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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 11, 2011

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Michael S. Merrill, County Administrator 

SUBJECT: Status of Cellular Communications Advisory Committee (CCAC)

It has been several weeks since the Board endorsed appointments to the Cellular Communications Advisory Committee. Additionally, the last discussion on this matter was held prior to the election and the Board has since changed. This memorandum provides the historical background for new Commissioners concerning the mission of the committee and updates you on hiring the additional professionals that will be used to facilitate and provide expert assistance in this endeavor.

At the June 8, 2010 Land Use Meeting, the Board directed a study for a possible amendment to the Land Development Code to increase required setbacks for wireless communication antenna towers. Subsequently, it was determined that a broader scope of issues is needed to be included in the study. At the August 18, 2010 Board Regular Meeting, the Board approved the establishment of an advisory committee and agreed to hire an independent consultant to bring necessary expertise to address the current and future needs of the County and its residents (minutes attached). At the October 6, 2010 Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting, the Board endorsed the County Administrator's recommended appointments to the Cellular Communications Advisory Committee with the understanding that there might be a need to hire special experts to address topics covered by the committee (minutes attached).

Since that last meeting, we have selected two University of South Florida professors, Dr. David Payne and Dr. Navita Cummings James, to be the objective, neutral facilitators for this process (resumes attached). A technical consultant, Wade-Trim, has also been selected using the County's rotating list of pre-approved consultants. A list of Wade-Trim's key staff for this project is attached. They can provide technical expertise in the areas of siting, structural, innovative regulations, best practices, emerging technologies and other tasks as deemed necessary by the facilitators. This outside firm will be used in lieu of relying on County staff as a technical advisory group to remove any perception of potential bias.

The facilitator team will cost approximately \$12,000 (depending on the number of meetings required). The technical consultant may cost up to \$33,040 depending upon the need for services as requested by the Facilitator and the CCAC. Funding for this project is available in the adopted FY 11 Planning & Growth Management budget

The first meeting of the committee is being scheduled for January 25, 2011 in the early evening to accommodate members who have daytime or evening conflicts. A series of 4-6 meetings is anticipated. The process will conclude with my review of the committee's work followed with my recommendation to the Board. The committee will comply with Sunshine requirements.

MM/JM/ps

cc: Cellular Communications Advisory Committee
Mary Ellen Elia, Superintendent, Hillsborough County Public Schools
Renée Lee, County Attorney
Lucia E. Garsys, Administrator, Planning and Infrastructure
Joe Moreda, Interim Division Director, Planning and Growth Management
Lori Hudson, Director, Communications

Attachments