

Captiva Community Panel
MINUTES
Aug. 13, 2013

Attending: Sandy Stilwell, Mike Mullins, Jack Cunningham, Robert Baugh, Jerry McClure, Paul McCarthy, David Rohn (phone)

Audience: 6

The meeting convened 9 a.m. Panel introductions followed and approval of the July 9, 2013 minutes (McClure/Cunningham) was unanimous.

CEPD update: Administrator Kathy Rooker noted there was a good turnout at July 26 meeting, with USACE representatives attending. The Corps is not honoring the agreement to fund the beach nourishment on Captiva, which was a last-minute decision the day we were going to open bids. The district kept the project out there in front of dredgers so they did not get frustrated. We put it right out to bid again, and opened bids Aug. 9. She encouraged Captivans to attend the regular meeting Aug. 14 where commissioners will consider three bids received and award the project bid. She said you could expect activity on the beach by late September. Cunningham asked why the Corps changed its mind to honor contract and whether this would still be a Corps project. Rooker said it will be a CEPD project. Cunningham asked what the county position on this was. Rooker said the state and local funding is still committed. Mullins disagreed, saying the district needed to go back to the county, that this was an opportunity to ask for more money from Lee County due to the loss of federal funds. Cunningham said he thought state money was contingent on federal funding. Rooker said the state ranks you higher if you get federal funding. Nancy Oden asked if the district had enough money for the project or would be coming from our pockets. Rooker said the board has not awarded the contract, so it depends on what contract they accept. She was comfortable we can be able to proceed with the project. We won't know cost until the final bills are all in and we apportion it to everyone, the same procedures as the 2005-2006 project. Mullins urged the audience to come to the next CEPD meeting, a lot will be decided. The district will try to go back to renegotiate the bids in those areas where it seems the contractor may have misunderstood what we wanted. Voters already approved referendum of \$15 million and you were told what the maximum assessment amount could be. He expected the cost to Captiva to be \$8 million to \$11 million, which was more than expected but not at the maximum voters approved. Also depends on current assessments vs. assessment used in the referendum. Stilwell suggested the district negotiate general conditions, and do a full analysis of all proposals. Rooker said all bidders were given the same general conditions, government contract requires that to make it a level playing field.

LCSO update: Deputy Mike Sawicki said the opening of snook season and the Labor Day weekend may cause some issues in Blind Pass, which they were monitoring and planning extra staffing. Fishing was down due to water quality issues. Discussion of issues and plans followed. Have been getting complaints about use of private docks by boaters, deputies can chase them off if you request it. Lately it's been amateur hour, with boaters/fishers who don't know what they're doing among the pros using the pass.

Hurricane update: Ann Bradley said residents needed to have current authorization letters on file, have a current hurricane pass; keep a full tank of gas -- and happy anniversary to Charley, which struck the island nine years ago today. Cunningham said the CCA building demolition was complete. They were about 30 days behind due to permitting glitches, so work may drag into next year. The library is

still open. Generator is planned as part of the improvements to provide services to community in a storm situation. Bradley offered thanks to Paul Garvey for responding to construction issues affecting the library so quickly.

Planning update: Planner Max Forgey said he had spoken with county planner Kathie Ebaugh, who said the Captiva Plan scope contract had cleared Community Development management and was reviewed by attorneys. It was not on the commission agenda yet, hopes to see it scheduled before the end of the fiscal year Sept. 30. He said he would plan commissioner visits accordingly. Mullins said he and Max will meet on MSTU issues, where the money goes and what we get from it. Maybe the panel could consider hiring Charlie Green as a consultant to look into this. The funds are specifically for use by the county's unincorporated areas. (McCarthy joined meeting.) Discussion of MSTU, legality and genesis. MSTU vs. MSBU definition ensued. The difference between the units involved being taxed based on benefit vs. being taxed based on property value.

Finances: Gooderham noted the regular update had been provided to panel members and asked if there were any questions.

Planning survey: Gooderham noted that a draft had been sent to all panel members prior to the meeting and was included with the handouts available to all. He briefly ran through the lead-up to this survey, which was part of the public input effort tied to the Captiva Plan update. The floor was then opened up to comments. Cunningham urged including a text box for comments on all questions. The landscaping language cited was tied to pre-Charley conditions. We need to acknowledge there is a limit to what we can do on private land. He suggested removing the canopy wording. Mullins brought up invasive vegetation species. Cunningham said we can't mandate Australian pines removal. On the Tween Waters stretch, there were a lot of smaller shrub plants that are blocking the view of the Gulf. From the Jensen curve to Tween Waters, there were nice palms planted.

Mullins asked if we could include a statement about invasives, to which there was general agreement. He suggested to include language about keeping vegetation out of the right-of-way, and to push the county to maintain roadway and remove sand, trim vegetation hanging in the road. Forgey said the county's roadwork was limited, since staff tries not to damage private plants. Discussion of road cleaning followed. McCarthy said there needed to be a distinction between aspirational vs. preservation, goals vs. cutting grass, prioritizing issues vs. random issues. Cunningham said a future orientation was needed. He wanted to look at Tween Waters road options, and suggested the draft remove old landscaping wording. They need to communicate with the county to ensure clearances are maintained. Forgey suggested the focus should be on environment and aesthetics. McCarthy included the natural environment.

Cunningham asked about the bike/ped section, noting that a bike path still a hot item. Widening shoulder could be an option, and asked about language to expand the bike lane. Discussion followed. Cunningham said parking is very controversial, but the Corps' rejection of beach project funding shows its importance. Mullins said the island would need more beach access to go up a level in the funding assessments. Cunningham said parking would have a benefit to businesses as well. As to survey security, he was opposed to multiple votes on these issues based on the number of properties someone owns. Mullins disagreed, saying the county and state use STRAP numbers as basis of community voice. The panel just goes further by including voters, etc. Baugh said using the STRAP numbers for the survey access makes sense. McCarthy reminds everyone that the survey was just informational, not a binding vote. Baugh suggested to simplify the survey a little more, let the community prioritize

what's important to them. Rohn urged something to offer more context as to what the planning process is for and how it will proceed. McCarthy said the survey would not be tied to the planned brochure according to his recollection, since we want more people to participate. We need to make it more inviting: "We want your opinion."

Water quality: Mullins reminded everyone about the upcoming meeting on Lake Okeechobee release at Tween Waters on Aug. 26. He noted that, although the county has been paying a lobbyist on this issue for years nothing seems to change. Stilwell said we need a coalition to magnify our voices. McCarthy said it was a state issue, not a federal issue. Water going into the lake is substandard by federal standards. Mullins said there are issues north of the lake as well. Cunningham said the panel should take a position. Baugh said we need to show the impact on our side of the state as well. Mullins said that counties need to spend their money on this as well. We need to show the value of clean water and beaches. Get one county to show the economic impact, and then build a consortium of other counties to have a greater impact. Stilwell wondered whether Hertz would have decided to move to this area if they saw our tannic-covered beaches.

Other business: Terri McClure asked whether bicyclists have to stop at stop signs. Sawicki said they have to act like a vehicle if they are in the road. Discussion followed.

The meeting adjourned 10:35 a.m., and Gooderham was urged to send out a quorum check to see which of the first three Tuesday in September would be best for better panel attendance.

-- *Ken Gooderham, administrator*