

**RESTORE ACT
Public Meeting
April 21, 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
Jolie Davis, Citizen Representative
Jack Schofield, Citizen Representative
Bruce Wilson, Tourism Industry Representative

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

Absent: David Pieklik, Economic Development Representative

Chairman Cowart opened the Committee meeting of the Levy County RESTORE Act Advisory Committee at 3:02 p.m. at the Levy County Court House, Chairman Cowart gave the invocation followed by the Pledge to the Flag. The roll of members was called.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cowart called for public comments and Jessica Koelsch with the National Wildlife Federation Fund advised that they have been following all RESTORE projects throughout the 23 counties in Florida.

RESTORE UPDATE

Ms. Tisha Whitehurst said she had received copies of plans from other counties. Ms. Whitehurst presented copies of the plan from Pasco County, Florida which has been sent to the governor for review and comment. Ms. Whitehurst also had a copy of a plan from Bay County, Louisiana which has been approved. Ms. Jessica Hoelsch said the projects submitted in Bay County, Louisiana were county government projects and no public projects had been submitted. Ms. Whitehurst said Bay County, Florida has submitted a plan but along with Pasco County their plans had not yet been approved.

Ms. Whitehurst said the direct component funding was opened on April 20, 2015 and those funds will be available to apply for planning money once she completes a webinar. Ms. Whitehurst explained once her training has been completed the planning assistance funds can be applied for and we can be on the multi-year planning plan. Ms. Whitehurst said the current period is open until July 31 and then it is possible it may close or it may remain open. Ms. Whitehurst said the funding periods can open and then close. Ms. Whitehurst said the money from the Transocean settlement is disbursed to the treasury and it will be there when needed. Chairman Cowart said that Tetrattech, the engineering firm will be able to help with the plan.

GULF CONSORTIUM MEETING

Comm. John Meeks said it was emphasized at the Gulf Consortium meeting to be focused on what the money is used for and don't use on infrastructure that should be done as capital improvement projects. Comm. Meeks said the Consortium adopted the purchasing policy for goods and services used by Leon County. Comm. Meeks said the next Consortium meeting will be June 19, 2015 in Ponte Vedra Beach.

PROJECT RANKINGS

Ms. Whitehurst requested the Committee provide direction on the projects which had been submitted by applicants. Ms. Whitehurst explained she was aware that the 2 Williston projects probably had already been funded. Comm. Meeks moved to have Ms. Whitehurst contact all of the project directors to determine the status of the projects they had submitted, seconded by Mr. Wilson. Ms. Ladner said she would prefer confirmation on the status of the project from the applicants either by a letter or email and the motion carried.

Ms. Sturmer moved to delete Andrew Gude's scoring of the 3 projects from the averaging and replace with Mr. Schofield's scoring of 3 projects, seconded by Ms. Davis and the motion carried.

Ms. Ladner said the project submitted by Nature Coast Business Development Council will be resubmitted from a different entity and would allow Mr. Pieklik to score the projects. Chairman Cowart said it would be clarified at the next meeting on Mr. Pieklik's status to see if his scoring of the projects can be included.

The Committee discussed the prioritization of the projects along with the possible elimination of projects and the consolidation of several applications into 1 project. It was a consensus of the Committee for Ms. Whitehurst to contact all of the applicants to determine the viable projects and provide this information to the Committee members 2 weeks prior to the next meeting with the project scoring of each application. There was additional discussion on how earlier projects were ranked and scored and those projects that stretched the intent of the use of the funds.

Ms. Ladner discussed the rankings and thought infrastructure and education should be included in the consideration of ranking. Comm. Meeks said this is all a work in progress and the 3 pots of money are being managed in different ways.

Ms. Whitehurst said there will be opportunities to fund other projects and she will be attending a meeting in the Big Bend area to look at the projects being presented and the funding that is available.

Comm. Meeks said he had spoken with Jason Holifield of Dixie County and they are looking to become more active and to discuss joint projects. Comm. Meeks said we need to consider joint projects with counties to the north and south, i.e. promoting shellfish, and that regional projects involve larger funding.

Ms. Sturmer said there is a shellfish project being recommended by the governor in

the Pot 2 funding and is being submitted through Soil and Water Conservation as a watershed project including oyster and clam restoration.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next meeting of the RESTORE Act Committee was scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. and will be held at the Levy County Court House, County Commission meeting room. Chairman Cowart explained that Ms. Whitehurst would notify Committee members by April 30 of the projects to be removed and then scoring of the projects need to be turned in by May 12 to have them ready for discussion at the May 19, 2015 meeting.

COMMENTS

Ms. Koelsch said that projects relating to education were not a specific eligibility activity for the scoring and needs to enhance the natural resources. Ms. Koelsch said the connections need to be made on the scoring, for example were the inner marina projects being combined or scored separately to account for the high scores. Ms. Koelsch said the governor had submitted the shellfish project to the Gulf Council for consideration and if it is not a selected project by the Gulf Council they would like to see the Gulf Consortium support the project. Ms. Koelsch said the funding list for the projects selected by the Gulf Council would be released this summer.

Ms. Sturmer said funding isn't really expected the first go around but there are other rounds it will be eligible for.

Ms. Koelsch said opportunities to leverage and combine projects need to be reviewed and consideration for using Pot 1 funds for possible match funds. Ms. Koelsch said if the county is willing to earmark Pot 1 funds for a project the Consortium could probably reallocate funds. Ms. Koelsch said leveraging opportunities need to be continued to be considered and the treasury wants open and transparent meetings concerning projects which may be selected for funding.

Mr. Schofield said the shellfish initiative appears to have a potential for overlap with the project submitted by the oystermen. Ms. Sturmer explained there are 2 different goals and objectives on the project applications. Ms. Sturmer said it may be appropriate later to have Mr. Peter Frederick for the oystermen association to discuss the proposal and intent as he spearheaded the proposal for the Pot 2 funding.

Comm. Meeks said the governor considered watershed regions for the restoration projects submitted.

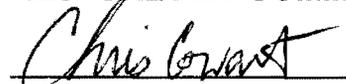
Chairman Cowart recognized Ms. Leslie Sturmer for the distinguished service award she received for the World Aquaculture Award.

MINUTES

Ms. Daviis moved to approve the minutes of March 17, 2015, second by Ms. Sturmer and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

RESTORE ACT COMMITTEE

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Cowart". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right across the signature.

Chris Cowart, Chairman