



# SUNCOAST LEAGUE OF CITIES

Suncoast League of Cities  
 Planning Retreat  
 City of Dunedin  
 Community Center  
 Saturday, June 24, 2017  
 9 AM – 1:30 PM  
**Workshop Notes**  
*Attendees*

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Association</b>
1	<i>Thom Barnhorn, Commissioner</i>	City of Seminole
2	<i>Julie DeBella Thomas, Councilwoman</i>	City of New Port Richey
3	<i>Angela Crist, Executive Director</i>	Suncoast League of Cities
4	<i>Wanda Dudley, Mayor</i>	Town of Kenneth City
5	<i>Terri Finnerty, Commissioner</i>	City of St. Pete Beach
6	<i>Mo Freaney, Commissioner</i>	City of Dunedin
7	<i>Heather Gracy, Commissioner</i>	City of Dunedin
8	<i>Ray Jay</i>	Waste Management
9	<i>Patty Jonhson, Councilwoman</i>	City of Pinellas Park
10	<i>Bill Jonson, Council Member</i>	City of Clearwater
11	<i>Deborah Kynes, Vice Mayor</i>	City of Dunedin
12	<i>Leslie Notaro, Commissioner</i>	City of Belleair Bluffs
13	<i>Robyn Odegard, Staff</i>	USF Florida Institute of Government
14	<i>Jim Quinn, Vice Mayor</i>	City of Seminole
15	<i>Yolanda Roman, Council Member</i>	City of Gulfport
16	<i>Dan Saracki, Council Member</i>	City of Oldsmar
17	<i>Tom Shelly, Commissioner</i>	Town of Belleair
18	<i>Trish Springer, Council Member</i>	City of Seminole
19	<i>Andrea White, Sr. Mgt. State Govt. Affairs</i>	City of Tampa/Charter Communications
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## Welcome, Opening Remarks, Introductions, and Goals

The Annual Planning Retreat was called to order at 8:54 AM by Heather Gracy, SLC President and Commissioner, City of Dunedin. She called everyone to have a productive year of 'doing,' and to do this everyone needs to be organized and prepared. She asked everyone to go around the room for introductions and to say what they hoped to get out of the day.

Items brought up in this introduction by everyone for the goals of the day included: a set calendar for the year, 100% attendance by members and associate members, developing a Home Rule special message, showing local value, action, educating residents about Home Rule, hold legislators accountable, and connect SLC members with each other.

Angela Crist, Executive Director, Suncoast League of Cities, was the facilitator for the retreat. She began by recapping and discussing the goals for the day's retreat.

## Review of Last Year's Accomplishments/Success

Angela Crist asked the room to name some accomplishments and/or success of the 2016/2017 year. Dan Saracki, Council Member, City of Oldsmar, state that last year was the first year he's been in Tallahassee and it was a wonderful experience and he hopes to continue doing it. Tom Shelly, Commissioner, Town of Belleair, noted how much work SLC accomplished last year with regards to the TAG initiative, and is looking forward to making it stronger this year. Heather Gracy stated she was very proud of the stability of the SLC's financials; with the financial stability she stated that the SLC can do a lot in both Tallahassee and DC. She also stated that the growth of associate membership was phenomenal last year. Angela Crist stated that she was pleased with individuals/number of people that wanted to run for executive committee. Tom Shelly stated he was happy we were able to beat House Bill 17.

## Transportation Advocacy Group (TAG) Activity

Before breaking into groups for the activity, Angela Crist explained what TAG "what it is and what it isn't". She explained that it's about advocacy and bringing resources to Tampa Bay for transportation development and improving the region NOT about getting into the nitty gritty of the details of how these items are accomplished. Angela said there are a lot of conversations about transportation in the Tampa Bay Area, but TAG is different because it is about advocacy for regional resources NOT project-based. There was conversation about where TAG is now vs where it may go as it becomes more sophisticated. There was unanimous feedback that TAG is just creating another new organization for the region. There was an overall call for more clarity about what TAG is. The priorities and goals of TAG appeared to a few in attendance to have competing priorities/resources with the organizations listed below.

Angela Crist reiterate that this is not about reorganizing and/or merging transportation groups—it's about advocacy. She also stated the FIOG would develop a one-page TAG FACT Sheet for TAG to assist members in their understanding.

**ACTION ITEM: FIOG develop a one-page TAG FACT sheet for members to use when speaking to the organizations.**

Tom Shelly made a motion to remove the last bullet on page two of the document that states: “seek external funding and resources to support the operation and administration of TAG Tampa Bay. Thom Barnhorn seconded the motion. The motion was amended to also include the first bullet page three that states: “Establishment of an enduring organizational structure for the TAG Regional Compact, subject to the approval of each Member of the TAG Regional Compact, to facilitate Compact work, enhance the strong relationships among the Compact Members and Partners, and to improve the Compact’s competitiveness in seeking external funding and resources.”

**ACTION ITEM: FIOG to update the TAG document based on the above mentioned consensus by SLC members.**

Angela Crist asked those in attendance to serve as a ‘TAG Liaison’ to the below organizations and identify themselves if they had an existing relationship with any of the organizations. The following individuals have agreed to serve as the TAG Liaison to these entities:

TBARTA-Tom Shelly

Tampa Bay Partnership-Heather Gracy

Regional Planning Council-Dan Saracki, Julie DeBella Thomas

FDOT-Angela Crist

HART-Mike Suarez

PSTA-Bill Jonson, Patty Johnson

Forward Pinellas-Patty Johnson, Bill Jonson

Hillsborough MPO-Patty Johnson

Municipal Association of Pasco-Judy DeBella Thomas

Pasco MPO-Mayor of Dade City, Camille Hernandez

**ACTION ITEM: TAG Liaisons to follow up on TAG strategy and timeframe (See Appendix)**

### **SLC Legislative Priorities 2017-2018**

Angela Crist opened a discussion about the 2017-2018 Legislative Priorities. There was a brainstorming discussion on the overall legislative attack on Home Rule. Specifically, SLC members decided to develop an overarching statement regarding the protection of Home Rule with three specific issues to support the statement.

There was discussion on the following items:

**\*\*vacation/short term rentals-** local government is experiencing serious challenges when it comes to regulating and enforcing due to legislative mandate

**\*\*Home Rule:** every city should put out city bulletins about what losing Home Rule will mean to residents of each individual city. Losing Home Rule will destroy community and derail projects in local cities.

HOME RULE to local government is:

- Ability to control local destiny
- Following the 'will' of the constituents
- Florida's constitution empowers local government with the right of local self-government

Heather Gracy mentioned the issue of CRA's. She stated that we need to be able to show state legislators that CRA's can be so valuable.

\*\*Opposing additional restrictions on local government finances...A comment was made that if a city has revenues of 10 million dollars or more, representatives will have to disclose their entire financial portfolio—this will prevent many qualified people from running for office.

\*\*Water quality and quantity

\*\*Allow local government to maintain and oversee business regulations ...there were discussion on House Bill 17-Business regulations of local government would be stripped. Any ordinance a city wants to pass would have to be approved by Tallahassee during session.

There was group consensus on the following priorities and strategy:

**ACTION ITEM:**

- 1. FIOG to develop an overarching statement regarding the protection of Home Rule with three specific issues to support the statement.**
- 2. Three specific issues**
  - a. Vacation/Short Term Rentals**
  - b. Opposing additional restrictions local government finances**
  - c. Allowing local governments to maintain and oversee business regulations**
- 3. FIOG will develop 2018 SLC Legislative Priorities Brochure to include items #1 and 2 as well as Federal Priority of Flood Insurance and TAG Tampa Bay.**

**LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLES AND DISTRICT MEETINGS**

There was discussion about the SLC moving forward with planning some key legislative roundtables within the Tampa Bay area prior to the start of the 2018 Legislative Session. There was consensus to focus on trying to conduct three roundtables within Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco Counties, respectively, while prioritizing the legislators.

**Hillsborough County**

Representative Sean Shaw 1  
Senator Dana Young 2  
Minority Leader, Janet Cruz 3

**Pasco County**

Senator Wilton Simpson 1  
Representative Amber Mariano 2  
Representative Danny Burgess 3

### **Pinellas County**

Senator Jack Latvala 1

Senator Jeff Brandes 1

Representative Chris Sprowls 2

Senator Darryl Rousson 3

Representative Ben Diamond 4

**ACTION ITEM: FIOG to research various chambers to identify any potential opportunities to collaborate and/or of dates conflicting.**

### **LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT MEETINGS**

There was discussion regarding the need for SLC members to meet with legislators in their district offices prior to the start of legislative session. Angela passed out an Advocacy Checklist that had been provided by Kathy Till several years ago. Angela also asked for volunteer based on the Legislative Roundtables that were previously discussed. Here is the proposed list:

#### **Hillsborough**

Senator Dana Young → Mike Suarez and Angela Crist

Representative Sean Shaw → Andrea White

Representative Janet Cruz → Mike Suarez and Andrea

#### **Pasco**

MAP Coordination/Chamber → Judy DeBella Thomas

Senator Wilton Simpson → Judy DeBella Thomas

Representative Amber Mariano → Judy DeBella Thomas

#### **Pinellas**

Senator Jack Latvala → Tom Shelly

Senator Jeff Brandes → Jamie Robinson

Representative Chris Sprowls → Heather Gracy

Senator Darryl Rouson → Terri Finnerty

Representative Ben Diamond → Patti Johnson

**ACTION ITEM: FIOG to create a fillable PDF Document of the Advocacy Checklist for members to use.**

### **SLC Advocacy: Legislative Session Travel Pilot Program**

Angela Crist introduced this new proposed project. The goal is for the SLC to reimburse one SLC member per week to be in Tallahassee while advocating for the SLC, the region, and the SLC's legislative priorities. The idea is that the SLC would have presence each in Tallahassee during the legislative session. SLC members would meet with legislators, receive a debriefing from FLC, write a one page report, and report back to SLC within in 24-48 hours.

Angela Crist opens the floor for discussion about what the specifics of the new program would look like. Specifically, she discussed that the SLC would pay for 2 nights in a hotel, taxi/parking, meals up to \$40/day, mileage at rate of .55 cents/mile; all reimbursable with an expense report with google maps of the trip and original receipts for all expenses. Rental car cost is not reimbursable. Each SLC delegate in Tallahassee will be required to attend the weekly FLC briefing. The SLC will reimburse up to \$1,000 per person per trip. There was unanimous consensus that it's a great program and the SLC will pursue this program during the 2018 legislative session.

There was discussion around having a standing weekly meeting with the FLC in Tallahassee so they will also know there will be an SLC member in their office on the same day of every week. There was discussion about the proposed travel schedule. There was general consensus that arriving Monday night and having meetings all day Tuesday and Wednesday would be the most productive.

Agreed upon Criteria and Process:

- 1) Criteria
  - Must meet with 4 legislators, attend FLC briefing, have meetings/get on the schedule with 4 legislators and/or staff, M-W (arrive Monday evening, meetings all day Tuesday (FLC briefing Tuesday morning), Wed evening head home)
  - Send a summary of meetings to Executive Director within 24-48 hours after returning home
- 2) Application Process
  - begin my establishing who is available and willing to go; there may be no need for a selection process depending on who is able and willing to go
- 3) Amount \$
  - The SLC will reimburse up to \$1,000 per trip per single person

**ACTION ITEM: FIOG to update application forms, distribute to SLC members, and master calendar who is available when to determine SLC member's participation.**

### Meeting Format and Calendar

Angela Crist opened the discussion for who will host the monthly business meetings for the 2017-2018 year. The following is the decided upon list:

**August 18th-** Florida League of Cities Conference

**September 15th-** City of New Port Richey

**October 27<sup>th</sup>-** Town of Kenneth City

**November 17th-**City of Seminole

**December 15th-**City of Gulfport

**January 19th-**City of Oldsmar

**February 16th-**City of St Pete Beach

**March 16th**-City of Pinellas Park

**April 20th** –City of Tampa

**May 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Awards Dinner**- City of Largo, Suncoast Performing Arts Center

Angela Crist also discussed two other operation items. The first was the will of the members regarding the Super Regional League Breakfast at the FLC Annual Conference. There was consensus by the members that, if necessary, the SLC would contribute money to offset the costs of the breakfast not covered by the sponsors. The second item was in regards to the nominations to the FLC Board of Directors from the SLC. There was consensus that the Executive Director would submit the SLC President and 1<sup>st</sup> VP as the SLC nominations.

The planning retreat was adjourned at 1:15 pm.