

MAY 11, 2011

A Joint Meeting of the Board of Lee County Commissioners with the Bonita Springs City Council was held on this date at the South County Regional Library, 21100 Three Oaks Parkway, Estero, FL with the following members present:

LEE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

Frank B. Mann, Chairman
John E. Manning, Vice Chairman
A. Brian Bigelow
Ray Judah
Tammara Hall

BONITA SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Ben L. Nelson, Jr., Mayor
Stephen McIntosh, District 1
Janet Martin, District 2
Steven Slachta, District 3
Martha C. Simons, District 5 (arr. 9:10 a.m.)
Bill Lonkart, District 6

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHN SPEAR, DISTRICT 4 WAS ABSENT FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING.

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

AGENDA**1. WELCOME**

Chairman Mann and Mayor Nelson provided welcoming remarks.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING FUTURE PLANS FOR BONITA SPRINGS COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Mayor Nelson and Council Member Lonkart outlined the City's request for assistance from Lee County toward an expansion of the existing South County Regional Library. A Feasibility Study and a copy of a presentation compiled by a Council-appointed Task Force were provided to the Commissioners. Lee County Library Director Sheldon Kaye recommended keeping Bonita Springs in the countywide library system and Commissioner Judah stated his support to partner with Bonita by providing \$4 million toward the expansion. Following further discussion, there was consensus that the Council would send a Resolution to the Commission, with specifics and options for financing. Gratitude was also expressed to retiring City Manager Gary Price.

3. DISCUSSION CONCERNING YMCA CLOSING AND IMPACT ON ITS USE AS A HURRICANE SHELTER

As a result of the YMCA Board voting to close their facility in Bonita Springs as of May 31, 2011, discussion ensued on the viability of continuing use of the structure as a hurricane shelter. Input was received by Lee County Public Safety Director John Wilson and City Attorney Audrey Vance. There was consensus that the City and County Attorney's Offices would coordinate with the YMCA, to ensure specific performance obligations are upheld. Additionally, a list of safety criteria to keep the structure viable as a shelter in an emergency situation would be compiled by Mr. Wilson's office. Both the City and County agreed to send letters to the YMCA Board eliciting their cooperation. There was also brief discussion on additional uses for the facility throughout the year.

4. BONITA BEACH ROAD WIDENING SCHEDULE AND EXPECTED CONSTRUCTION STATUS OF PHASE 11 (LIME TO OLD 41) AND RELEASE OF THE CITY'S SHARE OF THE TRIP FUNDS HELD BY LEE COUNTY

DOT Planning Manger Dave Loveland provided a status update and timetable on the Bonita Beach Road Widening project. Mr. Loveland addressed funding of the various phases and advised that bids are due May 19 with the project expected to take 18 months once a contract is signed. He also advised that regarding release of the City's share of any monies remaining from the TRIP Funds, there have been no changes since the February 14 report. Mr. Loveland responded to several questions.

5. FUNDS FOR GREEN SPACE ACQUISITION AND POLICIES THAT HAVE ELIMINATED MOST PARCELS WITHIN THE CITY

Mayor Nelson spoke about how some of the smaller parcels along rivers and waterways might fit into the Conservation 20/20 program guidelines. Commissioner Judah concurred that the focus should be expanded, and Commissioner Hall mentioned the commitment of the County in the use of Conservation 20/20 lands for mitigation and quality of life purposes, as well as transparency within the process. Mayor Nelson thanked the County for agreeing to re-examine the policy, and Ms. Simon reviewed the ecological impacts of recent Legislative actions.

Chairman Mann acknowledged the value of Bonita Springs within the County, and noted the County and CLASAC would continue to recognize that fact as it moves forward.

6. COMMISSIONER/COUNCIL ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

Council Member Simon expressed her desire to represent Bonita Springs as an at-large appointment to the TDC Board when an opening occurs, and requested a more equitable funding arrangement for beach and shoreline maintenance projects.

Council Member Slachta complimented the Department of Transportation on the Hickory Boulevard widening project.

Council Member Janet Martin addressed the ongoing issue of sound walls along I-75 and advised that when the matter comes up again, she expects strong community involvement.

Commissioner Bigelow responded to Council Member Martin that Morse Shores in his district was experiencing the same type of issues and suggested they talk further. He next revisited the Library expansion discussion distinguishing between a design and construction phase, and indicated support for entering a design phase.

Commissioner Hall expressed appreciation for the cities willingness to meet together and address challenges. She expressed the need to look at the library expansion from a comprehensive standpoint, and pointed out that the County Library millage is a stand-alone budget that needs to be balanced over 17 districts within Lee County. She indicated support for further discussions on the proposed expansion and acknowledged the great support that Bonita Springs provides the County.

Council Member Lonkart referenced a similar issue to the one raised by Council Member Martin within a golf club community, and spoke in favor of resolving issues by continued dialogue and open communication.

Chairman Mann made closing remarks on an apparent Board consensus around pursuing continued discussions and engineering considerations regarding the proposed library expansion, perhaps in partnership with the Lee County School Board.

Mayor Nelson mentioned a May 12 open house for the new Superintendent of Lee County Schools and invited all to participate.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

ATTEST:
CHARLIE GREEN, CLERK

Deputy Clerk

[Chairman, Lee County Commission](#)