

**MINUTES OF THE
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
JANUARY 16, 2015**

Chairman Mowery called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He led the pledge of allegiance and requested roll call.

The following members and alternates were present:

Indian River County: Commissioner O'Bryan
 Vice Mayor Adams
 Councilmember Turner (Alternate)

Martin County: Commissioner Fielding

St. Lucie County: Commissioner Mowery
 Commissioner Lewis

Palm Beach County: Commissioner Valeche
 Commissioner Burdick
 Commissioner Taylor
 Commissioner McKinlay (Alternate)
 Councilwoman Gerwig
 Mayor Golonka
 Councilmember Tinsley
 Mayor DuBois
 Councilman Hmara (Alternate)

Gubernatorial Appointees: Douglas Bournique
 Michael Davis
 Michael Houston
 Tobin Overdorf
 Reece Parrish
 Peter Sachs
 Kelly Smallridge
 Steven Weaver, Sr.

Ex-Officios: Lynda Westin, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority
 Kathy LaMartina, South Florida Water Management District
 Ann Benedetti, St. Johns River Water Management District
 Jill Creech, Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Council Staff: Michael Busha
 Phyllis Castro
 Kim DeLaney
 Liz Gulick

Stephanie Heidt
Peter Merritt

Council Attorney: Roger Saberson

The Executive Director announced a quorum is present.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chairman Mowery asked if there are any changes to the agenda. There being none, Commissioner Fielding moved approval of the Agenda. Commissioner Burdick seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. **Motion**

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Mowery stated he is very pleased there was a great turnout at the legislative breakfast. He noted that he and Mr. Busha attended the recent Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Policy Board meeting in Tallahassee where there was discussion that Senator Simpson will be pushing for legislation that could be detrimental to regional planning councils in the state. He stated that Ron Book, executive director of FRCA, and others are working aggressively on this and will keep Council members informed on the status of this issue.

COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATE

Commissioner McKinlay indicated that she has been working closely with the business development board on business development opportunities for the Glades communities. She noted that under the leadership of Commissioner Taylor and Mayor Vana, they have developed good incentives for Glades employees and contractors. She stated that she is continuing to fight for road money for the Glades as well. She indicated there is a lot going on in Loxahatchee and the acreage as well and she will be looking for Council member guidance in those areas. She stated that she has only been on the job two months, noting her strength is legislative issues, but she is still learning with respect to land development and zoning codes.

Commissioner Valeche stated that he had participated in a rolling retreat the previous day that was hosted by the Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). He stated they used several forms of public transit to travel throughout the county including Tri-Rail and buses. He indicated it was a very unique experience for him and it provided a better perspective related to transportation issues.

Councilmember Tinsley indicated that the City of Palm Beach Gardens recently adopted a public arts program for their public transportation bus shelters. She noted that the first shelter will be at the state college on PGA Boulevard and will feature work by Mark Fuller. She invited everyone to attend the Honda Classic which will be in February at PGA National Golf Club.

Commissioner Burdick concurred that the rolling retreat was great. She stated that she is amazed at how many people that sit on the MPO board had never ridden Tri-Rail. She indicated there was

information provided on interconnectivity. She noted Boca Raton created and funded their transportation program through a multiple partner program for the capital costs, and they are now working on plans to fund the operating costs as well. She noted that one of the things they are doing is incentivizing businesses to participate.

Commissioner Fielding indicated that Martin County is concentrating their funding on addressing water quality. He stated that the county has spent \$50 million over the past few years on various water quality processes and facilities, noting there are two new facilities the county is currently doing in partnership with the Department of Agriculture. He noted he is distraught over the Army Corp of Engineers (Corps) decision to release water from Lake Okeechobee. He stated that he understands that there are limited possibilities of what can be done with lake water, and commended the Corps for doing an excellent job over the summer diverting water away from the estuaries. He stated that it is essential that the lake water be released, because it is already almost a foot too high and we are coming into a projected wet period. However, he indicated this will be devastating to the estuaries.

Councilmember Turner indicated that the City of Vero Beach has rolled out a Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) program to get people off septic tanks. She noted that the program is not mandatory, but the city is incentivizing individuals with cost breaks. She stated the initial response has been good and they believe that once individuals understand that STEP is an option to full sewer system replacement that is significantly less costly, there will be more participation.

Vice Mayor Adams stated the City of Sebastian has been looking for ways to address failing seawalls. He stated that although there is no imminent danger of total failure, the seawalls are beginning to lean. He indicated that there is almost thirty miles of seawalls, and the city is actively looking into measures that can be taken for funding and implementing the needed replacements and repairs.

Staff reminded Council members that if anyone hears of a problem or issue another member is having, they should speak up if they have past experience or knowledge that can be helpful. Staff noted that one of the reasons regional planning councils exist is to share problems and experiences, and not reinvent the wheel.

Councilwoman Gerwig stated she also enjoyed the rolling retreat, indicating she has posted information on Facebook. She also indicated that she has forwarded information regarding the Winter Equestrian event in Wellington to staff for dissemination to all Council members.

Chairman Mowery recognized Representative Pafford from the Florida House of Representatives; Rachael Ondrus from Palm Beach County; Richard Radcliffe representing the Palm Beach County League of Cities; Commissioner Doug Smith from Martin County; Mayor Brennan from the Village of Tequesta; and Kathy Salerno from Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater's office.

Councilmember Davis thanked the Council members for their public service, stating that despite the inevitable and unavoidable frustration, they should remember that what they do every day makes a difference. He stated the breakfast went well, but finds it troubling that once again regional planning is under attack. He stated that if planning is not done well at the local and regional levels, then the

consequences are questionable and risky. He called upon Representative Pafford to help formulate a strategy for countering these attacks and promoting the positive, necessary side of regional planning.

Representative Pafford thanked Council for the opportunity to speak. He noted if you compare and contrast satellite images from the 1940s to now, it would show how the cities were once isolated, but now are linked to one another. He stated last year he met with the mayors of Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach. He indicated that approximately 51 percent of the legislature represents South Florida, so it is critically important to know where our region stands as it relates to the Governor and the state. He stated that it is important for the two regional planning councils to work together as a larger voice and begin looking at a uniform approach to policy, planning, and regional considerations, which he stated is very important to the economy and jobs. He suggested a liaison between the two Councils would be beneficial and by working together we can do better in a state that provides little guidance in term of planning. He stated that the work of regional planning councils is critically important in the state to deal with our future and issues such as sea level rise. He thanked Council members for committing themselves to the critical issue of planning.

Councilmember Overdorf noted that with the surplus in the budget, we now have the opportunity to spend money on water quality issues. He stated that he is happy the Governor has committed fully to fund Kissimmee River restoration and the state's portion of Everglades restoration funding. He noted that after the meeting he would be attending a summit hosted by Leadership Florida, which is an organization that provides a way for local governments to reach across the borders of the regions throughout the state and gain from each other's experiences. He noted a majority of members of the legislature have attended the leadership program and encouraged Council members to join.

Commissioner Taylor stated baseball is not dead in Palm Beach County and they are currently working with the City of West Palm Beach on developing the Haverhill site.

Mayor Golonka stated in Jupiter they are looking forward to the day when there is interconnectivity between Tri-Rail and bus services. She noted the town is currently working to provide transportation options other than cars in the river walk area of the town. They are looking at an electric car service and are working with electric car service vendors. She noted because the cars cannot travel on roads over 25 mph, they are looking at requesting sections of Indiantown Road be turned over to the Town, which will provide them more flexibility in designing this type of service.

Ms. LaMartina noted that over the past year there has been a concerted effort to reorganize the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program (IRL NEP). She noted that the five counties adjacent to the lagoon, along with South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the St. Johns River Water Management District, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection have drawn up an interlocal agreement, with four of those entities having either signed or approved the agreement. She expressed her excitement for this regional effort for planning and educational projects for the lagoon.

Councilmember Weaver indicated that a near-term solution is being put into place in western St. Lucie County called the Evans Property water farming pilot project. He stated this project is a cost-effective way to Everglades water restoration and quality improvement. He also noted the City of

Fort Pierce is developing an impact fee mitigation program to streamline their planned unit development process, and already have a very nicely revitalized commercial district at the inlet.

Mayor DuBois stated he is looking forward to the ethics training being hosted by the Palm Beach County League of Cities, thanking Mr. Radcliffe for hosting that training. He noted that the South Florida Fair is opening and encouraged everyone to spend time in the agricultural sections of the fair. He expressed his appreciation for the legislative breakfast that morning. In terms of economic development spreading on a regional level, he noted that several years ago Aldi, Inc. opened a gigantic distribution center in the Village of Royal Palm Beach, and last month the location of one of their stores was approved for location in the Town of Lake Park. He stated that he appreciated the MPO rolling tour. He noted that one of the things he has always promoted as an elected official is restoring the rail platform in Lake Park, and in conjunction with that the town has done a number of visioning sessions to plan roadway improvements to several roads around the vicinity of the proposed rail platform, which will help provide interconnectivity within the town.

Councilman Hmara stated he appreciated the comments regarding Aldi, noting the center in the Village is not just a distribution center, but the regional headquarters. He stated the company is targeting 70 stores in the region, with the flagship store on State Road 7 opening in March. In follow-up to staff's comment regarding Council members sharing their experiences, he noted the Village would appreciate any Council member input with respect to mixed use development. He noted the Village has an application to modify the comprehensive plan that proposes to take away what is intended to be a mixed use of residential, office, and retail and change it to a more classical split of residential with a piece of commercial. He indicated the Village resisted the change by a vote of 3-2, but asked if any Council members could help provide examples of where mixed use development has been successful.

Ms. Westin stated that the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority is pleased to have its new cab cars and locomotives out on the Tri-Rail corridor. She indicated there are 24 cab cars and 12 new locomotives, with three out on the corridor and the rest to be released after testing.

Commissioner O'Bryan noted the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners voted to not sign the interlocal agreement for the IRL NEP organization. He stated the county is very committed to working to restore the health of the lagoon, having spent millions of dollars out of their own pockets on various project, but they have some very serious concerns with the proposed new entity. He noted these concerns include: the timeline and process of how this was put together; the lack of any real involvement by the public or the advisory board; and the fact that millions of taxpayer dollars will be handled by the proposed organization, which will be comprised of thirty-eight percent of the voting block being non-elected bureaucrats. He stated the county believes that if tax payer dollars are involved, then the people controlling the money should be accountable to the tax payers. He stated the proposal is for a \$1.5 million in funding to start, but no budget has been presented. He stated they have been told there is an urgency to pass this along quickly, because they want to ask the legislature for up to \$1 billion for projects, yet there is no list of projects. He stated based on those reasons, the county voted against signing the interlocal agreement. He indicated if some of these questions can be clarified and answered they may be able to move forward. Commissioner Fielding stated the questions the county is asking have been discussed for almost a

year and have been fully vetted, which is why the interlocal agreement was approved with only one dissenting vote. He stated that the county's concerns are totally without basis.

Councilmember Houston noted he is a landscape architect and planner, so the conversation regarding Boca Raton is very relevant to him. He stated he is working on a project in Boca Raton, noting they have some of the most innovative land use patterns. With respect to Councilman Hmara's questions regarding mixed use, he encouraged him to look at the land use patterns and designations Boca Raton has created, noting one of the things the city has done is create a mobility standard that relies on development achieving a point system. He noted all elected officials must deal with land use and zoning, and frequently there are no great tools, because we still have Euclidian zoning. He stated the idea of mixed use and mobility is a coming thing, because millennials and people coming to the state want to live in that type of setting. He noted Boca Raton has developed regulations that give flexibility to the private sector to come up with solutions that are not rigidly applied by local government. He commended Boca Raton for some of the most innovative planning he has ever seen and suggested looking at what they have done for guidance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff provided information on a Work In Progress presentation in the Village of Tequesta on February 2nd. This is an economic development project where Council is assisting the village with looking at the US 1 corridor to develop a different address that will add more value, interest, commerce, and a civilized way to move around for all modes of transportation.

Staff noted PB MPO has asked Council to look at South Dixie between Okeechobee Boulevard and Belvedere Road; and also in Lake Worth between 10th and 6th Streets. Staff indicated this is being done as part of the Florida Department of Transportation's Complete Street Policy that looks at making roadways more valuable commodities for economic growth and quality of life issues.

Staff indicated public comment regarding the replacement bridge on US 1 in Jupiter, which is part of Agenda Item 8C, Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Log, was distributed to all Council members. Staff requested Council approval to include this addendum, which includes suggestions for bicycle lanes and places to walk, so the bridge can become part of a more complete network for multi-modal transportation.

Staff noted a proposal from the Florida East Coast Greenway Coalition was distributed and would be addressed under public comment.

Mayor Brennan noted Council staff had conducted a workshop the previous Saturday at the Village hall. She noted she and everyone else had not known what to expect of the process, with most people believing it would be a long presentation with slides and then public comment telling the village what the citizens want, including going 55 mph through the 1.5 miles of the US 1 corridor that traverses the village. However, she stated what occurred was a three minute presentation by Council staff that contained a few statistics of how the road, at four lanes, is well under capacity, which is a major concern to many of the citizens who believe not expanding to six lanes will cause traffic congestion. After the presentation, she noted everyone broke out into groups of eight to ten and each group was given a map of US 1 through the village with tracing paper on top. She stated at

this point of the workshop, everyone was realizing this was going to be a two to three hour process. She noted about six people left immediately, but most participants stayed and became part of the creative process. She stated many people thought the process was nice, but still want the corridor expanded to six lanes. Mayor Brennan indicated what she really liked is that a lot of people stood up and said they had come not wanting this, but can now see the benefit of what the village is proposing and if enhancements are done this is what they would like to see. She thanked Council staff, noting she wanted to let the Council members know the value of staff and how much she appreciates what they provide.

Staff noted the State has indicated they will be contracting with the regional planning councils to update the evacuation clearance times, vulnerability and populations analyses, and shelter inventories for the Treasure Coast region. This information relates to hurricane evacuation and keeping people safe by providing the emergency management directors up-to-date information.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Burdick moved approval of the Consent Agenda with the addition of the public comment to Item 8C, Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Log. Commissioner Valeche seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Motion

Items on the Consent Agenda were Consent Agenda were 8A, Financial Report – November 30, 2014; 8B, Minutes – December 12, 2014; 8C, Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Log; and 8D, Brownfields Cleanup Loan with the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Mowery indicated that Council members had been provided with his proposal for the committee appointments. He asked if there are any questions or comments from Council members.

Commissioner Burdick moved approval of the committee appointments as presented. Councilmember Smallridge seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Motion

ALL ABOARD FLORIDA UPDATE

Chairman Mowery stated that because this is an information item only, public comment would not be heard after the presentation. However, there will be an opportunity for members of the public to speak on this topic under Public Comment later on the agenda.

Staff presented a discussion of the latest information related to the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) process, the marine navigational survey being conducted by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and the financial status of the All Aboard Florida (AAF) project. With respect to the DEIS process, staff noted that the request to meet with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to

discuss Council's submitted comments has been denied. Staff also noted that although the state has not yet submitted comments their comments, Council's comments were submitted to both the state and the FRA. When the state comments are released, staff indicated they will be forwarded to all Council members.

Staff indicated the USCG is continuing to process a Marine Navigational Survey regarding the conditions of three movable bridges along the FEC rail corridor, including bridges at the St. Lucie River, Loxahatchee River, and New River. Staff indicated the USCG received extensive public comment, however they have indicated that any public comment related to the AAF project is not relevant to this process, because the focus of the study is existing conditions, and the agency's analysis is not designed to address potential future conditions that could exist on a bridge. Staff reported the USCG has indicated they will be working through the process and plan to have public hearings by February related to any proposed changes in the operational schedule for the bridges, which is the extent of what they can do with respect to regulations.

Regarding financing through private activity bonds (PABs), staff noted approval has been granted by the U.S. Department of Transportation for issuance of the bonds. Issuance of those bonds through a private entity must occur by July 1, 2015, and AAF is not permitted to expend the funds until after the EIS process. Staff has requested more detailed information regarding these PABs, which will be distributed to Council members when it becomes available.

Councilmember Sachs asked for comment on the letter that was distributed from the Florida East Coast Greenway Coalition. Staff indicated the idea being presented is to request the state to use money from Amendment 1, the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, to acquire the FEC railway right-of-way. Staff stated there is a strong desire for some type of trail to be included within FEC corridor, for a multi-use path along the corridor. Staff indicated the correspondence suggests the state pursue the entire corridor so it could be used for multi-modal use, particularly non-motorized access. Staff noted this is not part of a staff recommendation, but a request being presented by Mr. Walker to provide Council with information about this proposal. Staff noted a detailed analysis of the proposal would need to be done, because the FEC corridor provides transportation access for a lot of different users.

Councilmember Davis indicated he is disappointed, but not surprised the FRA has denied Council's request for a meeting. He stated he does not believe it is accurate to say they cannot respond to groups making additional comments, because the request is simply to provide clarification of the comments that have been submitted. He stated Council represents about two million citizens that have expressed substantive concerns and should be afforded more consideration. He stated when he worked in the federal government he does not recall every declining an audience with a group such as this. He stated the letter they sent is a generic letter from a well-intentioned public servant, but Council has more options. He asked if any Council members have a connection with the Obama administration, such as the Secretary of Transportation.

Commissioner Valeche indicated there has been a lot of correspondence between Congressman Murphy and Secretary Foxx. He suggested contacting Congressman Murphy's office.

Councilmember Tinsley indicated the City of Palm Beach Gardens had contacted AAF in November with a very detailed letter asking specific questions. She expressed her frustration that after several months, the response provided was just fluff and marketing information. She stated the city council has invited them to a council meeting or workshop to answer specific questions. She said that if they agree, she will let Council members know.

Councilmember Turner indicated that in the press it has been reported the state clearinghouse missed the deadline to file comments to the FRA. She asked if they intend to submit their comments, noting everyone in the region had done great work on providing comments. Staff noted the comments that had been approved by Council had been submitted directly the FRA, as did many local governments and groups. Staff indicated Council has a responsibility through the state clearinghouse process, to provide a common destination for comments within the region. Council then transmits to the state comments that have been provided from within the region. In this case, Council staff transmitted the comments to both the state clearinghouse and directly to the FRA.

With respect to the denial from the FRA to meet with Council, Mayor Golonka asked if a motion is needed to take the next step. She noted she is also not surprised by the denial, noting this also occurred recently with the comments from the Corps that stated in essence most of the comments provided on the marine navigational study were worthless.

Chairman Mowery stated that he thought Commissioner Valeche's idea to contact Congressman Murphy's office is a good idea and he would have staff coordinate that.

Councilmember Davis stated he is not opposed to AAF, but he is opposed to agencies not taking the National Environmental Policy Act process seriously. He stated process is very important and is designed to lead decision makers to good decisions by disclosing all the issues. He stated he is also concerned with the speed this had been done, noting that the average time for a transportation project to go through this process is five and one half years, but this has only been looked at for two and one half years. He stated he is not suggesting that it should take that long to do an EIS, but he believes this is being rushed through a very important process.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Walker indicated his proposal is to convert the FEC corridor between north Palm Beach County and Port Canaveral to other uses. He stated he is not suggesting acquiring the entire FEC corridor through a straight cash deal, but trading that portion of approximately 130 miles for a new corridor for the FEC to the west that would align with I-95, Route 27, or the Turnpike, whichever is determined to be the most rational path for freight and high-speed passenger service. He indicated additional cash compensation could be provided for the problems the FEC railroad would have realigning its service. He stated this proposal would not cut off the freight traffic into the Port of Palm Beach or Vero Beach, because there is an existing spur to the west, nor would it interfere with proposed freight traffic into Port Canaveral. He stated he knows the proposal is bold, but he believes Council is an outstanding group of elected officials, supported by an exceptional staff, and the public elected them to not just do the easy things, but the hard things as well.

Mr. Walker stated he has submitted a marine highway project grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration. He indicated he is asking for \$200,000, which would come to the Council for developing an implementation plan to further the marine highway concept primarily for the east coast of Florida, and possibly for a marine highway designation for the Okeechobee Waterway. He noted Council has done some very good waterway work in the past. He stated he has not heard back yet on the application, but has been told he has a 50/50 chance of the plan being funded. He stated this would tie into the entire FEC question, because there is potential for shipping a great deal of freight, especially with the widening of the Panama Canal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ORIENTATION

Staff announced that Dana Little will be returning to his previous position of Urban Design Director on Council staff.

Staff presented an overview that included facts about the Treasure Coast Region; Council membership; Council's mission, responsibilities, duties and statutory requirements; how Council was formed and its history; sources of funding; and Council's work programs. Staff noted the Treasure Coast Region is home to the second largest freshwater lake in the country, the largest freshwater marsh system in the country, and probably the most diverse estuarine system in the world. Staff indicated if the region was a state, it would be the thirty-fifth largest in the union, and along with Broward and Miami-Dade counties makes the Southeast Florida Region the fifth largest metro area in the country.

Staff noted Council was created through an interlocal agreement and is a forum for local elected officials and the private sector to come together to discuss issues that are important to them, solve common problems, seize opportunities, and take advantage of the strength of this region. Staff noted one of the strengths of Council is that by working together as a region, it creates a larger voice that will be of benefit when asking for state or federal funds; locating businesses to our area; and creating solutions to environmental problems. Staff noted Council's work program is not just about developments of regional impact and comprehensive plan reviews. Staff stated Council has a very diverse work program and should be considered an extension of the local government staff. Staff indicated the Council work program includes: economic development, urban design and redevelopment, transportation/land use planning, emergency preparedness planning, natural resource/energy planning, education planning, development of regional impact review, and regional planning and local government assistance programs.

Staff noted one of the biggest pieces of Council's work program is place making and revitalization. Staff indicated that unlike in the past, people who are graduating from college are not choosing what company they want to work for, they are choosing where they want to live. Staff indicated the better we can do in creating livable sustainable communities within our region, the better we will be able to attract not only the talent, but the tourist to our region.

Staff noted Council staff also provides grant assistance for its members. Staff noted an example of this is Palm Beach County used a master plan prepared by Council for the Urban Redevelopment Area to secure a \$52 million neighborhood stabilization program grant. Also, the Florida

Department of Transportation used drawings and ideas from Council's Transit-Oriented Development charrette to help secure a \$14.7 million TIGER grant. In Martin County, the Council On Aging used Council drawings to obtain a \$5 million grant for the Kane Center, which provides services to the community's elders. Additionally, Council helps to facilitate projects and coordination between many agencies. In terms of transportation, Council staff has been instrumental in coordinating efforts for the Tri-Rail Coast Link.

Staff noted that the eleven regional planning councils are tasked with providing the local emergency planning committees. These committees provide training to first responders and staff has developed a strong relationship with each of the county emergency managers. In addition to the training, the regional planning councils coordinated a state-wide hurricane evacuation plan that provides necessary data for responding to emergency situations.

Staff noted that in the last six years Council has loaned out almost \$4 million to 18 different locations in the region for brownfields assessment and cleanup. Also furthering economic development in the region, Council's small business loan fund has provided over \$20 million through grants and loans initiatives such as the Vaccine & Gene Therapy Institute of Florida in Port St. Lucie and a water system in the Glades region. Staff noted regional planning councils were also utilized by the state to run bridge loan programs for businesses that were affected by Hurricanes Jeanne, Frances, and Wilma.

Staff noted Council has also done work as it relates to everglades restoration and water planning. An example of this is Ten Mile Creek, which originated out of charrettes Council conducted for the water management district. Staff noted that Council continues to be involved in the very important work of ensuring our water quality in the region. Staff noted Council is also very active in energy conservation, alternative energy, and influencing policy initiatives such as Council's Energy Planning Guide and support of programs such as the Solar Energy Loan Fund.

Staff indicated seventy-one percent of funding for Council comes from local dues and contracts. Staff noted although there are 16 statutes where Council does work, over the last four years the Governor has chosen to veto funding recommendation for regional planning councils.

Staff noted Council is also supported by the FRCA policy board, which is comprised of members of the eleven regional planning councils. The policy board meets twice a year and is staffed with lobbyist and an intergovernmental coordinator who ensure regional planning councils are engaged with the state. Staff indicated the regional planning councils provide an efficient way for the state to roll out proposals, programs, and policy, because there is state-wide coverage and coordination between the eleven regional planning councils. It is much easier for the state to communicate through the eleven councils than to try to contact every local government within the state.

Staff reminded Council members they are governed under the Sunshine Law and should remember unless they are in an advertised meeting, they should only talk to one another about the four Fs – food, family, friends, and fun. Staff stated if there are any questions or concerns they have with the Sunshine Law, Council's attorney, Roger Saberson, is available. Additionally, staff will be scheduling an appointment to speak individually with each Council member in the near future.

Mayor Golonka thanked staff for the orientation, noting she really enjoyed the historical aspect of how Council was created.

Councilmember Weaver noted Representative Pafford had suggested moving forward with some sort of liaison between the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils. He asked how that might be accomplished. Staff noted Palm Beach County had recently suggested that they would be better served being in the South Florida Regional Planning Council. They recently voted to stay with Treasure Coast, suggesting FRCA look at the boundaries of all the regional planning councils in the state. Staff suggested Palm Beach County staff should be encouraged to go to one of the SFRPC meetings. Staff indicated the liaison between the two councils is, and should be, the executive directors.

Chairman Mowery stated the FRCA lobbyist would be meeting with Palm Beach County staff to collectively talk about this issue. He indicated this could not come at a worse time, because of Senator Simpson's challenge of the purpose of regional planning councils. He stated this issue is being looked at and there will be more direction coming in the near future.

Staff noted one of the things the two executive directors are considering is a joint Comprehensive Economic Development plan. These plans are due for an update and there are issues the seven counties can agree on with respect to economic development that would benefit all seven counties.

STAFF COMMENT

Staff noted that at the FRCA Policy Board meeting in January, the big topic was Amendment 1, the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, and how that will move forward and who it will benefit. Staff indicated there may be a role for regional planning councils in the program as it relates to emergency management, water policy, and environmentally sensitive lands. Staff stated Representative Berman had brought up a five-year plan for purchasing land. The regional planning councils could provide an efficient mechanism, as they have in the past, to evaluate applications and provide input and review. Staff noted that with the amount of money in the program, there needs to be an accountability/transparency piece on how the money is spent. Staff indicated the regional planning councils, functioning with local government and business, may have a role to play in implementing this long-term program.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Mowery adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m. This signature is to attest that the undersigned is the Secretary or a designated nominee of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and that the information provided herein is the true and correct Minutes of the January 16, 2015 meeting of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.

Date

Signature