

**Local Option Sales Tax Citizen Committee**  
**January 23, 2018**  
**Milton, Florida**

The Local Option Sales Tax Citizen Committee met at 9:00 a.m. on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Ed Carson, Vice Chairman Tony Alexander, Amy Cozart, Frederick Barrow, Stuart Viator, James Calkins and Colten Wright. Also present were the County Administrator (Tony Gomillion), Assistant County Administrator (Dan Schebler), Budget Director (Jayne Bell) and Administrative Coordinator (Sabrina White).

- 1) **Call to Order-** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Carson in the Santa Rosa County Administrative Center, Board Room at 9:00 a.m.
- 2) **Approval of Minutes from October 31, 2017-** Calkins moved approval of the minutes for the October 31, 2017 Local Option Sales Tax Citizen Committee Meeting, the motion was seconded by Wright and approved by the Committee.
- 3) **January 2018 Quarterly Update-** Schebler reviewed the quarterly update and read through the document. Committee members followed the overview by asking questions about listed projects:

Kemp asked if the Hamilton Bridge sidewalk project had leveraging components? Schebler responded yes, this is a Local Agency Program (LAP) project and is being designed in-house by our engineering department. Kemp followed by asking about the status of the Godwin Connector. Schebler responded that the project was a LOST project in total and there were no outside matching funds. The project is currently in the permitting process with Army Corps of Engineers and the Water Management District.

Henry asked if any of the design or construction work being done by county staff. Schebler responded that Hamilton Bridge Sidewalk, Sweet Bay Bridge, and Blackwater Heritage Trail. Staff started the design on the South End Annex Stormwater Project, but it may be completed by one of the firms as a result of the RFQ for design services. Henry followed with asking how Ranchettes and similar projects were being accomplished. Schebler responded that Ranchettes, Settlers Colony and Venetian way were all older subdivisions and a design firm was designing plans for the retrofit of the stormwater systems. Henry followed by asking if the Public Works Department could perform any of the work? Schebler responded that Public Works was performing the prep on roadway resurfacing and the final shoulder work after the paving contractor paved the roadway.

Carson asked if the design services that we can't perform in-house were going to be under a blanket PO? Schebler explained that we have a broad request for qualifications (RFQ) out for architect and engineering design services and when those proposals are received, staff will evaluate and make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners of which firms to secure for future task orders.

Henry stated he feels it is important to the renewal of the sales tax that we communicate that we are using in-house staff to the best of our ability to complete some of the projects to stretch the dollars even further.

- 4) **Revenues and Expenditures-** Bell recapped the update from the last meeting that revenues were about \$500,000 less than expected; however, at the end of the calendar

year, those revenues were only short by \$30,000. Revenues received are approximately \$6.4 million and expenditures are approximately \$2.7 million. Bell then demonstrated how staff was tracking the expenditures in a spreadsheet.

Henry asked if the spreadsheet was available online and if it could be sorted by vendor? Bell explained that it was not on the website, but she could send as requested and it was sortable by vendor.

5) **Overall Program Discussion-** Schebler presented a brief on the overall program.

Carson commented that based on the current projects, citizens are paying approximately \$3.0 million and obtaining \$14.0 million worth of projects because of the leveraging components. This is based on the estimate that citizens only pay approximately 75% of the sales tax and outside individuals pay 25%. Carson asked if there were projections of how the leveraging components will translate in future years? Schebler responded it is still too soon to know of future grant opportunities. Funding has been allocated and approved for all of the large HMGP projects that we currently have and there are only a few small projects like the Blackwater Heritage Trail that we may receive State FDOT funds for so future matching funds are limited.

Schebler then asked if the Committee had any thoughts or ideas how to share the information with the citizens? Calkins asked if there was a specific way that citizens could email the Committee specific ideas they may have? Schebler stated that staff had not set anything up, but citizens could certainly email county administration and that could then be relayed to the Committee. Calkins followed that in the past surveys have been set up to solicit information from citizens, is that possible? Carson responded that initially there was several meetings and the percentage of allocations was very well vetted prior to being set.

Cozart asked what kind of labeling or signage is being used? Schebler responded yes and elaborated that all road resurfacing projects have a sign on the road and the Sheriff is also placing a sticker on the new cars. Cozart followed by stating signs may be more positive whereas Facebook can be negative due to the ability for comments to be made which becomes a negative platform. Schebler followed by adding that ribbon cuttings will also be a tactic that is used to present a positive message.

Henry stated he felt a Facebook page may be good to add for additional transparency. Facebook was extremely useful when Moving Santa Rosa Forward was promoting the tax. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for staff to correct misinformation when possibly someone comments and doesn't understand that a portion of a project is being funded by a grant. Recognizing that social media does require staff and maintenance efforts, it provides an opportunity for positive messaging and earning the right to have renewed by the citizens in five years. Schebler responded that he would take that under advisement and discuss with the Public Information Officer. He further explained that information was currently being distributed through the BOCC Facebook page as well as press

releases. The public information office currently manages approximately 14 Facebook pages.

Alexander commented that Facebook is a necessary component and provided a word of caution that Facebook recently introduced a major change to their algorithm which makes it nearly impossible for a message to be seen in a non-paid account.

Calkins commented that he agrees with Henry and feels that it provides a more transparent view. Social media is the way of the future and we need to keep up.

Kemp commented on perceptions relative to social media and not too many appreciate sidewalks. When citizens see their tax payer dollars being spent on sidewalks there is a negative reaction therefore they should be vetted extremely well.

Barrow stated he feels there is a demonstrated level of trust in the Board and the leadership because of the lack of attendance to meetings. As a citizen, looking at the finances of the County, there is a confidence within the community that the Board is using our money well and prudently. We just need to keep moving forward and doing great things.

Wright commented that he feels it is important to try and sell what we are doing and continue to think about how the money is spent and keep it in front of them. The stickers are a great idea. We have to be cognizant that if we want the tax to pass again, it has to be in front of the citizens every day. Not everyone will go to the County website to see what is going on, thus we have to be more proactive of getting the message out there.

- 6) **FY19 Programmed Expenditures-** Schebler reviewed the public safety portion of the FY19 requests and introduced Sheriff Bob Johnson to discuss the departments requests for future years. Sheriff Johnson discussed the current fleet condition. There are currently 60 vehicles in the fleet that have over 150,000 miles and several need to be replaced soon. Thanks to the Board and the Local Option Sales Tax, 47 vehicles have been ordered and are currently being outfitted. Discussion continued between the Committee, Sheriff and staff relative the fleet and need to replace more vehicles than the budget allocation currently allows. After discussion, the committee requested that the Sheriff and staff work together to gather more information on the fleet that could be presented at the next LOST Committee meeting.

Schebler resumed the FY19 programmed expenditures and discussed the capital equipment and public facility allocations. Kemp asked what revenue the auditorium brings in each year. Gomillion commented that most facilities available for rent are not set up to be a revenue stream and revenues are minimal for rentals. Kemp followed by expressing a desire to see more details of the Fidelis facility.

Alexander asked if there was a plan to place stickers on the Public Works vehicles as well. Schebler responded yes. Wright followed by recommending consistency in the stickers that are used to promote the tax.

Herrington ml.

Mary Jane Herrington from the audience spoke. Herrington is a member of the Friends of Pace Library and stated the group has been raising money for years for a meeting room. They have capital money and they would love to use it toward the construction of the meeting room.

Schebler resumed the power point and review the transportation, drainage and recreation allocations.

Cozart commented on the Miracle League park for the south end of the County and feels that is a great larger project.

Kemp commented on the Edgewood Drive project and expressed a hope that County staff could be utilized to help build that project. It is important that we have safe and nice parks.

Alexander asked if there were any RESTORE projects that were recreation specific? Schebler commented there were none in POT 3. Alexander followed with a reminder that recreation was a close second to public safety and infrastructure may never be what citizen request yet it's necessary.

Cozart commented that sidewalks may not be favorable, however bike paths are great. Sidewalks can be used for bikes and turn the view into a recreation component.

Schebler explained the complexity of the Edgewood Drive project and why it may not be a good project for in-house forces.

Carson asked for clarification on the location of the recreation ADA upgrades? Schebler explained it was in existing parks and they would be made in parks that were receiving additional upgrades for example Chumuckla Community Park. Carson followed by expressing that ADA compliance should more of the allocation.

Wright expressed that new playgrounds should also have a section that is ADA compliant so that all may enjoy the parks. Schebler explained that the new playgrounds will have those components.

- 7) **Other Business or Discussion-** Schebler asked the Committee for specific recommendations to present to the Board at the Planning Workshop.

Kemp commented that the funds are being used for great things within the County and the projects would not be possible without the tax. How great is it that the citizens that come forward to donate 10% to the construction of the Pace Library Meeting Room. Would like to obtain citizen input on the FY19 list in the possible form of a survey. Lastly, public safety and recreation were the two top things. Ensuring sheriff has what he needs is important moving forward.

Henry asked how Triumph funds work and what is allocated per county? Schebler explained each county will get approximately \$15 million, but it will not specifically go to the County. Henry followed by asking more specifics on what projects the County has requested. Gomillion responded that the Triumph projects will not replace any of the LOST projects. Triumph is more for an economic driver opposed to infrastructure. Schebler further explained the Triumph process and responded that he will provide the Committee a list of the Triumph projects.

Carson stated he appreciates staff's efforts and was glad he could go to the website and see the updates very easily.

Next meeting April 17, 2018 at 9 am.

- 8) **Adjournment-** With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.



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Chairman