

PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA

NOVEMBER 12, 2009

COMBINED SPECIAL MEETING

The Gulf County Board of County Commissioners and City of Port St. Joe Commissioners met this date in a combined workshop with the following members present: Chairman Nathan Peters, Jr., Commissioners Bill Williams, and Warren Yeager. < Vice Chairman Carmen L. McLemore and Commissioner Billy E. Traylor were absent>. City of Port St. Joe Commissioners Charlie Stephens, John Reeves, Greg Johnson, Rex Buzzett, and Mayor Mel Magidson.

Others present were: County Attorney Timothy McFarland, Clerk Rebecca L. Norris, Deputy Clerk Kari Summers, Chief Administrator Don Butler, Deputy Administrator Lynn Lanier, Building Official Lee Collinsworth, G.I.S. Director Scott Warner, Grant Writer Towan Kopinsky, City Attorney Russ Scholz, City Manager Charlie Weston, C.R.A. Director Matt Fleck, and City Clerk Jim Anderson.

Chairman Peters called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m., E.T.

Pastor David Woods opened the meeting with prayer.

C.R.A.

Chairman Peters thanked everyone for attending the meeting, stating that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss C.R.A. concerns. Matt Fleck, D.R.A. Director reported that the purpose of this meeting today is to discuss the expansion efforts of the C.R.A. to include the North Port St. Joe area of Port St. Joe, stating that the meeting is required by State Statute, and the intent is to allow the County to have the opportunity to voice their interest in the expansion process. He reported that earlier this year the City adopted a finding of necessity which is the first step in creating or expanding the C.R.A., stating that in that process all the taxing authorities are notified that an expansion is being considered. Commissioner Yeager reported that the County Commissioners are in support of the C.R.A. in the North Port St. Joe area, stating that one of the major concerns is the number of years that the C.R.A. stays in place. C.R.A. Director Fleck reported that the old standard was a thirty year term, and the new standard is a forty year term, unless there are some negotiations between the City and County. Upon inquiry by City Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Yeager reported that within twenty years you should be able to complete the design of the C.R.A., stating that he is not opposed to reviewing it in twenty years, and if there is a need it can be extended at that time. City Commissioner Johnson reported that he agreed, except where a bond is issued, stating that typically a Bond is 30 years. Commissioner Yeager discussed that there needs to be flexibility. Upon inquiry by Commissioner Williams whether the C.R.A. had ever bonded a project, C.R.A. Director Fleck stated that they have not discussed that there is a new part of the statute concerning a cap which reads, twenty-four years into the C.R.A. expansion the County can begin to contribute to funding, they can stipulate to cap out, stating that it does not go on forever and the County can get some of the funds back. Upon inquiry by Chairman Peters, C.R.A. Director Fleck reported that the current C.R.A. extends to 2019. City Commissioner

Buzzett discussed that with the economy it may take thirty years to make it work. Commissioner Williams reported that a mutual agreement is critical. Upon inquiry by County Attorney McFarland, C.R.A. Director Fleck reported that in 2019 the boundary contracts back to the original. W.I.M. Association Walter Miller reported that the Legislation designed the C.R.A. to be flexible enough to accommodate the economic changes. <Ivey Henderson entered the meeting at 9:50 a.m.> C.R.A. Director Fleck discussed that Florida Statutes extends to forty years because you run out of time to see the benefit of the project, stating that you have the ability to extend the current C.R.A. to forty years. City Commissioner Reeves discussed that the purpose of the change in Florida Statutes is to force the City and County to meet and agree. Commissioner Yeager discussed the Marina Cove project, stating that any increase from this area goes to the C.R.A. Upon inquiry by Commissioner Yeager, C.R.A. Director Fleck reported that you cannot limit what you put in but you can agree to give some of the funds back, stating that the C.R.A. should refund the funds that are not committed. Commissioner Yeager reported that he supports the C.R.A. in concept. Commissioner Williams reported that everyone agrees that the North Port St. Joe area needs to be placed in the C.R.A., but that there needs to be some flexibility with the bond. C.R.A. Director Fleck discussed the possibility of extending the current C.R.A. with the new C.R.A. City Mayor Magidson discussed that you are limited on the current expansion to 2019, stating that there is only 10 years left and the ability to expand 10 years. <City Commissioner Johnson left the meeting at 10:04 a.m.> W.I.M. Association Walter Miller discussed the life of the plan and the life of the financing, stating (1) what is the benefit and commitment from the citizens, and (2) the investors/developers are looking at long term stability from the City and County, stating that the City and County has to be co-developers to make this work. City Commissioner Buzzett reported that the City can expand the C.R.A. at any point, stating that he hates to place all the amendments and hinder their ability to do their job. Commissioner Yeager discussed the possibility of a special assessment (fire, police, E.M.S., etc.), stating that this would help reduce Ad Valorem taxes, and to leave the existing boundaries where they are and address it closer to year 2019 and extend it if needed at that time. Upon inquiry by City Commissioner Reeves concerning extending the existing C.R.A. and immediately start working on the North Port St. Joe area by bonding, C.R.A. Director Fleck reported that he is not sure when they will be ready to start the North Port St. Joe area, stating that it depends on the market and being able to get a bond. Commissioner Williams discussed that everyone needs to agree by consensus taking into consideration the market variables and having no plan to date, stating that they need to work and buy into the vision. City Mayor Magidson reported that there needs to be a commitment to the new area. After further discussion by all commissioners, the consensus was for a 30 year term for the new area, and leave the existing area alone.

City Mayor Magidson called for public comment.

Pastor David Woods discussed that it is adequate enough that the existing C.R.A. be left alone and the now area be thirty years based on the conversation today. He reported that he is looking out for the residents of North Port St. Joe, stating that the thirty years needs to be used properly and effectively for the benefit of everyone, and that he agrees with the proposed agreement.

Amy Rodgers, North Port St. Joe resident appeared before the Board and discussed that she appreciated whatever they can do to better the North Port St. Joe community and that

she supports and agrees with the vision of the original council. Upon inquiry by Ms. Rodgers, City Mayor Magidson reported that with the expanded area it gives the C.R.A. the flexibility to apply for grants and bonding for the North Port St. Joe area. C.R.A. Director Fleck reported that the revised plans are the same, stating that downtown Port St. Joe and North Port St. Joe are "one" Port St. Joe.

City Mayor Magidson reported that the most important thing that has come out of this is that there is "one" Port St. Joe.

Upon inquiry, County Attorney McFarland advised that this is not an appropriate meeting to take a vote.

Ivey Henderson, North Port St. Joe resident appeared before the Board and discussed that it is pleasing to see a City joined as one, stating that the division has gone away. He reported that God is pleased at what He is seeing, stating that you will see monumental growth, and in essence the railroad tracks are dead and gone. Mr. Henderson commended the City Commissioners and County Commissioners for their apparent commitment.

Chairman Peters reported that the proposed Williams Avenue will be connecting to North Port St. Joe in the future. He thanked the City for meeting with the County and the efforts on behalf of the citizens of North Port St. Joe.

Chairman Peters invited the City to attend the Workshop at 11:00 a.m. today in the Board Room concerning the Sunshine Laws.

There being no further discussion, the meeting did then adjourn at 10:31 a.m., E.T.

NATHAN PETERS, JR.
CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:
REBECCA L. NORRIS
CLERK