

Local RESTORE Council
September 9, 2013
Milton, Florida

Present: Chairman Lane Lynchard and members: Robert "Bob" Cole, Kelley Fuller, Shon Owens, Brian Watkins, Edwin "Buzz" Eddy, Dave Robau, Rob Williamson, Donna Tucker, and Greg Fountain. Cal Bodenstein was absent. Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker), County Attorney (Angela Jones) and County Engineer (Roger Blaylock). Lynchard called the meeting to order at approximately 3:00 p.m. in the Administrative Complex Board Meeting Room.

Lynchard moved approval without objection of the August 8, 2013 meeting minutes.

Lynchard gave an update on a Consortium meeting that he attended in August. He said the most significant action item at this meeting was discussion of developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to seek a consultant for the Consortium. Lynchard said Walker has emailed Council members a copy of the regulations that were promulgated by Department of Treasury. He said Department of Treasury issued proposed regulations and there is a 60 day comment period.

Jeff Helms, Atkins North America, Inc., gave a power point presentation to the Board (Attachment in file). He said the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council approved their plan. Helms said this plan is groundwork for moving forward with RESTORE Act efforts. He said a draft of the Department of Treasury guidelines were posted to the Federal Register on September 6, 2013. Helms said he and County staff have set up a meeting with FDEP (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) and FWC (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission) for next Friday. He said he feels this meeting will be an opportunity to coordinate on how we can all work together and possibly share/leverage funds etc. Helms said after this meeting he will brief the Council and Commission on the results of this meeting.

Helms further discussed some highlights of the "Draft" Department of Treasury guidelines. He said the guidelines state that funding will be grant-based. Helms said an important detail of the guidelines, is that Department of Treasury recognized Florida's Gulf Consortium formulas for each of the 23 counties. Lynchard said this was one of the big things the Consortium was looking for in the guidelines. He said the eight disproportionately affected counties came up with and agreed upon this allocation formula before the RESTORE Act became law. Lynchard said at the last minute, this was pulled out of the RESTORE Act. He said he is glad to see this in the guidelines. Helms said the grants will flow directly to the County. He said Department of Treasury will establish and implement a program to monitor compliance. Helms said Department of Treasury's statutory role is not to determine which project and programs will best restore the Gulf Coast. He said Department of Treasury will review the applications for compliance with the RESTORE Act. Helms said Santa Rosa County will submit a multi year plan describing each program, project and activity for which it is seeking funding. Lynchard said Department of Treasury is not going to review Santa Rosa County's projects, but they will review the County's process. He said this shows the latitude that this Council has to come up with a plan. Lynchard said a multi year implementation plan is what this Council is working towards. He said this Council will review projects, pull the projects together and this will make up our multi year implantation plan.

Williamson said he does not see in the guidelines, the opportunity to hold funds back rather than investing or spending all. He asked if this means Department of Treasury will hold onto the funds unless they are allocated per grant request. Helms said he will need to get clarification on this. Williamson said his concern is that County staff will be spending a great deal of time on RESTORE Act related activities. Helms said the County will get 3% of the grant request for that specific fiscal year.

Eddy asked if a project can be funded later, through the plan, if the Council wishes to forward fund a particular project. Helms said the Council will need to approve the project as part of the multi year plan and that project would then be submitted. Helms said there are ways to do this; this Council will need to figure out how to do it, where it meets the federal grant criteria. He said there is a 60 day timeframe to develop comments. Helms further discussed an estimated RESTORE Act timeframe. He said the Council should be ready by April/May 2014 with the

Santa Rosa County multiyear plan for Pot 1 funds. There was further discussion of reimbursement for planning and administrative costs.

Williamson said a suggestion that may need to be made to the Department of Treasury is that any project that is submitted to Santa Rosa County should include an administrative component for Santa Rosa County aside from an administrative component associated with the grant submission. Lynchard said he understands the regulations as the County would get 3% of each project, once it is funded. Helms said planning costs will be included in the multi year plan.

Helms said he modified the flow chart based on the Council's mission statement. He said this Council is in the area of developing criteria.

Ogletree said the criteria listed are what the County uses to vet projects through the State. He said more than 51% of sales are generated from outside the state Florida. Ogletree said the County needs to bring "new" cash into the state rather than circulate dollars within the community. He further discussed the economic development general criteria for consideration list (Attachment in file). Robau asked if these criteria are weighted. Ogletree said no. Lynchard said this list gets the Council started in the discussion of criteria. He said this Council can assign weighting to the criteria and pick and choose criteria from this list. Williamson asked Ogletree about site development and if it is important to have sites developed. Ogletree said yes.

Lynchard said he suggests that Council members review and evaluate the criteria on their own and come up with any additional criteria they feel may be important. He said Council members should get their information back to the County Administrator. Lynchard said the goal for the next meeting will be to approve the criteria for economic development and tourism. Williamson asked if the Council has reached out to the TDC (Tourist Development Council) regarding tourism. Helms said yes.

Helms further discussed the tourism criteria for consideration list. Kate Wilkes (Tourist Development Council) said the TDC has met with BP on a monthly basis for the past three years until recently. She said this criterion is the type of things they are looking for. Wilkes said the TDC's plan is a marketing plan. Robau asked Helms how he will gage public support. Helms said at some point the Council will put the multi year plan out for public comment/review. He said this may also require a public hearing. Cole said Santa Rosa County's shorelines are what got damaged in the event. Helms said beach re-nourishment or beach restoration will fit into the categories very easily. Lynchard said there will be a separate activity for environmental. He said the Council may want to set aside a specific amount for each eligible activity before the Council starts making the plan. Lynchard said the Council is going to have to prioritize and determine how to spend the money. He said the Council will not be able to finalize the plan until it is known how much money the County will receive.

Linda Coley, President of Navarre Beach Leaseholders and Residents Association, thanked Cole for bringing up the real reason this County is getting money from the BP oil spill. She said the beaches are what were affected. Coley said tourism is the number 2 economic industry in this County. She said if the County does not have the beaches, then it will not get that revenue. Coley asked Lynchard if he is willing to consider beach restoration as part of the BP funding. Lynchard said he feels anything is on the table. He said the County has already submitted beach re-nourishment for NRDA (Natural Resource Damage Assessment) funding. Lynchard said he does not think this County has the luxury of waiting on RESTORE Act dollars to pay for beach re-nourishment. He said beach re-nourishment will probably need to occur within the next 18-24 months. Lynchard said RESTORE Act funds may not even be an option therefore, He said he feels the County should start the discussion of other funding sources for beach re-nourishment.

Lynchard said the next meeting will be October 14, 2013 at 3:00 p.m.

Helms gave the Council information regarding environment and general infrastructure criteria. Lynchard asked the members to forward their comments or additional criteria to Walker. He said Walker will get the information to Helms to compile a list for the Council to consider for approval at the next meeting.

Cole said he got an email from NACo (National Association of Counties) and there will be 5 state coalition RESTORE Act meeting on October 1, 2013. He asked if someone can attend this

in his place because he will be out of town. Walker said staff will make sure there will be County representation for this.

Robau asked if the information that has been given to the Council available on the County's RESTORE Act website for the general public. Lynchard said yes.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting adjourned.


By: Lane Lynchard, Chairman