



**VOLUSIA COUNTY ECHO ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 23, 2019**

MEMBERS

Larry Donnelly, Jr.
Gerald Fieser
Paul Kinney
Patricia Northey
Gerard J. Pendergast
Cyndi Ritchey
Regina Santilli
Catherine Storch
Jack Surette

STAFF

Carmen Hall, Community Services Operations Manager
Michael Dyer, Assistant County Attorney
Jill Marcum, Administrative Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Jay Pendergast called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Roll was called. All members were present.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 5, 2019 MINUTES

Reggie Santilli requested that the minutes be amended to reflect \$10,000,000 rather than \$2,000,000.00, with that change Ms. Santilli made a **MOTION** *"To approve the minutes of February 5, 2019"*. Pat Northey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORT:

Carmen Hall, Operations Manager, updated the committee about the results of the March 19, 2019 County Council meeting. She explained that the County Council had waived the tax issues for the City of Ormond Beach and that all grants had been approved by the council.

Ms. Hall went on to inform the committee that their recommendations for the change of scope for 08-18 Ocean Center and the change of scope and budget for 17-05 Florida Hospital Community Garden had also been approved by the council.

Ms. Hall introduced Dr. Karen Cole, Stetson University Director of Gillespie Museum and Environmental Outreach. Dr. Cole thanked the committee for ECHO's part in the construction of the Rinker Environmental Center stating that there have been 10 years of significant environmental work accomplished at the center. She went on to briefly explain the different activities taking place at the center.

NEW BUSINESS:

ECHO Grant 16-05 First Baptist Church Acquisition – Project Extension Request: Ms. Michele Vallance, Project Manager City of New Smyrna Beach, explained the need for the project extension stating that the parking lot portion of the Phase I project was all that was left to complete the project. She told the committee that the City had merged Phases I and II and that the restoration portion of the project needed to be completed prior to pouring the parking lot.

Ms. Valance explained that Phase II had been bid out in April of 2018 but the city had received no bids. She stated that they planned to rebid the project in two weeks and hoped to start the project in June. She said that the new estimate to complete the project was \$ 4.5 million, \$ 800,000 of which is ECHO funding.

Larry Donnelly asked if the building was the weeping mortar building and stated that he was not a fan of the project.

Vice-Chair Pendergast asked why the parking lot was effected by the restoration. He stated that he sees a trend in extensions from the City of New Smyrna Beach.

Larry Donnelly made a **MOTION** *"To approve the extension request submitted for ECHO Grant 16-05 City of New Smyrna Beach First Baptist Church Acquisition"*. Reggie Santilli seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ECHO Grant 16-08 Shell Harbor Park – Project Extension Request: Tim Baylie, Director, Volusia County Parks, Recreation & Culture Division explained that an extension was needed for the Shell Harbor Project stating that the contractor's contract was through June 22, 2019. He said that he felt the project would be complete by that time but that he didn't want to take a chance.

Member Jack Surette asked why the contractor agreement is longer than the grant. Mr. Baylie explained that the contract was for 365 days. He stated that hurricanes Matthew and Irma affected both the bid process and permitting time frame.

Catherine Storch made a **MOTION** *"To approve the extension request submitted for ECHO Grant 16-08 County of Volusia Shell Harbor Park"*. Reggie Santilli seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ECHO Grant 18-09 Timothy Pollard Memorial Park Renovations – Change of Scope & Budget Request: Theresa Brooks, Grants Manager explained that during the planning period the Town of Ponce Inlet discovered that Crown Castle had a lease for part of the park property and right of way for a cell tower. Due to that the Town was requesting to remove the Bocce Ball courts and move the location of the other amenities planned for that area of the park. Ms. Brooks explained that the funds intended for the Bocce Ball courts would be transferred to design a wall to separate the cell tower from the park.

Member Cindy Ritchey stated that \$15,000 for a redesign seemed like a lot of money. Ms. Brooks stated that it may not cost that much.

Ms. Storch asked if any of the residents were upset about the courts being removed. Ms. Brooks said that they had not received any complaints.

Catherine Storch made a **MOTION** *"To approved the change of scope and budget for ECHO Grant 18-09 Town of Ponce Inlet Timothy Pollard Memorial Park Renovations"*. Jack Surette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ECHO Emergency Stabilization Application – Wright Building: Ms. Hall informed the committee members that the application for the Wright Building had been withdrawn by the applicant and that it may be brought back at the next meeting.

Ms. Storch asked if staff could have a workshop with the applicant before they reapply. Ms. Hall responded that staff doesn't hold workshops for critical grant applications, but that they have offered to meet with the applicant at any time.

Ms. Northey stated that she thought it would be helpful to visit the site of the critical application in the same way they do the new applications.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Member Surette asked why Damien Richards was no longer serving on the ECHO Advisory Committee. Ms. Hall explained that Mr. Richards did not apply, neither did Pam Clayton.

Member Santilli asked if staff verified match funds when an extension was requested. Ms. Hall replied that they did not, however payment was not made until the grantee had met their match obligation. She said that the committee could add the requirement to the guidebook if they wanted to.

Ms. Storch stated that she did not like a letter being the only thing submitted.

Mr. Surette stated that he understood that the Wright Building was asking for a letter of credit for their match funds. Ms. Hall said that her understanding was that there were two parties involved, a non-profit and a local church. She stated that she had been told that the church applied for a line of credit and planned to give the money to the non-profit.

Member Ritchey asked if there was a way to help smaller non-profits to participate in ECHO.

Ms. Hall explained that historically the critical grants had no match requirements, but because the projects were not being completed or meeting the public accessibility

requirements the ECHO Advisory Committee had recommended that a match be required.

Ms. Ritchey stated that it was so much easier for a large organization to meet the match requirements, but much harder for the non-profits.

Ms. Santilli asserted that it was also about sustainability, that the non-profits receive the grant but then can't sustain it. She stated that it was something that the committee didn't want to see happen.

Ms. Ritchey expressed that there need to be requirements set for the non-profit. She suggested to require that the applicant have a board and have been in existence for a long time. She stated she felt that way they would be less likely to fade away.

Vice-Chair Pendergast reminded the committee that all applicants have to sign a restrictive covenant that can be up to 40 years.

Mr. Donnelley on to say that the resolution sunsets in two years and that by the time the changes were made the program will have ended.

Mr. Surrette asked how the ratio had changed between non-profits and government agencies since the beginning of the program.

Ms. Hall said that she would have to do some research. Mr. Surrette stated that he was just curious and she shouldn't put a lot of time into it.

Ms. Ritchey said that she had created a list of projects and that it was very heavily weighted in favor of the municipalities.

Ms. Hall stated that staff had a list of all projects from the inception of the program until now and that they would make sure all the committee members received a copy.

Ms. Northey stated that she thought the News Journal had recently published a list as well.

Ms. Santilli said that in previous times the County Council would take money out of ECHO for long range projects like trails and water access. Ms. Hall affirmed that one million was taken each year to be used for trails throughout the county. She stated that they had taken money from the funds for the boardwalk project, but those funds had been placed back into the ECHO account.

Ms. Ritchey asked for the current balance of the ECHO fund.

Ms. Hall stated that there was, at that time, \$12,078,391 of uncommitted funds. She explained that while there may be more money in the account it was committed for current projects.

Mr. Fieser asked what would happen if the committee recommended more funds than were available during a grant cycle. Vice-Chair Pendergast said that the committee would make recommendations and then the County Council would make the final decision.

Mr. Fieser asked if the recommendation would go forward even if there were not enough ECHO funds. Mr. Pendergast stated that during his tenure they hadn't had a situation like the one Mr. Fieser was describing.

Ms. Hall stated that it had occurred in the beginning of the program, but that she had been with the program for three years and that they had never gone over the amount in the fund during that time.

Paul Kinney asked if there were any applicants who didn't receive a score over the required 80.

Ms. Storch said that it had happened and described a situation in which she had given an applicant a score of 30. Mr. Pendergast explained that staff worked closely with the applicants prior to submittal so that by the time the committee received the applications the biggest errors had been corrected.

Mr. Kinney said he felt using ECHO funds for parking lots was a real stretch.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Susie Peace, Southwest Volusia Historical Society, introduced her husband and stated that the Wright Building was a particular concern to them. Ms. Peace said that she was surprised to hear that the application was so poorly written especially if it had been screened by staff prior to submittal.

Ms. Hall described the process for critical grant submittals. She explained that the application had to be distributed to the ECHO Advisory Committee members prior to the meeting.

Ms. Peace asked if the applicant was aware that the county staff would help them write the application. Ms. Hall explained that staff did not help write the application, they provided technical assistance to the applicant by answering questions and offering clarification.

Ms. Hall explained that the applicant was unable to show feasibility or match. She stated that prior to coming before the committee for consideration the applicant must have the required match in the bank and that the Wright Building doesn't have documentation at this time. Ms. Hall said that the applicant had verbally explained that the church would be providing funding, but that there was no documentation.

Ms. Storch suggested that Mr. and Mrs. Peace help with fundraising for the Wright project. She said that she believed that the applicant should look into finding someone to help them write the grant, perhaps a student.

Ms. Brooks, Grants Manager, asked if the guidebook still stated that borrowed funds could not be used for match.

Michael Dyer, Assistant County Attorney, affirmed that loaned or borrowed funds cannot be used as the cash match.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, Vice-Chair Pendergast adjourned the meeting at 3:53 p.m.

NOTICE UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (TITLE II)

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the County of Volusia ("County") will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of County, should contact the office of the County's ADA Title II Coordinator, Mr. George Baker, at (386) 248-1760 as soon as possible but no later than 2 business days before the scheduled event or meeting. This paragraph shall likewise apply to written requests by a physically handicapped person needing a special accommodation to attend a public meeting in accordance with section 286.26, Florida Statutes.

A copy of the County's Notice under the Americans with Disabilities Act (Title II) can be obtained at <http://www.volusia.org/ada> or requested from the County's ADA Title II Coordinator at the telephone number listed above.