**Environmental Advisory Committee**

Meeting Date – October 2, 2018

Liaison Report – Michelle Williamson

**Advisory Committee Policy Updates**

* Mr. Michael Molligan, Employee and External Relations division director, presented the proposed changes to advisory committee policies, which include:
  + Removing member listing within the policy
  + Removing term limits for holding office
  + Removing length of terms for memberships
  + Changing voting requirements from quorum to majority present
* Mr. Molligan encouraged feedback from the committee before going to the Governing Board with proposed changes in December. Members requested a copy of the draft policy before it is presented to the Governing Board. Mr. Molligan will provide these to all advisory committees prior to presenting to the Governing Board.

**Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP)**

* Mr. Ed Sherwood, Tampa Bay Estuary Program executive director, provided information on the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, which has contributed to significant gains in natural resources for the Tampa Bay watershed. Areas of management include water and sediment, bay habitats, fish and wildlife, public access, climate change, dredging, spills, invasive species, public education and local policy/implementation.
* Members asked about the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium and Mr. Sherwood explained this as an ongoing partnership effort to regain seagrass levels. Since 1992, it has involved more than 470 projects and resulting in the removal of 530 tons of nitrogen from entering Tampa Bay.

**SWIM Plan Update**

* Mr. Will Vangelder, SWIM Program manager, introduced the District’s SWIM program, which addresses Florida’s water bodies through a joint planning effort among stakeholders. The SWIM Program is currently working on updating the Charlotte Harbor SWIM Plan.
* Members asked where Coral Creek is, and Mr. Vangelder pointed out its location, explaining they are public lands managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and acts as a buffer system to maintain the health of the Charlotte Harbor.
* Members asked how much coordination for Charlotte Harbor we have with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), and Mr. Vangelder explained the District coordinates with SFWMD in establishing flow.

**Reconnecting A Stream**

* Dr. John Kiefer, Wood Water Resources engineer, discussed the process and benefits of reconnecting a stream system. Dr. Kiefer explained his work as a process of compressing two decades of weathering into two weeks, and projected long-term results to include increased biodiversity, decreased erosion, flood mitigation, sustainable and resilient riparian habitat, and nutrient reduction. He identified the Balm Boyette - Stallion Hammock Restoration Project that he is working on, which is funded by FDEP grant money.
* ***Members made a motion for the District to identify opportunities for natural stream and channel restoration within the priority SWIM plans that are being developed***. ***Members seconded and passed the motion unanimously.***