

**MINUTES OF THE
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
JUNE 19, 2020**

Chairman Houston called the virtual meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. and welcomed everyone. He led the pledge of allegiance and requested roll call. Thomas Lanahan, Council's Executive Director, took roll and announced a quorum was present.

The following members and alternates were present:

Indian River County:	Commissioner O'Bryan Commissioner Adams Vice Mayor Moss Councilmember Renick Councilman Foley, Alternate
St. Lucie County:	Commissioner Townsend Commissioner Dzadovksy Commissioner Mitchell, Alternate Councilman Carvelli
Palm Beach County:	Commissioner Valeche Commissioner Weiss, Alternate Mayor Gerwig Mayor Brennan Vice Mayor Hmara Mayor de Haseth, Alternate Vice Mayor Gottlieb, Alternate Commissioner Peduzzi, Alternate Councilmember Marino, Alternate
Gubernatorial Appointees:	Douglas Bournique Michael Davis Michael Houston Peter Sachs
Ex-Officios	Lois Bush, FDOT Kathy LaMartina, SFWMD Jason Andreotta, FDEP
Council Staff:	Thomas J. Lanahan Kathryn Boer Phyllis Castro Kim DeLaney Liz Gulick Stephanie Heidt Sarah Kammel Dana Little Jessica Seymour
Council Attorney:	Keith Davis

* This meeting was conducted virtually through the GoToMeeting platform pursuant to Florida Governor's Executive Order 20-69 authorizing use of communications media technology to conduct meetings.

Chair Houston recognized the Juneteenth Holiday and provided a reading of the history of the holiday, which was borrowed from Commissioner Mitchell from St. Lucie County.

Agenda Item 3: Agenda Approval

Council Action: Commissioner Dzadovkysy from St. Lucie County moved approval of the Agenda. Vice Mayor Hmara seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: Consent Agenda

Chair Houston requested Item 4B12, Stuart Amendment No. 20-01ESR (Springtree FLUM), be pulled for separate consideration, stating his firm represents the applicant for the proposed amendment.

Council Action: Commissioner Dzadovkysy from St. Lucie County moved approval of the Consent Agenda as amended. Vice Mayor Hmara seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Items remaining on the Consent were: 4B1, Financial Report – February 29, 2020; 4B2, Financial Report – March 31, 2020; 4B3, Financial Report – April 30, 2020; 4B4, Minutes – March 13, 2020; 4B5, 2020-2021 Local Emergency Planning Committee Grant Agreement with Florida Division of Emergency Management; 4B6, 2020-2021 St. Lucie County Hazards Analysis Agreement with Florida Division of Emergency Management; 4B7, Florida Power & Light Company Ten Year Power Plant Site Plan 2020-2029; 4B8, Interlocal Agreement with the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency; 4B9, Boynton Beach Amendment No. 20-01ESR (Water Supply Plan); 4B10, Jupiter Amendment No. 20-02ESR (Text amendments to Future Land Use, Coastal Management & Conservation Elements); 4B11, Martin County Amendment No. 20-02ESR (Hobe Sound CRA FLUM); 4B13, Wellington Amendment No. 20-01ESR (Water Supply Plan); and 4B14, West Palm Beach Amendment No. 20-02ESR (Broadstone 30.82 acres from SF to MFMD).

Agenda Item 4B12: Stuart Amendment No. 20-01ESR (Springtree FLUM).

Council Action: Commissioner Townsend from St. Lucie County moved approval of the staff recommendation. Vice Mayor Marino from the City of Palm Beach Gardens seconded the motion, which carried with Chair Houston abstaining.

Chair Houston asked for an overview on the February, March, and April financial reports. Mr. Lanahan indicated that revenue continues to come in as expected. He noted that some expenditures, such as travel, are trending under budget because of changes in working conditions due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Agenda Item 5: U.S. Economic Development Administration Partnership Planning Grant Supplemental Funds

Mr. Lanahan indicated that in March, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act providing, among other things, supplemental funding to the Department of Commerce, U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to help “prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus,... including for necessary expenses for responding to economic injury as a

result of coronavirus.” He noted that on May 8th EDA invited Council, as the Region’s existing Economic Development District, to apply for supplemental funds through the CARES Act on a non-competitive basis. The provided funding will be used to undertake work that includes short-term and long-term economic development planning and coordination to develop a disaster and resiliency economic development plan with a pandemic focus that is consistent with our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan. He noted that the funding will also be used to hire a Disaster Economic Recovery Coordinator for a two-year period. This will be a full-time, temporary employee that will serve as a liaison in identifying potential resiliency, mitigation, and economic recovery projects across the entire Region and assisting planning efforts in the most impacted communities.

Mr. Lanahan noted that under the special authorities provided by Council Resolution #20-01, he accepted the invitation from EDA and a grant application was submitted. The EDA funding is for a total of \$400,000, which will be on a reimbursement basis with no required match by Council. He indicated that he does anticipate the award of those funds and asked that Council approve the necessary actions to meet the commitments made in the application and associated work detailed in EDA’s scope of work.

Council Action: Mayor Gerwig from Village of Wellington moved approval of the staff recommendation. Vice Mayor Hmara seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Lanahan noted that for Consent Agenda Item 4B12, Stuart Amendment No. 20-01ESR (Springtree FLUM), Vice Mayor Moss asked, through the “chat” function of this virtual meeting, if the Martin County representatives had any comments. Chair Houston indicated that Tom Reetz, Senior Planner for the City of Stuart, was available for questions. Seeing none, Mr. Lanahan noted that for the record and also remarked that no comments were received from the County on the proposed amendments.

Agenda Item 6: Matching Funds for U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant Supplemental Funds – Broadband Application

Stephanie Heidt, Council’s Economic Development and Intergovernmental Programs Director, noted that this is a competitive application for EDA funding through the CARES Act. She explained that the intent of the funding is to help communities catalyze public-private partnerships that will support deployment of broadband for purposes including supporting telehealth and remote learning for job skills. She indicated that the proposed project will address the “digital divide” which is the economic, educational, and social disparities that occur between those who do, and those who do not, have access to computers and high speed internet. She noted that because of this divide school districts are struggling to provide adequate e-learning opportunities to students, because many cannot afford the necessary hardware, connections are not fast enough, and broadband internet access is too expensive for some people. She also noted that many people living in rural areas are transportation disadvantaged and not able to take time off work to go to doctor appointments. Additionally, people will need to be retrained to work in different occupations and social distancing and other health safety precautions are going to become the norm leading to more “work from home” arrangements.

Ms. Heidt stated that the Coronavirus has brought to the forefront the effects of the digital divide that exist in our region and the need for citizens to be able to work remotely and learn remotely, and

have easy access to healthcare. She indicated that research shows that rural Americans are 12% less likely than Americans over all to have home broadband access. She said Census Bureau data indicates that between 2014 and 2018, the most rural and underserved communities in the Region reported that only 54-64% of the households actually have computers and of those only 45-57% of the households have a broadband internet subscription. She also noted that in our Region the Palm Beach County School District has data that shows there is a correlation between students that have free or reduced lunch and those who do not have high speed internet in their home.

Ms. Heidt indicated that staff is requesting Council undertake a project to develop a regional broadband expansion plan to assess and address the digital divide throughout the Region. The project will create a roadmap and identify infrastructure projects that can be undertaken; and develop a framework for collaborative public/private partnerships. She noted that this project fits well with EDA's funding priorities and is consistent with the Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan. She indicated staff is seeking Council approval to submit the project application to EDA with a funding request in the amount of \$100,000. She noted that there are sufficient funds available in Council's budget, which will be reviewed later in the meeting, to meet the required 20 percent match of \$20,000.

Commissioner Weiss asked how many people make up the 45–57% that do not have internet connections, and if the project will address under-connected urban neighborhoods. Mr. Lanahan noted that one of the things we have learned is that there are significant pockets of underserved areas in the urbanized central and eastern parts of Palm Beach County. Ms. Heidt indicated that she did not have the exact population number, but noted that those areas include the Glades communities and rural areas in Indian River County. She said she would provide the exact numbers after the meeting.

Council Action: Commissioner O'Bryan from Indian River County moved approval of the staff recommendation. Commissioner Adams from Indian River County seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 7: Proposed Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Budget and Personnel Committee Chair Commissioner Townsend noted that the Budget and Personnel Committee met on June 11th and after discussion approved the proposed budget amendment as presented. Mr. Lanahan provided an overview of the budget amendment, explaining that when Council approves upcoming years' budgets in July, there is usually some forecasting and estimating that is done, which needs to be adjusted as new contracts are obtained and projects are completed during the course of the year. He noted with this budget that there have also been unanticipated changes as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic that have delayed when some projects can be completed due to the need for public meetings. He also noted an increase in revenue due to part of the new EDA funding being applied to this fiscal year. With respect to expenditures, he explained that due to some of the limitations from the Pandemic some of the categories, such as travel, have been underspent. Also, it is expected that consultant costs will increase due to the additional contracts that have been obtained throughout the year. He noted that the additional personnel expense will be for staffing the Disaster Economic Recovery Coordinator position. He indicated that the net increase to the total budget is \$211,744, with that balanced across revenues and expenditures.

Council Action: Commissioner O'Bryan moved approval of the staff and committee recommendation. Vice Mayor Hmara seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 8: Employment Impacts of Coronavirus Pandemic

Ms. Heidt provided a presentation on the regional employment impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic. She noted that unemployment rates for the Region were fairly consistent in January (3.3%) and February (3.2%), but in March the rate increased to 4.5%. In April, the unemployment rate more than tripled to 13.8% due to high unemployment filings brought on by impacts of Coronavirus Pandemic. With respect to industry sectors, Ms. Heidt noted that in January and February leisure and hospitality, government, professional and business services, and mining, logging and construction shared the top four spots for job gains. However, in April, the leisure and hospitality sector lost a reported 50,800 jobs. In fact, the financial activities sector was the only sector that did not experience job losses during the month of April. She noted that the pandemic is presenting tremendous challenges for economic development and job growth, and has exposed weaknesses in the Region's economy, which illustrates the need to diversify beyond the traditional industry base of construction and hospitality for economic sustainability in the Region. Ms. Heidt also demonstrated the Florida Chamber Foundation Scorecard, a useful tool that provides metrics by County based on the Chambers Six Pillars framework.

Commissioner O'Bryan asked if employees who are receiving payments from their jobs through SBA loans given to those businesses counted as employed or unemployed. Ms. Heidt stated she believes the unemployed are counted as those individuals that have filed an unemployment claim through the state, and are no longer employed. She indicated she would verify with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

Ms. Heidt indicated that the May employment numbers had just been released today by FDEO. She stated the unemployment rates for May are: Indian River County - 13.5%; Martin County – 11.4%; St. Lucie County – 13.8%; Palm Beach County – 14.1%; and the Region 13.8%. Mr. Lanahan asked how those numbers compare to April. Ms. Heidt indicated that it appears that the rates are generally trending downward throughout the Region.

Agenda Item 9: Report on the Use of Emergency Authority

Mr. Lanahan noted that on March 13, 2020, Council adopted Resolution #20-01 recognizing that extraordinary conditions exist and will continue to develop due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and authorizing certain emergency actions by the executive director may be done without the necessity of Council meetings. During Council deliberations prior to adoption of the Resolution, the Executive Director was directed to report back to the Council at their next meeting on any use of the emergency authority granted through Resolution #20-01. He provided the following list of items that fell within the scope of the special authority:

- Approval of staff analysis reports for 7 local government comprehensive plan amendments in order to meet the timeframes that DEO has at the state level for submitting agency comments. Mr. Lanahan indicated that none of the proposed amendments required objections or had extrajurisdictional issues.

- Provided a letter of support and approved a pledge of \$5,000 in Council funds as an equal share with other Regional Planning Councils as a 20% match for an EDA CARES Act grant application the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC) is preparing to conduct a statewide economic impact analysis using the REMI tool. The analysis will have region-specific data as well as a comparison across all regions. Mr. Lanahan indicated that this information will be very valuable when doing our own CARES Act work.
- Provided a total of \$5,500 to the county-wide economic development organizations in each county of the Region to assist them in providing web-based information and assistance to businesses recovering from the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Chair Houston thanked Mr. Lanahan for the update and his leadership. Mr. Lanahan thanked Council for providing him with the authority to make decisions on behalf of Council and expressed his appreciation for that confidence.

Agenda Item 10: Announcements

Mr. Lanahan indicated that the new interlocal agreement with the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency (PB TPA), which was approved on the Consent Agenda, not only speaks to the value of work Council provides, but to good intergovernmental relations and ways that we act on an entrepreneurial basis to earn the revenue it takes to continue to run Council's work programs without needing additional funding through increased dues. He stated this is a 3-year agreement that has the potential for \$500,000 in revenue and 2 one-year extensions. He noted Council has had several of these agreements over the years with the PB TPA that help local communities with cost-sharing to advance efforts such as complete street design projects, public outreach and planning activities that would not otherwise be affordable for those local governments.

Mr. Lanahan made the following announcements:

Council staff is working to establish a revolving loan fund for Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties through EDA CARES Act funding. Mr. Lanahan has been preparing a competitive grant request that will require a local match. He has been working with each of the County administrators to coordinate this effort. It is expected that the grant request will be for \$1 Million in funding to be made available for loans to small and medium size businesses to help them with long-term recovery from the negative impacts of the Coronavirus. He noted that in December of 2018 Palm Beach County was made part of the lending area of the South Florida Regional Planning Council's program, which has been allocated additional funding from EDA.

On May 29th, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross announced EDA was granting Indian River State College (IRSC) \$2 Million for a new worker training facility for advanced manufacturing, welding, and heating ventilating and air conditioning systems. At the presentation, Secretary Ross recognized Council's planning efforts that helped to make the project happen.

On July 10th, the Florida Regional Councils Association will be having a virtual meeting of the Policy Board. Mr. Lanahan invited Policy Board members and anyone else interested to participate at Council's offices where social distancing will be accommodated. He also noted that if anyone wishes to participate on their own, they can request meeting information from staff.

It has not yet been determined if the July 17th Council meeting will be held in person or virtually. At this time, the usual meeting location at IRSC is closed. Mr. Lanahan asked for Council member input on how this meeting should be conducted.

Mayor de Haseth from the Town of Ocean Ridge commented that the remote option is very useful and saves time.

Chair Houston asked if other Council members had thoughts on how the July meeting should be conducted. Mr. Keith Davis, Council's attorney, noted that the current executive order only allows for virtual meetings through June 30th. Mr. Lanahan indicated we will have to see if this is extended. He also noted that there is a proposed special quorum provision for regional planning councils currently on the Governor's desk that would only require one-third in-person attendance for quorum.

Mayor Gerwig indicated she prefers in-person meetings, but will defer to those that may be concerned with meeting in person.

Vice Mayor Moss stated she prefers in-person meetings, with remote participation as an option.

Commissioner Dzadovsky stated that he has been receiving phone calls and emails requesting the County consider mandating people wear masks, especially since there has been an influx of people coming from other counties as those counties are closing down their beaches and boat ramps. He asked for input from other Council members, stating that he does not want to create a difficult situation where counties and cities are pitted against each other.

Commissioner Valeche stated they will be discussing this issue at the County's next board meeting, but it is his belief they will be instituting a mandatory mask policy.

Commissioner Weiss noted that Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties all have instituted mandatory masking ordinances. He also noted that the number of positive COVID-19 cases throughout the state has been steadily increasing.

Vice Mayor Hmara stated that after discussion his Council agreed that to be effective, a mandatory masking requirement must be instituted county-wide.

Commissioner O'Bryan stated he has received similar calls, but his County has not formally considered a mandatory masking requirement. He noted that a Miami resident sued Miami-Dade County over their mask ordinance. He suggested waiting to see how the judge rules in this case first to avoid putting our communities at legal risk.

Councilmember Sachs, Gubernatorial Appointee from Palm Beach County, indicated through the Chat function that if the July meeting is held in person we need to apply social distancing and require masks be worn. He also indicated he would prefer the meeting being held remotely.

Mayor Gerwig stated that she supports mandatory masks indoors where people can interact.

Councilmember Davis, Governatorial Appointee from Palm Beach County, stated that his firm has 18 offices in 8 states around the country. He noted the cities of San Antonio and Austin have issued mask orders, but they are unclear. He also noted that Tampa and Orlando are in the process of issuing mandatory mask orders, but those are also hard to understand and they are trying to determine if that would apply to consulting firms when they are in their own offices. He suggested that any mandatory mask requirement needs to be very clear on when and where masks will be required.

Vice Mayor Hmara stated that the enforcement aspect of such a requirement needs to be structured, such as requiring business owners to be responsible for enforcing the requirement. Otherwise we are going to have individual phone calls from everybody and it will be unmanageable.

Chair Houston noted that Martin County is meeting right now to discuss a mandatory masking requirement. He asked that Council members update Mr. Lanahan as they move forward with any masking requirements in their local jurisdictions.

Agenda Item 11: Chairman's Comments

Chair Houston thanked staff for continuing to work through this time and making the on-line technology work. He expressed his appreciation to all the elected officials who have also worked hard to keep things moving forward. Mr. Lanahan thanked Chair Houston for his support.

Agenda Item 12: Council Member Update

Vice Mayor Moss indicated the Vero Beach City Council is working with DPZ CoDesign to development scenarios for the former power plant site.

Mr. Lanahan thanked Commissioner Mitchell for letting Council borrow his Juneteenth remarks. Commissioner Mitchell stated that he is honored to have it shared with Council.

Mayor Gerwig stated that they will be having a virtual horse show this summer because many of the horses were not able to return to their homes due to travel restrictions. She noted that the Village will also be doing a virtual Juneteenth celebration through their website. She stated that they were forced to cancel the in-person Luminary Relay for Life event with the American Cancer Society, but they will be doing that virtually.

Commissioner Peduzzi from the City of West Palm Beach stated they will be providing fireworks on the Fourth of July, from secret locations, that will be visible throughout the city. He noted that the City does their meetings virtually, which he believes will continue for some time.

Vice Mayor Hmara noted that even though the challenges seem unlimited, it is important to ensure that the Census is completed, because the results of the Census will be experienced for the next 10 years. To keep focus on the Census, he stated that 11 cities have started a friendly competition called the Census League to see which city has the highest percentage of responses. He noted that the losing cities have to wear t-shirts and hats of the winning city to celebrate the trophy presentation. Mr. Lanahan noted that it is a great opportunity to complete the Census online for individuals who are chained to the couch at home.

Mayor Brennan from the Village of Tequesta noted that recent heavy rains have exposed a lot of deficiencies in aging infrastructure, especially roads and sidewalks. She indicated they are moving forward with many of their capital projects for the community. She noted that they are doing a lot of community outreach activities such as having parades with firetrucks and police cars visiting children's homes to celebrate their birthdays and dropping off food and supplies to the elderly citizens who are homebound.

Vice Mayor Marino noted that as the Chair of the PB TPA she is pleased to be able to continue working with Council. She noted that the City has instituted an Economic Recovery program by taking \$1.3 Million out of their economic development fund for two initiatives. The first makes \$1 million available for loans to businesses with 25 or less employees who have not been able to obtain additional funding. For the other initiative, the City has used \$300,000 to purchase gift cards from Publix for residents in the community who became unemployed or furloughed. She noted that the business loan program was not receiving applications, so they re-wrote the policy to include restaurants of under 75 employees. She also noted that the City has been a leader in policing, and have posted their policies on their website. Additionally, she noted that there is a hurricane preparedness guide on the City's website that can be shared with other local governments.

Councilmember Sachs wished everyone a healthy, happy Fourth of July.

Jason Andreotta with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) noted that there are a number of bills making their way to the Governor's office this week. One of the bills, SB 712, sponsored by Senator Mayfield, transfers the regulation of septic tanks from the Department of Health to FDEP. He stated the bill also covers stormwater changes in rural development, wastewater infrastructure, agricultural best management practices, and biosolids.

Agenda Item 13: Public Comment

None

Agenda Item 14: Staff Comment

Mr. Lanahan thanked Council members for their patience and support to staff as we implement remote technology and all the good work they are doing in their own communities. He stated that all of us live somewhere in the Region so we are all constituents in one way or another.

Chair Houston thanked Mr. Lanahan and Ms. Heidt for their presentations, and staff for all their continued great work.

Agenda Item 15: Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Houston adjourned the virtual meeting at 11:28 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 June 19, 2020 meeting of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.

Date

Signature