

**MINUTES OF THE
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
JUNE 15, 2023, MEETING**

The virtual zoom meeting of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council’s Executive Board was held on June 15, 2023. Governor Appointee and Council Chair, Mr. Don McCormick called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. There was a quorum of the Executive Committee present.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Charlotte County: Mr. Don McCormick – Chair

Collier County: None

Glades County: Mr. Thomas Perry – (zoom)

Hendry County: Commissioner Mitchell Wills - (zoom)

Lee County: Councilman Fred Burson

Sarasota County: None

Ex-Officio Members: Mr. Phil Flood, SFWMD

OTHERS PRESENT

Ms. Margaret Wuerstle - Executive Director, SWFRPC

Ms. Rebekah Harp – SWFRPC

Ms. Asmaa Odeh – SWFRPC

Mr. Jim Burch – SWFRPC

Ms. Catherine Peralta – SWFRPC Vista - (zoom)

Mr. Daniel Trescott – Trescott Planning Solutions

Ms. Erica Woods – Stantec - (zoom)

Mr. Stephen Leung - (zoom)

J. Broderick - (zoom)

Sydney Wilson (zoom)

Full zoom meeting video: June 15, 2023

AGENDA ITEM #6(a)
MINUTES OF THE MAY 11, 2023, COUNCIL/EXECUTIVE MEETING

Councilman Fred Burson offered a motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2023, Council/Executive Committee meeting. Mr. Donald McCormick seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2023, Council/Executive Committee meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #7(a)
FINANCIALS: January – March 2023 Financials

Ms. Wuerstle explained that the financials are following our typical cycle of invoicing for the grants.

Mr. Thomas Perry offered a motion to approve the January, February, and March financials. Councilman Fred Burson seconded the motion to approve the January, February, and March financials. The motion was approved unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #7(b)
FINANCIALS: Draft Budget FY 2023 - 2024

Ms. Wuerstle explained that the draft budget is very typical of what we have brought to the Council in the past. There is a \$47,000 gap in the budget, which means we must raise that money through grants. Ms. Wuerstle continued to explain that she is confident that we can raise that amount since we have had higher gaps in program development in previous years. If we need to, we can cover it with the reserves.

Councilman Fred Burson offered a motion to approve the Draft Budget for FY 2023-2024. Mr. Thomas Perry seconded the motion to approve the Draft Budget for FY 2023-2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #8(a)
CONSENT AGENDA: Charlotte County Development Orders Review of Babcock Ranch Community Increment 3 Along with Amendments to the Master Development Order and Increments 1 and 2

Councilman Fred Burson offered a motion to approve the Charlotte County Development Orders Review of Babcock Ranch Community Increment 3 Along with Amendments To The Master Development Order And Increments 1 and 2. Mr. Thomas Perry seconded the motion to approve the Charlotte County Development Orders Review Of Babcock Ranch Community

Increment 3 Along With Amendments to the Master Development Order and Increments 1 and 2. The motion was approved unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #9
DIRECTORS REPORT**

AGENDA ITEM #9(a)

DIRECTORS REPORT: Meeting of the Economic & Political Delegation of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United States and the SWFRPC

Ms. Margaret Wuerstle wanted to provide a few updates on recovery. Ms. Wuerstle explained that on June 1st we had a meeting of the Economic and Political Delegation of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. They sent five people, and it was about three hours long where they listened to some of the projects that we are working on for recovery. They offered to share information on how they addressed issues and they also offered to send someone from the Netherlands to attend any resiliency meeting. We do not have anything planned like that, but we are looking at the options. It was a real interesting and a successful meeting. They were particularly interested in the food insecurity projects that we are working on.

AGENDA ITEM #9(b)

DIRECTORS REPORT: Federal Agency's for Southwest Florida in Partnership with the SWFRPC for Projects Ready for Execution and Implementation

Ms. Margaret Wuerstle explained that back in March we had a workshop with Federal agencies that attended. Different communities, agencies, and industries presented their needs to the federal agencies present. They went back and picked four projects, which were AirGlades, Americas Gateway, The Shrimp Industry, and the Heights Foundation Training Program. There was another workshop on June 5th. These four projects came to present to about ten federal agencies. The Shrimp Industry project has a lot of moving parts and partners. Ms. Wuerstle continued to explain the Shrimp Industry issues and how important it is to the vitality of the shrimp industry to rebuild the docks destroyed in Hurricane Ian. Ms. Wuerstle continued to explain their needs and how they are not getting the help they need. Ms. Wuerstle asked the Council members for their support to go to our Federal Representatives and ask them to intervene. Discussion continued and the board approved of Ms. Wuerstle contacting the Representatives.

AGENDA ITEM #9(c)

DIRECTORS REPORT: Grant Activity Sheet (Information Only)

There were no comments.

**AGENDA ITEM #10
COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No Committee Reports were given.

**AGENDA ITEM #10(a)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

There was no update given.

**AGENDA ITEM #10(b)
QUALITY OF LIFE & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

There was no update given.

**AGENDA ITEM #11
NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**AGENDA ITEM #12
STATE AGENCIES COMMENTS/REPORTS**

Mr. Phil Flood provided an update on the executive order for 3.5B committed to funding the environment over the next four years. There is a big focus on the wildlife corridor and land acquisition. There is \$100M dedicated now for the Florida Federal Program. There was legislation passed this year that guarantees a minimum of \$100M each year, so we will see that and/or even more in future sessions. There is also \$100M dedicated for the Rolling Family Lands Program, where you can buy development rights off of farms that are in production. Mr. Flood continued to explain that he understands that their grant program is out right now for soliciting proposals. Funding for our agency, we got record funding of \$600M for Everglades Restoration Projects. Some other funds of interest, the Resilient Florida Program – dealing with sea level rise and flooding, they received \$300M in the budget and \$20M for planning grants for resilient Florida. Local government water projects, which might have been a record as well, received \$433M for local projects. The TMDL dealing with water quality has \$40M out there. Alternative water supply, which is turning wastewater and converting it into irrigation water, got \$60M. There are also a couple of bills of interest related to the environment. One that has already been signed into law was geared primarily for DEP and pollutant load reduction and basin management action plans to clean and remediate the water and septic to sewer conversions. That was a really important piece of legislation that went through and signed into law which won't take effect until July 1st. There is another bill that is likely going to be passed which is a biosolid bill which establishes a grant program within DEP to assist local governments, which deals with what to do with the residuals from sewage treatment plants.

Helping to convert them to fertilizers or something along those lines. On Tuesday, the Governor signed into law the flooding and sea level rise vulnerabilities study bill that goes into effect on July 1st. It assists local governments with planning and vulnerability studies. It also expands a sea level impact projection (SLIP) study is required. Any time a local government or agency gets funding to do a project in the coastal zone area, they are required to do this special study, which is expanded to any area that is at risk of sea level rise in the next 50 years. One other interesting bill that establishes a sea grass restoration technology development initiative, which is a partnership with Mote Marine and the University of Florida to develop a sea grass restoration plan for the entire state of Florida. One last thing, there is a specific appropriation in the budget of \$250,000 to IFAS to evaluate the effectiveness of timing of seasonal fertilizer restrictions of urban landscapes. Which is a study to determine if fertilizer blackout dates have any impact on water quality. That is an overall summary of some of the legislative items that passed.

**AGENDA ITEM #13
COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Councilman Fred Burson explained the City of Fort Myers has been under consent order to clean up the river. The City of Fort Myers has completed their portion of work to pump 11M gallons a day to the City of Cape Coral for their reuse program, which currently the City of Cape Coral is laying the line. At the last City Council meeting they approved a little over \$20M to dig a deep well injection on the 13M gallons of water we are pumping into the river from the Raleigh Street Plant which is supposed to be completed in the next 2 years. Between the two projects that takes 24M gallons a day out of the river to help clean it up, which is a big commitment on the part of the City of Fort Myers. Mr. Flood explained that it will go down to the boulder zone with will not get into the water supply.

**AGENDA ITEM #14
ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Don McCormick, Chairman

The meeting was duly advertised in the June 8, 2023, issue of the FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER, Volume 49, Number 111.