

**RESTORE ACT  
Public Meeting  
March 17, 2015**

**Attendees:** Chris Cowart, School Board Representative, Chairman  
John Meeks, Board of County Commissioners, Vice-Chairman  
Richard Streeter, Citizen Representative  
Marilyn Ladner, Higher Education Institution (college/university)  
Leslie Sturmer, Aquaculture

Fred Moody, County Coordinator  
Tisha Whitehurst, Grants/RESTORE Coordinator

**Absent:** Jolie Davis, Citizen Representative  
David Pieklik, Economic Development Representative  
Jack Schofield, Citizen Representative  
Bruce Wilson, Tourism Industry Representative

Chairman Cowart opened the Committee meeting of the Levy County RESTORE Act Advisory Committee at 3:04 p.m. at the Levy County Court House, Chairman Cowart gave the invocation followed by the Pledge to the Flag. Chairman Cowart called for public comments and there were none. The roll of members was called.

**COUNTY EMPLOYEE**

Comm. John Meeks, Vice-Chairman, introduced Tisha Whitehurst who has been hired to be the RESTORE Act and Grants Coordinator. Comm. Meeks explained the Board of County Commissioners have appointed Ms. Whitehurst as the alternate for the Gulf Consortium and will be attending those meetings along with Comm. John Meeks, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners.

Chairman Chris Cowart inquired on his attendance to the Gulf Consortium meetings. Mr. Fred Moody said that the budget can be increased for Chairman Cowart's mileage as the RESTORE budget will have to be amended to include the hiring of Ms. Whitehurst and additional office expenses. Mr. Moody said only one person can vote at the meeting but it is important that Ms. Whitehurst become familiar with the Gulf Consortium attendees and getting familiar with the regional projects and how they will compliment our local projects.

Mr. Moody said there is a meeting on May 21, 2015 in Live Oak of the Gulf Consortium.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Dan Hilliard, W.A.R., Inc. explained they had an application submitted for an environmental project to obtain data sampling on the lower Withlacoochee River. Mr. Hilliard said they have had contact with the Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP") and Southwest Florida Water Management District ("SWFWMD") and are attempting to get DEP to handle the analytical work and upgrading the monitoring to a monthly basis in lieu

of the quarterly basis submitted in their project application. Mr. Hilliard in response to Dr. Streeter, said the monthly sampling is expensive and the application budget will have to be reviewed to see what a revised budget will be. Mr. Hilliard said this information would be supplemented to the submitted project application.

## **RESTORE UPDATE**

There has been no new information provided since the last Committee meeting.

## **PROJECT APPLICATIONS/REVIEW DISCUSSION**

Chairman Cowart asked for dialogue on the projects which have been received. Ms. Leslie Sturmer requested the projects be reviewed based on projects which had been rated and averaged with that number and do an analysis then group the projects.

Ms. Marilyn Ladner recommended that the projects be reevaluated since there are new committee members.

Comm. John Meek suggested that the projects be judged by the application since not all applicants made formal presentations with slides or powerpoints.

Ms. Ladner said the Committee should come up with the top 10 projects from a full set of scores. Ms. Ladner added that there will not be money to fund all of them and there are some that will expire, questioning the purchase of property with RESTORE Act funds in the case of the parking lot for the City of Williston.

Ms. Ladner suggested that David Pieklik participate in the scoring and once his conflict is removed his scoring could be included.

Ms. Ladner asked for clarification on her position in higher education having a conflict if the project was submitted by the College of Central Florida. Ms. Haines said she would have the attorney, Anne Bast Brown, clarify the inquiry.

Ms. Haines informed the Committee that a draft of a revised ranking form had been compiled and it was being reviewed by Ms. Brown. Ms. Haines explained the form had been drafted just prior to the hiring of Ms. Whitehurst and it would be provided to Ms. Whitehurst to review and allow for her comments on the proposed form to be included.

Dr. Streeter said he had ranked all projects, however, those were not provided to Ms. Haines by the consultant, Mr. Bill Williams.

## **MEETING SCHEDULE**

The next meeting of the RESTORE Act Committee was scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. and will be held at the Levy County Court House, County Commission meeting room. There will be a Gulf Consortium meeting on March 25, 2015.

## **COMMENTS**

Ms. Sturmer said the proposed projects released by the Governor included the Suwannee River watershed addressing conservation and agriculture for water quality and the restoration in conjunction with the University of Florida. Ms. Sturmer said these projects

will be in competition with the Council and the other gulf states. Ms. Sturmer said this project is not part of the oyster reef project. Ms. Sturmer said congressional representatives need to be lobbied to obtain their support of the project.

### MINUTES

Mr. John Meeks moved to approve the minutes of January 27, 2015, second by Ms. Leslie Sturmer and the motion carried.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Hilliard thanked the Committee for their work on the Committee and attention to the submitted projects. The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

**RESTORE ACT COMMITTEE**



Chris Cowart, Chairman