

Minutes
Florida Highway Beautification Council
Fall 2001 MEETING

Hayden Burns Building
Tallahassee, Florida

Tuesday, November 14, 1:00 pm – 5pm
Wednesday, November 15, 8:30 am - 12:00 pm.

- Welcome... introductions by David Johnston, Chair, FHBC
- FHBC Members attending: Bill Albaugh, Marion Hilliard, Marsha Levy, Joann Phillips, Alan Shaprio
- Guests attending: Carl Higgins, Susanna Thompson, Craig James, Preston Toole, Dick Bush, John Simpson, Judson Pankey, Bruce Mantel, Ken Cheek, Will Moriarty, Brian Dennis, Willson McBurney, Jeff Caster
- Location and Date for FHBC Spring 2002 Ranking Meeting was discussed. Willson McBurney offered to host the meeting at PBSJ headquarters in Orlando. Council accepted the invitation. Pending review of members' calendars, a date in May will be set. (Week of May 6, 2002).
- District Reports. Each District provided a brief report and responded to the Council's inquiries on the progress and status of previous year grant projects. During the report by D2, a motion was made by Marion Hilliard for the FHBC to notify City of Jacksonville of the Council's awareness of maintenance problems on a previous project. Marsha Levy seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn. D2 will notify the Chair if Council involvement is needed to remedy the matter. *(As a follow-up, Chairman Johnston wrote the City of Jacksonville a letter asking them to bring the project into compliance with the grant, prior to requesting any funds.)*
- District 7 reported that John Simpson has taken over responsibility for the District FHBC Grant program. Will Moriarty has done a great job for many years, and will provide counsel to John as he assumes the new responsibility.
- The Council asked the Staff Coordinator to verify if grant funds can be paid directly to Greenscape. Response: No...Section 339.2405(10), F.S. only allows, "*The head of the department...shall award grants to local governmental entities...*"
- Based on District reports, a minimum of 26-30 grant applications are anticipated for the 2002-2003 grant cycle.
- Rule Chapter 14-40 and the Billboard Directive. Jeff Caster reported that all three parts of the rule chapter are progressing nicely through the administrative process. Full adoption and implementation is anticipated in early 2002. The new Billboard Directive was distributed and discussed. Jeff Caster interpreted the directive to require that each landscape project preserve 500 feet of visibility for permitted signs. Part 1 of the rule will provide precise requirements.
- The Staff Coordinator distributed copies of a recent letter from Lee County Board of Commissioners requesting greater feedback from the council on how they scored each application. FHBC agreed to hand in score sheets from each application so they may be available to applicants on request from the Staff Coordinator. Council members can use this as a tool to speak directly to applicants and encourage the most desirable qualities on future applications.

- ❑ As the Council transitions to the revised rule during the 2002-2003 year, Criteria 15, Value to the Community will be scored.
- ❑ There is \$3 million available for the 2002-2003 grant cycle. Bill Albaugh reported that if demand for funding exceeds this amount, the department may budget additional funding.
- ❑ The Staff Coordinator asked the FHBC to consider modifications to ranking criteria to place emphasis on areas of greatest concern to the department's objectives. Criteria 4 water conservation practices, and Criteria 5 low maintenance requirements. After discussion, the FHBC agreed to preserve existing ranking criteria unchanged.
- ❑ District 7 requested a revision to Criteria 8, local support. John Simpson explained the District's concern for adjoining communities and neighborhoods that may not be aware of proposed grant project. After discussion, FHBC agreed to preserve existing ranking criteria unchanged.
- ❑ David Johnson, Chair, asked Carl Higgins to introduce Rick Chesser, Secretary, FDOT District 4. Secretary Chesser made note of Carl's selection for an award given by the Florida Urban Forestry Council. FHBC asked Carl to provide them a copy of the award, so they may better appreciate the significance of the award.
- ❑ Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI). Glenda Hunter, FDOT, Special Projects Coordinator, Office of Policy Planning briefed the FHBC and District Grant Coordinators on REDI and how it impacts the grant program. Rural Communities as defined in Section 288.0656(2)(b), F.S. may request a waiver of the grant match requirements. The details of the program are in the handouts provided. The FHBC will consider all requests for REDI waiver.
- ❑ FDOT, State Outdoor Advertising Administrator, Lynn Holschuh reported on the implementation of the statewide database of all signs. Districts are advised to notify Lynn of all approved landscape projects, indicating start and end of project. This will notify applicants for new signs that they will not be issued vegetation management permits to cut, trim, or remove any part of the landscape project. Lynn should be contacted with any questions.
- ❑ FHBC requested that each District Grant Coordinator or District Landscape Manager complete the section of the Grant Application (on page 5) that critiques previous projects; providing explanations and examples.
- ❑ FHBC requested that the annual ranking be published on line.
- ❑ Staff Coordinator introduced the new FHBC website now at www.MyFlorida.com Keyword *beautification*. Another link is through the "transportation" link, then select *Highway Beautification Program*. Annual ranking and other Council news will be published as requested by Council.
- ❑ FHBC acknowledged Ken Cheek for his excellent design work in District 2 that earned him an award from the Florida Native Plant Society in their annual design competition. The Council encouraged other districts to submit projects for awards.
- ❑ FHBC acknowledged Gary Henry for his selection by the National Roadside Vegetation Managers Association for their 2001 Roadside Excellence Award.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeff Caster, FHBC Staff Coordinator.