

RESTORE ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, PASCO COUNTY, FLORIDA

WORKSHOP

ANNOTATED MINUTES

AUGUST 3, 2016

**PREPARED IN THE OFFICE OF
PAULA S. O'NEIL, CLERK & COMPTROLLER**

**THE MINUTES WERE PREPARED IN AGENDA ORDER
AS PUBLISHED AND NOT IN THE ORDER
IN WHICH THE ITEMS WERE HEARD**

9:00 A.M.

**WEST PASCO GOVERNMENT CENTER BCC BOARD ROOM – 1ST FLOOR
8731 CITIZENS DRIVE, NEW PORT RICHEY, FL 34654**

Committee Members:

Jack Mariano, Board of County Commissioners
Kathryn Starkey (Alternate), Board of County Commissioners
Cynthia Armstrong, School Board Representative
Dr. Lisa Richardson, College/University Representative
David Sumpter, Science of Fisheries Representative
Jeffrey Lowe, Job Creation Industry Representative
Bill Cronin, Pasco Economic Development Council Rep
Kristin Tonkin, Tourism Representative
Bob Robertson, Citizen Representative
Bruce Mills, West Pasco Chamber of Commerce Rep - **ABSENT**

Staff: Ms. Michele Baker, County Administrator
Mr. Jeffrey Steinsnyder, County Attorney
Mr. Curtis Franklin, RESTORE Act Program Coordinator
Ms. Kelley Boree, Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mariano called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Marie Miller, Deputy Clerk, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

All Commission members were present with the exception of Mr. Mills. Commissioner Starkey arrived to the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizens are given an opportunity to comment on any proposition coming before the Committee during Public Comment. The Committee also takes Public Comment on items to be placed on a future RESTORE Act Advisory Committee agenda.

There was none.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Minutes Approval from the May 5, 2016 RESTORE Act Advisory Committee Meeting

Chairman Mariano requested approval of the May 5, 2016 minutes.

Motion to approve the May 5, 2016 minutes; motion carried.

Living Shorelines Project

Ms. Dana Gaydos, GHS Environmental, introduced Ms. Peggy Mathews, GHS Environmental, and noted that they would present ideas on behalf of the City of New Port Richey.

Ms. Mathews noted the conceptual design of the project was presented at an earlier meeting. An in-depth presentation would be given as they requested funding for the project.

Ms. Gaydos and Ms. Mathews gave a PowerPoint presentation and spoke regarding New Port Richey's amenities which included a main feature of the Cotee River, Orange

Lake, and a natural park at Grey's Preserve. The State identified the Cotee River as a Florida paddling trail. They would like to extend the paddling trail in addition to an environmental restoration project and create the Living Shorelines at Green Key Preserve. The restoration project was to improve water quality on the lake. A living shoreline was to create recreational and environmental benefits from a very disturbed shore line. Living shoreline projects had been one of the most favorable types of projects through RESTORE funding. They spoke regarding the environmental benefits, the creatures that would be attracted to the habitat, and that the project had not been fully designed. Proposed project components included extension of the pier for boat access, kayak and paddle board launch, a marine or weather data station, historic resource assessment, additional seagrass planting, shoreline vegetation planting, oyster bed assessment and bed creation, hands on projects for education, and long term monitoring. They reviewed the five phases. The first Phase would be to complete a historical and present resource assessment, design and engineer the project in Phase 2, Phase 3 would include permitting, Phase 4 would include the construction of the various components, and monitoring in Phase 5. Their first request from the RESTORE Act would be for \$75,000 to complete the historical and recent assessment which would include more of the conceptual design. The project did what the RESTORE Act was meant to do and was a beautiful parallel to other water quality projects.

The Committee, Ms. Gaydos, and Ms. Mathews held discussion regarding the seagrass plantings and the oyster beds being designed for safety and boating; seagrass would survive with exposure to the air; the vulnerability of the plantings; concerns of red tide, weather, and things that could impact or impede the project; an oyster industry could be created; exposed oyster beds would help with erosion and wave continuation; this was a prime location to create habitat to expand oyster and scallop resources; cost associated with the phases and funding source; available volunteer groups; design would take into consideration the altered characteristics with respect to flow and water quality; seagrass damaged at SunWest; available oysters in the area; sponge beds; opportunities to cost share between mitigation needs and RESTORE grants; New Port Richey's redevelopment plan to improve water access; the benefits of oyster reefs; and the project may "fit" under the Tampa Bay Estuary Program.

Mr. Franklin reminded the Committee that the project would be graded. He asked if the Committee would grade the project on phases or the entire project. If the entire project were to be graded a price would be needed to place the project in the State Expenditure Plan and Direct Component Plan.

The Committee, Ms. Gaydos, Ms. Mathews and Staff discussed how long the project may take to be designed in the phased approach; to separate the cost into smaller amounts; to rank Phases 1, 2, and 3 to place in the State Expenditure Plan; amending the State Expenditure Plan would be a long process; which phases the Committee should receive costs on; to have a low and a high cost given; how critical the pier would be; there would be an approximate timeline of 12 months for the engineer, design, and permitting phase; the project would be ranked with a budget on Phases 1, 2, and 3 and a range for Phase 4; review of the scoring process; presenters aware of the need for

extensive budget information; the project would fit into Pot 1 which would not be sent to the State; other grants and funds available that were very competitive; to leverage cost; and that Phase 1 and Phase 2 may need to be completed sequentially.

The Committed determined to grade the project under Pot 1 money with leveraging opportunities. Staff would send cost information and grading sheets to the Committee to grade the project.

Madison and Gulf Stormwater Project

Ms. Dana Gaydos, GHS Environmental, introduced Mr. Robert Rivera, City of New Port Richey, and noted that the City of New Port Richey had completed a River Basin Study on the Cotee River. She gave a PowerPoint presentation and explained the stormwater retrofit project. There were two phases to the project which affected two drainage basins. The most important factor was a main outfall that flowed into the Cotee River. She spoke regarding the project design that was to provide flood relief, to impose BMP's (Best Management Practices), and reduce the flooding to move people in and out of a main thoroughfare. Phase 1 included replacement/upgrade of eight stormwater drainage inlets, construction of a series of 18-inch trunk lines that led to a main 54-inch line, two 36-inch diameter outfalls, and appropriate BMP's to address the nutrient and pollutant loads associated with the discharge. She reviewed a graphic of Phase 1 which was closest to the river. Phase 2 included construction of 16 storm drain inlets, construction of new 18-inch lines, and to size the lines as more water drained downstream to the river to the pump line. A graphic of Phase 2 was reviewed which connected to Phase 1. She spoke regarding the River Basin Study which included Drainage Basin 126, pollutants in the drainage basin that were being contributed through the stormwater system into the river, components sampled during the basin study, to include the proper BMP's based on the stormwater study, the project was critical for life and safety to alleviate flooding on Madison Street for evacuations, the proposed cost of the phases were planned in the 2013 Stormwater Master Plan, the project would start in 2018, New Port Richey would contribute funds to the project as a team effort, and the preliminary engineering had been completed.

Chairman Mariano asked what was New Port Richey's stormwater utility fee and if the homes in the basin flooded or if the project was to protect the roads.

Mr. Rivera responded the fee was \$77.00 annually and he was not aware of the homes flooding. The large basin included both County and New Port Richey residents. The project would take care of the flooding problem but more importantly the pollutants that flowed directly into the Cotee River.

Chairman Mariano explained that the top priority was to keep the homes from flooding. He spoke regarding Magnolia Valley, MSBU's (Municipal Service Benefit Unit), and he was pleased New Port Richey would participate.

Discussion followed regarding New Port Richey's anticipation to apply for SWFWMD (Southwest Florida Water Management District) cooperative funding in 2018-2019 for additional funds for the project phases; estimates were based on New Port Richey's 2013 Stormwater Master Plan that included preliminary engineering estimates; the project would proceed using Stormwater Utility Funds if SWFWMD funding was not obtained; the cost did not include BMPs; to be more aggressive pursuing grants; when to implement BMPs; maintenance required; history of the existing system; stormwater quality elements; expansion of outreach projects; grading the project; to possibly use Pot 2 funding if the project were framed as a more Regional project; and the project was consistent with what was excepted for Pot 3 funding in the past.

The Committee accepted the project as a Pot 3/2 candidate project. Staff would write a project proposal to place in the FDEB databank and include a price breakdown with the grading sheet sent to the Committee. The additional cost of the BMP's would bring the total cost of the project to approximately 1.2 million dollars.

Update on Key Vista Shoreline Improvement Project

Mr. Mike Smith, Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Supervisor, met with the Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) at Key Vista to speak about the dredging and shoreline rip rap. He gave a PowerPoint presentation and spoke regarding shoreline stabilization, to build an observation/fishing platform, to improve flushing of the bayou by improving culverts, an optional kayak launch, to improve the kayak and trail launch area to be included as part of the Blueways trail, the cost of permitting and design, and the total cost of the project ranged from \$460,000.00 to \$500,000.00.

Mr. Franklin reminded the Committee that Key Vista was graded in the past. The Army Corps was not favorable on the project that dredged around the edge of the bayou from 1962. The Army Corps asked for a seagrass study and a study of the water depths along the canal with a plan to dredge accordingly. RESTORE funds could be used for private ownership. The owners of the easement on the property verbally committed to a conservation easement which would allow for the installation of the culverts. The Committee would be asked for an updated project grading and proposal for Pot 1 funding.

Discussion followed regarding the size of the culverts that were silted in; the benefit of only cleaning the culverts; the need to increase the size of the culvert for more water flow and natural flushing; the project was similar to the Bailles Bluff mitigation project; to grade the project to approve the culverts and rip rap without the structures and kayak launch area; to separate the platforms for grading the project; the importance of the platforms once the shoreline was stabilized with rip rap; and to review other water way access funding.

Project Discussion on County Wide Dredge Project

Mr. Franklin noted that the highlights were discussed during the Project Review. Dewberry had provided a task order for an assessment and analysis of a county wide dredge project. He asked if the Committee was interested in the proposal that would fall under Pot 3 funding.

Ms. Baker clarified that Dewberry would need to be paid under a task order to complete the work under Pot 1 funds. She felt the Committee needed to determine if the expenditure was appropriate and then recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that a county wide dredge project was scoped out.

The Committee and Staff held discussion regarding the cost of the project; that Dewberry was a selected consultant under RESTORE; opportunities that may come from this project; to place the project into Pot 1 without being ranked; after the study was completed the communities may be asked to “pitch-in” for the project; how the study would be reported back to the Committee; and concerns of paying for a study without knowledge of the end result when others have provided a project.

Chairman Mariano asked for a motion.

Ms. Dana Gaydos, GHS Environmental, asked if the MYIP (Multi-Year Implementation Plan) would need to be revised if the project was funded from Pot 1. She commented that there were several projects on the MYIP that were time sensitive and all the projects were selected for Pot 1 based on ranking.

Mr. Franklin responded yes the MYIP would need to be revised and submitted for approval. He noted that all projects placed on the MYIP had been graded up to this point. He asked if the Committee would grade the object on completing a task order to be consistent with the other projects.

Commissioner Starkey asked if the Committee was following the proper procedure.

Mr. Steinsnyder noted that funds could not be used for the task order until the MYIP was amended.

Discussion followed regarding grading the task order; the Committee would need a presentation to vote or grade the task order; the initial MYIP was submitted and accepted that included the Orange Lake, Sunwest, and the Waterfront Revitalization projects for which Staff was currently completing the grant paperwork; an addendum to the MYIP was being written for the School Board; the time frame to fund the project; and to bring the project before the Board of County Commissioners (Board) for funding.

Staff was directed to schedule the presentation of the project and to bring the project before the Board.

Project Review

Mr. Franklin stated there were currently 51 projects associated with RESTORE. The value of the initial graded projects for Pot 1 funding was 415 million dollars which exceeded the funding to be received from both Pot 3 in the amount of 12.7 million and Pot 1 in the amount of 5.4 million. He would highlight the higher ranking projects that included project updates. He explained the project rankings were based on the RESTORE Act guidelines, projects were divided per Pot eligibility and graded on Pot 1 criteria, the initial State Expenditure Plan would be submitted on September 2nd which would be non-binding, Pot 3 funding would be distributed evenly with each County receiving \$860,000.00 per year expected to begin fiscal year 2018-2019, a project may not be started until enough money was accumulated which was considered in the initial planning, the amount received for Pot 1 funding would be \$360,000.00 per year, RESTORE funding could be used to leverage other sources, available funding which included funding received and approved projects that totaled \$43,110.86 of undesignated funds, a map of the project locations, and the project ranking. He reviewed the following projects which included the project description, price, and rank:

- Costal Environmental Research Network (CERN),
- Watershed Research Institute
- Coastal Observation Monitoring and Prediction System (COMPS)
- Sunwest Park
- Sunwest Dredge Mitigation Projects that included Anclote Hole and Werner-Boyce Scrapedown
- Inshore Artificial Reef
- Repermit Hudson Artificial Reef
- Pithlachascotee-Anclote Conservation Effort (PACE) Analysis
- Property Acquisition for Stormwater
- Hammock Creek/Sea Pines Stormwater
- Forest Hills Stormwater
- Development of a Blueways Trail Program
- Cypress Creek Stormwater Road Culverts
- Port Richey Watershed Stormwater
- Bailles Bluff/Key Vista Shoreline Restoration Project
- Trail Feasibility Study for connecting Hernando, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties

Mr. Franklin reviewed the distributed sheets of Pot 1 and Pot 3 funding which included a list of projects ranked as they were voted on initially and an updated list of projects after eliminating projects that were no longer viable. He spoke regarding the estimated project cost and the amount of funds that would be available for both Pot 1 and Pot 3, a list of projects that were capable of being achieved, the list was amendable, an initial plan would be submitted by September 2nd, the Committee would need to decide how to complete a project, a worksheet that he created to help the Committee work through the projects between both Pots with examples such as the number one ranked project CERN would not be completed for the first ten years due to the funding received each

year but subcomponents may be achievable, the Gulf Coast Consortium asked for a fifteen year plan between 12.7 million dollars to 24 million dollars, and the funds did not have an expiration date,

The Committee and Staff held discussion regarding minimizing the expense of dredge projects; the ranked order of the projects; projects associated with the Property Acquisition for Stormwater project; the project study for Sea Pines had been completed; acquiring easements; to re-verify numbers for the Hammock Creek/Sea Pines Stormwater project; the Cypress Creek Basin was part of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program which was submitted to the portal; Public Works had looked at SWFWMD (Southwest Florida Water Management District) funding and which projects could be for the Tampa Estuary Program; the approval of the Magnolia Valley MSBU (Municipal Service Benefit Unit) and approval to purchase the Magnolia Valley Golf Course to help control the flooding in the area; which elements were included in the updated cost for Sunwest Park; that Senator Latvala was amenable to obtaining funds for Werner Boyce Scrapedown; BP money would be available in late FY 2017; projects that were on both Pot 1 and Pot 3 lists; a review of the Regional Reclaimed Water Project which included two viable components of Central Pasco 4G Ranch and Crews Lake; the worksheet made the assumption the projects were for one year; Ballies Bluff/Key Vista project was submitted under Pot 1; the Gulf Coast Consortium asked for a fifteen year plan to present to the Governor that Staff believed may be modified as situations changed; the ability to bond the money; the Committee did not know how the rules would be set; there was a 25 percent infrastructure limit for the State Expenditure Plan under RESTORE; compliance of how the funds were spent; and if projects could be shifted within the fifteen year plan.

Chairman Mariano spoke regarding the effort to move the item forward, the plan that would be submitted may be changed, the grouping of the projects, an example of the Sea Pines project with matching money, opportunity to drive cost down for some projects with leveraging, and to schedule another presentation with the projects to simplify not group the projects.

Ms. Baker explained that the funds would accumulate in an enterprise fund. As a project was approved for funding it would be assigned a project number. The project manager would then spend the allocated amount over the life of the project.

Staff would provide a full detail and back-up documentation of the projected cost remaining for Sunwest Park to the Committee.

Ms. Jessica Koelsch, National Wildlife Federation, noted Mr. Franklin's incredible efforts regarding the spreadsheets. She spoke regarding the constant state of flux, the level of detail was not needed to submit projects to the consultant in mid-September, other counties were picking one to two big projects and identifying a theme and body of water which the consultants had preliminary approved, the State Expenditure Plan would have to weave together priorities from 23 Counties, and the broader the plan the more flexibility the Committee would have.

Chairman Mariano asked if anything that “hit” the Gulf was considered Regional.

Ms Koelsch agreed. If multiple counties had similar projects it would be easy to bundle together.

The Committee, Ms. Koelsch and Staff held discussion regarding stormwater and septic replacement; projects that would be considered infrastructure; infrastructure projects that showed a benefit to the environment may be exempt from the 25 percent infrastructure cap; stormwater projects on the list that could be bundled together; currently there were no joint projects within the 23 counties; it was a two year process to develop the State Expenditure Plan; how funds would be distributed; Pot 1 fund disbursement was already set; conversations with a consultant regarding a countywide dredge project, hopes of the Army Corps of Engineers would allow maintenance dredges; to improve property values and quality of life; to complete smaller portions of projects; an environmental restoration project was more in line with the tenor of the BP funding; how the Committee would review of the projects for the benefit of the new members; to allow the project managers to defend their project; the scoring/grading criteria; which projects to include on the State Expenditure Plan; potential dates for the next Committee meeting; and review of the absent Committee Members comments regarding the project summary that would be provided to Staff.

The Committee directed Staff to schedule a meeting on August 22, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. for the project managers to present a simplified updated project presentation to be scored and ranked before submitting the State Expenditure Plan on September 2nd.

Staff would send out the Pot 1 and Pot 3 criteria along with the score sheet for grading to the Committee. The Living Shorelines project would be graded under Pot 1, the Madison Stormwater project would be graded under Pot 3 which would include the BMPs and SWFWMD matching funds, and the Key Vista Shoreline Improvement project would be regarded under Pot 3 criteria based on the updated cost. Staff would also provide an updated summary for the projects that would be presented.

State Expenditure Plan Discussion

This item was discussed under Project Review.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Dana Gaydos, GHS Environmental, spoke regarding the COMPS Buoy that was ranked number two on the Pot 3 list. She encouraged the Committee to use the funds for something tangible for the residents such as stormwater or reclaimed water since the COMPS Buoy did not work. She asked the Committee to sign in and plug in to one of the buoys.

Ms. Jessica Koelsch, National Wildlife Federation, felt there were great ideas on how to move forward during the State Expenditure Plan discussion. A lot had changed since the initial review and ranking of the projects such as the cost and expectations. She was pleased to hear that the Dewberry task order would be ranked. She spoke regarding her comments on the initial MYIP of the public process, and review of the new projects.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

RESTORE ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 3, 2016



Office of Paula S. O'Neil, Clerk & Comptroller

Prepared by: 
Marie Miller, Records Clerk II
Board Records Division