

**RESTORE ACT
Public Meeting of November 15, 2016**

Attendees: Chris Cowart, School Board Representative, Chairman
John Meeks, Board of County Commissioners, Vice-Chairman
Leslie Sturmer, Aquaculture
Rayanne Giddis, Higher Education
Jack Schofield, Citizen Representative
Richard Streeter, Citizen Representative

Absent: Tourism Industry Representative - Vacancy
David Pieklik, Economic Development Representative
Jolie Davis, Citizen Representative

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 gave the prayer followed by the Pledge to the Flag. The roll of members was called.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public had no comments.

**RESTORE ACT PROJECTS UPDATE AND
GULF CONSORTIUM UPDATE**

Ms. Tisha Whitehurst said she had attended the meeting with ESA with Comm. John Meeks and Mr. Wilbur Dean, Interim County Coordinator to discuss the Pot 3 funds which would be received by the County. In the discussion with ESA they recommended that it would be in the best interest to have the current RESTORE Act Advisory Committee also advise the Board of County Commissioners ("the Board") on the Pot 3 funding. Ms. Whitehurst explained there will be a different procedure from the Pot 1 funds. Ms. Whitehurst said the Pot 3 funds will follow the state expenditure plan, the rules will be different and the Council will oversee disbursement of the funds.

Ms. Whitehurst said she had met with the RESTORE Act Coordinator in Taylor County who had recently assumed the position with the resignation of the prior coordinator. Ms. Whitehurst explained that Taylor County was further behind in the process than the County currently is, however, they will be involved in the partnership of the Pot 3 funds.

Ms. Whitehurst said the ordinance for the procurement procedure to comply with 2CFR 200 will be presented to the Board on December 6, 2016 and then will be submitted to Treasury for review. Ms. Whitehurst said the current expected time line will be approval of the expenditure plan for the Consortium in April, 2017, state expenditure plan in place and approved by July, 2018 relating to Pot 3 funding.

Comm. John Meeks said it would probably be 2019 before any funds from Pot 3 would be received.

Mr. Jack Schofield suggested doing a press release to let the public know the current progress of the RESTORE Act funds for Pot 1 funding.

COMMITTEE MEMBER

Comm. John Meeks said he had approached 2 people to consider serving on the Committee to replace Gail Gold who has resigned but they were not interested. Chairman Chris Cowart said he would make contact with some tourist industry representatives to see if they would be interested in being a part of the Committee.

RESTORE PROJECT(S)

Ms. Leslie Sturmer explained the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association had voted to revise their project application since the Hurricane Hermine event. Ms. Sturmer said they wanted to revise the project to the *removal of shellfish farming gear and marine debris along the Cedar Key coastline* following Hurricane Hermine. Ms. Sturmer said the project would allow for 4 dumpsters from WastePro to be placed in Cedar Key with the intent to contract out with local businesses to remove the waste on the coastline and then arrange for continued maintenance following the initial cleanup. Ms. Sturmer said the project would be similar to Adopt-A-Shore which is found in other coastal communities. Ms. Sturmer explained it was not an unanimous vote by the Aquaculture Association as there were members that wanted to continue with the promotional funding of a clam trail. Ms. Sturmer said she had explained to the Association of the possibility of using Pot 3 funds and doing a regional project with Citrus, Dixie, Taylor and Jefferson counties emphasizing each county's specific shellfish. Ms. Sturmer said she was not asking for approval on a Pot 3 project but they would still like to have the clam trail but the marine debris cleanup with continued maintenance was more important in the short term.

Dr. Richard Streeter said it appeared to be a new project and the clam trail project had already been approved and there was a concern of accepting a completely different project.

Ms. Sturmer said after Hurricane Hermine Adam Putnam the Commissioner of Agriculture had recommended looking to RESTORE Act fund monies for the project.

Mr. Jack Schofield concurred with Dr. Streeter that the Committee had turned down another application and this could be setting a precedent even though this would be a better project, the other project had already been accepted.

Ms. Whitehurst said another one of the applicants had changed their project and it was accepted as it did not change the budget and it was the same group not someone new and this was a similar request.

Ms. Whitehurst said all of the project applicants had been contacted to determine if the hurricane had an effect on the submitted project and were requested to submit that information. Ms. Whitehurst said she had not received a response from Rose Campbell, President of the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association.

Ms. Sturmer said when she realized that Ms. Campbell had not responded she contacted her and that is when the Association decided to pursue the marine debris clean up as their project.

Mr. Schofield moved to remove the Clam Trail project and replace it with the marine debris removal for the applicant, Cedar Key Aquaculture Association, seconded by Comm. John Meeks and the motion carried. Comm. John Meeks said Mr. Putnam may have been discussing the Pot 2 or Pot 3 funding and the group may want to explore that as an option. Ms. Sturmer advised she would pass this information to the Association.

PRESENTATION

Dr. Peter Frederick with UF/IFAS advised that funding had just been confirmed for a oyster restoration project through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Dr. Frederick said the application was comprised of 10 years of research and an attempt will be made to restore one of the largest oyster reefs in Levy County at Lone Cabbage Reef. The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund will fund the 8.3 million dollar project with funding from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill consisting of Pot 2 funds. Dr. Frederick said 60 percent of the budget was for construction and the remainder going to monitoring, overhead and salaries.

After discussion, Dr. Frederick advised he would make a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners on the project.

GULF CONSORTIUM UPDATE

Comm. John Meeks advised the next meeting will be December 2, 2016 and there had been no new information received since the Committee's last meeting. Ms. Whitehurst said she had provided the Gulf Consortium with an update on the County.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next meetings of the RESTORE Act Advisory Committee will be Tuesday, January 17, 2017, commencing at 3:00 p.m. in the Board of County Commissioner's meeting room at the Levy County Court House.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Dan Hilliard, W.A.R., Inc. congratulated Dr. Frederick on the oyster bed restoration project. Mr. Hilliard commented on the impact on the very delicate balance of the water and the impact that has been occurring against the marine environment.

Ms. Mindy Allen provided an update on the aquarium project advising the Historical Committee in Cedar Key had given approval for the demolition of one of their buildings. Ms. Allen said the aquarium with classroom and office space is moving along and is projected to be completed in August-September, 2017. Ms. Allen wanted to know where funding stood for the project and when it would be disbursed and were amounts expended recoverable.

Ms. Whitehurst advised there would be no way that any disbursements would be made by September, 2017 as the multi-year implementation plan still had to be prepared and then approved by Treasury.

Ms. Allen asked if a loan could be reimbursed and Mr. Cowart said that would not be

an option, any funds awarded would have to be completely expended in the year they were received.

Ms. Sturmer discussed the possibility of a bond issue for the RESTORE Act funds to allow all of the projects to be fully funded. Comm. John Meeks explained there has been no decision on the bonding issue and it may be discussed at the December Gulf Consortium meeting but that was uncertain. Comm. John Meeks explained that ESA was not optimistic about bonding and discussed partnerships with other counties and state agencies to expand the use of the funds.

Ms. Whitehurst explained the first check was scheduled to be disbursed in April, 2017 and with the steps necessary for the multi-year implementation plan and review by Treasury funding for projects would not begin until 2018.

Ms. Sturmer said she wasn't aware of the length of time before funds being available for disbursement and the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association may want to reconsider their support of the marine debris removal project.

After discussion by the Committee, Chairman Cowart requested the discussion on time lines be set up for the January 17, 2017 meeting.

Ms. Sturmer suggested that a press release would be premature at this time from the discussion on when funds would be received and be available for disbursement.

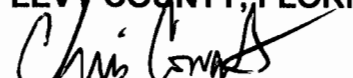
Chairman Cowart said the bonding issue of the RESTORE funds would need to be discussed by the Board to see if they were even interested in proceeding with a bond issue.

Ms. Whitehurst said the planning assistance funds were available for Tetra Tech to begin with the multi-year implementation plan as soon as the ordinance for procurement complying with the 2CFR 200 rule and then would be the appropriate time to make a presentation to the Board. Ms. Whitehurst said the procurement ordinance was being presented to the Board on December 22, 2016 (sic December 6, 2016) and then it will be sent to Treasury after the Board has approved.

MINUTES

Comm. John Meeks moved to approve the minutes of September 27, 2016, seconded by Mr. Jack Schofield and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

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



Chris Cowart, Chairman