

**SALES TAX FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 9, 2019 - 3:00 P.M.
18500 MURDOCK CIRCLE, ROOM B106
PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33948**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Patricia Aho, Donna Barrett, Steve Dionisio, Shaune Freeland, Ed Hill, Robin Madden, Gordon “Mac” Martin, Lynne Matthews, Kathi Obendorfer, Sylvia Orr, James Parish, Todd Rebol, Tom Rice, Steve Uebelacker, Steve Vieira, John Wright

MEMBERS EXCUSED: James Coalwell, Jason Green, Danny Nix, Brian Presley, Bill Schafer

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Robert Lee, Meeting Facilitator
Emily Lewis, Assistant County Administrator
Tommy Scott, Community Services Director
Travis Mortimer, Assistant County Administrator

OPENING STATEMENTS

Dr. Bob Lee, Meeting Facilitator, thanked Mr. Hector Flores, Deputy County Administrator, for chairing the previous meeting in his absence. He outlined meeting procedures and commented on the scoring process.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 17, 2019 Meeting

Ms. Matthews **MOVED**, Ms. Aho **SECONDED** approval of the September 17, 2019 minutes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

September 25, 2019 Meeting

Mr. Wright **MOVED**, Mr. Vieira **SECONDED** approval of the September 25, 2019 minutes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Lee confirmed no members of the public wished to speak. He then spoke at length regarding a project reviewed at the previous meeting for which a recommendation was made to assign a score of “0”; however, staff had since determined doing so skewed the final results.

Discussion ensued with consensus for members to re-score that project and to assign scores of no lower than “1” in the future.

Ms. Emily Lewis, Assistant County Administrator, confirmed she would reach out to those members who were absent this date.

Mr. Vieira then commented on the Sunshine Law, asking if Focus Group members were permitted to address community organizations.

Dr. Lee replied affirmatively, cautioning members to ensure no other Focus Group members spoke at the same meeting.

Mr. Rebol noted the Sunshine Law also prohibited third party violations in which one member communicated with another member through an unrelated third party.

SALES TAX PROJECTS

Maracaibo Park

Mr. Tommy Scott, Community Services Director, announced the re-design and renovation of Maracaibo Park included a new concession stand and restroom facilities, new sport courts, a multi-purpose field, trails, pavilions and paved parking. He projected construction and operating costs to be \$5.9 million and \$85,513, respectively.

Mr. Rice noted staff had indicated Maracaibo Park was currently below minimum standards, requesting clarification of same.

Mr. Scott explained specific minimum standards had been identified in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan for Community Parks based upon size.

Ms. Matthews questioned the criteria used to determine a structure's "end of life cycle."

Mr. Scott replied 50 years was commonly used as a building's life cycle standard, citing issues such as no air-conditioning, undersized for activities and structurally challenged in this instance.

Mr. Dionisio asked if the new facilities would encompass the exact same footprint and, if so, how the site would continue to be accessed during construction.

Mr. Scott replied affirmatively, stating tents and portable grills, for example, would be used during construction as had been done during other, similar projects.

McGuire Park: Phase 2

Mr. Scott announced McGuire Park was located in the Parkside Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) area and had previously been a blight on the community; however, the Phase 1 renovations had a significant, positive impact on the neighborhood, adding the park was heavily used by children and families. He displayed "before & after" photographs, noting McGuire Park had become a focal point of the community.

Mr. Rice agreed Phase 1 had made a major difference, adding workmanship was excellent. He questioned the need for the proposed bridge, further asking if the location lent itself to a canoe/ kayak launch.

Mr. Scott recalled the community had expressed its desire for a connection across the waterway via a boardwalk and bridge, stating same would be determined during the final scope-out of the project.

Ms. Barrett reiterated the positive impact on the community was significant. She questioned the proposed size of the Community Room.

Mr. Scott replied approximately 600 square feet.

North Charlotte Regional Park: Phase 2

Mr. Scott stated this project was located within the Murdock CRA area and was comprised of 100 acres, adding the park had been developed over time with sales tax funds. He noted a tiered facility with aquatics to the rear of same was currently under construction as part of Phase 1, while the additional amenities identified in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan were a part of Phase 2, specifically sport courts, pavilions, restrooms, additional parking, multi-purpose field, trails, boardwalk and activity pool. He concluded construction and operating costs were projected to be \$6 million and \$361,669, respectively.

Ms. Barrett asked if overall plans for this project would change as a result of the sale of Murdock Village.

Mr. Scott replied no such changes were anticipated.

Ms. Lewis mentioned the park might be re-named.

William R. Gaines Jr. Veterans Memorial Park: Phase 2

Mr. Scott provided a brief, biographical history of Mr. William R. Gaines, Jr., stating funds for this project commenced with a significant donation from Mr. Gaines' family. He noted the site encompassed approximately 40 acres, 30 of which were wetlands, adding Phase 2 represented continued redevelopment to include pavilions, exercise equipment, trails, sport courts, splash pad and restrooms, new Community Room and additional parking. He concluded construction and operating costs were projected to be \$4.5 million and \$147,774, respectively.

Mr. Hill confirmed the site was near the Port Charlotte Boulevard roundabout off Edgewater Drive. He stated he had observed an "Entry" sign but nothing beyond same.

Mr. Travis Mortimer, Assistant County Administrator, explained groundbreaking was scheduled for the following month.

Mr. Rice asking if consideration had been given to a canoe/ kayak launch.

Mr. Scott replied an existing, natural launch area was located nearby and was used daily, displaying an overhead depicting that area in relation to the subject property.

Ms. Lewis noted application had been made for grant funds, reiterating the family had donated over \$500,000.

FOCUS GROUP MEMBER SCORING

Dr. Lee confirmed members had completed their scoring sheets.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Kelly