

Minutes of the
Legislative Committee Meeting
March 2, 2006

A meeting of the NEFRC Legislative Committee was held on Thursday, March 2, 2006, at 1:40 p.m., at the St. Johns River Community College, Criminal Justice Center, 2990 College Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32084. **Chairman Myers** called the meeting to order with the following members present representing a quorum.

Linda Myers – Putnam County
Harold Rutledge – Clay County
Gordon Crews – Baker County

Ansley Acree – Nassau County
Blair Kanbar - Flagler County
Karen Stern – President NEFRC

Absent: Bruce Maguire (St. Johns County), Elaine Brown (Duval County)

Others: Tom Branam (Nassau County)

Staff: Brian Teeple, Mario Taylor, Mike Hadden, and Peggy Conrad

*Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Crews moved approval of the February 2, 2006, meeting's minutes; seconded by Commissioner Rutledge; motion unanimously carried.

Legislative Priorities

Chairman Myers called attention to the memorandum containing legislative priority information received to date stating that only Baker, Clay, and Duval had submitted their priorities and apologizing for Putnam County not having submitted their priorities.

Mr. Taylor explained the order of the information presented then gave more detail regarding the submissions.

Baker County

- Small County Road Programs
- Return Full Funding of the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program
- Hurricane Preparedness and Response Funds
- County Medicaid Responsibilities

Clay County

- County Medicaid Responsibilities
- Local Option Portability
- Transportation Funding

Duval County

- St. Johns River – Lower Basin
- Transportation Funding and Equity
- Affordable Housing
- State Aid for Libraries

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Mr. Taylor mentioned this list contained a variety of items and bills that accompany them. Also included was the 2006 State Business Advocacy Agenda from the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce. These were submitted by the MPO on behalf of Commissioner Maguire.

Florida League of Cities

- Affordable Housing
- Transportation Funding
- Water Quality
- Emergency Management, Preparedness and Recovery

Putnam County

Chairman Myers stated that she remembered Putnam County's priorities as follows:

- Affordable Housing - Full Funding for Sadowski for the SHIP Program
- Transportation Funding
- Emergency Preparedness

Chairman Myers mentioned that although the final document will contain others, probably these three items are the ones that legislators will know are critical to the Northeast Florida Region. The top issue in each county will also be brought forward even though it does not affect the other counties. It was decided to add **Medicaid** to the list as a fourth priority.

Chairman Myers urged everyone to submit their priorities.

The final product for submission will be produced by Mr. Taylor. This will be in booklet style and will include the Legislative Committee contact numbers. A discussion was held regarding whether to use a pamphlet or a palm card. It was decided to have the top three legislative priorities printed on a palm card for distribution to the legislators. The pamphlet will contain more information on all of the issues of each county and will be given to the Northeast Florida delegates. **Commissioner Rutledge** asked if he could receive 50 of the palm cards by the third week in March. Mr. Taylor called attention to the list of delegates.

Public Relations opportunities were discussed and it was decided to hold a press conference in Tallahassee. The information will be made available to all of the local media also. **Chairman Myers** mentioned that the Florida Association of Counties will be meeting in Tallahassee on March 29, 2006, presenting an opportunity for a press conference on that day. Meantime a list of priorities along with a cover letter can be submitted to the legislators. **Chairman Myers** emphasized the importance of contacts. Mr. Teeple and Mr. Taylor will make sure the Legislative Contacts are forwarded to the Legislative Committee especially the influential legislators on the committees relating to the priorities. Mr. Taylor stated he would provide a list of legislators to be visited and a schedule of who will be visited and by whom.

Florida Regional Council Association (FRCA) Legislative Tracking Chart

Mr. Teeple discussed the bill tracking charts, in particular tort reform, eminent domain, affordable housing, impact fees, and home rule.

The Regional Councils are at \$3 million in the budget and a request has been made for \$3.3 million through Representative Kravitz who wholeheartedly supports Regional Councils. Mr. Teeple then called attention to four bills to watch which included the DRI bill, electrical substations, outdoor advertising signs, and the agricultural enclave bill.

Chairman Myers suggested that the palm card should state that "Home Rule is Important to our Counties". Mr. Teeple mentioned that Hometown Democracy is gaining strength again.

Chairman Myers mentioned that Staff member Carol Brady had brought her concerns regarding decrease of funding for Florida KidCare. After discussion it was decided to add **Funding for Florida KidCare** as number five on the list of legislative priorities.

Chairman Myers encouraged committee members to speak with their delegates on a Friday afternoon when they are home and to use this as a public relations moment.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 6, 2006, following the Board meeting, at the Northeast Florida Regional Council, 6850 Belfort Oaks Place, Jacksonville, FL 32216.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.