

**MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WORK SESSION  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATON BUILDING; HONORABLE PATRICIA M. GLASS CHAMBERS  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, Florida  
FEBRUARY 18, 2021**

Meeting video link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUlgjuGhS-qV966RU2Z7AtA>

Present were:

Vanessa Baugh, Chairman  
George Kruse, First Vice-Chairman  
Kevin Van Ostenbridge, Second Vice-Chairman  
Reggie Bellamy, Third Vice-Chairman  
Misty Servia  
James A. Satcher III  
Carol Whitmore

Also present were:

Cheri Coryea, County Administrator  
William Clague, County Attorney  
Vicki Tessmer, Board Records Supervisor, Clerk of the Circuit Court

First Vice Chairman Kruse called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

**AGENDA**

BC20210218DOC001

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

1. The Invocation was delivered by Pastor Geoff Henderson, Harbor Community Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Enter Chairman Baugh)

 Chairman Baugh read a statement apologizing for action taken according to news outlets. She stated she loves Manatee County and will do all she can for the citizens. This is not a resignation. She apologized to people on a VIP list that was presented in the media, and took responsibility for an email that was sent to Jacob Saur, Public safety director. Citizens should always come first. Chairman Baugh also apologized to Rex Jenson, Schroeder Manatee Ranch Developer for his personal information being given out. She wishes that some privacy could have been given to people on the list. She apologized for misconceptions, and noted she did not receive a vaccine. She also apologized to Governor DeSantis, and was thankful he provided 3,000 additional doses of the vaccine to Manatee County. She understands that people are upset, but the additional doses were distributed to Lakewood Ranch, because there is a large elderly population. She stands by the Governor, and was embarrassed that Manatee County and Lakewood Ranch were brought up in an interview. It is her hope that more vaccines are distributed to Manatee County, and she will target areas in Manatee County that the Governor feels are important. This is not about politics, but about a pandemic, and if she can be part of saving one life, it is worth it. She is not putting blame on anyone else.

 Commissioner Servia thanked Governor DeSantis for bringing the pop up to Manatee County. Picking only certain areas to get the vaccine was unfair. The only VIP list that should exist should be all of the citizens of Manatee County. This situation was created by Chairman Baugh since she chose the zip codes who would get the vaccine. Emails sent by the Concerned Citizens of Manatee County misquoting the Governor, and accusing her of being in line with President Biden are upsetting.

 Commissioner Whitmore also received the emails mentioned by Commissioner Servia, and she responded to all the emails she received from citizens. This is a worldwide pandemic, and there was a lack of judgement by Chairman Baugh. She thanked the Governor for the pop-up in Manatee County. She requested a copy of the VIP list, and appreciated that Chairman Baugh has taken full credit for what happened, although she feels the intent was for Chairman Baugh to get the vaccine.

 Commissioner Satcher addressed the VIP list and did not pass judgement. He felt it was a plan by the media and the Democrats to run the risk of the Governor not coming back to Manatee County. The most important thing is to get citizens vaccinated, otherwise, they would not support MCR Health to vaccinate those who have difficulty getting vaccines. He referred to social media posts and felt it was obvious that when a big deal was made regarding the pop-up, there would be negative ramifications.

 Commissioner Van Ostenbridge was pleased Chairman Baugh took responsibility for her actions. He was opposed to the lottery system in the beginning, and he has been insuring residents that it is a fair system, and all residents were on an equal playing field. He hopes this action did not affect Manatee County from being able to participate in future pop ups, and he wants to continue with with the random draw of vaccine recipients.

 Commissioner Bellamy was thankful the Governor provided 3,000 additional vaccines. He apologized to citizens, because he believed in the integrity of lottery system with no compromises. He is thankful the Chairman identified this could be done differently and that she has taken full responsibility, and hopes for a more inclusive approach. He encouraged everyone to be the best public servants they can be, and stressed the importance of being civil and examining one's actions to maintain the integrity of Manatee County.

 Commissioner Kruse stated the decision to limit zip codes was poor, and he supports the lottery system. It is important to focus on the future, and learn from your mistakes. A special meeting could have been called for the entire Board to make a decision regarding how pop-ups are handled.

 Cheri Coryea, County Administrator, noted 200 more vaccines are being sent to the Lakewood Ranch site and will be distributed via the random pool.

 Commissioner Whitmore stated the Governors order to vaccinate those 65 older still stands.

 Commissioner Servia thanked everyone for their comments, and encouraged everyone to move forward as a Board of seven.

 Chairman Baugh, stated the Governor will be in Pinellas County for another matter today and appreciates that political parties are not an issue with Commissioner Bellamy.

**AGENDA**

BC20200218DOC001

 Cheri Coryea, County Administrator, read changes into the record regarding the Piney Point presentation and items that were added to the agenda. A ten minute break will be instituted during meetings halfway through the presentation, and there will be a 30 minute break for lunch.

**2. PINEY POINT EMERGENCY WATER TREATMENT PROJECT**

 Charlie Hunsicker, Parks and Natural Resources Director, reviewed a motion made by Commissioner Servia regarding receiving a presentation regarding costs, benefits, and risks for each option.

 Jeff Goodwin, Deputy Director Utilities, introduced the item. Mark McNeal from ASR US LLC, who will address seepage, but not closing the stacks.

 Mark McNeal, ASR US LLC, used a slide presentation to address injection wells in Florida, there are over 17,000 wells in Florida, Class 1 injection wells for industrial wastewater disposal wells, locations of Class 1 industrial wells, 22 different facilities in Florida, there is one in southwest Polk County, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) definition of injection well, definitions of geological conditions in Manatee County (aquifer, confining zone, and total dissolved solids), an example of core taken from Manatee County that is impervious in the middle confined area of 300 in between the upper and lower Florida aquifers, the top of the impermeable zone is 1900 feet, there is a natural gradient for the groundwater to flow toward the southwest, regulatory requirements, limits into what can be injected in the groundwater zone, definition of underground sources of drinking water, injection zone would have 35,000 mg/l TDS of seawater, the drinking water standard is 500 mg/L of seawater, primary safe guards, casing material, data collection to demonstrate confinement, various tools used to inspect the well during construction, mechanical integrity demonstration (pressure tests, external mechanical testing, and two overlapping casings into the injection zone. Any leaks in a well will show quickly to ensure drinking water supplies are protected.

He continued the slides to address monitoring requirements. Once the well is operational the stacks could be drained within two years, and no water will be discharged into Bishop Harbor. The well can action approximately 52.5 million gallons of water a year. He also reviewed the timeline for permitting, one year to construct the well, pretreatment may need to be done, and the cost is between \$7 and 8 million.

 Mr. McNeal responded to questions and explained the lower Florida Aquifer (LFA) does not have a long history in the Tampa area. The Polk County deep injection well takes domestic waste that must be treated to be used in the power plant. All the impurities are put in the well. The LFA also has leaching from landfills, industrial waste streams including heavy metals, and fruit production waste. Drinking water comes from the upper aquifer, and the soil is gypsum. The water from the LFA reaches the surface approximately 20 to 30 miles offshore. Water released from Piney Point, would have to move far and the flow is very slow. One of the stacks has dredge material, and it is important to keep solids out of the well. Once phosphorous hits the limestone, the limestone wants to hold it, and that phosphorous will be held in the limestone. Drinking water around the well is constantly tested. Pretreatment costs will be determined during construction of the well, and could cost \$2 million, and due to the depth of the well, it could cost approximately \$7 million. He cannot guarantee cost at this time, but a worse cost scenario would be \$13 million.

 Discussion ensued regarding long term costs for treatment, problem is to get the water out, not matter what is done, there is still going to be excessive water coming out of the stacks for years, overlapping casings have monitors, fuel tanks have the same design at gas stations, if the monitoring well has an issue the well would be shut down, a change in pressure in the deep well would be a function of how well the pretreatment is operating, if there is plugging, it is a function of back pressure, and the filters would need to be cleared,

pressure in the monitoring wells is the first sign there may be an issue, sinkholes are rare in Manatee County because of the confining layer and the geology is different, the very top layers are important regarding sinkholes, and there are improvements provided by nature where little treatment is needed,

RECESS/RECONVENE: 10:35 a.m. – 10:49 a.m. All Commissioners present.

 Ron Noble, AquaClean Environmental, is interested in working with the County, since his company specializes in cleaning water. There will always be opposition to deep well injections, and will take several years to care for the stacks. AquaClean's process would also include a pretreatment, and they would seek a separate permit to clean the water. AquaClean is willing to involve their own money into the project which would allow the County to move forward without the allocation from the State.

 Dawn Kitterman asked if there is an opportunity for citizens to speak regarding the opening comments at the meeting.

 Chairman Baugh explained public comment is allowed regarding agenda items.

There being no further public comment, Chairman Baugh closed public comment.

 William Clague, County Attorney, stated the rules of procedure limit public comment to items on the agenda. The Chairman has the discretion to allow public comment, but the Board can only override that decision at a meeting where the Board is allowed to vote.

 Charlie Hunsicker, addressed how the Nitrogen Consortium of Tampa Bay will operate and that Nitrogen loads in the area have been fully allocated. He responded that if the County chooses to go with a deep well, there will never be a surface distribution, other than the stormwater discharge. HRK has a nitrogen allocation for the stormwater that is already going into the Bay. The appropriation request stated the money would be spent on fixed capital construction followed by a feasibility study, without naming the system, using a procurement method that would allow the County to choose the proper method.

 Discussion ensued that is it going to be a lean year to get funding from the State.

 Commissioner Whitmore questioned if the previous discussion will be discussed at a future meeting.

 Vice Chairman Kruse noted the item was to have a presentation on deep injection wells.

 Discussion ensued that is it important to discuss the options, a trip to Tallahassee is not planned at this time, both options should be presented side by side, the appropriation request was submitted to the State, what would the next actionable item be regarding Piney Point, the appropriations request will be tracked through the State, the State will confer with the Department of Environmental Protections, it would be helpful for the State to know the County's intention, prefer for the Board to make a solid decision, lobbyist will provide updates, place this on the March 9 agenda to make a decision regarding the options for Piney Point, costs for nitrogen testing, a surface pond could be created to treat the nitrogen, and the County is not responsible for future treatment.

 Mr. Hunsicker clarified a letter was provided to the Board regarding evaporation technology, and that would also be an option. The evaporation technology will not take care of the water in the stacks.

 Discussion continued regarding the legislative priorities, deep well injection was not removed from the list, if the County does not get the allocations, what would be next steps, HRK has been looking at other processes, the Board should know what HRK's plans are for the treatment, Representative Will Robinson is trying to get the information regarding HRK's plans, HRK is in foreclosure and they will likely not be the owner in a few months, the note holder for HRK cannot make any decision regarding the property as of yet, but is open to the County being an active participant with the property, and there could be a possibility to recoup money the County might put in.

3. **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

 The County Administrator introduced the item. There was discussion that the pre-budget work session is an on-going discussion.

 Jan Brewer, Financial Management Director, used a slide presentation to introduce the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), goals of the work session, the purpose of the CIP, non-occurring expenditures, and how CIP projects get added to the plan.

 Chad Butzow, Public Works Director, stated the goal is to constantly update the fifth year of the Plan.

Ms. Brewer continued the slides to discuss process, priorities can be changed during the plan, a chart of projects versus dollars available, typical sources of revenue, funding source and stability, project phases, the automated CIP dashboard located on [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org), 54 projects were added to the FY20-24 Plan, and actions to move projects forward faster.

She continued the slides to address changes to existing projects, criteria for projects, typical revenue sources for capital projects, CIP cash flow from gas taxes, cash flow from the infrastructure sales tax, CIP cash flow additional needs, shortfalls and solutions, estimated revenue, the approved list, remaining balances, 20 percent is moving in the budget right now, there is the ability to bond Infrastructure Sales Tax (IST) projects to move them forward, the 15-year balances for transportation, and public safety and parks.

Ms. Brewer responded that IST can be dedicated, but when COVID hit this tax faltered. Manatee is strong as of last year, and there is the ability to bond. There are two ways to bond, one of which is general obligation bonds which require voter approval, but the County usually bonds non ad valorem. The geobond was approved by voters for the conservation lands referendum.

 William Clague, County Attorney, explained the sales tax is not always bankable due to the economy.

 Ms. Brewer continued the slides to address recurring-available for debt services funds and set aside reserves of \$8.4 million, these funds come in every year and can be used as a revenue source, the unincorporated set aside is \$500,000 and has never been used, the return on a 30-year bond at 1.55 percent, the general fund also includes the Sheriff, and these would need to be used to balance out if the ad valorem tax falls short.

 Discussion ensued if there is a shortfall in revenue, there are funds available.

**RECESS/RECONVENE:** 12:10 p.m. - 12:52 p.m. All Commissioners present.

 Ms. Brewer continued the slides to address one time funding in the General Fund, Transportation, Unincorporated, and Participation Projects totaling \$31 million, interfund loans, Transportation recurring and non-recurring, and there could be a particular line item for transportation with the ad valorem taxes.

 Discussion ensued regarding having a dedicated source for transportation.

 Cheri Coryea, County Administrator, explained the process for non-recurring opportunities.

 Discussion ensued that the CIP is covered in theory from the IST stream, and recurring projects are not part of the discussion, citizens voted for the IST based on a particular list of projects, but there have been a few changes that required Board approval.

 Ms. Brewer notified the Board that links will be sent to the Commissioners so they can easily access CIP information.

 Discussion ensued that funds were moved from Parks and Natural Resources to Public Safety for the new animal shelter, and the Board has the power to move items.

 Ms. Brewer distributed a list of initial suggestions for transportation, for the Board to review.

 Ms. Coryea stated this presentation is to take the Board to the next level, and Mr. Butzow was tasked to create a list for all desired projects.

 Mr. Butzow explained the CIP is an annual process, and staff evaluates the priorities of the Board, traffic management, and development trends. Staff is being more aggressive when dealing with individual intersection projects. Numerous maintenance responsibilities have been added to the list, and 70 percent of the County's bridges are obsolete. It is easier to replace a bridge prior to an emergency situation. Certain maintenance projects are presented annually. He continued to review the list and pointed out five capacity jobs, and confirmed that the Lakewood Ranch Boulevard and Balmoral intersection is on the list. He continued to explain why funds in the past were appropriated, but the project did not begin, due to permitting and design issues. Projects are not designed unless they are funded. The County prefers to not use eminent domain, so many of the easier projects have already begun. The land acquisition process needs to take place by a certain time.

 Discussion ensued regarding realistic timelines, project management software, use more funding to build infrastructure, roundtable discussion with possible private partners, land acquisition, conservatively acquire land for projects before they are on the list, careful to not purchase land that is not needed, the dynamic of the Board can change, and the timing of the different phases.

 Mr. Butzow responded that continuing contracts can be used for projects that are \$4 million or less, the procurement process for a designer can take up to three or four months, and the first six months are for planning. It could take 12 to 18 months to get a good size project shovel ready. If coordination is needed with utility coordination needed and work cannot begin until that work is done. They are working to have friendly land acquisition, and construction can begin six months after. Sidewalks may take less time, but there are still many steps to complete.

 Ms. Coryea noted it is important to look at every aspect of each project, since most projects will effect multiple departments.

Ms. Brewer displayed a status of existing projects. She encouraged a credit line when the projects are in the design phase or at the beginning of construction.

 Discussion continued regarding metrics built to analyze the CIP and help the projects begin quicker, eminent domain, being more customer friendly, request an update on the U.S. 41 complete streets projects, commitment from the Florida Department of Transportation to begin the U.S. 41 project, and a section of Whitfield is planned and the scope could deal with another section.

 Ms. Brewer suggested adding a column to the list for Commissioners to add projects they would like to add. She and Mr. Butzow will meet with each Commissioner regarding projects.

 Discussion ensued making sure the projects meet the needs of the community.

 Ms. Brewer explained the process for budgeting. The needs for the Sheriff and the Constitutional Officers are presented to the Board as well as each department. The ad valorem is the deciding faction. Counties are required to fund the Constitutional Officer per Florida Statute.

 Ms. Coryea confirmed a budget can be presented, and the Board has the right to not approve that budget. There may be good reason to fund additional requests. The budget is delivered around June 1, and when the Sheriff submitted his budget, the County Administrator worked with the Sheriff to agree on a budget.

 Discussion ensued regarding issues in the past with the Sheriff, there is a good relationship with the Sheriff,

 Commissioner Satcher supports the Sheriff and his budget, but would like to consider cutting the budget for the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

 Discussion ensued regarding the Constitutional Officers and their work being important to the County.

 Ms. Brewer stated their planned discussion for the day has concluded.

 Ms. Coryea requested the Commissioners rank projects. The next work session is March 16 and Parks and Natural Resources will be discussed, with the Parks Master Plan presented.

 Andra Griffin suggested items be pulled from the CIP including the proposed animal shelter, GT Bray, new libraries, and suggested more programs to reduce crime.

 Glen Gibellina supported the Sheriff's budget and the jail operation, and commented on Parks and Natural Resources projects, and trust funds.

 Pam Freni supported an new animal shelter east of I-75.

There being no further public comment, Chairman Baugh closed public comment.

 Commissioner Van Ostenbridge expressed concern regarding the process for selecting an Acting County Administrator and considering only one person, Charles Hines. He addressed other candidates who are interested and the need to consider more candidates for inclusion.

 Commissioner Whitmore stated she has received calls from other people interested in the position, and feels a national search would be best, and supported having Mr. Hines as the Acting County Administrator.

 William Clague, County Attorney, explained these decisions have significant legal ramifications. Until the Board is in a legal meeting they cannot give direction to the County Attorney. The Board must take action by majority vote for it to be legally defensible.

 Commissioner Bellamy encouraged each commissioner to have a forgiving heart.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Baugh adjourned the meeting at 2:18 p.m.

Minutes Approved: March 23, 2021