissioner Storter Long read from the interlocal agreement about the equipment including consumables, computers, and communication hardware. She thinks they did not fully equip the facility because they were waiting to see who would be using it. Mr. Carlisle reported that there is a basic Wi-Fi system there but it will have to be upgraded in order to handle more than ten or twenty people in a room. The Wi-Fi system was funded through the Southwest Florida Community Foundation. They only had \$50,000 to spend on it. Commissioner Swindle pointed out that everything should be on the table and become a discussion point. This may be a good reason to have a director. Commissioner Storter Long said they cannot expect the County Manager to handle this in addition to his other duties.

Chairman Wills said they would need to have another meeting after they speak to the colleges in order to move forward. Since both Hendry and Glades County Commissions will hold their BOCC meetings on June 12th - Glades County at 9:00 a.m. and Hendry County at 5:00 p.m., Commissioner Turner asked if the two Boards could meet in the

afternoon in Moore Haven to see if there have been any updates from the education facilities. The Commissioners agreed to meet at 11:30 a.m. at the Training Center in Moore Haven. Glades County will provide lunch.

Commissioner Stanley said they will be stronger and have a better opportunity to get funding because they are pursuing this as two counties instead of one. He said they need to make sure the money the colleges receive from SB 10 is spent there at the Training Center.

Commissioner Storter Long said the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) is now being managed from Central Florida Regional Planning Council instead of Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. She talked about some of the routes they are planning on. She believes this will prompt higher expectations from GoodWheels. Mr. Chapman gave an update on GoodWheels. He said they are moving to the Heartland Regional TPO as well as the Central Florida Planning District. One of the Planners with the TPO will be meeting with him and he will tell them about Hendry County's concerns with GoodWheels. He said they are very interested in the handoff of the program between one administration to another administration and in what might be discovered in terms of the reports and efficiencies. He also had a conversation with Lee County who is monitoring this because GoodWheels is in a part of their network.

Julia du Pluoy, with Lake Okeechobee Business Alliance, said it is really important to think about going out to speak with the future workforce. She said they can build the programs but they should also talk to high school students to explain what these facilities are all about. She emphasized that the students should have career counseling and be told about the importance of their grades and the money they could be making. Commissioner Turner said a report is being prepared that will challenge the high school students in this area to want to engage in certain careers. They are hoping to present it prior to next year's school session. It will be geared to go along with what Commissioner Swindle is already doing in Hendry County with the adult school program. Commissioner Swindle said he is going to career day tomorrow at Clewiston High School and will go back next week to meet with the seniors. He plans to do the same thing at LaBelle High School. He wants to tell them about the training that is being offered locally. Chairman Wills said we are losing a lot of children that are never going to go to college and they are not employable here because they are not receiving the training they need. He said it sounds like they are talking about a facility but it's not just a facility; it's a way of life. He said they can't just let this go away; they need to keep pushing it. This will change the entire region for the future. Commissioner Swindle said the program he is presenting tomorrow is intended for incoming seniors who are at a credit hour point where they can leave their senior year and get into a building/construction technology program.

V. Public Discussion

No one from the public spoke at this time.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

John Ahern, Glades County Chairman

ATTEST:

Sandra H. Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court

Approved: May 29, 2018

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD. THIS MEETING WAS RECORDED BY
HENDRY COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE.