

The City of Bonita Springs, with funding assistance from the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL), engaged Stansbury Resolutions By Design, Inc. to provide facilitation services for a series of collaborative workshops. This report is a summary of the facilitated workshop of October 27, 2006. It is not a verbatim transcript of what each person said, and concentrates on the information and results produced by all participants as a group.

List of Participants

Jay Arend, Mayor
Richard Ferreira, Council Member
Martha Simons, Council Member
Alex Grantt, Council Member
John Joyce, Council Member
Ben Nelson, Jr., Council Member

Don Eslick, Chair, ECCL
Jack Lienesch, ECCL
Sam Levy, ECCL
Barbara Akins, ECCL
Phil Douglas, ECCL
Arnie Rosenthal, ECCL
Neal Noethlich, ECCL
Don Vilnius, ECCL

Gary Price, City Manager
Barbara Barnes-Buchanan, Assistant City Manager
Audrey Vance, City Attorney

Jim Stansbury, Stansbury Resolutions By Design, Inc., Facilitator

Invited Speakers and Observers

Randy Adams, Florida Transportation Engineering, Inc., City's Consultant on Sandy Lane
Greg Rawl, Professional Geologist City's Consultant on DR/GR
Paul Piller, Piller and Associates City's Lobbyist
Jack Meeker, Citizen

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mayor Arend welcomed the participants to Workshop 2, asked everyone to introduce themselves, and called on the facilitator to initiate the discussion.

II. SEPTEMBER 28, 2006 WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Jim Stansbury welcomed everyone to Workshop 2, and provided a summary (attached) of the evaluations that the participants had provided of the first workshop. A high standard had been set in making the first collaborative discussion a success. While he appreciated the complements received, he felt that the participants themselves had made the difference. As requested, he would watch the length of individual talk time today to make sure everyone maintained their interest and engagement. Jim provided a new evaluation form and asked that it be handed back at the end of the workshop. A summary of the Workshop 2 responses is attached.

Since the last workshop, Sunshine compliance had come up in planning future workshops and work between workshops. He asked Audrey Vance, City Attorney, to give some advice on this concern. Ms. Vance provided a booklet (“Guide to the Sunshine Amendment and Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees”) and supplemented those requirements with additional information regarding Sunshine:

- A. Any person, including citizens not holding public office or positions, can “break” Sunshine by, for example, acting as a communication pipeline between public officials.
- B. Any city council member can communicate with ECCL and its members.
- C. Two or more council members cannot communicate in any manner outside of a council meeting unless that communication (meeting, email, telephone call, web log, or other means) is properly noticed with an announced agenda and is open to the public.
- D. A Council member designated by Council as a liaison person to the ECCL cannot influence any options under consideration, and is constrained to discuss facts and report back to Council on findings of fact. Discussions of fact, such as exchanges of published reports, potential timing of future meetings and possible agenda items are acceptable, as long as the Council member is not influencing the inclusion or exclusion of ideas, proposals, and other decisions that only the Council as a whole is authorized to make.
- E. ECCL members can also avoid conflicts by transmitting information to the whole council through City staff.

III. COLLABORATION DISCUSSION

The facilitator suggested that the participants apply some structure and discipline when addressing any specific mutual concern. He noted that it is typical human nature to identify problems, as the group had done on September 28, and then proceed directly to solving them. When a solution seems apparent, it then gets tested to predict what the actual result might be.

He offered an alternative, one that is especially important when a group of diverse interests is working together. It is better to think about and reach agreement on “what success will look like” before tackling how to attain it. “You may find that you differ, and it is better to resolve such differences first. Otherwise, you end up struggling for consensus on strategies that are seeking different outcomes.”

He provided two handouts (attached). The first illustrates how issues and opportunities could be addressed from workshop to workshop, including the time in between. He agreed with the participant’s previous request for an exchange of information, and that should always be the first step. It is important to distinguish between facts and opinions when looking at information. A structural engineer, for example, can test the quality of concrete and reinforcement in a bridge and report that it is well-below minimum specifications for safety. That is a fact, and it is unlikely that other professionals would arrive at a different conclusion. He can then be asked to state “how long the bridge will last before it fails? He will give an opinion, one of many that would likely be received from a group of similar experts.

The second handout is a worksheet that each participant can use to develop their own view of future success, as well as results to be avoided. For example, a company might be seeking greater staff productivity, without loss of morale. A non-profit organization may see success as having a more diversified, stable donor base, without losing the donors they already have. Thinking about “unintended consequences” in advance is important. While it takes a few minutes for everyone to fill out worksheets, it saves a lot of discussion time and gives everyone an equal opportunity to influence the conclusions.

IV. LOBBYING OVERVIEW

Collaboration on Sandy Lane, Lobbying other Jurisdictions, and Improving Hospital and Medical Facilities had been initiated on September 28, and would continue today. The facilitator suggested that lobbying activities seemed to apply to many areas of mutual concern, as well as being a standalone issue. Paul Piller, the City’s lobbyist, was present and the group asked him to describe the lobbying system before weaving it into the day’s topics.

Mr. Pillar noted that lobbying is a year-round activity and is not limited to the last 60 days of the year:

- A. The current election puts lobbying on hold, and when it is over, there will be a period of time in which new, renamed or continuing committees are organized through November and December.
- B. From January through February, “light” discussions on budgets and some legislation will begin.
- C. “Heavy” legislation and lobbying efforts will occur in the Spring and Summer. During this time, the budget is worked on but the focus is on legislation that will ultimately affect that budget. That is why budget confirmation occurs in the last 60 days of the year, when the impacts of actual legislation are known.
- D. The City’s and Estero’s mutual concerns often deal with the state appropriations. You must play within the process and lobby initially with the

relevant departments. Later, Community budget issues may be introduced as line item additions.

- E. There are 3,000 lobbyists in FL. They outnumber legislators. Corporate lobbyists spend their clients' money during the lobbying process. Paul does not when he is working for public entities. The City's funds are public, and he does not spend them beyond normal fees and expenses.
- F. Lobbying itself is complex. Some lobbyists write their own bills, and then ask legislators to introduce them in both houses. Keeping both versions of any bill the same as they move through the legislature is critical as they proceed from the House to the Senate. If the Senate makes changes, it sends them back to the House for reconsideration. If a bill is to pass, both versions must be the same.
- G. Good legislation usually takes 3 years to reach passage (by inference, bad legislation is much quicker!)
- H. Seven or eight of twenty committees deal with local government. The City must get its desired bills to the relevant committee(s).
- I. Paul cannot lobby for any particular matter without City Council authorization.
- J. The City's interests are also presented to the County Delegation, which requires two weeks notice to get on its agenda. The Secretary's telephone number is 278-1992 (actual person) and 433-4300 (voicemail).

V. COLLABORATION ON CARRYOVER TOPICS

A. Sandy Lane

1. On September 28, the participants had developed the following conclusions and ideas:
 - a) The participants will have access to a transportation consultant analysis of Sandy Lane when the report is completed for the City.
 - b) The group needs to examine the costs and timing of each component, and potential funding roles.
 - c) The group wishes to document a mutually-supported proposal to be presented to Lee County pointing out the benefits to the County.
2. New Information and Discussion
 - a) Randy Adams, Design Engineer with Florida Transportation Engineering, Inc. provided an update on the Sandy Lane study. The report had been completed and he was in the process of assessing the findings before forwarding it to the city and discussing it in a Council workshop in December. The report would include revised cost estimates and the impacts on the Pelican Landing area resulting from redirected traffic. He explained the proposed lane changes, adjustment to an extension that would coordinate Corkscrew Road geometrics with Lee County, and previous cost estimates.

- b) A major County budgeting issue is anticipated which will put pressure on the city to choose between funding of Sandy Lane or Bonita Beach Road improvements. The City, looking at the big picture, will see the latter as the priority, not Sandy Lane.
- c) Estero citizens see a county role in funding Sandy Lane, not just the city. “We will benefit from those improvements and Lee County should pay its fair share.”
- d) The group concluded that while the discussion of details awaits the engineering report presentation to Council, it should begin preparing a joint lobbying package that addresses Sandy Lane’s priority, cost-sharing, and early initiation of design that will avoid cost escalation.
- e) There was support for the following view of a Desired Result:
 - i. “A successful strategy for Sandy Lane will result in building a thoroughfare that will relieve traffic pressure from Cocoonut to Old 41, without resulting in the City of Bonita Springs footing the bill or losing funding for Bonita Beach Road, or Pelican Landing losing its entrance.”
 - ii. “The main obstacles foreseen are Lee County refusal to pay, and Pelican Landing refusing to support.”

B. Lobbying Other Jurisdictions

1. On September 28, the participants had concluded that:
 - a) The City and Estero need to seek allies when lobbying to such entities as FDOT, cultivating support from partnerships and our State Senator, for example.
 - b) We need to know more about how the lobbying system works, and how we can best use it. Can we get some advice from the City’s lobbyist?
 - c) We need a higher, joint visibility and presence at the County Commission.
2. New Information and Discussion
 - a) ECCL and the City should work together in Nov. and Dec. to generate a list of legislative needs for presentation to the County Delegation. ECCL has provided its thoughts, and any presentation will require Council authorization.
 - b) To achieve this, we need to set mutual goals, developing a common focus and vocabulary that presents our unified voice. We also need to differentiate ourselves from special interests.

C. Hospital and Medical Facilities

1. On September 28, the group had concluded that:
 - a) There are no local emergency service facilities within reasonable distance of Bonita Springs and Estero residents

- b) There are prolonged transport times due to Fire Department personnel having to stay with injured people until a “handoff” can be made to ambulances which then get backed up at hospital facilities that cannot keep up with demand.
 - c) Lee Memorial and Charlotte Community Hospitals serve over 1M people and are not close by.
 - d) There are planned reductions in total regular hospital beds to about 1,300, despite an increasing population.
 - e) Lee County ranks 2nd highest in the state in uninsured motorists under age 65.
 - f) There is a moratorium on new emergency center facilities due to the expiration of previous enabling legislation. New legislation was under consideration until the election campaign.
 - g) Possible ideas worth exploring include:
 - i. Recruiting a branch of U. of F. Shands to our area
 - ii. Lobbying for changes in legislation to allow free-standing emergency centers.
 - iii. Possible use of a recent 34ac. purchase by Lee Memorial for use as a free-standing emergency facility.
 - iv. A joint City/Estero meeting with Nathan to initiate a proposal.
2. New Information and Discussion
- a) The participants were advised by Paul Piller that the legislation under consideration in the last Senate session had died without any action. It would have allowed free-standing emergency centers under less onerous standards.
 - b) The group questioned why DCA did not include hospitals and emergency centers in its concurrency requirements. Schools were finally being addressed – why not healthcare?
 - c) Hospitals look at healthcare as a business, while caregivers look at it as a professional service. These views need to be balanced in finding ways to bring trauma, emergency and step-down facilities to the area.
 - d) The group agreed that its view of success would be “a facility that serves the needs of South Lee County”. To attain it, the following actions were agreed on:
 - i. Paul Piller will watch legislation and rule-making activities including lobbying efforts by HCAA and assist the City in adding its weight to statewide lobbying efforts to see such legislation passed in the next session. If it passes, he will seek resource allocations to the Bonita Springs area.
 - ii. A City/Estero subcommittee of John Joyce and Sam Levy will build our case on paper, providing the demographics, ambulance and

driving times, distances from facilities, lack of trauma treatment where needed, etc. and document the need for reversing the trend of fewer facilities vs. increasing population. The draft will be distributed for the group's review and refinement.

- iii. Generate local support from South Lee County neighbors and organizations and present this document as a high priority to the County Delegation.

VI. COLLABORATION ON NEW TOPICS

A. Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource Land Use Category (DR/GR)

1. Information and Initial Discussion

- a) Greg Rawl, a professional geologist, presented information on a current study of the DR/GR area. His firm initiated its work at the request of the City, which took the lead on this issue. Lee County had done a less detailed study, but a more comprehensive review similar to that of Bonita Springs was under consideration for the broader DR/GR areas identified by the County.
- b) Greg provided information on the City's portion which lies east of I-75, as follows:
 - i. Geological cross-sections showing the aquifers
 - ii. Surficial aquifer contours showing water table pulldowns in wet and dry seasons and their relationships to the Imperial River and saltwater intrusions
 - iii. Simulated net recharge to the water table via rainfall and irrigation
 - iv. Land use patterns over time from 1954 to 2002, showing the developments that took place before DR/GR was put in place.
 - v. Soil patterns including hydric (wet) and non-hydric (dry) - most of the local DR/GR is non-hydric.
 - vi. Basin impacts, with local (within-City boundaries) agricultural uses that had been grandfathered contributing the most surficial loads.
 - vii. The potential to use existing pumping systems as an asset in reconnecting historical drainage patterns across I-75.
 - viii. Using best management practices (BMP's) as part of land use change permitting (it would be very difficult to impose them on existing land uses).
- c) The state is working on Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) regulations to improve standards for local governments. These can in turn be applied by local government to lands within their jurisdictions (FDEP states that "TMDLs establish the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can assimilate without causing exceedances of water quality standards.")
- d) There was a discussion of the impacts of mining, and it was noted that the City's Comp. Plan stops mining from re-occurring within the city's

boundaries. Mr. Rawl explained that while the DR/GR study did not look at water quality, mine pits do act as conduits to wellfields. This is not much of a problem in the Bonita Springs case.

- e) There is state funding for conservation land acquisition and exotics removal.
 - f) The City is about to do a study of the transfer of development rights (TDR) related to the DR/GR.
 - g) The participants provided the following views of success:
 - “Strike a balance between environmental concerns, development rights and customary uses that is in the overall community’s interest, and avoid wholesale development of the DR/GR and/or pollution and destruction of our resources.”
 - “Restore and preserve aquifers and flow ways through all the DR/GR areas. The Benson/Pulling rehydration process should be funded by the County and City. Don’t deteriorate Spring Creek!”
 - “Avoid the Bonita Springs DR/GR from becoming just a receiving area for the County.”
- The major obstacles will be “political will,” “finding \$’s for rehydration work”, and “developers [that] may fight what’s going on!”

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT ON TODAY’S DISCUSSIONS

One citizen observed the workshop and did not wish to offer comments.

VIII. ROUNDTABLE CONCLUSIONS AND WHAT’S NEXT?

There was some consideration of alternating meeting locations between Bonita Springs and Estero. Because of the need for record-keeping and public broadcasting, it was agreed that the meetings will continue to be at City Hall as a matter of practical convenience.

The next workshop is scheduled for January 11 from 9:00-12:00 at City Hall. This is a tentative date and time to be confirmed as the workshop planning is developed. The agenda will include progress on Sandy Lane (engineering study), Lobbying (feedback from Paul Piller) and Hospital/Medical facilities (subcommittee draft), and continuation of collaboration on the DR/GR. In addition, discussion of Green Space Acquisition and Workforce Housing will begin.

A. Action Items

1. Paul Piller feedback (through staff) on post-election lobbying picture.
2. The City and ECCL will exchange information that bears on DR/GR and other topics so that people can arrive on January 11 with a reasonably similar understanding of existing facts and opinions.
3. John Joyce and Sam Levy present draft of written case for Hospital/Medical.

4. Facilitator's request: Please photocopy blank Desired Results Worksheets and fill out personal thoughts on Green Space and Workforce Housing to bring to the workshop. Email me if you have questions, and do not share them before the January 11 workshop or other publicly noticed meetings.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at about 1:00pm.

Attachments:

- A. Sept. 28 Workshop 1 Evaluation Summary
- B. "Recommended Sequence for Collaboration on Items of Mutual Concern"
- C. "Desired Results Worksheet"
- D. Re-Listing of the Ranking of Issues for greater clarity.
- E. Oct. 27 Workshop 2 Evaluation Summary

BONITA SPRINGS-ESTERO COLLABORATION WORKSHOP 1
28-Sep-06

Summary of Participant Responses

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unaccep- table	Points	Votes	Average
	5	4	3	2	1			
1. Rate the following elements of this workshop:								
Framing the Discussion	9	4	0	0	0	61	13	4.69
Initial Exploration of Potential Collaboration	10	2	0	0	0	58	12	4.83
Public Input	3	3	6	0	0	45	12	3.75
The Roundtable Conclusions and What Next?	5	6	0	0	0	49	11	4.45
The guidance and assistance of the facilitator	9	3	0	0	0	57	12	4.75

Comments:

Jim did a good job in facilitating the meeting.
Great job.
Impossible without facilitator.
The exploration for potential collaboration took a bit too long - needed to be made more clear what you were looking for (can we agree on collaborating vs. can we accomplish the task).
Very well done. Very impressive guidance and understanding of issues - good preparation.
I was amazed at the background information that Jim had assessed in preparation for this meeting. It met all my expectations.
Jim is a real pro - I've seen a lot of facilitators over the years, but he is one of the very best.

2. What did you like best about this workshop?

It provided an opportunity for open dialogue with each community on issues of community and common interest.
Good involvement of everyone. Good focus.
Discussion of items of interest of both groups.
Found a way for an elected city to communicate with an all-volunteer city.
You helped us move together and create a congenial mood.
That we agreed to tackle mutual problems and solutions, especially being united before the County Commission and State Legislature.
Starting of dialogue for the future.
The "ice-breaking" between the communities.
Very positive exchange - no acrimony - expectations well articulated.
Sincere participation. All of it.
The dialogue and listening to and watching the body language of the participants.

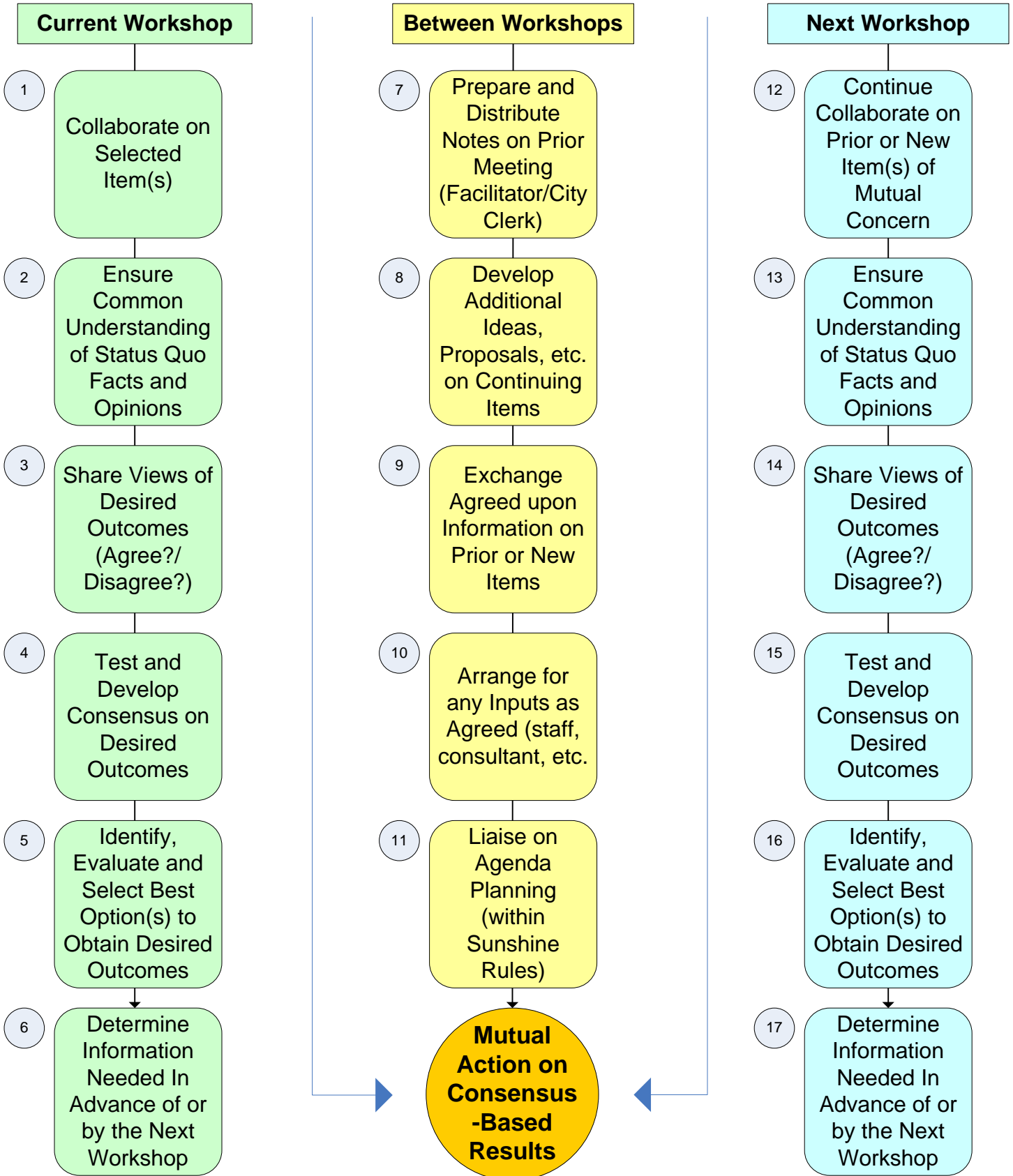
3. How could it have been improved?

This meeting has met my expectations.
I think it was just the right amount of time for good input.
Topic was so large and time was insufficient to really discuss in depth - future meetings to address this.
Give people a maximum amount of time to speak.
Maybe we can do this at City/County meeting.
More meetings.
No comment.
I can't identify any areas.
There was some confusion as to how we were going to rank/vote/ etc. on our issues as to the actual criteria.

4. What is your overall rating of this workshop?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unaccep- table	Points	Votes	Average
	5	4	3	2	1			
	7.5	2.5				47.5	10	4.75

Recommended Sequence for Collaboration on Items of Mutual Concern



Desired Results Worksheet

1. I believe that successful collaboration and strategies that address the (name of concern) _____ should result in:

(Please describe what you want the result to be, not how to achieve it)

2. without resulting in unintended consequences such as:

(Please describe what you want to avoid, not how to avoid it)

3. I believe the following obstacles will have to be overcome in order to achieve these desired results:

(Please list the main obstacles, if any, you foresee.)

Re-Listing of the Ranking of Issues for greater clarity

For clarity, the following lists the details of the group's September 28 ranking of "potential for resolution from easiest to most difficult".

1. Sandy Lane
2. Lobbying
3. Hospital/Medical
4. Greater Voice on SFWMD (tie)
4. Widening I-75 (tie)
5. Green Space Acquisition (tie)
5. Funding Final US41 Widening (tie)
6. Social Services (tie)
7. Passenger Rail (tie)
7. Flooding/Water Quality Projects (tie)
8. Lee Transit
9. Fire Districts Resource Sharing
10. Coconut Road/I-75 Interchange
11. CR 951
12. DR/GR (tie)
12. Workforce Housing (tie)
13. All FDOT Issues (tie)
13. Growth Management (tie)
13. Annexation/Two Mile Halo (tie)

After the ranking, the group realized that many items fell into a "transportation" category, and that "Lobbying", while a standalone concern, applied to other issues involving Lee County, SFWMD, FDOT and other jurisdictions.

BONITA SPRINGS-ESTERO COLLABORATION WORKSHOP 2
28-Oct-06

Summary of Participant Responses

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable	Points	Votes	Average
	5	4	3	2	1			
1. Rate the following elements of this workshop:								
Sep 28 Workshop Overview	7	4	0	0	0	51	11	4.64
Approaches to Collaboration	6.5	3.5	0	0	0	46.5	10	4.65
Continuing Collaboration on Sandy Lane	4	6	1	0	0	47	11	4.27
Continuing Collaboration on Hospital/Medical Needs	6.5	3.5	0	0	0	46.5	10	4.65
Continuing Collaboration on Lobbying	3	4	4	0	0	43	11	3.91
Initial Discussion on DR/GR	1	5	4	1	0	39	11	3.55
Public Comment	(no public comments)							n/a
Roundtable Conclusions	3	3	1	0	0	30	7	4.29
The guidance and assistance of the facilitator	5	5	0	0	0	45	10	4.50

Comments:

Productive - needed flexibility that you exhibited.
 Did not appear as crisp and well organized as Sept. meeting. Part of the issue may have been the change in personnel (Arend in, McCourt out).
 The committee has made substantial progress on discussing the ER and Hospital issue. It appears to be an effective tool to push an agreed agenda.
 Good flow of information. Broad participation by members.
 I think we can be effective together selling the need for hospital to community, and building base of support to lobby state legislature.
 I thought that the discussion of all topics on the agenda was forthright and quite informative.

2. What did you like best about this workshop?

Got some things done.
 Progress achieved but limited.
 Hospital approach unified.
 Got to some real action items on sandy Lane and Medical.
 Education of issues.
 The orderly manner of discussion and the exchange of ideas.
 Councilman Nelson's recommendation on hospital issues.
 Got through a lot of material in a timely manner.
 Hearing from others.
 Agreement on community impetus, development to communicate the need for a hospital in Southwest and South Lee County.

3. How could it have been improved?

Better control of time and speakers.
 I am a bit concerned that we might lose momentum because the meeting wasn't as crisp as I hoped for. Opening part on sunshiune was necessary but not crisp. DR/GR study not well-explained.
 Keep extraneous discussions (RR, etc.) minimized.
 Hold to three hours.
 Stay on track and not get too generally involved in side issues.
 A more managed way of calling on participants.
 I would like to have had something in writing about the Bonita Springs plan and policies for the DR/GR.

4. What is your overall rating of this workshop?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable	Points	Votes	Average
	5	4	3	2	1			
	4	5	1	0	0	43	10	4.30

