

**CITY OF PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA  
LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
CHARLOTTE HARBOR EVENT CENTER  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2019 9:00 A.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mary Boeringer, Burnt Store Isles; Julia Bowser, District 3; Tom Cavanaugh, Team Punta Gorda; Kelly Gaylord, District 2; Jay Gile, Burnt Store Meadows; Mary Harbour, Visual Arts Center; Melissa Lockhart, District 5; Ashley Maher, Charlotte Community Foundation;; Gene Murtha, History Center; John Peterman, District 1; Don Sabatini, District 4; Jim Sanders, Economic Development Partnership; Bob Sifrit, Historic District Homeowners Association; Robert Toth, Seminole Lakes; John Welsh, Boaters Alliance; John Wright, Punta Gorda Chamber

**CITY EMPLOYEES PRESENT:** Debby Carey, City Councilmember; Melissa Reichert, Communications Manager; Kristin Simeone, Finance Director; Mitchell Austin, Chief Planner

**CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Ms. Melissa Reichert, Communications Manager, called the meeting to order.

**WORKSHOP TOPICS**

- A. Citizen Comments
  - Mr. Rick Sarkisian spoke on the growth of pickleball in the community, suggesting construction of pickleball facilities on Henry Street or Trabue Park be considered. He noted PicklePlex was closed to the public during tournaments.
  - Mr. Sabatini inquired as to the use of pickleball facilities on Cooper Street.
  - Mr. Sarkisian replied those courts were used by the Peace River Picklers.
  - Ms. Reichert announced on November 20, 2019, City Council would consider appointment of Mr. Gary Skillicorn as the Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association representative since Mr. John Miller had been elected as a Councilmember and could no longer serve as a Committee member.
- B. Approval of October Meeting Minutes
  - Ms. Gaylord MOVED, Mr. Sifrit SECONDED approval of the October 30, 2019 minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- C. Sales Tax Action Item Register November
  - Ms. Reichert drew attention to the register, requesting any comments.
  - Mr. Sabatini noted he had not prepared this month's register, requesting same reflect who had done so.

D. November Projects for Review

- Mr. Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner, provided a presentation on proposed local sales tax program projects.

**Bicycle Capital Improvement Program**

- Would install bicycle pathways to fill gaps and connect existing network. Projects would be distributed City-wide. Would foster public health and safety. Indirectly benefitted economic development. Additional operating costs anticipated. Federal and State grants possible. Continuation of Punta Gorda Pathways projects from 2014 sales tax program. State and Charlotte County (County) participation possible. Would benefit special-needs populations and environmental quality. Project not contingent on another sales tax project.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Ms. Gaylord confirmed installation of a Multi-use Recreational Trail (MURT) on a street in the project area could potentially remove that portion of the street from the project.
- Scoring sheets completed.

**Historic City Hall Improvements**

- Would rehabilitate exterior and interior of structure, enhance security and address Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues as well as health and safety issues. Neutral effect on operating costs; ongoing maintenance issues present. State grant funding possible. Would serve entire City. Contributing structure to the National Register Historic District.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Councilmember Carey questioned if the Committee should consider the ADA compliance issues and their impact on special needs populations. She then confirmed the 50% rule did not apply to this structure as it was historic.
- Scoring sheets completed.

**Complete Street - Royal Poinciana Improvements**

- Would connect US 41 MURT to State-wide SUNTrail network. Federal and State grant funding possible. Would serve the Burnt Store Meadows community, which was underserved relative to access to parks and trails. Would foster public health and safety. Additional operating costs anticipated. Continuation of Punta Gorda Pathways projects from 2014 sales tax program. Joint participation not anticipated. Would benefit environmental quality and serve entire City.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Ms. Gaylord opined the project would impact special needs populations by correcting ADA compliance issues.

- Mr. John Welsh opined consideration of the population served should focus on the number of people who would use the pathway.
- Scoring sheets completed.

### **Complete Street - US 17 Improvements**

- Would install sidewalks, street lighting, bicycle lanes, intersection treatments and enhanced crosswalks along East Olympia Avenue from Cooper Street to US 41. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) identified project development and environmental design funds for this project in fifth year of their work program; therefore, a significant portion of project may be funded at the Federal level. Would foster public health and safety and economic development. Additional operating costs anticipated. Continuation of Punta Gorda Pathways projects from 2014 sales tax program. Joint participation anticipated with State. Would benefit special-needs populations and environmental quality. Would serve entire City.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Scoring sheets completed.

### **Harborwalk East - Phase II**

- Would extend Harborwalk to Cooper Street, connecting existing Harborwalk to future Cooper Street MURT. High costs related to environmental issues in the project area. Would foster public health and safety. Indirectly benefitted economic development. Additional operating costs anticipated. Federal and State grants possible. Up to 50% of transportation impact fees could be used for this project if available. Continuation of Punta Gorda Pathways projects from 2014 sales tax program. Would benefit special needs populations and environmental quality. Would serve entire City.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Scoring sheets completed.

### **Henry Street Property Improvements**

- Would install walkways, enhance public parking and improve the Dog Park on Henry Street.
- Mr. Cavanaugh stated Team Punta Gorda and the Peace River Wildlife Center (PRWC) had submitted a project request related to this site, questioning if that project should be considered at the same time.
- Consensus of members was to consider this project in January 2020 in conjunction with the project submitted by Team Punta Gorda and the PRWC.

### **Historic Interpretation Markers - Historic District**

- Would provide interpretive markers and improve branding, particularly as it related to heritage tourism and community education. Indirectly benefitted economic

development. Additional operating costs anticipated. State and private grant funding possible. County participation not anticipated but possible. Would serve entire City. Markers could be installed in areas of historic significance, including neighborhoods or business districts.

- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Councilmember Carey noted the Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB) expressed a desire to raise funds to produce and install historic interpretive markers prior to the County's centennial, questioning how the sales tax project and fundraising would be reconciled.
- Mr. Austin replied HPAB's project could provide a model for or become a component of this project.
- Scoring sheets completed.

#### **South Punta Gorda Park (Fire Station II)**

- Would improve parking, drainage, landscaping and site furnishings. Area identified as underserved from park-infrastructure standpoint. Additional operating costs anticipated. State grant funding possible but not likely. Project identified for possible funding of up to 40% from park impact fees. Would serve entire City.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Mr. Toth spoke in favor of a park in that area, expressing preference to purchase another property to do so. He then requested clarification of the plans for a park.
- Mr. Austin replied this location would be a passive park.
- Scoring sheets completed.

#### **Trabue Park Improvements**

- Would improve landscaping and site furnishings and serve as a community gateway with installation of public art or an architectural feature. Site was purchased for hazard mitigation purposes. Could serve as pickleball court location; conceptual design with eight courts and parking existed. Project identified for possible funding of up to 75% from park impact fees.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Councilmember Carey confirmed City Council's direction was needed to consider pickleball courts at this location.
- Mr. Cavanaugh confirmed installation of courts would not impact the site's hazard mitigation status.
- Discussion ensued regarding the suitability of this location for pickleball courts, with consensus of members to reconsider this project with and without pickleball courts at a future meeting.

- Members requested direction from City Council regarding the need for pickleball courts at this location, input from Bayfront Health Punta Gorda and clarification of the number of pickleball courts necessary to serve the City's population.
- Discussion ensued regarding the history of the property as it pertained to hazard mitigation.
- Scoring sheets completed.

### **Sidewalk Enhancements - Tropicana & Marion**

- Would improve sidewalk infrastructure, install landscaping and provide intersection treatments. Relatively high project costs due to possible need for right-of-way acquisitions. Top priority was to extend sidewalk along south-side of West Marion Avenue and then remove the Coronado Drive crosswalk. Would foster public health and safety. Additional operating costs anticipated. Continuation of Punta Gorda Pathways projects from 2014 sales tax program. Would serve entire City.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Ms. Gaylord opined this project would serve a special needs population by correcting ADA compliance issues.
- Mr. Welsh pointed out not every citizen would use this sidewalk.
- Ms. Gaylord confirmed the Committee could provide recommendations for projects not included in the recommended sales tax program list.
- Mr. Peterman requested the percentage of the sales tax budget each project would consume be denoted.
- Ms. Simeone noted a budget did not yet exist for the upcoming sales tax program, reviewing the process used to fund projects during previous sales tax programs.
- Scoring sheets completed.

### **Veteran's Park - Shade Structure(s)**

- Would provide a shade structure over the ceremonial plaza. Additional operating costs anticipated. Continuation of Punta Gorda Pathways projects from 2014 sales tax program. Would serve entire City.
- Project's alignment with the scoring criteria reviewed.
- Ms. Gaylord inquired as to partnership or donation funding denoted in the 1% Sales Tax Infrastructure Projects spreadsheet.
- Mr. Austin replied such funding might have been possible at the time the document was compiled; however, he had not had any contact with another entity regarding such funding.
- Ms. Simeone stated similar projects received donations; therefore, there was a possibility of such funding for this project.

- Scoring sheets completed.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

- None.

**MEMBER COMMENTS**

- Ms. Lockhart spoke in favor of delaying scoring certain projects until clarification was received.
- Mr. Gary Skillicorn spoke in favor of members scoring projects independently.
- Ms. Harbour expressed difficulty in scoring projects when the budget remained unclear.
- Mr. Murtha spoke in favor of careful consideration of the use of Trabue Park.
- Mr. Sanders requested the project detail sheet and scoring sheet be placed together.
- Ms. Reichert stated information on projects recommended by the public would be provided to members by December 15, 2019, noting meetings were scheduled for March 11, 2020, and March 25, 2020.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

- None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

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Communications Manager

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Recording Secretary