TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 8C

From: Staff

Date: May 20, 2016 Council Meeting

Subject: Minutes – March 18, 2016

Introduction

The Minutes of the March 18, 2016 Council meeting were posted to Council's website at http://www.tcrpc.org/council_meetings.html.

Recommendation

Council should approve the Minutes of the March 18, 2016 Council meeting.

Attachment

MINUTES OF THE
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
MARCH 18, 2016

Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. She led the pledge of allegiance and requested roll call.

The following members and alternates were present:

Indian River County:	Commissioner O'Bryan Commissioner Zorc Vice Mayor Old Vice Mayor Adams, Alternate
Martin County:	Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch
St. Lucie County:	Commissioner Lewis
Palm Beach County:	Vice Mayor Valeche Mayor-elect Gerwig Vice Mayor Hmara Mayor Dubois Commissioner Ryan, Alternate Mayor Brennan, Alternate Commissioner Katz, Alternate
Gubernatorial Appointees:	Michael Houston Tobin Overdorf Reece Parrish Steven M. Weaver, Sr.
Ex-Officios:	Lois Bush, Florida Department of Transportation Ann Benedetti, St. Johns River Water Management District
Council Staff:	Michael Busha Phyllis Castro Kim DeLaney Liz Gulick Stephanie Heidt Dana Little Peter Merritt
Council Attorney:	Glen Torcivia attended on behalf of Keith Davis

The Executive Director announced a quorum is present.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Lewis moved approval of the Agenda. Vice Mayor Hmara seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. **Motion**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff indicated Representative Harrell has agreed to come to the April 15th Council meeting to provide an update on the legislative session.

Staff stated the loan to refinance Council's office building has closed and in 10 years Council will own the building.

Staff thanked representatives from Tradition for their help in setting up the meeting and the use of their building.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch requested Council members be efficient when providing their updates, and to state their name and local government.

COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATE

Vice Mayor Jerome Adams from the City of Sebastian stated the city is working on their waterfront and historical assets in order to be more attractive for the residents and visitors to the area. He also noted they are looking at the issue of quiet zones.

Commissioner Paula Ryan from the City of West Palm Beach indicated the city council has given final approval to move forward with submitting a lane elimination application for the Dixie corridor from Okeechobee Boulevard south to Albemarle Road. She noted this has been a two-year labor of love, and thanked Council and staff for all the support.

Mayor-elect Anne Gerwig from Wellington stated the International Polo Club has been sold to Mark Bellissimo's Wellington Equestrian Partners, the entity that operates the other show grounds, dressage, and show jumping facility.

Commissioner Mitch Katz from the City of Delray Beach stated the city's focus is Congress Avenue, which is west of I-95. He noted the city is taking the directives and ideas that came from a citizen-led task force. He said they want to be known for more than their downtown, so they are going to make Congress Avenue Delray's next great street.

Commissioner Peter O'Bryan from Indian River County noted on April 15th they will be holding the 3rd Annual Jackie Robinson game at Historic Dodgertown. He indicated the Brevard Manatees will be playing the St. Lucie Mets and there will be fireworks and a celebration of Jackie Robinson breaking the racial barrier in major league baseball.

Vice Mayor Randy Old from the City of Vero Beach stated Council staff provided a presentation last week for the city council summarizing a one-and-a-half-year charrette process done for the arts district in the city. He stated the report received unanimous support and the city is very excited.

Vice Mayor Valeche of Palm Beach County noted the baseball complex known as the Ballpark of the Palm Beaches is on schedule and will open next January. He stated the other issue for the county is major infrastructure improvements. He indicated this has become a very complicated process, because what originally started out as a plan to fix roads, bridges, and parks has morphed into a giant mess of trying to raise the sales tax from 6 percent to 7 percent, and share that with the school board, municipalities, and the cultural council. He stated he believes they should issue a bond for the amount of money needed for the projects that have been identified, and not get caught up in other agendas.

Councilmember Overdorf, Gubernatorial Appointee, indicated Torrey Pines has been successful in obtaining several million dollars in grant funding and will be doing well for the next couple years. He also stated Christ Fellowship Church has taken over the vacant Digital Domain site, with their first event having over 700 people in attendance. He stated the church is very focused on the local community. He noted the location of this meeting, which originally was a development of regional impact, has become a real shining area within St. Lucie County and encouraged Council members to look around after the meeting.

Staff noted information on the Living Shorelines program in Palm Beach County, and a map of the region's urban service boundaries are included in the Communication Package.

Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch from the Town of Sewall's Point stated the town will be voting on their sign ordinance that is being affected by the Supreme Court ruling.

Councilmember Parrish, Gubernatorial Appointee, thanked staff for organizing the meeting. He noted the state's chief financial officer, Jeff Atwater, will be reorganizing the Department of Financial Services in response to legislative action from the last session. He indicated it is still up to the governor to sign the bill, but he wants everyone to know there will be some changes in the department.

Glen Torcivia indicated he is attending for Keith Davis, Council's attorney.

Councilmember Weaver, Gubernatorial Appointee, stated Keiser University is ready to break ground on a 70,000 SF facility within a mile of the current location. He noted Fort Pierce is in the middle of their best season in years due to the A1A improvements that have been done. Vice Mayor Valeche asked if the Keiser facility is a substitute for what they planned to do at Avenir in Palm Beach Gardens. Councilmember Weaver stated he only has a cursory level of information on the proposed facility in Port St. Lucie.

Vice Mayor Hmara from Royal Palm Beach stated he is pleased to have the election behind him. He noted he was sworn in as the vice mayor the previous evening. He indicated the village council has decided how to utilize their substantial reserve. He said a portion of the reserve, which was accumulated through some very good management and careful planning, will be applied to pay off

the village's only bond for the Royal Palm Beach Commons Park. He stated the village will be debt-free and the future looks bright. He stated he is pleased to hear Vice Mayor Valeche's assessment of the proposed sales tax increases becoming over complicated, and he encouraged him to pursue getting the focus back on the infrastructure work that as originally planned.

Mayor Brennan from the Village of Tequesta indicated their focus is on US 1 and the village's complete streets project. She noted they have received the first engineering reports directly from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), with a date to begin work between late August and early November of 2017. She thanked staff for all the assistance with this project. She indicated the village received 100 percent funding, which is invaluable to the community. She stated FDOT could have just repaved the 6 lanes, but Secretary Prasad and his then chief Jim Boxold gave their support for the complete streets project. She thanked Council staff for all their help and encouraged other communities to become aware of everything staff can do to assist them. She noted FDOT also helped with funding for a traffic mast arm pole. Staff stated without FDOT's support, a lot of the projects we are working on would not happen. Staff noted there has been a cultural change within the FDOT and they are beginning to see that roads have a lot to do with how communities are successful with economic development and making good addresses.

Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch encouraged everyone to visit Council's office building in Stuart. She indicated there is a lot of history and illustrations of what Council has done for its communities over the past 30 years.

Mayor DuBois from the Town of Lake Park stated the town had a community meeting regarding the US 1 corridor mixed-use density and intensity improvement increase. He indicated one of the things that came from the meeting is the power of a good traffic grid pattern, which you do not expect to find in a suburban community. He noted it allows a very short corridor to build to 15 stories and maintain traffic levels of service. He stated the governor vetoed the town's funding for the Lake Shore Drive stormwater improvements. He also noted the town Commission voted to not support the proposed one cent resolution for Palm Beach County. He stated he represents a town that is not affluent, and due to the regressive nature of these taxes, he does not believe it will help his constituents as much as it will help other municipalities in unincorporated Palm Beach County. He indicated he sits on the impact fee board and they are currently working to review a new methodology that looks very promising and is supported by the real estate community and other elected officials.

Commissioner Lewis of St. Lucie County announced the county did receive funding for a new hangar for their airport. She stated that for the first time in history the airport is fully leased, with many requests for space. She noted in the early 2000's the county lost the opportunity to have a mega yacht business located in Fort Pierce. She reported she is going to the Palm Beach boat show after the meeting to meet with some mega yacht folks to talk about doing business in Fort Pierce.

Ann Benedetti with the St. Johns River Water Management District noted April is water conservation month. She stated the district passed a proclamation to help raise awareness of water conservation and is asking municipalities and local governments to do the same.

Lois Bush with FDOT indicated she would share with Gerry O'Reilly the comments of Council. She stated they have a complete streets implementation plan she will provide to staff to share with Council members.

Commissioner Tim Zorc of Indian River County stated the county will be having a presentation on the Indian River Lagoon titled *Are We Making Any Progress?* on March 29th from 9am – 3pm. He indicated presenters will be coming from around the state and look back 3 years to where we are today. He stated one of the negatives of not having a full development of regional impact (DRI) process is projects such as the proposed Okeechobee Clean Energy Center do not receive extensive review. He stated he is very much in support of this center, because he believes most of the jobs will be for construction and permanent operations, and will likely live in Indian River County. He stated one of the comments the county will address is in the area of emergency services. He stated Indian River County is under mutual aid, so they will need to help the three responding stations from Okeechobee, because Indian River County facilities are closer and have more personnel. He stated Indian River County feels they will be providing a bulk of the services, but Okeechobee will be getting all the tax revenue. He stated his county will be looking at how to address this issue, noting the DRI review process would have been a good way to handle this issue.

Councilmember Houston, Gubernatorial Appointee, noted he was involved in the planning of the Okeechobee Music Festival, which was held the previous week with over 30,000 attendees. He indicated the City of Stuart has finalized the lease agreement with New Urban Communities on a 1.3 acre property in downtown Stuart to do 48 rental apartments close to downtown. He noted that like Royal Palm Beach, Stuart is trying to figure out the best way to use publicly owned land, while furthering the city's vision.

Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch thanked everyone for speaking, stating she feels it is important to take time and build relationships.

Mayor-elect Gerwig indicated Wellington will be celebrating their 20th anniversary Saturday at Village Park.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion

Commissioner O'Bryan requested item 8E, Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan Amendment 16-2ESR be pulled for discussion, and moved approval of the Consent Agenda as amended. Mayor-elect Gerwig seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Items remaining on the Consent Agenda were: 8A, Financial Report – January 31, 2016; 8B, Minutes – February 19, 2016; 8C, Town of Jupiter Inlet Colony Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 16-1ESR; 8D, Town of Lantana Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 16-1ESR; 8F, Village of Royal Palm Beach Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 16-2ESR; and 8G, Wellington Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 16-1ESR.

PALM BEACH COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 16-2ESR

Commissioner O'Bryan noted at the last meeting there was a proposal to increase the density of a large parcel of land. He stated he had argued the point that if part of the land is to be under conservation, that should be done from the beginning to ensure it is permanently protected. He noted he did not want to imply the developer might not go through with the proposed plan, but it is possible the proposed project may never go through, and if the land has been up-zoned it cannot be reversed. This would allow a subsequent developer to come in and say they do not want to agree to the conditions in the original agreement. He stated the city indicated the conservation land would be taken care of later with special conditions, but they needed the flexibility to up-zone and increase the density on the entire parcel. Commissioner O'Bryan noted in the current proposed amendment for Gulfstream Polo Properties part of the proposal is to "delete previously adopted conditions of approval." He stated it may sound good to have conditions, but once you up-zone you cannot go back, and conditions can always be changed. Commissioner O'Bryan moved approval of the staff recommendation. Commissioner Zorc seconded the motion for discussion.

Motion

Commissioner Zorc asked if the original plan was for 6,500 units and now they are down to 2,000. Staff noted the original plan allowed 400 units, but they asked for about 6,800 to 7,000 units. Commissioner O'Bryan stated that is not relevant to the current item other than the deleting of previously approved conditions of approval. Vice Mayor Valeche noted that originally, when it was Lennar and Centex, they had asked for over 9,000 units. Staff noted the original proposal did not have any conservation land, but after negotiations and public input it was decided they could have up to 3,250 units in return for fifty percent of the property in conservation. Staff indicated Commissioner O'Bryan is attempting to show the importance of making the designation at the time of the amendment, but the City of Palm Beach Gardens indicated they did not feel it was the time.

Vice Mayor Valeche stated he is concerned about the traffic on Northlake Boulevard, because the county just approved a major development in the area that will have over 4,000 homes, a lot of commercial and retail development, and possibly an employment center so residents will not have to travel east on Northlake Boulevard for work. He noted Avenir is right on Northlake Boulevard with 3,250 homes and 50 percent of the property to the north being given up for water uses. He stated the county owned Mecca Farms, which is directly west of Avenir. He stated that when Scripps was put in Abacoa, the county sold that property to the water management district to do some surface water storage and provide drinking water for West Palm Beach. He indicated there is another proposal from GL Homes that will be brought to the county in April called Indian Trails Grove, which is further west and north of Westlake, and he cautioned they believe they deserve the same density as Westlake. He noted he believes the Avenir developers have been fairly cooperative, and although he believes 3,000 is 1,000 too many, they have given up at least half of their property to conservation and put in an easement, which will help water flows in the northern part of the county.

Mayor DuBois stated that with respect to the Hungry Land Slough improvements, 14 years ago the county bought land in Lake Park to create what is called the Lake Park Scrub area, which is a conservation area within the municipal boundary of the town. He indicated that two years after the purchase a management agreement was created to build a nature center and although $3 million has been spent to improve the property, they still have not built the nature center. He stated the offer

was made to create a nature center on Silver Beach Road, which is being improved in the 5-year work plan, and the right-of-way for that road has been pushed from Riviera Beach wholly to the Lake Park side. He stated this eats up the entire driveway bib entering the property and has created a high speed road where the entrance is supposed to be for school buses. He said Lake Park has to maintain a police presence at the park, and this has essentially become a park in Lake Park that serves thousands of homes in Riviera Beach. He indicated there is another private property that could be used to continue the extension of Park Avenue east, which abuts the nature center. However, he indicated in his last conversation with the director of the Department of Environmental Resources Management and Vice Mayor Valeche they told him the nature center money is now going to the Hungry Land Slough. He stated he tried to create a compromise where there could be parking to the north and south, but when he presented this to his council they did not support the idea. He stated he would be voting against the report, because he does not see where the funding will come from and the county is currently not able to build its current commitments. Upon being put to a vote, the motion carried with Mayor DuBois opposed.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED U.S. SENATE BILL 2481 – EVERGLADES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION ACT

Motion

Councilmember Houston moved approval of Resolution #16-04 in support of U.S. Senate Bill 2481 – Everglades For The Next Generation Act. Commissioner O'Bryan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

VILLAGE OF NORTH PALM BEACH CHARRETTE – WORK-IN-PROGRESS PRESENTATION

Council staff gave a presentation of the economic development and urban design charrette done for the Village of North Palm Beach, which took place in February of 2016. Staff indicated this was a multi-agency and community process that included four host committee meetings, 54 individual interviews, day-long community workshop with over 150 participants, and a week-long design studio open to the public. Staff stated the focus was not only to improve the quality of life and mobility issues within the village, but to forge a vision. Staff noted the village is updating their land development codes, so this is the perfect opportunity to use the public planning process to influence the direction of that process. Staff indicated there was a lot of public input that included ideas for redevelopment and infrastructure improvements, with a general consensus future growth is fine, but everyone wants to maintain the scale and character of the village.

Staff noted a market study had been developed to help with planning decisions and show what is supportable in the area. The study showed there has been very limited retail growth, and an average of $24,000 a year household retail expenditures, with about $118 million a year being spent outside the village. Staff noted U.S. 1 was originally planned to be an office corridor, but there is currently a 40 percent vacancy rate in the corridor today. Staff indicated there is also a pent-up demand for residential, and a strong market potential for a new hotel. Staff noted the community also wants living shorelines in place of hard seawalls. Staff indicated this process is serving to assist the village through the visioning process to not only identify what is the appropriate scale of redevelopment and uses, but also ensure what is incorporated into the code. Staff noted the complete process is available on Council's website.

Vice Mayor Valeche noted there was a slide in the presentation that indicated the zoning along US 1 is discouraging redevelopment. He asked if any developers have come to the village wanting to do something along US 1, but have been deterred. Staff indicated yes, prior to the economic collapse, there was some interest in doing mixed use areas. Staff stated it was not that the Council would not support the plans, but it is difficult when the code is stacked against the developer, and they have to go through a lot of variances and waivers to get their plans approved. Staff stated the village has recognized the code needs to be fixed, because it is not keeping up-to-date with the desires of the community. Vice Mayor Valeche asked if the Business Development Board of Palm Beach County is directing individuals toward that corridor. Staff indicated they did not know.

Mayor DuBois stated the Town of Lake Park is also encountering the same issues with the US 1 corridor. He stated the current 1960s and 1970s design of parking in front of buildings is not welcoming and does not extend the sense of the village. He stated there needs to be sidewalks and tree-lined streets to give the sense of a human scale environment instead of a concrete jungle. He said the presentation reminded him of Dorothy Gooding, a former resident of the town who wrote the book *Tucked Between the Pages of Time: A History of Lake Park and Environs.* He stated he would like to get together with Council staff to look at making improvements in his town, so improvements along US 1 can dovetail and give a sense of single use from one town to the other. He indicated he would need to get approval from his council. Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch suggested having staff do a presentation to the town council in Lake Park.

Commissioner Katz stated this is similar to what Council is helping the City of Delray Beach, which is narrowing US 1. He warned everyone it is a tough, painful process that will take years, but the results are worth it. He stated you have to help the citizens and elected officials get through the process, especially during the construction phases of narrowing a major thoroughfare like US 1. He said they are now seeing the benefits, and invited the Town of Lake Park commission to come to Delray to see what they have done. Staff noted that with lane elimination taking away 25 percent of the roadway does not mean losing 25 percent of the capacity.

Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch stated she likes the historical photographs, noting her mother is an historian and these photographs give a reference point of where we have come from and where we will be one day.

Mayor-elect Gerwig stated her first job was at the Twin City Mall and she was surprised going back years later to see what had happened there, because it was pretty much complete at one point and it has transitioned. She stated she did not see anything in the presentation about Anchorage Park and what has happened there. Staff indicated Anchorage Park was at one time a wastewater treatment plant has now been redeveloped into a park with assistance provided through Council's Brownfields program. Staff noted there are current discussions for RV and boat parking at the site, because the village is continually looking to improve the facility. Mayor-elect Gerwig asked how the plans are going for the RV and boat parking. Staff indicated they have had some workshops, and one of the things that makes sense for boat parking is there is already a boat ramp there. Staff noted one idea percolating during the charrette was to find an off-site location for the RV parking, airboats and possibly boat storage. Staff stated they will be doing another rendering to illustrate how to do some aesthetic improvements to facilities the village supplies to the community, which is one of the things that makes it so rich a place to live. Mayor-elect Gerwig noted the citizens do not have to put

their garbage cans out by the street. Staff confirmed this, adding the village provides 5-day a week garbage pickup, which the citizens like.

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA GREENWAYS & TRAILS PLAN

Council staff gave a presentation on the Southeast Florida Greenways & Trails Plan. Staff noted that if the region is going to be competitive for funding and make regional facilities that are functional, planning efforts need to cross county lines. Staff indicated the plan is an effort to understand how to stitch together what is taking place within the cities and counties to form a regional network. The intent of the project is to identify and organize a range of regional facilities for non-motorized use, such as greenway corridors; paved and unpaved pedestrian and bicycle trails; and equestrian trails. Staff indicated the entire regional planning effort had been funded by the Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on behalf of the Southeast Florida Region, with facilitation and plan development by Council staff.

Staff noted there was lengthy discussion regarding what criteria should be used to appropriately identify projects as regional. Ultimately, the criteria includes facilities that connect to regionally significant parks and preserves; historic and cultural facilities; colleges and universities; and premium transit. Additional criteria includes facilities that provide connections to downtowns, or central business districts, or premium transit facilities like Tri-Rail, Metrorail or the Miami-Dade Busway.

Staff provided illustrations of the types and standards for the facilities chosen in the plan, and a map series was developed in GIS format as part of the plan. These are available to local governments, metropolitan and transportation planning organization (MPO/TPO), and state agencies. Staff indicated the maps include the multi-use and hiking facilities at a regional scale as well as individual maps for each county from Indian River to Monroe. Staff also provided illustrations of blueways trails, noting there was a lot of discussion and enthusiasm for paddling trails and kayak access, which is a growing recreational and commercial opportunity not just across the region in Florida, but nation-wide.

Staff indicated there is an immediate funding opportunity through the Shared-Use Nonmotorized (Sun) Trail Network, which is a new state funding program that allocates $25 million annually for 5 years for regionally significant facilities. The funding for this effort is recommended by the Florida Greenways and Trails Council, which is a non-profit entity established by the state to provide input to FDOT, who will make the final funding decisions for the initial regional trail networks. Staff noted for our region the only facility eligible for this funding is the East Coast Greenway, a 3,000-mile urban trail that runs from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida. Staff stated the trail will be built in pieces over time to ultimately create a continuous trail that provides different rural and urban experiences. Staff indicated there are pieces of the East Coast Greenway throughout the region, and this funding program presents an opportunity for the region to bring home some of this state funding. Staff stated they are working with local governments and agencies to provide information on the project and assembling public letters of support and resolutions for the project.

With respect to the Southeast Florida Greenways and Trails Plan, staff indicated it was adopted by the Palm Beach MPO in December, and has been provided to each individual MPO/TPO in the

region for action as appropriate within their communities. Staff noted there will also be a series of implementation workshops beginning this summer.

Commissioner Ryan asked for an update on the C-51 canal project, if it was vetoed by the governor, and how that project will tie into all the blueways/greenway work. Staff explained the C-51 canal is an east/west canal in Palm Beach County that bridges the cities of Lake Worth and West Palm Beach. The canal has an existing saltwater control structure that prevents boaters from accessing the Chain of Lakes, which includes 20 miles of interconnected freshwater/brackish lakes to the west; and Lake Worth Lagoon, Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), and ocean to the east. Staff stated there is currently a project underway to construct a lift structure to take both motorized and non-motorized boats up and over the control structure. Staff noted funding has been allocated by the Florida Legislature to advance the preliminary engineering and permitting for the project, and Council staff will be assisting with this project over the next year. Commissioner Ryan asked if this will tie into the larger plan. Staff indicated it would. Commissioner Ryan asked if since the C-51 project is further along, would it be eligible for the funding previously mentioned. Staff stated the more interconnected any system is, the more competitive for funding it will become. Staff noted the greenways and trails plan as it currently exists includes a focus on paddling trails. Staff stated the next phase of the plan, based on feedback from the project managers, is a strong desire for the plan to more formally include those facilities. Staff stated if you paddle to a point, and then get out and hike, that is great leverage and utilization for those kinds of resources, and adds to both the quality of life and ecotourism.

Vice Mayor Valeche noted the C-51 structure is not only a saltwater control structure, but it is also a muck trap, because the C-51 basin drains from the west. He stated there is reason to believe there are problems in the Lake Worth Lagoon, because the muck comes down the C-51 canal, gets into the lagoon, and kills the oyster beds. Staff indicated the preliminary designs take that into consideration, and the muck traps that currently exist to the west will not be disturbed.

Councilmember Overdorf stated when looking at the interconnection of the blueways, there is the possibility of utilizing Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) as the overall agency to coordinate with other state agencies. Staff noted FIND is one of the agencies that has been identified, and they have been a great agency partner, but their focus is the ICW, which limits their ability to take a leadership role for non-intracoastal water bodies. While most of the facilities connect to the ICW, they are not part of the ICW. Staff suggested the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, or perhaps a tourist development council may be a more appropriate agency, because there is the potential for a strong return from ecotourism. Staff noted this project first began years ago under the previous MPO director in Palm Beach County, who asked Council staff to look into this project. Staff indicated interest in blueways has grown over time, especially for economic development purposes.

Councilmember Weaver asked if the C-51 project will be constructed as a lock. Staff indicated it will be a lift mechanism installed adjacent to the control structure. Councilmember Weaver stated this will improve the property values for thousands of properties to the west. Staff noted the preliminary feasibility study for the projects estimates there could be an $80 to $120 million increase in property values, which will benefit the larger region. If the project is successful in engineering a way around a saltwater control structure, there are many other regional opportunities

to extend that type of project, particularly in St. Lucie County. Staff noted during the planning process for the Martin and St. Lucie counties waterways plan, the idea of getting boats around the control structures was a popular topic, because many folks would like more waterfront access. Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch stated this project could help with cleaning up the waters, which will make our waterways more enjoyable and could bring in more tourism dollars.

ALL ABOARD FLORIDA UPDATE

Staff provided an update of the All Aboard Florida (AAF) project. With respect to quiet zones, staff noted the Palm Beach County cities from West Palm Beach south to Boca Raton are working with the Palm Beach MPO to fund and establish quiet zones. Staff noted the local governments will be adopting notices of intent in the next six weeks, enabling quiet zones to be established well before AAF starts running its trains. The current AAF schedule indicates the passenger rail service would begin in 2017. Staff noted Council will be working with the local governments and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to ensure the notices are submitted to FRA for review. Staff noted once the AAF construction is completed, each of the local governments is anticipated to adopt a notice of establishment. Staff noted there has been a request by the Treasure Coast Council of Local Governments to provide an update on quiet zones. Staff indicated there has been extensive discussion with the northern local governments regarding quiet zones and what would be necessary for the northern counties in the region. Staff stated AAF will need to publish a construction schedule before the northern local governments can start the process to pursue quiet zones and the notice of intent process.

Commissioner Ryan stated Nick Uhren from the Palm Beach MPO reported the crossing upgrades required to double track have begun. She stated she was under the impression the work would occur simultaneously with the installation of the quiet zones, but there needed to be an agreement reached and signed first. She asked if the notice of intent is needed for AAF to begin the process. Staff noted there is an agreement between AAF and FDOT to enable AAF to construct the additional safety infrastructure necessary to go from safe grade crossings to grade crossings that can be quiet zones. That agreement allows funding from the Palm Beach MPO to AAF through reimbursement through FDOT. Staff noted the agreement has been signed and executed, so there will not be a delay in the construction activity. Staff stated AAF will construct all the additional infrastructure as necessary in the normal course of construction, which will mean intersections will only need to be shut down once.

Vice Mayor Valeche asked if the governor vetoed some money for quiet zones. Staff indicated funding was available two years ago, and there is additional funding through the recent legislative session to pay for the additional infrastructure for quiet zones, which is matched 50-50 by local dollars. Staff noted this funding cannot be used to match funding from private sector entities such as AAF. Staff stated AAF is required to put in certain infrastructure, and then those intersections will be available to the local governments to establish quiet zones if they want, noting the local government already pays for the operations and maintenance for the crossings. Staff also noted there are places where the trains will go slower, because the track does not allow them to run at top speed, such as either side of the Loxahatchee River bridge in Tequesta, the St. Lucie River bridge in Stuart, and a few other spots in Fort Pierce and St. Lucie Village. Staff stated those are the key locations where there may be a need for additional funding to pay for more infrastructure to enable quiet zones to be established. Staff indicated each local government is evaluating the AAF proposed

infrastructure and what additional funding will be necessary. Staff noted Palm Beach MPO is anticipating an allocation of funding through the MPO to pay for additional infrastructure.

Commissioner O'Bryan stated he is more concerned with the speed the trains will be traveling through the county, than he is about the crossings being quiet. He asked if the county decides to establish quiet zones, can there be a speed limit for freight trains traveling 80 mph and under to be quiet, but the higher speed trains would have to sound a horn. Staff indicated that question has not yet been raised, but staff would request clarification from FRA. Staff noted where quiet zones are established, the conductor is made aware the horn should only be sounded if there is an obstruction on the track. Staff stated there is a human role in the process, not just an automated system. Staff stated it is a good question for FRA as to whether or not freight operators can operate under one set of instructions and passenger rail conductors operate under another. Commissioner O'Bryan noted that since the high-speed trains will be traveling about a half mile in 16 seconds, there probably will not be enough time for the traditional two long, a short, and a long blast for each crossing. Staff stated it is their understanding they would start to blow the whistle before they hit a grid section, because there is not enough time to execute the variation in signal. Staff noted the other thing to consider is there will be a substantial amount of fencing along the corridor in many locations where there is known pedestrian trespassing.

With respect to marine navigation, staff noted George Gentile from the Jupiter Inlet District is present to address the board on the subject of the Loxahatchee River bridge and potential improvements to raise that bridge for improved navigational clearance. Mr. Gentile stated he is the Chairman of the Jupiter Inlet District and Commissioner of District 3. He indicated the district is working hard to engage local governments with respect to the issue of navigation as it pertains to the Loxahatchee River bridge. He stated he is a proponent for suggesting to AAF that there be some bridge modification to allow the navigation under the bridge, which only has a 4-foot clearance when in the down position. He indicated they have been conducting a study since January of 2014 that shows an average of 4,000 to 6,000 vessels a month pass through that bridge. With another 4 feet of clearance, approximately 80 to 85 percent of those vessels would be able to go under the bridge. He stated the average closing time for a freight train is 19 minutes, and that is anticipated to increase. He indicated that in November, AAF Brightline administration told them they can do a bridge section in another area that would raise the beam exactly like the district's engineers had shown, and they are now doing preliminary analysis and engineering plans.

Mr. Gentile stated AAF has come to them to ask for assistance in getting the funding for that section. Mr. Gentile stated he wanted to be very clear that his board is only interested in the navigational issue as it pertains to the AAF project and their mission is only to address the one section of the bridge. He stated AAF has asked for assistance with submitting an application for a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant. He indicated his board has taken this under advisement and agreed to preliminarily start the process. He stated the board will meet on March 23rd to determine if they will proceed with that assistance and what criteria they will request. He stated he wants to ensure all the local governments, particularly in Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties, know what they are doing is not in support of the railroad, but strictly in support of the navigation, which is their mission. He noted the district was established in 1921 to manage and own the inlet, and manage the navigation of the saltwater reaches of the

Loxahatchee River. He said the district feels is it imperative to do whatever it can to get the navigability under the bridge to be as clear and free as possible.

Councilmember Houston asked if FIND is playing a role in this process. Mr. Gentile indicated his commission has had discussions with FIND, and they have indicated there is a possibility of getting one of their grants. However, there may be issues with this, because the bridge is not directly on the ICW.

Mayor Brennan stated she has been approached by Michael Reininger, president of AAF, to discuss this issue. She stated the village's concern is when the bridge is not working properly, it blocks their entire town. She stated she and the Jupiter Inlet District have been assured not one penny of the TIGER grant would go to what AAF has in their current scope of work, or what they are required to do with private dollars. She stated the village is supporting this under the very narrow conditions that the TIGER money will only be used for what is needed by the Jupiter Inlet District, the Village of Tequesta, and all the mariners. She stated they are not only worried about the ability of the boaters to go under the bridge, but also their fire rescue boats being able to respond to emergencies.

Councilmember Houston asked if there is a budget estimate. Mr. Gentile stated both the district's and Brightline's engineers have determined the cost of the section will most likely be more than $3.5 million. However, the minimum TIGER grant is $5 million, so that is what they will request. He stated the district will be the sponsor and recipient of the funds, and they are very clear that this will only go to the section of the bridge needed to increase the navigation. He stated Brightline has indicated they are committed to investing $12 million into the renovation and repair of the bridge. He said they have also indicated they are replacing the entire trestle portion, which was not originally planned. He stated they are making a concerted effort, and although the district believes the entire bridge should be replaced, that may not be currently feasible. Mr. Gentile stated he will provide future updates and invited everyone to attend the district's March 23rd workshop.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

STAFF COMMENT

Staff reminded the Gubernatorial Committee to stay for their meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Chair Thurlow-Lippisch adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.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 March 18, 2016 meeting of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.

_____ _____

Date Signature