

Local Restore Council
June 8, 2015
Milton, Florida

Present: Chairman Lane Lynchard and members Rob Williamson, Shon Owens, Brian Watkins, Buzz Eddy, Tony Alexander, Dave Robau, Donna Tucker, Carole Tebay. Also present were Roger Blaylock (County Engineer), Hunter Walker (County Administrator), Roy Andrews (County Attorney) and Jeff Helms (Local Restore Consultant). The meeting was held at the Santa Rosa County Administrative Complex, Board meeting room and began at 1:00 p.m.

Lynchard moved approval without objection of the April 13, 2015 meeting minutes.

Helms gave a power point presentation regarding an update of the RESTORE process (Attachment in file). He said recently, through an extensive study, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) scientists have linked dolphin deaths to the BP oil spill. He said there has also been a recent ruling on an obscure lawsuit, by an environmental group, regarding fracking in the Gulf of Mexico. Helms said the acronym for RESTORE is Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States.

Helms said the technical scoring teams held meetings on May 11, 2015 and May 18, 2015. He said the county received 56 project proposals: 21 environmental, 7 job creation/workforce development, 18 infrastructure, and 27 tourism. He gave an overview of these meetings.

Lynchard said the projects range from very small projects to projects that the council would not even be able fund in this round. He said the grading and ranking sheets are a guide to the council. Lynchard discussed a number of possible ways that the council can fund the projects. He said he came up with a list of 12 projects which are listed below:

Environmental

Navarre Park Water Quality
Floridatown Water Quality
Rattlesnake Bluff
Yellow River Marsh Preserve State Park Restoration

Economic Development (Workforce Development/Job Creation)

Successful Re-entry Program
Entrepreneurship Academy - Pace High School

Infrastructure

Dirt Road Paving
Driftwood Navy Cove
Eufaula (Outfall Treatment)

Tourism

Blackwater Heritage State Trail
Gulf Coast Kiln Walk
Quinn Street Marina

Lynchard said these projects total \$2,810,000.00 in Restore funds, \$7,510,000.00 total project costs. He said this is a little less than a 3:1 leverage and still gives approximately \$1,500,000.00 to plug into other projects.

There was further discussion on whether there is a need to establish a three year project completion deadline.

Williamson thanked the technical scoring teams. He said feels Lynchard's recommendations are strong and that he does not have a lot of changes. Williamson said under the Economic Development projects, he would switch the Successful Re-entry program with the Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education Program. He said in regards to Tourism, he has had trouble trying to figure out how beach restoration could make a generational impact. Williamson said he does not think this council can ignore that this project scored number one, in three different categories. He said he does not feel he could support allocating \$1,000,000.000 but could be in favor of some portion of it.

Alexander said he feels the council does not need to overlook The Gulf Coast Discovery Center when talking about generational projects. He said having this sort of facility on the beach will

allow for an expansion of educational services, the creation of this tourist attraction, and additional facilities on the beach for visitors to take advantage of. Williamson said he agrees.

Lynchard said he agrees this is a very good project but the council is dealing with only \$4 million. Helms discussed the possibility of funding the different phases of projects.

R. Williamson discussed the idea of setting aside planning dollars for a project that the council believes is within the spirit of Restore and will be in support of in the next round.

Eddy said he feels using \$300,000.00-\$400,000.00 towards the planning and permitting for the Gulf Coast Discovery Center, in order to set it up for the next round of funding is a great idea.

Robau said The Discovery Center was, by far, his favorite project. He said he feels this project will have a generational impact. Robau said he would be in support of funding the \$265,000.00 they have allocated for the design and permitting.

Owens said a lot of the projects being discussed could, in the future, be done with matching funds or other available funding. He said if this council funds the planning and engineering, this is saying this project will be eventually funded and this may not happen. Owens said he feels earmarking the funds for the future may make more sense. He said he feels spending the money on engineering and plans may be getting "ahead of the game". Lynchard said he agrees. He said this council wants concrete results from this round of Restore funding.

Tucker said she is in support of the Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education Program. She said Locklin Career Academy is partnering with the business community and doing incredible things.

Lynchard said another project that he has high regard for is the Pensacola East Bay Oyster Restoration Project. Helms said he would encourage this council to leverage towards the design of this project. R. Williamson said he feels if the council gets in on the early portion of this, from a leveraging standpoint, Santa Rosa County is going to benefit tremendously from a little bit of investment of a project of this scope. Lynchard said he encourages the council members to take a look at this project.

Tebay said she is not in favor of the beach restoration project. She said she feels this project is not sustainable.

Public Forum

Charlene Mauro said the Gulf Coast Discovery Center is the best economic development "bang for Restore buck". She said this project has the opportunity to put Navarre on the map. She said she has been in discussion with Guy Harvey Enterprises as partners for the Gulf Coast Discovery Center.

Tim Kohane (Navarre Beach Leaseholders and Residents Association) said if the beach is not restored, the county will not have tourist. He said a lot of the projects being discussed are based upon the fact the county has Navarre Beach.

R. Williamson said he believes that beach restoration warrants some funding. Alexander said he is also in support of some funding being allocated. He said the beaches are vital to tourism and Navarre.

Robau said he would be in support in evaluating the beach restoration project through a tourism perspective.

Brooks La Grua said the need for a facility such as the Gulf Coast Discovery Center has been shown by surveys by the Tourist Development Council and by questions of bed tax collectors.

Jessica Koelsh (National Wildlife Federation) said she feels Deadman's Island is a good project and that this project already has a lot of support. She said in regards to the East Bay Living Shoreline Project, if the purchase of Escribano Point is included, \$10.8 million has already spent. Koelsh said this project is definitely a great leverage opportunity.

Ira Mae Bruce said the beach brings businesses to the southend of the county.

Chuck Pohlmann said he submitted the Navarre Pass project to clear up water quality in the sound. He said he feels some of the graders may have misconceived the project because the total

project cost of \$17.4 million. He said this is a two phase project. He further discussed the details of this project.

Adrienne Sams said she is the site manager at Arcadia Mill Archeological site. She said Arcadia Mill sees over 3,000 school children a year from the tri-county area. She said Arcadia Mills is almost 200 years old and represents the industrial spirit of Santa Rosa County.

Ralph Agnew said his concern is the water quality in the Navarre Park area

Darryl Boudreau (The Nature Conservancy) said the Nature Conservancy has been asked by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to submit a full application for this round of NFWF funding. He said NFWF has focused on the design, permitting, and engineering for the project. Boudreau said NFWF mentioned that it will be helpful for the county to show “skin in the game”. He said the price tag of the design, permitting, and engineering will be approximately \$2 million. He said NFWF has asked that the Nature Conservancy focus on a shell recycling program for Santa Rosa County as well as water quality monitoring. Boudreau said he would like to encourage the county to consider “skin in the game” towards shell recycling and water quality monitoring.

Williamson asked if the Santa Rosa Sound would be included in the water quality testing component. Boudreau said it does not at this point but could be an addition.

Alexander said the Navarre Chamber has long been a supporter of the concept of a Navarre Pass. He said if this is something that could be done without environmental impact and with an environmental benefit and without an impact on the military mission then he feels it is probably a good idea for a number of reasons.

Robau said when he was an environmental scientist for the Air Force he was asked to look at the proposal of reopening the Navarre Pass. He said he encourages Pohlmann to contact public affairs at Eglin Airforce Base regarding the mission impact analysis that was conducted. He said he feels this analysis would probably help to put the issue to rest.

Helms said the concern that some of the technical team members had with Pohlmann’s project were the fact that, he was not addressing the actual source of the pollution.

Lynchard said he feels it will be appropriate for Helms and staff to develop a preliminary list based on the projects that were discussed earlier including the revisions by Williamson. He said at some point the council will approve the list projects, put the list out for public review and comment, and have it approved by the Board of Commissioners. Lynchard said he would also like the council to take a look at the East Bay Oyster Project submitted by the Nature Conservancy. He said another thing that stands out is EDGE (Northwest Florida Marine Education and Discovery of Gulf Ecosystems, Inc.) getting the \$265,000.00 for planning trying to come up with a way forward to assist with keeping that project at the forefront.

Williamson further discussed an overview of the project list and funding totals based on the discussion above. He said there are three workforce development projects that need discussion.

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

By: Lane Lynchard, Chairman