

## MEETING MINUTES

### Springs Coast Management Committee

August 15, 2018

The Springs Coast Management Committee meeting convened at 1:30 p.m., August 15, 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)  
Keith Kolasa, Hernando County  
Bob Titterington, Marion County  
Jason Mickel, Pasco County  
Terry Hansen, FDEP (via phone)  
Jason Wagman, FWC  
Angela Chelette, FDACS (via phone)  
Michael Molligan, SWFWMD  
Charles Lee, Environmental  
Curt Williams, Agriculture  
Richard Owen, Public Supply  
Heather Young, Regional Planning Council  
Dave Bruzek, Industry  
Chris Oliver, State Parks

#### **Members Absent**

Dr. Mauricio Arias, Academia

#### **SWFWMD Staff**

Randy Smith  
Chris Anastasiou  
Danielle Rogers  
Sky Notestein  
Vivianna Bendixson

#### **Recording Secretary**

Kelly Page

#### **Other**

Allison Megratz, Kimley-Horn

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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

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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 July 11, 2018**

*A motion was made for approval of July 11, 2018 minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

#### **3. Public Input**

Mr. Molligan stated there were no blue cards presented.

**4. Update: Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP)**

Mr. Terry Hansen, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), explained several of FDEP's BMAPs are being challenged and are unable to provide an update until they hear from the Office of General Counsel (OGC) to determine their course of action.

Mr. Molligan asked if the BMAPs are in effect despite the legal issues surrounding them. Mr. Hansen replied in the negative. BMAPs will not be in effect until there is some resolution, whether it be a time extension or the OGC denies the challenges.

**5. Action Item: Approval of FY2020 Springs Funding Application and Evaluation Process**

Ms. Danielle Rogers, Environmental Project Manager, reviewed the FY2020 process and requested the committee approve the application and evaluation process.

Ms. Rogers walked the committee through the District's website to download the application. Applications will be emailed to Danielle Rogers by 5:00 PM October 5<sup>th</sup>, which is the same deadline as Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) applications. Staff will standardize the information from the Springs funding applications and provide the list to the Management Committee for review and discussion (at December and January meetings). Applicants will make appropriate changes, if needed, and applications will then undergo a final evaluation (February meeting). Projects will be voted upon whether to recommend to the Springs Coast Steering Committee (March meeting) for FDEP funding consideration.

The proposed schedule for Springs funding applications is as follows:

- Raw applications due October 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM
- Raw applications presented to Management Committee October 31, 2018
- Raw applications emailed to Steering Committee November 2018
- Management Committee members review and discuss applications December 12, 2018 and January 9, 2019
- Steering Committee members review and discuss applications January 30, 2019
- Management Committee's final evaluation February 27, 2019
- Steering Committee's final review March 27, 2019
- Governing Board approves final evaluations April 23, 2019
- District sends applications to FDEP May 2019

Ms. Rogers asked the committee to approve the springs FY2020 application and evaluation process.

Mr. Jason Mickel asked for guidance on what information should be submitted in the application to make them most competitive? Ms. Rogers suggested the applicants use the FDEP guidance document when completing the application. There is a link available on the Springs funding application page to retrieve the guidance document.

Mr. Mickel asked what is the committee looking for in evaluation projects? Mr. Molligan explained the feedback from FDEP is they want a list of projects to consider and priority ranking would not affect FDEP's evaluation process. Because the District was on a time restriction this past cycle, the Management Committee decided not to rank them. However, the committee can choose to rank them.

Mr. Charles Lee asked if there has been a decision on the approved projects sent to FDEP. Mr. Hansen explained the projects chosen must pass the Legislative Budget Commission (LBC) in September for funding approval before the awards are finalized. Mr. Lee suggested scheduling the "Lessons Learned" meeting to follow the LBC in September as opposed August. Mr. Mickel suggested the committee continue to evaluate the application and evaluation process without the LBC decision, since FDEP determines the projects approved (LBC confirms the funding).

Mr. Jason Wagman suggested to provide the application link on the Springs page. He also asked whether applicants can submit projects to FDEP without District approval, and to explain the reason for the committee's evaluation process. Mr. Molligan offered to provide the application link in a more convenient location on the website. He reminded the committee that the proposed schedule allows more time to review projects and welcomed the committee to discuss how they wish to evaluate, or rank, the applications this year. After some discussion, members decided to wait until the applications are submitted to determine how to evaluate projects.

*A motion was made to approve the proposed schedule and evaluation process. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

#### **6. Presentation: Hernando County Marine and Coastal Programs**

Mr. Keith Kolasa, Hernando County, presented Hernando County's Marine Resource and Coastal Programs, which consist of science-oriented studies and restoration projects. Restoration projects include enhancing oyster reefs, living shorelines, salt marsh grass nurseries, and expanding artificial reefs. In addition, the county plans to monitor sea turtle population, hard bottom habitats, sea grass health, improve boat ramps, channel maintenance, and kayak trails, as well as provide an education and outreach program.

Hernando County worked with the University of Florida for more than a year and a half to develop six priority goals: shoreline stabilization, oyster reef restoration, artificial reefs, recreation and commercial fisheries, vessel navigation and gulf access, and hard bottom habitat and restoration. Each of these goals include objectives and a detailed action plan.

Mr. Kolasa explained Hernando is the first county to develop a coastal zone marine resource plan, and was recently featured in the Florida Planning Journal. He added that much of this credit goes to the students and staff at the University of Florida for their work on the plan.

Currently, the County has \$3.1 million in Restore Funds for marine and coastal habitat enhancement, \$4.56 million for boating improvements, and \$5 million for water quality. The funding sources also include FDEP, Florida Institute of Oceanography, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Natural Resource Damage Assessment, and the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Mr. Kolasa discussed projects that have been completed, which include army tank deployment at Bendickson Reef, reef ball construction and deployment at three sites, oyster reef bagging and deployment at Centipede Bay, and shoreline stabilization (marsh grass planting) and coastal paddling trail at Linda Pedersen Park. These projects depended on community outreach as well as partnership from the University of Florida Sea Grant Extension program.

Mr. Lee asked if there are updates on success of the oyster deployment. Mr. Kolasa explained the initial deployment went out in April, and although new oyster utilization has not been as successful as hoped, there will be another deployment in September. Members asked if there has been any economic analysis on the projects and Mr. Kolasa said there is one study underway by Florida Sea Grant as well as an upcoming boat ramp user survey. He also explained scalloping is a huge economic driver for the local economy.

Dr. Anastasiou asked if there have been any concerns, in relation to shoreline enhancement, with permitting or use of public funds to enhance private property and Mr. Kolasa responded in the affirmative. He explained there are a lot of canals, however, on state land where property lines end at the sea wall, and the projects can be funded. However, inside the residential canals, the County can only assist in permitting, not funding.

**7. Update: Weeki Wachee Quantifiable Objectives**

Dr. Chris Anastasiou provided an overview of the quantifiable objectives of the Weeki Wachee River. The quantifiable objectives are part of the Weeki Wachee River SWIM plan, which are grouped into three focus areas: water quality, water quantity, and natural systems.

Dr. Anastasiou explained there are five water quality monitoring stations throughout the river, ranging from WW0 (near the headsprings) to WW5 (five river miles from headsprings). Targets for water clarity include a river-wide average of are greater than 50 feet and a springs average of greater than 120 feet. The average water clarity for 2017 shows the water clarity at 121 feet in the headsprings and 49 feet in the river. Water clarity in the river over the period of record 2006-2017 does not show a significant trend for either the river or the headsprings. Quantifiable objectives for river-wide total nitrogen and springs nitrate concentration are based on the FDEP Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Dr. Anastasiou reported the 2017 average river total nitrogen and springs nitrate concentrations are significantly above the TMDL targets.

Mr. Lee asked if there has been any discussion on the potential leveling off of nitrate concentrations in the last few years, or if nitrate concentrations appear to be elevated during the drier years. Dr. Anastasiou said there had been some discussion, but there has not been enough analysis to suggest a definitive answer.

For the water quantity focus area, the quantifiable objective is to maintain greater than 90 percent of natural flow. The Weeki Wachee River is maintaining 95.1 percent of natural flow.

The natural systems (habitat) focus area is subdivided into two river wide quantifiable objectives. The first is to maintain greater than 40 percent coverage of desirable submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). The second is to maintain less than 10 percent coverage of invasive, or undesirable SAV. Most recent data indicate the river has not met these targets (desirable SAV is at 14 percent and undesirable SAV is at 15 percent).

Dr. Anastasiou explained the monitoring is ongoing, and that data collection and funding is important. Members asked if funds through 2019 are available and Dr. Anastasiou responded that funds are available through 2018. Ms. Rogers added there is a scheduled Fall 2018 event and Spring 2019 event. Once collected information is available, the Technical Working Group will present the findings to the Management Committee.

**8. Open Discussion**

Mr. Molligan requested the committee plan to discuss intent for project evaluations at the next meeting on October 31. Mr. Lee requested to have FDEP project list available as soon as possible.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.