



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

TO: Jim Liesenfelt, Interim County Manager
FROM: Don Walker, Director of Communications
SUBJ: Citizen Efficiency and Effectiveness Recommendation #2025044

CEER #2025044, titled Summit meetings between Commissioners and City Leaders, was received by the County from Heather A Elko.

Citizen Statement:

In recent years the relationship between the County and our cities has deteriorated into becoming adversarial. Issues do come up that would benefit from wise leaders (the leaders themselves, not their staffs) sitting down together. BACKGROUND EXAMPLES: 1. The Malabar Scrub melt-down was one, where the issue seemed to be hijacked by hotheads on both sides, when a reasonable joint meeting of multiple Commissioners and City leaders could have been more professional and effective. 2. The funding of lifeguards situation is similar to the Malabar issue. This one resulted in sword-rattling and combative talk. Citizens learned about it in social media and news sources, which resulted in their being concerned and upset at an unknown future.

Citizen Recommendation:

The County should reach out to Cities on issues that require joint cooperation and set up a summit meeting on an as-needed basis, involving the cities that the issue affects. 1. I suggest the actual elected Commissioners and City leaders (not just staff representatives) attend this/these meetings, which would include an agreed-upon agenda, coffee and snacks, and lunch if the meeting is lengthy. A. The drawback of just having "my people meet with your people" is that staff members do not have decision-making authority and must fear for their jobs if they speak "out of turn." 2. The benefit of such summit meetings is to spend quality time, speak and listen respectfully, break bread, and knit together a more coherent governance for the citizens of Brevard County. A. The costs would be as follows. Leaders' time away from office tasks; space needed for a comfortable meeting; snacks, drinks and lunch if needed. B. A side benefit is that leaders will get to know each other on a more personal level and that will result in future communication being easier. C. The summit meetings do not need to be etched in granite. They should be as-needed when the issues arise where joint cooperation would be beneficial. 3. Citizens don't care as much as the elected leaders do about when they are in a city jurisdiction



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or in a county jurisdiction. Citizens just want solutions that affect their quality of life, no matter who is in charge.

Staff Analysis:

The County routinely reaches out to, and works in tandem with, municipal governments, their elected officials, and other community agencies related to a broad spectrum of governmental initiatives, including transportation projects, public safety, community redevelopment and environmental issues.

Staff Recommended Action:

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners reject Citizen Efficiency and Effectiveness Recommendation #2025044 because Board action to schedule meetings, including a Summit meeting if desired, is already allowed at Board discretion under the County Charter.

CC: Frank Abbate, County Manager

Horst, Rachel

From: CEER@brevardfl.gov
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 12:15 PM
To: Horst, Rachel
Subject: A new CEER Recommendation has been submitted as ID #2025044

Recommendation # 2025044

Dear CEER Administrator,

Speak Up Brevard Recommendation ID #2025044 has been submitted. Please login to the CEER Application to start the recommendation evaluation workflow.

Contact Information:

Group/Organization

Name Heather A Elko
Address 566 Thomas Barbour Dr, Melbourne FL 32935 6929
Phone (321) 427-8564
Email Efeather2@bellsouth.net
Alternate Email

Recommendation Information:

Recommendation ID 2025044
Recommendation Title Summit meetings between Commissioners and City Leaders
Areas Affected Citizen sense of wellbeing
Department Affected
Current problem In recent years the relationship between the County and our cities has deteriorated into becoming adversarial. Issues do come up that would benefit from wise leaders (the leaders themselves, not their staffs) sitting down together. BACKGROUND EXAMPLES: 1.The Malabar Scrub melt-down was one, where the issue seemed to be hijacked by hotheads on both sides, when a reasonable joint meeting of multiple Commissioners and City leaders could have been more professional and effective. 2.The funding of lifeguards situation is similar to the Malabar issue. This one resulted in sword-rattling and combative talk. Citizens learned about it in social media and news sources, which resulted in their being concerned and upset at an unknown future.
Recommendation The County should reach out to Cities on issues that require joint cooperation and set up a summit meeting on an as-needed basis, involving the cities that the issue affects. 1.I suggest the actual elected Commissioners and City leaders (not just staff representatives) attend this/these meetings, which would include an agreed-upon agenda, coffee and snacks, and lunch if the meeting is lengthy. a. The drawback of

just having "my people meet with your people" is that staff members do not have decision-making authority and must fear for their jobs if they speak "out of turn." 2.The benefit of such summit meetings is to spend quality time, speak and listen respectfully, break bread, and knit together a more coherent governance for the citizens of Brevard County. a.The costs would be as follows. Leaders' time away from office tasks; space needed for a comfortable meeting; snacks, drinks, and lunch if needed. b.A side benefit is that the leaders will get to know each other on a more personal level and that will result in future communication being easier. c.The summit meetings do not need to be etched in granite. They should be as-needed when issues arise where joint cooperation would be beneficial. 3.Citizens don't care as much as the elected leaders do about when they are in a city jurisdiction or in a county jurisdiction. Citizens just want solutions that affect their quality of life, no matter who is in charge.

Attachments

Summit Meetings between County and Cities.docx

Please do not reply to this e-mail, as it will go to an unmonitored mailbox.

Summit Meetings of County Commissioners with Elected City leaders for specific purposes

Intro: In recent years the relationship between the County and our cities has deteriorated into becoming adversarial. Issues do come up that would benefit from wise leaders (the leaders themselves, not their staffs) sitting down together.

Proposal: The County should reach out to Cities on issues that require joint cooperation and set up a summit meeting on an as-needed basis, involving the cities that the issue affects.

1. I suggest the actual elected Commissioners and City leaders (not just staff representatives) attend this/these meetings, which would include an agreed-upon agenda, coffee and snacks, and lunch if the meeting is lengthy.
 - a. The drawback of just having "my people meet with your people" is that staff members do not have decision-making authority and must fear for their jobs if they speak "out of turn."
2. The benefit of such summit meetings is to spend quality time, speak and listen respectfully, break bread, and knit together a more coherent governance for the citizens of Brevard County.
 - a. The costs would be as follows. Leaders' time away from office tasks; space needed for a comfortable meeting; snacks, drinks, and lunch if needed.
 - b. A side benefit is that the leaders will get to know each other on a more personal level and that will result in future communication being easier.
 - c. The summit meetings do not need to be etched in granite. They should be as-needed when issues arise where joint cooperation would be beneficial.
3. Citizens don't care as much as the elected leaders do about when they are in a city jurisdiction or in a county jurisdiction. Citizens just want solutions that affect their quality of life, no matter who is in charge.

Background examples:

1. The Malabar Scrub melt-down was one, where the issue seemed to be hijacked by hotheads on both sides, when a reasonable joint meeting of multiple Commissioners and City leaders could have been more professional and effective.
2. The funding of lifeguards situation is another. Similar to the Malabar issue, this one resulted in sword-rattling and combative talk. Citizens learned about it in social media and news sources, which resulted in being concerned and upset at an unknown future.