

**RESTORE ACT
Public Meeting of September 15, 2015**

Attendees: Chris Cowart, School Board Representative, Chairman
John Meeks, Board of County Commissioners, Vice-Chairman
David Pieklik, Economic Development Representative
Marilyn Ladner, Higher Education
Jolie Davis, Citizen Representative
Richard Streeter, Citizen Representative
Jack Schofield, Citizen Representative
Fred Moody, County Coordinator
Wilbur Dean, Assistant to the County Coordinator
Tisha Whitehurst, Grants/RESTORE Coordinator

Absent: Leslie Sturmer, Aquaculture
Bruce Wilson, Tourism Industry Representative
Anne Bast Brown, County Attorney

Chairman Cowart opened the Committee meeting of the Levy County RESTORE Act Advisory Committee at 3:00 p.m. at the Levy County Court House, Chairman Cowart lead by the Pledge to the Flag followed by the prayer. The roll of members was called.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Dan Hilliard, W.A.R., Inc. provided an update on the aquatic restoration project that they have submitted. Mr. Hilliard said they have partnered with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and Southwest Florida Water Management District and is advising that they are reducing their request for funds from the RESTORE Act Pot 1 funds to \$85,000.00. Mr. Hilliard said the collaboration with the state has paid off "handsomely."

RESTORE ACT UPDATE

Ms. Tisha Whitehurst said Committee action was required to reduce the funding requested by Lower Withlacoochee River Environmental & Restoration Study (Item #7) submitted by W.A.R., Inc. Comm. John Meeks moved to reduce the project cost to \$85,000 from \$125,000, seconded by Jack Schofield and the motion carried.

Ms. Whitehurst requested the all project rankings be submitted to her no later than October 1, 2015. Ms. Whitehurst explained the 9 projects from Cedar Key had been consolidated to 4 projects and the FOREVER project will need to be re-scored with the re-submittal of the project by the Levy County School Board.

Susan Haines on behalf of Ms. Anne Bast Brown, County Attorney informed the Committee that the Board of County Commissioners had approved the waiver of conflict for Ms. Marilyn Ladner and Mr. Chris Cowart for the FOREVER: For Our Resources Eco-Vitality

& Economic Resiliency which is being re-submitted by the Levy County School Board instead of the Nature Coast Business Development Council.

Ms. Whitehurst said a copy of the contract with Tetrattech was provided and the planning assistance application was submitted by the deadline of July 22, 2015. Ms. Whitehurst explained that she would not request a Tetrattech representative to attend a meeting until projects had been selected. Ms. Whitehurst said the planning period has to be revised from 3 years to a period of 6 months to no more than 2 years. Ms. Whitehurst explained that Mr. John Stutz said the application would be refused if it was a 3 year time frame.

Ms. Marilyn Ladner inquired into the current status of the fines and penalties. Ms. Whitehurst explained there had been no recent update and approximately 3 million dollars will be Levy County's portion which will be paid out over a period of years. Ms. Whitehurst said it is important to select some of the smaller projects less the planning assistance funds. Mr. Fred Moody explained other counties are opting for selecting smaller projects to see how the grant process works.

PROJECTS

Mr. Jack Schofield explained that he is a representative of the Withlacoochee Gulf Preserve and item #10, Withlacoochee Gulf Preserve, Road Improvements could be removed as a project submittal. Mr. Schofield said the Preserve has been working with the County and there has been road improvements made. Mr. Schofield moved to remove Item #10 from the project list, seconded by Ms. Ladner and the motion carried.

Ms. Whitehurst said the planning assistance funds will be from the approximate \$500,000 already designated to Levy County and does not want to use any more of the funds on the planning assistance than necessary.

PROJECT PRESENTATION

Ms. Marilyn Ladner introduced Ms. Carol Jones the Career Education Coordinator for Levy County School Board. Ms. Ladner explained the Forever: For Our Resources Eco-Vitality & Economic Resiliency project is being re-submitted by the Levy County School Board and will be called Developing Water Ambassadors. Ms. Ladner said with Mr. David Pieklik's conflict of interest with the submittal by Nature Coast Business Development Council and being unable to work on the project they found that more involvement was needed from the school system to promote an environmental education program.

Ms. Carol Jones explained the project would be district wide and would develop watershed curriculum units for the 4th and 6th grade students throughout 10 different schools. Ms. Jones said Inglis and Yankeetown are supportive of the project and partnerships with the Withlacoochee Gulf Preserve and the George Kirkpatrick Marine Lab to promote summer labs for the students. Ms. Jones said the project costs would be for training the teachers, providing equipment to set up small labs in each classroom and then

combine technology with the labs in summer to allow for the data collected to be used in the classroom. Ms. Jones said the funds would also cover indirect costs, extra staff, substitute staff for teachers, trainers to train the teachers and salaries for bus drivers to transport students.

Ms. Ladner explained that there was discussion of collaborating with Pasco County to form a regional project for Pot 3 funding and developing into a state-wide plan. Ms. Ladner said this would be a pilot program.

Ms. Jones added this would expand the field experience into the elementary grades and move students to the STEM in post secondary grades. Ms. Jones said the funding would equip 10 labs and provide manuals for lab experiments tied to the program. Ms. Jones said these would be small labs within a classroom.

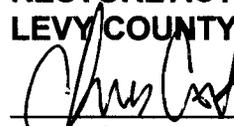
MEETING SCHEDULE

It was a consensus of the Committee that the next 2 meetings of the RESTORE Act Advisory Committee will be October 20, 2015 and November 17, 2015, respectively at 3:00 p.m. and will be held at the Levy County Court House, County Commission meeting room.

MINUTES

Comm. John Meeks moved to approve the minutes of June 15, 2015, seconded by Ms. Jolie Davis and the motion carried.

**RESTORE ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA**



Chris Cowart, Chairman