

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP OF
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

JANUARY 16, 2020

Present: Commissioner Steven L. Barry, Chairman, District 5
Commissioner Robert D. Bender, Vice Chairman, District 4
Commissioner Jeffrey W. Bergosh, District 1
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3
Commissioner Douglas B. Underhill, District 2
Janice Gilley, County Administrator
Sharon Harrell, Finance Director, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Alison Rogers, County Attorney
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Krykyt Fisher, Office Assistant III, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Shamara Jernigan, Agenda Program Coordinator, County Administrator's Office

Location: Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, Board Chambers, First Floor
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida

Report prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Chairman Barry called the Committee of the Whole (C/W) Workshop to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

The C/W was advised by DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office, that the meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on January 11, 2020, in the Board's weekly meeting schedule.

AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

3. P3 Proposal and Needs Analysis

A. Board Discussion – The C/W:

- (1) Was advised by County Attorney Rogers that:
 - A by-statute confidential proposal was received from a private party
 - The question for the Board is whether there is enough interest in the proposal to follow the P3 statute
 - By that statute, the Board would do a solicitation that would be out “on the streets” for between 21 and 120 days to request similar proposals from other parties
 - It would be helpful to know how long the Board would want the proposal out on the street, who would the selection committee be, and if there is any particular way to define a similar project
 - Should the Board wish to proceed with a P3 proposal, there are several independent analyses that would be required by the statute
- (2) Heard comments from Commissioner Bergosh regarding the need for something to be done with the Bay Center, his desire for a shorter period of solicitation, and his support as long as no funding comes from the general fund or Local Option Sales Tax (LOST);
- (3) Heard comments from Commissioner Underhill concerning his lack of support without a modern and true needs assessment and a clear statement from the Board on exactly what it is looking for;
- (4) Heard comments from Commissioner May regarding his concern that there not be an absence of the Bay Center while building something new, the funding sources, and his opinion that there should be two separate spaces: an event center and a sports arena;
- (5) Heard comments from Commissioner Bender regarding acquiring the Gregory Street loop/exit ramp;
- (6) Heard comments from Commissioner Barry regarding moving the process forward, funding, and the need for a plan in order for outside capital to be procured;

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

3. Continued...

A. Continued...

- (7) Discussed a 60 day solicitation period and was advised by County Attorney Rogers that the Board would need to agree on confidentiality with other proposals and whether it wanted the blackout period waived;
- (8) Discussed identifying several key components, such as identifying funding without LOST or ad-valorem dollars, not allowing for the non-use of the current facility, and being open-minded to the renovation of the Bay Center, among other ideas;
- (9) Discussed having one facility versus two, the potential locations of the facilities, how funding could be related to location, and identifying public and privately owned parcels for use (such as the Tech-Park);
- (10) Requested that each Commissioner be provided with all studies done on the Bay Center from the 2001-2002 time period onward, and agreed to bring the item back to the March Committee of the Whole for further discussion and to identify the components for the Request for Proposals; and
- (11) Agreed to ask staff to move an item forward for real business on engaging the Florida Department of Transportation about closing the Gregory Street loop/exit ramp; and

B. Board Direction – None.

4. Consideration of the 5th Cent Tourist Development Tax

A. Board Discussion – The CW:

- (1) Heard an update on the most recent Tourist Development Council (TDC) Meeting from Commissioner Bender, during which the council voted to recommend to the BCC the enactment of the 5th Cent Tourist Development Tax (TDT); the Board could decide to start collection of the 5th cent prior to determining its use;
- (2) Discussed potential uses for the 5th cent, the possibility of putting the levied dollars into a restricted fund until the use is identified, and whether there is support from hoteliers and other business owners;

(Continued on Page 4)

AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

4. Continued...

A. Continued...

- (3) Heard comments from Commissioner Barry advising that he is open-minded on the collection of the 5th cent, but would need to feel comfortable with the use;
- (4) Heard comments from Commissioner Underhill regarding his lack of support for levying the tax, especially without identifying the use, and the lack of west side representation on the TDC;
- (5) Was advised by Commissioner Barry that, in his opinion, needs are evident, but identifying the priority is what the Board will need to do;
- (6) Heard comments from Commissioner Bergosh concerning his support of a discussion on how the tax would be utilized and what other counties are doing in regards to the TDT;
- (7) Heard comments from Commissioner May concerning his support for increasing services and the allowable uses of the TDT;
- (8) Discussed the TDT tax other counties nearby are currently levying, was advised by Stephan Hall, Budget Manager, that the 5th cent would amount to approximately \$3 million, and was advised by County Administrator Gilley that infrastructure could be an allowable use of TDT dollars due to visitor impact on infrastructure;
- (9) Was advised by County Attorney Rogers that the 5th cent was levied in the past in an effort to attract Southwest Airlines, but was never collected and was sunset due to Southwest not coming to Pensacola; and
- (10) Discussed bringing this item back in March with the P3 item for further discussion and was advised by County Administrator Gilley that she will provide the annual TDT report from the Department of Revenue to everyone; and

B. Board Direction – None.

6. Adjourn

Chairman Barry declared the C/W Workshop adjourned at 10:27 a.m.