

we're here to do. But part of thinking about your strategy to be able to come up here -- and, remember, this is the order for your particular issue. It's the applicant, it's the county staff, then it's the comment from the citizens. This is a big issue. The applicant and the county staff conversation, I believe, is going to be more than five minutes. It's going to be lengthy. So just think about that while you're sitting here. And we will keep you posted. I think it will be obvious sort of how things are flowing, but Isles of Capri is not next.

So if you have a copy of the agenda, the next item, you know, Ms. Patterson, I believe, is 10A.

MS. PATTERSON: It is 10A.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: So without further ado, unless -- I see Commissioner Saunders light up. Sir?

COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: Just a real quick comment. I think your comment about getting the opposition folks to get a little bit better organized so they won't have 69 speakers, I think, is a great idea. But my view is we'll get that started today, and let's finish it, if it takes till 8:00 or 9:00, 10:00 at night, I think everybody wants to get it behind us. And so that -- I just wanted to place that out there; that's my view. Let's get it -- we'll get it done.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: We're going to press on, sir. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: I have one.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Go ahead, sir.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: One quick point, and that has to do with the speakers. And as we're moving through the process and we move into the public, if you hear someone say what you've already said, come to the podium and say, I agree with George, and that way there we're not consuming that entire three minutes. If George has already made your point -- I'm picking on him because he's sitting there. But it's -- that's something that we can do to help

move along the process and still give everybody time. You're still a matter of record that you've registered your response, but we can do that, so...

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Right. And I agree with Commissioner Saunders. Trust me, nobody up here is watching the clock, but at times I have gotten emails from citizens that said, well, I couldn't stay there till 7:00 at night. You know, I can't believe you couldn't move things. So I don't know that we'll ever please anyone [sic], but we're here to work, and we're here to hear from you, and we're here to get things done.

So without further ado, let's press with the business that's ahead of that.

And, Ms. Patterson, we'll move on to 10A.

Item #10A

**RECOMMENDATION TO ADJUST THE BOARD'S CALENDAR BY ELIMINATING THE SUMMER RECESS AND THUS PROVIDE FOR YEAR-ROUND MEETINGS – MOTION TO WORK THROUGH THE SUMMER BY COMMISSIONER MCDANIEL; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOCASTRO - APPROVED (COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS OPPOSED)**

---

MS. PATTERSON: 10A is a recommendation to adjust the Board's calendar by eliminating the summer recess and, thus, provide for year-round meetings. This item was brought to the agenda by Commissioner McDaniel.

COMMISSIONER MCDANIEL: And on the note of we're here to work, here's a perfect example of that.

I have served as your county commissioner for six years, in excess of six years now. I've lobbied to do this since I became your

county commissioner. I've lived in Naples since 1981, and when I came here 41 years ago, there was less than 100,000 people living in Collier County. Now we're pushing 400,000 people. And I believe that the community deserves a voice. I believe that the community deserves an opportunity to reach your elected officials on a far more regular basis than what we have been doing, and just because we have been doing it doesn't mean we can't try something else.

So the proposition that I brought here today is to extend the Board's calendar, work throughout the summer, maybe adopt some rules as we go with regard to contentious items of land use and such to not be held in those summer meetings, and take -- take the business of our community on a more regular basis.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Yeah. I just want to say that was part of my platform when I ran that I just think times have changed. This is a busy county with a two-and-a-half billion dollar budget. You know, we're not -- we're not an elementary school where we take summer break or, you know, companies -- Arthrex doesn't break for the summer, NCH doesn't. They do some weird things in Washington, D.C., but I'm proud of what I think we need to do here.

I agree with Commissioner McDaniel, and I voted to cancel the summer break every single time it came up, and it failed. But having said that, I also want to echo that some of -- some of the pushback that we got or some of the feedback I would say from citizens that we got who liked the summer break, it wasn't because they liked us taking vacation. And I can tell you every commissioner up here is in the building. It's not like we all go to Tahiti, but the reality is, some of the people that gave us feedback were worried that we would have an Isles of Capri issue on the -- you know, squeeze that under the door over the summer. I'm here to tell you that most of our meetings in this room are not Isles of Capri and big -- it's a lot of the daily business. Look at the agenda. We're approving the payment of

money, hurricane recovery, the building of berms on beaches, approving contracts for construction so we can get things going.

How many of you have sent me an email saying, why do I see all this construction in season? Aren't you guys smart enough to do it in the summer? Well, you know, sometimes part of keeping the business of government moving is that we are keeping it moving all 12 months out of the year. Maybe some of these summer meetings wouldn't be marathon sessions because we wouldn't be voting on an Isles of Capri.

But I voted and supported exactly what Commissioner McDaniel has said, and I think -- you know, it failed a couple of times, but I just really think that times have changed, and you elect commissioners to be here full time. If there's not something on the agenda that calls for a meeting, the County Manager can tell us the agenda's very thin. I think, you know, we don't need to have a meeting on July whatever, and we could make that determination.

I'm in full agreement that, you know, we should have the opportunity to have meetings in here every two weeks for 12 months out of the year, you know, pending holidays and whatnot and sort of the typical things. I know I've got some people lit up here, and then it looks like we have public comment.

Before I get back to you, Commissioner McDaniel, let me go to Commissioner Saunders.

COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: Yes. A couple questions for staff and a couple comments.

I don't have any problem with having those meetings in July and August, but I do want to correct one thing. We always have an opportunity to have a meeting. If there's something that needs to be done, the Chairman, on his own motion, can call for a meeting at any time. So three commissioners can call for a meeting at any time. So if there's ever a point where there's some sense that we're getting

behind on anything, that's just a matter of the Chairman recognizing that and taking action to call the meeting.

But there's a reason why we've had this break, and it's not because commissioners are in Tahiti, as you were saying, and it's not --

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: I said they weren't.

COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: I know. And it's not because we aren't willing to work. We are here, but there's a reason for this. And I want to turn to the Manager, and I told her this morning that I was going to put her on the spot a little bit. I did this last time it came up.

We have a staff that puts together a 2,000- to 2500-page agenda every two weeks all year long. Now, we also give them incredible amounts of stuff to do. Today we're talking about, you know, the CDC grant and adding these types of things, but they have planning things that they're working on, Golden Gate Master Plan, the other master plans that they're working on.

So I want to ask the Manager if this break is important to staff and, if so, why, but I realize that, you know, it's a Commission decision, and staff has said, and they'll say it today -- I'm sure the Manager will say it today -- wherever this board's meeting, they're ready to be with us. It's not like they're trying to avoid a meeting, but there's a reason for this. And I want the new -- the two new commissioners to understand why we've done this in the past. So that's my question.

MS. PATTERSON: Of course.

So, as Commissioner Saunders said, we put together an agenda every two weeks. So, essentially, one week is the week that we're preparing and approving the agenda to print, and the next week we have a meeting, and we do this throughout the year.

In those six-ish weeks that we have in the summer, we are not

doing that for a portion of those, and it gives the opportunity at that time to do things, special projects, master planning. We spend a lot of time on the AUIR over the summer getting it ready for the fall. It also does give those staff members, specifically those that are very involved in the agenda process, the opportunity to take that time during that period of time away where they're not having to delegate that responsibility to somebody else.

Now, what we have said is, we'll make it work. We will adjust our schedules to make that work, as well as working on those special projects throughout the year, which we do that as well, and it also is going to provide an opportunity for, from time to time, you as the Board to see different faces coming up here. You get used to seeing your department heads and some of your key division directors. It is going to give the opportunity, as some of those folks, this is the only time of year that they might take that vacation with their kids or whatever that might be, that we are now going to have those -- that bench be able to come here and have an opportunity for you to get to know them as well.

So with those things that may present a challenge, they also -- there may be some benefit that arises as well. And, as Commissioner Saunders said, it is a Commission decision, and we will make it work. But for the benefit of the new commissioners, that summer period was always intended for that time for the staff to have a period of time to execute some of these projects that have been assigned and do some of that strategic planning and capital project work, planning work that we squeeze in for the rest of the year.

COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: Just a closing comment. If there was ever a point in time where we feel that we need to have extra meetings, that's easy to accomplish. But I just wanted to -- Commissioner Hall and Commissioner Kowal to know why this

has been kind of the policy in the past. It's not just commissioners trying to avoid meetings. It's really giving our staff an opportunity to get some good work done.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: One other thing I'll say, and not in rebuttal to that, but in response to that is, I think the other side of the coin would be is if we continued all throughout the year, and we also have the ability, like you said, to call special meetings, but we also have the ability to say, wow, there isn't enough on the agenda. And so it's a matter of our default is we're going to have meetings throughout the whole year. It's more proactive by saying we might cancel one here or there. Then, wow, we've got this gap, but we could always squeeze in a meeting.

Secondly, one of the reasons why I'm a supporter of having the schedule go throughout the whole year is it might show us where on our staff we might be a little bit thin, because if you say, well, the staff will just make it work. Well, I don't want them to make it work. I want to excel. So if we added these meetings and somebody is pulling double duty and doesn't get, you know, time with their kids or doesn't get to work on a special project, then we need to figure out how we can beef up our staff.

Because, you know, like -- I'll go back to my original comment: Times have changed. This is a full-time job. It's a full-time county. It needs full-time support. And this is a time to be able to see what parts of our departments need that extra break and now all of a sudden are overtasked. And that's where we're -- that's where I know -- I'll just speak for me -- then that's where I'm going to put the acceleration of my position to support the staff and say, wow, we just discovered a couple departments are really stressed out with these extra meetings. Why aren't we hiring more people?

Commissioner Hall, and then, Commissioner Daniel [sic], you're

on deck.

COMMISSIONER HALL: I'm certainly not opposed to working all year long. When I read about some of the benefits of the break were to allow staff to -- key staff to take vacation and to plan, I thought, maybe if we worked just -- school is out -- school comes back, what, second week of August all the time?

MS. PATTERSON: Usually.

COMMISSIONER HALL: So there's no sense in taking those days off, because everybody has their kids home. So what if we just missed the second week in July and worked all the way through August?

I'm just saying -- I bring it up to allow key staff for vacation because, I mean, kids are only out of school a very short time now. And I'm not opposed to going all year long. I'm just bringing it up for discussion.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Commissioner McDaniel.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: Oh, yeah, okay. I thought you said Daniel.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: No, McDaniel. Got it. I know your name. I was just talking to your mom. It's McDaniel. I got it.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: She's watching.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: She told you to sit up straight, by the way. She sent us a note here. Go ahead, sir.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: To your comment, Commissioner Hall, this is a pilot program, and rather than moving items based upon school and so on and so forth, our staff is already -- we've already started to see the new faces. We've already had discussions about developing the bench strength and having -- other than just the regular faces come to the podium and speak with us, we've already started that process.



I would -- it's a critical -- from my perspective, it's a critical period of time for our community because of our fiscal year. The way our current systems work, we take the public out of the process substantively by taking that period of time off right before the beginning of our fiscal year in October. We come back in September. We have a couple of meetings, budget hearings that are done along with the regular meetings, and then we adopt our budget, and we go on. I'm looking to enhance the public input into the government processes of what Collier County has.

From a negotiation standpoint, if you want to -- first of all, any of us that has a conflict because of already scheduled items -- some people travel and the like -- you're certainly welcome, if you can, to call in. With a vote of the Board, we'll acquiesce and certainly allow that.

And then the only other -- you know, we take two -- necessarily, another month off in the fall with one meeting in November and one meeting in December. And Commissioner Saunders, last year when we were talking about this, talked about that November meeting, and everybody knows that I go away in November. So if the Board wanted to, we could have another meeting in November. Most of us, most of you are here during that period of time, and we could have that meeting as well. That would be what I would propose as opposed to trying to limit what we're, in fact, doing right now.

So I'm okay with the one meeting, because Thanksgiving through -- and Christmas and New Year's, it's a difficult time of year to get anything done. But I would like for this to be used as a pilot program. We have some pretty -- I have some pretty interesting ideas that I haven't had an opportunity to speak with you gentlemen about yet as to what we -- excuse me -- what we can do in those new meetings in the summertime.

But to assure the public, the goal is not to do anything nefarious,

not -- necessarily, we wouldn't be hearing any real contentious land-use items during that period of time but just conducting the business of the community, so...

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Before I go to Commissioner Kowal, I just wanted to ask Mr. Miller, how many -- we have public comment. How many? One, okay.

Commissioner Kowal, and then we'll go to public comment.

COMMISSIONER KOWAL: Thank you, Commissioner or Chairman.

I'm going to be short and sweet. It doesn't -- to me it doesn't bother me. I'm not afraid of work. I'm retired. I can be here every day, so, you know, it's not a problem.

But it comes down to, I believe it's a staff thing, you know, and it's -- and what situation they've been in over the years, and it sounds like Commissioner Saunders was saying that they use that time to work on the things that you don't see, the public don't see behind the scenes that are just as important as the things you do see up here when we're on the dais.

You know, we can always try something new, you know. If it works, it works. If it doesn't, we can always go back to the old way. You know, sometimes people say, don't try to reinvent the wheel or don't break something that's not broken but, you know, it is true, we are not the same county we were 20, 30 years ago. This is a thriving metropolitan area. We've got 405,000 people here on a full-time basis, and then we probably increase by another 100- to 200,000 in season. So it's quite a job and, you know, it is something that we have to pay attention to all year-round, so...

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Mr. Miller, we'll go to the public comment.

MR. MILLER: Yes, Chairman. And I've just had one other

gentleman want to make comment. That's not usually what we do, but it's your discretion.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: No, absolutely. Go ahead.

MR. MILLER: Okay. Rae Ann Burton will be followed by Mr. Zegarac. I'm sorry, I've forgotten your first name, sir.

MR. ZEGARAC: Daniel.

MR. MILLER: Daniel.

MS. BURTON: You just can't get rid of me.

Okay. I was going to say good morning, but it's now afternoon. My name is Rae Ann Burton, Rural Golden Gate Estates.

Item 10A, 24219, to eliminate summer recess. What is preventing -- presenting concerns to the residents and will keep them from commenting on issues on the agenda, one, the BCC states it will not present for vote any projects of major changes such as amending the Growth Management Plan or push through projects that have been questioned and protested against in the past, but what if the developers demand it?

Two, it is felt that there will be projects that concern residents that will indeed pass through per the demands of developers without any comments from the affected communities or residents.

Three, adding two meetings to July and August will cost the taxpayers an extra \$7,500 to 10,500, plus the staff vacationing, meaning BCC will be working with reduced staff. Salary is one of the biggest, greatest costs. Would this mean an increase to taxes? Now, 7,500 to 10,500 may not be a lot to you, but to a retired senior citizen, that's a lot.

Four, the taxpayers need those two months to research the projects already being presented, as the agenda items are posted late on Thursday the week before, not giving much time for research.

Five, eliminating the summer recess is a poor service to the taxpayers of Collier County.

January 10, 2023

I request that you vote no. Plus, I believe the taxpayers should have the opportunity to have those months for research and a break from meetings, plus the staff need to catch up with other projects and family time. I think you should vote no.

Thank you.

MR. MILLER: Your final speaker is Daniel Zegarac.

MR. ZEGARAC: Good afternoon. Daniel Zegarac.

Oddly enough, I'm sitting next to the person that doesn't want to change your schedule. But, you know, a billion-and-a-half to two billion, now we're talking two to two-and-a-half billion pieces and parts galore. I mean, if our managers have become accustomed to and need that time off, guys, you've got to -- you've got to do more reps. You've got to come to practice. You've got to be more committed.

You know, you are our football team. If you don't win for us, we don't need ya, you know. But I would say, you know, to manage something as large as what we have going on here, really? You can do it remotely, or you can do it without seeing people? I don't understand that at all.

I've worked for guys that have, you know, a couple billion, two-and-a-half billion going on in sales, and, you know, when somebody comes in the room and says, you know, can we take off July and August, you know, there's one less chair in the room at that point, you know.

We all have to do our job. And I don't -- I don't want to make it tough on people or, you know -- but sometimes you just got to -- if you -- if you want to keep doing what you've been doing, you're going to keep getting what you've been getting.

You know, maybe our upper echelon managers need to accept this and say, hey, the vacation schedule's going to be a little different this year. You know, it's not -- we're not all going to be gone in July

and August, plus whenever else we leave. But this is -- this is bigtime. This isn't -- this isn't a little municipality. Little municipalities actually meet more often. This is -- this is major league stuff.

And, you know, the consent agendas that we don't have time to go over now, are you kidding me? Are we going to be surprised about engineering costs that increase after projects? I mean, I don't -- I don't want you guys to be surprised about that kind of stuff. And I'm just talking about operationally. I'm really not, you know, concentrating on development or other things right now. But I am for, you know, forgoing the July/August vacation.

So thank you.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Commissioner McDaniel.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: And just as -- just as an aside, Dan, our staff's prepared for this. They've already been preparing for this, just so you know. They are our football team. They -- assuming that the Board is in consent with the thought process. And so with that, they are -- they're already putting processes in place to be prepared for this. So just to assure you that they are, in fact, ready.

So with that I'm going to make a motion that we adjust the Board's schedule. We work through the summer months. If you wish -- do you want to add -- and I don't know. Do you want to add in a November meeting or leave it be one in November and one in December?

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: I like what -- I mean, me personally, I like the proactive approach, which is we schedule all of our meetings. We always have the ability to eliminate one rather than the other way around where we keep the gap and go, well, we can always throw one in there. So I don't want to monkey around. I like your idea of saying, you know, it's a pilot program. And I

second the motion.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: So you want to add in a November meeting? Because I don't want to have one at Christmas.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: No.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: So just the November meeting.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Right.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: So we work all year long with the one meeting off at the Christmas and New Year's holiday.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Which is what we've always had. Okay. So we have a motion.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: Are you clear?

MR. KLATZKOW: We're not clear.

MS. PATTERSON: No, we're not clear. We have traditionally had one meeting in November and one meeting in December.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: He misspoke.

MS. PATTERSON: Okay. So we're going to go --

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: He misspoke.

MS. PATTERSON: We're going to go through the summer and leave the other two months as they are, or we're adding?

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: No. We're going to have two meetings in -- two in November. Two in November, and the only meeting we're going to take off this coming year will be the -- unless we decide that there isn't sufficient work for the Board to do or the -- you know, for what we need to do, so...

COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: Who gets to make that decision that there's not enough work to do at a meeting?

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: I don't know. That was his idea.

COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: I think that -- and I'm sorry

for jumping in.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: No, no.

COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: But just the idea that being proactive means that we schedule these meetings then we can cancel them as opposed to we don't have a meeting scheduled but in advance we can schedule one if we need one, I like the latter approach where if we need a meeting we can schedule it.

So I'm going to vote against this, because I think it's unfair to our staff, and that's the only reason I'm voting against it.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Commissioner Hall.

COMMISSIONER HALL: I can see working through the summertime, but I'm going to be a proponent of one meeting in November, one meeting in December just because of the timing of the year. It's difficult to get --

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: I agree with that.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Yeah. I don't know that I misspoke. What I wanted to do was leave our schedule the way it is and add the meetings that we have never had over the summer. So maybe I did misspeak, but I think I'm what echoing is what Commissioner Hall is saying is that we keep what we've always had. We're just adding the meetings in July and August that have always been set aside.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: So for clarity purposes, we're going to work through the summer, one meeting in November, one meeting in December, and that's my motion.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: And I second that.

MS. PATTERSON: Understood.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Okay. So we have a motion and second. All in favor?

COMMISSIONER HALL: Aye.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: Aye.

CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Aye.  
COMMISSIONER KOWAL: Aye.  
CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: Opposed?  
COMMISSIONER SAUNDERS: Aye.  
CHAIRMAN LoCASTRO: It passes 4-1.  
Okay.

Item #10B

DIRECT THE COUNTY ATTORNEY TO ADVERTISE, AND BRING BACK FOR A PUBLIC HEARING, AN ORDINANCE WHICH WOULD CREATE THE UNPAVED PRIVATE ROAD EMERGENCY REPAIR MUNICIPAL SERVICE TAXING UNIT BY AUTHORIZING A LEVY OF NOT TO EXCEED ONE (1.0) MIL OF AD VALOREM TAXES PER YEAR - MOTION TO APPROVE BY COMMISSIONER MCDANIEL; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KOWAL – APPROVED

---

MS. PATTERSON: Commissioners, Item 10B is a recommendation to direct the County Attorney to advertise and bring back for a public hearing an ordinance which would create the unpaved private road emergency repair municipal service taxing unit by authorizing a levy of not to exceed one mill of ad valorem taxes per year. This item is brought to the agenda by Commissioner McDaniel.

COMMISSIONER McDANIEL: Okay. Again, I've served as your county commissioner for in excess of six years. For anybody who's had an opportunity to read the item, there's in excess of 110 miles of dirt/private roads in Collier County. It's a huge issue for our community from a health, safety, and welfare standpoint.

One of the -- the primary job, I believe, of local government is