

SWFRPC BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

November 7, 2011

The SWFRPC's Budget & Finance Committee held a meeting/conference call on November 7, 2011 at the offices of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. The following members and staff were in attendance:

Committee Members

Councilwoman Teresa Heitmann, City of Naples (Chair)
Councilman Forrest Banks, City of Fort Myers

Others

Ms. Liz Donley, SWFRPC Interim Executive Director
Ms. Nancy Doyle, SWFRPC Administrative Services Coordinator
Ms. Janice Yell, SWFRPC Cost Accountant II
Ms. Nichole Gwinnett, SWFRPC Administrative Specialist II

Call to Order

Ms. Donley explained that there was an internal staff meeting held to discuss the upcoming holidays and staff came to a consensus for shutting down the offices in between Christmas and New Years and agreeing to take two furlough days to begin assisting the anticipated budget crunch that is going to come with the Lee County MPO leaving. Staff believes that the savings will be approximately \$12,000, plus the savings in actually shutting down the building completely (utilities turned off or at a minimum, etc.). But staff will also need to notify the Council that the Council's offices will be closed from December 23rd to January 2nd with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Committee Chair Heitmann called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. and noted that there was not a quorum present. She then recommended that the meeting be either postponed or rescheduled with the agenda as presented. She requested that an update of the Lee County MPO be given at the next meeting and also the recommendation from the Executive Committee regarding the shutdown of the Council's offices during the holidays. Ms. Donley agreed.

Councilwoman Heitmann asked Ms. Donley if she had any other recommendation as to what other items should be addressed at the next Budget and Finance Committee meeting. Ms. Donley stated that if the meeting will be held in the beginning of December, she will bring the additional activities that staff is doing to reduce our overhead costs. Staff will also have spoken to at least one realtor about the building.

Councilwoman Heitmann clarified that the following items will also be included on the agenda:

- Reduction of Costs

- Executive Committee Recommendation regarding the shutdown of Council's offices during the holidays.
- Effect on the budget for the Council's offices would be shutdown.
- The Lee County MPO Consequences or Cause and Effect on the Budget
- Realtor Input

Ms. Donley explained that instead of spending the money to get an actual appraisal, staff was going to meet with the same realtor who sold the building to the Council and get some discussions started on what the market is, where this building would be in the market and also some other options that staff are exploring in regards to subletting space.

Councilwoman Heitmann asked when the MPO contract will be completed. Ms. Donley replied that it is her understanding that it is the intent of the MPO to be out of the building by March 1st.

Councilwoman Heitmann asked if it would be appropriate either this month or next month to discuss with the Executive Committee either recruitment or sale of the building. Ms. Donley replied that she doesn't disagree; she feels that preliminary homework needs to be done before any funds are expended on it. Ms. Jennifer Pellechio of staff has been given some suggestions by other agencies within the region about hosting incubator companies since we already have the resources and infrastructure. Staff also needs to contact the landlord who owns the adjacent property; because at one time he had shown some interest in purchasing the building and then leasing it back to us. She wanted to make sure that she was able to give the committees a couple options so that they would be able to give clear direction on how to proceed. With a new Executive Director coming in, she wanted to make sure that all of the homework was done along with the foundation. But she doesn't feel that those decisions will be able to be made before a new Executive Director is on board or at least appraised of what is happening.

Councilwoman Heitmann stated that she agrees and by having the footwork and options on both sides is appropriate to her.

Councilman Banks suggested presenting to the six counties the options of increasing their assessments or selling the building. Ms. Donley explained that there is an option of a supplemental assessment.

Item #4 - Set Next Meeting Date and Time

Councilman Banks suggested conducting a Doodle poll to schedule the next meeting.

Item #5 - Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:21 a.m.