



# TREASURE COAST REGIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES

**TREASURE COAST REGIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2013 - 10:30 A.M.  
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
200 NW 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET, OKEECHOBEE, FL**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Vice-President Councilwoman Pilar Turner, City of Vero Beach; Treasurer Councilman Dowling Watford, City of Okeechobee; Vice-Mayor Joel Tyson, City of Fellsmere; Alderman, Ingrid M. VanHekken, Town of St. Lucie Village; Council Vice-President Ann Kagdis, Town of Ocean Breeze; Commissioner Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch, Town of Sewall's Point; Councilman Richard Gillmor, City of Sebastian; Mayor Linda Hudson, City of Fort Pierce; Vice-Mayor Linda Bartz, City of Port St. Lucie

**MUNICIPAL STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Jason Nunemaker, City of Fellsmere; City Manager Brian Whitehall, City of Okeechobee; Secretary Bonnie R. Cruz, City of Port St. Lucie

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Nick Blount, FPL; Amy Brunjes, FPL; Travis Walker, Law Offices; Patricia P. Christensen, Summit 21; AniYa A., Freedom Entertainment Group; Rebecca A. Rickey, Vero Heritage, Inc.

**ALSO PRESENT:** ; Mayor William Thiess, Town of St. Lucie Village; Councilwoman Earlene Cairns, Town of Ocean Breeze; Kathy Salerno, Financial Officer Jeff Atwater's Office;

## AGENDA

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-President Turner called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

### 2. INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Treasurer Watford gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### A) September 18, 2013

Vice-Mayor Tyson motioned to approve the September 18, 2013 minutes. Vice-Mayor Bartz seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **4. TREASURER'S REPORT**

##### **A) Report**

Treasurer Watford presented the league with the Oct/Nov 2013 Treasurer's Report (see attached), that states the balance of \$20,012.83 and the Certificate of Deposit in the amount of \$20,972.83.

Alderman VanHekken motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report. Council Vice-President Kagdis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **5. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **A) Washington, DC Briefing on FL Waterways Issues – Commissioner Paul Luger, Town of Sewall's Point – (Note this item was discussed after Item B)**

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch announced that Commissioner Luger could not attend today meetings but prepared a memo dated November 19, 2013 and asked for her to read it into the records, (see attached).

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch said that she hopes the league considers his recommendation and thanked them for allowing him to represent us at the briefing. Vice-President Turner said that the most interesting point is the sharing information with each municipality. Alderman VanHekken said that maybe the league should move forward to forming a group.

Councilman Gillmor said that that there is a need to work together because of the different issues in each municipality that are connected by the lagoon. He continued that the sea grasses are coming back but it will be a slow process and he is looking into conducting a workshop inviting ORCA and Harbor Branch to help give some insight on what each municipality can do, i.e. installing more Kilroys in the water to help pinpoint the problems because until the cause is determined is when a solution can be found.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch said that the information sharing is more important in some cases than money and a consortium of information is very effect and powerful to achieve a common goal amongst us all.

##### **B) Executive Director Position Criteria – (Note this item was discussed prior to Item A)**

Vice-President Turner said that the Executive Director Position Criteria has been formatted for member approval which is an initiative she began for the league to be more professional and have the opportunity to grow by representing our communities with a stronger and powerful voice.

Vice-Mayor Tyson said that this is a great move because the smaller communities have limited staff and this would certainly be an asset to move the organization forward in a positive way and reviewing the Treasurer report I believe the league can afford it.

Councilman Gillmor inquired after reviewing the responsibilities that this position would assist the secretary in drafting the agenda but would this eliminate the need for a secretary/clerk? Treasurer Watford said a secretary would still be required to prepare the minutes and Vice-President Turner said that person would still be needed as support from city staff. Vice-Mayor Bartz said that the secretary would not be as tasked from the municipalities as greatly as it does now but the Executive Director will work closely with the secretary to help alleviate a lot of the work.

Secretary Cruz said that the Executive Director would help immensely if the secretary would only be tasked for preparing the agenda and transcribing the minutes.

Vice-President Turner inquired for a concurrence to have an Executive Director concept before moving forward and received a unanimously yes.

Treasurer Watford inquired what salary range is anticipated subject to the league's budget and Vice-President Turner suggested a \$10,000 a year salary sufficient to cover mileage and hotel for conferences. Councilman Gillmor inquired to Treasurer Watford if that figure would be sustainable.

Treasurer Watford said yes barely but is very close to what the league receives from the FLC so dues from the associate members would have to be relied on, but Vice-President Turner said that the Executive Director would be very active to increase the membership dues.

Vice-President Turner reviewed that the salary would be all inclusive and Alderman VanHekken confirmed that would include hotel expenses and per diem. Treasurer Watford inquired if the contract would reflect a maximum of \$10,000 and Vice-President Turner said that a cap could be placed on it.

Vice-Mayor Bartz said that the contract could be negotiated with the applicant to move forward with the cap of \$10,000 to be approved today for the first year to see how that person responds by bringing in new associate members and doing all the other duties as required.

Vice-Mayor Bartz motioned to cap the position at a \$10,000 salary for the first year to include all expenses. Alderman VanHekken seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Treasurer Watford inquired on how is the league prepared to select this person. Secretary Cruz said that the one applicant that is interest in the position, Patricia Christensen, is present today if you want to move forward in interviewing because she is prepared. She continued that the other applicant withdrew.

Vice-President Turner inquired if the league is prepared for interviewing and/or if Patricia is prepared to be interviewed and Alderman VanHekken said that she wants to hear what Patricia has to say to make a decision today.

Treasurer Watford asked for a consensus on hearing Patricia today because he agrees with that and wants to hear her thoughts but also he inquired if the league wants to advertise the position or have an executive committee interview the person to make a recommendation to the league members for a decision.

Vice-President Turner inquired with Secretary Cruz is any type of solicitation was sent out for the league's intention to hire an Executive Director. Secretary Cruz said advertising was not sent out because the applicants approach us first stating their interest.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch said that she wants to hear what Patricia has to say today especially since she was one of the founders of this group and what is needed is leadership from someone that is familiar with our communities to move our goals forward.

Vice-President Turner said that the league is very fortunate to have Patricia interested in being the Executive Director especially because of her back ground and her familiarity of the areas and inquired if Patricia is ready to address the league.

Patricia Christensen greeted the league members by passing around a resume and thanked Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch for giving her credit on being one of the founders but they were Tom White, former Mayor of Vero Beach, and Bob Minsky, former Mayor of Port St. Lucie.

Ms. Christensen introduced herself and spoke regarding her back ground especially in her position with Waste Pro that was involved with the Palm Beach League of Cities and understands their operation which is very successful. She said that in reviewing the job criteria she can successfully achieve all of the goals and believes the organization has two weaknesses; leadership and membership and can achieve one of the goals by increasing the associate membership.

Ms. Christensen said that she can work closely with the new executive board and secretary by having the agenda and minutes be prepared properly in addition to doing the research needed in providing the back-up material that is required for the different issues that will be discussed as a board.

Ms. Christensen said that the salary range that she has been contemplating as far as the budget is exactly what was discussed to be a fair salary for starting this position. She continued that she believes if she was hired to fill this position the associate membership would grow along with the revenue that would give the ability to become stronger not only in the Treasure Coast area but at the state level too. Then the duties of the Executive Director would increase and strengthen the position in addition to hopefully increase the salary as well. She said that she knows she can fill every criteria that is required for this position.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch inquired on how would she inspire the leadership and tap into the FLC that hasn't been done yet by taking the league in the direction of leadership in the state level. Ms. Christensen said that because the league is an affiliate of the FLC she believes time should be spent on discussing the legislative issues that the FLC proposes to address with the state legislature each year.

Ms. Christensen stated that the league has two representatives on the FLC and collaboratively information can be brought back for notification and in addition several of the members are assigned on different FLC committees. She continued that on the agenda should be an area to include what is being discussed at the FLC committee meetings to be shared with the other elected officials as also when FLC sets their legislative agenda.

Treasurer Watford discussed a concern regarding role playing and Ms. Christensen aid that she has learned over the last two years to take the back seat to help this organization achieve its mission to grow and for her to be their voice.

Vice-President Turner inquired what will be the key to acquiring more associate members. Ms. Christensen said that she contemplated in asking each municipality to provide the ten biggest vendors to be placed in a database and those will be the key ones to attract. But we need to give the organizations a reason to be here and one of the items that I have contemplated is changing the format to give them more access, meet, and speak with the elected officials.

Ms. Christensen continued that each community issues may not affect all of the municipalities but you want the support of your neighboring community especially when you are going to the state level. She continued that she has grown to expand her horizon by becoming a member of the SLC Chamber of Commerce and is involved by being a Board of director for the Chamber that will also help with Associate Membership.

Ms. Christensen said that the website needs help and have acquired a little bit of knowledge on maintenance of websites by maintaining the website for my Rotary Club and has a website by publishing a weekly newsletter called Weekly Tidbits.

Vice-President Turner thanked Ms. Christensen for attending today and asked for a motion to proceed.

Mayor Hudson suggested for the person to report their hours at every board meeting.

Treasurer Watford inquired if a city has an attorney that could review the contract and Vice-Mayor Bartz offered the City of Port St. Lucie so both are protected.

Treasurer Watford motioned to choose the person today to the contract process.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch motioned to select Patricia Christensen as the league's executive director because she believes the members are very fortunate and it is a gift to have someone who is so well fit for the position that knows each municipality and that she is in attendance today to choose her. Vice-Mayor Bartz seconded the motion.

Treasurer Watford inquired on how soon can a contract be prepared and asked if Secretary Cruz could email the board asking for suggestion, requirements, and/or recommendations to review a draft contract.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch amended the motion to choose Patricia Christensen based on the members and herself reviewing an acceptable contract. Councilman Gillmor seconded the amended motion, which passed unanimously.

Vice-President Turner congratulated Ms. Christensen that thanked the league for having the confidence in herself and that she is very excited to move forward.

### **C) Nominating Committee Recommendation**

Vice-Mayor Tyson has motioned to nominate Mayor Faiella to serve as President, Councilman Gillmor as Vice-President, Councilman Watford as Treasurer and they all have accept their nomination for one year. Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Vice-President Turner announced that Councilwoman Amelia Graves will be the TCRLC representative for the City of Vero Beach.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A) All Aboard Florida High Speed Rail Support Letter – Mayor Thiess, Town of St. Lucie Village**

Mayor Thiess explained why the Town of St. Lucie Village is asking for support regarding All Aboard Florida High Speed Rail because with a small population and a small budget there are 2 ½ miles of railroad tracks with six crossing within the Town of St. Lucie Village. He continued that proportionally there are more crossings than most of the other cities and the main issues are safety, noise, and costs. He continued that they are responsible for the maintenance which costs between \$75,000 -\$80,000 that always increase but the trains come through now are at 45-60 mph and these new sophisticated could come through up to 80-110 mph.

Mayor Thiess said that the biggest issue is the noise that All Aboard Florida said that it is up to the individual cities/counties to do what they want to do, so if you want a quiet zone area, you would need a movement to push DOT to fund. He said that Palm Beach County passed a resolution to DOT to ask for funding of the quiet zones, but they were told it is doubtful, so the Town of St. Lucie Village is going to press for funding we might as well all ask in a unified format either by a letter from this league or for each individual city to do resolutions.

Treasurer Watford suggested that the league prepare a resolution for President Faiella to sign and circulate to the representatives. Mayor Thiess mentioned that it should also be distributed to the league north of us which is the Space Coast.

Treasurer Watford motioned to prepare a resolution for President Faiella to sign. Vice-President Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **B) Environmental Mitigation Fund Resolution – Vice-Mayor Bartz, City of Port St. Lucie**

Vice-Mayor Bartz said that this resolution was approved by the City of Port St. Lucie as alternates to help with funding for the cleaning of the Indian River Lagoon that redirects some of those mitigation dollars and credits that come from developers. She continued that basically we all want a common goal to clean up the waterways and to keep them clean by working together and this is a template for you to present this to your cities. She said that this more for sharing information but the dollars are needed.

Mayor Hudson said that the City of Fort Pierce also passed this resolution.

**C) Approval of Education and Entertainment Associate Membership Application**

Vice-President Turner introduced AniYa A which proceeded to explain her background and business especially her "Stop the Violence and Show the Love" initiative/proclamation. Vice-Mayor Tyson motioned to accept. Council Vice-President Kagdis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**D) Approval of IRSC Foundation Associate Membership Application**

Vice-President Turner said that Ann Decker could not attend today's meetings but this application is to ensure IRSC has updated information regarding the league's scholarship. Treasurer Watford motioned to approve. Alderman VanHekken seconded, which pass unanimously.

**E) Approval of Vero Heritage, Inc. Associate Membership Application**

Vice-President Turner introduced Rebecca Rickey which explained her business of restoration of historical landmarks for preservation. Vice-Mayor Tyson motioned to approve. Council Vice-President Kagdis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**F) 2014 Meeting Schedule**

Vice-President Turner said that in your packet is the 2014 meeting scheduled to post your calendars and the next scheduled meeting is January 15, 2014.

Council Vice-President Kagdis from the Town of Ocean Breeze said that they will host the January meeting.

**7. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Council Vice-President Kagdis announced that she will be attending the FLC legislative conference and the major issues on the table are the vacation rental situation that impacts every community and the noise ordinance for the east coast railway.

Amy Brunjes of FPL announced a community open house regarding Florida Southeast Connection Pipeline meetings.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-President Turner adjourned the meeting at 12:16 p.m.