

Largo, Florida, April 18, 2005

A meeting of the Pinellas County Charter Review Commission (CRC) (as created by Chapter 80-950, Laws of Florida) was held in the Young-Rainey STAR Center, General Conference Room, 7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo at 5:05 P.M. on this date with the following members in attendance:

Alan Bomstein, Chairman
Susan Latvala, County Commissioner
John Bryan, City of St. Petersburg Councilmember
Karen Burns
Katie Cole
Robert C. Decker
George Jirotko
Louis Kwall
Roger Wilson

Absent:

Jim Sebesta, State Senator
James F. Coats, Sheriff
Ricardo Davis, Vice-Chairman
Roy Harrell

Also Present:

Ronnie E. Duncan, County Commissioner
Susan H. Churuti, County Attorney and Staff
Stephen M. Spratt, County Administrator and Staff
David Libby, Director, Personnel Department and Staff
John H. McNeil, Employees Advisory Council Chairman
William Naylor, President, Pinellas County Fire Chiefs' Association
Chris Staubus, Assistant Director, Utilities
Kurt Spitzer, KS&A
Other interested individuals
Caroline J. Jones, Deputy Clerk

A G E N D A

1. Welcome
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Commissioner Presentation – Ronnie Duncan

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4. Presentations
Unified Personnel Board
Employee Advisory Council
5. MGT Study
Scope of Services – Kurt Spitzer
Fire Services Component
Fire Chiefs' Association
Council of Firefighters
6. Discussion of Schedule, Locations and Issues
7. Other Business
Approval of Expenses
8. Adjournment

WELCOME

Chairman Bomstein called the meeting to order and noted the presence of a quorum with nine members in attendance; whereupon, at his request, the guests introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Bomstein stated that the minutes had not been furnished to the members prior to the meeting; and that approval would be deferred to a future meeting.

PRESENTATION BY COMMISSIONER RONNIE E. DUNCAN

Commissioner Duncan referred to the many components of Pinellas County government and expressed concern with the lack of communication exhibited between entities that provide and evaluate similar services; whereupon, he noted the importance of transit governance with regards to redevelopment and roadway enhancements. He discussed the importance of having a group in place that has the ability to monitor and follow through on the multitude of changes that are taking place countywide; and related that the County needs to take a closer look at the private sector with regard to expedience of the permitting and site plan process; and suggested that the review of the Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) be revisited. In conclusion, Mr. Duncan noted social services, affordable housing, and delivery of medical services as related issues that he believes needs additional attention; and sought background information on the process required to make

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Pinellas County a true home rule community, to which Chairman Bomstein responded that Attorney Churuti will provide that information to him.

UNIFIED PERSONNEL BOARD

Director of Personnel Dave Libby presented information to the Commission wherein he reported that the Unified Personnel System (UPS) provides services to the 11 Appointing Authorities and enumerated those services as:

- Employee and Organizational Support
- Employee Benefits
- Employee Communications
- Records Administration
- Testing
- Pay and Classification
- Counseling
- Recruitment
- Training

He indicated that the Appointing Authorities meet quarterly; that any recommendations, concerns, or revisions are discussed at that time; that information is then shared with the Employees Advisory Council (EAC); and that once concurrency is reached in the form of a recommendation, it is brought to the Unified Personnel Board (UPB) for its approval.

Referring to the UPB, Mr. Libby advised that the board is made up of seven members; that two of the members are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners, two by the Constitutional Officers, two by the EAC; and that those six members appoint the seventh member. He explained that the system has been in existence for 30 years; that it is established by a Special Act; that since its establishment only three changes requiring legislative approval have occurred; and that the department is funded by the BCC.

Responding to query by Commissioner Latvala, Mr. Libby indicated that the UPS was established to eliminate the duplication of services in existence at the time when each of the Appointing Authorities maintained its own personnel department and to bring an end to the "bidding wars" which were conducted by the individual authority in an attempt to employ the applicant of its choice.

In response to query by Councilmember Bryan, Mr. Spitzer indicated that although the Pinellas County UPS is not the only one of its type, most counties utilize a different system; whereupon, responding to additional queries by Councilmember Bryan, Administrator Spratt expressed his agreement with the satisfaction voiced by Mr. Libby

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with regard to the UPS; and noted that having local authority as opposed to the current legislative authority would be preferable as long as it works as effectively for the employees.

Alluding to the comments by Administrator Spratt, Ms. Stanfield added that staff has been working with the legislature for two years in an attempt to effect general law changes in that area.

Responding to queries by Ms. Cole with regard to changing the authority to the county level, Mr. Libby stated that if the BCC were to become the local law-making body for the UPS, he is of the opinion that the Constitutional Officers would opt out of the system.

In response to questions by Mr. Decker, Attorney Churuti advised that pursuant to an interlocal agreement between the Chief Judge and the BCC, the County funds approximately 30 court employees; that the employees have no appeal rights; and that the Chief Judge has authority for hiring and firing of the individuals.

Responding to queries by Mr. Kwall, Mr. Libby advised that the Unified Personnel Board has final approval of personnel rules; whereupon, Mr. Kwall expressed his approval of the UPS concept.

EMPLOYEES ADVISORY COUNCIL (EAC)

Chairman of the EAC John H. McNeil presented an overview of the Council and its makeup and indicated that meetings are held monthly with approximately 80 attendees; that the Council reviews proposed rule changes and offers them to the delegates for input; and that he is in favor of retaining the current system. Referring to the recent climate survey, he noted the excellent job the Personnel Department had done with compiling the information and disseminating it to everyone; that the system has been an effective tool in thwarting the presence of a union and that he believes the employees of Pinellas County are well-represented.

In response to queries by the Chairman, Attorney Churuti indicated that the EAC was established by a special act of the legislature; whereupon, Mr. McNeil stated that funding for the EAC is provided by the Personnel Department; that it operates independently parallel to the Personnel Department; and added that the Council would like to be able to make certain legal decisions to reflect the opinions of the employees rather than accepting the legal interpretation of issues as represented by the Personnel Department.

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Discussion ensued with regard to the Sheriff's Office and the PSTA relative to the fact that neither are part of the UPS and their unionization; whereupon, Attorney Churuti added that the Sheriff's employees are organized by a separate special act of the legislature. Chairman Bomstein questioned the necessity of home rule for the UPS based on the fact that although local rule would effect faster changes, there has been only three amendments that have taken place in the last 30 years; whereupon, additional discussion ensued with regard to the advantages and disadvantages of home rule for the personnel system.

Responding to query by Commissioner Latvala, Attorney Churuti advised that home rule could be achieved by an interlocal agreement; however, it would not be binding for future constitutional officers.

MGT OF AMERICA, INC. STUDY

Scope of Services

Chairman Bomstein brought the members up to date with regard to the BCC ratification of the contract between the Pinellas County CRC and MGT of America, Inc. for the updating of the previous Pinellas County Government Services Improvement Study prepared in 1992 and the authorization granted for an expenditure in an amount not to exceed \$147,940.00 and requested that the proposal be revisited by the members based on the concerns expressed by the BCC and reflected in its split vote.

Responding to Mr. Kwall's request to revisit the components of the proposal by straw vote, Chairman Bomstein suggested that the members consider background information to be presented by Mr. Spitzer prior to proceeding with additional action.

Mr. Spitzer referred to the proposal approved by the CRC and the BCC which included the areas of police, fire, water and sewer, library and building services; and reported that the Pinellas County library system is very unique and is one which has recently been negotiated and renegotiated; that the study is not going to be an engineering study and subsequently could not determine the quality of the water and sewer service in the County; and that cost savings with regard to police services can be clearly accomplished by further consolidation of the smaller departments with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. In conclusion, he pointed out the remaining two areas of study, building and fire services; and advised that although a full contract had been approved, the members could revisit the areas in which they wish to proceed.

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Councilman Bryan stated that he favors reverting to a narrower scope of services; whereupon, Mr. Kwall moved to reconsider the vote taken at the last CRC meeting and to limit the study to fire services. Discussion ensued with regard to the need to include building services in the scope of services, following which Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. After input by Commissioner Latvala pertaining to complaints expressed by the contractors relating to discrepancies amongst the cities' building departments, Mr. Kwall amended his motion to include that the members consider each service area individually with the fire services area addressed first, and Commissioner Latvala seconded the motion. Upon call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Thereupon, Mr. Kwall moved, seconded by Commissioner Latvala, that MGT be engaged for the purpose of studying building services. Discussion ensued with regard to a countywide building service wherein Councilman Bryan expressed concern with local departments giving up review based on historical and architectural significance; whereupon, Commissioner Latvala indicated that the consolidation would not necessarily eliminate design review of historic districts by city governments. Following further discussion, Mr. Spitzer noted for the record that the Pinellas Planning Council would not be a component of the building services study. Upon call for the vote, the motion carried 8 to 1 with Councilmember Bryan casting the dissenting vote.

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At this time, 6:08 P.M., Councilmember Bryan left the meeting.

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Following discussion, Mr. Kwall moved, seconded by Commissioner Latvala, that the balance of the proposed study areas be eliminated. Upon call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Fire Services Component

Chairman Bomstein referred to the *Joint Position Paper* distributed by the Pinellas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Council of Firefighters and indicated that it reflects the desire of the stakeholders to be involved in the process of developing a scope; and proposes that additional aspects be incorporated into the study.

William Naylor, Fire Chief and President of the Pinellas County Fire Chiefs' Association, reiterated the desire of the fire chiefs to be significantly involved in the process; and referring to certain parameters set forth for the study, expressed disagreement with any recommendation to close fire stations noting that at least three new stations have been

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added since the 1992 study; and that there are still areas that fall short relative to response time. With regard to the recommendation for a group-purchasing program, Chief Naylor advised that such a program already exists. He pointed out that fire services are already functionally consolidated and provided background information with regard to the computer run-card system noting the ability for one city to assist another city with fire and emergency services; and opined that the problem resides in the funding of fire services. Referring to unincorporated areas, Chief Naylor stated that the cities cannot be expected to develop funding sources; and that infrastructure, fire hydrants, and water lines should be addressed through the County.

In response to query by the Chairman, Chief Naylor noted that the previous study contained certain inaccuracies and did not take into consideration that 80 percent of the fire fighters are paramedics or emergency medical technicians (EMT); that Emergency Medical Services (EMS) should be a component of the study; and that no consideration was given to long-term growth in the County.

Speaking to the discussions with the fire chiefs earlier in the day and at the request of Chairman Bomstein, Stephen Humphrey, Jr., MGT of America, stated that the fire services community is seeking an in-depth study of fire operations in Pinellas County; that there have been many changes in the County relevant to growth; and that EMS and water issues do need to be addressed. Chief Naylor commented that the population growth in North County will require more services and manpower; that the program must be a long-range one; that many areas of the County are being annexed resulting in a shrinking tax base; and that those are the types of issues that need to be looked at and planned for in the study.

Mr. Wilson referred to mutual aid agreements in relationship to functional consolidation of fire-fighting services and opined that the same may need to be done with administrative services.

At the request of Chief Naylor, Fire Chief James Engle offered a suggestion pertaining to the implementation of franchise fees in unincorporated areas as opposed to solely using ad valorem taxes, noting that everyone utilizes electricity, that not all individuals pay ad valorem taxes, and that the franchise fees could stabilize the millage rate. Discussion ensued wherein Chairman Bomstein pointed out the difference in the fire district millage rate between the City of Belleair and the Lealman Community based on ad valorem taxes; and noted that it does create an imbalance within the County from fire district to fire district.

Responding to queries by Ms. Cole, Chief Naylor indicated that there are no reimbursements between the cities for provision of fire services; that all services are

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provided pursuant to mutual aid agreements; and that the fire chiefs are in agreement with the Pinellas Assembly concept but do not agree with the need for a countywide fire department.

In response to query by Commissioner Latvala and comments from the members, Chief Assistant County Administrator D. Gay Lancaster referred to the issue of mutual aid agreements and pointed out the cost savings appreciated by each city not having to purchase its own specialty resources and the sharing of services; and alluding to Commissioner Latvala's comments with regard to the number of vehicles that respond to emergency situations, related that it is an operational decision determined totally by the municipalities.

Responding to comments by Mr. Kwall, Chairman Bomstein indicated that the reason input is being sought from the departments involved in the study is to ensure the inclusion of all pertinent issues; whereupon, referring to the joint proposal submitted by the Firefighters Council and the Fire Chiefs' Association, asked that Mr. Spitzer review the recommendations on behalf of the CRC and stated that direction would then be given to MGT based on Mr. Spitzer's recommendations to the members; and no objections were noted.

In response to comments by Mr. Wilson, Mr. Humphrey pointed out that one of the recommendations in the study deals with addressing whether consolidation of administrative services would be effective.

Discussion ensued with regard to the funding approved by the BCC for the study wherein Administrator Spratt advised that any revisions to the scope of services would have to go back to the Board for approval; whereupon, Chairman Bomstein noted that once an agreement is finalized with MGT, the Board will be asked for ratification.

DISCUSSION OF SCHEDULE, LOCATIONS AND ISSUES

Chairman Bomstein indicated that alternative location meetings will occur every third meeting; that he and Mr. Spitzer will determine the upcoming alternative location; that the next scheduled meeting is May 3 and will be held at the Swisher Building in Clearwater; and that he is recommending that Mr. Spitzer schedule the June 20 meeting with the Legislative Delegation, and no objections were noted.

Discussion ensued with regard to topics for the May 3 and May 23 meetings wherein Mr. Wilson requested that the County Attorney's Office submit an outline of the process

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Pinellas County would need to implement to acquire total authority to oversee annexation activity.

OTHER BUSINESS

Approval of Expenses

Mr. Spitzer presented expense statements in the amount of \$13,802.00; whereupon, Mr. Kwall moved, seconded by Commissioner Latvala and carried, that the expenses be approved for payment.

Thereupon, at the suggestion of Chairman Bomstein, Mr. Kwall moved, seconded by Commissioner Latvala and carried, that the Chairman be granted authority to approve future bills.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 P.M.