

MEMORANDUM
FROM
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

Date: October 20, 2014

To: Lee County BoCC
Dist #1, #2, #3, #4, #5

From: Roger Desjarlais 
County Manager

Board Members,

As you know, we are scheduled for a work session at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 21. During the past few weeks I have met with each of you to solicit your thoughts regarding issues facing Lee County in both the short and long terms. While the list of topics is not exhaustive, they do represent a variety of subjects that will ultimately require policy direction from the board that will in turn become the basis for the organizations work efforts.

During the past year we successfully focused on creating a balanced and sustainable budget following the recession. It was accomplished through a series of work sessions where the County Commission engaged in policy discussions and debates that led to a successful conclusion of the budget season.

As the new fiscal year begins, our first work session will commence the discussion for prioritizing major work efforts that will go beyond routine service delivery in FY14/15. Routine service delivery can be defined as those services provided by the continuation budget. Some of the major work efforts simply mean finishing work that has already started, such as the impact fee studies and final decisions. Other and longer-term efforts requiring policy discussion and direction may involve growth management, transportation, economics, the environment, etc.

During the past few weeks in preparation for this work session and ultimately your Oct. 29 retreat, I met with each of you to solicit your preliminary thoughts on the important issues facing Lee County. In no particular order I have listed the topics we discussed. I have also eliminated duplicate topics that were mentioned by more than one board member.

- Growth – The economy continues to recover and the number of applications for development review is on the rise;
- Develop where infrastructure exists – How do we incentivize development where infrastructure already exists;
- Land use/Comp Plan/EAR – The State of Florida Department of Community Affairs and concurrency no longer exists;
- Impact Fees;

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- Finalizing changes to the 20/20 program to insure its long term viability/CLASAC recommendations;
- Affordable Housing – During the recession affordable housing was plentiful. As the economy continues to improve, rental and home ownership costs increase and the number of affordable housing units are on the decline;
- Sustainability – In 2010 the board created a sustainability committee that along with staff created a community sustainability plan. The plan has never been adopted;
- Transportation – Not just roads and capacity;
- Economic Development – Local efforts, regional efforts, corporate relocation, local business assistance and growth;
- Environmental Issues – Water quality, open space, water quantity, sea level rise, etc.

The goal for this work session is to discuss these or other topics and begin to identify policy priorities that can be more fully developed during your October 29th strategic planning session.

It goes without saying our efforts to continue developing an organization that places a premium on cost savings and efficient operations will continue. It also goes without saying that the topics listed in this email do not describe issues that will be resolved or solved in any single year, but will be multiyear efforts and in some cases unending efforts to protect quality of life in Lee County.

Roger