

**MINUTES OF THE  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
MAY 16, 2013 MEETING**

The meeting of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council was held on May 16, 2013 at the offices of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council - 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room at 1926 Victoria Avenue in Fort Myers, Florida. Chair Karson Turner called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Commissioner Griffin led an invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. Administrative Specialist II, Nichole Gwinnett conducted the roll call.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Charlotte County:** Commissioner Chris Constance, Commissioner Tricia Duffy, Councilwoman Kim Devine for Vice Mayor Rachel Keesling

**Collier County:** Councilwoman Teresa Heitmann, Mr. Bob Mulhere

**Glades County:** Commissioner Dennis Griffin, Mr. Thomas Perry

**Hendry County:** Commissioner Karson Turner, Mr. Melvin Karau

**Lee County:** Vice Mayor Doug Congress, Commissioner Tammy Hall, Commissioner Frank Mann, Councilman Chris Chulakes-Leetz, Ms. Laura Holquist, Councilwoman Watkins-Brown for Councilman Forrest Banks, Councilwoman Martha Simons

**Sarasota County:** Commissioner Charles Hines, Commissioner Carolyn Mason, Vice Mayor Willie Shaw, Commissioner Cheryl Cook for Commissioner Tom Jones, Councilman Kit McKeon

**Ex-Officio Members:** Mr. Phil Flood - SFWMD, Ms. Melissa Dickens - SWFWMD, Mr. Lawrence Massey - FDOT, Mr. Jon Iglehart - FDEP

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**Charlotte County:** None

**Collier County:** Commissioner Tim Nance, Commissioner Tom Henning, Mr. Alan Reynolds

**Glades County:** Councilwoman Pat Lucas, Commissioner Tim Stanley

**Hendry County:** Commissioner Don Davis, Mayor Phillip Roland, Commissioner Daniel Akin

**Lee County:** Vice Mayor Joe Kosinski

Sarasota County: Mr. Felipe Colón

Ex-Officio Membership: None

**AGENDA ITEM #4  
PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were given at this time.

**AGENDA ITEM #5  
AGENDA**

Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve the agenda as presented and Vice Mayor Shaw seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #6  
Minutes of the April 18, 2013 Meeting**

Mr. Mulhere made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2013 Meeting and Commissioner Hall seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #7  
DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Ms. Wuerstle presented the item. She explained that in June she would be bringing to the Council the budget amendments based upon the 2012 audit.

Ms. Wuerstle announced that the Quality of Life Committee is scheduled to meet at 11:30 am after the RPC meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM #7(a)  
July 18, 2013 & August 15, 2013 Meeting Dates**

Ms. Wuerstle presented the item. In July, she will be bringing both the budget and work plan; however, if the July meeting is cancelled due to lack of a quorum then staff will have to adjust their schedule. Both the work plan and budget need to be submitted by August 15 and the current date for the SWFRPC board meeting is scheduled for August 15th.

By consensus the board agreed to cancel the July 18 meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding moving the August meeting to August 8.

Commissioner Mason noted that Sarasota County BCC would be in recess during August.

Mr. Mulhere noted that Collier County BCC would be in recess during August.

Commissioner Hall asked if a preliminary budget could be presented for discussion at the June meeting. Ms. Wuerstle explained that a preliminary budget could be presented in June. Commissioner Hall stated that if a preliminary budget was presented in June then the Council could address their concerns in June and it would be ready for adoption in August.

Chair Turner stated that he agreed with Commissioner Hall's comments.

Councilman Leetz asked Ms. Wuerstle if she sees any "windfall" of revenue coming in. Ms. Wuerstle explained that there is money in the State budget and the rumor was that the governor may sign off on the budget today; however, he has until May 24th to do so.

Commissioner Mann asked for confirmation that the Executive Committee would review the proposed budget before it goes before the full Council for approval. Chair Turner replied yes.

**Vice Mayor Congress made a motion to cancel the July 18, 2013 SWFRPC meeting and move the August 15, 2013 SWFRPC meeting to August 8, 2013. Commissioner Mann seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

**AGENDA ITEM #7(b)  
SWFRPC 2012 Audit**

Both Ms. Wuerstle and Mr. Jeff Tuscan of Tuscan and Company presented the item.

Vice Mayor Congress asked for clarification that both the penalty and balloon are up in 2016. Mr. Tuscan stated that he was correct, the penalty prevented refinancing prior to the balloon.

**Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve the SWFRPC's 2012 Annual Audit and Councilman McKeon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

Councilwoman Heitmann thanked staff for their efforts.

**AGENDA ITEM #8(a)  
Grant Activity Sheet**

The grant activity sheet was presented in the packet as an information item.

**AGENDA ITEM #8(b)  
CHNEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) Update**

Dr. Lisa Beever presented the item.

Commissioner Constance asked if the total numbers of restore acres are the total number of acres that the CHNEP was trying to restore. Dr. Beever stated that was correct.

Commissioner Constance stated that he felt that the main focus needed to be Charlotte County, because the majority of the 16,244 acres (approximately 95%) of Charlotte Harbor needed

restoration. Dr. Beever explained that 3,954 acres needed to be restored. Matlacha Pass required the most restoration followed by Tidal Peace and Estero Bay.

Mr. Perry asked Dr. Beever if the CHNEP evaluates tape grass in the Caloosahatchee River basin. Dr. Beever explained that tape grass was classified under the “wild celery” category.

Commissioner Mann stated that he wanted to know whether “we were gaining or losing” and when the goals were set. He explained that there was a current issue between the City of Cape Coral and Lee County regarding the Cietus Boat Lift, where one side states that everything in the estuaries is being destroyed and everything that was part of Charlotte Harbor future was dim. While the other side was saying that it hasn’t had any effect at all. He then stated that he has read that our seagrasses are improving.

Dr. Beever stated that the seagrasses are improving for the entire study area. Commissioner Mann asked Dr. Beever how he is a better RPC member today from hearing her report. Dr. Beever stated that seagrasses are improving in the greater Charlotte Harbor area, but you don’t know if they are improving in Lee County, Pine Island Sound or Estero Bay. Dr. Beever explained that from Pine Island south there hasn’t been any mapping done of seagrasses since 2008. For the area north of Pine Island, in greater Charlotte Harbor and the major component of Charlotte Harbor, mapping has been completed, so we can confirm that there have been increases in the Charlotte County portion of the CHNEP’s study area.

Commissioner Mann asked if there will be a point in time that information will be available for Lee County. Dr. Beever stated that the CHNEP is hopeful and the next best opportunity is early winter 2014 for the mapping and then a few months to do the analysis.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Donley explained that in the past, the WMDs had flown over the estuaries and mapped the seagrasses. However, the last few years the SFWMD has not had the funding in its budget to conduct the mapping. The SFWMD is currently working on their budget for 2014, so it would have to be a specific request to the SFWMD to fund seagrass mapping, which would include those fly overs.

Mr. Flood stated that he would take this information back to the SFWMD governing board.

Commissioner Hall stated that Lee County did purchase additional equipment and are currently monitoring several areas to check salinity. Staff is checking on a monthly basis the oyster beds, seagrasses, snook habitat and all of those issues. The county pushed back decisions in order to obtain both wet season and dry season responses.

Commissioner Constance asked Dr. Beever what kind of budget would be needed for the seagrass mapping. Dr. Beever stated that it would be between \$250,000 to \$300,000, which would include the entire SFWMD’s area from Estero Bay north.

Commissioner Constance asked if anyone considered using satellite fly over. He felt that it would be less expensive than using an airplane.

**AGENDA ITEM #8(c)**  
**Community Planning Technical Assistance Grants**

Ms. Jennifer Pellechio presented the item.

Councilwoman Heitmann asked Ms. Pellechio what the benefits of the public art grant were. Ms. Pellechio explained that staff has been meeting the region's local Tourist Development Councils, various partners, chambers and other interested parties who have expressed that there are many public art facilities throughout the region that haven't been identified. The idea behind the grant was to pull all of the resources together and place them into an inventory and from the inventory develops a field guide and website where people can go for the information. Another step is to develop a strategy to embrace in our local comprehensive plan and any type of planning effort as we move forward as a community.

Ms. Holquist asked how complicated the process was for preparation of the letters of interest. Ms. Pellechio explained that it is a quick process and it is based upon legislative approval.

Councilwoman Simons asked Ms. Pellechio to send the DEO information to her.

Councilwoman Heitmann asked Ms. Pellechio to explain more about the agricultural sustainability project. Ms. Pellechio explained that this was another project identified within the CEDS and the agriculture community. Some leaders have come to the RPC stating that we have all of the assets throughout the region but they are not working together. The question is how we get the produce producers to work with the beef producers along with the other agriculture entities. Also identify that there are programs, such as farm to school, in our state that are very important to our region. We have been looking at different funding streams to fund different components. The agriculture sustainability is looking at what is really in our back yard instead of us purchasing our produce from California.

Ms. Wuerstle explained that there was a recent article published that Coca Cola was interested in investing \$2 billion in replanting citrus groves.

**AGENDA ITEM #9**  
**CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve the consent agenda: Agenda Item #9(a) Intergovernmental Coordination and Review; Agenda Item #9(b) Financial Statement for April 30, 2013; Agenda Item #9(c) Glades-Hendry LCB Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) Minor Update; and Agenda Item #9(d) Town of Longboat Key Comprehensive Plan Amendments (DEO 13-1ESR). Commissioner Constance seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #10(a)**  
**Division of Emergency Management – Approved “County Commissioners’ and Constitutional Officers’ Guide to Wind Mitigation Programs and Applications**

Ms. Ann Cabrera gave a PowerPoint presentation.

Commissioner Cook asked if there are programs for cities. Ms. Cabrera explained that most of the grant funds are distributed on a county basis. She then suggested that it would be best for a city to look collectively and to make an application collectively as a county.

**AGENDA ITEM #11(a)1**  
**Estero Bay Agency on Bay Management (ABM)**

Dr. Lisa Beever presented the item.

Commissioner Hall stated that she saw under reserve issues that the Conservation 2020 reserves were in jeopardy and that statement was incorrect. Dr. Beever stated that she was uncertain where that statement came from because she knows that there was some discussion on the millage.

Ms. Holquist asked about the land deal with FGCU. Dr. Beever explained that the letter was just received from President Bradshaw which stated that the applicant formerly withdrew because they didn't have the amount of information needed to make the June 5 meeting and there was no flexibility on June 5 on the part of the private equity group.

Commissioner Mann asked if the ABM had ever discussed the Cietus boat lift issue. Dr. Beever explained that the ABM has not because it is not within the Estero Bay basin.

**AGENDA ITEM #10(b)**  
**RESTORE Act – Commissioner Chris Constance**

Commissioner Constance presented the item.

Commissioner Hall explained that the procurement process was for the consultants to help prepare the plan.

**AGENDA ITEM #12**  
**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was presented at this time.

**AGENDA ITEM #13**  
**STATE AGENCIES COMMENTS/REPORTS**

SFWMD – Mr. Flood announced that the SFWMD updated its Lower West Coast Water Supply Plan and by statute the District was required to update its Southern Work Plan. A public workshop was scheduled to be held on June 14. On May 22 a workshop was scheduled to discuss the District's land assessment process in Fort Myers at 10:00 a.m.

FDOT – Mr. Massey announced that it was the last Council meeting before the comment period closes for the Strategic Intermodal System Cost Feasible Plan.

SWFWMD – Ms. Dickens announced that there are two openings on the District's Governing Board (Charlotte and Sarasota).

Both Commissioner Duffy and Councilwoman Simons expressed their concerns regarding the governor appointments on the RPC.

**AGENDA ITEM #14  
COUNCIL ATTORNEY'S COMMENTS**

No comments were made at this time.

**AGENDA ITEM #15  
COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Vice Mayor Congress announced that the City of Sanibel was named as the third happiest coastal city in Coastal Living.

Regional Counsel Donley explained that the Council would be following the water management district's template for executive sessions where the district would call their executive session while their Governing Board was in session, and then they come back to the Governing Board meeting and adjourn.

By general consensus the Council agreed to the process.

Regional Counsel Donley stated that the Executive Session was exempt from the following:

- Florida Public Meetings Law under Florida Statute 286.0113,
- Public Access And Disclosure under Florida Statute 281.301, and
- Public Records Disclosure under Florida Statute 119.071-3(a).

At this time a closed door Executive Session was held.

**AGENDA ITEM #16  
ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.



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Commissioner Tom Jones, Secretary

The meeting was duly advertised in the May 2, 2013 issue of the FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER, Volume 39, Number 86.