

**MINUTES OF THE
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
JUNE 21, 2018 MEETING**

The meeting of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council was held on June 21, 2018 at the offices of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council-1400 Colonial Boulevard, Suite #1 in Fort Myers, Florida. Chair Perry called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM. Commissioner Shaw then led an invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Margaret Wuerstle conducted the roll call and announced that a quorum was not present.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Charlotte County: Commissioner Ken Doherty, Commissioner Joe Tiseo,
Vice-Mayor Gary Wein

Collier County: Commissioner Bill McDaniel, Mr. Bob Mulhere

Glades County: Commissioner Donna Storter-Long, Commissioner Donald Strenth,
Mr. Thomas Perry

Hendry County: Commissioner Emma Byrd, Commissioner Julie Wilkins, Mr. Mel Karau

Lee County: Vice-Mayor Mick Denham, Councilman Fred Burson,
Councilman Greg DeWitt,

Sarasota County: Commissioner Charles Hines, Commissioner Willie Shaw

Ex-Officio: David Agacinski-FDOT

MEMBERS ABSENT

Charlotte County: Mr. Don McCormick, Ms. Suzanne Graham

Collier County: Commissioner Penny Taylor, Councilman Reg Buxton

Glades County: Councilwoman Pat Lucas

Hendry County: Commissioner Mitchell Wills, Vice-Mayor Michael Atkinson,

Lee County: Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass, Commissioner Brian Hamman,
Councilwoman Anita Cereceda

Sarasota County: Commissioner Michael Moran, Councilmember Mitzie Fielder,
Mr. Felipe Colón

Ex-Officio: Mr. Phil Flood-SFWMD, Mr. Jon Iglehart-FDEP,
Mr. Dennis Ragosta- SWFWMD

**AGENDA ITEM #4
PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made at this time.

**AGENDA ITEM #5
AGENDA**

There were no changes made to the June 21, 2018 agenda.

**AGENDA ITEM #8
DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM #8(f)
Disaster Recovery Coordinator Update**

Ms. Wuerstle announced that Mr. Sean McCabe has been hired to fill the Disaster Recovery Coordinator position. The previous coordinator accepted a full-time position with the City of Bonita Springs. Mr. McCabe explained that the purpose of the coordinator is to communicate with local governments and alert them to funding opportunities and strategies to help with long term recovery from Hurricane Irma and gaining economic resiliency. He has already met with a few governments and discussed topic such as affordable housing.

**AGENDA ITEM #8(e)
Promise Zone Update**

Ms. Wuerstle reiterated that communities outside of the Promise Zone can receive bonus points on their grants if the project creates a direct benefit for Promise Zone communities. The RPC was asked by the VISTA program to take on three additional VISTA volunteers, one for Dress for Success, one for the Harry Chapin Food Bank, and one for clinic in East Naples.

At this point in the meeting the Council gained a quorum.

**AGENDA ITEM #8(a)
FY 19 Proposed Budget**

Ms. Wuerstle presented the proposed FY 19 SWFRPC budget. She explained that the loss of revenue from local assessments is \$324,706. The deficit in the budget is \$369,633, which the Council hopes to make up with grant funding. Ms. Wuerstle explained that this deficit amount is consistent with the past few years and those deficits have been filled with additional grant funding.

Vice-Mayor Denham was concerned about the Council's revenues. He asked about the risk of the local assessment figure being decreased further. Ms. Wuerstle explained that the budgeted amount only includes the counties and cities that have not given any indication that they will pull funding. Vice-Mayor Denham then asked about the risk of not meeting the Program Development amount (the deficit that needed to be filled by additional grant funds), since over a third of total revenue is in this line item. Ms. Wuerstle responded that the Council has over \$500,000 of currently pending potential grant funding. The RPC will continue to apply for grants to fill that deficit and the RPC has a track record of filling similarly sized deficits. However, there is no guarantee that the deficit will be filled. Vice-Mayor Denham asked if the decreased role of the RPCs in state planning will affect the RPC's ability to secure grant funding.

Commissioner McDaniel requested that the vote be made soon so that he could get back to the Collier County budget meeting. He believed that this conversation, while valid, has gone off track of voting on the budget. Vice-Mayor Denham explained that the conversation is on topic and necessary for his understanding of the proposed budget. Mr. Perry recognized Commissioner McDaniel's request to expedite this discussion and explained that most of the RPC's grant funding is federal and the change in state statutes does not affect the RPC's ability to receive federal funding. Commissioner Doherty added that the budget shows roughly \$700,000 in investments that could be used to fill any deficit that cannot be filled by grant funding. He added that he shares Vice-Mayor Denham's concern, but also recognizes that there is a safety net in place. Commissioner Wilkins also added that budget amendments could be made throughout the year. Chair Perry noted that only a small amount of the Council's revenue comes from its members and the grant funding is imperative.

A motion was made by Councilman Burson to approve the FY 19 Proposed Budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shaw and passed.

AGENDA ITEM #8(c) Audit Report

Mr. Jeff Tuscan gave the report on the FY 2016-2017 audit. They gave an 'unmodified opinion', which is the highest possible opinion. However, there is a 'matter of emphasis' section about the counties and cities withdrawing funding from the RPC. He stated that the finances of the RPC are a concern. By rule, the entity must survive a year from the date of the audit which would be through FY 2019. Chair Perry and Ms. Wuerstle were confident in the RPC's ability to survive past that time, so Mr. Tuscan did not qualify the report for a going concern issue, but it was noted.

A motion was made by Mr. Mulhere to approve the Audit Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shaw and passed unanimously.

There is an accompanying resolution (SWFRPC Resolution #2018-02) that acknowledges compliance with the Florida Statutes regarding any surplus funds. Ms. Wuerstle explained that the RPC has always done what is required and the resolution confirms that.

A motion was made by Mr. Mulhere to approve SWFRPC Resolution #2018-02 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shaw and passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #7
CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Mr. Mulhere to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shaw and passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #6
MINUTES OF THE MAY 17, 2018 MEETINGS**

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilkins to approve the May 17, 2018 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shaw and passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #8(b)
April 2018 Financials**

Ms. Wuerstle presented the financials. She explained that the Council is right on schedule and there are no inconsistencies with previous years.

A motion was made by Mr. Mulhere to approve budget amendments as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shaw and passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #8(d)
July-August 2018 Meeting Dates**

Ms. Wuerstle explained that historically it has been difficult to gain a quorum in July and August because the County Commissions and City Councils are on break.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilkins to cancel the July and August 2018 Meetings. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Strenth and passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM #9
STAFF SUMMARIES**

**AGENDA ITEM #9(a)
Grant Activity Sheet**

This item was for informational purposes only.

**AGENDA ITEM #10
COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**AGENDA ITEM #10(a)
Executive Committee**

Chair Perry explained that the Executive Committee has been busy during the last month. They have met to discuss the budget and audit.

AGENDA ITEM #10(b)
Promise Zone Steering Committee

No report was given at this time. They are trying to determine a meeting date.

AGENDA ITEM #10(c)
Estero Bay Agency on Bay Management (EBABM) Committee

There is a poll out to determine a meeting date and time.

AGENDA ITEM #10(d)
Quality of Life & Safety Committee

No report was given at this time.

AGENDA ITEM #10(e)
Regional Transportation Committee

Mr. Tim Walker is continuing to add to the Regional Transportation Map.

AGENDA ITEM #10(f)
Council Relevancy & Restructuring Committee

Chair Perry stated that the Committee had a productive meeting and plans to meet again in late July, or early August. He invited all Council members to attend. There will be a presentation at the Council meeting in September.

AGENDA ITEM #10(g)
Water Quality and Water Resources Management Committee

Vice-Mayor Denham handed out copies of letters sent to the Army Corps of Engineers and the Water Management District. They expressed concern about the water issues that have taken place in recent days regarding the releases from Lake Okeechobee that affect the water quality of the estuaries. This has major impacts on the tourism of the coastal communities. Almost a billion dollars have been spent to refurbish the dike and it still can't hold any additional water. He stated that holding a few more inches of water would have a tremendous impact in the estuaries. He added that he does not endorse any risk to property or personal well-being of anyone south of the Lake.

Chair Perry added that he and Vice-Mayor Denham have found a lot of common ground on this issue. There must be changes in the management that can accommodate the well-being of both the inland and coastal communities.

Mr. Mulhere asked if the final decision in releases rests with the Army Corps of Engineers. Vice-Mayor Denham explained that it's a combination of the Corps and the Water Management District. Vice-Mayor Denham believed that they have had a successful legislative session regarding water quality, but those projects are all 5-7 years away. Mr. Mulhere asked if the Congressional

Delegation should have been added. Commissioner Wilkins suggested contacting the President. Vice-Mayor Denham explained that the Delegation and Governor were copied, and they are going to Washington next month. He added that Congressman Rooney has been fantastic. He has also met with sugar farmers and understands their plight.

**AGENDA ITEM #11
NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business brought to the Council.

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

Mr. Agacinski announced that the SIS Implementation Group will conduct a statewide SIS designation webinar on June 27. It will present the revisions to the SIS designation criteria and include recommendations on existing SIS facilities. Commissioner Wilkins explained that because SR 29 through downtown LaBelle is a SIS facility, it limits what the City can do. Mr. Mulhere added that this is also true of Immokalee.

**AGENDA ITEM #13
COUNCIL LEGAL CONSULTANT'S COMMENTS**

No comments were made at this time.

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

Commissioner Doherty asked for clarification on the Relevancy Committee membership. Chair Perry explained that the committee consists of the Executive Committee with a few additional members and invited Commissioner Doherty or anyone else to join.

Mr. Mulhere is frustrated by the continuing difficulty in gaining a quorum every meeting. Today there was a need to rush through the meeting to vote on items and that is not the best way to do business. Vice-Mayor Denham fully supports that sentiment and he wished to have a more detailed discussion of the budget.

Commissioner Strenth explained a key piece in the water quality discussion is to get the communities around Orlando to accept responsibility for their part of the issue. The Lake and the reservoirs can only hold so much.

AGENDA ITEM #15
ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be on September 20, 2018. The meeting adjourned at 10:02 a.m.


Mr. Thomas Perry, Chair

The meeting was duly advertised in the June 4, 2018 issue of the FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER, Volume 44, Number 108.