

STEERING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2021 | 6:00 P.M | TC COURTHOUSE

Members – Dwight Jewell, Ken Buckmaster, Gary Claridy, Bill Fergusson, Richard Harsh, Terry “Bubba” Gregory, Landon Gulley, David Nollner, Lonnie Taylor, and Mayor Stephen Chambers.

Members Absent: Beverly Atwood

Others Present: Bryan King, Chris Gregory

1. Open Meeting

Chairman Dwight Jewell opened the meeting at 6:00pm and took visual attendance.

2. Review Minutes from January 5, 2021

Minutes from the January 5, 2021 meeting were reviewed. Landon Gulley made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Jerry Ford.

Motion Approved

3. Mayor Report

A. Requests for Qualifications

1) Civil Engineer

There is a need to replace sidewalks around downtown as many are in bad shape or need to be finished out from the recent Streetscape project. A civil engineer would be needed to design the areas in order to meet ADA requirements and storm water management. Mayor worked up an RFQ draft compiled from surrounding counties for a civil engineer. Most counties ask for a general engineer where HTC would mainly need an advisor for the sidewalk projects. Mayor re-evaluated and is his opinion to use the engineer retained by the Highway Department – Collier Engineering – in order to keep consistency with the current road design. It is a professional service and is not required to be up to bids. The funding would come out of Urban Services’ Public Works account and included in the FY2022 Budget proposal if it is the will of the Commission. Would also recommend a sidewalk improvement plan for future maintenance.

It is the consensus of the Committee to go with Collier Engineering as they are being used by the Highway Department. Grant funding for this specific need is currently not available.

No Action Taken

2) Financial Advisor

In order to deal with recent questions on the County debt, it would be beneficial to have an advisor in place to contact. This would be a certified advisor that specifically deals with the market, interest rates, and cash flow analysis. Would assist in making decisions on current debt and assist in future debt or financing plans. Mayor also presented his idea to “snowball” debt payments where when Loan 1 is paid off that payment would be added to Loan 2 and when that is paid off the combined payment would be added to Loan 3 and so on.

Most current debt is at a fixed rate and can be paid fairly quickly. The bonds for CJC, EESI, and the High School are the three variable rates and all are currently below 2%

No Action Taken

4. Items to be sent to Committees – *No new items were presented for committees*

5. Items on the Commission agenda

A. Planning Commission Appointment

The Planning Commissioner Darryl Smith resigned and created a vacancy. Mayor is uncertain if he will have an appointment by the February Commission meeting.

B. Public Hearing & Second Reading on Rezoning Ordinance (*Andrews Ave – Potts*)

Commission is to be aware that the Planning Commission did not recommend this rezoning. The reason being was for spot zoning. Information that was sent to the County Commission was not the same information reviewed by the Planning Commission. Committee discussed to resubmit the request back to the Planning Commission at the 2nd Reading of the Ordinance. Commission should be diligent in obtaining an explanation from the Planning Commission on their recommendations. Commission should also be consistent in its decisions on rezoning ordinances.

6. Other Discussion

Bill Fergusson requested a listing of grant funding pertaining to the CARES Act and to the Local Government Support Funding (LGSF). He wishes for discussion on the appropriation in the Budget and Finance Committee. Mayor offered that the bulk of this discussion will be during the budget hearings. The Mayor's office is currently gathering requests from County departments and will present the requests during the hearings. Any allocations of this funding has been recorded in the Budget Amendments. Clarification of the funding will be presented to the Budget and Finance Committee later this month.

7. Public Comment

Citizen Bryan King encourages the County Commission to seek a financial consultant to analyze the financials each year. This will assist in planning for future endeavors of the County. He also offered the experience of several business minded community members that could review the financials and report to the Budget and Finance Committee.

8. Adjourn

Jerry Ford motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15pm.