

**MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WORK SESSION  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, MANATEE/OSPREY ROOMS, FIFTH FLOOR  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, Florida  
May 4, 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 (entered during work session)  
Carol Whitmore

Also present were:

Dr. Scott L. Hopes, Acting County Administrator  
William Clague, County Attorney  
Quantana Acevedo, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

Chairman Baugh called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

 The Invocation was delivered by Reverend Brock Patterson, Longboat Island Chapel, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.


**AGENDA AND UPDATES** 

BC20210504DOC001

Dr. Scott Hopes, Acting County Administrator, reviewed the agenda changes:

- Item 1, Utilities Department Review/Budget – The work session presentation was updated and replaced to provide minor revisions to Slides 17, 21, and 51, as follows:
  - Slide 17, the last two bullet points (Update Master Plans and New Regulations) were added;
  - Slide 21, the second bullet point was updated to 44 million gallons per day, instead of 48; and
  - Slide 51, the bullet point “Historical Rate Increases and Debt Issuances” was listed twice; the duplicate was removed; and
- Item 2, Presentation Regarding a County-Initiated Thoroughfare Plan Update – A written comment submitted through the online public comment form was added to this item


1. **REVIEW – UTILITIES DEPARTMENT BUDGET**

 Jeff Goodwin, Deputy Director of Wastewater, utilized a slide presentation to review Enterprise Operations, Management Team Introductions, level of service management, growth management, long-term planning, managing the unknowns, and Utilities Programs (Wastewater, Potable Water, Solid Waste, and Business Operations).


**Wastewater Program 2302**

Mr. Goodwin continued the slide presentation to review Wastewater Program 2302, base budget supports, FY 22 base components, desired requests, FY 19/20 results highlights, wastewater opportunities and challenges, system capacity for growth, and wastewater flow history.


(Enter Commissioner Satcher during the presentation)


 Discussion ensued on what factors would be used in determining the design for the expansion of the Southwest Regional Water Reclamation Facility (SWRWRF), the Tallevast area has long needed sewer connections, advanced wastewater treatment, whether tertiary wastewater treatment was of the considerations in the handling of Piney Point Phosphogypsum Stacks, wastewater projections for the SWRWRF include Lake Flores, Peninsula Bay and Aqua by the Bay, the County has only biosolids dryer, if reverse osmosis is planned for the North Regional Water Reclamation Facility, and whether developers are charged fees for new development.

Potable Water Program 2301

 Kevin Morris, Deputy Director of Potable Water, continued the slide presentation to review the Potable Water Program 2301, FY 22 base components, desired requests, FY 19/20 results highlights, opportunities and challenges, system capacity for growth, and historical information.


(Chairman Baugh was absent for a portion of the presentation)


 Dr. Scott L. Hopes, Acting County Administrator, stated there would be a future request to replace outdated water meters, which would address valve issues, and noted he was surprised at the amount of technologically outdated equipment in certain departments in the County.

 Discussion proceeded on how the water contract with Sarasota County would end in 2025, whether the County would have to purchase water from Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority (PRMRWSA), there are nine laboratory employees, sludge beds, the County pays PRMRWSA membership fees and buying water from them could take place in 15 years, Florida is water rich and the County currently does not have any water supply issues, the Algae Spraying Program is Lake Manatee, and several projects discussed are listed in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

RECESS/RECONVENE: 10:21 a.m. – 10:31 a.m. All Commissioners were present.


Solid Waste Program 2303

 Rob Shankle, Solid Waste Division Manager, continued the slide presentation to review Solid Waste Program, How we do it – Solid Waste, base budget supports, desired requests, FY 19/20 results highlights, and opportunities and challenges.


 There was discussion on how the Solid Waste Franchise Agreements cannot be extended beyond 15 years per Ordinance 16-45, whether staff is considering a waste energy site instead a landfill, Hillsborough and Sarasota Counties would not be interested in investing with the County on a waste energy site since they have recently invested in their landfill capacities, a County Commission liaison should be included on the landfill search site and Mosaic Fertilizer reclamation properties should be considered in and outside of the County, would like the franchise agreements to include no garbage pick-up on Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Day, tipping fees (\$14.53 per month for residential and at the landfill the costs vary based on material), consideration of closing the landfill on MLK Day, the recycling percentage has increased to 65 percent and should be recognized publicly, how long is the permitting process for a new landfill, staffing issues with solid waste haulers, whether the County is experiencing staffing shortages, recycling is currently not profitable, whether pay increases are needed for deficient positions, and would like to see the 15-year timeframe for the franchise agreements be extended by amending the ordinance.

Dr. Hopes stated there is still time left on the agreements (to expire on 9/30/23) and he would work with the County Attorney to evaluate options, which would be brought back to the County Commission in a timely fashion.


Business Operations Program 2304

 Heather Dilldine, Business Operations Manager, continued the slide presentation to review Business Operations Program, base budget supports, FY 22 base components, desired requests, goals, how we monitor performance, FY 19/20 results highlights, opportunities and challenges, and plans to address growth.

(Commissioner Kruse was absent for a portion of the presentation)


 Discussion took place on the ability to charge additional fees for credit card payments, cash payments can be discounted, but credit card payments cannot be assessed with additional fees, offering a discount for using a bank account to pay their bill, would like a discussion on charging property owners instead of tenants for water bills, customers have the option of receiving paper versus electronic billing statements, moving garbage fees to ad valorem tax bill, Venmo (mobile payment service) is not being utilized as a payment option, and finding a solution for fees accumulated from credit card payments

Chairman Baugh asked if there is a previous opinion from the County Attorney's office on assessing fees for the use of credit cards that it be forwarded to the County Commission.

 Michelle Balais, Senior Fiscal Services Manager, continued the slide presentation to review Department Planning, Enterprise Structure, program costs centers, Enterprise Funds, historical rate increases and debt issuances, operating budgets FY 20 results, operating budgets FY 20/23, summary desired requests, FY 21/25 adopted CIP, Capital Improvement Program, challenges for FY 22/26, customer bill (historical), and County comparison.

BC20210504DOC002

**RECESS/RECONVENE:** 12:10 p.m. – 1:02 p.m. All Commissioners were present except Chairman Baugh and Commissioner Whitmore. First Vice-Chairman Kruse presiding.

 There was discussion on the unrestricted reserve balance (as of 3/31/21) and restricted reserves at \$7.5 million (handout reflecting this information was emailed to the County Commission).

BC20210504DOC003


Utility Rate Study

Ms. Balais stated the last Comprehensive Utility Rate Study was conducted in 2016 and the current rate study began in 2020.

(Enter Chairman Baugh, presiding, and Commissioner Whitmore)

Thierry Boveri, Raftelis (County Consultant), used a slide presentation to review the Comprehensive Utility Rate Study including study objectives, revenue sufficiency (existing revenues, operating expenses, debt service, reserves/"pay-go", CIP needs, historical capital spend and projected appropriations, and combined revenue requirements), recommendations summary, financial plan results and other considerations, rate comparison, and affordability analysis.

BC20210504DOC004


 Andra Griffin stated the County should not be compared to other municipalities, and inquired about the affordability of utility fees.

Discussion ensued on staff looking at what the County should be charging to provide


services, Lake Manatee Dam, new customer fees, the CIP should have been incorporated into the presentation, and like to see the County comparisons in order just to gauge how the County is doing and to provide economic data.

2. **UPDATE – COUNTY-INITIATED THOROUGHFARE PLAN**


 Clarke Davis, Deputy Director of Traffic Management, made introductory comments.

 Nelson Galeano, Transportation Planning Division Manager, utilized a slide presentation to review the Thoroughfare Plan, why a Thoroughfare Plan, how does the County use the Thoroughfare Plan, need for thoroughfares, how will we grow and move, context classification, Complete Streets, public perceptions, creating strong communities, Traffic Circulation Plan, what do we want to amend/update, 2045 Future Traffic Circulation Right-of-Way Protection and Reservation (Map 5-C), Group 1 – I-75 Corridor, Group 2 – Fort Hamer and Sawgrass Road, and potential Hillsborough Interchange. BC20210504DOC005

Mr. Davis pointed out the Need for Thoroughfare Maps to reflect how the commercial development is situated near the west and centered around major corridors whereas residential is situated more east, which means fewer jobs and services and added stress on the road system. In terms of Group 2 – Fort Hamer and Sawgrass Road (Slide 39), he elaborated that on the adopted Thoroughfare Plan, Fort Hamer Road ends at proposed JJ Road (depicted in gold). Fort Hamer Road is proposed to be extended to the County line and developers in Hillsborough County are looking at the potential of a new interchange on the east side of I-75. Staff is recommending that Fort Hamer Road be shown to the County line with an Interchange Justification Study area that overlaps Hillsborough and Manatee Counties (starting at Buckeye Road). If the interchange is successfully created that connects to Fort Hamer Road, there may be enough traffic on it that six lanes would be needed possibly to Buckeye Road.

 Commissioner Kruse inquired about the status of the proposed Hillsborough Interchange since capacity would have to be created for Fort Hamer Road, which includes a two-lane bridge.

Mr. Davis stated the interchange is being privately-initiated and the Interchange Justification Report is being created ahead of Hillsborough County's discussion with the Florida Department of Transportation.

 Dr. Scott L. Hopes, Acting County Administrator, cautioned the County Commission on getting bogged down on details because Hillsborough County cannot move forward with their plan until the County submits the updated Thoroughfare Plan to the State.

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge elaborated that an interchange would have to have a certain amount of density in order to meet the required spacing requirements.

Commissioner Whitmore reported the Fort Hamer Bridge was originally planned for four lanes.

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge clarified that expanding Fort Hamer Road to four lanes is not an option and a second two-lane bridge would have to be built next to it.

Chad Butzow, Public Works Director, explained the Fort Hamer Bridge was designed to be paired with another two-lane bridge. The current bridge would be the northbound lanes and

the second bridge would be the southbound lanes (would be built to the west of the existing bridge).

Mr. Galeano continued the slide presentation to review Group 3 – North East County, and Group 4 – Lakewood Ranch.

Chairman Baugh inquired about Tara Bridge and pointed out Lena Road is reflected on the Group 4 – Lakewood Ranch map from S.R. 70 to S.R. 64.

Mr. Davis noted Lena Road is an important part of the County’s north-south connections for the area. Tara Bridge is part of Tara Boulevard and Honore Road and is an adopted planned connection on the Thoroughfare Plan.

Chairman Baugh stated in the future she would be making a motion to remove the Tara Bridge from the Thoroughfare Plan.

Commissioner Whitmore stated she has not been in favor of building Tara Bridge, because it would be constructed through a neighborhood.

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge inquired if Lena Road is a Tier 1 road on the CIP, and if not, it should be especially with the foregoing of Tara Bridge.



Commissioner Kruse stated he does not see the point of having Tara Bridge on the Thoroughfare Plan since it would compound traffic issues.

Mr. Galeano continued the slide presentation to review Group 5 – Southwest, County/Lake Flores.

Mr. Davis noted 86th Street West to 75th Street West is considered to be the heart of the Lake Flores development [approved on 8/16/15, PDMU-14-20(Z)(G)]. Other changes in the area include changing the alignment for 51st Street West and termination of an old extension 43rd Street West and KK Road (private internal road for IMG Academy aka Bollieteri Boulevard).

Commissioner Whitmore stated the plans for Lake Flores included six miles of roads.



Commissioner Van Ostenbridge asked about right-of-way for the proposed 51st Street West extension.

Mr. Davis reported staff was working with the representatives for Lake Flores on a viable alignment for 51st Street West through the Lake Flores property. Upon question, he noted the proposed 66th Street West extension is also within the Lake Flores property. Both 51st Street West and 66th Street West are on the Thoroughfare Plan and the changes would make the alignments consistent with discussions between staff and the Lake Flores representatives.

Mr. Butzow noted the 51st Street West alignment is proposed to be to the immediate west of the IMG Academy athletic fields.

Commissioner Whitmore reported a park and ridge was promised to the west of 75th Street West with the Lake Flores approval.

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge stated Preston Whiting, Lake Flores developer, is considering a trail system with boardwalks and a preserve that would abut the State-owned land behind

the Utilities Building on 66th Street West.

(Note: This land was discussed at the work session on April 15, 2021)

BC20210504DOC006

Mr. Galeano continued the slide presentation to review the Bradenton–Palmetto Connector Study Area, Thoroughfare – Future Land Use Relationship Maps, Residential Projects – Future Development Area Boundary Map, and which steps/actions are needed to complete the update

Commissioner Servia asked if the update to the Thoroughfare Plan would be heard for consideration prior to the summer recess in July.

Mr. Davis reported staff is endeavoring to schedule the transmittal hearings with the Planning Commission and County Commission prior the summer recess.



Commissioner Satcher stated there are plans to four lane Fort Hamer Road north of the bridge.



Mr. Butzow clarified the proposed transmittal hearing for the Thoroughfare Plan would be heard by the Planning Commission in July. In regards, to Fort Hamer Road, the County could not get approval for a four-lane structure, because the CIP did not support four-laning the roads on either side of the bridge. He would be speaking with the County Administrator about moving the four-laning of Fort Hamer Road higher on the CIP priorities list.

#### Public Comment



Cathy Woolley, Tara resident, thanked the Board for agreeing that the Tara Bridge should be deleted from the Thoroughfare Plan. She thanked Mr. Davis for his efforts and noted the land set aside for Tara Bridge could be used for affordable housing.

Dr. Hopes stated he received a report on all of the County-owned properties regardless of the surplus status. Chairman Baugh asked that he share the report with the County Commission.

BC20210504DOC007



Mr. Butzow stated today staff is referring to a piece of Tara Boulevard existing as part of the Thoroughfare Plan. The Plan is mainly about requirements for building, reservation of right of way, building of lanes, and whether impact fees are eligible to be used on said roads.



By telephone, Glen Gibellina suggested developers build their own wastewater treatment plants with projects. He did not have any comments on the Thoroughfare Plan.

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

Commissioner Servia stated she is in favor of removing Tara Bridge from the Thoroughfare Plan. She inquired if staff is looking at concurrency differently in walkable communities (i.e., coverings for sidewalks).

Mr. Davis noted staff is working on a mobility plan and one of the approaches may allow them to look at multimodal level of service or quality of service for non-motorized modes (safety and perception of safety).



Commissioner Whitmore mentioned that she does not support a fixed-span bridge for the Cortez Bridge replacement. She was asked if the County Commission would be taking a position on this issue.

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge supported a drawbridge; however, the Florida Department of Transportation has decided on a fixed-span 65-foot bridge despite the lawsuit that has been filed. The County Commission should contribute to the design and focus efforts on ensuring the bridge is out of service for the least amount of time.

Commissioner Whitmore supported a 45-foot replacement bridge.

Chairman Baugh stated a bridge is needed.

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge pointed out masks are still being required in County buildings despite Governor Ron DeSantis signing a bill to end Coronavirus (COVID-19) measures. At the next meeting he would make a motion to remove temperature check stations and mask requirements.

Commissioner Kruse supported a mask recommendation, but not a mandate for wearing masks in County buildings.

Commissioner Whitmore asked Dr. Jennifer Bencie to look at the data for the County since everyone is not vaccinated.

Commissioner Baugh stated people should be allowed to make their own decision on whether or not to wear a mask.

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge explained his proposed motion would include restoring the dais back to its previous state.

Commissioner Satcher agreed that people should have the freedom to wear or not wear masks.

Dr. Hopes stated staff is planning to host vaccine pop-up sites at County buildings.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Baugh adjourned the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

Minutes Approved: August 24, 2021