

**MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AND ST. JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
FEBRUARY 15, 2007
(9:00 A.M.)**

Proceedings of a joint meeting of the Board of County Commissioners and the School Board of St. Johns County, Florida, held in Conference Room 1a at the St. Johns County Permit Center Building, 4040 Lewis Speedway (County Road 16-A) and U.S. 1 North, St. Augustine, Florida.

Present were: St. Johns County:
Ben Rich, District 3, Chairman
Thomas Manuel, District 4, Vice Chair
Cyndi Stevenson, District 1
Ron Sanchez, District 2
James E. Bryant, District 5
Waldemar Kropacek, Interim County Administrator
Joe Vonasek, Assistant County Administrator
Patrick McCormack, County Attorney
Pam Halterman, Deputy Clerk

School Board:
Beverly Slough, District 1, Chairman
Carla Wright, District 5, Vice Chairman
Tommy Allen, District 2
Bill Mignon, District 3
Bill Fehling, District 4
Joseph Joyner, Superintendent
Tracy Upchurch, School Board Attorney

(02/15/07 - 1 - 9:07 a.m.)
CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR
Rich called the joint meeting to order.

(02/15/07 - 1 - 9:07 a.m.)
Stevenson gave the invocation and Manuel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(02/15/07 - 1 - 9:08 a.m.)
ROLL CALL

Rich asked all board members to state their names. Rich, Manuel, Sanchez, Bryant, and Stevenson along with McCormack, Kropacek, Vonasek, Locklear and Halterman were in attendance.

School Board members introduced themselves: Slough, Wright, Allen, Mignon, Fehling, as well as Joseph Joyner, Superintendent, and Tracy Upchurch, School Board attorney, were in attendance.

(02/15/07 - 1 - 9:09 a.m.)
GREETING BY COMMISSIONER BEN RICH, CHAIRMAN

Rich thanked everyone for attending the joint workshop meeting.

(9:10 a.m.) Slough stated that she was glad to be working with the commissioners and looked forward to continued communications.

(02/15/07 - 2 - 9:10 a.m.)

1. REPORT / DISCUSSION ON:

A. DISCUSSION ABOUT STANDARDIZATION OF CONTRACTS IN REFERENCE TO THE USE OF COUNTY FACILITIES THAT ARE LOCATED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Rich stated that the county and school board had mutual reasons to standardize contracts between themselves. He said the legal representatives would work together to bring back language for use contracts to the boards. Slough asked for examples of contracts which lacked standardization.

(9:13 a.m.) Troy Blevins, Director, Parks and Recreation, noted that the joint use agreements had not been reviewed in approximately five years. He said he planned to continue discussions between representatives of both boards. Slough agreed that the process was appropriate and would like to see it continued. Wright concurred with Slough. Allen said both boards were working for the same taxpayers and agreed that continued joint use was necessary and useful, but he asked that the safety of children and building and facility security remain a priority. Mignon concurred with Allen.

(9:19 a.m.) Blevins affirmed that schools had always left recreation fields in good shape after using a facility. Stevenson stated that the county had excellent communications with the School Board and school representatives.

(02/15/07 - 2 - 9:21 a.m.)

B. UPDATE ON THE USE OF SCHOOL ATHLETIC FACILITIES BY ATHLETIC ASSOCIATIONS

Fehling stated that he had found it difficult to determine who handled recreation fields when he raised questions concerning facilities. Rich suggested that staff could work together to handle the issue to eliminate the confusion.

(9:24 a.m.) **Motion by Rich, seconded by Slough, to authorize staff and legal counsel to meet to discuss the standardization of contracts in reference to the use of county facilities that were located on school property.**

(9:24 a.m.) Joyner asked for clarification regarding joint use agreements and the use of property by outside entities. He explained that the principal of a school was authorized to handle property utilized by outside entities. Rich advised that the county would not ask for standardization of use regarding facilities currently under the purview of school principals. Allen voiced that he would be adamantly opposed to spot improvements but in favor of countywide improvements. Rich agreed with being fair with all facilities. Bryant commented that principals and the recreation department should be part of the communications due to the involvement of those representatives. Slough suggested that communication was the main issue involved with two governments. Bryant concurred with Slough. Wright noted that the former Hastings High School building had been turned over to the town of Hastings and asked for its current use. Blevins said the building was being used as a community center.

(9:30 a.m.) **Motion carried unanimously.**

(02/15/07 - 3 - 9: 31 a.m.)

C. UPDATE ON JOINT EFFORT ON A CENTRALLY LOCATED SCHOOL POOL

Manuel noted that a community pool was a pressing issue for the Commission and asked for feedback from school board members regarding the matter. Fehling said he was not in favor of a centrally located community pool because it would be difficult for all county residents to use. He suggested that pools should be based on the needs of the community it served. Manuel commented that he could support that theory if they were dealing with an unlimited budget. He said a centrally located pool should be based on population distribution and not geographic location. Allen stated that the need for a community pool existed; however, he was concerned with financing and maintenance cost. He noted that the new Governor had proposed a drastic decrease in revenue by reducing property taxes which would adversely affect the School Board's budget resulting in much concern. Manuel commented that limited funds should be allocated based on the number of residents being served. Allen concurred with Manuel. He suggested that working with outside groups was appropriate. He pointed out that the School Boards' primary goal was education. Manuel noted that the county had the highest number of Community Development Districts per capita in Florida. Mignon noted that during his time as principal at Nease High School the swim team had to travel to a pool facility, and he said he would oppose a centrally located facility due to necessary travel. Manuel suggested that many assets existed which were not being utilized. Sanchez said funding was limited and money was not currently available for pool maintenance. He said he had contacted the YMCA and would meet with them, in the near future, regarding the use of pool facilities in surrounding counties. Mignon advised that Joyner would be attending a meeting with representatives of the YMCA in order to create a very similar agreement. Sanchez said he would continue to work with the YMCA and report the outcome. Rich said the board had previously received concessions from CDD's to construct junior Olympic pools; however, he would not be in favor of the county funding new pools; although, he pointed out that a possibility existed to locate pools in CDD areas.

(10:00 a.m.) Manuel spoke on locating pools in CDD and DRI areas. Stevenson agreed that partnering with the YMCA was a good approach. She commented that the cost of pools and maintenance was expensive. Fehling asked for clarification on CDD's which Manuel offered. Fehling said he viewed pools as a community facility and not just a benefit for swim teams. He noted that a higher rate of success occurred with pools constructed close to community centers. Wright concurred with Fehling. She asked what the board wanted from the school board regarding pools. Manuel suggested that a fee should be implemented if high school swim teams utilized pool facilities. He noted that the need for pools existed in the community, and the county had fiscal constraints but he would like to see the two boards work together on an acceptable solution. Sanchez voiced that no other choice existed but to obtain more funding from CDD's and developers. He suggested that the Parks and Recreation Department budget needed to be lowered which could be accomplished by implementing user fees.

(02/15/07 - 3 - 10:13 a.m.)

D. UPDATE ON SCHOOL CONCURRENCY RECOMMENDATIONS

Slough advised that the school boards' concurrency plan had been posted on their website and they were moving forward. Joyner stated that they were currently waiting to hear back from the Department of Community Affairs in Tallahassee. Tim Forson and Nicole Cubbege, School Board representatives explained school concurrency in detail. Cubbege noted that school concurrency needed to be in force no later than August 2008.

(02/15/07 - 4 - 10:17 a.m.)

E. DISCUSSION ON THE NOCATEE DRI/PUD MODIFICATION - HIGH SCHOOL "CCC" ACCESS ROAD

Fehling said it would be necessary to ask for relief with construction funding because the new high school was located in the Nocatee DRI and it required them to comply with Code regarding roads, sidewalk, etc. He explained that they would like to lessen the road, sidewalk, curbing and tree requirements on the access road to the new high school. He noted that access of the roadway, after the Davis Park entrance, needed to be limited to school function participants. Rich asked for specifics.

(10:24 a.m.) Cubbege explained that a detailed proposal would come before the board in the near future. Fehling noted that the only people to utilize the mentioned portion of the subject road would involve school functions. He said the road would be constructed to meet code; however, the gated entry to school property needed to be reviewed. He affirmed that relief from sidewalk and landscaping requirements were being suggested. Rich said he would support the proposal. He pointed out that the Sheriff would control the area around the facility. In response to an inquiry, Fehling explained elements of the area to the board members. Sanchez questioned whether any other project would benefit from the new road. Cubbege added that the road shifted west from the current Davis Park entrance and would connect to the Nocatee entrance and the Riverwood Preserve. Sanchez questioned whether a grant was available due to it being located near the Preserve. Bryant advised that any grant would be the county's responsibility to obtain. He noted that the county had purchased a spade truck which the county could allow the school board to use; however, it was currently not operational. Rich suggested that the county's tree fund might be available to help the school board with landscaping. Bryant noted that developers were required to contribute to the tree fund. Stevenson said the funding was earmarked for trees and not for services such as landscape planting.

(10:38 a.m.) McCormack advised that he would review the tree fund issue. Kropacek noted that the county used free labor from the sheriff's department for landscaping and suggested that the school board might be able to partake in the program. Allen said the penal farm program was a good idea.

Bryant departed the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

(02/15/07 - 4 - 10:44a.m.)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lon Greenwood, 6675 SR 16, spoke on school traffic, no turn lanes and parent/children drop-off around the Mill Creek elementary school. Rich suggested that the stacking issue needed to be designed into school construction plans. Joyner affirmed that the current construction process included stacking. Forson explained the process involved with planning new school construction. In response to an inquiry, Locklear affirmed that four lanes were planned at the Mill Creek elementary school area to ease the stacking issue. Forson pointed out that the elementary school was operating at double its capacity. Rich noted that the stacking would be reduced in half after the new elementary school currently being constructed was operational.

(02/15/07 - 4 - 11:01 a.m.)

OTHER BUSINESS

Allen asked that a fact finding committee be created to review the actual cost to live in St. Johns County which would help in finding solutions to some issues. Rich noted that Bill Lazar had previously figured the minimum cost at \$13.48 per hour to live in SJC.

Wright departed the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

(02/15/07 - 5 - 11:08 a.m.)

NEXT MEETING DATE SCHEDULED FOR MAY 17TH at 9:00 a.m. SCHOOL BOARD TO HOST

(11:09 a.m.) **Motion by Fehling, seconded by Allen, motion carried unanimously, to adjourn.**

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

Approved _____ March 6 _____, 2007

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: Ben Rich
Ben Rich, Chairman

ATTEST: CHERYL STRICKLAND, CLERK

By: Cheryl Strickland
Deputy Clerk

