## Draft Minutes of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Gubernatorial Committee Meeting on February 21, 2014

### Florida Regional Councils Association – Monthly Activity Report: February 2014

### Unemployment Summary – Treasure Coast Region*

### Overview of the Workforce Solutions Region*

### Overview of Workforce Alliance Region*

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* Data unavailable to produce the report at the time of agenda publication.
MINUTES OF THE TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
GUBERNATORIAL COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 21, 2014

The meeting of the Gubernatorial Committee was called to order by Council Chairman Peter O’Bryan at 12:23 p.m.

The following committee members/staff were present.

Indian River County: Commissioner Peter O’Bryan

Martin County: Councilmember Tobin Overdorf
               Councilmember Michael Houston

St. Lucie County: Councilmember Steven Weaver, Sr.

Palm Beach County: Councilmember Michael Davis

Council Staff: Michael J. Busha
               Peter G. Merritt
               Liz Gulick

Council Attorney: Roger Saberson

Chairman O’Bryan discussed how the Gubernatorial Committee was formed. The idea came from the January 2014 Florida Regional Councils Association Policy Board Retreat in Tallahassee. He wanted the Council to be more effective and get the message up to the Legislature and Governor, so it was decided to create a Gubernatorial Committee to work hand in hand with the legislature on issues that Council as a whole develops.

Chairman O’Bryan nominated Councilmember Weaver to serve as Chair of the Gubernatorial Committee. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The meeting was turned over to Chairman Weaver.

Chairman Weaver stated that this Committee would look to Chairman O’Bryan and staff on how to get started and prioritize items Council as a whole wanted the Committee to take forward to the Governor.

Chairman O’Bryan noted that the legislative agenda added to Council’s agenda is new. He also suggested this year the Committee would take a more reactive role instead of proactive, because of the late start going in the legislative session. He suggested this summer would be a good time for Council to formulate legislative policies and build an agenda that Council can promote in the 2015 legislative session.

Chairman Weaver asked about a starting point. Chairman O’Bryan noted the items discussed at the February Council meeting, particularly All Aboard Florida and quiet zones, is a huge
endeavor. Local communities need help in establishing these quiet zones. He suggested an educational process. Staff noted this was essentially a brand new railroad being proposed and everyone is trying to figure it out.

Chairman O’Bryan pointed out that two important basic policy tenants to keep in mind when speaking to the legislature are home rule and unfunded mandates.

Chairman Weaver questioned the lack of state funding. Chairman O’Bryan noted that the Florida senate and house include the regional planning councils in their budget, but the Governor has vetoed the funding for the last three years. Chairman Weaver asked if there was any insight into the Governor’s rationale. Staff noted that numerous people had spoken to the Governor about the value of regional planning councils. Councilmember Davis suggested that this Committee may be able to erode some of the myths that perhaps the Governor has heard. Staff noted that this would be the first time a group of regional planning council appointees has taken this approach. Councilmember Davis noted his excitement and indicated that this gives us greater value as a group. He also noted that the Committee would have to sort out the different issues/positions of the counties and municipalities. Chairman Weaver noted that this Committee would not prioritize any decisions on behalf of the Council but would agree to move forward with the message that is given to them.

Councilmember Overdorf asked Mr. Busha if he had talked to Senator Negron about Council’s funding. Mr. Busha indicated that the Senator has agreed to put the regional planning council back in the budget. Mr. Busha also noted that the Florida Regional Councils Association has employed Ron Book for the past 23 years as their lobbyist and Mr. Book has asked that the funding be handled by him.

Councilmember Overdorf noted that the Committee would have an opportunity to speak to Senator Negron about Senate Bill 372 among other issues. He also noted how important baseball is to the region and the Committee could address that in Tallahassee also. He also noted that the waterways, river, water storage, and water quality, all are issues that this Committee can communicate from a regional perspective. He also mentioned how important agriculture is to all the counties and the Committee will want to make sure there is a balance in discussing this issue.

Councilmember Houston noted that the Committee should make certain that no one is already doing what the Committee is proposing. He noted that he receives the newsletter from the News Service of Florida on what is going on in the legislature. He asked Mr. Busha if Council was receiving information from Ron Book on the legislative issues. Mr. Busha stated that when the legislative session starts Council receives a packet every week about what is going on in Tallahassee. He suggested this Committee could narrow down the issues that are important to the region.

Mr. Busha also suggested other things the group could do, including taking a district wide look at how to work together. Local governments have to want to do this. For example, no one is working on behalf of the cities and counties regarding All Aboard Florida and quiet zones.
Councilmember Overdorf indicated that there should be some level of funding that can satisfy those mandates. Mr. Busha suggested that when the Committee talks to Senator Negron, the budget has always been about $2.5 million for the eleven regional planning councils.

Chairman O’Bryan noted that the legislature sometimes forgets that Florida has 67 counties and every county is unique. Some of the bills may impact each county differently. Mr. Busha pointed out that this has been a regional planning council role since the beginning to point out these types of issues. Council advocacy has a long history, but we must be smart about using it strategically.

Mr. Busha noted that the Florida Regional Councils Association has a legislative agenda that is included in Council’s agenda package each month. Mr. Davis indicated that the Committee needs to hear Council’s position and discuss the process. He asked if this would be generated by the Committee, or solicited from the full Council. Mr. Busha pointed out what happened today under legislative matters. There was some legislation that we want to look at and some information that was not legislation that local government may need help on. Also, there are the funding issues and the unfunded mandate issue. The Committee should look for initiatives that the Council wants to support.

Mr. Busha indicated that staff would bring the issues back to the Council under Legislative Matters. The Committee will report their thoughts on actions they think the Council as a whole should take, whether a resolution, or a trip to Tallahassee. The Committee needs to decide how to become most effective when the legislative agenda comes out and how to push it forward.

Chairman Weaver asked staff to put together a position statement providing direction on House Bill 763 and Senate Bill 372 and how it specifically impacts the region. Councilmember Houston said the only concern is the issues have not been vetted very well and not debated in front of this group. If fully vetted, everyone understands the impacts and then we feel comfortable as a group to represent the position of the Council.

Mr. Busha suggested focusing on key issues that we all feel comfortable with and Council will send this Committee forward with instructions on how to begin. This Committee will give Council an update once a month, and possibly ask Ron Book to address Council.

Councilmember Houston stated that it would be interesting to hear Senator Negron’s position and indicated that the Committee can get a dialogue going with Governor Scott. Mr. Busha noted that the regional planning council directors meet each month. He asked the Committee if they could pick up the phone and talk directly to Governor Scott. Councilmember Overdorf indicated that he could contact the chief of staff and Councilmember Houston indicted he had clients that could contact the Governor directly.

Chairman Weaver noted that this Committee got a late start. He asked that the Committee identify 4 to 5 things that they could move forward on now and that the Committee would expect staff to put together an impact and position statement on Bills 372 and 703. He also asked for clarification on what action the Committee could request from the legislators regarding All Aboard Florida. Mr. Busha suggested making a recommendation for the best way to get the four
Chairman Weaver indicated the Committee should perhaps take the recommendation of the News Service of Florida, especially in regards to these bills and others that are going to impact this region. Staff asked the Committee members if they received the News Service of Florida. Councilmember Houston asked if one is allowed to share this service. Staff indicated they are not sure if this is an option.

Chairman Weaver pointed out the varying degrees of participation among the general members of the group. In regards to the sports commission and baseball, Chairman Weaver did not think this was a legislative matter at this time. Staff indicated that a position paper would be prepared for the Committee along with an update on the meeting with the two sports commissions.

Chairman Weaver noted that it would be best to meet face to face with the legislators instead of in writing, and asked staff to identify the time and place where that might be applied so the Committee could plan ahead.

Staff pointed out that the Council has 16 responsibilities under the Florida Statutes and the state is not funding the Council. The local governments are paying for Council to complete the responsibilities required by the state. Chairman Weaver pointed out the change in Council’s role in recent years. Staff indicated that Council has been assisting local governments all along with economic development, transportation, technical assistance, and emergency preparedness.

The Committee discussed the Sunshine Law about communicating by email. Councilmember Houston asked if the meetings could be held via conference call. Council’s attorney indicated no. Councilmember Houston stated that this is a significant limitation to a lobbying group. Staff indicated that all meetings have to be advertised. Chairman O’Bryan indicated that a lunch meeting could be scheduled at Council office and the meeting would be noticed. Council’s Attorney stated that this would be okay as long as there is a physical location to hold the meeting. Chairman Weaver asked if the Committee would have to wait until the next meeting for staff to prepare the requested items. Staff indicated they would prepare summaries and position statements for the next meeting.

The Committee agreed to meet monthly after the regular Council meetings. Councilmember Davis noted that the Committee will take what they heard from the Council and decide how to proceed. He also noted that there may be a need to have a separate meeting from time to time. Councilmember Houston asked if other Council members could attend the Committee meetings and staff indicated yes.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Weaver motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:10 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Overdorf and carried unanimously. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for March 21, 2014, immediately following the regular Council meeting.
OUTREACH

- Met with representatives from the Florida Department of Transportation, at their request, to offer insights and suggestions pertaining to the process being developed for the Florida Transportation Plan and Strategic Intermodal System Strategic Plan updates.
- Met with Barbara Lenczewski, Development Representative III at the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, to explore funding opportunities for regional planning councils.
- Spoke to representatives at the Florida Department of Health and followed up with an email that provided an overview of regional planning councils and the “single point of contact” contracting advantages.
- Wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, Ananth Prasad, critiquing the Department’s transportation planning process for non-metropolitan areas, which was signed by the Chair of the FRCA Executive Directors Advisory Committee, Brian Teeple (NEFRC).
- Collected data from each regional planning council that support and demonstrate implementation of the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development for the second quarter of the 2013-14 Fiscal Year and submitted the data to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.
- Continued to work with representatives from the Florida Chamber Foundation to create on-line regional scorecards for each council, including identification of the specific website segments and site map features for this metric-driven economic development tool.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/CAPACITY BUILDING

- To enhance partnerships and strengthen the relationship between regional planning councils and their state and federal partners, attended meetings of the Enterprise Florida Board, Stakeholders Council, and Community Competitiveness Task Force; Safe Mobility for Life Coalition; and, Tallahassee/Leon County Economic Development Council; and, participated in the Florida Chamber of Commerce’s Capitol Days and Enterprise Florida’s monthly conference call for its economic development partners.
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LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

- Issued a February Legislative Highlights report and bill tracking summary.
- Reviewed newly filed bills for the 2014 Legislative Session and monitored legislative committee meetings held during the first three weeks of February, 2014.
- Updated and distributed FRCA’s talking points for the 2014 legislative session.

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Participated in the February FRCA meetings and identified and confirmed presenters for the March FRCA meetings.
- Updated the FRCA website to post the most current Legislative Highlights and 2014 Legislative Agenda.