

MEETING MINUTES
Springs Coast Management Committee
October 31, 2018

The Springs Coast Management Committee meeting convened at 1:30 p.m., October 31, 2018, at the Southwest Florida Water Management District, Building 4 Conference Room 112, 2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida 34604-6899.

Members Present

Dave Burnell, City of Crystal River
Ken Cheek, Citrus County (via phone)
Alys Brockway, Hernando County
Bob Titterington, Marion County
Jason Mickel, Pasco County
Gabriela Vega, FDEP (via phone)
Jason Wagman, FWC
Yesinia Escribano, FDACS (via phone)
Michael Molligan, SWFWMD
Curt Williams, Agriculture
Richard Owen, Public Supply
Heather Young, Regional Planning Council
Dr. Mauricio Arias, Academia
Rick Owen, State Parks (via phone)

Members Absent

Charles Lee, Environmental
Dave Bruzek, Industry

SWFWMD Staff

Randy Smith
Chris Anastasiou
Danielle Rogers
Sky Notestein
Vivianna Bendixson

Recording Secretary

Kelly Page

Other

Alan Garri, Kimley-Horn
Rusella Bowes-Johnson, City of Ocala
Stefica Depovic, FDOH
Dr. Xueging Gao, FDOH (via phone)
Gordon Onderdonk, Hernando County Utilities
Rick Kirby, Hernando County Utilities
Will Fontane, FGUA
Esther Kaufman, Jones Edmunds
Dawn Bowne, City of Dunnellon
Ed Barranco, Department of Health (via phone)
Kevin Coyne, FDEP (via phone)

FDACS – Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
FDEP – Florida Department of Environmental Protection
SCMC – Springs Coast Management Committee

FWC – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
SWFWMD – Southwest Florida Water Management District
SCSC – Springs Coast Steering Committee

A list of others who were present, and signed the attendance roster, is filed in the permanent records of the District.

1. Call to Order and Roll

Mr. Michael Molligan, SWFWMD, called the meeting to order. Roll was called and a quorum was noted.

2. Action Item: Minutes Approval from August 15, 2018

A motion was made for approval of August 15, 2018 minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

3. Public Input

Mr. Molligan stated there was one blue card presented.

Mr. Alan Garri, Kimley-Horn project manager, spoke on behalf of the City of Ocala in stating the City has vested interest in springs funding process and the improvement of Rainbow Springs springshed. The City would like to be involved in the selection process if possible, and has projects submitted this year.

Mr. Molligan explained the Management Committee is constituted under the Steering Committee and this request will probably need to be discussed at the Steering level. Mr. Molligan said he will review the protocol and discuss the process at a future meeting.

4. Update: Springs Funding FY2019 Projects

Ms. Gabriela Vega, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), provided an update on the FY2019 Springs Funding. She explained the Legislative Budget Commission (LBC) was supposed to release the funds at its September meeting, but the Springs funding was removed from the September agenda. FDEP expects to see it on LBC's December or January agenda. Ms. Vega also explained FDEP has contacted each of the entities that have been selected for funds.

5. Update: Septic Upgrade Incentive Program

Ms. Gabriela Vega provided a brief overview of the new septic upgrade incentive program. FDEP will provide subsidies of up to \$10,000 to septic system installers and licensed plumbers that are retained by homeowners within the Basin Management Action Plan Priority Focus Areas (BMAP PFAs). PFA counties include Citrus, Hernando, Leon, Marion, Orange, Pasco, Seminole, Volusia, and Wakulla.

Installers apply for the program and provide required documentation; FDEP will review the application and it must be approved before work can begin. Within 30 days of completing installation, the contractor will submit a payment request form and attach the required supportive documentation.

Mr. Ed Barranco asked if the health department must take the photograph (as part of the supporting documentation requirements) and Ms. Vega explained the installer may take the photograph, but it must be taken before the inspection.

Mr. Richard Owen asked if anyone has received a reimbursement yet and Ms. Vega responded in the negative. She explained the program is quite new and FDEP just received the first application yesterday.

Ms. Brockway asked if there is a list of eligible septic tanks and does that include the passive systems. Ms. Vega replied in the affirmative, explaining the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) has a list of eligible systems on its website. Mr. Barranco added (FDOH) will cover this in its presentation.

Mr. Molligan asked how FDEP determines how much to reimburse and Ms. Vega explained the amount is not a percentage of costs, but rather up to the \$10,000 limit.

6. Presentation: Homeowner Options for Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems (OSTDS)

Dr. Xueqing Gao, Florida Department of Health, explained the process of waste elimination with a conventional septic system, which provides some preliminary treatment before discharging to the drain field. The conventional system removes most critical pollutants, such as organic carbons, nutrients and bacteria. However, these systems are not specifically designed to remove nitrogen.

Dr. Gao explained the BMAP rules were signed into law in June of 2018, but because of some petitions and the implementation of these BMAPs, enforcement is currently on hold, possibly until January 2019. Once the rules become effective, FDOH will immediately require new construction within these areas, on lots less than one acre, to either connect to a sewer system, if available, or

get a conventional system permit if there is assurance a sewer system will become available within the next five years. If these are not available, a new OSTDS will be required. The same rule applies to homeowners who have a previously abandoned system as well as those wishing to add on to their existing systems (i.e.: add-ons are required with a home addition or swimming pool installation, where wastewater increases by 20 percent).

Traditional systems eliminate an average of 30 percent of nitrogen before discharging to the drain field, whereas the new systems must remove at least 50 percent prior to releasing discharge. The goal is to remove up to 65 percent before wastewater is discharged into the ground. The current OSTDS technologies approved to address the 65 percent nitrogen reduction goal are: Aerobic Treatment Units (ATU), Performance-Based Treatment Systems (PBTS) and In-Ground Nitrogen Reducing Biofilters (INRB). Dr. Gao suggested information can be found on the website or by emailing members of the Division of Disease Control and Health Protection.

Mr. Bob Titterington asked if there is any chance for FDEP to deviate from the five-year requirement and Dr. Gao explained this is a BMAP requirement, referring the question to FDEP. Mr. Kevin Coyne, FDEP, responded if the sewer system is delayed beyond the five years, it may put the septic system in violation of a BMAP, which becomes a slippery slope; however, no definitive answer is available.

Ms. Alys Brockway asked what is FDEP doing to get the information out to septic companies and Mr. Coyne explained FDEP has put out many announcements, worked with Florida Onsite Wastewater Association (FOWA) to get the word out, sent out press releases, and sent information to county FDOH offices.

7. Presentation: Springs Funding Applications Received Fiscal Year (FY) 2020

Ms. Danielle Rogers, Environmental project manager, provided an overview of the process for submitting applications to FDEP for FY2020 springs funding and distributed the packet of submitted applications. Ms. Rogers explained there are 16 total projects submitted: eleven applications are in the Rainbow BMAP boundary, two of which are in the PFA; Crystal River/Kings Bay has no projects submitted; Chassahowitzka and Homosassa have two applications submitted within the BMAP area, one of which is within the PFA; Weeki Wachee and Aripeka has three applications in the BMAP area, two of which are within the PFA.

Ms. Rogers explained the next meeting will consist of reviewing the preliminary evaluations as well as any presentations the committee requests to have.

Mr. Molligan asked whether projects had to be in a PFA for FDEP to consider them or if FDEP preferred projects within a PFA, and Danielle explained the current (Cooperative Funding Initiative) CFI consideration favors projects within a PFA, however, traditionally, FDEP does not specifically favor projects within a PFA. FDEP looks at the competitiveness of the project in comparison to other projects.

Ms. Rogers explained District staff will standardize the applications and notify applicants if additional information is needed, however, staff will not rank or provide any recommendations for the projects. Members agreed to review the projects provided in the application packet and provide any presentation requests within two weeks from today.

Discussion ensued as to whether the committee should rank projects or provide more selection during evaluation. ***A motion was made to have each of the six applicants provide a presentation on each of their projects and to internally rank their projects. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

Mr. Will Fontane announced FGUA has taken ownership of the City of Dunnellon's utilities and asked the committee whether its applications, which have been submitted under the City of Dunnellon's name, should remain as they are or if FGUA should resubmit the applications.

8. Open Discussion

Mr. Jason Mickel mentioned the committee should look at the projects submitted and have questions ready prior to the next meeting. Mr. Molligan told the committee staff will get evaluations to the committee a couple weeks prior to the December 12th meeting so the committee will have plenty of time to review them.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.