

Board of County Commissioners

Workshop Item

Date of Meeting: January 6, 2009

Date Submitted: December 18, 2008

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator
Jessica Welch, Policy & Public Information Coordinator

Subject: Ratification of the December 16, 2008 Workshop Regarding Discussion of Increased Employment Opportunities for the Unemployed Citizens

Statement of Issue:

This agenda requests Board ratification of the December 16, 2008 Workshop regarding discussion of increased employment opportunities for the unemployed citizens.

Background:

During the December 1, 2008 Board Meeting the Board directed staff to schedule a workshop on December 16, 2008 to discuss increased employment opportunities for the unemployed citizens of Wakulla County.

Analysis:

The workshop was a brainstorming session between the Board, local organizations, and citizens to discuss ways to increase employment opportunities for unemployed citizens. Discussion also included the possibility of designating a central location as a point of contact. Such location may facilitate communications with unemployed citizens, to those individuals or businesses that seek the services provided by the unemployed.

Workforce Plus representatives were in attendance and pledged cooperation in working with Wakulla County to assist the unemployed. Workforce Plus serves Wakulla County by linking businesses in need of qualified employees with those unemployed citizens seeking permanent job placement. In addition, Workforce Plus offers free job training and other tools to assist them in obtaining long term employment. Workforce Plus is striving to open dialogue with local businesses to assess their needs and connect them with qualified applicants.

Additionally, Scott Jackson, Extension Director, offered the Extension Office as a point of location for day laborers if it's the Boards desire to designate a central location. The Board also discussed the liability issues that may arise with designating a central location.

The County has committed to further promote the Workforce Plus partnership by being a proactive partner by creating a point of reference on the County website that is hoped to increase visibility of the various employment opportunities here in the County.

Discussion at the workshop included the idea of a County food bank. This concept involves relationships between individual churches or religious groups already participating in food bank services by joining together to pull their resources on a rotating bases.

The Board informally discussed the possibility of opening a Farmers Market in Wakulla County. Extension staff also discussed their willingness to assist with this concept. It was suggested that Arbor Day will be held at Hudson Park on January 17, 2009 and may be an opportunity to host the first Farmers Market.

Options:

1. Ratify the discussions during the December 16, 2008 Workshop Regarding Increased Employment Opportunities for the Unemployed Citizens.
2. Do not ratify the discussions during the December 16, 2008 Workshop Regarding Increased Employment Opportunities for the Unemployed Citizens.
3. Board direction.

Recommendation:

Option #1