

**MINUTES OF THE  
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
APRIL 16, 2021**

Chairman Hmara called the meeting to order at 9:36 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 attended in person:

Indian River County:           Commissioner O'Bryan  
                                          Mayor Foley  
                                          Councilmember Minuse, Alternate

Martin County:                 Commissioner Smith  
                                          Mayor Clarke

St. Lucie County:               Commissioner Mitchell

Palm Beach County:            Commissioner Marino  
                                          Commissioner Bernard  
                                          Mayor Gerwig  
                                          Councilman Hmara  
                                          Commissioner Linden, Alternate

Gubernatorial Appointees:   Douglas Bournique  
                                          Reece Parrish

Council Staff:                 Thomas J. Lanahan  
                                          Phyllis Castro  
                                          Kim DeLaney  
                                          Liz Gulick  
                                          Stephanie Heidt  
                                          Terry Ann Paulo  
                                          Jessica Seymour

Council Attorney:             Keith Davis

The following participated remotely:

Indian River County:           Commissioner Adams  
                                          Commissioner Earman, Alternate  
                                          Commissioner Moss, Alternate  
                                          Mayor Dodd

St. Lucie County:               Councilman Pickett, Alternate

Martin County:                 Commissioner Hetherington

Palm Beach County: Commissioner Weiss  
Vice Mayor Gottlieb  
Commissioner Peduzzi, Alternate  
Commissioner Bohlen, Alternate  
  
Councilmember Reed, Alternate

Gubernatorial Appointees: Michael Houston  
Michael Davis

Ex-Officios: Lois Bush, FDOT  
Jon Moore, FDEP, Alternate  
Kathy LaMartina, SFWMD

Council Staff: Kathryn Boer  
Sarah Kammel  
Dana Little

### **Agenda Item 3: Agenda Approval**

*Council Action: Commissioner Smith from Martin County moved approval of the Agenda. Mayor Clarke from the City of Stuart seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.*

### **Agenda Item 4: Consent Agenda**

Chairman Hmara asked if anyone from the public wished to comment on the Consent Agenda. There were no public comments.

Items on the Consent were: 4B1, Financial Report–January 31, 2021; 4B2, Financial Report–February 28, 2021; 4B3, Minutes–February 19, 2021; 4B4, Greenacres Amendment No. 21-01ESR (10.58 acres from PBC MR-5 to City RS-MD); 4B5, Gulf Stream Amendment No. 21-02ESR (Re-Assigning 11.8 acres with Public, Residential Single Family, Recreation land uses); 4B6, Lantana Amendment No. 21-02ESR (Text amendment to Mixed Use Dev. Policy); 4B7, Martin County Amendment No. 21-01ESR (CRA Text Amendments); 4B8, West Palm Beach Amendment No. 21-01ESR (Text Amendments to Mixed Use Districts); and 4B9, Resolution #21-02 FDOT Public Transportation Grant Agreement.

*Council Action: Commissioner Smith moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Mayor Clarke seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.*

### **Agenda Item 5. Public Marina and Coastline Resilience/Brownfields Initiative – Presentation by Amy Worsham, AICP, Regional Services Manager, Cardno**

Stephanie Heidt, Economic Development and Intergovernmental Programs Director, noted that in 2019 Council, in partnership with the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) and Miami Waterkeeper, was awarded a Brownfields Coalition Assessment grant which provided the funding for the Public Marina and Coastline Resilience/Brownfields inventory. She indicated that

the intent of the project was to create a GIS-based inventory to assess potential environmental impacts and resiliency challenges at public marinas and coastline access points. The purpose of this initiative is to help communities move priority sites forward with cleanup and resiliency planning, design, and implementation. She introduced Ms. Amy Worsham with Cardno who provided an overview of the development of the inventory, noting that the goals of the project include not only improving coastal resiliency and environmental impacts, but also restoring marine habitats and identifying adverse impacts to marine species; enhancing public access to waterfronts; increasing participation in Clean and Resilient Marinas programs; and expanding community education and engagement.

Ms. Worsham provided the methodology for site prioritization and reviewed the top sites for each of the counties in our Region. She noted that the next step is to focus on these priority sites and identify funding sources to help move these projects forward. She reviewed several of the different agency programs with available funding that can be used to do a few pilot projects and then use the findings to develop best practices and guidelines for other sites as the program moves forward. She highlighted the Connor Preserve project, which was completed for the City of Palmetto in Manatee County. This project was a contaminated property that had been cleaned up but was experiencing flooding issues. The project consisted of re-establishing and expanding the preservation areas, while also creating recreational opportunities and stormwater treatment areas to address the flooding issues.

Ms. Worsham demonstrated the GIS viewer, noting that there are several useful layers that include CRAs, Brownfields sites and areas, and Opportunity Zones as well as a sea level rise mapping tool. Information regarding Census tracts and population are also included, which is very helpful for planning and grant writing activities.

Commissioner O'Bryan from Indian River County asked if Ms. Worsham would be able to assist them with getting a body of water declared a Federal No Discharge Zone. Ms. Worsham indicated she cannot personally do this, but there is a department within Cardno that can assist with this type of permitting. Commissioner O'Bryan indicated that there are certain types of Coast Guard-approved septic systems that allow a boat owner to treat waste and then discharge that into a body of water. He noted that the federal discharge requirements only address fecal coliform, not nitrogen, phosphorus or any other nutrients that have so far been the cause of water quality issues in the Indian River Lagoon. He noted that No Discharge Zones are not common, with only two or three in the entire country. He indicated he would want to look at this regionally and have the entire four-county stretch of the lagoon given this designation.

Commissioner Smith noted that about five years ago Council did a waterways plan study for Palm Beach County, and then two years later did a joint waterways plan for Martin and St. Lucie counties. He suggested tying this initiative back into those studies to take advantage of all that work and be as consistent as possible. Ms. Worsham noted that they have requested money from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to look at all the local plans and resources to make sure that everything is working together. Commissioner Smith noted when applications can show studies and plans have been developed in support of their project it will receive higher rankings in the grant process, because there has already been planning done and strategies developed.

Councilmember Bournique, Gubernatorial Appointee from Indian River County, noted that he has kept his boat at three different marinas in the region and has noticed that they no longer wash boats in the water, but use wash racks for boats. He stated that the problem is the racks are angled over

the asphalt so the runoff still goes into the lagoon. He suggested having a cost-share program that boaters could contribute to that would address this runoff, as well as runoff from the rain, into the lagoon.

Chairman Hmara thanked Ms. Worsham for her presentation.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Resolution #21-03 Authorizing COVID-19 Response and Recovery Task Force**

Terry Ann Paulo, Disaster Economic Recovery Coordinator, indicated that the purpose of this item is to obtain Council approval for Resolution #21-03 which authorizes the formation of a COVID-19 Response and Recovery Taskforce. She stated that the Task Force is being formed to help both the pandemic economic recovery efforts and developing a resilience section in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan. She stated that the Task Force will sunset June 30, 2022 to coincide with the end date of Council's grant agreement with the U.S. Economic Development Administration to provide CARES Act Recovery Assistance to the Region.

*Council Action: Commissioner O'Bryan moved approval of Resolution #21-03. Mayor Gerwig from the Village of Wellington seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.*

#### **Agenda Item 7: Resolution TCSF #21-01 Requesting the Resiliency Study of the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project by the Army Corps of Engineers**

Mr. Lanahan indicated that this is a follow up item to the March joint meeting with the SFRPC. He stated that although there was not an in-person quorum at that meeting, there was extensive discussion about the serious potable water, sewer, and stormwater drainage issues facing the Southeast Florida region. A key component of the meeting was a conversation about the Central and South Florida Flood Control Project and Resiliency Study and the urgent need to address flooding and other related risks to vulnerable communities due to changed conditions, including sea level rise, weather patterns, land development, and population growth. He stated that Resolution TCSF #21-01 is being presented now to Council for a formal vote to adopt. He noted that the SFRPC will vote to adopt this resolution at their board meeting on April 26th. He indicated that both Councils have already transmitted a letter to the Congressional Delegation for each of the Regions in support of the study, which was signed by each of the executive directors.

*Council Action: Commissioner Smith moved approval of Resolution TCSF #21-01. Commissioner O'Bryan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.*

#### **Agenda Item 8: American Rescue Plan of 2021 – Opportunity from Adversity**

Mr. Lanahan provided an overview of the various relief efforts since last March, noting that a substantial amount of money has been committed into a number of different programs, with trillions more dollars still yet to come down from the Federal government. He indicated the National Association of Development Organizations, of which Council is a member, has been instrumental in ensuring that our economic development activities have been included in these different programs. He provided a breakdown of the American Rescue Plan, which includes, but is not limited to \$350 billion for state and local governments; \$242 billion in economic impact payments to individuals; \$30 billion for public transportation; and \$28 billion for restaurants. He

noted that this will be additional money that local governments can use to create or supplement local initiatives.

Mr. Lanahan indicated the purpose of his presentation is to start the conversation of what will be the legacy of this pandemic. He asked if it will be about rubber gloves and surgical masks, or projects like those done in the past through the Works Project Administration (WPA) or Public Works Administration (PWA) in the recovery from the Great Depression. He stated that this is a good time to find opportunities to address adversity and help lift up people. He provided the following quotes:

*I proposed to create a civilian conservation Corps, to be used in simple work. More important, however, than the material gains will be the moral and spiritual value of such work, dealing with the tremendous unemployment that was happening at that point in time.* Franklin Roosevelt at his memorial in Washington DC

*The WPA was one of the most productive element of FDR's alphabet soup of agencies, because it put people to work building roads, bridges, and other projects. It gave men and women a chance to make some money along with the satisfaction of knowing that they earned it.* Ronald Reagan quote from his book An American Life.

Mr. Lanahan noted that the WPA program went on for eight years during the recovery from the Depression. The program spent \$11 billion in 1939 dollars, which translates to \$2.2 Trillion current dollars, and created things that have lasted and are still enjoyed today. He provided examples of regional projects done through the WPA program, which include: a mural from the old Fort Pierce post office; the old Martin County Courthouse that is now a cultural center; the old Armory building in West Palm Beach, which is now an art center; the Flagler Memorial Bridge, which has now been replaced but lasted from 1938 to 2014; the Old Lake Worth bridge, which was built in 1937, and lasted until 1973; and a mural from the Lake Worth post office. He noted that nationally there is a Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas that is a WPA project. The project had been conceptualized and planned to deal with flooding issues. Instead of diverting the river around the community, someone suggested trying something different with the money they had received through WPA and other funding as part of the New Deal. They were able to execute the project and it is the living heart of that community and now a tremendous asset for the city.

Mr. Lanahan noted that within the Region there will be a total of \$694 Million available through the American Rescue Plan to counties and cities. He suggested that now is the time to take the opportunity of leveraging those federal dollars with state and local dollars to do big projects that will have lasting effects rather than spreading around the money to do small projects or fund things that will not be around in the future.

Commissioner Smith noted that he serves on the National Association of Counties Board of Directors and they recently had a conversation about the definition of infrastructure. He noted that it is not just about roads and bridges, but projects such as pipelines, sewer treatment plants, and septic to sewer projects. He suggested that Council get together with the SFRPC to look at doing very large initiatives jointly that will benefit the entire seven-county region, such as closing the ocean sewer outfalls in Miami-Dade and Broward counties or working to address the Biosolids issue. He stated that if we approach this regionally, we might be able to leverage a significant amount of funds toward a project that is always just a little bit out of our reach in terms of going off by ourselves. Mr. Lanahan thanked Commissioner Smith for his comments, noting that one

project that has been given much consideration is having a rail line that will run from Miami up to the bottom of Lake Okeechobee, which could cost up to \$700 Million. Commissioner Smith suggested that Mr. Lanahan contact Ms. Cosio-Carballo, Executive Director of SFRPC, to set up a joint call to start identifying projects that are significant to the seven-county region. He noted that the outfall problem to the south affects us here through its impacts to the coral reefs and creating an entirely new rail corridor to the west could divert as much as 30-40% of freight traffic off the coastal rail corridor. With respect to septic to sewer conversions, Mr. Lanahan noted that there is money in the proposed state budget for these projects as well as in the American Rescue Plan. He stated that this is the perfect opportunity to put together the federal, state, and local dollars to complete these projects that have been ongoing for years. This is a chance to have some lasting good come from all of this suffering.

Chairman Hmara stated that we are on the front end of a legacy opportunity and he encouraged Council members to think about not only how we have survived extraordinary challenges caused by the pandemic, but what projects we are able to complete with this incredible opportunity.

Councilmember Minuse with the City of Vero Beach noted that the Supreme Court recently ruled against Florida in our long-standing water war with Georgia. She stated that we have a huge challenge in our State regarding our aquifer - where it starts and how it flows. She suggested Council adopt a very proactive stance in protecting our water supply.

Councilmember Bournique noted that at a recent St. Johns River Water Management District meeting they discussed the issue of biosolids and gray water. He stated that what is needed is for the utilities to ante-up and take care of the biosolids being produced at their plants. He stated that technology to better manage the disposal of biosolids is very expensive, and it is cheaper to convert the biosolids to fertilizer that is then reprocessed through the cows grazing on the grass and then becoming food for people and potentially including contaminants. He stated that we are a civilization that put people on the moon, but we still need to figure out what we do when we flush our commodes.

Chairman Hmara stated he looks forward to learning about some innovative uses of these funds that will help move our Region forward.

**Agenda Item 9: Council Member Orientation: Kim DeLaney, Council's Director of Strategic Development & Policy and Phyllis Castro, Council's Accounting Manager**

Kim DeLaney, Council's Director of Strategic Development & Policy, presented on Transportation and Strategic policy, noting that one of the things that all the staff members bring to Council is private sector experience, which makes for a good multi-disciplinary setting to address challenges in the Region. She noted one of the things staff does is work with local governments and agencies to assist them with defining their mission and creating vision statements that will communicate how they want to be to both residents and investors. Staff also assists with redevelopment planning efforts; developing findings of necessity to determine if establishment of community redevelopment areas is appropriate; updating plans; and assisting with marketing and branding. Dr. DeLaney highlighted the former H.D. King Power Plant site in Fort Pierce as a project that received Council staff assistance for Brownfields assessment and cleanup as well as negotiation of a public/private partnership between the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency and the chosen developer for the site. She indicated Council also assists with Transit-Oriented

Development, Complete Streets and Corridor planning; waterways and blueways planning; and greenways and trails planning.

Phyllis Castro, Council's Accounting Manager, reviewed the responsibilities of the Accounting Department which, in addition to customary accounting functions, includes processing contract revenue, working with the auditors to complete the annual audit, and budgeting. She indicated that we received an unqualified opinion from our annual audit and last year Council had a net contribution to Reserves of \$169,000. Ms. Castro noted that in addition to herself, Sarah Kammel works in the Accounting Department. Ms. Kammel was formerly a Marine Biologist but returned to school to become an accountant. Since 2017, she has worked part-time for Council while attending school. After her graduation in 2020, she came on board full time.

Ms. Castro gave Council members a summary of a recent incident involving the mis-use of Council's credit card. She noted that when Ms. Kammel was reviewing the credit card activity online, she noticed that it showed several purchases of tires in Georgia and California. After reporting the fraudulent charge to the credit card company, Ms. Castro called the various vendors where the tires had been purchased. She worked with the owners of the companies and the local law enforcement agencies to identify and arrest the individuals who had stolen the credit card information and made the illegal purchases. Ms. Castro noted that the lessons learned from this incident are that you should always use reputable websites, even if it means spending a little more money; and stay aware and current with the charges on your credit cards. We were able to rapidly identify the fraud and facilitate capture of the criminals because we check the activity every few days.

Mr. Lanahan thanked Council members for listening to the Council orientation and Ms. Castro for customizing her presentation with current events.

### **Agenda Item 10: Announcements**

Mr. Lanahan noted that in the Communication Package there is an interesting article from the Sun Sentinel memorializing in words what we have been observing, which is people from the New York area and northeast corridor are moving down to southeast Florida in large numbers.

Mr. Lanahan noted that also in the Communication Package is the update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan Metrics for 2020. He noted that the update includes a 2018, 2019, and 2020 comparison, with the 2020 numbers being based on 2019 data, which was before Coronavirus. He indicated that later this year there will be a presentation of the 2020 metrics update.

Mr. Lanahan noted that there is also a map showing all the military installations in the State. He stated that he found this astounding, noting that much of what he puts into the Communication Package is information he has not seen elsewhere, or is directly related to Council's work program.

Mr. Lanahan noted that Ms. Paulo has completed the data gathering stage of Council's COVID-19 business survey and she is working very hard to compile and analyze all the data to provide a report to Council.

Mr. Lanahan indicated that the status of Senate Bill 62, which proposes to eliminate regional planning councils from Florida Statutes, has not changed and there is currently no companion

House bill. He noted that the Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) representatives are monitoring legislation to ensure that language from this bill does not get dropped into other bills that are moving forward. He stated that with only 14 days left in the session, hopefully this issue will not be brought up again. He stated that in the meantime, FRCA will continue to seek information about what the driver is behind this issue because it will potentially come back again next year. Mr. Lanahan thanked Council members for their locally adopted resolutions opposing this legislation and Commissioners O'Bryan and Smith for going to Tallahassee to speak before the Community Affairs Committee. He stated that one of the benefits that has come out of this experience is that individuals are getting reacquainted with regional planning councils, who we are and what we do, and that the information they have in their head from 20 years ago is not accurate.

### **Agenda Item 11: Chairman's Comments**

Chairman Hmara noted that at the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) meeting he received a one-pager with infographics that highlighted the purpose and the intent of the TPA. He suggested staff create this type of flyer for Council. He asked Council members to be prepared at the next meeting to share with everyone some of the innovative, long-range thinking initiatives that each is seeing in their organization that will leverage the money provided through the American Rescue Plan. He stated he would like to take advantage of this unique venue to share information that can be of great value individually and also create some synergy in the Region.

### **Agenda Item 12: Council Member Update**

Councilmember Reed from the City of Palm Beach Gardens indicated that they are currently doing a walk, bike, safety audit that can be utilized by both the Palm Beach Gardens high school and elementary school. She encouraged Council members to take the time to get out on foot on the roads to see what is happening in the neighborhoods. She stated that the TPA provided an app that allowed them to take a picture and do a GPS pin to indicate where they found issues such as a sidewalk that may be lacking lighting. She suggested this might be an exercise that we can do on a broader scale throughout the Region.

Councilmember Bournique stated that Mr. Lanahan should not feel bad that people do not know what Council does. He stated that for 20 years his kids never knew anything more about his work than he went to the office everyday. He stated there is a lot of gray area in what agencies do, so it is important to occasionally remind people of the important work Council does.

Mayor Gerwig stated that one of the silver linings they have found with COVID is that people are not leaving the area even though the Olympics are coming up in August in Tokyo. Also, because of equine herpes, many are not leaving to go to other show circuits.

Commissioner Linden from the Town of Lake Park stated that they recently did a bicycle ride around the Town, noting that Chairman Hmara participated as well. He stated that they biked approximately 4 miles and then at the end toured some of the local breweries. He stated it was a fun community project and offered his lessons learned if others are interested in doing this type of event. He noted that the 23-story twin towers model dwelling unit that will be displayed on a barge in the marina should be completed in about a month. He indicated that the units will be priced between \$700,000 to \$1.5 Million. He also noted that the last town flea market of the season will be held on Saturday.

Commissioner Marino from Palm Beach County noted that the County has been very successful partnering with the State of Florida Department of Health to get individuals vaccinated and the County has taken charge of answering a lot of questions from minority communities that have been asked about getting popup locations. She noted that Commissioner Bernard has been instrumental in this effort to ensure there are locations available for less fortunate residents.

Commissioner Bernard from Palm Beach County stated that they are close to having 80% of the County's seniors vaccinated. He noted that in the County the median sales price of a home is 450,000, a 24% increase from 2019's cost of \$363,000. He stated that this means that housing prices are going up and there is lack of inventory, which is an issue that the elected officials and the leaders in the County will address.

Commissioner Mitchell from St. Lucie County stated that he received his second vaccination yesterday and is only experiencing a sore arm. He stated that the County, along with Palm Beach, just approved hosting baseball games at the end of May that will be qualifying events for the Tokyo Olympics. He stated that he hopes that Major League Baseball and the Olympic Committee will consider increasing the attendance cap to allow more people to attend these games.

Mayor Foley from the Town of Indian River Shores stated that the Town is experiencing an unprecedented demand for homes. He noted that they have very little developable land left, but two developments that are still under construction are completely sold out. With respect to the COVID vaccine program in Indian River County, he has received an overwhelming majority of positive feedback about the efficiency of the system and terrific service that was provided by the County.

Councilmember Minuse indicated that the City passed a resolution last month in opposition to Senate Bill 62 and they have been in touch with Senator Mayfield and Representative Grall about this issue. She indicated they conducted a workshop last month to collect information on developing a stormwater utility. She noted that one of the things that has been brought to their attention is that there has been illegal dumping from boats in the intracoastal and they are working very hard on the enforcement on that issue. She indicated the City will be doing budgetary discussion, so she appreciates the attention that is being given to the American Rescue Plan funding.

Commissioner O'Bryan indicated that real estate is a very hot market in Indian River County, with people putting their homes on the market and receiving multiple offers over asking price. With respect to COVID, he stated that the County has reached 88% for the 65 and over age group. He stated he believes that everyone has been vaccinated that wanted to get vaccinated, so they will be scaling down the mass vaccination sites and concentrating on under-represented areas. He indicated that they have gone from a lack of vaccines to a lack of recipients, noting that once the vial is open, all 10 shots need to be given. He stated that overall, about 44% of the population has been vaccinated in the County and once the Governor extends the age requirement to 18 and over, they anticipate the demand for the vaccine to increase. He noted that the County will be hosting the number one ranked women's softball team at the former Dodger Town facility. He stated there will be a series of games against the Italian Olympic team, and then they will be going to Orlando to face the University of Central Florida's team.

Mayor Clarke stated that the City had a vaccine event on April 3<sup>rd</sup> with over 550 participants that was organized by Senator Harrell and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. She invited Council members to come to the East Stuart area on April 30<sup>th</sup> for crosswalk dedications. She noted that this is predominantly an African American community in the City where they want to highlight their street improvement projects, as well as improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and get a better sense of place. She indicated that the City will be spearheading their first annual Emancipation Day Proclamation for the State of Florida on May 20<sup>th</sup>. She noted that May 20, 1865 was Emancipation Day for Florida slaves. She noted that at the Knott Museum in Tallahassee, they will be doing a virtual celebration and information can be found at the Tallahassee Arts Council website. She stated that one of the most wonderful events she has enjoyed in the City is a walking tour Council staff recently held. She stated that if anyone has questions, from Tallahassee right on down to the last taxpayer, about money being spent on regional planning councils, they need to know that the staff is very professional, down-to-earth, knows their business, and they are working to help our communities grow and thrive.

Chairman Hmara stated he could not agree more. He thanked the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners for the great job they have been doing to get through the backlog of COVID testing and more recently getting the vaccinations in the arms of folks. Mayor Gerwig thanked Chairman Hmara for his assistance in getting her shot at an event in his community. Chairman Hmara stated that they are looking forward to more successful pop-ups, because this is a great way to get more shots into more arms.

Chairman Hmara provided Council members with copies of the first Village magazine, which features the Principal of the Year from Royal Palm Beach High School.

**Agenda Item 13: Public Comment**

None

**Agenda Item 14: Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chairman Jeff Hmara adjourned the meeting at 11:35 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 April 16, 2021 meeting of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.

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Date

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Signature