

Local Restore Council  
Organizational/Orientation meeting  
December 10, 2012  
Milton, Florida

Present: Chairman Lane Lynchard, Commissioner Robert “Bob” Cole and members: Kelley Fuller (Navarre Beach Area Chamber of Commerce), Shon Owens (Town of Jay), Brian Watkins (City of Milton), Edwin “Buzz” Eddy (City of Gulf Breeze), Cal Bodenstein (District 1 Representative), Rob Williamson (District 2 Representative), Donna Tucker (District 3 Representative), and Greg Fountain (District 4 Representative). Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker), County Attorney (Angela Jones), and County Engineer (Roger Blaylock). Lynchard called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Lynchard said this is the first meeting of the Local Restore Council. He thanked the Local Restore Council members for their willingness to serve on this board. Lynchard said there is a lot of work to be done, but the reward to Santa Rosa County and our region, from Restore, will be significant. Each member of the Council introduced themselves. Lynchard said Dave Robau will not be able to attend the meeting today. He introduced Sheila Harris, Santa Rosa County Grants Coordinator, and said she has been involved with Restore for quite some time.

Lynchard said the Local Restore Council is a Sunshine organization. Jones gave a brief presentation on the Sunshine Law (included in the backup material). She said public bodies, such as the Restore Council, are prohibited by Florida law from privately discussing items which could come before the Board for a vote.

Lynchard gave a power point presentation over viewing the Restore Act of 2012. He said the Clean Water Act, grants the federal Environmental Protection Agency the ability to impose fines on a per barrel basis. Lynchard said BP and other responsible parties for the Deep Water Horizon Spill will have to pay a fine for each barrel of oil estimated to have been spilt in the Gulf of Mexico. He said the estimate of the Clean Water Act ranges from \$5 to \$20 billion. Lynchard said the Restore Act establishes the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust, funded by 80% of the Clean Water Act fines. He said the trust fund authorizes expenditures to restore natural resources and the economy of the Gulf Coast region. Lynchard said it further allocates the funds to the Gulf States. He said the Local Restore Council is primarily concerned with the state allocation money. Lynchard said a direct allocation of 35% of the Restore Act funds will be split equally among the states. He said 7% will go to each state. He said the eight disproportionately affected counties receive 75% of Florida’s share of the Restore money. Lynchard said the fifteen non-disproportionately affected counties will share in another 25% of the direct allocation. He gave further discussion of the allocation formula. Lynchard said in July, the formula was pulled from the Restore Act and since then the eight counties have been working together to come up with a mechanism to get the formula put back into the Restore Act. He said seven of the eight counties agreed to a modified version of the original formula.

Tucker asked Lynchard if he anticipates any projects sharing funds between the different counties. Lynchard said it is possible. He said there are conditions attached to the direct allocation. Lynchard said the County has to develop a multi year implementation plan for the Restore funds. He said this plan has to be developed with significant public input. Lynchard said public input is one of the primary purposes of the Local Restore Council. He said there will also be federal audits of the County. Lynchard said the Local Restore Council is an eleven member board with five of the members appointed by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), two members of the BOCC and then one member of each of the Navarre Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, City of Gulf Breeze, City of Milton, and Town of Jay. He said there are three different pots of money. Lynchard gave further detail of the Restore funds allocation breakdown. He said 35% is the direct allocation, 30% is Gulf Wide and 30% goes to the state pursuant to a formula. He said 2.5% will go to create centers of excellence throughout the region and another 2.5% will go to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration, Science, Observation, Monitoring, and Technology Program.

Lynchard gave a brief overview of the Gulf Coast Restoration House Report (attachment in file). He said the state of Florida is listed as “Coastal Political Subdivisions”. He said this may be confusing because every other state is named in the report. Cole asked Lynchard if there is an update on keeping the Restore funds out of National Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA). Lynchard said Restore act is not funded yet. He said the Restore Council’s task is to develop a plan to address the environmental and economic issues that arose from the oil spill. Lynchard said the Restore Council will have to come up with a plan to make the dollars last as long as possible for Santa Rosa County. He said he feels the Local Restore Council should come

up with a plan to invest the dollars rather than spend the dollars. He said the goal is to pick and choose the projects that will give the biggest return and that will have a future impact.

Lynchard said the plan of action is developing a mechanism for people to submit projects to the county. He said Harris has designed a draft of a project submission form and this will be available on a website that will be developed where projects can be submitted for consideration. Lynchard said this board will review the submitted projects and make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners, who will make the ultimate decision on the multi year implementation plan. He said he feels the Local Restore Council will need guidance from the BOCC. Lynchard said the Local Restore Council will develop an allocation formula and then start vetting projects. He said at some point he thinks the County will need to engage a third party consultant to assist the council with the evaluation of projects.

Cole asked about the list of early restoration projects and when it was developed. Walker said this list contains the current Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) projects and it has been developing over the last year and a half. Owens said this list is just a model of what type of projects that are currently out there. Lynchard said a lot of the projects, that will be reviewed, will be eligible for funding from other multiple sources. He said the more projects that are funded under NRDA, the better because the County can direct its own local dollars. Lynchard said one of the permissible uses of the direct allocation is matching funds for federal and state grants. He said he feels the County should take a portion of the Restore dollars and set it aside as matching funds in order to stretch the dollars.

Williamson asked if NRDA money is specifically for environmental projects. He said he thought most of the direct allocation was supposed to go towards economic development. Lynchard said it can go towards environmental or economic development. Williamson asked if there is a length of time that funds could be set aside. Lynchard said there is no guidance in the Restore Act or time frame right now. He said the only timeframe mentioned in the Restore Act is the Local Restore Council is required to develop a multi year implementation plan. Walker said we will know more as we move through the process. Williamson said he likes the idea of the funds having a generational impact. Lynchard said he agrees. Owens asked if these funds could be used if another disaster hits and they are needed. Lynchard said these funds are specific to the Restore Act.

Lynchard said he feels the members of this council will probably be contacted by people with different projects in mind. He said there is no requirement that they meet with anyone. Tucker asked if the project forms will be made available to the public. Lynchard said the forms will be available online after the first of the year.

Lynchard said a county email address will be provided to each member of the Local Restore Council before the next meeting.

Owens asked when the Restore funds will be allocated. Lynchard said as soon as the Department of Justice and BP enter into a settlement agreement.

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

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Chairman: Lane Lynchard