

Stormwater Governance Study Alternative User Fee Collection Process

March 8, 2011

Non-Ad Valorem Assessment

- Assessment process proposed in recently completed study.
- Assessment is included in annual tax bill.
- Statutory time line requirements for establishing the assessment.
 - Property Assessor and Tax Collector agreement
 - Certification of property rolls and proposed assessment

Alternative Collection Process

- Add stormwater fee to Pinellas County Utilities (PCU) bill.
 - Stormwater fee is separate line item on bill
 - Process used by other local jurisdictions for their stormwater fee
 - Clearwater
 - St. Petersburg
 - Largo
 - Fee added to Pinellas County Utilities bill

Non-Ad Valorem Process

Advantages:

- Because fee is on tax bill, a high collection rate is assured.
- Property appraiser maps are accurate and all properties in the unincorporated areas will be identified.
- Charges for stormwater user fee will be levied directly on property owner.

Disadvantages:

- A rigid time frame must be followed to implement.
- Fee must be paid once per year in a lump sum.
- Potential to initiate a tax deed sale for failure to pay the fee.
- Mid-year adjustments or changes to fee structure are not possible.

Collection via PCU Utility Bill

Advantages:

- Greater flexibility in schedule for adoption and implementation process.
- Periodic billing cycles easier for many citizens than annual bill.
- Ability to adjust charge if incorrect or if property improvements are made.

Disadvantages:

- Not all properties in unincorporated area served by PCU.
- Expanded process to merge Property Appraiser and PCU files to create bills.
- On rental properties, tenant would receive bill, not property owner.
- Potentially lower collection rate.

Billing through PCU

- New technologies and processes make this easier to accomplish.
- Eliminates tight time frames for implementation.
- Provides time for additional discussion on need.
- Another “option” for consideration.

Clarification

- Proposed Stormwater Utility is NOT a new “agency”.
 - Would be allocated to merged Public Works / Utilities / Environmental Management organization for capital and operating expenditures.
 - This is not the creation of a separate agency or department.