



Council Minutes

March 12, 2007
10:00 a.m.

REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Chair, Commissioner Scott Black, City of Dade City
Vice Chair, Commissioner Deborah Kynes, City of Dunedin
Secretary/Treasurer, Reverend James T. Golden, City of Bradenton
Past Chair, Mr. Robert Kersteen, Gubernatorial Appointee, Pinellas County
Commissioner Gigi Arntzen, City of Largo
Mayor Larry Bustle, City of Palmetto
Council Member Bob Consalvo, City of New Port Richey
Vice Mayor Larry Crowley, City of South Pasadena
Commissioner Bill Dodson, City of Plant City
Mr. Julian Garcia, Jr., Gubernatorial Appointee, Hillsborough County
Ms. Angeleah Kinsler, Hillsborough County Gubernatorial Appointee
Commissioner Jack Mariano, Pasco County
Councilor Bob Matthews, City of Seminole
Vice Mayor Janice Miller, City of Oldsmar
Mr. Andy Núñez, Gubernatorial Appointee, Pinellas County
Mr. Frank Parker, Gubernatorial Appointee, Pasco County
Vice Mayor Carlen Petersen, City of Clearwater
Mr. Russell Johnson, Gubernatorial Appointee, Hillsborough County
Commissioner Robin Saenger, City of Tarpon Springs
Ms. Kim Vance, Gubernatorial Appointee, Hillsborough County
Commissioner Jane von Hahmann, Manatee County
Mr. Philip Waller, Gubernatorial Appointee, Hillsborough County
Councilman Earnest Williams, City of St. Petersburg
Mr. Bob Clifford., Ex-officio, Florida Department of Transportation
Mr. Mike Farley, Alt., Ex-officio, Department of Environmental Protection
Mr. Todd Pressman, Ex-officio, SWFWMD

REPRESENTATIVES ABSENT

Ms. Michele Cavallo, Gubernatorial Appointee, Pinellas County
Commissioner Phil Collins, City of Treasure Island
Commissioner Ronnie Duncan, Pinellas County
Commissioner Rose Ferlita, Hillsborough County
Mayor Ward Friszolowski, City of St. Pete Beach
Dr. Lois Gerber, Gubernatorial Appointee, Manatee County
Council Member Mark Knapp, City of Temple Terrace
Commissioner James McCormick, City of Safety Harbor
Vice Mayor John Phillips, City of Gulfport
Vice Mayor Ed Taylor, City of Pinellas Park
Ms. Barbara Sheen Todd, Gubernatorial Appointee, Pinellas County
Mr. Charles Waller, Gubernatorial Appointee, Pasco County
Ms. Michelle Miller, Ex-officio, Enterprise Florida

OTHERS PRESENT

Lucy Ayer, Hillsborough County MPO
Shawn College, Exec. Planner, Hillsborough Planning Commission
John Healey, Planner, Hillsborough County
Dave Hocksprung, Cherry, Bekaert and Holland
Joanne McClellan, SWFWMD
Mike Monahan, Upper Tampa Bay Chamber
Trisha Neasman, Planner, SWFWMD

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Manny Pumariega, Executive Director
Mr. Martin Shelby, Legal Counsel
Mr. Avera Wynne, Planning Director
Ms. Suzanne Cooper, Principal Planner
Mr. John Jacobsen, Accounting Manager
Ms. Betti Johnson, Principal Planner
Mr. Bill Lofgren, Principal Planner
Mr. John Meyer, Principal Planner
Mr. Greg Miller, Senior Planner
Mr. Patrick O'Neil, Senior Planner
Mr. Brady Smith, Senior Planner
Mr. Mike Spina, Senior Planner
Ms. Jessica White, Senior Planner
Ms. Kim Williams, Communications/Graphics Coordinator
Ms. Sue Young, Recording Secretary

Call to Order - Chairman Black

The regular meeting of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council was called to order by Chairman Black on March 12, 2007 at 10:07 a.m.

The Invocation was given by Ms. Kim Vance, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call - Recording Secretary

A quorum was present. There were no voting conflicts.

Announcements:

Chairman Black made the following announcements:

Ms. Pat Whitesel, past chair of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and former Palmetto Mayor, lost her husband last week. The services are later this morning and Ms. Wren Krahl will be representing the Council.

A reminder was provided to Council members to RSVP to Sue Young for the 15th Annual Future of the Region Awards Luncheon to be held March 30th at the Quorum in Tampa.

Taken out of order:

9. **Other Council Reports**

Celebrating Tampa Bay: City of Bradenton - Reverend Golden

Reverend Golden introduced Dr. Sandy Elton, the Hernando DeSoto Society president for the year 2006-2007. He is a retired family practice physician of 40 years and was chosen to lead the Hernando DeSoto Society. This is a society made up of not just people from the City of Bradenton, but from throughout Manatee County and I want to share this moment today with Mayor Bustle from Palmetto and Commissioner von Hahmann. This is our Manatee County presentation for our spotlight on Tampa Bay.

Dr. Elton introduced his contingent: the reigning Hernando deSoto - Frank Eldridge, Queen Ashley Williams and others. A short video was presented. Dr. Elton noted that Hernando deSoto, one of the last of the great Spanish conquistadors, landed in Florida on May 31, 1539 in search of gold and silver. He explored most of the present southeastern United States, died and was buried in the Mississippi River in 1542. He never found gold; he never found silver. Many of the present day roads and interstates in the southeastern United States are along the same routes as Hernando deSoto's travels, and many of the cities and rivers have names given them by Hernando deSoto. The wild pigs in Florida are descendants of those brought here by Hernando deSoto. In 1936 it was determined that Shaw's Point in Bradenton was the actual landing place and since then has become a national park. In 1939, the 400th anniversary, the Hernando DeSoto Historical Society was formed and began having what was called the DeSoto celebration every year in the spring. This has been uninterrupted except for five years during World War II. Today we are still putting on the celebration each year.

There is a yearly student exchange with the sister city in Spain and they send people to our festival and we send people to their festival. In 1975 the Society received the highest award that can be given by the Spanish government to an out of country organization. This award sits proudly in our own museum which is part of the southwest Florida museum. In 1988 the DeSoto Trail was formed with plaques at different locations throughout the southeast of Hernando's travels. This is now being renovated in Florida through the National Park Service and DOT.

The Historical Foundation placed the first kiosk, which cost \$5,000, at Port Manatee and it is now open to the public. The Society is comprised of a maximum of 250 members; at present we have 225 and 19 applicants. It is a strictly voluntary organization; the only paid employee is the executive director and the others are recruited. The Hernando DeSoto Historical Foundation is the main organization. It is run by a board of directors, elected by the Society. It is the duty of the president to run the day to day operations of the Society and to oversee all events. The second of our groups is the Hernando DeSoto Crew, which are 33 people elected annually by the Society. From that group one person is selected to portray Hernando deSoto. The last group is the Hernando DeSoto Historical Foundation, which is a true foundation with donations and grants. Through this we work very hard to give back to the community with such things as Toys for Tots, Just for Girls, Lighthouse for the Blind. Last year between the Foundation, the Society, and the Crew, we donated back to Manatee County \$57,000.

Chairman Black thanked the DeSoto Heritage Festival representatives, the conquistadors and the ladies and wished them a successful festival.

Secretary/Treasurer Golden emphasized that this is not just a local home-grown, home-owned

operation. There is a network of these societies and festivals throughout the country. People come down from Minnesota to participate and we go to those places in return. This is a reciprocal type arrangement. I am particularly appreciative of Dr. Elton and all of these good people from Bradenton who have come to make this a very special day. Thank you.

Chairman Black noted there are other festivals coming up next month. Under Agenda Item #7. Council Comments, time will be provided for Council members to mention upcoming events in their community. Today we have a representative from the City of Oldsmar, Mike Monahan to tell Council about "Oldsmar Days."

Mr. Monahan stated he is the Vice President for Business Assistance with the Upper Tampa Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce in Oldsmar which is partly in Hillsborough County and partly in Pinellas County, and with a little bit of interaction with Pasco County as well. A true regional chamber. We are getting ready to hold our annual Oldsmar Days events, which lasts the entire week. Our chamber produces a monthly newspaper which describes all our events. We start out the week on the 16th with a cocktail party at Tampa Bay Downs, which is technically in Hillsborough County. A Hall of Fame Jockey will be our guest speaker at the cocktail party and proceeds from this event benefit the Chamber's Historical and Educational Foundation. On the 17th the biggest horse race in the entire western part of Florida takes place at the Tampa Bay Derby. The Tampa Bay Derby is probably not quite as famous as the Kentucky Derby, but I will tell you that three horses that have raced in the Tampa Bay Derby have gone on to race in the Kentucky Derby, so we like to look at that as a stepping stone for three year old horses going on to bigger and better things.

We then have events throughout the rest of the week such as: Taste of the Bay, a golf tournament, a historic walk and tour of downtown Oldsmar, and a parade. The great grandson of the founder of the Oldsmobile, as well as the founder of Oldsmar, will be in the parade. We end up the week with the 3-day Oldsmar Days Event, so that will be a great opportunity for different vendors to get together. There is a carnival, lots of music and lots of food.

Chairman Black said the Council would hear from Council Member Bob Consalvo under Council Comments as he has a special event he would like to share.

1. **Approval of Minutes** - Secretary/Treasurer Golden
The minutes from the February 12, 2007 meeting were approved. (Parker/Miller)
2. **Budget Committee** -Secretary/Treasurer Golden
 - A. The Financial Report for the period ending 1/31/07 was approved. (Miller/Parker)
 - B. FY 2006 Annual Audit
Mr. Dave Hocksprung, representing Cherry Bekaert & Holland presented the FY 2006 Annual Audit Draft which was prepared by Allison McFarland, Senior Auditor with the firm. He thanked staff for their cooperation and complimented them for the good sets of records.

Mr. Hocksprung provided an overview of the required communications and findings. Items reviewed under the required communications included significant accounting policies; management judgements and accounting estimates; significant audit adjustments; disagreements with management; difficulties encountered performing the audit. Action required under each item was stated as "none."

No new significant accounting policies were adopted and the application of existing policies was not changed. It was noted that no transactions entered into the Council during the year were significant and unusual or any significant transactions for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus.

The assets of the Council exceeded its liabilities at the close of the fiscal year by \$1,010,525 (net assets). The government's total net assets increased by \$336,052 due to several fee for service projects and carry-over membership dues. At the end of the current fiscal year, unreserved fund balance for the General Fund was \$951,112, or 27.8 percent of total general fund expenditures for the fiscal year. The unreserved fund balance consists of \$452,892 that is designated and \$498,220 that is un-designated. The Council's total long term liabilities decreased by \$96,710 compared to the prior fiscal year. The key factor in this decrease is the partial pay-down of a note payable for \$2.8 million for the Capital Project Gateway Centre.

The audit disclosed no audit findings relative to the major state projects that the auditor is required to report under Rule 10.550. The state projects tested as major projects were the Department of Community Affairs: Regional Planning Councils, and Growth Management Implementation.

Mr. Hocksprung provided thanks to Mr. Pumariega, John Jacobsen, and his staff and stated they were very cooperative and very helpful.

The FY 2006 Annual Audit was approved (Miller/Parker)

Mr. Pumariega personally thanked John Jacobsen and his staff for doing a great job. They also do the accounting and the compliance work for the Tampa Bay Estuary Program so they have double duty and also do a great job for that program. Mr. Pumariega also thanked the Planning Staff for bringing programs that fit our mission generating revenues to the Council.

3. **Consent Agenda - Chairman Black**
The Consent Agenda was approved (Kersteen/Miller)
4. **Item(s) Removed from Consent Agenda and Addendum Item(s) - None.**
5. **Review Item(s) or Any Other Item(s) for Discussion - None**
6. **Mr. Raymond A. Chiamonte, AICP, Assistant Executive Director, Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission and Ms. Lucie Ayer, Executive Director, Hillsborough County MPO**

Mr. Chiamonte requested Council members open their minds to rail transit and multi-modal transit. He said he is attracted to rail because of unique experiences. He was raised in Riverview until he was 10 years old at which time he moved to Chicago. It was a life changing experience, and because of the transit system in Chicago he became a much more independent teenager than if he had stayed in Riverview. He was also a research assistant at the University of South Florida to Dr. Robert Kaplan, who was a visionary type of professor. Dr. Kaplan was convinced in 1980 that we should be working on rail transit in the area. He assigned me to work on this, using the San Diego model and using existing rail lines as the basis. As a result he became convinced this is a good idea and believes the time is right for this.

The population growth for the United States is the fastest growing nation in the world. A lot of countries in Europe are not growing anymore. In 1915 the U.S. reached its first 100 million, and in 2006 we reached

300 million. It is projected that in 2037 the population for the U.S. will reach 400 million. We have changing demographics such as more empty-nesters, the elderly, single-person households and housing preferences are shifting.

Why should rail transit be a part of this? A lot has happened in the last decade and one of the arguments against rail transit for the Tampa Bay area 10 years ago was, if Phoenix doesn't have it, if Houston doesn't have it, and other sunbelt cities don't have it. Why should we? That type of thinking has changed. We now have an entirely different situation with the cost of oil, growth trends, the employment hubs of Hillsborough and Tampa, and limitations of road-only approach.

It's not just about the rails, it is also about creating a land use pattern that supports transit, both bus and rail, creating walkable communities such as West-Park Village in Tampa. This was built along rail lines that run along Linebaugh Avenue and go into Pinellas County. The community was designed to take advantage of that, and there is space available for a train station at some point in the future.

Nationwide, Tampa Bay ranks 19th in population and is the 13th largest in the television market. Tampa and Detroit are the only two areas in the top 25 without rail. Hillsborough County's population is 1,132,152 and public transportation transit service miles are 886, rail service miles are 3.2. In comparison, Atlanta's population is 470,688 and their transit service miles are 2,534 and rail service miles are 26.8. Mr. Chiaramonte showed charts of population density FY 2025 and of employment: persons per acre FY 2025. Goals of Rail Transit are to provide a cost effective transportation strategy to keep Tampa Bay competitive with other communities; to provide for mobility needs within and through the area at peak travel times; and to enhance quality of life through mixed-use and transit development oriented patterns. The capacity of our transportation system is limiting our ability to grow.

Investment in rail transit can address all of these issues by increasing the transportation system capacity and mobility options; provides opportunities for growth; housing and transportation affordability; and access to jobs and services.

The Resolution which was adopted, in summary, states: The Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission encourages all appropriate government agencies in Hillsborough County, including its municipalities, to pursue a comprehensive and coordinated vision of alternative forms of transportation that includes roads, light rail, and bus rapid transit (BRT). And to consider the interaction of land use and transportation, and the role rail transit can play in supporting an array of community lifestyle choices, as decisions are made during the updates of the Comprehensive Plans and the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Ms. Lucie Ayer, Executive Director, Hillsborough County MPO, provided a report on the MPO Transit Study. MPO Board Action of May 2006 directed staff to conduct a multi-modal mass transit study as part of the Long Range Transportation Plan update, looking at county and city development patterns and a variety of transit technologies, based on the MPO Citizens Advisory Committee recommendation that a long-term vision for public transit be re-energized. We recognize that the Pinellas MPO is in the process of putting their mobility initiative together and we will be coordinating with them.

Study Goals include: develop a concept plan for a countywide transit system; look at a variety of technologies; emphasize regional and sub-regional corridors; and, develop land use/transit strategies.

Study Activities include: designing a process for decision-making; form stakeholder teams; create a website and newsletters; and develop transit scenarios. Also develop a preferred scenario to make technology choices; describe location and quality of service; develop preliminary cost estimates; identify the benefits,

challenges, and opportunities; and provide an opportunity for comment and consensus.

Presentations are available on the TBRPC website:
www.tbrpc.org/councilagendas/Council_Mtg_Presentations/2007

Questions & Comments:

Chairman Black asked if Mr. Chiaramonte would like a letter of support or a resolution from the Council and he said he would appreciate that. Chairman Black said it will be brought before the April meeting for consideration.

Council Member: I grew up in Europe, did graduate work in Chicago, and my family lives in Minneapolis so I appreciate multiple transit systems. In this community it is hard to get people out of their car and into rail. How did cities like Phoenix and Houston convince their population they needed to support this type of transportation?

Mr. Chiaramonte: I think the key is making sure the system gets people to their destination at a close or better time frame than the automobile. The problem with our bus system is that it takes longer than driving because it travels on the same roads and it weaves more than I would in my car. When you start getting the times closer together and public transportation starts beating the car to the destination, then you don't have to sell people.

Council Member: Have you also done a study of bus usage in Tampa versus these other cities and what the overall effect of their bus system is? Do they have greater usage than Tampa? I see a lot of empty Hartline buses.

Mr. Chiaramonte: With our system some of the trips are what is called a dead trip - where it is returning from a direction. I have noticed that there are less buses that don't get a lot of people on them. I took a bus from downtown to Westshore the other day and it was full of people. I think a lot of those cities do have more bus use because they have systems that serve.

Council Member: I noticed on the MPO that you are doing the study and estimated the cost, but hasn't a big hurdle with implementing the rail been the large cost? Are you looking at ways to fund it, what are some of the ideas that you are thinking of, and what have some of the other communities done for funding?

Ms. Ayer: I will tell you that first of all we are going to nail down some of the costs that you alluded to. It is a political decision. No matter what, this is going to take a long time.

Council Member: It's nice to plan things, and your presentation was very well done, but how much input are we taking to and receiving from the public? How many meetings are we having to talk about what the public sees and wants from their experiences? Are we taking that information so that we are making a good decision of how we are going to spend money?

Ms. Ayer: We started this process in November 2006 and had 8 meetings throughout Hillsborough County. The Values came from those meetings. We also had a meeting in February

and there is another on March 13th. We have 3 teams: the leadership team, a technical committee, and an assistance team that went through the scenario gaming. Now we are taking this to the citizens. We have advertised this in the paper and are hoping to get a good turn out. We are very proud that the Hillsborough County MPO is very big on public participation. The last time we adopted a long range plan we had 80 meetings and thousands of information by utilizing the web site.

Mr. Chiaramonte: My experience with people's attitudes is a lot different this time than from when we did this 10 years ago. There are a lot of people who have moved here in the last decade that come from cities that have transit and they are actually surprised that a city this big doesn't. It seems the public gets it, especially the people from companies like Bank of America or Citicorp. They came from cities that had transit.

Council Member: Speaking of Bank of America and corporations, has the MPO spoken with them in terms of partnership?

Ms. Ayer: Not yet. I'm not so sure we have the goal of actively negotiating with the private sector.

Mr. Chiaramonte: In the 1990s when rail discussions began the Partnership wasn't involved. A lot of these newer companies that have come in during the last decade are saying their employees are having problems getting to work and have been complaining. It is becoming an issue and they jump-started the Partnership on the regional transportation issue. That is where a lot of the push has come from. When the business community gets involved then things start to happen.

Council Member: When you see empty buses it can also mean that you aren't putting the bus at peak service. You can have stuffed buses that people have to stand up in, and then you get to another time period and you won't see that. It is interwoven with frequency of service. Putting more buses on the road will help eventually. Could you replicate what Portland, Denver/Dallas have done? I have been sorry I missed that. I don't know if it was the RTL that met, or regional transit, but I would have loved to have seen that presentation.

Ms. Ayer: We have a CD that contains all of the presentations, both visual and audio. I will work with Mr. Pumariega to make sure you receive that. I sent that to all of the public agencies on the Hillsborough County side.

Council Member: Maybe we could present the video and then you could speak at our next Regional Transit Roundtable?

Ms. Ayer stated she would be happy to present.

Chairman Black thanked Ms. Ayer and Mr. Chiaramonte for their presentations and said he thought someone should be sent to Atlanta to see their transit systems and how they work.

Council Member: Have you coordinated as far as - your market area is the Tampa Bay area? Have you gone around to other areas to show them what you are trying to do?

Ms. Ayer: Mr. Chiaramonte and I make this presentation almost once a day, so yes, we do that. In terms of the regional area, that is why we are utilizing TBRPC. We will make the presentation to anyone.

Council Member: As far as getting people to actually ride it, to try to find out what is going to make them jump on?

Ms. Ayer: We will do that as well. The meeting on the 13th is a starting point and then throughout the next few months. We have asked Homeowner Associations to see if we can get on their agenda.

Mr. Chiaramonte: You are talking about more of a regional effort outside Hillsborough County. After each presentation we make changes. I want to change the Hillsborough County slides and get the other counties in and see what type of percentages we come up with and then tie every body in. One thing we noticed is our existing needs are really pretty regional. They go into the other counties. It gets hard because of the way government works. Our assignment is Hillsborough County, but we need the other counties to be involved.

Council Member: Just a quick question - what is the financial . . .

Mr. Chiaramonte: I say this strongly: there is no road that I'm aware of that supports itself. Dale Mabry does not support itself. You cannot expect, transit has to be looked at as a public service for the specific purpose of shaping growth. Even the New York system which is the closest to making money, does not make money. You have to get that out of your mind. It provides the ability of people getting to work and services just like your roads are. They are totally tax supported. You want a system that gets as much back as possible but you are not going to make a profit.

Ms. Ayers: The March 13th workshop is at 1pm and then it will be repeated at 6pm at the Florida State Fairgrounds. Parking is free.

9. **Council Members' Comments** - Chairman Black

Council Member Consalvo, City of New Port Richey, distributed the entertainment brochure for the Chasco Fiesta, which is an 11 day event (March 22 - April 1, 2007). Chasco Fiesta started in 1942 and honors the romantic legend intertwining the lives of a Spanish boy and girl, a priest, and the Calusa Indian tribe who captured them after defeating a Spanish expedition. According to the story, the boy and girl were later wed as Queen Chasco and her consort Pithla. Today, Florida's Native American heritage is revered, as evidenced by this annual event honoring all Native American tribes.

Commissioner Mariano said this is an awesome celebration. On Sunday, March 25th, if you have any young talent such as grandkids they hold a Chasco Idol and it gives the young people a chance to go on stage and compete just like American Idol. It is great community involvement.

Council Member Consalvo stated Chasco Fiesta benefits local non-profit organizations including Lighthouse for the Blind, Sertoma Speech & Hearing, Gulf High School, and many, many more.

Most events will be held at Sims Park. Information: 1-877-4CHASCO, or www.chascofiesta.com

Chairman Black thanked Council Member Consalvo and Commissioner Mariano.

Commissioner Kynes said the Highland Games is an international event which is being held on March 31st, 9am to 4pm and is a fascinating look at the Celtic culture. The Highland Games were implemented in 1965 to raise funds to support the three Scottish bands of Dunedin: The City of Dunedin Pipe Band, The Dunedin High School Scottish Highlanders Band, and The Dunedin Highland Middle School Band

and to improve, develop and maintain the standards and quality of Dunedin's Highland games and associated activities. The Games and Festival also serve to entertain the public while informing them of the Scottish culture. These funds will ensure the continuation of the games into the future for the pleasure of the attendees and the participants.

Council Member Matthews asked if email addresses, web site addresses, and any other contact information could be provided on the special events.

Councilman Williams reminded Council members that the International Grand Prix is coming up on March 31-April 1 and invited everyone to attend. He further stated the City of St. Petersburg has so many events that it is hard to talk about them.

Chairman Black reminded the Council that we will be *Celebrating Tampa Bay* all year and if your city would like to present a brief program at a future meeting, please contact Wren Krahl at ext. 22 or wren@tbrpc.org. If your city has a special event or best practices such as a project that is going very well in re-development or housing please let her know so you can showcase that.

8. **Program Reports**

A. **Agency on Bay Management (ABM) - Chair, Mr. Robert Kersteen**

The March 8th Full Agency meeting was chaired by Mayor Ward Friszolowski, as Vice Chair. There was excellent attendance at the meeting. On the agenda were:

Water Supply Planning in Manatee County - John Zimmerman, Water Division Manager, described the state of the water supply, how population projections are made, and plans for providing the 70.5 million more gallons of potable water that will be needed by 2025 in Manatee County. The expectation is that the additional supply will come primarily from surface water sources, that is - the Little Manatee River, the Manatee River, Flatford Swamp and desalination.

Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service in Tampa Bay - Steve Fidler, the Director of Operations for Tampa Port Authority, and Lieutenant Dwayne Meeker, US Coast Guard, presented this recently implemented service for vessel traffic in Tampa Bay, one of only three in the US. This system developed over the past 15 or so years, after the Blackthorn and Skyway disasters and the 1993 triple vessel collision. Physically located at the Tampa Port Authority, the service is a joint command of these entities and adds immeasurably to the safety and security of vessels and the ports around Tampa Bay. It starts with transponders - which gives identification information on almost every vessel entering Tampa Bay. The system uses radar to track every vessel and continuously update location, speed, and direction. Coupled with advance notice procedures required by the Captain of the Port, no one is sneaking into our ports. The service has four levels of effort - monitoring, information, recommendation and directing action, as needed to keep ships out of each others' way and moving smoothly. It has already increased the efficiency of vessel movement. This is a terrific tool that will help protect the environment as well as the ports, the community, and ships.

Port Sutton EnviroFuels project was also on the agenda. Dr. Bradley Krohn and Engineer Paul Hauck presented the plan to construct and operate an ethanol production plant near the Tampa Electric Bayside Power generation station in upper Hillsborough Bay. There are now 105 plants

in the US producing about 5 billion gallons per year, and over 40 plants under construction. The technology has advanced dramatically to improve efficiency and reduce emissions and odor. An estimated 44 million gallons would be produced annually from 17 million bushels of corn. Florida crops could also be used, and citrus growers are anxious to find suitable crops that could be grown in place of citrus. It is estimated that 20 such plants will be needed in Florida alone to provide the 10 percent ethanol blend level sought by the federal government by 2010. Pending Florida Senate Bill 2274 mandates the same level by 2012.

The next full Agency meeting will be Thursday, May 10th. All were invited to attend.

Chairman Black called attention to Resolution #2007-1 titled Sufficient Funding For The National Wildlife Refuge System and the Agency on Bay Management is asking that the full Council approve this resolution. Motion to approve (Mariano/P. Waller)

Commissioner Mariano asked about the usage of sugar cane for ethanol and Ms. Cooper stated it was possible, although corn has a higher level of sugar. Corn will always be the primary crop because of the high sugar content and then it can be supplemented or substituted with other grains. Sugar cane has to grow in mucky situations and we are trying to reduce sugar cane because of its impact on the Everglades. It also wouldn't grow where citrus grows. We need a crop that will grow in sandy dry soil.

Councilman Williams said it can also be made from soy beans or anything that has carbohydrates. That's really what we are talking about. Switch grass and wood chips can also be used. There are a number of products and we have a lot of forest in Florida.

B. Clearinghouse Review Committee (CRC) - Chair, Commissioner Deborah Kynes

No Report. There will be a meeting on Monday, March 26, 2007, at 9:30 a.m.

C. Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

No Report

D. Emergency Management

In September 2005, Governor Jeb Bush issued Executive Order #05178 that created the Coastal High Hazard Study Committee. The committee was charged with studying and formulating recommendations for managing growth in coastal areas, especially the coastal high hazard area. The committee conducted meetings around the state and served as a forum for identifying and making recommendations. They were charged to recommend land use policies to safe guard the public from natural hazards, to protect property rights, preserve the coastal eco-systems, and to enhance the economic development tourist opportunities. The legislature looked at their recommendation and adopted HB1359. On one hand they significantly reduced the definition of coastal high hazard area - on the other hand, all local governments now must adopt a level of service for evacuation clearance times for category 5 hurricane scenarios. The Tampa Bay

region has the highest clearance times in the country when it comes to a category 5. The bill does allow you to “pay and go” if you do impact in the coastal high hazard area, or impact shelters, or clearance times, but is that going to help local governments maintain clearance times? The RPAC has developed a working group that has been working on a white paper to provide to the Council and then to the Department of Community Affairs, both to the Division of Community Planning and to the Division of Emergency Management, that will recommend to local governments what we feel they can do to meet those objectives, as well as provide some flexibility and meet whatever DCA is going to determine to be their objectives or what they feel is the intent of the legislation. It is quite a challenge. We are also working on a couple of draft ordinances using what is existing and bringing it up to what we feel the legislature had in mind. That is our goal. If you have any suggestions or would like to work with this group, please contact Betti Johnson, ext. 39.

Chairman Black: Do you anticipate the group coming up with some suggestions about changing the bill or the statutes?

Ms. Johnson: We have discussed that but I don’t see that happening. We will be meeting again on the 13th at the RPAC meeting and we should have some first drafts.

Councilman Williams: We have the longest evacuation outside New Orleans, in our area of Pinellas County. How are we going to address that issue, especially with the bridges. We can’t get people out because they have to evacuate within 22 hours. What kind of suggestions are you willing to propose? We don’t have mass transit where we can jump on a train and be sent somewhere - and the other part of that is where would one be sent? How do you deal with those kinds of issues?

Ms. Johnson: We have to be honest with our citizens and tell them there is not enough time for everyone to evacuate and go to Atlanta. Our message this year is: Go tens of miles, not hundreds of miles - and make friends with people on high ground. The problem is that many people, even on high ground who don’t live in manufactured housing, don’t feel safe because we haven’t found the mitigation needed. Why haven’t we gotten window protection? Basically if you are trying to balance all your other bills it is hard to come up with what can be up to \$15,000 for windows.

Councilman Williams: What we could ask for is more dollars for more shelters because we can’t do evacuations. There are just too many people, and we don’t have enough shelters. We need to ask the legislature to try to provide dollars so that we can add more shelters within our county.

E. Legislative Committee - Commissioner Jane von Hahmann, Chair

Commissioner Kynes provided the Legislative Committee report due to the absence of Commissioner von Hahmann.

We recently attended an excellent Florida Regional Councils Association Policy Board meeting

in Tallahassee and came back with some real insight of this legislative session.

The proposed Regional Transportation Authority Bills were reviewed and discussed by the Legislative Committee. The letter in your packet was sent to the Bay Area Legislative Delegation with some recommendations and concerns. One of the key recommendations is that the Policy Board should include the Chair or designee of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. It was agreed upon in Tallahassee last week that Galvano's HB 251 will take the lead. I am encouraging everyone to make contact with Galvano's office. We received a letter from Senator Fasano stating that he will keep our ideas in mind as they move forward with this legislation.

Also, in your packets you will find the FRCA Legislative Summary.

Representative Mike Davis' Affordable Housing Bill, HB 1375, was filed last week. Section 15 of the Bill contains language regarding Employer Assisted Housing, Regional Agencies providing services and encouraging the private market to provide affordable rental and home ownership housing, but has no specific language regarding the Council's Employer Assisted Housing Proposal.

DCA Secretary, Tom Pelham, spoke at the FRCA Policy Board meeting and made the following comments:

- He is hopeful to fix some of the deficiencies with SB 360.
- The Local Plan Amendment Review Process is missing the Big Picture and a more effective regional context revision. The issue of delegation of reviews to RPC's deserves discussion with all of the stakeholders. They are also looking at having a DCA planner in each of the regions.
- The Secretary is anxious to begin discussion and improve upon growth management in Florida. Especially regarding a regional vision, a clean state vision and an urban policy. He is hopeful that we can make some progress in regional planning and can develop a new approach to regions with a regional plan that has a greater influence on what takes place. The estimating conference is taking place in Tallahassee today. They are anticipating \$500 to 800 million less in revenues than was originally projected.
- On the tax issue, for those of you in local government, Ron Book's best advice to local government was a taxation bill, it's going to happen, and the best strategy for local governments is to actually compute the impact of the bill. There are several floating out there. One is the 2001 rollback, another is from House Speaker Marco Rubio who is saying we should do away with any homestead and have no taxation, and then go to a 2.5 sales tax. If you will look at these different variations that are coming up before anything is decided, and of course we are still probably two weeks away from the Senate laying in on what they are going to come up with for their tax bill. So, your best strategy is to actually compute the impacts of these various bills through your finance departments and present it as factual loss of revenue impact. Mr. Book thinks that is the best strategy to show how these various bills could affect local government.
- Penny for Pinellas is tomorrow so everyone needs to get out and vote.

Are there any comments regarding the RTA letter, the FRCA Summary or the comments made by Secretary Pelham?

- Reverend Golden: There is a particular caveat with respect to all of these recommendations relative to rollbacks. If you have a CRA (community re-development area) that has come in to being with a baseline of 2001 or later, if there is a rollback tax rate of 2001, the CRA no longer has any income. I looked at the statute relative to CRAs and there is no provision in the statute that says that if the CRA statute is in conflict with any other statute then the CRA statute can prevail. Any roll back legislation that is being contemplated leaves your CRAs without funding. In fact, takes all that set-aside money and returns it to the general revenues. That is a huge step back in terms of what we are trying to do. Apparently all of these remedies are designed to remove the inequities of people who started out equal.
- Chairman Black: As we lobby our legislative delegation lets keep that in mind because I know so many of our cities, and our counties, are doing some good things with these CRAs.
- Councilman Williams: I think what was said is very important to try and make sure that you understand and figure out the impact. We have estimated that we would loose \$30 million, which means that it impacts everything that we do. It goes to the heart of Tuesday's vote. If we loose \$30 million and then on top of that we loose the vote tomorrow, our city is in big trouble. I don't think the public really understands that. We are not doing a very good job of explaining to the public the tremendous impact. What we are looking at is more of us looking to the Senate because we feel the House doesn't have a clue as to what is going on. Our staff went back to look at what the impact will be. I know the Florida League of Cities also weighed in on that information so it is really important for our local governments to understand potentially what we are talking about, things that are being pushed out by the legislature. This was all started by property taxes. That's not how we run our city. All the money we get from property taxes goes to public safety. If we only operated on property taxes we would be out of business tomorrow. Our position is, we only get 28 cents out of a dollar anyway so we have to do a better job. I was on the Council Thursday talking about the impact of the penny because I wanted to make sure our citizens understood. We have to be very pro-active to let our constituencies know the information that is accurate, not just feel good stuff. I'm asking all of the elected officials to get with their constituencies and let people know the true impact of some of this craziness that's going on in Tallahassee.
- Chairman Black: As we approach the hour I would like to make a few comments in conclusion. When I was in Tallahassee this past week I had an opportunity to meet for a few moments with Mike Sittig, the Executive Director of the Florida League of Cities and he was quick to say that this is not a forgone conclusion - that this taxation legislation was going to pass which was one of the first encouraging

signs I have heard. One of the things that he stressed to me is the fact that the Florida Chamber of Commerce is supporting this taxation legislation and a lot of your local Chambers are not. The Dade City Chamber of Commerce would be one of the first ones to loose their funding. You need to have your local Chambers of Commerce tell the Florida Chamber of Commerce of Tallahassee to back down from this position. Our local Chambers of Commerce would be one of the first ones feeling some of these cuts if your city is funding your Chamber of Commerce.

F. Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) - No Report.

G. Telework Tampa Bay - No Report.

H. Economic Development - No Report.

I. Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) - No Report.

10. **Executive/Budget Committee Report - Chairman Black**

We did not have an Executive/Budget Committee meeting this morning. And there is no Legislative Committee meeting following the Council meeting today.

11. **Chairman's Report - Chairman Black**

I would like to remind everyone once again that the Future of the Region Awards Luncheon is coming up on March 30th at the Quorum Hotel at 11:45 a.m. and if you have not already RSVP'd please make sure to let Sue Young know if you will be attending. Council members will be provided with a complimentary lunch.

I would like to recognize our new General Counsel, Martin Shelby. This is his first meeting with us.

12. **Executive Director's Report - Manny Pumariega**

Council folders contain a Regionalism concept paper which was shared with Governor Crist and some of the leadership in Tallahassee. We wanted to put something on the table about regionalism as the legislative process unfolds. We will keep you posted.

Reverend Golden: I would like to thank the Executive Director for the outstanding leadership that he demonstrates. He is a leader of leaders and I had an opportunity to see that first hand and I thank him for the opportunity to attend the FRCA meeting and to be a part of that process.

Chairman Black thanked everyone for their attendance.

Adjournment 11:45 a.m.

Lori Denman, Recording Secretary

Commissioner Scott Black, Chairman