

MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FORT PIERCE, THE ST. LUCIE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, AND THE PORT ST. LUCIE CITY COUNCIL, HELD IN THE ST. LUCIE COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 2300 VIRGINIA AVENUE, FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, BEGINNING AT 2:00 P.M. ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2006.

County Chairperson Doug Coward called the meeting to order.

Upon Roll Call, those present for the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners were: Chairperson Doug Coward; County Commissioners Christopher Craft, Frannie Hutchinson, Paula Lewis, and Joseph Smith; County Administrator Doug Anderson; Assistant County Administrator Ray Wazny; and County Attorney Dan McIntyre. Those absent: None.

Upon Roll Call, those present for the Fort Pierce City Commission were: Mayor Robert Benton; City Commissioners Rufus Alexander, Edward Becht, Christine Coke, and R. Duke Nelson; City Manager Dennis Beach; City Attorney Robert Schwerer; and City Clerk Cassandra Steele. Those absent: None.

Upon Roll Call, those present for the Port St. Lucie City Council were: Mayor Robert Minsky; Councilwomen Patricia Christensen and Michelle Berger; Councilmen Christopher Cooper and Jack Kelly; and City Manager Don Cooper. Those absent: None.

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Chairperson Doug Coward said before they begin, the agenda before them, they have a half a dozen items. The County has identified four, the City of Fort Pierce has identified two, and he doesn't believe the City of Port St. Lucie submitted any. But he wanted to allow the opportunity to amend that and add additional items if any Commission Member or Council Member has suggestions.

Councilman Kelly said he would like to add one. He would like to have a quick discussion about the County and City contingency fund or whatever they want to call it.

City Commissioner Nelson said he would like to talk briefly about the U.S. #1 and Weatherbee Road traffic light, the status..

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The first item on the Agenda was Annual Report for the Transit Municipal Service Taxing Unit and Other Transit Issues.

County Administrator Doug Anderson said as they know they set up a Transit Municipal Service Taxing Unit to provide a regional transit system. Jody Bonet, Assistant Director of Community Services, is going to present the annual report.

Ms. Jody Bonet, Assistant Director of Community Services, said she appreciates the opportunity to speak today. She also appreciates the opportunity of their support for transit. (Ms. Bonet displayed PowerPoint slide show.) This will be a brief presentation on the history of transit in St. Lucie County. She put together a presentation of the Federal and State and Local perspective. There has been a lot of support from the Federal Government. This past year the State passed a huge Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU, as well as other appropriations. A total from the State of Florida, they received \$65.77 million of Federal Transit commitment to the State. So they see a real commitment along with \$15 million to expand the Tri-Rail, operating buses and rail service. St. Lucie County itself has received over \$1 million in Federal earmarks and those funds are for purchase of buses. The State perspective is, due to the inability to expand road capacity to keep up with the population growth, the 2005 Growth Management Bill approved several things that help deal with the long range planning of

transportation. It provided State funds to match the Federal New Starts Transit Program and also provide funds for planning Smart Growth communities. But most importantly, it provided over \$7 billion dollars for Multimodal Projects throughout the State over a ten year period. They have not applied for any of these yet, but these are some of the regional projects they heard about at the MPO meetings that they can all apply for - the New Starts, Strategic Intermodal System, and the TRIP Program (Transportation Regional Incentive Program). The local history began basically in 1992 when the State allocated funds for the transportation disadvantaged population. By 2000, St. Lucie County was receiving approximately over five years a \$6 million operating assistance from the Federal Transit Administration. In 2002 they may all recall the U.S. Census Bureau linked Martin and St. Lucie Counties. At that time it put them over 200,000 population. Now they are well over 200,000. As a result of that, they will be losing their operating funds from Federal Transit. The Public Hearings were held in 2002 and that is when all of them approved an Interlocal Agreement that allowed for the MSTU (Municipal Service Taxing Unit), which is currently at 0.09 with a maximum mil per household at .25. At this time it is 0.09 which is a little under \$7.00 per \$100,000 house, or approximately \$13 for a \$200,000 house. This is what they collected on the MSTU. It shows they collected \$1,188,276; and of that, \$85,000 was used for grant match and staff. The remaining was used just primarily for the Demand Response System. As they can on the chart, it has: Jurisdiction, Demand Response Trips Performed, Cost of Trips, Amount Collected from MSTU, and the Difference. As they see, throughout St. Lucie County they had 127,000 trips. The cost of the trips at \$16.95 a trip for the Demand Response is a costly service, at approximately \$2 million. Of that, \$1 million was used from the MSTU. So they had \$1 million shortfall. That was made up with these other State and Federal programs: Medicaid, Transportation Disadvantaged, FDOT Block Grants, FTA Operating, etc. After 2007, they will lose the FTA Operating. This year they received \$900,000 to share between Martin and St. Lucie Counties for operating from Federal Transit Administration. The Treasure Coast Connector has been around since June 2002. Their beautiful blue and yellow bus runs from 7th Street in Fort Pierce and goes down to Martin Memorial from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday. The Treasure Coast Connector was fully funded by FDOT until 2005. And the State is also weaning them off that. So by 2010 it is going to require 100% local funding from the counties. On February 2005 they opened two new routes, the Connector Plus. This Route 2 is more of a residential, it goes along Avenue D through the redevelopment area, up to Juanita Avenue, Angle Road. Then the Route 3 connects at 7th Street and goes to U.S. #1 and goes to the businesses, the Lawnwood Hospital and out to IRCC and I-95 and the Turnpike, where there is a lot of jobs and shopping. All three connect at their transfer stop at 7th Street. The Treasure Coast Connector basically for the first couple of years had under 3,000 people. It basically was going up and down U.S. #1, so it was hard to get the ridership. Over this time it was providing a vital role for people with wheelchairs and those who just depend on bicycles. When they added their two Connector Plus Routes - U.S. #1 and the east/west route - the total ridership began to grow. And as of December 2005 they had over 6,000 riders. They can see how expanding the system helps. The Port St. Lucie Downtown Trolley, she appreciates the Port St. Lucie Council support for this. They had a great ribbon cutting the other day. This is their first week. The Port St. Lucie trolley has 21 stops. It goes along Midport Road, connects U.S. #1 and also some medical areas and multifamily units, and

connects with the Treasure Coast Connector. This is going to be a great addition to the system. The Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency has also applied their support for transit and is going to be implementing a Downtown Trolley in 2006. They are hoping that will go ahead and connect with their system, so they can all go from place to place. The second phase of their goal is to connect to the beaches. Also, the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency received a FDOT grant for transit shelters, so they will see soon some shelters in the area. Primarily they get funds from FDOT for the operation called Service Development Grants. They get three years at 50% funding. Right now it is covering the two Fort Pierce routes and a Demand Response Route that is going to be opening up in the St. Lucie West area, and also they can always apply for more funding. The beautiful artist designed benches are finally hitting the streets. They have 25 of 100 out. And they look great. Those are going to help market their stops. They withheld Hurricane Wilma's winds. So they think it was a good idea. This could not have been done without the help of County teamwork, the Cultural Affairs Council, and also FDOT grant and the County Community Pride funding. They had Mosquito Control, which had the only vehicles that could actually install these. Parks and Recreation, Road and Bridge, Environmental Resources, Community Services, and even the Jail Trustees helped put out and put together the benches. They still have time to give input to the Long Range Transportation Plan. The MPO and the Counties are taking input through a consultant. So if they still want to make recommendations for fixed routes, transfer stations, and roadway signs, they can still get involved in the MPO process. Basically, affordable transportation is important for economic development. The high cost of housing and anything else, if they have a dependable fixed route, they would not have to have two or three cars per family. How can they increase transit service? One thought is to continue to charge a demand response fee. And then maybe make the fixed route free, because people would then get on to the fixed route and not depend upon the demand response which costs \$16.95 per trip. Indian River County has nine routes that they run for free and they have moved a lot of riders to these routes. The demand response door to door service which is costly has gone down. By doing more fixed routes, even if free, may be a way to get people out. Other ways to get people on board is to add benches and shelters and longer hours. Look at how other communities have done it. With the FTA funding decreasing, they may have to look at, depending upon how property values increase, maybe within the next year or two they may have to consider that MSTU raising. Let's see how the property values and all that comes out. Improve marketing of service. One of the most important things land use this, developing the transit/pedestrian mixed use developments that make it easy to not have to reduce trips, but also so they can have some big amounts of people riding on the buses. Finally, they have a marketing program going right now. That was also funded through the FDOT Service Development. They will have a newsletter out soon, promotional events. And they did a free ride on the bus for half of the month of December and they did get an increase there. They are hoping that the numbers will keep rising. They also have a website if they want to check their services. She also put out brochures. Post cards to bring back to the community for where they would like to have the fixed routes to go. They are trying to do a little survey. They appreciate their support and hope they are going to continue support. If there are any questions, she as well as Marianne Arbore and Darrell Drummond from the Council on Aging, are here.

Chairman Coward said he thinks both the Community Services and the Council on Aging have done a terrific job. They can obviously see the great progress they are making in the update Ms. Bonet just gave them. Are there any questions or comments from one of the Board or Council Members?

Councilman Cooper asked this \$15 million to expand tri-rail, do they have any information on the tri-rail system and what they are doing to try to bring it this way.

Ms. Bonet said yes, Tri Rail has been getting a lot of Federal earmarks over time, adding double rails in South Florida. Also there is plans for it to come into Martin County. And in their long range transportation plan, if they include that as an item of the plan, it would make sense because they do have - as their Economic Development Manager said - 40,000 people who leave the County every day to go to work. But really, there is the Federal Earmark process. And if they were to have in their plan coming into the next Legislation, that 4 or 5 years for the transportation bill, that would be available to help as well as that FDOT New Starts Program. That is why FDOT started that program, so they could have some more match for that. And that would also pay for a direct bus rapid transit, which is something they put in first, connecting buses. That is easy to implement.

Chairman Coward said this is more of a comment than a question. But when they passed the Interlocal Agreement on the MSTU for transit, they did it narrowly. He thinks they missed an opportunity to include a broader category for alternative modes of transportation to include bicycle and pedestrian systems. And he thinks there is a need in St. Lucie County throughout, not just in the unincorporated area but within the cities, to try and retrofit older roads; and then of course, he thinks the newer roads, the standards are being put in place to upgrade them. He thinks they need to make a commitment to try to provide public safety and recreational opportunities, particularly around schools. He remains very concerned that they have missed an opportunity to provide a funding source for that. So he hopes that they somewhat consider looking at the MSTU and possibly broadening the language to allow for the use of those dollars to help them with not only transit but possibly bicycle and pedestrian systems.

Ms. Bonet said it all connects.

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The next item on the Agenda was Bio Solids - Request for Funding from State and Municipal Participation.

County Administrator Anderson said several years ago the County was working on a Bio Solids program with partners along the Treasure Coast including Martin County, Indian River County, and the Cities within St. Lucie County. The cost of the project got very high and they regrouped since then and they are working on outside funding. The South Florida Water Management District encourages the County Commissioners to once again receive this. He would like to have Leo Cordeiro give them an update.

Mr. Leo Cordeiro, St. Lucie County Solid Waste Director, said as Solid Waste Director about two and half years ago he got an education on bio solid waste and they spent a good deal of money and spent a lot of time. They got plans, they got designs, they were up to the point of permitting. But they were not successful on securing the \$2 million from the State, then they actually lost

interest from a lot of the players, so the project had been shelved since then. If they are successful in this \$5 million, they still have the property at the landfill, they still have the infrastructure, the scales, the whole works. They could very easily bring it back to life and stop the practice of land spreading the sludge. As the Solid Waste Division, they don't have problem, if the County certainly doesn't. The whole county, it comes from north as well as south into their County. There is the ability to do something here and maybe the \$5 million will get some support and get this project back.

County Commissioner Craft asked could Mr. Cordeiro just explain for him exactly what the Bio Solids are?

Mr. Cordeiro said the sludge that is left over from the sewage treatment plants first has to be de-watered. It is too watery to dry and to do anything without de-watering it. So first they de-water it. Once they de-water it, then they get the sludge. Right now, the sludge is what is being applied without the water. And the sludge can be dried into pellets. It could be dried into pellets and made into fertilizer, actually market it. It is a two step process. They could actually landfill it. Although they don't take sludge at the St. Lucie County landfill, Okeechobee landfill does and other landfills do. It causes a real problem in the solid waste field. But if they could do just the de-watering, they could solve a problem; or they could do the de-watering and pelletization.

County Commissioner Craft asked what kind of revenue does he think would be generated from the pelletization?

Mr. Cordeiro said when they looked at it two and a half years ago, actually what they were trying to do is just cover their cost. They were pretty sure they could do it for about the same amount of money that was being spent for land applying it. It is not so much a revenue but to cover the cost. He doesn't believe it would be more expensive than what they are doing now.

Mayor Minsky asked has anybody sat down and worked out a business plan to say this is how much it is going to cost, this is how much it is going to cost to operate it, this is the potential revenue they might have, so that they might get some idea of what the net figure would look like?

Mr. Cordeiro said they have all of that. They could certainly get everyone a copy of that. They did it two and a half years ago when they started.

Mayor Minsk asked can they put it into an Executive Summary?

Mr. Cordeiro said absolutely. They could get that for everyone here.

Mayor Minsky said because he doesn't really see how he can make a decision on it unless he has some idea of the monies they are dealing with over a period of time.

City Commissioner Becht said he noticed Martin County and Indian River County had adopted ordinances making it difficult, if not impossible, to spread the sludge. Has St. Lucie County considered doing anything? What, if anything, has St. Lucie County done to prevent that sludge from contaminating their western lands?

County Administrator Anderson said it is his understanding at this point in time they have not passed any ordinances prohibiting that, because it is still being applied to their lands in St. Lucie County.

City Commissioner Becht said from his perspective then, until that idea is coupled with the pellets, he would have trouble with... Maybe he misunderstood.

Chairman Coward said that is exactly the point he wanted to try and make, is that not only is the pelletization process helpful in dealing with their waste with all the partners who potentially come into this, but because they are currently an outfall for sludge from other areas because they simply don't have the agricultural lands in their jurisdictions. His understanding - and he hopes Mr. McIntyre can expand on the this - is that they are limited in how restrictive they can be unless they have an alternative for disposal. By establishing the pelletization process, then they could have a very restrictive ordinance that says they cannot land apply because they have a viable alternative. So that is hand in hand, these two issues.

County Attorney McIntyre said they actually have a draft ordinance that is in final stages and could go forward. As Chairman Coward indicated, they are trying to parallel the ordinance with the alternative. This issue has been litigated in other counties in the state and primarily DeSoto County, which adopted an ordinance that actually just prohibited land spreading in their county. It prohibited trucking and they got sued by the haulers. They ended up losing at the early levels and he thinks they settled, but they spent for over \$250,000 in legal fees. There are a lot of issues. It is a science driven thing too, they have to have some basis for regulation. The hauling companies will argue and have argued that there is no scientific reason that they can't land spread, it is not harmful to the environment or to the people. But the County has a different perspective obviously on that. They have an ordinance ready. They have actually discussed with their engineers the backup for this ordinance. They are ready to go with it, but they wanted to try to parallel with this other option they were discussing.

Chairman Coward said just going back in time, when they first dealt with this issue several years and became aware of the fact that they were receiving quite a bit of sludge material from out of County, they had special meetings to try and aggressively deal with this. He thinks they were all under the impression that the State had a pretty good handle on what was going on. And he can distinctly remember a conversation with the DEP staff person at that meeting where he asked the number of permits that were issued in the County - which they knew - and he asked how many gallons of material was being deposited - they had no idea. So DEP doesn't even know how much material they are actually permitting. He thinks this is a very serious issue. But in order to make it cost feasible, they are trying to maximize the number of entities that partner with them. In following up on Mayor Minsky's question about a business plan, he doesn't know if Mr. Cordeiro has this information today, but obviously this has to work for each local government from a cost standpoint. He knows that they had sought a \$2 million legislative appropriation last year. Ironically, the Governor vetoed that; and then subsequently came down to this area and told them he was going to clean up the Everglades and included \$300 million and told them they should do specifically what they

have been trying to do, which he vetoed. It is his understanding that they essentially need to have some initial start-up money, some assistance from either the SFWMD or the State; and then from that point they ought to be able to at least keep their cost comparable. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. Cordeiro said he agrees. He can tell them that the \$5 million would certainly get the de-watering portion going.

Chairman Coward said lets provide some background material for the City Managers and possibly that can get to the various elected officials to review and let's hopefully revisit this. He thinks they all want to try to do good for the environment and public health, and do it cost effectively.

Mr. Cordeiro said he will do that.

Mayor Minsky said he may be mistaken, but it seems to him back in the past he remembers that all of the sod farms used to use the sludge. Is that for some reason not still being done?

Mr. Cordeiro said he believes that is being done, but he doesn't know.

Mayor Minsky said because the amount of growth and the amount of sod they see going around over here, he figured it would commensurate with the buildup of the population. Contrary to popular opinion, they are not experts on this.

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The next item on the Agenda was FEMA Reimbursement for **Debris Removal** for Private Roads and Gated Communities for Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne.

County Administrator Anderson said they thought this would be of interest to both cities because they are all in the same boat on this one. Hurricane Wilma, County received approval to receive reimbursement for picking up vegetation debris in gated communities and on private roads. However, for Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, they are in the appeal process now, to bring them up to speed where they are at. If the cities want to join with them in the appeal process, please do. The County right now is out \$2.1 million for Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, picking up that material.

Ms. Faye Outlaw, Assistant County Administrator, said as Mr. Anderson indicated, for Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne the County incurred approximately \$2.1 million for debris removal on private roads and gated communities. Back in March 2005, they filed an appeal of FEMA's determination to not approve reimbursement for those costs. In late December, they received the response from FEMA regarding their appeal and essentially FEMA denied the appeal. FEMA indicated the County could file a second appeal. She thinks that in terms of the appeal itself, it is a two-prong test. One relates to proving that area was an immediate threat to life, safety, and health of residents, which they were able to meet that test. The second test, perhaps more stringent, was proving their legal response to those. In the denial of the appeal, they determined that the County had not sufficiently demonstrated that they had legal responsibility for removing the debris among private roads and within gated communities. They have since hired a different consultant to work with them on the second appeal. This consultant is very experienced in the FEMA process and they actually headed up the State Emergency Management operation at one

point. The County has until March 13th to actually file the second appeal. They are in the process of doing that. She believes that the City of Port St. Lucie has incurred approximately \$900,000 of these costs. She is not certain what Fort Pierce actually incurred. Their thought here is that if they are not successful going single handedly on the second round to get approval on that money, then it would be certainly advantageous for them to talk about and look at coming together in a united force that probably get the Federal government to reverse itself on this particular policy. So they wanted the respective governing bodies to just give that some thought in terms of the strategy where they go from here given that the second appeal may not be successful. They are hoping that it doesn't come to that, but it certainly something that they wanted the cities to be aware of and give some thought to.

Councilman Kelly said he was under the assumption that they were going receive that money from a State fund. Can Mr. Cooper update them? He thought he had seen e-mails or a letter saying...

City Manager Cooper said they have received the same as the County, basically everybody has, authorization for Hurricane Wilma. Nobody in the State has received authorization for private gated roads and communities. It is an issue up and down the east and west coasts for Hurricanes Jeanne and Frances. They are in the appeal process as well. Theirs is not at this point in time denied. They tried to make the argument that is required pursuant to their stormwater utility. They received initial okay from the FEMA staff locally; but then it was subsequently rejected by FEMA out of Orlando. He has also been in contact with Congressman Foley and their Congressional Delegation in Washington and their lobbyist is working on it. It is an issue that appeared on both coasts of Florida. In his opinion, ultimately it is going to end up in the political arena. One of the arguments that they are trying to make is that if it is okay for Hurricane Wilma, then why isn't it okay for Hurricane Frances and Hurricane Jeanne?

Councilman Kelly asked is he including that \$1 million in that \$10 million that they talked about this morning? Or is that over and above what they talked about?

Mr. Cooper said that is well over. That is Hurricane Wilma only. Their non-reimbursable items from for Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in gated communities is \$970,000.

City Commissioner Becht said the City would like to do anything it can to help coordinate them all receiving what they should receive from FEMA. But going forward, he would ask that the County, particularly in the service area of the Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, give serious consideration every time they approve a development that Fort Pierce may eventually annex, make sure that it isn't a private gated community and that they do have the interconnectivity that seems to make sense from a planning standpoint.

City Commission Alexander said Ms. Outlaw said she has no figures from the City of Fort Pierce.

Ms. Outlaw said she is not aware of the figures in terms of what Fort Pierce incurred for private road debris removal.

City Manager Beach said their cost for that ran in the vicinity of \$300,000. And just last week they received a letter of denial of the appeal that they had submitted. He will be suggesting that they work with St. Lucie County and Port St. Lucie to follow up on that.

Mayor Minsky asked what is the philosophy behind FEMA denying to pay or reimburse on private roads? Because those people pay taxes and are citizens of our communities. What they are actually even stuck with is paying above and beyond for the maintenance of their areas. But they are still tax paying citizens of their respective communities. What is the reasoning to sit there and say, those people have to pay for it?

County Administrator Anderson said they all agree with Mayor Minsky 100%. That has been their argument, that all residents of St. Lucie County are equal. And he is correct, people from these gated communities pay even more. They also receive fire protection, police protection, garbage pick-up, they receive all those service, plus they maintain their own roads. He doesn't know if FEMA has a better answer other than they are trying to save a buck.

City Manager Beach said he thinks the primary distinction is that the roads are privately owned, that they are removing debris from privately owned property, and he believes that is the basis.

Mayor Minsky said the reason he was bringing it up was because looking at the taxation situation, the government receives the same amount of tax dollars from those people as anybody does; and since this is coming out of Federal funds, they shouldn't be suffocating certain people just because they live in a gated community, if they are paying the same taxes to the Federal government as everybody else is. He just doesn't understand the basis for FEMA's discrimination. Especially since the Federal government is the ones that are saying that discrimination is an evil thing.

County Administrator Anderson said right. That is their argument.

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The next item on the Agenda was Presentation from St. Lucie County Public Works on Road Improvements and Interconnectivity.

Mr. Scott Herring, St. Lucie County Road and Bridge Manager, said he will be standing in for Mr. West, he will do the best he can. One of the things that Jody Bonet mentioned earlier when she was talking about the transit issues was Senate Bill 360, which passed the Legislature last year with the Growth Management Funds. She also mentioned the Transportation Regional Incentive Grant Program (TRIP). They made this presentation to their Board of County Commissioners two or three weeks ago to show the roads they looked at that they got funded and other roads that the Board might want to recommend to the Metropolitan Planning Organization for inclusion in the TRIP process. (Mr. Herring displayed slides in a Powerpoint presentation.) What they have in front of them is the Proposed Transportation Improvements for Unincorporated St. Lucie County. The roadways shown in green are the funded projects and the roadways shown in red are the unfunded projects. The funded projects include: Walton Road from approximately Village Green Parkway east to Lennard Road; the Lennard Road MSBU, which will proceed north from Walton Road all the way up to U.S. #1; Midway Road from U.S. #1 to 25th Street; and 25th Street from Midway Road to Edwards Road. Those roads are currently funded. When it comes to the unfunded roads, they have substantial unfunded needs at this

time. The Kings Highway corridor from U.S. #1 to State Road 70 - Okeechobee Road - approximately \$100 million. Indrio Road improvements from I-95 to Kings Highway at \$30 million. Proposed Orange Avenue shoulder widening from Kings Highway to the County Line approximately \$17 million. West Midway Road from 25th Street to the Turnpike Overpass at approximately \$25 million. And the proposed South Jenkins Road extension at \$26 million, which would connect Jenkins Road from its current end basically to Edwards Road down to Midway Road. In speaking of specifics of the Midway Road corridor, from U.S. #1 to 25th Street the County is actively pursuing a Project Development & Environmental Study (PD&E). This is a State and Federal funded process. They just had what he considers a successful public information meeting last Saturday. They hope to finish up the Project Development & Environmental Study some time this year and hopefully begin the design plans. The PD&E Study will basically lead them to a 30% set of plans, which they will then hire a consulting firm to take it to the 100% set of plans. FDOT does have money funded for the design of this road and for right-of-way acquisitions. And as they add additional years to the Five Year Work Program, they are rolling in money for construction. This second section of Midway Road is between 25th Street to the Turnpike Bridge. The County is undertaking this with its own funds at this point in time in trying to fast-track it as quickly as they can. They have a Request for Proposals out for the design and he believe they are actually negotiating with consultants to begin the design. They hope to begin the design in 2006, a three year process before they go to construction. The County is also actively acquiring right-of-way on this section of 25th Street to the Turnpike Overpass Bridge from willing sellers at this point in time. The big question mark on this is the Turnpike Overpass Bridge. He believes their estimated cost of replacing that will be in the neighborhood of \$10 million to \$12 million and they are actively working with the Turnpike to see if there is anybody that can help them with that. Just a quick time line on where they hope to be. They hope to start construction on 25th Street to the Turnpike in June 2008. Midway Road from 25th Street to U.S. #1, because they are going through a Federal process, they will probably not start construction until January 2010. They realize that is a long time, but having to incorporate Federal and State dollars extends the time frame quite a bit. Next is the Kings Highway corridor. Kings Highway is their major north/south road in St. Lucie County. They have been experiencing rapid growth in the area. As they can see from this graphic which shows existing and projected volumes, the roadway is failing or close to failing on several links. In order to try and move this along, the County is working with FDOT to review the current Project Development & Environmental Study, which he believes was done in 1995 or 1996. In the short term, the County is trying to come up with a way to improve the intersections along Kings Highway - such as Orange Avenue, Angle Road, and Indrio Road - because they believe that if can improve the intersections, that will buy them additional time before the actual links have to be included. Like he said, they are working with FDOT to update the overall cost for it and hopefully see what they can do about the project design and road segment widening. They will have to enter into a Local Agency Program (LAP) Agreement with the FDOT for the intersection improvements if they are able to fund them. They are beginning the design of Kings Highway and Indrio Road intersection and also Kings Highway and Angle Road intersection. They are working with a group of stakeholders as it relates to the overall improvements on the corridor. And they are trying to identify the right-of-way needs for the corridor. One of the problems they have is there is a

large canal running down the western side of it, which will complicate the design. Critical needs as the see it from the County at this time is to identify the design funding for the Kings Highway roadway segment from Okeechobee Road to Orange Avenue. They will also have to identify the design funding for the remaining segments (Orange Avenue to Indrio Road and Indrio Road to U.S. #1). But what they are focusing on before they get to those is the intersections; because they believe by improving the intersections, they will be able to buy a few more years as it relates to the roadway. Any of them who are involved with any type of State project share their level of frustration. The design, permitting and right-of-way process is typically four to five years for roadway segments before construction is to begin. Whenever they involve Federal and State dollars, it slows down the process. Starting the designs now is critical. The Indrio Road corridor is the next one they identified to the County Commission. As they are all aware, the Board of County Commissioners undertook a Charrette Land Plan for north St. Lucie County and has come up with the Towns, Villages & Countryside (TVC) Element as part of the proposed changes to the St. Lucie County Comprehensive Plan. They came up with a TVC proposed roadway network, which would identify the roads necessary to be in place by 2030 to accommodate the level of development as envisioned by that. Indrio Road widening is a key element up there. They realize that the TVC Plan will dictate the road configuration. They also realize that the TVC Plan does propose a parallel street network which will help relieve some of the current constraints and congestion on Indrio Road. The County has initiated design of the intersection of Kings Highway and Indrio Road. Unfortunately at this point in time they have not identified any funding for construction. And the State is getting ready to initiate the design of Indrio Road from Emerson Avenue to Kings Highway. That is a process they are working on in this current fiscal year for FDOT. The Orange Avenue shoulder widening project is from Kings Highway to the Okeechobee County line, approximately 17 miles. In 2002, the County widened travel lanes to 12-feet at a cost of \$1.9 million. This road experiences heavy commercial traffic - fruit trucks, delivery trucks, 18-wheelers - and they have concerns about the width of it. To fully bring it up to current standards with paved shoulders will cost approximately \$17 million in design and construction costs. This is one of the County's Legislative requests for funding of the design. They are asking for 50% of the design of \$1.4 million for the design costs. That is it. He will be very happy to answer any questions.

City Commissioner Nelson said in reference to the request made by him on the U.S. #1 and Weatherbee Road traffic light, he is wondering whether or not the staff or Mr. Herring can address that.

County Chairman Coward said they will have Mr. Herring try to field that, but he doesn't know if he is prepared. Does Commissioner Nelson have a more specific question, is he asking for an update?

City Commissioner Nelson said they have considerable growth in the area. Some 1,200 homes are slated to go in there in the very near future. That is within the City's jurisdiction. Particularly, there are homes being built and they are in the unincorporated area of the County. There have been deaths with respect to people walking on Weatherbee Road. There has been an abundance of traffic accidents there at U.S. #1 and Weatherbee Road. It takes considerable amount of time to get a stop light there unless they declare it some sort of an emergency. Warrant studies have been made, but they didn't prove to be adequate to put that light there

at this time. He thinks they need to do something because of the impact that it is having on their southern end of the City at this time.

County Administrator Anderson said this has been one of his pet projects that he has been interested in for many years. He has a lot of them. And he agrees with Commissioner Nelson 100%. The County has had to take steps. And one of the steps is to put turn lanes in before they can redo the traffic counts.

Mr. Herring said if he can jump in here, he is perfectly content to deal with this now. When they asked FDOT to look at this the last time, FDOT said they need to put in turn lanes. The County went out and did the design and had to acquire a little bit of right-of-way. He believes they are approximately 95% complete with the construction of the turn lanes at this time. As they have gotten this close to it, he has been in contact with the FDOT Traffic Operations section and FDOT is actually planning on having their consultant back out there on March 15 to get new traffic numbers - they have been continually providing updated access - and do a complete new signal warrant analysis at this time. So they would expect hopefully to be able to report something back probably the end of April time frame on what the latest results of the traffic signal warrant study are. The County will be providing the information to FDOT about the recent approvals, both within the City and the County, to show that there is going to be anticipated future traffic at this intersection.

City Commissioner Nelson said his experience, when they get new people on board it is an opportune time to press a little harder on some of the issues that they have been doing for a long time. There has been a change in the leadership at FDOT, at both the State level and District IV level. He thinks it would be beneficial to press this as they are doing obviously to get more positive results.

Mr. Herring said they have actually invited the new District Secretary from FDOT IV District to appear at the April Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting. He is not 100% sure that is has been confirmed, but he knows he is trying to put that on this calendar to be at that meeting.

County Commissioner Hutchinson asked is it State or Federal, that section?

Mr. Herring said both actually, State and Federal.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said she encourages the City of Fort Pierce, as they approve those new developments, that they ask the developers to come to the table to help pay for that. And that may actually get it in there faster.

City Commissioner Nelson said they are already in fact doing just that, asking for the developers to give their fair share. But they have only had one affected developer thus far that has put in his fair share. They are anticipating some others, both in the County and in the City, and they are going to be asking them to do the same thing, as well as asking the County.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said they have been doing that.

Chairman Coward said he wholeheartedly agrees with that, because he thinks traditionally St. Lucie County as a whole has sold itself short, and as a result they have ended up with shortfalls in roads and schools and so forth. He thinks this community has been fairly supportive of growth issues, but he thinks they are moving to a point where they need to understand that those impacts can be taken care of by the development community. And he thinks they are doing a much better job in St. Lucie County of making sure that those costs are shouldered by those that are creating it. What the County is doing at this present time is not having their impact fees dribble in as the building permits are issued over the years, but they have actually changed their policy to require the impact fees be paid up front. So they can actually do the work that is needed before the development is fully built out. They are also seeking additional voluntary funds above the minimum impact fees that are in place which practically doubles the impact fees, so they have been able to bring in literally millions of dollars per project of additional money to help them with Kings Highway intersections and other areas. He thinks if they continue to do that collectively... Obviously the impacts of growth - whether it is a project in the unincorporated County, Port St. Lucie, or Fort Pierce - it is not just the affecting those jurisdictions, it is affecting across political boundaries. So they need to be working collectively to make sure that after they approve these, they are getting adequate funds from development, to help not only the entity that is approving it, but also the other jurisdictions that are affected by that.

City Commissioner Alexander said he has a follow up on what they were speaking about impact fees. Concerning the Kings Highway portion at Indrio Road, just recently someone - he doesn't know who it was - completed a project. Is that a repaving, the areas from St. Lucie Boulevard to Indrio Road? His question is, whatever they did, whether it was a repaving or what, why would they go ahead of the project of Kings Highway itself? Just to do a little portion of it? That section is five miles and they are going to have to come back through there to complete that area and they are going to have repave what they completed. He doesn't know who is over that.

Mr. Herring said his understanding that was a FDOT resurfacing project. He understands what Commissioner Alexander is saying, but part of the logic behind doing that is they realize it is going to be a few more years before they get out and actually do any type of widening project, so they will go in to do something to keep the pavement from being totally destroyed just from the years of wear and tear until they can get to that. They have actually had to do that on a segment of U.S. #1 here in St. Lucie County. And he believes they are actually going to be resurfacing a portion of U.S. #1 in Martin County approximately two years prior to widening. It is just to help to keep it in a safe situation until they can do the construction.

City Commissioner Alexander said the second part of the question on Kings Highway, there are a lot of development coming into the area there. Being the fair share of developers now, his concern is they are confused as far as they consider a fair share. And when he heard the Chairman say over and above that impact fee... That is where his concerns are. He thinks that is something they as Commissioners should insist on, because that is going to have a big impact on that entire community on Kings Highway from Okeechobee Road to the Indian River County. It is a question of what is a fair share and how they determine the amount?

Chairman Coward said good points. He thinks the point of not making improvements that are going to be bulldozed under, he thinks that is what they are trying to achieve on Kings Highway. With the intersection improvements, those would fit into an ultimate expansion as he understands it. So they are not putting in intersection improvements that will then have to be dismantled or wasted.

Mr. Herring said that is correct. They are trying to keep from putting in throw-away improvements.

Chairman Coward said he just wanted to note for the record, under the North County Charrette, the Indrio Road and Kings Highway, he thinks the language that was used in here is that no funding has been identified. He just wants to make it clear that as a part of the development of those towns and villages, those developers will absolutely be making substantial contributions towards the roads that are needed in order to provide service for their residents, which will also provide benefits to the community. So while it has not been identified, it is clearly known that there is going to be a funding source through those development approval processes. And he thinks there is actually a benefit to developers as well, because right now they have the concurrency issues on intersections, that if individual developers came through they wouldn't have the capacity on the roadways to build. So by working in a comprehensive fashion, they can actually pool the investment dollars to actually do the larger projects.

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The next item on the Agenda was Joint Planning Agreement - Transportation / Land Use Planning Fringe Areas / Jenkins Road.

Mayor Benton said they have an area that has been a grave concern of the City's for some time and there is several reasons for it. The boundaries are, the east boundary would be 25th Street, the west boundary Jenkins Road, the southern boundary Edwards Road, and the northern boundary is Orange Avenue. Because in that block basically the County is approving multi-family big developments and so is the City of Fort Pierce. They are looking at literally thousands of homes in that area, but the infrastructure - roads, drainage, and everything - is probably in the same state it was when he was born, except maybe it has been paved instead of dirt. A lot of projects that have come in front of the City haven't been signed off by the County. He knows they have talked about this. It just hasn't at least got to the City Commission level, where there was the County sign-off on this as far as road improvements. When they look at the amount of development, they don't see parks being planned for that area. They see green space, which can be retention areas. They have the field of dreams in Fort Pierce, the Little League fields, and that is it. For thousands of homes, shouldn't they be looking at an area in there that can handle ballfields for seniors and kids? The drainage problems, Port St. Lucie should be worried about this because all the flooding that comes down the St. Lucie River is going to be drained from that area with Five Mile Creek and Ten Mile Creek. And a lot of that land which is pasture land or groves, that water has a chance six months out of the year to soak into the ground. But now, instead of seeing one or two acre properties being developed, they are seeing multi-family with retention areas that basically sit right near the creeks, fills up in a two-inch rain, and goes into that canal. Those 50 year floods that they keep seeing many more of can be several times a year. He just thinks that they need to be on the same page and somehow they need to plan that area a lot better

than what they have. He knows his Commission has a lot of concerns an almost every project. One in particular, KB Homes on Jenkins Road he believes it was, the Commissioners specifically asked them if they could have a letter from the County to see if they had plans for that bridge over Ten Mile Creek. And KB Homes said no, the County did not. And within a week, the City got a letter from Mr. Anderson saying yes, the County does intend on putting a bridge over that road. The City had approved it, now they are basically looking at putting thousands of residential cars in front of a bunch of semis down the road. Is that good planning? He doesn't think so. He knows his Commissioners had a lot of concerns in that area.

County Administrator Anderson said as a point of information, in May when Commissioner Hutchinson was Chair for the Board of County Commissioners at the time, a letter was sent under her signature to the City of Fort Pierce with a Joint Planning Agreement attached that was executed by the County Commissioners. Mr. Beach has just told him that has been executed by the City of Fort Pierce and it is in the mail to him. He thinks they now have a Joint Planning Agreement in place.

Mr. Beach said the Joint Planning Agreement has been executed. But if they go through the several pages of discussion in that agreement, what it essentially says is that they will simply review each others plans - the County will have a representative at the City's Technical Review Committee and the City will have a representative at the County's Technical Review Committee. They have been attempting since it was first suggested probably the last year and they have had varying degrees of success and failure with it. From what he understands the Mayor is saying, what they are looking to work out with St. Lucie County is some type of cooperative plan and cooperative agreement on the land use and density issues in all of the area that is within the service boundaries of the Fort Pierce Utilities Authority. The City is in the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan. One of the assignments of that consultant is to work with St. Lucie County and try to blend and get concurrence from St. Lucie County regarding those issues.

Mayor Benton said he for one doesn't feel comfortable approving a couple hundred unit development knowing that there are several of them that will be put out on Jenkins Road when he knows there is no money to make improvements. Is he right? There are no improvements right now in line for Jenkins Road from Orange Avenue south to Edwards Road? They are all looking how many thousands of units going up there?

County Commissioner Hutchinson said she is going to address that one. They had required their staff to hold a neighborhood charrette way back in the Fall and had invited the City of Fort Pierce. They are actually waiting... That charrette was just held this past Wednesday night for the very area they are talking about. They have always acknowledged, at least at this level they have been back and forth on giving each other a heads up if there is a development coming in and asking if they have any concerns about it, which she thinks is working great. They have stopped projects that going into the unincorporated areas that are soon to go into the service area. And also have had staff send them back too with either an acknowledgment with a date to respond by City staff, so they at least know on record if there is no response back before it is brought back to the BOCC. She agrees with what Mayor Benton is

saying. The letter that Mr. Anderson fired off to the City about the Ten Mile Creek Bridge, that was because she had read it in the paper and was unaware of that, and she asked when did this get changed. She appreciates the Mayor at least saying that. If there is ways they can do better, she is all open for that. But she doesn't know at what stage they start doing that or what more can they add on.

Mayor Benton said he was at the Planning Meeting on Wednesday night and so was County Commissioner Smith. He doesn't know how many developers they County is already looking at, he has seen them at the BOCC meetings, he doesn't know how many more developments are proposed that are on hold. But unfortunately, when they have several developers in one area, trying to do a planning charrette or something doesn't work because nobody is going to give up their piece of the pie. Before they get to that point, with the North County Charrette they had, he thinks it is very important that they take that area around Jenkins Road and the City and County sit down and decide what type of density that they want to see and what the roads can handle and the drainage. The drainage issue, they can't dredge the St. Lucie River and Five Mile Creek to get that volume of water they are going to be putting it in. And until they feel comfortable putting that amount of traffic on the roads, how can they approve some of these projects? Then they read that the County is approving these projects like Mercedes Homes and Lennar Homes, and then when a percentage is complete they are annexed into the City, and what they see is BOCC Minutes that say the City has annexed the project, now annex the roads. Yes, the City may annex these, but they want the improvements made and then they will maintain them. Right now they are getting a 4% admin fee of that impact fee for roads and the City is behind the 8-ball here. They need to plan that area a little bit better. Because they grew up here, they know what is going to happen and they know how it is going to affect the people that are already there, they are hearing it from them.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said she agrees. What she would suggest going along that line of thought is that the City of Fort Pierce and the County really need to sit down and basically do more of a land use workshop together. Because to be quite honest with him, she has a lot of concerns. She and the Mayor have actually discussed this, the City is annexing in what is presently zoned Agriculture, and she doesn't have a clue as to what the City is changing that to and what to tell the surrounding neighbors, or what the City's future land use is then is going to be. She agrees there does need to be a better coordination and understanding as the City takes what the County's existing zoning and future land use is and what it is going to turn into when it becomes part of the City.

Mayor Benton said he knows that these land changes from Agriculture to Multi-Family, a lot of it was done long before this Board came along. It is just unfortunate because he doesn't know how the land can handle what they are looking at putting on it. He knows they can't say it is not compatible. Legally they can't say they will deny this project. But they know of people with two or three acre lots, and they are putting 146 townhouses behind them, like there off Dade Road. What do they tell these people? It is not the City's or County's fault. But somehow they need to look at the big picture and see if they can make changes.

City Commissioner Coke said she will stick her two cents in, but she doesn't want to keep the nice people from Port St. Lucie here on a basic City/County issue. However, she knows that the City of Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County are working diligently to try to make sure the future land use is where they are connecting or are going to be compatible with each other. She thinks they took a great step with the passage of the JPA. Unfortunately, as many things, she doesn't think they have the follow through on it that they need to at a staff level on either side. She thinks that is a large part of where their problems are occurring. The other thing that she thinks that they need to consider jointly is getting their engineers together to look at the roads that are going to be involved between the City and the County and where the development is going to take place and get a Needs Assessment, not from these developers, but what they honestly believe, so they can preserve a quality of life for their citizens if they try to travel from one end to the other so they are not sitting in a parking lot on Kings Highway or Sunrise Boulevard. She thinks that once they get an idea of that, they pretty much can apply if they know this is what they want to do. The engineers have a price per mile. Of course, it is going up every day. However, then if they say this developer is going in and this developer is going in and this is "x" number of units per acre, they can charge them per unit on what it is going to cost for those roads. They ought to have that put right in front to them as their responsibility. She thinks their staffs could work together to see that those roads are properly developed and funded.

Chairman Coward said he didn't agree with every specific issue raised, but the broader goals laid out he strongly supports. Because he thinks particularly in these transitional areas where the City and County are impacting each other, it is absolutely essential that they do good cooperative transportation and land use planning. He thinks the example of the neighborhood plan that was done on Wednesday night on North Jenkins, north of Orange Avenue, he thinks it is a great example where the County invited the City to participate with the residents and the landowners and developers to try to put together some conceptual plan. They have also done it in White City, they invited the City to participate with them in that regard. He would like to continue to do that. He hopes they can possibly revisit the idea of having a JPA with the City of Port St. Lucie, because they obviously have similar if not more dramatic issues in transitional areas where the western growth is going into unincorporated areas where there is existing residents, and the road issues and the land use are even more critical. So he hopes they can possibly work more cooperatively with the City in that same regard. He just wants to point out, Mayor Benton mentioned there is no parks in this general area. They are going to be bringing in about a \$15 million to \$20 million regional park out of the ground right across the street here at Lawnwood, which is smack dab in the middle of that broad geographic area the Mayor has been talking about. The Mayor talked about Mercedes Homes and a couple of other developments that were not contributing. In fact, he thinks the County did a really good job. The developers came in and initially wanted to abandon the grid road system. And they have actually learned from the example the City of Fort Pierce has set, in his opinion, where they have a good network of streets which disbursts the traffic and is more cost-effective. So instead of abandoning these roadways, they have maintained them and made the developers pay for them. So they have new roads coming in. Peterson Road, to name one. They also made them set aside park lands, so there would actually would be a regional park for that

neighborhood. He thinks they did a really good job of requiring them to pay for roads and parks and make additional contributions for design and expansion of Jenkins Road. He thinks that is what they need to continue to do.

Mayor Benton said the only thing to say about the park over here at Lawnwood, he knows he has been uninvolved with Little League now for about 10 years, but Commissioner Hutchinson will remember they used to have to fight over the practice fields over here and that was 10 years ago. So they are playing catch-up there. These parks over here can handle the existing population. But what is coming, they need another centralized big area set out with several ball fields. Because the other night at the planning session, they showed each developer had their little area of green space; but a kid can't hit a baseball without breaking a window, it is a very small area. They have got to have not just ballfields, but practice fields and soccer fields for that perfect community, and he is not seeing that. The existing fields are overcrowded already.

County Commissioner Craft said he does know that every developer that comes into his office he is asking for areas of board open space that is uninterrupted so that the kid can throw a frisbee. Along the same line, they obviously need to have some fields that are designated for a specific sport, but they need to have more multi-use fields. He thinks that is what is happening in these smaller neighborhoods that are being approved, they are getting multi-use fields. It may not be designated for softball or baseball or football or what have you, but those things are being able to be done there. It kind of amusing, now the developers are coming in and on their plans they put a frisbee throwing area on the plans.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said she is going to follow up on Commissioner Craft because he pointed out a good point. One of the parks that she is extremely proud of is one that is within the service area of the City and that is there on Oleander Avenue between Weatherbee Road and Midway Road, which is the new park that is being put in there. It is made up of environmentally passive, along with baseball fields and softball fields going in there as a mixed use.

Mayor Benton said hopefully soon they will be on board with a lot of these. He found out the other day that there is a school planned for Jenkins Road. He doesn't think the City knew about that. Hopefully soon they will all on track with this, it is very important. Because if the City is going to be annexing all this property, he needs to know that there is going to be facilities for the public. They just can't play catch-up, especially with the price of land. But if they have large developers coming in adjacent to one another, one in the City and one in the County, if they can extract a corner from each, they can compile one big park possibly.

City Commissioner Nelson said he would like to address the issue of Kings Highway and Jenkins Road again. The ditch on the west side of Kings Highway in the vicinity of that proposed research park is an open ditch. He is wondering what is their philosophy with respect to getting that piped so as to make it more safe and of course give it a better appearance in the area? Secondly, they talked terms of North Jenkins Road improvements rather than South Jenkins Road improvements where they have the need for a bridge

over there. What is the time frame for the bridge over the extension of Jenkins Road? And their philosophy with respect to the ditch, the piping on Kings Highway?

County Commissioner Hutchinson said the piping on Kings Highway, that is all going to be figured out when they do the design phase of that roadway.

City Commissioner Nelson asked are they pushing for that now, as opposed to waiting until it happens and then ask them to fill in the ditch?

County Commissioner Hutchinson said yes, they are pushing for it; but again, it will all come out in the wash when they start the design phase, which they are trying to start right now.

City Commissioner Nelson said he is young enough to know when 25th Street had a big ditch on the side, and they covered it up and everybody is happy. He wants it to be the same thing out there on Kings Highway.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said she thinks all of them want to be happy. But the thing that they are running into is the fact that it is a State road, owned by the State, so they will have final say and jurisdiction over that.

City Commissioner Nelson said 25th Street is also a State Road.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said sections of it.

City Commissioner Nelson said the portion he is talking about is State Road. What about Jenkins Road bridge crossover going south?

County Administrator Anderson said when the WalMart Distribution Center was constructed, they ran Jenkins Road basically up to that point coming north. But obviously the next point is to cross that. It is extremely expensive to put a bridge in. A few years ago that bridge was a little over \$5 million and the number has gone up since then. Right now they don't have funding identified for that.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said it is on the MPO list, way down, but it is on there.

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Chairman Coward said he is going to make a suggestion. The last item on the Agenda under Fort Pierce is really an issue that the County and the City of Fort Pierce can discuss. They have not had the opportunity to talk about Port St. Lucie issues. So he is going to suggest that they take the Port St. Lucie item and then they can return back to the Fort Pierce issue, if that is all right with everyone.

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The next item discussed was Hurricane Contingency Fund.

Councilman Kelly said he is speaking for himself. It would not be appropriate for him to ask for a consensus, but the Mayor can. They have all been through three hurricanes in a 14 month period and everyone has a contingency fund. This year they only had one hurricane that went into this budget in Port St. Lucie. The other Council members feel free if he says something incorrectly, this is the first time he has brought it up, or Don Cooper can correct him. But they have about \$10 million in their contingency fund or emergency management fund. Is he right? What is the figure?

City Manager Cooper said \$10 million liability. Contingency from the General Fund is \$2.4 million. With 75% reimbursement from NCRS.

Councilman Kelly said to get right down to it, they had a huge natural disaster in the City. This hurricane cost them more money - and again correct him if he is wrong - than the other two hurricanes, because of the one huge natural disaster they had in Port St. Lucie, which is in the County, and it was the Monterey Waterway. It is a \$6 million project and fortunately they got \$4.5 million from the Federal Government. They are getting that but they are short over \$1.5 million. Basically they don't have it. With that \$10 million liability, it is gone. He doesn't know where they are going to pay it from. They don't have anything left in the contingency fund for that. He knows the County has a contingency fund. His request to the County is... This is a 120 day project. In other words, they have to pay it now. They are starting the project, 90 to 120 days, is he correct on that one? And they are going to have to pay for this. They are not going to wait until the next budget year. They are out of money. They have that \$10 million liability and he doesn't know how they are going to pay what they have already. But they don't have enough left in the General Fund. They are short \$1.5 million. And his request to the County is, this is a County responsibility just as much as the City, because it is in the County. And he is sure that if there was something in the north County, they would let them know it. But with a disaster like this, they need some County help. And he doesn't think it is unreasonable and he thinks it is appropriate to ask the County for money from their contingency fund for half of it, \$750,000, toward that Monterey Waterway, which is one of the biggest natural disasters they have had. And he can't say it any more simple. He feels it is appropriate and not unreasonable to ask for that money. Again, that is his own request, he doesn't know if the Council agrees or what their consensus would be.

Mayor Minsky said it depends on whether they say yes or no.

Chairman Coward said he thanks Councilman Kelly for giving them a lot of background on that and ample time to review their item, all of 30 seconds. He is sure that the County would be pleased to take a look at that. He doesn't know offhand what the situation is. The County basically has two funds. They have a contingency fund for their annual budget that is typically in the range of about \$1 million for costs that incurred throughout the year that are not anticipated. They also have emergency reserves, which he is proud that the Board has substantially increased from in the low \$3 million range up into the low \$8 million range since he has been on board, and that was at the recommendation of their Budget Director. His understanding is that they depleted a good portion of that \$8 million. And as part of their recovery plan, they are trying to get it back up to that level, if not higher, in the next several years. But that is one more reason they weren't able to do a greater tax rate decrease was the fact that they had to build those emergency reserves back up in case they were faced with another natural disaster.

County Administrator Anderson said out of \$100 million, they are probably down to maybe \$700,000 left in there and that is to get them through the end of this year. That is providing the possibility they don't get hit by another hurricane during that time frame. Their financial goal resulted from some \$120 million dollars in County costs for Hurricanes Jeanne and Frances. Another

\$17 million for Wilma. And as Chairman Coward said, they had \$8.4 million in reserves that they blew through in a heartbeat. Right now their financial goal for the next 4.4 years is they have to recoup \$22,764,324. So if Councilman Kelly thinks Port St. Lucie has financial problems, that is where the County is at. He is not trying to make light of it, but they are in the hole also big time. They figure it is going to take them 4.4 years, provided they don't get hit again, to get that money back; and that's after FEMA, that's after insurance, that's after grants.

Mayor Minsky said he has to admit when it comes to all these funding resources and everything else like that, he is kind left behind. But what bothers him is that communities can't really plan for this because they don't seem to have a firm fix on what funding they are entitled to under certain situations. And it seems to him that they should press their Federal Government to say, if an event happens, this is how much funding they can expect based on the amount of damage. Now for the Federal Government to sit there and for them to cherry-pick which ones they will do, that leaves them in the lurch. They are taking all this money from the citizenry, they are taking all this money in taxes, all this money from the County, from the State. Florida is still a donor State, last he heard. He thinks they need to start making an effort to push the Federal Government, so that if an event happens they can figure on how much money they are going to get back based on the amount of damage that they have. They should be able to know. But to say, this is what happened, does it qualify or doesn't it? But to have to go and ask the Federal Government whether they will accept that or not accept that, no. They should say the specifications are there. Does it meet the specifications? Then they will get the money. To him, that has been the most difficult part about this. Something happens and there is no way to protect themselves. There is no way to prepare because they don't know how much support they are going to be getting. He thinks that is a short coming in the relationship they have between all those agencies that are out there to help them. They are actually charity cases when they should be beneficiaries.

Councilman Kelly said he didn't mean to bring this up at the last minute. He did not have this on agenda. Chairman Coward remarked about the 30 seconds. He didn't ask for an answer right now. He is just asking the County to consider it. And each of them meet with their City Manager individually every week or two now. He had his meeting with Mr. Cooper this morning; and when he asked him about the article in the paper about that \$2.7 million or \$3 million, how much was going to be left after the Monterey Waterway, Mr. Cooper said there is no money left. They don't even have that \$1.5 million to pay it. They have been through three hurricanes. He is not going to get acrimonious with anyone. They did take care of south County. They never asked for anything, because the County didn't have anything to give them. He won't get into complaining about the Federal Government or FEMA or anybody. The County went through the same course as Port St. Lucie did. They didn't ask for anything. This is one time that he thought he would ask. And if the County could just consider that, great. The idea of where to get the money didn't come to him really until today when he went over the figures with Mr. Cooper. He is sorry if he offended anyone by bringing this up at the last minute.

Chairman Coward said Councilman Kelly didn't offend anyone. He was actually just being funny, he didn't mean to set him off. He is sure the Board of County Commissioners will consider it. He thinks

the point that is being made though is that they were obviously hit with upwards of \$200 million damage to public buildings and facilities; and the net after insurance and FEMA was in the range of \$22 million to St. Lucie County, which they are going to try to rebuild and pay for within the next 4.5 years. They are obviously facing huge recovery expenses themselves. The County will consider it, but they have to face the reality of what they are dealing with as well. But they will try and look for a creative way and do what they can. Is there any other additional items Port St. Lucie would like to discuss? If not, they will move to the next item.

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The next item on the Agenda was Discussion on Skateboard Park for Lawnwood Complex.

Mayor Benton said he has been looking for a skateboard park for years. He knows the City had an issue with skateboarders several years ago, they were looking to outlaw skateboarding. The City at the time put a little pressure on, because unfortunately they are not in the recreation business. They thought the skate park was on track, at least from what he was told by County staff several years ago. In fact, they went down and took a lot of pictures down in Rio. He thought that was an excellent park to model one after. When he saw the plans for Lawnwood recently, he didn't see a skate park in it. He thought before they break ground, let's see if they can resurrect this. Because he knows the County's parking garage downtown is being used right now; and he thinks these people are using it, understanding that it is with County approval. But soon they will be closing that and putting two more floors on it, so they are going to be putting skateboarders out in front of the Sunrise Theater, which is going to create problems. It is time - just like baseball, soccer, and every other sport - that they give skateboarders and inline skaters a place to call home.

County Administrator Anderson said with the young Commissioners that they now have that like to skateboard, they have been researching the process for a skateboarding park. They updated their costs. Yesterday they met with the architects for the new special needs shelter/gymnasium that is going to be constructed at Lawnwood and has to be opened by May 2008 because of State funding they are receiving. They have come up with the very final plans to present to the Commissioners of the gymnasium/special needs shelter, which will also incorporate their new Parks & Recreational offices. (Mr. Anderson displayed a drawing.) What they are talking about at this point - and this has not gone before the Board yet, they just really got this basically finalized yesterday - the gymnasium, they are talking about locating that right along the practice field along Virginia Avenue. The reason they would build there is that is all that is is practice infield, it is not a full baseball field and there is a parking lot adjacent to that that they could use for this. That would save them a lot of money. Then adjacent to that gymnasium, back in this area is where the skateboard park could go on about one acre. And that would enable them to use the restrooms in the gymnasium. They could have doors on the outside of the gymnasium and be able to close off the gymnasium so they would have restrooms available for the skateboard park right there. The estimated price for a skateboard park at this time is about \$557,000. They do not have money funded for that. They are just putting all of the money they can together right now to budget for this gymnasium and special needs shelter. The construction costs keep going up and they don't have this fully funded yet. Probably get that done in the next week or so to come up with the funding for that. At the same time, if the

Commissioners decide to go ahead with a skateboard park, they set that site aside and construct the gymnasium to accommodate that. Hopefully the City of Fort Pierce will become a partner with them with this skateboard park in financing it. If they can do that, obviously that would move that right along.

Mayor Benton said the City has property there. Are they including that in their improvements to Lawnwood?

County Administrator Anderson said the property right now that the City has is where the County employees park in the dirt. It is on the corner of South 23rd Street and Virginia Avenue. Their plans had been to improve that parking lot if it were deeded over to the County. He had talked to Dennis Beach in the past and he suggested that the County draw plans to submit to the City; and if that was acceptable to the City to improve that parking lot, that the City could possibly consider deeding that property over to the County. No commitments were made, that was conversation they had. Another thought they had right along when they talk about realigning streets in Fort Pierce and working together, where 23rd Street comes out onto Virginia Avenue is a very dangerous intersection. It comes out just east of 25th Street. They have had studies performed over and over again and it does not warrant traffic signal because it is very close to 25th Street to put another traffic signal in. A few years ago they presented to the County Commissioners a campus plan for this entire area; and they are working on revising that plan whereby this would be one entire government campus, including the Lawnwood Complex. And the plan was to reroute 23rd Street back through there. They are going to keep property set aside for that, so if it ever comes to fruition. And then what they would do is, where 23rd Street now goes out to Virginia, they would close that off and that would be part of their complex.

Mayor Benton said what he was looking to come out of this is basically a commitment from the County. He knows they are making improvements to the Lawnwood Complex. He knows there are several soccer, baseball, and softball fields, all kinds of fields. He is looking for approximately an acre and a half - not a tennis court with some bowls and some half-pipes - he is talking about a serious park that they could be proud of. He would rather take the time to find a place for it there and he would like to see that there is a commitment from both the City and the County to do that. If the City has to donate some property to make that a reality, he hopes the City Commission will do that.

County Administrator Anderson said he thinks they have found a site, they are getting it surveyed right now. They hired a surveyor to survey it to make sure everything is going to fit there. They think they have located a site, they think will work. They have some real good costs here they just got. It is a \$557,000 number and it will be a state of the art skateboard park.

City Commissioner Coke asked do they not have funds from the Parks Referendum that the citizens of Fort Pierce agreed to pay into?

County Administrator Anderson said yes; and they are spending more from the Parks Referendum at this Lawnwood Complex than they are actually receiving from Fort Pierce's portion.

City Commissioner Coke said she understands that. Her point she made to him several years ago, and she will make it again now in

case anyone has forgotten, that Lawnwood Stadium is actually a County facility that is located inside the City.

County Administrator Anderson said which they have just redone, that entire stadium.

City Commissioner Coke said she is very glad that they have. However, she thought it several years ago when they passed this referendum and she still believes that at some juncture... She supported the Parks Referendum with the understanding that the City of Fort Pierce would have some input into how their money was spent, and that is not how it has turned out at all. She is very grateful for the work that has been done to improve the parks; however she does want everybody to be cognizant, especially Lawnwood Stadium, that facility is used by everyone - County people, City people, people from outside the County. It hosts a myriad of sports activities. It is not solely for the benefit of the citizens of the Fort Pierce area. She thinks that if their Commission feels strongly about asking for something, she would hope that the County would try and find that money within the Parks Referendum that they are already funding.

County Administrator Anderson said right now the gymnasium/special needs shelter is draining their resources. That is taking a lot of money at this point. As time goes on, more money will accumulate. But this facility, it is planned right now, what they are discussing. They haven't brought it before the Board yet. It is an NCAA basketball court, so it host collegiate events here and have people come in from all over the county, which he thinks is needed, and also local people use this gymnasium. They think that basketball is one of those areas in this community that they don't have enough facilities for. That is one of the things that they really want to get in place.

Chairman Coward said he actually agrees with both comments. He thinks the intention here was to put this on the agenda so they could provide input. They obviously collect a portion of the recreation impact fees dollars from City residents. Their full intention is to invest that back into the City in concurrence with what the City wants. He can't speak for this Board, but he personally thinks this is a great idea. It is not an issue of whether they can try to incorporate it from a financial standpoint, they will find a way to make that happen in his opinion. The issue is more towards the land availability. If the City has some additional property there that could possibly be used for the auditorium/shelter facility which they are putting there, then he thinks they have the ability to achieve this at that location. And he thinks if they reprioritize, they can do that.

City Commissioner Nelson said he would like to add his support to the skateboard effort. If it comes down to the issue of whether or not they should have more soccer fields or a skateboard facility, he would choose the skateboard park. He doesn't think they have that many people who have been living here for countless numbers of years that are engaged in soccer. They have had a dire need for this skateboard facility. He thinks the State has passed a law that says that the liability with respect to skateboard accidents and so forth are not necessarily those of the municipalities or the county governments anymore. So they have a cushion there two ways, a limited liability as well as some funding that could be appropriated from some other sources that have been mentioned thus far. So he is solid in support of this skateboard effort and he

thinks they should do it even if it requires eliminating some of the soccer ball fields.

Mayor Benton said a lot of the schools have ball fields and soccer fields. He doesn't know one that has a skateboard park. So it is needed.

County Administrator Anderson said he has made that very clear.

Mayor Benton said and he didn't want to have to threaten him with 200 kids in the audience. His own kids have grown up and they are not skateboarding. But he knows Commissioner Coward has got a skateboarder up and coming, as well as some other folks here.

Chairman Coward said he would like to ask one thing, in order to move this along. Could their Commission formally address the acreage that is in this location and see if there is a way for them to provide them with additional land and incorporate the skate park; and then they will go back and look to see if they can reprioritize and find additional dollars to actually pay for the improvements.

Mayor Benton said he will be asking his Commission on Monday night.

County Commissioner Lewis said her understanding has been, addressing recreation referendum funding, that some City and County funds have been expended on the park. It isn't as if they have used all the City funds alone, because what they have done far exceeded what the City funds came to. And also, this is what is on the ground. There are more things being planned that are not shown here. So this is not a what you see is what you get kind of thing. There is more coming. Unfortunately this is not an actual representation of what is there. What is still planned is not on that. Maybe they can send it over to the City so they can include that in their discussion Monday evening so they know what they are looking at moving to acquire this particular property.

Mayor Benton said they have that. Mr. Anderson has sent that over to him a couple of weeks ago, what is planned. That is why they know there are rugby fields and soccer fields. There is three soccer/rugby fields. Let's eliminate one if they have to and put in a skate park.

County Commissioner Lewis said she is not objecting to that at all. She was just simply kind of filling in because there are folks that are looking at pictures and maybe wouldn't understand what they are talking about is not all there is, there is a lot more coming.

Councilman Cooper said he knows tomorrow there is going to be some people that don't understand why they can't fix a lot of what they have, but are looking at \$500,000 for a park. Of course, the Board knows that is a 1/4 of mill that has been set aside for park improvements. He is curious how their system works. Port St. Lucie has their own Parks and Recreation Department. He is not on the Fort Pierce Commission, but he certainly supports Mayor Benton with that concept. The kids love it. Their facility is used constantly. Does the City and the County team up with that 1/4 mill? How do they work together, the County and the City of Fort Pierce?

County Administrator Anderson said the City of Fort Pierce does not have a parks department. The County runs the parks program in the

City of Fort Pierce. So the way it is, the millage that comes in from the City of Fort Pierce and the County is combined together. It is different from the City of Port St. Lucie, where the money goes directly to them.

Councilman Cooper said he was just curious how that works.

City Commissioner Becht said before they jump off of this topic, he had seen the literature - and he doesn't know if it ever reached the County Commissioners - but he knows that Mr. Beach at one time proposed to him and they had gone around and looked at properties. There are County properties in Downtown Fort Pierce that they would like to talk to them about acquiring. They could perhaps do that incident to a swap, where they give them land here so they can expand and create the skate park. The County has lands in Downtown Fort Pierce that they would like to see in City hands.

Chairman Coward asked is he trying to complicate this?

City Commissioner Becht said it is just a swap.

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The next item on the Agenda was Questions and Comments.

Councilwoman Berger said she thinks the City of Port St. Lucie might be able to help the County free up some funds in their Parks and Recreation Department. If they would like, they would be happy to help them out with that **River Park Marina**, there on Prima Vista.

Chairman Coward said they actually are moving aggressively forth with improvements at River Park Marina. They had been slowed down by permitting delays and so forth. He understands there are some pretty substantial grants that they have secured and they will be making some major improvements.

County Administrator Anderson said yes, they just received their permit.

Councilwoman Berger said it has a playground as of a couple of days ago.

Chairman Coward said personally, he thinks it is a missed opportunity. He thinks there is a whole lot more that could be done there. But in spite of the delays they have had in the past, he thinks they are aggressively moving forward with some important improvements at that location.

County Commissioner Craft said if they could have a member of staff kind of explain. They have had some problems, he thinks, with multiple jurisdictions that have slowed them down at that site that he wants to make sure that everyone is aware of. It is not the County that has dragged their feet on this project there. It is some State and Federal organizations that have slowed them down.

County Administrator Anderson said he doesn't know if anyone is here that could address it. If not, he will. He knows one of the docks was too high so they couldn't get in and out of a boat. But that has been resolved.

Mr. Pete Keogh, St. Lucie County Parks & Recreation Director, said in the absence of Don McLam who was working on this project for their department. The hold-up has been on the DEP. That was the agency that was responsible for the delay in the project.

County Administrator Anderson said the reason was that they moved the dock. They brought the dock level back down so they could access the dock. Also, on the trails, they gave them some difficulty on where the people could walk and not walk. They straightened that out. They do have the permits now. As Commissioner Coward said, they have the money. They are coming to the Board this month on recommendations on the marina that was destroyed by fire. They finally had worked out a settlement with their insurance company on that. So they are going to make a recommendation to the Commissioners as early as the 14th.

County Commissioner Hutchinson said just to follow up, can she ask staff to get the City of Port St. Lucie Council copies of what the plans are going there. She believes Councilwoman Berger will be quite impressed with what has been planned to go there.

Chairman Coward said as a resident of Port St. Lucie, he lives across from a beautiful open space that has no improvements in it and he would rather see them focus on making improvements on existing open space in the City than taking over County responsibility. That is just his personal perspective.

Councilwoman Berger said they know he lives there, that is why...  
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Mayor Benton said yesterday he received his **insurance** bill just for windstorm and it went up just under 60% and that is before he got his flood insurance. Last year he thinks it was 30%, with no claim last year. He is just wondering that if everybody is seeing that. Because on top of the rising price of utilities and everything else, it is almost unbearable. He knows a lot of them are going to Tallahassee this month. He would ask if they could maybe ask them if they have to tighten up the building codes, like Dade County, to do something to bring these rates under control. Because it is going to make it unaffordable to live on the Treasure Coast.

Mayor Minsky said one of the problems is that the companies that do the insurance, they can't afford to operate at a loss. And because the escalation on prices and escalation on values, their expenses are going up just like everybody else. The only way to recoup and to stay in business is by raising the rates. Unfortunately, they are all caught in that squeeze because they can't afford to buy insurance, if they have a mortgage they are in deep trouble. The fact is that these companies are not going to operate at a loss. Whether or not their profit is justifiable or reasonable, that is a completely different question.  
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Councilman Kelly said he has a quick historical concern here. He thinks it was about four or five months ago that they took a trip to Washington, DC and during that time they had some terrific historical pictures taken of the County Commission and himself and everyone with Senators and Congressman in front of historic buildings. It is part of St. Lucie County history. He remembers there was a couple rolls of film and maybe Commissioner Smith would remember, didn't they entrust that to someone who said they would have that back in about 48 hours?

County Commissioner Smith said that was his recollection.

County Commissioner Craft said those photographs, he took them in and they are trying to fix them because they went through the x-ray machine. That's his story and his sticking with it.  
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County Commissioner Hutchinson said before they adjourn, she wants to thank both the Cities for having attended today. This has been a very good meeting and one she is proud of. But she would also like to direct the staffs, in order to continue these going on and that the communication goes on, if they go ahead and arrange and start working on the days when they will be meeting with the Cities on an individual basis on certain things they discussed.

County Commissioner Craft said under that comment, he thinks there is many issues that they discussed that are very specific to each City and he would like to see these times staggered. If they can have a three hour block set aside, the first hour will be designated for Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County and then the second hour will be Fort Pierce, Port St. Lucie, and St. Lucie County - all three - and the third hour will for the County and Port St. Lucie. That way they are not wasting each others time because there is some people here that have a lot of important business to take care and he thinks it will really cut down on the meeting time.

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The next item on the Agenda was Public Comment.

**Mr. Joseph Jenkins** said he is the Operations Manager of WJFP WJCP Radio here in Fort Pierce. He wanted to say good afternoon to the entire boards of the City of Fort Pierce, the County, the City of Port St. Lucie. He is a little bothered today because of the fact that while he enjoyed the whole the meeting and there are some great things going on in his County, he didn't hear much about where he is from and the expansions and the redevelopment. This was growth meeting it looks like to him and there is going to be a lot of growth where he is from. They call it the northwest section of town. He doesn't know what they are east of. He is only five minutes away from the beach. He is troubled. Skateboarding is a needed thing that they need to make room for the skateboarders. But he has kids that are killing each other. They are talking about gymnasiums here in adjacent areas. Nothing talked about northwest. He went to a Concerned Citizens meeting the other night with the CRA Director who promised things. He is going to make it quick, he doesn't want to be a downer, but he just really needs to stress to all of them that they need to be more concerned about that area and those folks. A lot of them do not know what is going on here today. They are not getting information. Information is being put on other radio stations, which they are not privy to. It is a gross miscarriage of equally dispelling the information. Now when he goes back and tells them yes, they are spending money in the County, they are growing beautifully, they are widening roads. He lives on a dirt road in Paradise Park, has been for six years. Why didn't they discuss that today? And so he is going to leave some information. He has spoken with the Mayor. He has spoken with Commissioner Smith on these issues. He is so sorry that Commissioner Nelson had to leave and he cannot for the life of him feel like why he would feel like skateboarding. He is glad that Commissioner Nelson is supporting it. He knows they need room for skateboarders. But why didn't he bring up what he is bringing up? Why didn't he mention what he just mentioned? He just wants to admit all of them work very hard and he doesn't want to down. He knows he is emotional on it, he doesn't want to transfer that energy of negativity, just emotion to them, not negativity. He sees them in action. He agrees with Commissioner Hutchinson, this has been a very good meeting. But nothing is being done where he is from.

Chairman Coward said he actually agrees with him in many regards. There is a lot more that needs to be done in northwest Fort Pierce. One of the issues that was talked about earlier was the need to work with the City of Fort Pierce cooperatively on a number of issues and that needs to include infrastructure and recreational facilities. He thinks he heard Commissioner Smith mention a desire to try to do something similar. He doesn't know if he wants to expand on that recreation issue. But Mr. Jenkins says he lives in Paradise Park and asked why that specific project was not mentioned. He didn't want to leave the assumption that there was nothing being done. The reason that project isn't being mentioned is because that is a specific County project; and this discussion here is on broader issues that are overlapping jurisdictional boundaries and there is a need for intergovernmental coordination. But the County itself is in fact continuing to invest money in Paradise Park, Harmony Heights, and other areas. What they are doing is, although the road improvement is the ultimate goal, the first step is to get the drainage fixed. Because if they don't have the drainage fixed and they put the asphalt in, the roadway erodes as does the investment and they haven't achieved anything. So Phase I is to actually go in and make the engineering and drainage improvements and then follow that up with the road improvements thereafter. He thinks in this year's budget alone, they have several hundred thousand dollars if not more for those two projects, and that is a continuation of past efforts. They are moving forward in Paradise Park on some improvements. Personally, the recreation issue is a huge one. He would like to see them expand a lot of facilities in Fort Pierce and do that in partnership with the City.

County Commissioner Smith said he is happy to see Mr. Jenkins here. Like he said, no negativity at all and none taken. There are a lot of wonderful projects going on in District I and throughout the County. Of particular interest to him as he sees the pipes, he is not sure if those are on his street yet, but he was down on San Diego Avenue back in November when they were putting down drainage pipes for improvements to the roads there. The next issue will be coming in and taking care of the next efforts, the important part of going in and putting down bedrock for the paving so they can go ahead and get those roads taken care of. The Board of County Commissioners has made a commitment in the last year to make sure that they go back through the areas that are unreserved at this point, including northwest Fort Pierce as called by many people. There has been a commitment of resources financially to take a look at some of their parks and recreational areas there. Avenue M and 13th Street within the City of Fort Pierce, the County has placed a new pool there. At Paradise Park they have looked at a pool structure there, they have done some improvements there. They are making improvements there. But the overall issue is that they are improving the quality of life for all of their residents. He thinks Mr. Jenkins question is well justified. While he actually wasn't able to see what they are doing in this meeting, he will be happy to sit down and talk with him about what they are doing and what they have done.

Mr. Jenkins said he has been very informed with this meeting and he commends them all, they really break it down in layman terms. He will attend more and get with Mr. Smith. Again, not to throw stones, but he just thinks there needs to be an awakening on both sides. They mention this on the radio and he looks over his shoulder. He has an article and he will just read a piece from it. Fort Pierce resident Betty --- has a full plate. At 61, totally

responsible for providing care to two developmentally disabled children who live with her full time. She has also has three grown children of her own. She sings gospel music with her church choir. She helped with ice and water for distribution when the power was out in Fort Pierce after Hurricane Frances. But as soon as the lights came back on in her own home, she received a message to feed the people from God. She said without a second thought, she woke at 5:00 a.m. Thawing, cooking, frying, and baking every scrap of food in her home. When she had a full meal prepared, that first day she called the local radio station to give her address to anybody that... They initiated that for her. This is the kind of stuff that is going on. They fed 52 people the first announcement and they were stocking her and she was cooking. They provided cooks for her to help in the kitchen. The Crime Stoppers information, the redevelopment information is not getting to the people. He understands if they don't show up, they can't focus on those problems. They have to fix the problems of folks who are standing in front of these microphones. But if they are constantly putting Crime Stoppers spots on with the Love Doctors. People who are committing crimes not listening to the Love Doctors. People who know about crimes are not listening to the Love Doctors. They have got to get back and get this information to their community so they can come up, so they can grow together. They are growing. They are beautiful. Fort Pierce is being rebuilt now. The roads need to be... Sunland Gardens lighting, proper lighting. There needs to be an awakening and they need to start working together. For instance, he was the person that was on the corner of Sunrise Theater and he will be tonight, until they see... The fundamental problem is, they are going to do this over here. Sunrise is opening again tonight. Not going to, but it will open tonight. Friday Fest, never, he has not heard one announcement about Friday Fest on an African American or urban station. Never. He is a resident, a black resident of Fort Pierce. Their Main Street invitation was to have a band from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. tonight and a collard green and corn bread cook-off. That was their invitation to get him off the corner. Again, he didn't come for this. But he thinks if not now, then when?

Chairman Coward asked if he could interject, because he wants to leave here with an optimistic feeling. He thinks everyone sitting up here shares the broad goals Mr. Jenkins laid out for them. He thinks there is a commitment for various improvements in all parts of the County, including northwest Fort Pierce and the adjacent unincorporated County areas. When he was first on this Board, former City Commissioner Sessions worked in conjunction with Commissioner Nelson and their whole Commission to bring forth a multi-million dollar partnership to invest millions of dollars in the Avenue D corridor. And that was something that the County Commission endorsed and put forth. That to him was the beginning of the awakening. He doesn't think needs to happen, he thinks it has started. They need to continue those commitments. He thinks they just put \$500,000 slush fund in the hands of Commissioners Smith and said please go work with the local community to develop additional recreational programming. And they will use that as a seed to get additional grant dollars. So they are committed to try and work with the community to do a variety of different things. He hopes Mr. Jenkins leaves here knowing that they are committed to try to work with him.

Mr. Jenkins said they were in Port St. Lucie as well. They want to be in the microphone, they have a talk show every day from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. It is a community African-American talk show.

But it is to better the community so that they can become better neighbors, a better community, a better City, a better County, a better State, and so on. But he offers the invitation here now. His uncle and he work very hard and they are still trying to draw up some things. Like a Commissioner Minutes hour, where it is open to any elected official who wishes to come in on any given Monday; and if there is a problem, there's not participation, there's not enough information to drive up funds. They have African American entrepreneurs who are throwing their monies out of the windows, investing on things when they could be investing in their own surroundings. He invites them. It is open. It is a non-profit radio station. They meet all the legalities. On that note, that is the positive. That is why he came today. Because he wanted to make that offer. He met with City Manager Dennis Beach.

Chairman Coward said he personally has never received such an invitation; but now it has been extended, he will certainly be willing to attend. He bets all his counterparts will be there as well. He did want to point out two additional things that have happened that he is proud of. The County, through their Economic Development Department, worked with the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Council and the Lincoln Park Business Association to sponsor a National Conference basically, where they had experts coming in from as far away as California to look specifically at how to work on redevelopment issues in minority areas. It was a very successful first meeting. He thinks they got slowed by a hurricane after that, they have been trying to pick that back up. He also knows that Sheriff Ken Mascara has worked very closely with the City of Fort Pierce and has done sting operation on gang violence and has put a tremendous amount of effort in that. He knows that a lot of them have served on Weed & Seed and are trying to deal with not only the law enforcement side but also some of the social programming side. He has worked with Commissioner Alexander to try to get additional funding for summer programming. He does not want him to leave here thinking there is not support and interest. There is a lot of things going on. Maybe they need to do a better job to let the community know of it and they will do that through his radio station and other means.

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**Mr. John Ferrick** said he is a County resident. He is addressing this to the whole Board more or less, the Commissioners and all, but this is mainly pointed at asking questions to the City of Fort Pierce. Mayor Benton brought up several instances on Five Mile Creek and Ten Mile Creek about the **flooding** conditions and the possibility of future flooding conditions due to the development. His concern is the flooding on the North Fork which is were the circumference of the Five Mile Creek and the Ten Mile Creek go to the south, which does go into Port St. Lucie and will affect them in the near future. His problem is the development that is going into the flood plains and filling in these flood plains where the flood waters have no place to go to to spread out and not get as high as they would if they weren't being filled in. They are being filled in. The river when it floods, which it will, no two ways about it. The problem is that with the filling in of these flood plains the water won't go up, he will get flooded because he lives in a flood plain. He knows this. But flood waters are going to get higher. And at some point people who have never been flooded before are going to get flooded. He is hoping with the cities coming in to this area with their future annexations that they plan ahead and realize that they just can't fill in these flood plains. Because they are going to flood somebody that has never been flooded before and they are going to flood the other people who

have been getting flooded and know they are going to get flooded and they are going to make their conditions even worse. He is hoping they look forward as they come into annexations in this area that they will take this into consideration in the future.

Mayor Benton said he addressed part of that today. He took some of his staff members that are new to the area out to White City Park and all around, just to show where the levels were and have been in the past. There is one project that he noticed today on the north side of the St. Lucie River with Ten Mile Creek there along 25th Street, multi-family. That will be annexed into the City, but that is not something that the City has approved. That is his issue, is that they need to get together and discuss these. Because what happens is, when they annex them, Mr. Anderson and these County Commissioners aren't going to get phone calls, the City Commissioners are. The City's staff and the City Engineer are going to be dealing with it. It is really important that they address this. Because some of them that have been here a long time remember that area flooded maybe once every five or ten years. Now it is happening several times a year and it is only going to get worse. He thanks Mr. Ferrick, this is something they really need to hear from the folks in White City, because it is going to be a major problem.

Mr. Ferrick said he is hoping they will look into it.

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Councilman Kelly said they made a trip to Washington, D.C. and they had a consensus he thinks that they were going to go back. And he knows if they don't go back, the first trip was for naught. Because if they don't go back and ask the Senators and Congressman and everybody they met with, what have you done for us lately? He thinks they need to remind them. They were going to go back. This time he is hoping a few more Council members would like to attend. They are going to Tallahassee and it is a lot of work. But he would just ask the County if they could set up a trip and find out when would be most advantageous time to go, in May or April. Let's put that trip back on.

County Commissioner Craft said he would also like to invite the City of Fort Pierce to join them on the next trip.

Chairman Coward said very good idea.

Councilman Kelly said Martin County.

Chairman Coward said the last trip was particularly successful because they were able coordinate with folks on the west coast of Florida. So it wasn't seen as just a local issue, it was truly a regional or even a statewide issue. He thought that was effective. They can try to coordinate with Lee County. He thanks everyone. He thought this was extremely productive and he hopes they can do this more often.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

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Adjournment.

ATTEST:

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR COMMISSIONER