

**MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING WITH
THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AND THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
APRIL 21, 2004
(9:00 A.M.)**

Proceedings of a joint meeting of the Board of County Commissioners and the School Board of St. Johns County, Florida, began and held in Conference Room A of the St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Office, 4455 Avenue A - Ste 101, St. Augustine, Florida.

Present were: Karen R. Stern, District 2, Chair
 Bruce A. Maguire, District 4, Vice Chair
 Marc A. Jacalone, District 3 Commissioner
 James E. Bryant, District 5, Commissioner
 Nicholas M. Meiszer, District 1, Commissioner
 Ben W. Adams, Jr., County Administrator
 Dan Bosanko, County Attorney
 Diane Gorski, Clerk of Courts Office

Present for the School Board were: Carla Wright, Beverly Slough, Bill Fehling, Tommy Allen, Diane Lovell, Joe Joiner, David Toner, Joe Purvis and Martha Mickler.

Present for St. Johns County were: Joe Vonasek, Scott Clem, Joe Stephenson, Dan Weimer, and Mary Ann Blount.

(04/21/04 - 1 - 8:57 a.m.)
CALL TO ORDER

Chair Stern called the meeting to order.

(04/21/04 - 1 - 8:57 a.m.)
ROLL CALL

Everyone introduced his or herself for the record.

(04/21/04 - 1 - 8:59 a.m.)
GREETING BY COMMISSIONER KAREN STERN, CHAIR

Stern thanked Penny Halyburton, Supervisor of Elections, and staff, for the use of their Conference Room. And welcomed everyone to the meeting.

(04/21/04 - 1 - 9:00 a.m.)
PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Wheeler, 4240 Leaping Deer Lane, stated that he was here to show his support and that he had spent the last few years working with the Board to resolve issues in the northwest sector of the County.

(04/21/04 - 1 - 9:00 a.m.)
1. REPORT/DISCUSSION ON:

A. Discussion of the Impact on A1A from new PV school site.

Maguire expressed his concern over the Talbot site location for the future High School and wanted to discuss the issues with concurrency because A1A was already over capacity and deficient. (9:02 a.m.) Scott Clem, Director of Growth Management, shared results of a preliminary traffic impact study that had given consideration to impacts from the new High School. Clem explained that it was difficult to analyze traffic counts because many students were already traveling the road system that attended Nease High School, and that most of those trips would not be considered new trips, but that they would be redistributed to different roadway segments which wouldn't have been traveled otherwise. Clem stated that there would be a northerly shift from segments from CR 210 and Roscoe Boulevard. He explained that much of the true impact from the school would be tied to the operating hours. He stated that the highest impact would be during peak hours. He estimated over 300 additional trips would be added to the already over capacity 4-lane road, which could be mitigated by adjusting hours during the 4:00 -6:00 p.m. time frame. He explained that some segments might show a reduction particularly to the south of Palm Valley Road. (9:06 a.m.) Maguire asked for a report on exactly how deficient the road was. Clem referred to the handout he had provided. He explained that with the addition of the new High School the roadway would be 24 percent above the grade capacity that is currently 10-15 %. Discussion ensued. Clem stated that there would be some shift of impact regardless of the location of the new High School. (9:10 a.m.) Bill Fehling, School Board, stated that he had driven the route and had been able to go the speed limit at 8:20 a.m. and only stopped for the cycles of the lights on A1A to the Duval county line. He stated that he was frustrated with the County assigning blame for adding to traffic problems by adding a High School, which would serve the community and felt that the County was more concerned with providing access to the Nocatee Community and other commuters outside the community, than providing a new school for children in the community to attend. (9:13 a.m.) Joiner stated that a request to change the schedule to avoid 6:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. impact would not allow the school to function properly. Stern asked the School Board if they would consider changing the start time of the new High School. (9:21 a.m.) Lovell stated that she was committed to building a school in Ponte Vedra and Stern agreed. She stated that the intent of the Joint School Board meetings was to work together sharing a vision. Meiszer stated that our predecessors had not anticipated the need for schools, recreation areas and roads and that both Boards should attempt to purchase land for these purposes and continue to do so throughout the County. (9:24 a.m.) Joiner stated that the School Board had approved hiring a planner to help identify a twenty-year plan, land banking, and identify school sites and other issues. (9:25 a.m.) Tommy Allen summarized this item. He stated that the School Board had been successful at cooperating with the County and that the cooperation would continue. He summarized that the School Board would look into start and end times as a variable of consideration to peak traffic hours and that the School Board may be able to regulate who drives to school, and many other things to explore to minimize the impact to traffic. (9:27 a.m.) Maguire stated the potential problems and issues relating to the new High School being built in Ponte Vedra over the next three years should be identified and addressed and that both Boards would work together to resolve the issues.

(04/21/04 - 2 - 9:28 a.m.)

B. Athletic facility at Switzerland Point School.

Stern stated that the County, by entering into an Interlocal Agreement had committed to install lights and irrigation at the fields at Switzerland Point and questioned the ramifications of the School Board building on the fields. She mentioned that the lighting would be able to be relocated and wondered in what ways both Boards were working together. (9:29 a.m.) David Toner, School Board, stated that they had notified the County Recreation Department of a meeting to use the Switzerland Site for the

building of a school. He explained that a survey had been completed and had been turned over to the Master Planning Department and that the school would be able to be built with minimum impact to the existing Middle School and that the two major fields would not be impacted. He explained that they were looking into a way to relocate the third field. (9:31 a.m.) Stern stated that she was pleased with the outcome and the way things were being handled. (9:33 a.m.) Weimer stated schools have first priority over their own land and that future consideration of land purchases should include land for recreational purposes. (9:34 a.m.) Joiner said that the planner would assist in determining future needs and that long range plans would need to include both Boards concerns as they continued to work together to acquire land for both school and recreational facilities. (9:35 a.m.) Weimer stated that the Comprehensive Plan required the County to have a Master Recreation Improvement Plan by 2005 and that consultants for both Boards would be working together to determine the sites. (9:36 a.m.) Toner stated that Fruit Cove was a good example of teamwork and long range planning. Allen clarified that the School Board would do a better job in planning and would continue to work closely with the County as well as regulate, manage and cause future developments to provide its own infrastructure. (9:37 a.m.) Bryant stated that the County was actively seeking out a hundred acre parcel and would continue to pursue land acquisitions in addition to requiring developers to provide land for schools and recreation. (9:37 a.m.) Fehling explained that the communities were growing so quickly that it would no longer be possible to choose a spot randomly, to build a new school because current growth would not allow it. He commended the County for pursuing other alternatives. (9:38 a.m.) Jacalone mentioned that all projects had to comply with County minimums for infrastructure and asked if the School Board was ready to implement school concurrency. (9:39 a.m.) Beverly Slough, School Board, stated that they had been studying the issue and were not ready to discuss it. Jacalone remembered that the issue had been presented to the School Board several months ago and that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) had been waiting to hear from them. (9:39 a.m.) Meiszer explained that the developers were not meeting our standards and that County Standards were not adequate and needed to change. He stated that large regional parks with major facilities are needed to serve the community and that there had been some good planning with the Switzerland Middle School arrangement that had worked well. He asked the County to revise their requirements and set greater standards. He requested concentration on larger areas with both short and long range planning and reiterated that the current regulations weren't working. (9:42 a.m.) Bryant clarified that the County Development of Regional Impact (DRI) process provided adequate amounts of recreation to satisfy the communities but that Planned Unit Developments (PUD) are not required to satisfy the recreation infrastructure. (9:43 a.m.) Jacalone requested clarification on the PUD land requirements for recreation. (9:44 a.m.) Clem explained that PUD's took care of the recreational needs within their community. Bryant explained that the County negotiated with DRI's to obtain additional land for recreation at no cost and that there were no negotiations with PUD requests. (9:45 a.m.) Jacalone stated that the County had minimum standards in the Concurrency Management Ordinance that addresses infrastructure needs. He explained that the County Ordinance had no minimum educational standards set, unlike that of the School Board. Joiner asked if the County was requesting the School Board to review concurrency and come back to the Board with recommendations. Jacalone confirmed the request. Stern remembered that at the last meeting it had been agreed that the School Board would review the Concurrency issue and bring back recommendations to the Board at a later date. (9:47 a.m.) Joiner explained that during workshop their attorney had given them a briefing and that he had just needed direction from the County. Jacalone explained that the County Commission adopted the Concurrency Management Ordinance and that School Concurrency would be included at the School Board's request. (9:48 a.m.) Bosanko highlighted the School Concurrency requirements. He stated that there was a statutory

process statewide. He explained that only Palm Beach County in Florida had actually implemented it. He stated that problems were associated with the issue and those could be discussed at another meeting. (9:49 a.m.) Stern asked if this issue could be revisited during the next meeting, which would allow both Boards to be prepared to discuss the issue. (9:50 a.m.) Joiner stated that the School Board would not be ready to discuss the issue at the next meeting but they would be able to give a progress report. Discussion ensued. (9:54 a.m.) Bosanko recommended inviting staff from other counties to share their experiences. He said that if the program were to work it would be a very expensive process to implement. He expected that it would be litigated. He said that it would need to be tested. (9:55 a.m.) Stern requested Ansbacher and Bosanko meet with staff to discuss the issue and give an update at the next meeting. (9:56 a.m.) Joiner clarified that a learning session would take place at a subsequent meeting.

(04/21/04 - 4 - 9:57 a.m.)

C. Update on the Masters Drive plan.

Allen referred to the memo that mentioned the statute that required the County to keep the School Board apprised of short and long range plans and final solutions of hazardous conditions. Stern stated that since the memo had been sent, Bosanko, Adams, Stern and members of the Masters Drive community, Sheriff Perry, Chief Shoar, a representative from Bill Harriss' office and staff from both the County and City had met to discuss the issues. Allen stated that the statute was very clear that the Board had twenty-four hours to act and that was why he had sent the memo. Stern stated that the County would continue to meet with Joe Ferguson and School officials in helping to make the area safe. (9:59 a.m.) Joe Stephenson, Public Works Director, explained that some safety issues had been addressed but they there were not quite through the short-term plan period. He stated that he would return to the Commission the first week in May to give a full report on the short-term recommendations to include what had been implemented and what would be implemented. He announced that a consultant had been brought on board and was actively studying the options. He said the road had been re-striped and the lanes narrowed, and that signage had been added to remind motorists of the fines they would incur if cited for speeding. He stated that Chief Shoar had said that in one months time two hundred plus tickets had been written. Stephenson stated that enforcement would be key to controlling the traffic on the roadway. He stated that five locations had been identified for the placement of crosswalks. He explained that the law required motorists to yield to pedestrians at crosswalks and that few people witnessing motorists stopping are few. He considered crosswalks to be a mixed blessing because they give pedestrians a false sense of security. He stated that the crosswalks would need to be monitored by law enforcement to ensure pedestrian safety and that there may be areas that justify having a school crossing guard and that his recommendation would be brought to the Board at the May meeting. He explained that the County had been working closely with the School Transportation Director and mentioned that the County had considered requesting the school bus route be moved from Masters Drive, but that it would require two separate bus routes. He said that there were no bus stop areas and the consultant recommended that students wait on their side of the road until the school bus arrived and then cross the road under the protection of the school bus flag. Stephenson stated that the consultant understood traffic very well but not students and the County would need to find a way to provide the children with safe places to congregate, which translated into land acquisition. He pointed out that a lighting problem had been identified. Stephenson stated that a long-term plan would require land acquisition and that the process would be painful. He said that the County did not have enough land to build sidewalks. He explained that speed bumps were not an option because they would cause drainage issues and create hazardous conditions for motorists. He

mentioned that at the Vista Cove and Pomar Park locations the left turn striping would need to be raised to curbs to farther restrict traffic to feel the need to slow down. He advised that the county was looking into raising medians to act as speed bumps. Stephenson announced that a consultant would be on board the first of June to give full details and recommendations on the long-term plan. He explained that a sidewalk would be needed on both sides of the road and that it would require disrupting a good many private properties. He mentioned adding signage to direct trucks to alternate routes. (10:07 a.m.) Bryant asked if placing "Local Traffic Only" signs would help the situation. Stephenson answered that the signs could be placed, but in the opinion of the professional traffic community, they would not help. He stated that the sign was probably general enough to where nobody would be trying to enforce it and it might help and that the signs would be posted. (10:08 a.m.) Meiszer stated that he knew all the arguments against speed bumps and that desperate situations called for desperate measures, particularly when the goal was to save lives. He said that when there were no other alternatives available, he recommended having the consultant look into installing speed humps. Meiszer explained that municipalities were already using speed bumps and that they were used in Gainesville and Panama City on public roads. He stated that the speed bump could be installed in the driving lane only and could be two separate bumps going in opposite directions, which would not impede drainage. He asked Stephenson to revisit the option of speed bumps. (10:09 a.m.) Stern supported speed humps and explained that they were quite effective. Discussion ensued. (10:10 a.m.) Allen shared his thoughts regarding the relocation of bus stops. He preferred having the bus stops on Masters Drive and stated that it would assist in the traffic flow. He asked the County to install the streetlights before the school year started on August 6, or soon thereafter. (10:12 a.m.) Lovell asked in the Sunshine Bus Company used the same bus stops as the School System and Stern stated that they did use some of the same stops and that the Sunshine Bus Company would like to place benches, but the land was an issue.

(04/21/04 - 5 - 10:13 a.m.)

2. OTHER BUSINESS

Adams asked Toner to brief on the Gaines property acquisition. Toner explained that the School Board was negotiating turning the property over to the County for Fire District use and that a survey and appraisal were forthcoming.

(10:14 a.m.) Bryant commented that both Boards needed to project their coordination efforts to the public to reinforce the positive. He stated that the joint purchase of property for school and recreation purposes would be beneficial to the community. (10:16 a.m.) Stern concurred and commended the Commission and School Boards on handling growth and planning. (10:17 a.m.) Joiner stated that the School Board and County were working hard to provide educational and recreational appropriate sites and commended everyone involved. (10:18 a.m.) Allen read a letter regarding the School Board's acquisition of the Barnes property located on State Road 206 and Cowpen Branch Road for the new elementary school. The letter identified additional land available attached to the elementary school parcel and asked the County to look into purchasing the adjoining acreage for recreational purposes. (10:20 a.m.) Fehling provided a map of the soon to be acquired School Board property and available adjoining acreage. (10:20 a.m.) Bryant stated that the county would direct staff to look into the possible purchase of the fourteen-acre Barnes parcel. (10:21 a.m.) Adams directed Mary Ann Blount, Real Estate Manager and Dan Weimer, Recreation Manager to work with Mr. Toner regarding the available fourteen-acre parcel and possible acquisition. (10:22 a.m.) Miscellaneous discussion ensued.

The next joint meeting was set for July 28, 2004, at 9:00 a.m. at the School Board building.

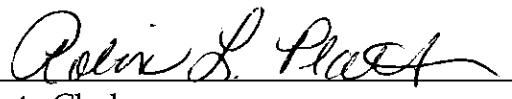
With there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Approved _____ May 4 _____, 2004

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Karen R. Stern, Chair

ATTEST: CHERYL STRICKLAND, CLERK

By: 
Deputy Clerk