

MINUTES OF THE GLADES COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS JOINT MEETING ON TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2018 AT 11:30 A.M. AT THE GLADES COUNTY TRAINING CENTER, MOORE HAVEN, FLORIDA

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The Glades County Board of County Commissioners held a Joint Meeting on Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at 11:30 a.m. with the following Commissioners present:

Glades County:  
John Ahern, Chairman  
Tim Stanley, Vice Chairman  
Donald Strenth  
Weston Pryor  
Donna Storter Long

Hendry County:  
Mitchell Wills, Chairman  
Emma Byrd, Vice Chair  
Darrell Harris  
Karson Turner

Others present:

Barbara Butler, Hendry County Clerk of Court  
Charles Chapman, County Administrator  
Joe Helfenberger, County Manager  
Paul Carlisle, Glades County Consultant  
Julie Braddock, Glades County Administrative Assistant

I. Call to Order

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

Hendry County: Chairman Mitchell Wills, Vice-Chair Emma Byrd,  
Commissioner Darrell Harris, Commissioner Karson Turner,  
County Administrator Charles Chapman, Clerk Barbra Butler

Glades County: Chairman John Ahern, Vice-Chair Tim Stanley,  
Commissioner Weston Pryor, Commissioner Donald Strenth,  
Commissioner Donna Storter Long, County manager Joe Helfenberger  
Paul Carlisle, Consultant

- II. Approval of minutes from the April 5, 2018 Hendry-Glades Joint Meeting  
Motion made by Commissioner Pryor, seconded by Commissioner Turner, called and unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2018 Hendry-Glades Joint Meeting.

III. Board discussion

Hendry County School Superintendent Paul Puletti said he has been speaking with Glades County School Superintendent Scott Bass about the Training Center. Mr. Bass has been in discussions with I Tech in Immokalee. He said I Tech sees the Glades Training as a potential branch campus of theirs. Mr. Puletti reported that FGCU is proposing to come in to offer alternative certification classes for teachers who are struggling with certification issues and with testing issues.

Mr. Carlisle said he met with a representative from the Indian River Community College who plans to speak to someone in Okeechobee about bringing classes from the coast to the Training Center. Mr. Carlisle also talked to him about getting other colleges in the area involved. He said the welding class at the Okeechobee campus is over capacity. He said they talked about using GoodWheels for Transportation.

Chairman Ahern said that someone spoke to him about starting a school for linemen. He will find out more about this and report back to the Board.

Commissioner Turner said the consensus of the two Boards is that they are not taking any options off the table. He said the conversations with I Tech and FGCU are promising. Commissioner Harris asked if Okeechobee planned to contribute to some of the funding. Chairman Ahern said that had not been discussed. He believes Workforce Development and FGCU will contribute some funds. He did not know about I Tech.

Mr. Puletti said it would be easier for FGCU classes to begin in August but that will depend on how many want to take a class. He said the classes are for teachers who are already teaching but need certification. Mr. Puletti said the State Department's Colleges of Education are producing half of the need for teachers in this state. People with degrees must get certified and they are given three years to do so. They will need to take the general knowledge test which is difficult because it requires them to know things that they will never teach. The next thing is to challenge the subject knowledge test. FGCU offers alternative certifications to go through instead of going through this series of tests. The difficulty in this is the time it will be offered. He said it would be easier for teachers if the classes were held on Saturdays. After the three years are completed the teachers will receive a temporary certificate and must be ready to teach or else they will be put on substitute teacher pay. Mr. Puletti said this is a state issue. He believes these classes would be a great benefit. Commissioner Storter-Long asked if they would reach out to other counties such as Highlands and Okeechobee since this is a state issue. Mr. Puletti said they did talk to those counties at the Heartland Education Consortium. The Glades Training Center would be a central location for them. They will also offer tutoring for the tests. In regard to costs the Teachers would be responsible for paying for their classes. He said they would have to find

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out if there is a grant that would help with this. Chairman Ahern believes FGCU would charge half of the normal amount. He said they need at least 25 people before they will begin a class.

Commissioner Storter-Long asked what incentives they would offer. Mr. Puletti said the incentive would be that they could be fully licensed and that this is the closest place for them to go. He suggested that another incentive could be that they would reimburse the cost of completing their certification. He also asked that they do not hold night classes.

Mr. Chapman asked if the Dean of Schools at FGCU had exchanged any paper work with Glades County for the classes. Chairman Ahern could not answer that but said the Dean had attended the Scholarship dinner and said they have money appropriated for this.

The Commissioners determined that the next step would be to get enough people for the classes. Commissioner Turner would like to see Glades and Hendry Counties make a joint request to the legislature for \$500,000. Mr. Carlisle said that the state has invested \$4.5 million and Glades County has put over \$1.5 million in the facility and about \$500,000 in infrastructure.

Mr. Puletti said Hendry County has invested a lot of money in vocational education for a welding program and an industrial mechanics program, and just put several hundred dollars into the construction of a building. He said they would probably not look at programs in Glades County that are currently in Hendry County. He would like to see an H/VAC program at Glades.

Chairman Wills said that they need to make sure that as they go forward the two Counties and the School Boards come together regionally along with other areas such as Highlands County to lobby for this.

Commissioner Harris commented that he has heard a lot about a nursing program and said there are many young people that are interested in it. He said anyone in the medical profession will always have a job. Mr. Puletti said they now have a night CNA class.

Commissioner Storter-Long asked if it would be practical to have a tutor with virtual training in multiple subjects. She wondered if this would solve the problem of not having enough people for one class. Mr. Puletti thought it would be practical because they would not have to send a teacher to the facility.

Commissioner Pryor asked where the closest firefighter program is being held. The Commissioners thought they had training sessions in Moore Haven and Labelle. Chairman Wills said the Assistant Fire Marshall recently said they are looking for programs to offer and they are trying to get grants for them.

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Commissioner Harris asked Mr. Chapman if he had reached out to the two Cities to get them on Board. He had not done so at this time but believes they should be at the legislative table when the time comes. He would like to invite the new City Manager of Moore Haven, and the City Managers of Clewiston and Labelle to the next joint meeting.

Commissioner Storter-Long asked if the building had been retrofitted to teach welding. The Commissioner replied that it was. She said before the building was even begun they invited HR people from the large agricultural businesses to discuss what they would like to see. Diesel mechanics and welding were brought up as priority classes.

Mr. Puletti said those finishing classes in Hendry County are getting jobs as soon as they finish.

Chairman Ahern asked when the Commissioner would like to schedule the next meeting. He suggested that Mr. Puletti and Mr. Bass decide a date and time.

Motion made Commissioner Pryor, seconded by Commissioner Stanley, called and unanimously carried to adjourn.

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John Ahern, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Sandra H. Brown, Clerk of Court

Approved: August 13, 2019

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD.