



Legislation Text

File #: 18-559, **Version:** 1

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

FROM: Peter D. Lear, CPA, CGMA, City Manager

TITLE: EDC of Sarasota County

Recommended Action

Discussion and provide direction regarding the existing Interlocal Agreement for membership in the EDC of Sarasota County

Background Information

At the July, 2018 Budget Workshop, the City Commission provided consensus to remove funding from the budget for the membership in the Interlocal Agreement regarding the EDC of Sarasota County. At the Board meeting for the EDC of Sarasota County held on August 16, 2018, there was much discussion regarding the possibility of the City of North Port terminating the agreement. The following are the notes from that meeting taken by Commissioner McDowell:

Feedback from other board members about North Port withdrawing from the EDC include:

- * What could the EDC do better to communicate with North Port and visa versa
- * This discussion and action is diverting attention from the EDC's goals and mission
- * Fairness to other government entities if North Port withdraws and the EDC still promotes NP without any contributions paid to the EDC
- * North Port is a consumer of the EDC. As a consumer if they don't believe they are getting anything of value, it is understandable why they want to withdraw.
- * There is strength in numbers to promote the county. Presenting as a unified front.
- * The value is spread countywide
- * The "optics" of North Port withdrawing is affecting other entities (ie MPO, Chambers etc) and leaves them wondering why and if they're next
- * Having a voice is an investment
- * Sarasota County was surprised by this move
- * It was suggested that North Port continue as a member and the EDC is "on notice" for one year to show specific ROI (direct and indirect). Spend this next year making everyone stronger.

At this point I was invited to speak and explain why North Port was withdrawing. My talking points included:

- ** a brief description how the entire conversation of withdrawing started ... at a budget workshop, with a simple question, "what is our ROI on the \$65,000 contribution"? Since no real ROI could be explained it was decided with a 5-0 vote to withdraw the money and out of the EDC to focus on North Port
- ** We have spent approx. \$500,000 since 2005 and based on the presentation given by Mr. Huey our ROI is 1,200 North Port residents work for the companies they've brought to the county.
- ** The county withdrew from the RPC for the same reason, lack of value and little ROI
- ** North Port Businesses should still have the EDC advocating for them because these businesses are required to pay the business tax receipts. Those monies are allocated to the EDC.

****** The interlocal agreement is basically useless because some of the “players” don’t exist and the required reports are not being shared with our staff.

Mr. Rob Lewis introduced himself. He is Jeff Matsby’s replacement. Mr. Lewis assured the board that nothing has changed at the County level in the EDC department. The revamping was only a change in personnel and there is no change in the County’s commitment to the EDC. He will be reaching out to Ms. Ruth and the rest of North Port’s Commissioners.

The board expressed appreciation for my comments and requested time to get everything worked out. Including more interaction with Ms. Ruth and the City Manager.

EDC Board direction - to work with all parties to increase communication, revise the interlocal agreement and strengthen the relationship with NP and other government agencies. Passed unanimously.

Staff is continuing to prepare the budget based on the direction given at the budget workshops. If that direction is to change, the funding will need to be added back.

Strategic Plan

Financially Responsible City Providing Quality Municipal Services

Financial Impact

Depending on direction, funding will be added back to the budget as included in the City Manager’s Recommended Budget in July.

Procurement

N/A

Attachments:

1. Email from Commissioner McDowell

Prepared by: Pete Lear for Commissioner McDowell

Department Director: Pete Lear