

LOWER WEST COAST WATERSHED SUBCOMMITTEE

Held on January 18, 2008

The meeting of the Lower West Coast Watershed Subcommittee was held on January 18, 2008 at the offices of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council at 1926 Victoria Avenue, Fort Myers, Florida.

Those present included:

David Crawford	Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council
Mayor Mick Denham	City of Sanibel
Craig Bartoshak	Duda & Sons
Jon Iglehart	Department of Environmental Protection
Karen Bickford	Lee County
Wayne Daltry	Lee County Smart Growth Dept.
Jim Love	Department of Health
Mark Hooks	
Bob Himschoot	Crews Environmental
Catherine Corbett	Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Carla Palmer	
Jim Beever	Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council
Roxanne Groover	FOWA

Mayor Denham called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

Mayor stated that the subcommittee's primary purpose was to focus on urban pollution and that means those things which are caused by us to pollute our environment. We didn't want to be another committee pointing towards Lake Okeechobee as the main cause.

Mayor Denham explained that the five tasks to focus on are 1) overuse of fertilizer; 2) wastewater treatment, 3) package treatment facilities and recognizing that in some part of our community, they are not considered substantial; 4) Stormwater and how we treat stormwater and 5) Septic systems and the effects they may or may not have on the environment. The three resolutions have not been benign resolutions. Each resolution has been followed up with a series of action and trying to orchestrate communities in southwest Florida with reference to fertilizer.

In terms of wastewater treatment, we recognize the recycled water has a high concentration of nitrogen and is a cause of significant concern. Trying to represent all the interests that have a wastewater issue and put together a grant package and hope to have completed within weeks.

With respect to package treatment resolution, one of the recommendations is that on a barrier island and like places adjacent to a body of water, that DEP not provide any more permits for package treatment facilities on a barrier island. On Sanibel, there are no septic systems and package treatment plants.

Mayor Denham stated that septic systems and stormwater issues still need to be addressed. The water quality and viability to our state is extremely vital. By the end of this quarter, hope to have resolutions.

Discussion on septic systems ensued.

Mayor Denham asked the committee's input on what should be in the resolutions.

Mr. Craig Bartoshak asked about details on package plant measures of output. Mayor Denham discussed process.

Ms. Roxanne Groover introduced Mr. Mark Hooks who made a presentation. Mayor Denham stated what should be in resolution. Mr. Hooks' worked for Infiltrator Systems and his presentation focused on the National Onsite Wastewater Recycle Association in which he was a board member. He reviewed what the typical wastewater system consists of for the benefit of the committee.

The committee had questions about studies which are by the Florida Department of Health and the national studies, the maintenance of high tech methods, soils and proposed legislation.

Mr. Hooks said that there are some new tools out there to study these types of questions. He also reviewed advanced treatment processes and that there were grants to obtain funding for projects.

Discussion on fertilizer and stormwater runoff related to nitrogen content and penalties for non-compliance.

Mayor Denham had questions regarding builders and contractors and discussed what kind of information and/or technology is needed to improve water quality. Mayor Denham also expressed his concern about separation of drinking water wells and septic systems.

Ms. Catherine Corbett made a presentation on water quality concerns in the Charlotte Harbor and the Hendry Creek pilot project and compared decentralized versus centralized septic systems. She also reviewed the progress by other counties with respect to water quality and the maintenance of the septic tanks.

Discussion on soils, the costs associated with the septic systems and technical and managerial capabilities and models.

Mr. Beaver said that the presentation could be put up on the subcommittee website.

Discussion ensued on using wastewater and resource for watering laws.

Mr. Daltry spoke about redevelopment and design of septic systems.

Ms. Bickford stated that needed to look at the system as a whole.

Discussion continued on nitrogen and phosphorus removal.

Mr. Beaver said that the central counties need to be engaged in this process also.

The next meeting of the Lower West Coast Watershed Subcommittee will be on February 21st at 12 noon after the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

