

The Board of Sumter County Commissioners (BOCC/Board) convened in a special called meeting and workshop on Tuesday, February 2, 2021, at The Villages Sumter County Service Center in Wildwood, Florida with the following members present to wit: Gary Search, District No. 1; Doug Gilpin, District No. 2; Craig Estep, Vice Chairman, District No. 3; and Oren Miller, 2nd Vice Chairman, District No. 5. Garry Breeden, Chairman, District No. 4, was absent. The following individuals were also present and acting in their respective official capacities: Bradley Arnold, County Administrator; Caroline Alrestimawi, Deputy Clerk; and Jennifer Rey of The Hogan Law Firm, Attorneys for the Board. Commissioner Estep called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The complete audio recording of this meeting is available on the Clerk's Website - www.sumterclerk.com.

1. Public Forum

There was input from the public.

Jennifer Rey, County Attorney, was present to address a communication, which came to the Board. Ms. Rey has not done any inquiries or investigation regarding the communication received but simply reviewed the email, in light of what the law requires. Ms. Rey offered thoughts on how such issues can be dealt with moving forward. When reading through the communication, it appears to be an individual taking an advocacy position on an issue that the BOCC has taken action on. It is foreseeable that the issue will to come back before the Board because in a previous workshop there was a discussion to bring information back to the Board as the implementation of the policy is monitored. If that was the whole content of the email, that would most likely be where the discussion ends. However in the email, there are references to thoughts or statements of another Commissioner being conveyed. Thus, there is a concern regarding rather or not there are potential ethics or Sunshine Law issues. The Sunshine Law requires that communications amongst the Board on items, which the Board will transact business or take action must happen at a publicly noticed meeting. Although, this particular communication was not between Commissioners but involved a third party, third parties cannot be used as a liaison, a conduit or an intermediary as an invasive device, whether intentional or not. Whereas, it is okay for friends, relatives, etc. to take advocacy roles, they should not take an advocacy role that relates to information that they have based on communications with other Commissioners outside of a meeting. Ms. Rey conferred with the Commission on Ethics and they offered three situations that they consider: Is the communication or conduct done at the direction of the elected official? Is the communication done without direction but with informed consent? Was the communication unprompted with no involvement of the elected official? Ms. Rey cannot say whether or not this situation rises to a level that would be deemed a Sunshine Law violation, as she was only asked to look at the particular communication but has not investigated it. At this point, Ms. Rey's bigger concern is that this is the second issue that has been raised so it is important to discuss these situations so they can be avoided in the future because communications like these can be a "slippery slope".

2. Feasibility Study (For Direction)

Representatives from the City of Webster and The City of Center Hill were present. The Board expressed an interest in determining its support to provide sewer service to Lake Panasoffkee, the City of Coleman, the City of Center Hill, and additional capacity for the City of Webster. In the latest review of providing service, we reviewed the Florida Government Utility Authority (FGUA) as a possible entity to acquire and operate systems that were interested in their pursuit of grant/loans to grow the service areas. The FGUA is a creation of the State of Florida to regionalize water and sewer service and step in when private or public water systems are failing. FGUA is interested in serving areas in Sumter County as they provide service in the surrounding counties, so scope and scale would fit their business model.

Lake Panasoffkee: Two separate studies were conducted in the past targeting the use of the City of Bushnell existing, but near capacity, wastewater treatment plant. The last study contemplated a series of sewage pumping stations and sewer force mains (pressurized lines) to pump sewage to the East of I-75 to the City of Bushnell plant. From this main “trunk” system, commercial activities could proceed while the residential collection system would move forward in later phases as state regulations tightened to eliminate septic systems with illicit discharge into the lake. No further action occurred as some businesses did not support the initiative, and the Lake Panasoffkee (resident-owned) water system had to approve the initiative due to the State Public Service Commission granting it territorial rights to not only water service but sewer service. The water system has no current plans to develop sewer service in this area.

City of Coleman: The City of Coleman has a water system but no sewer service. Sumter County recently supported (by paying for the design and facilitating an agreement between Wildwood and Coleman) an interlocal agreement between Wildwood and Coleman for interconnecting their water systems located near the intersection of US 301 and Warm Springs Avenue. The City of Wildwood paid for the construction of this interconnection. This service provides fire flow and customer service to the City of Coleman in the event of failure of their water plant. Likewise, the City of Coleman can service a limited portion of Wildwood should a portion of its system fail in this area. For years, the City of Wildwood has proposed the City of Coleman connect to its sewer system via an interlocal agreement, but the City of Coleman remains uninterested in considering it; therefore, Wildwood is making no more offers to do so. To the West and South of Coleman, a private sewer system is in place and developing, so another option for service to Coleman could be considered for dialogue. For these reasons, there is no plan to recommend Sumter County’s further pursuit to support sewer service for the City of Coleman.

City of Webster: The City of Webster currently has a sewer collection system but not a sewer treatment system. It relies on an agreement with the City of Bushnell for the treatment; however, the current development activity in discussion with the City of Webster exceeds the maximum capacity “guaranteed” by the City of Bushnell. The City of Bushnell is currently prioritizing its capacity needs for its jurisdiction rather than for others. Webster is currently discussing interest from existing private water and sewer

providers in their joint service area boundaries to joint in a future joint system. FGUA met with the City of Webster and supports their efforts for a larger consolidation of its public and the area private system; however, FGUA will not proceed with further interest until a water and sewer feasibility study is conducted. This is an area of support Sumter County can provide under the consolidated planning services provided to it, the City of Coleman, and the City of Center Hill.

City of Center Hill: Like Webster, the City of Center Hill is also gathering interest from private systems in their joint planning area to join the possible feasibility study. Center Hill has a water system but no sewer service. I am seeking direction to pursue the solicitation to negotiate a contract with a consulting engineering firm to conduct two feasibility studies that would meet FGUA's criteria for the same. The first study would focus on the joint planning areas of the City of Webster and the City of Center Hill. The second would focus on the Lake Panasoffkee area provided the Lake Panasoffkee Water System Board of Directors if they support the activity and are open to the idea of another entity operating their system as part of providing sewer service in the community.

Commissioner Miller has lived in a city that had their own septic tanks and water. When the residents were polled regarding if they wanted city sewage and water, everyone wanted it. However, once residents found out the hook up cost for city sewage and water, there were not as many residents that wanted it. Commissioner Search spoke regarding city sewage and water being better for the environment. The Commissioners provided consensus to do the feasibility study.

2-2-21-2

3. Ordinance Amending Chapter 2 Administration (For Direction)

This item was raised at a workshop by Commissioner Estep. Mr. Arnold had the County Attorney go through the Ordinance and ensure that the delegated responsibilities were listed and consistent. The chain of command is as follows: Chairman, Vice Chairman, 2nd Vice Chairman, and County Administrator. The proposed Ordinance has been edited by the County Attorney to clear up any inconsistencies. Commissioner Search questioned that if given today's climate, should the Ordinance use Chairman, Chairperson, or Chair. Mr. Arnold noted that addressing the usage of "Chairman" would be a much larger code modification throughout. The Commissioners provided consensus to putting the proposed ordinance on the agenda to set a public hearing.

2-2-21-3

4. Implementation Of Public Information Office (PIO) (For Direction)

This is another item that Commissioner Estep brought forth. Within the last decade, there has been a shift in the way people receive their news. Now, many obtain their news and weather updates in real-time through social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and various other platforms. People now have the ability to learn about events

as they are unfolding. As social media and emergencies can create a breeding ground for misinformation and disinformation, it is essential to utilize social media listening to identify inaccuracies and respond accordingly to set the record straight with the residents. Depending on the type of event, landlines, or other traditional forms of communication may be unavailable, making social media communications essential for communicating in real-time with impacted citizens. To become a trusted source of official and accurate information during emergencies, the County has to establish itself beforehand as a trusted and valuable source. This involves regular posting of news/announcements, insight into operations, and timely responses to public inquiries. The Public Information Office at whatever tier of investment will contribute to public understanding of government policies and raise awareness of the roles/purview of County Officials (including constitutional officers), availability of services, noteworthy trends, and risks to public health and safety. The Public Information Office's responsibilities will include: monitoring media coverage of public affairs; briefing and advising administration; managing media relations; providing information directly to the public; sharing information across the administration; formulating communication strategies and campaigns; researching and assessing public feedback. The Public Information Office (PIO) directs the implementation of an integrated communications strategy for the County, incorporating media broadcasts, written materials, and social media trends and applications. Their work would include conceptualizing, developing, and implementing communications, media and advertising campaigns, marketing programs, and various special projects that provide clear and timely information relative to the County's operations, departments, and functions. The PIO's focus will be on the conveyance of public information, and the successful representation of the County's interests via social media and traditional news outlets. As the investment expands, the ability to become more reactive with large-scale social media influx expands (like with hurricanes and the recent vaccination inquiries) and more proactive with building relations with the community and media. In the attached survey of surrounding counties, the Public Information Offices of the surrounding counties reside in different locations within the organizational structure, but it typically resides close to the County Administrator. Only counties that responded to our survey have been included. The integration with Administrative Services will vary—the minimum tier will have none, and the maximum tier will have full integration. The additions of duties that have been added in that specific tier will be listed. Commissioner Gilpin believes it is a good idea but is concerned that there may be a lack of funding. Commissioner Miller agreed with Commissioner Gilpin and thinks the Board should look at it during budget time. Commissioner Estep is of same mindset, which in his mind wipes out Tier 3. Commissioner Search is in agreeance with the other Commissioners. The Commissioners gave consensus to look into Tier 1 and Tier 2 so they can determine at budget time if there is a feasible option.

2-2-21-4

5. Memorandum Of Understanding With CentralSquare (Staff Recommends Approval).

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is to address a security vulnerability with CentralSquare’s software. CentralSquare successfully mitigated the Vulnerability through the cloud-based Imperva Web Application Firewall (“WAF”). The purpose of this MOU is to establish a clear understanding of the conditions under which CentralSquare will provide the Customer with protection against the Vulnerability by providing the Imperva WAF solution that will block unwanted traffic from the eTRAKiT cite and disable malicious file uploads. All affected customers are required to avail themselves of the WAF solution.

2-2-21-5

Commissioner Miller moved, with a second by Commissioner Search, to approve the Memorandum Of Understanding With CentralSquare. The motion carried 4 - 0.

6. State Of Emergency Declaration Extension Sumter County Board Of County Commissioners (Staff Recommends Approval).

Mr. Arnold has been sharing daily reports with the Commissioners and the Cities. GMR is returning Thursday and picking up where the Health Department left off, using the GMR list for individuals set up for their first dose appointments. It is the hope that GMR will have a continuous supply of vaccinations coming from the State so they can make it through second dose activities. Since GMR is coming in, the Health Department is adding some of their doses to assist GMR in processing more vaccinations. Therefore, the Health Department cancelled their event in Wildwood on Thursday. President Biden has waived the local match criteria for FEMA reimbursement purposes, which is helpful. President Biden is also moving towards looking at additional local funding support. Since the transit operation receives federal funds through FDOT, there will be a mask mandate for all riders and contracted drivers. Signage will be on the buses and masks are available on the buses for riders who do not have a mask.

2-2-21-6

Commissioner Search moved, with a second by Commissioner Miller, to approve the Local State Of Emergency Declaration Extension. The motion carried 4 - 0.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.