
**JOINT VIRTUAL WORKSHOP -- MINUTES OF THE
SOUTH FLORIDA AND TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS
NOVEMBER 5, 2021**

The South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils held a joint virtual meeting/workshop on November 5, 2021.

Agenda Item 1: Pledge of Allegiance

SFRPC Chair Bailey called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcomed everyone, and reminded them of the meeting's virtual procedures. Representative Joseph Geller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item 2: Roll Call

The following members were present from **South Florida Regional Planning Council**:

Broward County:	Commissioner Beam Furr Mayor Steve Geller Mayor Ana A. Ziade
Miami-Dade County:	Council Member Jordan Leonard
Monroe County:	Commissioner Michelle Coldiron Commissioner Samuel Kaufman
Ex-Officios:	Dat Huynh, FDOT District VI Lorraine Mayers, South Florida Water Management District Jon Moore for Jason Andreotta, FDEP
Council staff:	Isabel Cosio Carballo, Executive Director Leandro Braslavsky-Soldi Kathe Lerch Alisha Lopez Christina Miskis
Council Attorney:	Jacob Horowitz

The following members and alternates were present from **Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council**:

Indian River County:	Commissioner Peter O’Bryan Commissioner Susan Adams Commissioner Joe Earman, Alternate Commissioner Laura Moss, Alternate Mayor Ed Dodd, City of Sebastian
St. Lucie County:	Commissioner Cathy Townsend Commissioner Curtis Johnson, City of Fort Pierce
Martin County:	Commissioner Doug Smith Commissioner Stacey Hetherington
Palm Beach County:	Commissioner Gregg Weiss Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Alternate Commissioner Melissa McKinlay, Alternate Vice Mayor Chelsea Reed, Alternate
Gubernatorial Appointees:	Douglas Bournique, Indian River County Reece Parrish, St. Lucie County
Ex-Officios:	Lois Bush, FDOT Kathy LaMartina, SFWMD Jon W. Moore, FDEP, Alternate
Council Staff:	Thomas Lanahan, Executive Director Kathryn Boer Phyllis Castro Kim DeLaney Liz Gulick Stephanie Heidt Sarah Kammel Dana Little Terry Ann Paulo Jessica Seymour
Council Attorney:	Keith Davis

Agenda Item 3: Public Service Award – The Honorable Joseph Geller, State Representative, 100th District

On behalf of the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils, Chair Bailey and Vice Chair Townsend welcomed, thanked everyone for attending today’s Joint Meeting.

Public Service Award

The Councils presented a Public Service Award to State Representative Joe Geller, 100th District, in appreciation for his dedication to the Regional Planning Councils, in championing quorum legislation on behalf of the regional planning councils for three consecutive years. Passage of this legislation which reduced the physical quorum requirement from 50% to 30% for Council Meetings made it possible for the state’s regional planning councils to continue meeting throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic. Chair Bailey read the memorandum on the Award.

Representative Geller stated that the rest of the State did not appreciate the distances that our Councilmembers had to travel for a meeting and was happy to help. He thanked both Councils and said he would be available to help in any way while he is still in office. SFRPC Executive Director Isabel Cosio Carballo recognized Representative Geller’s legislative aide Joel Ramos for his years of service and assistance to the Councils.

Agenda Item 4: Chairs’ Comments – Councilmember Mario J. Bailey, Chair, SFRPC and the Honorable Cathy Townsend, Vice Chair, TCRPC

Chair Bailey and Vice Chair Townsend stated that they wished this workshop was in person.

Agenda Item 5: Opening Remarks and Three Questions –Frank Bernardino, Partner, Anfield Consulting

Mr. Bernardino thanked both Councils for the invitation to continue the conversation on a critical issue – water resource management. He mentioned the resolutions the RPCs have individually and collectively created, calling for greater transparency in identifying the needs of the state and water infrastructure in general. He stated that there are three items to be aware of as we listen to the lineup of noted speakers: 1) What is working? 2) What is not working? and 3) What specific actions can help us address our common challenge? After the speaker presentations, discussion will take place on the challenge of identifying priorities and next steps. He believes this discussion will be productive.

Agenda Item 6: “One Florida – Protecting Florida Together” & Implementation of SB 712 (2020), Deputy Secretary John J. Truitt, Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Deputy Secretary John Truitt gave an update on SB 712, The Clean Waterways Act, sponsored by Senator Mayfield during the 2020 Legislative Session. This is an environmental milestone for Floridians on state, local, and county levels to build upon the water quality enhancement efforts of multiple stakeholders. This legislation focuses on remedial action and improvements to regulation regarding septic and stormwater systems, wastewater infrastructure, as well as agricultural best management practices. It serves as the foundation for implementing actions by the Department of Environmental Protection, local governments, and regulated community based on the Blue Green Algae Task Force’s recommendations. He mentioned the contingency plans for power outages at sewage disposal facilities, provision of financial records from all sewage disposal, detailed documentation of fertilizer, updated stormwater rules and design criteria to improve the performance of stormwater systems statewide – specifically to address nutrients, and regulation of septic tanks as a source of nutrients, and the transfer of oversight from

Department of Health (DOH) to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). He explained the Water and Reuse of Phase I (completed) and Phase II of the Clean Waterways Act, and, once the rulemaking activities are completed, what the revised rules will provide along with the results of the public's input on water reuse. The Wastewater Collection Systems' overhaul was detailed to include the provisions and implementation of a power outage contingency plan, inflow and infiltration studies and leakage surveys, emergency response plans, and reporting requirements for noncompliance events related to sanitary sewer incidents. This will increase transparency and will also require future legislative ratification. Mr. Truitt explained the biosolids rulemaking process, workshops, and public input. He described the amendments that ensure the proper management, use, and land application of biosolids to protect waters from nutrient pollution and minimize the migration of nutrients to prevent the impairment of waterbodies. The certification package was filed with the Department of State with an effective date of June 21, 2021. Stormwater regulations had not changed in thirty years, and DEP is currently in the rulemaking process to update the stormwater design and operation regulation, including updates to the Environmental Resource Permit Applicant Handbook, using the most recent scientific information available. The goal is to complete rulemaking by the end of 2022 with ratification during the 2023 legislative session. The transfer of the Onsite Sewage Program to DEP became effective on July 1, 2021. He explained the staff changes, coordination with the county health departments on local septic permitting issues, and the five-year agreement to complete the transfer. A technical advisory committee has been developed to research new technologies, appropriate setbacks, etc. and provide recommendations into the rulemaking. Implementation of Agricultural Best Management Practices are currently underway, in which many parcels were referred to DEP to bring parcels into compliance or into the process of compliance through education and outreach, or removed due to lack agriculture activity. He thanked the RPCs for the ability to update them on SB712.

SFRPC Councilmember Furr stated that it was nice to see the progress that is being made. He inquired about potable reuse to drinking water (full reuse). Mr. Truitt stated that this is one of the areas being researched. Based on public input, people are in support of it. It was noted that Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) is doable and acceptable, and it would be good to inform elected officials that it is manageable.

TCRPC Councilmember O'Bryan informed those present that the sewer inspection requirements involve special companies with specific cameras, with compliance costs representing a \$1.4 million hit. There is cost to all of this.

Frank Bernardino stated that there are two pieces of legislation being introduced this year – one would require inspection of sanitary sewer laterals. To create an incentive, the state would pay for the cost of inspections and improvement of the sanitary sewer laterals for individuals through a new state program. The second piece of legislation is to promote higher frequency of inspection of these systems. It would provide an incentive to the private sector to undertake the inspections, and place certain limitations on DEP from being able to charge additional fees to those that the private sector would charge. One of the controversies is how to deal with access to private property to undertake the inspections.

Discussion ensued on the standardized inspection procedure. Mr. Truitt stated that an inspection procedure is scheduled to be implemented as part of rulemaking. There are discussions on whether that inspection procedure is appropriate or requires further modification. SFRPC Chair Bailey thanked Mr. Truitt for his presentation.

Agenda Item 7: Overview of EDR Responsibilities: Annual Land & Water Assessment; Stormwater & Wastewater 20-Year Needs Analysis; and Analysis of Future Expenditures to Minimize the Adverse Effects of Inland and Coastal Flooding – Amy Baker, Coordinator, State of Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

SFRPC Chair Bailey introduced Ms. Amy Baker and summarized her professional career. He stated that she will be giving an overview of the responsibilities of the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR).

Ms. Amy Baker stated that the Office of Economic and Demographic Research direction is not the regulatory side or reinventing the wheel but more approaching these issues from a statewide perspective bringing together various reports and analyses and focus on the financial projections and economic consequences of not making appropriate investments at the right times. There are three pieces that work together to produce the annual assessment of the Land and Water Report (started in 2016 session) which is on the website. She noted that this is an evolving document and is updated in the most recent edition of 2021. First a statewide water supply and water demand model was developed for all existing and future reasonable beneficial uses in the natural systems to achieve the legislature's intent that sufficient water be available, yearly. It was blended from the Water Management Districts' (WMD) work on statewide water supply projections and analysis of supply and demand. The EDR maintains consistency with the WMD in financial and legislative budgeting processing terms.

Economic consequences are the next big piece that we have to bring to the discussion. And to do that, time needs to be spent with the utilities and this has been the focus of outreach. They are trying to determine any gaps where the needs are greater than the dollars being invested and what the State has been doing and whether it is keeping up with staying at that level moving forward would suggest as a percentage of the total project. The EDR is a minor player in water supply. She noted the alternative water supply projects, recovery of prevention strategies and the state investments and cost. She stated that water quality has the same sort of analysis: expenditure needs, identify needs that are out there, and what the economic consequences are if we are not stepping up the plate to see these projects through to completion. Statewide involvement is reflected on the Basin Management Action Plan and Implementation and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Implementation but there are quite a few additional areas that need to be brought into the report for future years. Sections 403.9301 and 403.9302, Florida Statutes (Chapter 2021-194), Laws of Florida, direct municipalities, counties, and independent special districts that provide a stormwater management system or program, or wastewater management services, to develop a 20-year needs analysis every five years. For the first cycle of reports, local governments must submit their report to their respective county by June 30, 2022. Counties will compile the local reports for submittal to EDR and the DEP by July 31, 2022. EDR will then publish an analysis of the submissions in the 2023 edition of the Annual Assessments of Florida's Water Resources and Conservation Lands. (Source: Ms. Baker's presentation and www.edr.state.fl.us)

Ms. Baker explained the stormwater project and how EDR is working with local governments and associations to develop a template and informational documents. Stormwater is broken into buckets of study: 1) routine operations in maintenance, 2) expansion projects related to flood protection and water quality, 3) replacement of aging infrastructure, and 4) stormwater relating to initial resiliency initiatives related to climate change at the regional level. Wastewater is a key feature of the report and will focus on effluent management, effluent water quality, projects that are part of resiliency initiatives, replacement of aging infrastructure, and finally septic to sewer conversion information.

Additional legislation, CS/CS/SB 1954 (Chapter 2021-28, Laws of Florida) requires the creation of a Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan. Among other provisions this legislation requires EDA to include in its annual assessment of Florida's water resources and conservation lands an analysis of what future expenditures are needed by the federal, state, regional, and local governments to achieve the legislature's intent of minimizing the adverse economic effects of inland and coastal flooding (sea level rise, high tide, storm surge). Ms. Baker mentioned a risk assessment project evaluating a variety of different risks to the state, what is needed to prepare us to meet those risks, and what the cost would be. There are some feasible and responsible interventions that could be taken to reduce those risks, which has many elements to it, including water quality, water supply, climate change, drought, flooding, and then the effects of increased frequency and severity of storms.

Ms. Baker gave a brief highlight of the state's future revenue outlook stating that in terms of general revenue, there is a significant projected balance that is expected to be available to the legislature. The most important part you would need to be aware of, is that the dollar balance that is going to be available, is largely non-recurring, which means in terms of ongoing programs, it is going to be problematic or challenging to find ways to fund these programs with recurring revenues. But in terms of investments, in terms of infrastructure, in terms of initiatives, that may be very costly but time limited, that large pot of non-recurring dollars is very important to allowing these kinds of projects to go forward. Then any money that is left at the end of this year rolls forward into their budgeting for next year, but what is recurring this year becomes non-recurring when rolling into next year.

Doug Smith inquired about 1) biosolids and innovative technology 2) rollover funds, ARPA funds, and how the state, or our region, could maximize the use of funds.

As far as biosolids, Ms. Baker stated that they are doing their best to not get too far ahead of DEP in their rulemaking and are sequencing the different initiatives that they share. It is being focused on but probably a year away. Additionally, there are ongoing discussions on investments in schools and those needs; it will not be a water or climate change focus. There will be others at the table with different initiatives. She suggested that the Councils focus on issues that can be joined together as one – common needs, discussions, and speak with one voice.

Advance Water Treatment (AWT) modeling and its priority was mentioned. Ms. Baker stated that some work is being done and that the House project risk assessment is looking at a variety of those issues in trying to identify efficient initiatives that may be lower cost but have the biggest bang for the buck. This will be noted after the beginning of the year. Many of those present thanked and had positive remarks for Ms. Baker.

Agenda Item 8: Central and Southern Florida Project Resilience Restudy Update – Todd F. Polk, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Eva B. Vélez. P.E., Strategic Program Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Ecosystem Branch; Ana Carolina Coelho Maran, P.E., Ph.D., District Resiliency Officer, South Florida Water Management District

Lieutenant Colonel Todd Polk stated that the Army Corp of Engineers, Jacksonville District is moving forward with a Flood Risk Management Infrastructure Resiliency Study, focusing on the most immediate risks under the changing conditions. He introduced Eva Vélez, Strategic Program Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Ecosystem Branch. Ms. Vélez explained the Corps role in working together with state, local, and tribal governments, as well as the public to address building a more community resilience across Florida. A PowerPoint presentation was given showing the Central and South Florida (C&SF) Project's

operations including the various parts of our communities including agriculture, municipalities, Everglades National Park, etc., that are part of building community resilience and quality of life. This includes flood control navigation, water supply, industry, groundwater, and salinity control. She explained the C&SF System of canals, levees, Lake Okeechobee, and the Everglades that are the great connector and are part of the ecosystem and part of the watershed that moves the water to the coast. There are significant changes in sea level and climate effects to the whole system. This is where the C&SF System brings everyone together including the Corps. The Corps is also involved in the storm risk management projects, navigation projects, water supply efforts, enhancement of fish and wildlife, and recreation with local governments and partners. She explained how this is being modified by the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) to provide additional storage, flexibility, and operational changes to our system to protect the Everglades, flood control and water supply. The South Atlantic Coastal Study (SACS) helped the Corps understand the significant risk to the entire Atlantic coast, but also that the coastline and southeast part of Florida has the most urgent needs as it relates to climate change and sea level rise. Ms. Velez depicted how the water system moves and is connected throughout the central and southern areas of Florida and how the C&SF is the connects the system. She discussed the importance of protecting the coasts with beach renourishment, protection to our critical infrastructure, additional storage areas, stormwater treatment, the benefits of CERP, etc. She mentioned the new study, the C&SF Flood Risk Management Infrastructure Resiliency Study that will bring together the watershed and the coasts, which was authorized in the President's budget for FY 2018. Different ways to address or consider the C&SF were described in which each mission area (beach and dune restoration, living shorelines, shoreline stabilization, levee/floodwall, drainage improvements, canals, stormwater treatment areas, structures, human environment, etc.) contributes a collection of measures to combine into projects to help adapt to climate change and a more resilient community. As long as the natural areas are protected, such as the coast and Everglades National Park, it provides and builds our community reliance as well as our C&SF systems. The details of the new study were clarified in the PowerPoint: navigation, flood control, water supply and related purposes, studying existing infrastructure and changed conditions, land use and population changes, climate change and sea level rise, etc. The SFWMD would be the nonfederal sponsor. There is not an appropriation bill from Congress to receive funding in order to begin the study. Once there is funding the study and an agreement will begin with the SFWMD.

Drew Bartlett, SFWMD Executive Director stated that the District hired Dr. Carolina Marán and that she will explain the Districts' Plan, opportunities, and grant applications, such as FEMA bridge grants, funds for the statewide resiliency plan, and the District's role as a local sponsor for the study with the Corps. Mr. Bartlett stated that the cost of this comprehensive look at South Florida's current infrastructure and adaptation to sea level rise and climate change will cost hundreds of millions of dollars, perhaps even a billion dollars.

The issues of western Broward County being underwater in 7-10 years and sea level rise were mentioned. Mr. Bartlett stated that awareness at the state and federal level is critically important and there is an absolute need to look at the flood control system behind the salinity barriers to get those evaluated and retrofitted, so that it can continue to provide the level of service needed. He is concerned with the King Tides, storm surge, etc. which is why he is pursuing FEMA Bridge Grants and state funding. Ms. Velez stated that the urgency of improving the resilience of the system is significantly important which is why there will be additional storage and flexibility as part of the Everglades Restoration Program specific to the C&SF Resiliency Study. She then gave the timeline of once the funding begins and through the Water Resources Development Act that will give us the opportunity to begin the engineering, design, and construction of features to help add resilience to the C&SF System. She stated that we would have to compete for the funding and that the people gathered together today would be essential to advocacy and

urgent communication regarding these needs. There was discussion on the funding appropriations for the Statewide Resiliency Plan, C&SF Resiliency Study, and the possibility of a county front loading the funding and then seeking reimbursement.

BREAK 11:50 AM – 12:05 PM

Agenda Item 9: South Florida Water Management District Resiliency Efforts – Ana Carolina Coelho Maran, P.E., Ph.D., District Resiliency Officer

Dr. Marán highlighted some of the water management challenges and how they are the central discussion on resiliency. The District's statewide resiliency initiative is focused on flooding and sea level rise, because building resilience in water management systems represents a large piece of the solution. She gave a brief overview of the history of the C&SF Project and the SFWMD. A video was presented showing the vulnerability of the coastal structures during a King Tide event, increasing ocean levels and saltwater intrusion limiting discharge capacity and exacerbating those systems deficiencies. The SFWMD is identifying resilience needs and opportunities to address the vulnerability of the C&SF Flood Control Project and Big Cypress, priority projects in coordination with water managers, and funding sources to accelerate implementation. She described the resilience vision focused on risk reduction, effect and effectiveness of the projects, using technical resources to implement and identify what needs to be done, and then pursuing those efforts. Public engagement, leveraging partners, and focusing on innovative nature-based solutions are proposed in Phase I. The Protection Level of Service Program, identifying individual coastal structure hardening and basinwide flood adaptation history and needs was described (both primary and secondary systems). Maps were depicted showing the various basins' current and future level of service conditions and deficiencies. Dr. Marán summarized the process to date. Phase I and Phase II were described in detail bringing the project priorities to the plan every year. There will also be flood mitigation project recommendations from additional flooding limit ability assessments from project partners and the C&SF will play a major role in the process. The Priority Implementation Projects were detailed for coastal structure resiliency (the cost estimate recommendations for refurbishment vs. replacement, pump additions), the scope (improved pump capacity, flood barriers and structure elevation, etc.), and self-preservation mode in critical structures (maximize the ability to operate gates during storm sure events, electronic/mechanical components – generators, etc.). The Everglades Mangrove Migration Assessment Pilot Study was described preserving, enhancing, and restoring the mangrove and other vegetative communities to build coastal resiliency, reduce storm surge damage, create habitat for at large variety of fish and wildlife, and protect against sea level rise. Another program is the Regional Climate Projections that will estimate future climate conditions with reduced uncertainties, future projections of rainfall using state of the art climate models. Dr. Marán described the Saltwater Interface Mapping and Future Conditions Groundwater Modeling mapping showing the evaluation of sea level rise and other climate impacts on water supply, water management vulnerabilities, future groundwater elevation, and saltwater intrusion scenarios. There was conversation regarding water supply (wellfields, relocation of wellfields, reverse osmosis, etc.), future demands and alternative water supply sources, water conservation, maintaining freshwater levels under future sea level rise, and strategies to improve resilience and sustainability. There was discussion on funding availability, water discharge and sea level rise, and future flooding issues.

SFRPC Chair Bailey thanked the speakers for their informative presentations. He would like to know what the RPCs can do regionally and what the priorities should be to assist in these efforts. City of North Lauderdale Mayor Ana Ziade noted that the cities mentioned in the presentations are on the east and west coast, and the most populous/wealthy of the counties. She does not see the economically less

fortunate municipalities that are not federally assisted. There are many cities in Broward County that don't have the funds to address these issues but are nevertheless impacted from the east and west due to canals going through their cities. She gave the example that North Lauderdale is on the C14 Canal and is impacted by the Everglades and the Intracoastal. The City had to hire lobbyists to secure state funding. There are central cities that don't have that option. She wanted the less fortunate municipalities to be included in all these plans and maps.

Mr. Bartlett responded to how the RPCs can help. He suggested that letters of support are great, they get said, read, and filed. It is really the constant drumbeat of support that is important to influencing state and federal officials who, already juggling many priorities, are asked to take on an additional priority. Everglades Restoration is mentioned or presented in almost every session, but other issues such as resilience do not consistently receive as much time or attention. He knows that Dr. Jurado has presented on this topic. We need to create ownership at state and federal levels on this issue. Those that don't live here don't feel this is an issue.

The Agenda was modified to present Agenda Item 11 next.

Agenda Item 11: Emerging Wastewater Treatment Technology & the Future of Biosolids Reduction and Disposal – Kurt A. Pfeffer, P.E., Hazen & Sawyer

Mr. Pfeffer gave an overview on the past regulations on biosolids treatment and their disposal. He explained the various stabilization processes that have been used over the years, and the hierarchy of biosolids products. In Florida, as of a couple of years ago, based on EPA records, about 25% of unclassified biosolids are still disposed in landfills. Maps were shown depicting biosolids management in Florida. He stated that making decisions on how to manage biosolids is very complicated and covered some of the technologies that are being deployed in pilot testing and full-scale demonstrations throughout the country. DEP has tightened rules for biosolids land application to address migration of nutrients from land applied biosolids to surface waters. Mr. Pfeffer detailed biosolids management opportunities, recommended rule revisions, piloting innovative processing technologies, and DEP 62-640 Rule revisions and compliance. He noted the potential impacts of 62-640 Rule Statement of Estimated Regulatory Costs (SERC) including a significant reduction of biosolids land application rates. He discussed the EPA's assessment of pollutants found in biosolids using a risk assessment tool for land application scenarios and their plan to identify, implement determinations, treatment, and regulations for those unidentified pollutants. Mr. Pfeffer explained the various biosolids and concentrations, residuals, etc. and the complications of treating some of these chemicals. He mentioned the federal regulations that will come out in 2023 and that some states are already taking action and doing more research where the issues are more sensitive. PFAS chemicals are widely used, long lasting chemicals that break down very slowly over time. They are found in a variety of food products and the environment (water, air, soil, animals). He explained the concern over PFAS chemicals including possible harmful effects to human health, the efforts to make the water safer, and the requirements to be able to remove those chemicals. He explained the advanced thermal treatment processes that can address potential PFAS in detail. These processes would take biosolids out of the land application realm. The presentation included multiple facilities using various systems which were all described. There is some interest in the industry for looking at technologies beyond Class A biosolids and some utilities are already thinking ahead and have begun those advanced processes.

SFRPC Chair Bailey thanked Mr. Pfeffer stating that this has been a very important discussion for the Councils, and it was good to see some of the best practices in the country.

Agenda Item 10: Septic Systems & Water Quality Protection – Terri Lowery, Senior Vice President/Managing Director, Jones Edmunds & Associates, Inc.

TCRPC Vice Chair Townsend introduced Terry Lowery. Ms. Lowery gave a brief history, legislative initiatives, and numbers of septic tanks in Florida and Southeast Florida. She noted the systems are failing and/or even discharge nitrogen at high levels. The stakeholders involved are regulators (FDEP, FOH, WMDs), local government/utilities, environmental groups, property rights groups, builders/realtors, legislators, and citizens. She explained the septic to sewer challenges such as cost and funding, sustained political leadership, public education, and acceptance, etc. The cost and funding challenges were detailed: existing water service, plant capacity, treatment facilities distance, site conditions, cost, and potential funding sources. The impact to the residents was depicted as well as financial, construction, and operation and maintenance impacts. The Septic to Sewer Guidance Document, created by Jones Edmunds and Florida Water Environment Association Utility Council, is not a comprehensive study but a collection of thoughts, ideas, and resources from multiple sources. The goal is to assist local governments in navigating challenges of septic to sewer transition, such as fact vs fiction, technical alternatives overview, feasibility and cost, customer incentives and requirements, public education, elected official involvement, funding sources, local funding alternatives, and legal and regulatory documents.

Chair Bailey thanked Ms. Lowery for her informative presentation and assistance.

The Agenda was modified to present Agenda Item 13 next.

Agenda Item 13: Updates

- a. Draft Resolution TCSF 21-02: Affordable Housing SHIP Funding Distribution – The Honorable Senator Nan Rich, Broward County Commissioner, District 1

Senator Nan Rich stated that she had been working on a draft resolution with Mrs. Cosio Carballo that expresses support for increased local government flexibility in addressing affordable housing needs. This Resolution supports amending the current requirements of State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) funding distribution to allow for equal funding of homeownership and multi-family rental housing as deemed appropriate by the local government. Currently, 420.9075 (5)(a), Florida Statutes states that “At least 65 percent of the funds made available in each county and eligible municipality from the local housing distribution must be reserved for homeownership for eligible persons” (underline added). The request is for the legislature to amend Sections 420.9075 (5)(a) and 420.9075 (5)(b), Florida Statutes, to allow counties the flexibility to use up to 50 percent of their SHIP fund allocation for multifamily rental housing to respond to the housing needs of their communities. The loss of the Sadowski funds were mentioned. Housing and rental housing is the most critical problem in communities and throughout the State. Senator Rich is in discussion with other Senators who are also committed and would like to have a workshop. SFRPC Chair Bailey thanked Senator Rich. Ms. Cosio Carballo suggested this item be placed on the SFRPC Agenda for approval since today’s gathering is a workshop.

- b. Jamie A. Monty, Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (RCP), Southeast Florida Regional Administrator, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- c. Joanna C. Walczak, Administrator, (RCP) Coral Protection and Restoration Program, Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Joanna C. Walczak stated that she is here to update the Councils on two programs within FDEP that are coral related. She apologized that Jamie Monty could not be present today. Ms. Walczak updated everyone on the Kristin Jacobs Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area. The department has completed the first draft of their management plan for this area. Ongoing projects of the Coral Reef Conservation Program, the Stakeholder Team, and the southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative will supplement this management plan. She noted that the public process and draft plan is scheduled and moving forward. The conversation continues between FWC and DEP reef management, communities, and other additional public/private/nonprofit stakeholders. Ms. Walczak gave an update on state funding as it relates to the work that is underway in response to Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease and highlighted successes including adult survivors and reproductive populations. She discussed efforts to farm a variety of coral species in land-based facilities to create a rescue gene bank to support the large-scale ecosystem restoration that will eventually need to occur. The update included a discussion of the different stressors that may be transmitting the disease/lesions such as sedimentation, septic tanks, nutrients, and large water discharges. Restoration is in the future of Florida's Coral Reef. DEP has been working with Council staff and additional partners to develop a proposal to the Economic Development Agency (EDA) for incubating and accelerating the coral. This is an opportunity to create the technical and physical infrastructure needed to revolutionize and innovate the coral restoration industry. Innovators, and technology on the research side for coral husbandry, is needed to grow corals and out plant them. First, we need to understand why these corals died in the first place. The department has clearly recognized that reducing nutrient pollution in the coastal area is a major priority. She mentioned the funding for Biscayne Bay Improvement Projects. Ms. Walczak discussed federal legislation including the Resilient Reefs Act. NOAA and DEP's Coral Program are working collaboratively to address jurisdictional and programmatic issues and ensure that Florida's efforts in water conservation and restoration projects are adequately funded while ensuring that NOAA is able to continue to grow. She thanked the Councils for their partnership and invaluable support and stated that the Councils have been instrumental in elevating the economic, environmental, and resilience value of corals to coastal communities. DEP has been working with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, or Everglades Task Force, to identify ways to reconnect these conversations because these are two nationally important ecosystems that both need large-scale ecosystem restoration. Additional funding provided by EPA through their South Florida Geographic Initiative, a nationwide program, is being sought. She asked that everyone check out the website <https://floridascoralreef.org/>. DEP is also working with management agencies to develop a Florida's Coral Reef Restoration Strategy to ensure that ecosystem services are provided and restored. The Resilience Action Plan has been completed; a program focused on climate impacts to the reef. She noted the three main goals: enable resilience, support public policy that creates the enabling condition for reef recovery, and enable our stakeholders to support the future of the reef. Ms. Walczak mentioned that multiple institutions have undertaken applied research on disease resistant coral and the ability to grow coral. Comments were made on the septic tank stressors, funding, nursery facilities, and advanced water treatment.

Agenda Item 12: Open Discussion and Identification of Regional Priorities; Next Steps – Moderated by Frank Bernardino, Partner, Anfield Consulting

Mr. Bernardino stated that in conversation with Mrs. Cosio Carballo and Mr. Lanahan, they felt it was important to establish a base of understanding and information, and the presentations that you heard today were phenomenal. The question is to have a meaningful conversation about water policy and next steps, whether or not to engage at a macro or micro level, conversations on the state and legislative

potential planning, funding – an enormous issue for a future meeting, etc. The goal today is to talk more about values and priorities, what is important to us.

SFRPC Chair Mario Bailey stated that his recommendation, if everyone agrees, is to have another public meeting, no additional presentations, but in the interim Mr. Bernardino should consult with staff and put some action items together.

There were comments on the importance of continuity and never losing sight of the different issues talked about today and building consensus on the important and common priorities of the regions, counties, and cities. Continuing the water policy discussion, Mr. Bernardino suggested the need for a planning and policy structure for water akin to the Florida Transportation Commission structure used for transportation.¹ Lacking a formal structure for these policy issues and conversations, we will continue to move disparate pieces, competing against each other for limited financial resources, and only making occasional gains based upon the priorities of the leadership in place at the time.

Commissioner Moss of Indian River County would like to tie the discussion of water to a discussion regarding development and found today's discussion was very helpful.

Discussion ensued that the SFRPC/TCRPC were to put a planning and policy framework for water related issues in partnership with the other RPCs, a very strong proposal could be brought to the legislature. This could be well received.

Agenda Item 14: Public Comment

Laura Vernard, citizen, is responding to the idea that there is a need to create yet another structure, because it seems to her that there are many agencies working on this. She would hate to see one more layer of structure that lacks authority, clout, or funding. TCRPC Vice Chair Townsend explained that the meaning was for the RPCs to work together in the long term, not create another entity.

Drew Martin, Loxahatchee Sierra Club of Martin, St. Lucie, Palm Beach counties has concern that the drainage system could fail over the long term. Engineering solutions may not solve the problem if development continues on open spaces that could hold flood waters, such golf courses and agricultural areas.

Linda Smith, Palm Beach County, stated that affordable housing needs to be expanded and located in urban centers, along transportation, existing sewer, etc. Greenspaces and agricultural lands need to be preserved. She does not think that we can build enough sea walls. She thanked the Councils for their time.

Agenda Item 15: Council Comment

SFRPC Councilmember Ziade appreciated today's workshop and commended the Councils.

¹ The Florida Transportation Commission is a nine-member commission that evaluates, reviews, and makes recommendations on matters related to Florida transportation policies, initiatives, or revisions. The mission of the FTC is to provide leadership on issues of statewide importance and by maintaining oversight and public accountability for the Department of Transportation and other statutorily specified transportation authorities. <http://www.ftc.state.fl.us/aboutus.shtm>

Vice Chair Townsend thanked Chair Bailey and everyone for their participation. She is pleased with the direction this conversation is going. Chair Bailey thanked Vice Chair Townsend as well. He thanked the everyone for attending the workshop on all the important issues facing our communities.

TCRPC Councilmember Smith suggested the Executive Directors continue the discussion on creating a framework.

Agenda Item 16: Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Bailey and Vice Chair Townsend adjourned the Joint Workshop of the Treasure Coast and South Florida Regional Planning Councils at 2:29 p.m. This signature is to attest that the undersigned is the Secretary or a designated nominee of the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils, and that the information herein provided is the true and correct Minutes of the November 5, 2021 meeting.

Michele Coldiron, SFRPC Secretary
Monroe County Commissioner

Doug Smith, TCRPC Secretary / Treasurer
Martin County Commissioner