



Roundtable of Volusia County Elected Officials Meeting Minutes January 11, 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: Roundtable Chair and DeLand Mayor Bob Apgar; Volusia County Council Chair Jeff Brower; Daytona Beach Shores Mayor Nancy Miller; Deltona Mayor Heidi Herzberg; Edgewater Mayor Michael Thomas; Holly Hill Mayor Chris Via; Lake Helen Mayor Daisy Raisler; New Smyrna Beach Vice Mayor, Jake Sachs; Orange City Mayor Gary Blair; Pierson Town Council Mayor Samuel Bennett; Ponce Inlet City Council Member Lois Paritsky; Port Orange Mayor Don Burnette; and Volusia County School Board Vice Chair, Jamie Haynes.

Others attending included Michael Booker, City Manager, Daytona Beach Shores; Carmen Rosamonda, City Manager, DeBary; Michael Pleus, City Manager, DeLand; Glenn Irby, City Manager, Edgewater; Joe Forte, City Manager, Holly Hill; Lee Evett, Interim Town Administrator, Lake Helen; Kohn Evans, City Administrator, Oak Hill; Dale Arrington, City Manager, Orange City; Joyce Shanahan, City Manager, Ormond Beach; Jeaneen Witt, Town Manager, Ponce Inlet; Jamie Miller, Interim City Manager, Port Orange; Les Gillis, City Manager, South Daytona; Dr. Carmen J. Balgobin, Volusia County School Board Interim Superintendent; George Recktenwald, County Manager, Volusia County; Suzanne Konchan, Deputy County Manager, Volusia County; Ben Johnson, Volusia County Council Member, At-Large; Barb Girtman, Volusia County Council Member, District 1; Danny Robins, Volusia County Council Member, District 3; Khalid Resheidat, City Manager, New Smyrna Beach; John Peters, Acting City Manager, Deltona; John Booker, Volusia County, Government Affairs; Lisa Lewis, Supervisor of Elections, Volusia County; Will Roberts, Tax Collector Elect, Volusia County; Kevin Captain, Director, Volusia County Community Information Division; Stacy Cantu, Daytona Beach Commissioner, Zone 4; Brian Rothwell, Deputy Chief Tax Collector, Volusia County; Rev. Ben Collins, Collective Church/F.A.I.T.H.; Phyllis Butlien, DeBary City Council, Seat 4; Jeff Allebach, Council Member, District 2, City of Orange City; Martin Harper, Council Member, District 5, City of Orange City; Kelli Marks, Council Member, District 4, City of Orange City; Jonathan Foley, Interim Council Member, City of Port Orange; Patricia Boswell, Florida Department of Health; Holly Smith, Communications Manager and Government Liaison, Florida Department of Health; Jim Judge, Emergency Management Director, Volusia County; Joe Pozzo, Public Protection Director, Volusia County; Kevin Captain, Community Information Director; Larry Bartlett, Property Appraiser; Mike Chitwood, Sheriff, Volusia County Sheriff's Department; Jim Cameron, Vice President of Government Relations, Daytona Beach Regional Chamber of Commerce; Freddie Wilson, Collective Church; Mary Helen Moore, Daytona News Journal; Mary Anne Connors; Adrienne Toles-Williams, DSC In Motion Newspaper; Darrell Hill, Production Coordinator, Volusia County Community Information Division; Gary Daniels, Production Coordinator, Volusia County Community Information Division; Ashlyn Russell, Staff Assistant I, Volusia County. Taking minutes was Laura DiGioia, Administrative Aide, Volusia County Manager's Office.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Roundtable Chairman Bob Apgar welcomed those in attendance and after standing, lead all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

TRAINING ACADEMY

Sheriff Chitwood, explained the challenges cities and counties were having with law enforcement recruitment, and the manner in which those officers were being trained. The Sheriff explained that there were two different types of academies in the United States: open and closed. Open academies, such as Daytona State College, was where tuition was paid and acceptance into the program was accepted regardless of criminal background, or potential for hire into a law enforcement position. The college was then reimbursed \$3,000 from the State for every person that was hired. The closed academy as seen in Jacksonville, Florida, and used as an example, recruited; performed background investigations; verified candidate qualifications met the standards sought; hired, and trained in the manner and culture desired by that agency. The Sheriff gave examples of recruitment decisions that were not successful with potential open academy recruits and cited mental instability and prior expunged criminal records.

Sheriff Chitwood briefly discussed the history of how the training academy idea came about, and the goal to create a certified training academy for the individuals hired by the Volusia County Sheriff's Office. The goal was to build careers for individuals who wanted to spend 20 to 30 years working for, and living in, Volusia County. It was explained that Daytona State College already used Volusia County Sheriff's facilities, including the firing range; driving range; defensive tactics lab, and classrooms. Those services were provided to the college at no charge.

The second challenge discussed was the lack of a crossover academy in Volusia County for current officers seeking relocation to our State and County. The current program consisted of two weeks of training for preparation to take the state exam, and required being sent to other counties to receive that training. The risk of this practice was that good candidates were lost to other agencies that had provided them the crossover training.

The associated costs to candidates and the state of the open academy system was discussed. The Sheriff's proposed academy would not require money from the individual or the state. Current officer training includes 770 mandated hours at the State Police Academy, followed by 800 hours with the Volusia County Sheriff's Office, to fine-tune and correct any misinformation received. The proposed academy would be a total of 1,070 hours and train individuals the way the Sheriff's Office desired them to be in the field.

The proposed training model had gained popularity and had already been implemented in Martin and Highlands Counties, Florida. The Sheriffs of those counties had been working closely with Volusia County on this endeavor. Survey results reviewed from sheriff and police chiefs across the country showed a great displeasure with the open academy system, and the type of recruits that were being received.

Sheriff Chitwood reiterated that this system will not cost the County additional money, as recruits were already being retrained following graduation from the Academy, and no additional funding would be requested. The Sheriff stated that this endeavor was geared toward the Volusia County Sheriff's Office, and the future of the organization.

Mayor Apgar asked if cities could utilize some of the academy's services or facilities for a fee or reimbursement. Sheriff Chitwood stated that assistance has always been available to the cities at no cost. Current plans were to train Volusia County Sheriff's Office employees and had been the proposal that was

approved by the First Regional Board, and presented to the Criminal Justice and Standards Commission in early February.

Sheriff Chitwood addressed various questions from Dale Arrington, City Manager of Orange City, and Orange City mayor, Gary Blair, on the continuation of the open academy system; use of Volusia County training facilities, and goals of the new Academy. The Sheriff stated that the goal was to attract the best and the brightest, and that the main difference was that from the first day, the candidates would be Volusia County Sheriff's Office employees. He stated that for the investment the Sheriff's Office would be making into these individuals, a conditional employment contract, in case of separation, would be put into place. Discussion ensued with City Manager Joe Forte, of Holly Hill, who shared his experience with Daytona State College, and inquired on how the open academy system could be improved.

NEW TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE SERVICES PROVISIONS

Will Roberts, shared his experience and insight of graduating into a position with Corrections, from Daytona State College, as it related to Sheriff Chitwood's presentation. Mr. Roberts explained that his business card and informational handout listing current Tax Collector's Office services provided at various County locations. Mr. Roberts explained that the Tax Collector's Office would soon be processing concealed weapons permits, no longer requiring citizens to leave the County for these services, and keeping the revenue generated within Volusia County. Mr. Roberts explained with this change, Volusia County would benefit, as any funds collected above the Tax Collector's Office expenses were returned to the County.

Mr. Roberts discussed collaborative work being performed with the Florida Department of Health for the eventual processing of birth certificate requests in the County. The Tax Collector's transition team was currently in the process of obtaining necessary software and agency signatures to begin providing this service.

Heidi Herzberg, Mayor, Deltona, asked if the Deltona and private tag offices throughout the County were still operational; had already been closed, and if new offices would be opened to replace them? Mr. Roberts informed the audience that those agencies were no longer permitted to continue operation and were given until January 31, 2021 to complete any current pending transactions. The Tax Collector's Office was currently working on taking over the workload, locations, and staffing issues of these independent agencies, especially in Deltona, were there was a citizen need for a Tax Collector's presence.

Jeff Brower, Chair, Volusia County, asked about the 1,200 monthly permits issued to Volusia County residents from Flagler County offices, and the clarification of those permits being to carry concealed weapons. The calculation was broken down to \$22 for new applications, and \$12 for renewals. Mr. Roberts explained that these fees were being paid by Volusia County residents to Flagler County at an estimated annually amount of \$400,000, and would soon be processed and received by Volusia County.

COVID-19 / VACCINE UPDATES

Mayor Apgar shared incites received from a Mayor's call that shared the need for leadership to recognize citizen concerns and questions, and that a sense of patience must be encouraged. Mr. Apgar explained the need to personalize current messaging to seniors and Baby Boomers, with regard to consistent messaging; their level of technological skills and usage; messaging through more traditional avenues and multiple newspapers; messaging from major area hospitals to their patients, and the importance of adherence to advertised event dates and times when possible. Although dates and times were predicated

by vaccine availability, that message needed to be shared as well. Discussion ensued following Mayor Apgar's question on the amount of vaccine being received and first and second dose recipients.

Joe Pozzo, Director, Volusia County Department of Public Protection, addressed comments that were made and the continued need for patience throughout this entire process. Mr. Pozzo expressed that often times the information received from the State level was incorrect on vaccine quantities allocated to Volusia County. He stated that the program with the Florida Department of Health was very fluid, especially with the new administration and their rollout standards.

The Volusia County Manager's Office, following the previous week's unregistered event held by the city of Daytona Beach and the Florida Health Department, were now in improved communication for future rollouts and coordination with Volusia County staff. Discussion ensued on the success of the first Volusia County rollout at Dewey O. Boster Park in Deltona, which was a pre-registration event through Eventbrite, with 300 registrations held back for phone-in registrants. There were 1,940 vaccinations performed at the two-day event. AdventHealth had scheduled an event where both first responders and 65 and older patients were vaccinated. An event was also being scheduled with Halifax Health to vaccinate those at the 911 Center.

Mr. Pozzo shared that all events moving forward would require pre-registration, with phone registration available to those without the means to schedule electronically. Following citizen comment at the previous week's County Council Meeting, registration quantities were expanded to three appointments per registration to take into consideration the seniors who were carpooling to events with others. Mr. Pozzo explained that each registered person would receive two tickets each; one for the initial vaccination, and one for the 2nd vaccination 28 days later, at the same venue. It was reiterated that events would be scheduled when vaccines were received. Events that had been scheduled for later on that week had to be rescheduled due to the State not providing the number of vaccines promised. Vaccine that was held back from a previous event would be used at a small scale, one-day event that week at the Volusia County Fairgrounds.

Vaccination sites under consideration were required to have the space for drive-thru service, opposed to walk-up, for speed and social distancing. The drive-thru event at Dewey O. Boster Park, with the use of scheduled appointment times, moved very quickly and efficiently, with little traffic backup onto Saxon Boulevard. On average 120 vaccinations were administered per hour, with 150 having been registered per hour. The future goal, when the vaccine is more readily available, was for 200 vaccinations to be administered per hour. The County's goal was to establish three or four sites that would be able to handle the traffic flow of these large drive-thru events. The Volusia County Fairgrounds had already been used as a mass testing site and would be another ideal location for this type of event. Sites on the east side were being researched, with utilization of sites on two to three week rotations. Regardless of where a person received their first dose, their second dose would be received at the same location. Plan implementation was based on vaccine availability.

Mr. Pozzo further explained that prior to going to a city, the County would seek to obtain assistance from that city for the traffic plan, security, traffic control, cones, public works assistance, and perhaps a generator if necessary. In addition to drive-thru sites, the immobile and those unable to come to an event was addressed, with plans being formulated to put together mobile integrated health systems and strike teams to go to these communities and provide vaccinations. It had been identified that there were pockets in all communities where this issue needed to be addressed.

Gary Blair, Mayor, Orange City, inquired about the strike teams being discussed for the immobile, and if they could go out to individual communities such as Orange Tree Village, John Knox, and such places where a high concentration of older individuals reside. Mr. Pozzo explained that some of those facilities were already a part of long term care and nursing home facilities plans for vaccination, but mobile home parks may not be. Mr. Pozzo stated that although long term care facilities were a concern, the County would follow guidance from the Florida Health Department in that matter. The County's job was to operationalize the mission with the team tasked to perform the planning, with the clinical piece relying on the Health Department's identification of those communities. Discussion ensued on vaccine distribution through the healthcare system versus the State, and performance efficiency of each. Mayor Apgar stated that it was important for the long term healthcare facilities to know of the vaccination schedules for these communities, as some of the residents were mobile and could be venturing out to receive vaccinations at other sites. The importance of getting the message out was a very important aspect of the program.

Martin Harper, Council Member, Orange City, we need 75 – 80% of the population to be vaccinated to achieve herd immunity per Dr. Fauci. In Volusia County that would be approximately 400,000 people before achieving this number. Provided his opinion that the CDC and the Health Organizations should be determining how the vaccination occurs with the governments providing support and money which was currently lacking.

Karen Chasez, Mayor, Deltona, stated that she had experienced first-hand the first vaccination event coordinated by the FDOH on the first-come, first-served basis, and inquired to whether now that appointments had moved to Eventbrite, if she had to register for her second shot? Mr. Pozzo stated that he was working with the FDOH and the City of Daytona Beach, as that was a Daytona Beach health department vaccine site. Logistics for the second-round of vaccinations were being discussed with one suggestion being to go to a registration system for people to know the time to arrive, and maintain a smooth flow as was seen at Boster Park. More information would be provided from both the Health Department and Daytona Beach as it became available. Ms. Chasez suggested that the decision should not be left to the last minute and to provide those information at least one to two weeks before the event. Mr. Pozzo also reiterated that they were prepared for providing vaccinations six days per week for mass distribution, pending the receipt of the vaccine.

Jeff Brower, Council Chair, Volusia County, inquired that Mr. Pozzo stated that currently vaccine amounts hoped for were not being received. Mr. Pozzo stated that they received a vaccine number from the Florida Department of Emergency Management, which was then reduced to an allocation of zero, due to mitigating circumstances. Remaining unused vaccines from the previous week were then scheduled for distribution at the Fair Grounds on that Thursday for a smaller event. Mr. Brower asked if there was vaccine for the second round for those who had already received their first vaccination. Mr. Pozzo did not have that information at the time. Mr. Brower inquired as to the number of first responders who had already received their vaccinations. Mr. Pozzo stated that he was prepared to share that number at the following week's County Council meeting, including vaccination numbers for residents of long-term health care facilities and nursing homes.

Patricia Boswell, Administrator, Florida Department of Health for Volusia County, stated that there was an increase in COVID cases in Volusia County being more than what was experienced in July. Statistics were shared of the rise of hospitalizations; occupied ICU beds and patients on ventilators, with 4,183 new cases reported in the previous two week period resulting in an 11.38% positivity rate. New Smyrna Beach state testing site statistics were shared of 11.5% of people tested found to be positive for COVID-19.

Veterans were encouraged to contact the VA for vaccination availability through VA clinics and hospitals. Current vaccine supplies were stated as the largest challenge to the vaccination program. Vaccinations already administered included with the 65 years of age and older category of persons who would be performing the vaccinations. Allocations of vaccine were determined by the speed at which the vaccine was administered.

Ms. Boswell explained that the State of Florida had received 254,000 vaccines total for that week, and with the removal of vaccines for long-term care facilities, Publix, and hospitals, 166,000 vaccines remained for allocation to county Health Departments for those 65 years of age and above. There were 17 county health departments that received an allocation for that week, with Volusia County not being one of them. Allocations were given in the amounts of 1,000 - 2,000 with one county receiving 4,000 doses. It was predicted that vaccination numbers would increase as the amount of vaccine was allocated.

Ms. Boswell stated that the vaccine was one layer of protection against the virus and the first dose did not get people to 95% immunity. The Moderna vaccine being administered in Volusia County required two doses, 28 days a part, to get to that level of protection, and that following the vaccination series, social distancing, wearing a mask and frequent handwashing, and avoidance of crowded areas would still need to be practiced.

Don Burnette, Mayor, Port Orange, asked if the FDOH knows the weekly vaccine allocations in advance, or were they informed week to week? Ms. Boswell stated that that up to this point, the second doses had been put aside. Mr. Burnette offered assist from the group with contacting the State or Federal government to assist the FDOH, so that the Department did not have to fight this battle for Volusia alone.

Discussion ensued on the lack of current residency requirements for vaccination. Clarification was given that the location of the vaccination clinic did not determine that residents who surrounded that location had a higher chance of obtaining a vaccination, than those traveling in from other counties.

Jeff Brower, Council Chair, Volusia County, asked if there was a citizenship requirement to receive a vaccination. Ms. Boswell responded that at the current time this was not a requirement.

Martin Harper, Council Member, Orange City, expressed his gratitude for the information that had been presented and confirmed that once the vaccine series was completed that there would be a 95% protection factor from the virus, and that CDC safety practices would still need to be followed until nationwide herd immunity was achieved.

Mayor Apgar reviewed the information presented to include that residency was not a requirement and that the FDOH could not control the vaccine allocations that were being received by the County.

F.A.I.T.H. AFFORDABLE / WORKFORCE HOUSING COMMITTEE

Ben Collins, Founder and Pastor of Collective United Methodist Church in DeLand, President of the DeLand Main Street Association Board and Member of F.A.I.T.H., presented a brief overview of F.A.I.T.H. that included a summary of successful causes that were championed by the organization. For the last two years the organization's focus had been on the lack of affordable housing rental units in the County due to the rising cost of rent.

A PowerPoint presentation was shown which included:

- Volusia Housing Trust Fund
- F.A.I.T.H. – Fighting Against Injustice Towards Harmony
 - Established in 2000
 - 30+ diverse congregations in Volusia
 - 501 c3 Non-Profit
 - Interfaith, non-partisan
- Stories from the Community
- Housing Crisis in Volusia County
 - 30% of all renters paid over half of their income on rent
 - Mean renter wage: \$13.35/hour
 - Wage needed to afford a one-bedroom apartment: \$17.37/hour
 - Deficit of over 16,000 affordable rental units
- Occupations and Wages
 - Wage necessary for full time worker to afford a two bedroom apartment: \$21.37/hour
- Housing Trust Funds
- The Sadowski Act
- Locally Controlled Housing Trust Funds
- Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund
 - Example of \$9.5 million in grants leveraged into \$164 million of construction
- Three Central FL Counties Created Housing Trust Funds in 2020
 - Hillsborough County
 - Seminole County
 - Orange County
- Funding Sources
- Call to Action

Mr. Collins explained that the matter of affordable housing transcended humanitarian efforts, and affected the viability of local economies and economic development. An example presented described a lightening company that was provided tax incentives to move to DeLand, Florida, but passed on the opportunity because of the lack of affordable housing for their employees. One solution presented to mitigate these types of situations was the formation of housing trust funds, of which over 700 had already been created by cities and counties across the nation. The statewide housing fund created in Florida was the Sadowski Act, which had provided great funding, although the fund had often been depleted by the Legislature. The Sadowski Act shortfalls included being highly competitive, ownership requirements, and often times did not meet the needs of local communities. Promotion of a local housing trust fund was encouraged in Volusia County. Mr. Collins stated that the success of the housing trust funds laid with their ability to leverage funds from private, state and federal sources. The average amount leveraged from those funds was \$8 for every \$1 the counties put into them.

Mr. Collins stated that although F.A.I.T.H. was not advocating for any particular method to raise funds, it was suggested that at least \$7 million per year was needed to adequately address the problem. The goal was to get the additional support of the Council to pass an ordinance to establish a housing trust fund in Volusia County. Volusia County was deemed best equipped to operate a housing trust fund to serve all of the municipalities within it. Mr. Collins suggested everyone come together and urge the County to create a housing trust fund and to share what it would mean to their communities. A draft letter of support could be found on the F.A.I.T.H. website at FAITHVolusia.org/housing for virtual signature. Information was

provided on the Action Assembly scheduled for March 22nd at 6:30 p.m. as a drive-in event in Daytona Beach. Mr. Collins thanked the audience for their invitation to speak.

Mayor Apgar stated that some of the fund models presented were founded on private support, and not necessarily the tax payers of the jurisdictions. He said that in order for this program to work in Volusia heavy reliance on those sources of funding should be explored, and for uniform program administration throughout the municipalities.

CITY MANAGERS ORGANIZATION UPDATE

Michael Pleus, City Manager of DeLand, stated that the City Manager’s Organization did not meet in November or December, but that results from the January meeting would be shared at the March Roundtable Meeting.

REPORT ON ROUND TABLE LEADERSHIP

Mayor Bob Apgar, stated that Mayor Heidi Hertzberg from Deltona and Mayor Nancy Miller from Daytona Beach Shores had volunteered to serve as the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Elected Officials Roundtable. There being no objections, the mayors were appointed to their positions. Mayor Apgar thanked the members for the opportunity to serve as Chair, and gave congratulatory comments to County staff for their assistance. Mayor Apgar stated that he was looking forward to working with the both Mayors on a successful transition into their new positions toward future success.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

NEXT MEETING

Heidi Herzberg, Roundtable Chair and Deltona Mayor, gave thanks and congratulatory comments on Mayor Apgar’s leadership throughout the past four years. The next meeting would be held on Monday, March 8th, with a location selection and details to follow.

ADJOURNMENT

Roundtable Chairman Herzberg, with finding no further comments, thanked those in attendance for coming. The meeting was adjourned at 1:28 pm.