

**MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
JOINT MEETING WITH LONGBOAT KEY COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING; FIFTH FLOOR, MANATEE AND OSPREY ROOMS  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, Florida  
December 1, 2021**

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

Present were Manatee County Commissioners:

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:

Dr. Scott L. Hopes, Manatee County Administrator  
William Clague, Manatee County Attorney  
Robin Toth, Deputy Clerk, Manatee Clerk of the Circuit Court


Present were Longboat Key Commissioners:

Ken Schneier, Mayor  
Sherry Dominick  
Penny Gold  
Debra Williams  
B.J. Bishop


Also present was: Tom Harmer, Town Manager, Longboat Key

Absent from the Town of Longboat Key Commission were:

Mike Haycock, Vice-Mayor  
Maureen Merrigan

 County Commission Chairman Baugh called the Joint Meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. and welcomed Longboat Key Commissioners.

### **INVOCATION**

 The Invocation was delivered by County Commissioner Bellamy.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

 County Commissioner Bellamy led in the Pledge of Allegiance.


### **INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS**

Elected Officials and staff at the table introduced themselves.

### **AGENDA**

BC20211201DOC001

#### **1. TOWN AND MANATEE COUNTY COLLABORATION EFFORTS**

 Tom Harmer, Town Manager, Longboat Key (Town), stated the Town requested the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) conduct a study of the Town's concerns and challenges of being split between Manatee and Sarasota Counties. The Town and both Counties were contacted by OPPAGA to discuss the current circumstances and a Report was completed in October 2021. General issues previously raised by the Town are

confirmed in the Report. The Town continues to focus on opportunities to partner with both Counties.

He utilized a slide presentation with information from the OPPAGA Report referring to tax data from the 2020 tax year and focused on current and/or recent efforts:

- The Town has a great working relationship with the County as a long-term wholesale water and sewer customer
- Greer Island Law Enforcement Support (\$60,000/annually since 2018)
- Red Tide – County Assistance – Island-wide during recent outbreak (2021)
- County Marine Patrol Vessel staffing (Greer Island, Jewfish Key)
- Signage on Greer Island
- Beach Nourishment – One-time funding support for structures and sand on Greer Island (\$2.69 million), emergency removal of sand at the spit near Lands End to keep the lagoon open. The Town is working on a Spit Management Plan to replenish sand on an annual basis, and the creation of a small kayak/paddle board landing area

Future Opportunities include:

- Broadway Roundabout (Design) – The Town has participated in discussions with the County on jointly funding the design for the Broadway Roundabout (very north end of the Island in Manatee County). This is recommended in the Barrier Island Traffic Study. The Town has historically funded initial design improvements for Gulf of Mexico Drive (SR 789) and then sought State funding to accelerate improvements. Design is estimated at \$300,000.
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Priorities – The Town designated their ARPA Funds (\$3.6 million) to assist in replacing the Subaqueous Wastewater Line from Longboat Key to the County treatment facility on the mainland and for flooding and drainage infrastructure improvements on the north end of the Island. The Town is open to exploring joint initiatives with the County on using ARPA and/or other Federal Funds to help address priorities that benefit Longboat Key residents within Manatee County.

Town staff continues to collaborate and partner with the County to explore on-going funding opportunities and identify ways to address challenges identified in the OPPAGA Report.



Discussion ensued regarding beach access (Beer Can Island), Longboat Key has 12 public parking/beach accesses on the Island, the biggest public parking/beach access is at the north end between North Shore Road and Broadway (near the roundabout) with 100 parking spaces.



County Commissioner Whitmore stated the Broadway Roundabout is a major safety and pedestrian crossing issue to beach access, and the County could give a discretionary amount of \$150,000 toward improvements.





Longboat Key Mayor Schneier stated there are sharp turns coming from the south of the Broadway Roundabout. The County's contribution to the Greer Island Sand Renourishment and Reconstruction Project was a breakthrough.





County Commissioner Van Ostenbridge stated the relationship between Manatee County and Longboat Key has improved over the past year, signage on Beer Can Island will be improved, he supports the idea of prohibiting motorized vehicles inside the lagoon to help reduce noise, questioned if the entrance to the lagoon would be widened if it is maintained, suggested pushing back the dry location of the spit near Lands End, this is a public access point and he supports keeping it a public access, Manatee County approved funding for a new Sheriff Patrol boat and three additional marine deputies to patrol the north end of Longboat Key and south end of Anna Maria Island, the County hopes to coordinate with Longboat Key


next summer on deputy shifts, the Broadway Roundabout is planned for a County Commission agenda in January, and he anticipates using ARPA funds on future projects.

 Upon question by County Commissioner Satcher as to the intent/purpose of the OPPAGA Report regarding the bi-County situation with the Town, Dr. Hopes stated it was his understanding that the Legislature is leaving it to the two Counties and the Town to dialogue about the situation. The Legislature would address the matter if the two Counties and the Town comes forward with a proposal. Aside from a collaboration or mutual agreement to change the current bi-County arrangement, it would remain as is and the data is available for consideration.

 Mr. Harmer stated the moving of County lines requires a special act of Legislature. The purpose of the study was to have an independent study on the impacts and challenges of being in two Counties. There is a cost differential that must be considered, how to work cooperatively between the two Counties and how everyone could benefit by working together on initiatives that benefit both Manatee and Sarasota Counties.

 County Commissioner Satcher encouraged looking at the concept of incorporating the south end of the island into Manatee County, or maintain the current arrangement.


 County Commission Chairman Baugh stated she spoke to Representative Joe Gruters about this concept and for both Counties to work together toward a better solution.

 Longboat Key Commissioner Bishop stated long-term issues have long-term impact. The Town of Longboat Key does not have a public school for 33 children on the Manatee County side of Longboat Key. Longboat Key taxpayers seek equal treatment as other taxpayers of the unincorporated areas.

Discussion ensued that the OPPAGA Report provides the basis for a cost benefit analysis, Manatee County Commission is committed to providing all of the services to Longboat Key, Manatee County School Board tax revenues, has anyone discussed the School Board taxes with Longboat Key, there are 38 additional students on the Sarasota County side of Longboat Key for a little over 70 students on the Island that attend public schools, Manatee County School District provides a school on Anna Maria Island for less than 100 students, Longboat Key residents have overwhelmingly supported every School Board tax referendum, teacher salaries should not be based on a referendum, there is good collaboration between the State, both Counties and the Town for emergency management, other potential opportunities, Longboat Key falls under the Sarasota County Emergency Operations Center during a declared emergency, Manatee County election process is split between both Counties, whether the election process could be changed regarding the bi-county split, it is not unique that four cities in the State of Florida are divided between two counties, pay attention to decisions that have long-term consequences, tax equalization lawsuit around the State about taxing unincorporated areas, an underground sewer line is shared between Manatee and Sarasota Counties, and Longboat Key is a donor community.

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2. **SUBAQUEOUS FORCE MAIN UPDATE**

 Isaac Brownman, Public Works Director, Longboat Key, utilized a slide presentation to give an overview of the Town's Wastewater System. The Town is a Manatee County potable water and wastewater treatment bulk customer. The Town has 47 lift stations island-wide to move effluent to primary Lift Station D on Gulf Bay Road. Material is pumped through a 3.5 mile

route (two miles under Sarasota Bay, 1.5 miles under land) to the County's Southwest Water Reclamation Facility (SWWRF). The Town's force main was installed in 1973 and put into service in 1975. He continued with slides about the Town's subaqueous force main work, new pipeline (2018), force main leak and repair (June 2020), construction of a temporary access road and stabilized platform from which to work through Longbar Pointe property, and the executed Consent Order with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (February 2021), and including property restoration provisions.

The Town continues to fund and work on subaqueous force main enhancement and system preservation, including operational, equipment and coordination of improvements with the County as treatment service provider to enhance flow monitoring. The Town has a very good working relationship with the County and the Town intends to continue that. The Town is also exploring the feasibility and costs of preserving the mainland portion of the force main along the route. Another pipeline assessment of the existing force main is funded and planned to occur in FY 22, pending response by Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) on the Town's proposed protocol. The Town continues to work to satisfy the Consent Order.

Mr. Brownman concluded with a slide of the Town's Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), in which \$21 million has been identified for the redundant force main under Sarasota Bay. The cost and options will continue to be refined as the Town gets closer. This funding is in addition to the Town's commitment to the overall system as demonstrated in the Town's Five-Year CIP and recently adopted Utility Rates. Longboat Key's operating General Fund budget is \$18 million and an analysis is underway on the project. The CIP amount includes cost for pipeline construction and potential environmental seagrass mitigation.

Last year, the Town made and received a State appropriation match of \$1.25 million to fund the mainland portion of the force main (\$2.5 million). The Town is pursuing additional funding opportunities, State appropriations, grants and opportunities to partner on the infrastructure improvements. This year, the Town made a State appropriation match request for an additional \$800,000 for the rest of the mainland connection (\$1.6 million). The Town was asked by local Delegation members if Manatee County was participating in the match. Longboat Key is requesting an \$800,000 appropriation match by Manatee County.



There was discussion regarding the idea of a pay-back arrangement with the Town, there are no available reserves in Manatee County Utilities, Manatee County Utilities are 100 percent enterprise funds, the motivation for getting matching funds from the Legislature, using ARPA funds and asking the County for matching funds is to lessen the impact of the utility rate increase to Longboat Key customers, there is a risk to Manatee County overall as part of the utility infrastructure, if there is a way for the Town and Manatee County to partner, and Longboat Key's lobbyist is David Ramba.


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3. **MANATEE COUNTY AREA TRANSIT (MCAT) LONGBOAT KEY SHUTTLE SERVICES**





Jonathan Roberson, Manatee County Transit Planning Section Manager, gave a slide presentation to update the Board on Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT) Longboat Key (LBK) Shuttle Services. MCAT launched the LBK Shuttle service as a pilot project on April 15, 2017, as part of the Fixed-Route Optimization and Restructuring Plan (July 2016). The LBK Shuttle operates 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week and connects to MCAT's Anna Maria Island (AMI) Trolley and Route 6-Cortez Road corridor at Coquina Beach, and Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) Mobility-on-Demand (MOD) service at Bay Isles Shopping Center.


Discussion ensued regarding LBK's Shuttle service characteristics, ridership has increased 115 percent from 2018 to 2019, ridership peaked into 2020 but dropped due to COVID-19, ridership has resumed to surpass historic monthly and annual highs, LBK Shuttle handles 20 trips per day with the majority of riders coming from the mainland (Cortez Road-Route 6) to work on the Island, service workers are the most common users of the LBK Shuttle, shuttle service versus fixed-route service, the fare structure for the LBK Shuttle is the same as MCAT fixed-route system, all valid MCAT and SCAT fixed-route bus pass options are honored, MCAT offers similar service in the Port Manatee area and is considering piloting similar services in eastern Manatee County, the County's focus is on the extension of the fixed-route service, many areas in Manatee County are asking for transit service but are not the best market for a standard fixed-route, what this service costs the County per ride, all Manatee County's transit vehicles are wheelchair accessible, riders are frustrated that the LBK Shuttle only comes to Bay Isles Shopping Center and does not serve St. Armands Circle, it would help to have a one-County fix for transit, Sarasota currently provides a subsidized Uber service since the pilot bus route was cancelled, ability for Sarasota and Manatee Counties to work together, currently the LBK Shuttle is not a smooth service, Manatee County staff met with Town staff and Sarasota County transit staff and their vendor on MOD service and whether Manatee County could parcel out the trips, certain roadblocks surfaced with vendor constraints to service this area, and both Counties should be able to arrive at a solution.


 County Commission Chairman Baugh asked the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to address this issue to the Manatee County Commission, and that Sarasota County make a presentation to the MPO.


 County Commissioner Whitmore stated that Sarasota County needs to extend their route to the Bay Isles Shopping Center.


 Mr. Harmer thanked the MCAT team, spoke on the MOD service by the County, they do not go any further than the County line, and both Counties can find a way to get from one end of the Island to the other on public transit and how the connection would work.

 County Commission Chairman Baugh suggested Dr. Hopes communicate with the Sarasota County Administrator on a solution.


 Longboat Key Mayor Schneier stated this is an important service that the County needs and it should be fixable. Both Counties need to work together on a solution.

 Longboat Key Commissioner Williams questioned the intent of extending the route to Bay Isles Shopping Center.


 Upon question by Longboat Key Commissioner Debra Williams regarding Airport service, Mr. Roberson stated Route 99 goes to the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport, from downtown Bradenton to downtown Sarasota. This route is shared with Sarasota. Currently, there is no direct Airport shuttle.

 Longboat Key Commissioner Bishop stated viable public transportation must be made easy and convenient for Longboat Key to have a dependable work force.

(Depart Longboat Key Commissioner Bishop)


 County Commissioner Servia stated Manatee and Sarasota Counties previously had overlapping transit routes for workforce reasons. This problem could easily be resolved between Manatee and Sarasota counties. Manatee County MPO representatives should address this issue at the next MPO meeting.


(Enter Longboat Key Commissioner Bishop)

 County Commissioner Kruse stated this is predominately a Manatee County service for Manatee County working citizens. It is a matter of extending Route 6 a few extra miles and seems like a simple solution and minor cost for a major community benefit. BC20211201DOC004

**RECESS/RECONVENE:** 3:19 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. All Manatee County Commissioners were present. All Longboat Key Commissioners were present except Commissioners’ Haycock and Merrigan.


4. **COQUINA BEACH RENOURISHMENT AND EROSION CONTROL PROJECT UPDATES**

 Charlie Hunsicker, Parks and Natural Resources Director, utilized a slide presentation to give an update of FY 22/23 project activities on Coquina Beach, proposed structural solutions for refurbishing the Longboat Pass Jetty at the south end of Anna Maria Island, and a report on the placement and location of additional, nearshore artificial reefs required by a permit related to the beach renourishment actions during FY 21 for Holmes Beach, Bradenton Beach and Coquina Beach in particular. Design and permitting for each of the three projects will be jointly funded by FDEP beach renourishment grants and the dedicated one cent for beach renourishment as Tourist Development Taxes. Request for construction funding under a 50/50 cost share with FDEP will be pending in this year’s FDEP State Legislation appropriations request.

 Tom Pierro, Coastal Protection Engineering Consultant, continued with slides to review the Anna Maria Island Beach Program, the two different types of programs on Anna Maria Island (Central Anna Maria Island and City of Anna Maria and Coquina Beach County-managed projects), particulars of the 2021 Coquina Beach Project with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Florida receives 90 percent Federal Cost-Share for Hurricane Irma Recovery, anticipated FEMA cost shares (75 percent for Hurricane Hermine; 90 percent for Hurricane Irma), construction cost estimate for combined project construction timeline, the FEMA reimbursement process is still underway, coordination and upcoming related projects in the County that may have interaction with Longboat Key, Longboat Pass (Coquina Beach) Jetty Rehabilitation, Coquina Beach Existing Groin Removal, Coquina Beach Stabilization with Feasibility Study Alternatives and preferred Conceptual Alternative 7, Upcoming Artificial Mitigation and Recreational Reef projects along the north Shore of Coquina Beach, the offshore area is being looked at as the final component, also being considered is the creation of an artificial recreational reef as a snorkel trail at Coquina Beach accessible from the shore.


Mr. Pierro showed a slide regarding Passage Key Inlet Management Study with permitted sand borrow areas. The Passage Key Shoal at the very north end of the Island offshore of Bean Point is the sand source for the Anna Maria Island project, aside from what can be taken from Longboat Pass and sharing with Longboat Key.

Inasmuch as these multiple permitted sand borrow areas are the primary source for future County projects, not just Federal projects, but potentially supplementing Coquina Beach, the State required a comprehensive inland management study be performed in coordination with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and FDEP. A meeting was held with the State and broader Technical Advisory Committee meetings are planned. The State asked to bring in additional stakeholders. Mr. Pierro reached out to the Town of Longboat Key to participate.

 Discussion ensued if something could be done about the flooding at the Coquina Beach parking area, tourist tax dollars are being used to alleviate flooding (\$7 million for both phases), the County has heavy construction bridge materials ideally suited for deep water fishing reef deployment, there are square miles of permitted sites in offshore Anna Maria to create a native snorkeling reef as a soft recreational experience.


(Depart Commissioner Whitmore)

 Upon question, Mr. Pierro stated Passage Key is a unique resource in that it has a 20-year cycle of circulation of sand, and there is a sustainable source of sand that is recharging.

 County Commission Chairman Baugh stated the County Commission seeks a better working relationship with Longboat Key. Though all problems cannot be solved, the County and Longboat Key could be good partners. BC20211201DOC005


(Depart County Commission Chairman Baugh; First Vice-Chairman Kruse presiding)

**CITIZEN COMMENTS** (Agenda Items Only)

 Chris Tanner, Attorney representing Longbar Pointe LLLP, provided an update on the breach in the wastewater pipe (Agenda Item 2). The property that was impacted was permitted by the State as a wetland mitigation bank in 2017. The mangrove line of demarcation appears to be expanding and will continue to be monitored to identify and quantify the impacts from the breach.


There being no further citizen comments, Chairman Baugh closed Citizen Comments.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

 County Commissioner Van Ostenbridge thanked Longboat Key Officials for attending this meeting and providing feedback to strengthen their relationship with the County.

 Longboat Key Commissioner Gould thanked the County Commission for the meeting.


 Longboat Key Mayor Schneier thanked the County Commission for hosting the meeting.


 Longboat Key Commissioner Williams thanked County Commissioners for this meeting.

 County Commissioner Servia thanked everyone for attending this meeting.

(Enter County Commission Chairman Baugh)

 Longboat Key Commissioner Bishop thanked the County Commission for this meeting.

 County Commissioner Satcher thanked everyone for attending. He encouraged Manatee County School Board to look closer on making things more equitable for Longboat Key.

 Mr. Harmer thanked Dr. Hopes for his readiness and timeliness to communicate.

 Dr. Hopes stated he looks forward to future communication with Longboat Key Officials.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, First Vice-Chairman Kruse adjourned the Joint Meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Minutes Approved: April 12, 2022