



## **Roundtable of Volusia County Elected Officials Meeting Minutes May 10, 2021**

### **CALL TO ORDER - 12 p.m.**

The Wayne G. Sanborn Activity Center, 815 S. Alabama Avenue, DeLand, Florida.

Those attending included the following Roundtable members: Nancy Miller, Mayor – Roundtable Vice Chair, Mayor, Daytona Beach Shores; Karen Chasez, Mayor, DeBary; Bob Apgar, Mayor, DeLand; Heidi Herzberg, Roundtable Chair, Mayor, Deltona; Michael Thomas, Mayor, Edgewater; Chris Via, Mayor, Holly Hill; Daisy Raisler, Mayor, Lake Helen; Russ Owen, Mayor, New Smyrna Beach; Douglas Gibson, Mayor, Oak Hill; Gary Blair, Mayor, Orange City; Bill Partington, Mayor, Ormond Beach; Samuel Bennett, Mayor, Pierson; Lois Paritsky, Council Member, Ponce Inlet; Don Burnette, Mayor, Port Orange and Jeff Brower, County Council Chair, Volusia County.

Others attending included: Jamie Haynes, Vice Chair, Volusia County School Board; Michael Booker, City Manager, Daytona Beach Shores; John A. Peters, Acting City Manager, Deltona; Glenn Irby, City Manager, Edgewater; Joe Forte, City Manager, Holly Hill; Lee Evett, Acting City Administrator, Lake Helen; Khalid Resheidat, City Manager, New Smyrna Beach; Kohn Evans, City Administrator, Oak Hill; Dale Arrington, City Manager, Orange City; Joyce Shanahan, City Manager, Ormond Beach; Jeaneen Witt, Town Manager, Ponce Inlet; Wayne Clark, City Manager, Port Orange; Les Gillis, City Manager, South Daytona; George Recktenwald, County Manager, Volusia County; Jamie Haynes, Vice Chair, Volusia County School Board; Barbara Girtman, Volusia County Council, District 1; Danny Robins, Volusia County Council, District 3; Heather Post, Volusia County Council, District 4; Ben Johnson, Volusia County Council, At-Large; Billie Wheeler, Volusia County Council, District 2; Suzanne Konchan, Deputy County Manager, Volusia County; Kevin Captain, Community Information Director, Volusia County; Larry Bartlett, Property Appraiser, Volusia County; Lisa Lewis, Supervisor of Elections, Elections, Volusia County; Will Roberts, Tax Collector, Volusia County; Phyllis Butlien, Interim Vice Mayor/Council Member, City of DeBary; Patricia Boswell, Administrator, Florida Department of Health, Volusia County; Joe Pozzo, Public Protection Director, Volusia County; Georgia McKeown, Consultant, Tallahassee/Local Government; Jim Cameron, Consultant, Jim Cameron Consulting; Ashlyn Russell, Community Information, Volusia County; Brian Vandell, Production Coordinator, Volusia County; Patrick Kelman, Production Specialist (Drone360); Derrell Hill, Production Coordinator, Volusia County; Bobbie King, Community Services Operations Manager, Volusia County; Kelvin Miller, Votran General Manager, Volusia County; Ethan Johnson, Communications and Performance Management Manager, Florida Department of Health for Volusia County; Holly Smith, Tax Collector's Office; Martin Harper, Council Member, District 5, City of Orange City; Kelli Marks, Council Member, District 4, City of Orange City; Brian Rothwell, Deputy Chief Tax Collector, Volusia County; Lois Bollenback, Executive Director, River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization; Mary Helen Moore, Reporter, Daytona Beach News Journal; Heather Shubirg, Executive Vice President, TEAM Volusia; Big John, WELE; Freddie Wilson, FAITH; Sandy Murphy, Citizens 4 Responsible Development; Benjamin Collins, FAITH. Taking minutes was Laura DiGioia, Administrative Aide, Volusia County Manager's Office.

## **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Roundtable Chair Heidi Herzberg welcomed those in attendance and following introductions of the attendees, lead all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **COVID-19 / VACCINE UPDATES**

**Joe Pozzo, Director, Volusia County Department of Public Protection** presented vaccination statistics from all sites in Volusia County. He shared the closing of the Fairgrounds to administration of COVID vaccinations as the demand had significantly decreased, but first and second dose vaccine opportunities were opened at four Health Department sites which created vaccination opportunities throughout the County. Second dose administration would run through May 28, at the same locations where first doses were administered. Mr. Pozzo stated that walk-ups were still being taken at the Fairgrounds, with the individual's second dose administered at a local Health Department. Tidal Basin, who was responsible for Sharecare scheduling, blasted email notifications to those still in their que on the Fairground closing and alternative Health Department venues. Vaccination outreach events were still being scheduled throughout the County. Communities in need of outreach could contact Mr. Pozzo, Ms. Boswell or Emergency Management for evaluation and scheduling.

Information was provided on Johnson & Johnson vaccination efforts at the jail, as well as vaccination events and testing site information by appointment by calling (386) 274-0500. Mr. Pozzo explained that sheltering social distancing protocols were still in place, although the State had announced an updated social distancing and sheltering measures that would soon be distributed to Emergency Management agencies.

**Patricia Boswell, Administrator, Florida Department of Health for Volusia County of Volusia** stated that almost 223,000 people had been vaccinated in Volusia County and almost 172,000 of those individuals had completed their vaccination series. Publix and pharmacy sites had now become walk-in sites which made it easier for individuals to get vaccinated. Vaccination rates had slowed down after the initial push to vaccinate the elderly and at risk individuals. In Volusia County almost 80% of the 65 and older, and 60% and older populations have been vaccinated, with over 50% of 25 year old residents having been vaccinated. The goal is to have 70% of our residents being vaccinated.

Ms. Boswell stated that all age groups eligible for the vaccine could benefit from the protection that it could provide them and others, especially once prevention measures are eased. Trend numbers were shared on the decrease of community virus spread and it was declining. Current recommendations were to have school age children vaccinated with the recommended vaccines for schools, so when COVID vaccines become available for their age group, the recommended six week period between vaccinations will have elapsed.

Ms. Boswell entertained and answered question from the audience with regard to COVID statistics and community transmission, and informational measures to encourage under 40 year olds to be vaccinated. Ms. Boswell suggested that vaccination opportunities needed to be near where people work or reside and convenient. Various large employers and educational institutions in the County had already reached out to the Health Department to coordinate vaccination clinics and opportunities.

Chair Herzberg asked Ms. Boswell to share contact information for those interested in vaccine events. The vaccine event coordinator, Melanie Black, could be reached at (386) 481-4345. Homebound individuals could contact Michelle at (386) 281-6423. Questions arose to updated guidance that was provided by the CDC with regard to fully vaccinated people, transmission and cloth mask effectiveness.

## **BUS STOP 101**

**Bobbie King, Volusia County Community Services Operations Manager** distributed a booklet entitled, “Bus Stop – 101: A Guide to Votran Bus Stops in Volusia County,” and utilized an overhead PowerPoint presentation to share bus stop and transportation history and services. Votran currently served all 16 County municipalities in addition to 4 named unincorporated areas, and multiple unincorporated areas. Votran operated 28 daytime fixed routes and 7 night routes, with 6 Sunday routes; FLEX service in New Smyrna Beach and paratransit service aka Gold Service. Within municipal routes served, there are 2,580 bus stops, with 201 of those being ADA compliant. Within unincorporated Volusia County there were 202 bus stops, all of which were ADA compliant. Bus stop placement and construction was governed by Federal Transit Administration (FTA); Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 enacted in 1992 (ADA); Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG); Florida Administrative Code 14.20 (FAC) and local ordinances for aesthetics and positioning.

Ms. King explained the process how bus stop improvements were triggered: new route or modification to an existing route; State/County/City projects or FDOT roadway projects which often included sidewalk improvements. The four different types of bus stops were explained which depended upon roadside conditions. Bus stop and accessory cost estimations were shared, which included a basic ADA pad with a sign for \$10,000; with additional shelter for \$16,000; bench or trash can for \$1,000 each. Cost for ADA accessible path was \$74 per linear foot. Bus stop funding was discussed which came from state and federal grants with an annual improvement budget of \$100,000.

Various bus stop shelter styles found within the County were shown, in addition to their susceptibility to vandalism and damage. Bus stop maintenance was explained and performed in coordination with cities and other organizations. Cost and means for municipalities to maintain their bus stops was discussed with the City of Daytona Beach shared as an example of a municipality that issued an RFP for advertising, which required the advertiser to construct and maintain the bus stop with often times no cost shouldered by the city. Should cities want to engage in such an endeavor, specifications and guidance could be provided by Votran.

Ms. King answered various audience questions from maintenance and improvement responsibilities for bus stops, to Council Member Girtman’s thoughts to expand conversation for transportation alternatives to a vast array of County citizens. Council Member Girtman shared her hope in coordination efforts with Votran, cities and the River to Sea TPO Board and Committees with work toward this common goal. Discussion ensued on bus stop proximity to each other and what appeared as a bus stop on every block in some areas of Holly Hill.

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATES**

**Georgia McKeown, Tallahassee/Local Government Consultant, Tallahassee/Local Government Consultant** presented information on the recent legislative session where only 275 bills passed, and as of that morning 27 bills had been signed, with six bills impacting local government, had been signed. She stated it appeared the war against home rule had continued within the Florida legislature by legislators who received constituent issues that may affect a particular geographic area, but the bill then permeates throughout the entire State. When these situations arose, it was imperative to alter the language and prepare amendments to change this from occurring. Ms. McKeown stated that there were at least 36 bills that passed which affected local government that dealt with preemption and mandates.

Due to the pandemic this past legislative session was most difficult due to not being able to meet in person with legislators to affect change. ZOOM meetings or phone calls proved not to be as effective as in person communication, especially when testimony was required. In the House, this process was performed on-

line which made it a slightly easier process. House members did allow some meetings by following strict protocols. This year's events made it more difficult to relay your story to try and make a difference. The Governor's priorities were shared which included tax relief, election reform, anti-riot legislation, a budget that demonstrated his priorities of teachers in the classroom, first responders and child care providers, the environment, COVID, fiscal recovery and tax relief were all addressed during this session. Florida became a model to other states due to rapid recovery which was faster than expected, drop in unemployment, real estate market growth and vaccine availability and commitment to seniors. Unfortunately bills were being produced that appeared to show a very negative effect to cities and counties, and when appeared to be eliminated, reappeared into another bill or amendment.

Ms. McKeown informed the audience that the final bill analysis on the 275 bills which passed had not yet been completed. As the governor had only received 26 bills it was still premature to predict what would happen at this time. The Governor would have 15 days in which to sign or veto a bill, or do nothing and let it pass. The synopsis of each of the 36 bills pertaining to cities and the budget would be sent to Laura DiGioia, for distribution that week. (Document had been received and emailed each attendee on May 13, 2021.) Ms. McKeown's suggestion was to have the City Manager, City Attorney, Public Works Director, and anyone involved within your city to study the bills and the substantive changes which affect how cities and municipalities do daily business.

Budget legislation was discussed and accolades were bestowed on our legislative delegation that made themselves available, returned messages and phoned. The \$101.5 billion spending plan was proposed and passed, and contained \$6.9 billion in federal funding for Medicaid increases and federal educational stimulus funds, which if not included, would have had the budget be only \$2.3 billion over the previous year's budget. Earmarks were given to various higher education institutions such as Daytona State College, Bethune Cookman, Flagler Nursing program and Embry Riddle and Stetson University. Ms. McKeown discussed the municipalities which received funds for large ticket purchases, projects and renovations, and commented on the many grant fund opportunities included within the budget. Discussion ensued on bills that were passed and their history, including changes to the Sedowski fund.

Russ Owen, New Smyrna Beach Mayor, asked about the 36 bills which dealt with preemption and mandates and received affirmation that those bills were strongly supported, which illustrated a trend of moving control toward the State. Mr. Owen called out the effort of colleagues who have raised this issue with the public. Audience questions ensued on the outcome of various bills and measures in addition to the Mr. Jim Cameron's inquiry on the cottage industry bill which pertained to home based businesses in residential zones and various restrictions upon those businesses. Bob Apgar, DeLand Mayor, encouraged cities to work toward keeping home rule and the changes that have occurred throughout the past 25 years. Further discussion ensued on Florida Power and Light double pole removals which were not allowed before.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Rev. Benjamin Collins attended as a member of FAITH and commented on affordable housing trust funds and linkage fees. Discussion ensued on the cost of affordable housing and suggestion for a joint study on linkage fees much as had been started by Daytona Beach.

Big John made comment on the County's lack of a bus plan and bus top benches, and discussed actions taken by Daytona Beach which did not cost citizens tax dollars.

Sandy Murphy, Citizens for Responsible Development, commented on affordable housing and models to follow for responsible development and ability to bring opportunities.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Roundtable Chair Herzberg stated that the body does not traditionally meet in July and so the next meeting would not be until September 13<sup>th</sup>, unless an urgent issue were to come up and notification would be sent out to all members.

**CLOSING COMMENTS/ ADJOURN**

County Chair Brower had commented on the time span to the next meeting and Ms. Herzberg commented that perhaps another meeting could possibly be scheduled sooner than September. County Manager Recktenwald stated that it would be discussed. Closing remarks were solicited from attendees with popular consensus to have a meeting sooner than September. Council Member Post requested that a linkage fee discussion be brought back to the Roundtable at the next meeting as previously mentioned. Mayor Via requested that a meeting be scheduled before September as cities would be receiving (ARPA) funds and that it would be a perfect time to invite the public in to share ideas and how those funds could help their communities. Lisa Lewis, Supervisor of Elections, commented on the topic of redistricting with preliminary numbers coming out around August and hopes that the County and School Board can work together to determine common city and school district lines to assist Volusia County voters. Mike Thomas with the City of Edgewater commented on recent experiences with riding Votran. Nancy Miller commented that waiting until September would be too long to wait for another meeting.

Roundtable Chair Herzberg, having received no further comments or questions, thanked those in attendance for coming. The meeting was adjourned at 1:34 pm.