

October 29, 2003

The Pinellas Assembly City and County Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) Task Force met in the Largo City Hall Training Center, 201 Highland Avenue, Largo, Florida, at 6:09 P.M. on this date with the following members in attendance: Dick Holmes, Chairman; Beverley Billiris; Wayne Darnell; John Doran; Bill Heller; and Sallie Parks.

Absent: Carlton Ward, Co-Chairman.

Late Arrival: C.R. Wedding.

Also present: Maureen "Moe" Freaney, City of Dunedin; Mark Woodard, Assistant County Administrator; Kim Adams, City of Largo; Andy Houston, City of St. Petersburg; Dan Katsiyiannis, City of Pinellas Park; William Puller, Richard Hough, and Gary Schobel, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office; Arlene Smitke, Board Reporter; and other interested individuals.

#### AGENDA

1. Welcome/Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes - October 8, 2003
3. Technical Team Presentation on Other County Services
4. Discussion of Other County Services
5. Review and Discussion of Sheriff's Allocation Methodology (Handout on Summary of Key Issues)

#### WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Holmes called the meeting to order at 6:09 P.M.

#### APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 8, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Darnell moved, seconded by Ms. Billiris and carried, that the minutes of the October 8 meeting be approved.

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### TECHNICAL TEAM PRESENTATION ON OTHER COUNTY SERVICES

Mr. Adams reviewed the findings and recommendations of the Technical Resources Committee, as documented in a handout entitled *MSTU Technical Resources Committee Report on MSTU Budget Allocations for FY 2002, FY 2003 and FY 2004*, dated October 27, 2003, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record.

### DISCUSSION OF OTHER COUNTY SERVICES

Responding to query by Ms. Parks, Mr. Woodard indicated that the County's goal is to carry approximately a ten percent fund balance throughout the entire General Fund; that that amount would be in keeping with the Board-adopted policies and the Government Finance Officers Association's recommendation of five to ten percent; and responding to queries by Messrs. Darnell and Doran, explained that the year end reserve balances are the beginning balances for the next fiscal year; and that the balances will fluctuate according to variations in actual versus projected revenues and expenses.

### REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF SHERIFF'S ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY

Ms. Freaney called attention to various handouts provided for today's meeting, copies of which have been filed and made a part of the record, to wit:

1. GSG Response to MSTU Technical Resources Committee Report dated September 23, 2003, with cover letter to Sheriff Rice.
2. Sheriff's MSTU Allocation - Summary of Key Issues, October 29, 2003 and Key Questions.
3. Task Force Recommendations (Draft).

Referring to Item No. 2, she indicated that the Task Force must first decide whether to accept the Base Level of Service (BLS) concept; and that, if so, it must address several allocation-related issues. Discussion ensued, during which the members made the following observations and suggestions:

- ◆ No one knows the perfect answer; the Task Force can only exercise its best guess.
- ◆ Any formula will be subject to debate; there will never be agreement.
- ◆ The County should allocate funding and manpower to the Office of Management and Budget to determine a reliable method of cost allocation, including definition of data elements to be gathered.
- ◆ The Sheriff's Office should develop a workload tracking system and the software necessary to collect the data.
- ◆ There is no basis to believe the 37 percent BLS figure is accurate; the unincorporated property value figure of 28 percent is a more reliable basis for BLS, if one is to be used.
- ◆ GSG's narrative of the BLS calculation is inconsistent with the formula used.
- ◆ Accurate MSTU allocation is an evolutionary process; the BLS must be built over time from accumulated workload data.
- ◆ Workload data could be gathered by sampling or time-in-motion studies, rather than requiring time sheet data.
- ◆ An annual joint review of MSTU cost allocation by County staff, the Sheriff's Office, and City Manager designees should include justification of the allocation and/or implementation of changes.
- ◆ A citizen's committee, or Tax Equity Board, should be appointed to meet every two years to review the information from the annual County/City reviews.
- ◆ A review of MSTU allocation methodology should be conducted periodically by an outside consultant, possibly at six-year intervals to coincide with the Charter Review schedule. The review could take place prior to and in preparation for the Charter Review.
- ◆ The periodic review should be overseen by an independent agency to eliminate any perception of impropriety. Agencies to consider include the Clerk of Circuit Court, the Property Appraiser's Office, and the Pinellas Planning Council.

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- ♦ A considerable amount of public funds have been spent on the GSG study. The report presents a formula for incorporating workload data when it becomes available.
- ♦ Roughly half of the MSTU budget is allocated to the Sheriff; the other half, to the County Administrator. The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for final adoption of the budget.

Ms. Freaney noted that a recent Court decision in Alachua County has upheld the allocation of the entire Sheriff's patrol cost to the MSTU; whereupon, Mr. Woodard cited case law in Sarasota and Palm Beach Counties in favor of countywide allocation. Following discussion with input by Messrs. Puller and Hough, Mr. Katsiyannis stated that the main concern in Alachua County has been that of double taxation.

#### FUTURE MEETINGS

Mr. Wedding moved, seconded by Mr. Doran and carried, that the next meeting of the Task Force will be its last. Following discussion, Chairman Holmes indicated that November 12 will be the final meeting date; whereupon, Messrs. Heller and Darnell noted that they will be unable to attend.

Chairman Holmes suggested that each member submit their personal recommendations prior to the next meeting; whereupon, Ms. Freaney suggested that all materials be submitted to her office by Friday, November 7.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Upon direction by Chairman Holmes, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.