

**MINUTES OF THE
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
JULY 15, 2016**

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m. and led the pledge of allegiance. Chairman Davis indicated a quorum was not present and after roll has been called the meeting would begin with the Council Member Update, which is a non-action item, to allow Council members more time to arrive.

The following members and alternates were present:

Indian River County:	Commissioner O'Bryan Commissioner Zorc
Martin County:	Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch
Palm Beach County:	Vice Mayor Valeche Commissioner Taylor Vice Mayor Hmara Commissioner Katz Mayor Tinsley Mayor DuBois Commissioner Ryan, Alternate
Gubernatorial Appointees:	Douglas Bournique Michael Davis Tobin Overdorf Peter Sachs Steven M. Weaver, Sr.
Ex-Officios:	Ann Benedetti, SJRWMD Jennifer Smith, FDEP Jeffrey Upchurch, FDOT, Alternate Lynda Westin, SFRTA
Council Staff:	Michael Busha Phyllis Castro Kim DeLaney Liz Gulick Stephanie Heidt Peter Merritt
Council Attorney:	Keith Davis

COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATE

Commissioner Zorc with Indian River County noted the county will be hosting a meeting on the Bethel Creek Connection in August to discuss the benefits of a connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian River Lagoon (IRL). He stated this will be similar to the Destin model that connects the Gulf of Mexico to an inland waterbody to improve water quality. He stated he would let Council members know the exact date.

Councilmember Bournique, Gubernatorial Appointee from Indian River County, indicated the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) passed a resolution to support moving as much water as possible north and south to reduce the flows into the IRL.

Vice Mayor Valeche with Palm Beach County gave an update on the shooting range being built on the former Mecca Farms site. He indicated construction began in June and it is anticipated it will open within a year. He stated the facility is designed to be of Olympic training quality and will be the largest premier shooting range in Florida. He said the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will be operating the facility, which will have shooting ranges, trap and skeet, law enforcement training, and classes that will include hunter safety and youth programs. He noted environmental monitoring measures have been taken to confine lead to one area and protect the groundwater.

Commissioner O'Bryan with Indian River County stated the county has been awarded two cost-share grants from the SJRWMD. He stated one grant will be used for a new stormwater project on Osprey Acres, and the other is for the first phase of a septic to sewer conversion project in the City of Sebastian.

Mayor Tinsley with the City of Palm Beach Gardens stated the city has approved an economic development project called *Falcon*. She stated this is a global company that will retain 450 jobs and provide 200 new jobs to the area with an average wage of approximately \$66,000 per year. She noted the city has committed about \$80,000, which is 10 percent of the total match for the Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund program.

Commissioner Katz with the City of Delray Beach stated they are moving along with their initiative to improve the Congress Avenue corridor in the city. He stated this developer-initiated project will run from Boca Raton to Delray Beach. He noted the city recently approved a zoning change that will stimulate growth in the area.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch with the Town of Sewall's Point thanked Senators Nelson and Rubio, and Congressman Patrick Murphy for hosting an event in Washington D.C. to focus attention on our waterways, and involving the RiverKidz, a group founded in the Town of Sewall's Point. She thanked South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) for their resolution in support of septic tank conversion. She stated the problems with the water in the river are not caused by septic tanks alone, noting there was an algae bloom documented in Lake Okeechobee on May 23rd. She stated she is sure the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and SFWMD knew of this and there was no open warning to the people of Martin or St. Lucie counties, and releases of water continued into the St. Lucie River and IRL. She stated there is a real concern for public health,

safety and welfare with respect to the dike breaking; however we cannot continue to live with the current water conditions. She stated this problem has been brought on by everyone, and she appreciates all the efforts to address this issue.

Councilmember Overdorf, Gubernatorial Appointee from Martin County, stated the county recently approved a great new project he worked on called *Ag Tech* that will bring new business to the county. He said the property owner has volunteered to accept over 1,000 acre feet of water on their property. He indicated he attended a recent meeting of the Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Policy Board. He stated Commissioner Mowery is in line to be chairman the year after next, which will give Council a statewide voice.

Vice Mayor Hmara with the Village of Royal Palm Beach stated the village has been very successful in hosting events in their 162-acre park. He said they not only host four major events there a year, but have also expanded to evening band concerts. He stated these concerts are being operated on a temporary rental stage that is not cost effective and is pretty flimsy, and has resulted in sound spillover to neighboring communities. He said the village has educated themselves on this issue and has decided on a strategy that will allow them to build a permanent amphitheater that will attract more entertainment and be less offensive to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Mayor Dubois with the City of Lake Park stated about 10 years ago the Palm Beach County Health Department tested canals in the acreage, which is comprised of 15,000 homes on 1.25-acre lots within 30,000 acres that are crisscrossed by shallow canals, and found the water in those canals was 99 percent clean of *E. coli* and other types of discharges that are harmful to people and wildlife. With respect to the septic tanks in Martin and St. Lucie counties, he said you cannot refute the science and what has been found in the water, but he is very surprised to hear the blame shifted this way, when there is an example of a much denser development without contamination.

Jennifer Smith with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) gave an update on the Department's response to the algae bloom. She stated the Department has a hotline to report any observance of potential algal blooms and a website with several links for information as well. She stated the Department would like for all reports to come through these methods, because this is how they deploy their sampling teams. She noted the website provides information on where samples are being taken and the results of those samplings. She indicated there is also an algal bloom innovative technologies portal for companies and individuals to suggest ideas and submit proposals for cleaning up the algae. She stated the submissions are reviewed by a designated team that consists of individuals from the Department, the Corps, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, SFWMD, FWC, and the departments of health.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch stated she appreciates the Department's efforts, but noted the current algal bloom was documented in Lake Okeechobee in May. She suggested having a warning system like the ones used in western states to warn people when conditions are favorable for wildfires. She stated the Governor's office should do more than just have a state of emergency when we are in an emergency, and warn people when conditions are favorable for an algal bloom.

Commissioner Zorc asked if there are designated sites for companies to work. Ms. Smith stated although there is not a list, they have identified several sites and the Department is working with

Palm Beach, Martin, and St. Lucie counties on this. She indicated they are monitoring the Lake Worth Lagoon and Loxahatchee River as well.

Lynda Westin with the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority stated their governing board has approved agreements regarding the downtown Miami Link. She stated this is a rail connection on the CSX line between the Mangonia Park station and downtown Miami. The agreements will address access between the CSX line and the Iris crossover; operating and funding; what is being built at the station site; additional funding for track improvements; and setting up an escrow fund. She indicated Commissioner Abrams from Palm Beach County will be finalizing those agreements.

Anne Benedetti with the SJRWMD stated they are authorized and ready to assist the SFWMD. She noted the northern part of the IRL does not look too bad, but there are recent reports of algal bloom outbreaks in Indian Harbor Beach.

Councilmember Bournique stated he remembers 30 years ago when it was decided no more water would be sent down to the Everglades, and he thought at that time the C-44 and Caloosahatchee were going to be bludgeoned. He said it was right to save the Everglades, but they took the path of least resistance, which was to move the water east and west. He stated he is now pleased elected officials are working so hard to save the lagoon and the east coast, and are getting support from the water management districts, FDEP, the Governor's office, and from Congressman Murphy. He also thanked Council's leadership on this issue.

Chairman Davis indicated there is a quorum present and the next item would be approval of the agenda.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilmember Overdorf moved approval of the Agenda. Mayor Tinsley seconded the motion, **Motion** which carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff provided a copy of correspondence sent to Gracia Szczech with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and a resolution from FRCA. At its July 8th meeting, FRCA passed a resolution supporting the Governor's request for a federal emergency declaration and immediate review of the Lake Okeechobee regulation schedule, and the fast-tracking of any high-end impact Everglades Restoration projects, including repair of the Herbert Hoover Dike. Staff indicated Council received a response back from FEMA stating they are reviewing and carefully considering all correspondence.

Staff provided two SFWMD resolutions for emergency funding appropriations to repair the Herbert Hoover Dike and support the Governor's position on a 50-50 cost sharing program to assist in septic tank removal and retrofitting.

Staff provided a brochure summarizing the Indian River Lagoon Economic Valuation Update report, which Council produced with funding from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

Staff provided correspondence from the Florida League of Cities indicating Commissioner Mitch Katz from the City of Delray Beach is being appointed as a regular member. Staff noted this appointment will leave two alternate vacancies.

Staff asked Council members for a motion to cancel the August meeting. Commissioner Katz moved approval of canceling the August 19th meeting. Mayor Tinsley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Motion

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Davis stated there has been much debate and information produced from many well-intentioned public servants and leaders from a variety of local, state, and federal agencies and governments, but after 30 years of experience with the issue of water and Everglades restoration, he is struggling to understand what is myth and what is fact. He stated he would like for Council to take the role of facilitating and moving the discussion along a positive way that will lead to solutions and good outcomes. He noted we are at a critical point with several possible directions and we want to make sure we make good decisions that will not lead to any long-term, possibly irreversible damage. He stated each agency and organization has their own perspective of the situation, and although they may not be wrong, it is from their own perspective taking into account their culture, statutory authorities, and expertise. He asked Council members to consider having staff prepare a draft, non-political fact sheet of basic information and questions being asked in order to give elected officials, decision-makers, and the public a better understanding of the basic facts.

Commissioner Ryan stated she would appreciate this, because she is getting several emails with conflicting opinions. She noted the City of West Palm Beach council is going to be having presentations at their meetings from different organizations to get input of the issues and how they affect the city.

Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch indicated she likes the idea, noting with so many people using the word fact, it is hard to know what is fact and what is not. She stated she believes having Palm Beach County involved is key. She said historically Martin and the other counties have been too small and powerless, but Palm Beach County has experience and influence that can be helpful. She stated she does not want to take away focus from things that are important to Palm Beach County, but she believes it would be wonderful to bind together, if for no other reason than to bring money to this area for improvements and resources for a better South Florida. Vice Mayor Valeche stated Palm Beach County is very involved and has a very effective lobbyist who is in Tallahassee and Washington and has this issue high on his radar screen. He stated Palm Beach County is happy to participate in any way possible.

Chairman Davis stated there are dueling sciences and opinions for many of the issues, so he would like to have Council lay out the information in a way that gives people an understanding this is not a general matter and there are a lot of issues and different solutions to address. He stated we have

reached an emergency level, and we need to make decisions for a path of what needs to be done and how it will be funded.

Councilmember Overdorf indicated he fully supports this idea, and made a motion to move forward with a systematic approach and research that can be published by the regional planning council serving as a body to produce an informational piece that addresses the water systems within our region.

Motion

Vice Mayor Hmara said he knows how difficult it is to discern the truth when you sit in the middle and have two equally credentialed individuals or organizations with opposing opinions. He stated Palm Beach County does pay a lot of attention to water quality issues, and one of the things he appreciated from a study on the C-51 canal is it was so well written even a layman could understand the science.

Commissioner Taylor indicated she has talked with Council staff on the issue of water. She said Palm Beach County does take the issue of water very seriously and has a water guru who is very involved. She stated if Council does this, they would need to get their information from all entities.

Councilmember Bournique stated he supports the idea of staff providing guidance on this issue. He said with large water management systems there are some basic obvious things that need to be addressed such as non-historical discharges, local discharges, and septic tanks. He noted we are in an election year, so if we stay on point and get the candidates' attention, we have a golden opportunity to get support. Mayor Tinsley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

There was no disclosure of voting conflicts on Consent Agenda items. There was no public comment on Consent Agenda items.

Commissioner Taylor moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Sachs seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Motion

Items on the Consent Agenda were: 7C1, Financial Report – May 31, 2016; 7C2, Minutes – June 17, 2016; 7C3, City of West Palm Beach Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 16-1ESR; and 7C4, City of Port St. Lucie Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 16-3ESR.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017

Staff provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 proposed budget, noting enough revenues have been secured to balance the budget. Staff also noted there is a proposed 3 percent merit increase for staff included. Chairman Davis stated it seems light, but it is probably consistent with the state. Commissioner Taylor stated the committee reviewed the budget and did not feel there would be an undue burden to give staff the increase. Commissioner Taylor moved approval of the proposed budget. Commissioner Ryan seconded the motion for discussion.

Motion

Commissioner Zorc asked if the City of Vero Beach is paying for the Vero Beach Arts Village project, or if it was funded through the county's dues. Staff indicated local dues paid for a portion of the project. Commissioner Zorc requested a copy of the breakdown.

Councilmember Weaver stated the total fund balance is approximately \$3 million. He asked what is the future of that money. Staff explained most of it is Council's revolving loan fund and we do not have access to that; Council has access to a balance of about \$775,000; and the remainder is equipment, capital assets, and legal reserve. Upon being put to a vote, the motion carried.

FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT COMPANY TEN YEAR POWER PLANT SITE PLAN 2016-2025

Staff summarized the Florida Power and Light (FPL) Ten Year Power Plant Site plan noting the main purpose of the plan is to disclose the general location of future power plant sites. Staff indicated the plan does not identify any preferred sites in our region for new power generating facilities, but does identify one potential site in Martin County that is being evaluating for a future photovoltaic (PV) facility. Staff noted one of the preferred sites in the plan is in Okeechobee County, directly adjacent to Indian River County. FPL is planning to construct a natural gas-fired power plant on this site by 2019. Staff stated the current plan indicates fossil fuels will increase and be the primary source of energy used to generate electricity during the next 10 years; nuclear sources are predicted to decrease slightly; and solar sources are predicted to increase slightly. Staff noted FPL's efforts to increase use of cost-effective renewable energy include the use of utility-scale PV facilities and distributed generation PV pilot programs.

Staff stated the draft report indicates Council supports and encourages existing and proposed solar projects, but Council remains concerned the plan does not forecast a significant increase in the use of renewable energy during the next decade. The draft report concludes the region and all of south Florida will continue to remain vulnerable to fuel price increases and supply interruptions, because of the continued heavy reliance on natural gas and nuclear fuel as the two primary types of fuel. Staff indicated the draft report recommends FPL adopt a more balanced portfolio of fuels that includes a significant component of renewable energy sources; encourages the Florida legislature to adopt a renewable portfolio standard in order to provide a mechanism to expand the use of renewable energy in Florida; and urges FPL and the State of Florida to continue developing new programs to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels, increase conservation, and increase reliance on renewable energy sources to produce electricity. Staff recommended Council approve the draft report and authorize its transmittal to the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC).

Councilmember Overdorf said the staff report indicates FPL is not making significant contributions toward renewables, yet they have the second largest solar field in the entire county. He stated he is trying to understand how that is not significant. Staff noted the intent in the report is to say the amount of renewable energy in the overall picture is not significant. Councilmember Overdorf asked what Council could suggest for additional renewable energy beyond what FPL is currently doing. Staff stated FPL is doing as good a job as it can within the constraints of the system. Staff indicated the report recommends the state and legislature step up with a renewable portfolio standard that provides incentives for other types of renewable energy. Councilmember Overdorf stated the tone of the report is FPL is not doing anything and he asked if there is a better way to say

we encourage the state to create opportunities, not just for FPL, but for all the energy companies within the state.

Commissioner Zorc stated FPL is the lowest cost energy provider in Florida, and is ranked in the top one or two for the nation, and he would like to give them credit for this. He stated he would like Council to consider modifying the conclusion to include some of the pertinent rate structure history. He stated he will make that a motion, contingent upon Commissioner O'Bryan's comments. Commissioner O'Bryan asked if FPL has a net metering system that credits kilowatts based upon their cost to produce energy and not the retail rate. Amy Brunjes, Regional Manager/External Affairs for FPL, indicated FPL does have net metering. Commissioner O'Bryan asked if FPL credits dollar for dollar at the retail price. Ms. Brunjes asked Buck Martinez, the Senior Director of FPL's Office of Clean Energy, to respond. Mr. Martinez stated FPL provides net metering at residential rates. He indicated what costs FPL 3 cents to produce, they are providing back to the customer at 9.2 cents. He stated FPL has over 3,000 customers that are net metered, and this is being subsidized by those individuals who do not have solar on their roof.

Mr. Martinez stated when you look at the ten year site plan, part of the reason solar has not typically been included is because it is not a firm capacity that can be relied upon, because it is not available all the time. He said because it is intermittent, it can only be used when available, unlike natural gas or nuclear energy, which are available all the time. He stated FPL is increasing its solar portfolio; however FPL must be concerned about the economy and providing affordable rates to their customers in a smart manner. He indicated FPL is building 3 new solar projects without increasing the cost to the customer by leveraging the existing system and not having a tax or mandate as other states have done. Chairman Davis stated the reliability of solar would only apply if a company is trying to move toward a complete solar system. He said he believes FPL has a lot of room to grow and still have other energy sources. Mr. Martinez said it is not that it is not reliable, because when the sun is out it is extremely reliable. He stated the concern is FPL cannot manage a system with intermittent fuel, but needs to have a combination of base load as well. Councilmember Weaver stated there are emerging technologies such as vanadium bromide and other electrolytic storage mediums that can be used to capture the solar during the day and put it out at night. Mr. Martinez noted FPL is testing battery storage, where in essence batteries from vehicles are being used to model some of that technology. He stated they are also looking at other technologies that will use the ocean currents in the Gulfstream.

Commissioner Ryan said she has been learning about PACE (Property-Assessed Clean Energy) programs. She said the city is updating their ordinance to give financing options to residents to install things like solar. Mr. Martinez stated that is between the customer and the individual financing companies. Commissioner Ryan said she sees it in terms of getting more people to install solar as an option. Mr. Martinez stated every customer in the State of Florida has the option of installing solar on their roof.

Councilmember Weaver stated he has been told FPL is proposing an across the board 9.5 percent rate increase. Ms. Brunjes indicated FPL filed for a rate increase with the FPSC in March. She stated they are currently under a settlement on their rates that will expire at the end of the year. She said they have proposed a four-year rate increase where the average residential customer will pay about \$13 more a month. She said their rates are the lowest in the state and they are projecting they

will be lower than they were 10 years ago, even with the proposed rate increase, which will be incremental over a four-year term. Mr. Martinez indicated rate increases are based on investments. He said over the last few years FPL has been transforming their whole portfolio by taking down a number of old oil-fired plants; decreasing the amount of oil being imported from other countries and replacing that with natural gas; and strengthening the grid and infrastructure to withstand storm events. He also noted over the last two years there have been four reductions in their bills.

Chairman Davis stated the staff report is informational and fairly benign as it relates to the recommendation. He stated the bottom line is Council is encouraging FPL and the State of Florida to continue to develop new programs. He asked if FPL has any concerns with the report. Ms. Brunjes stated the report does not properly recognize all the company is doing. Chairman Davis noted Commissioner Zorc and Councilmember Overdorf have concerns and he asked if it would be appropriate to ask staff to add to the report language on how FPL compares to the national averages. Councilmember Overdorf stated he would like to recognize the job FPL has done in the report. Chairman Davis asked him to provide a motion for Council consideration. Councilmember Overdorf made a motion to have staff consider current Council member comments and present a modified recommendation at the next Council meeting to be forwarded to the FPSC. Chairman Davis asked when the report is due. Staff indicated the report is due July 26th. Chairman Davis asked if it would be acceptable to have staff incorporate the Council member comments from this meeting and send the report without further Council approval. Councilmember Overdorf agreed. Commissioner Zorc seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Motion

LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED PROJECT

Staff presented a brief overview of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project, which was recently announced by the Corps. Staff indicated the objectives of this project are to improve the quality, quantity, timing, and distribution of water entering Lake Okeechobee; provide management of lake water levels, reduce releases to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River estuaries; and approve system-wide operational flexibility. Staff noted the Corps and the SFWMD are planning to hold several public workshops throughout the development and implementation of this plan, with the first public workshop scheduled for July 26th in Okeechobee. Staff stated during the workshop, the Corps and SFWMD staff will describe the project and seek comments and suggestions. Staff noted an attempt to contact the Corps has been made to question why the upper and lower Kissimmee watersheds are outside the boundary of the project. Staff asked for questions and comments from Council members to include in staff's letter to the Corps.

Commissioner Zorc stated he concurs with staff's comment to include the Kissimmee River Basin, which he has been told is 55 percent of the inflows to the lake. He stated without showing that area, he does not understand how they will address the problem, because this will eliminate 70 percent of the water to the north. Chairman Davis asked if staff knew of any longer range plans to address the rest of the watershed. Staff stated attempts to contact the Corps have not gotten a response. Chairman Davis indicated at the national level is it not unusual to carve out a piece when a watershed study like this is done. He requested staff continue to pursue this question. Councilmember Overdorf stated he has spoken with two members of the SFWMD governing board regarding this, but has not received an update. He stated he knows of at least 3 landowners who are willing to participate in the program.

INDIAN RIVER LAGOON ECONOMIC VALUATION UPDATE REPORT

Staff provided a presentation on the Indian River Lagoon Economic Valuation Update report, which was completed by the East Central and Treasure Coast regional planning councils for the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. Staff indicated this economic analysis was done to establish a repeatable and cost-efficient method for estimating the total annual economic values attributable to the IRL. Quantifying these values and the IRL's total annual economic output serves to emphasize the region's economic interdependence with the IRL and the importance of restoration efforts to sustain its health and productivity. This effort represents a tremendous opportunity for the IRL region to quantify, not only the annualized economic contribution of this nationally significant estuary, but what is at stake economically if the ecosystem collapses.

Commissioner Ryan asked how defense connects to the Lagoon. Staff stated in the 1950s, when NASA was being created, they needed to find a site that was properly located, well-protected, somewhat isolated from people, and close to the equator. Staff indicated it was determined Cape Canaveral was the perfect location, because it was relatively undeveloped and the quality of life near the lagoon and the nearshore coastal waters are attractive to young engineers.

Drew Martin stated as an economic driver, the IRL is losing the economic argument to agriculture and the Everglades Agricultural Areas (EAA), because the damage being experienced in the lagoon is caused by not being able to send the water south, because all the land to the south is blocked by agriculture. He stated it is important to begin to talk about the economic value of the IRL, because he believes it is more significant to the economy than agriculture. He stated he is not saying we do not need both, but there are a lot of ways to have agriculture in the EAA without blocking the water flows to the south. He stated he is glad to see this type of economic valuation, but noted it is hard to quantify real estate values. He stated the one thing that can be quantified is what is being lost when the water is polluted and people no longer want to come here.

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Staff provided an update on Council's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, which was established in 1998 as part of an effort to implement Council's Strategic Regional Policy Plan Regional Goal 3.8: Establish the Treasure Coast Region as a Regional Economic Development District (EDD). Staff indicated this designation, given by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), provides more opportunities for federal funding to help the region remain competitive in national and global markets, and increases the power of the region to promote and help implement national, state, regional, and local economic development goals. Staff noted this designation requires the establishment of a CEDS Committee to broadly represent the main economic interests in the region and development of a CEDS plan. Staff stated the Committee is comprised of appointees from each county in the region and representatives of economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, workforce development boards, local governments, private businesses, and private citizens. Staff noted the Committee operates according to an adopted set of bylaws, meets four to six times a year, and operates under the provisions of the Florida Sunshine Law.

Staff indicated the CEDS Committee is currently updating Council's CEDS Plan, which is updated every five years and approved by Council. Staff stated this plan follows EDA guidelines; highlights the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges; and provides a set of guiding principles for community leaders to set common economic development goals and priorities for action. Staff noted the framework adopted for the state and regional economic development planning efforts is the Six Pillars of Florida's Future Economy developed by the Florida Chamber Foundation. Staff also noted the Committee is currently involved in planning an economic development summit for the Treasure Coast Region to be held on October 28, 2016. Staff stated the purpose of the summit is to engage stakeholders as part of the process to update the CEDS plan by bringing together region's business development boards, economic organizations, colleges, universities, and local governments within the region to provide a synchronized focus on economic issues.

ALL ABOARD FLORIDA UPDATE

Staff indicated there has been minimal activity related to the All Aboard Florida (AAF) project. Staff stated the corridor in Palm Beach County from the City of West Palm Beach south is currently under construction and quiet zones should be in affect by October.

Commissioner Zorc stated Indian River County public works staff met with the AAF engineering staff about 20 months ago to determine what crossing grade improvements should be done during the construction period that would be the financial responsibility of the county. He noted that none of those items were included in the plans AAF has submitted. He asked if this has occurred elsewhere. Staff stated in Palm Beach County, the metropolitan planning organization is funding the construction for additional sidewalks and sidewalk improvement, which is included in the plans from AAF. Staff noted there has been discussion regarding the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) position on which sidewalks must be included as a safety improvement, and which will fall to the local governments for funding. Staff offered to reach out to FRA and AAF staff on this issue and provide information back to all counties.

Vice Mayor Valeche asked what the deadline is for AAF to raise the money for the rest of the project. Staff indicated it is December 31, 2016 for the private activity bonds (PABs). Vice Mayor Valeche asked if that included the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) loan. Staff stated the RRIF loan is separate from the PABs, which appears to be the preferred funding mechanism. Staff noted the approval of the RRIF loan is under the authorization of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and there will be no action taken until approval of the final environmental impact statement. Staff stated the PABs are authorized by the Florida Finance Development Corporation. Vice Mayor Valeche asked if there has been any indication the project will go forward north of West Palm Beach. Staff stated there has been some conjecture on this, but AAF is advancing the completion of the 100 percent design plans for the planning and engineering side of the project, even though the financing for that part of the project remains in question.

Mr. Martin said he appreciates Vice Mayor Valeche's comments, because there is a lot of confusion about whether or not this project is a done deal. He stated he knows people who are opposed to the project, and he believes the biggest concern is going to be the traffic and how it will affect the

east/west flow. He asked for an update of this. Staff indicated the local governments are responsible for the local roadway network and the Florida Department of Transportation is the state agency responsible for the interface between the roadway and rail networks. Staff stated they are not aware of a particular implementation action, because there is a bit of a distinction between how the trains operate and how the roadway network is managed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

With respect to the Lake Okeechobee Watershed project, Garry Ritter of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation stated he also questions the map, speculating it looks like the map the Corps provided during the Central Everglades Planning Process that is scheduled to be completed in 2019. He said with that there will be storage in the Kissimmee Basin and an increase in regulations in Lake Kissimmee. He said there are several large programs coming together and it is like a puzzle to make all the pieces fit together and figure out what is going on in the overall grand scheme. He stated he is very pleased Council is taking a holistic approach on the issue of water throughout the entire region and, as Councilmember Bournique stated, the system starts in Orlando and runs all the way down to the Everglades and Florida Bay. He stated there are anthropogenic inputs into Lake Okeechobee, and is reminded of how in 1986 the dairy industry was blamed for the water pollution. He stated this resulted in a huge impact to the economy of Okeechobee County. He said agriculture wants to be at the table and help, and ready to work with this Council and any other agencies to be part of the solution. Chairman Davis thanked Mr. Ritter and said this reminds him of a conversation he had with Michelle McGovern from Senator Nelson's office of the need for an economic evaluation of Lake Okeechobee. Mr. Ritter stated he has a long history with Lake Okeechobee, having worked at the water management district. He stated many years ago they looked at the internal loading and the nutrients within the lake, and he now understands the current algal bloom is likely the result of a perfect storm, because there is the perfect temperature and the right atmospheric conditions. He suggested the sediments in the lake should also be analyzed.

Mr. Martin stated at the water management governing board meeting the previous day he found it interesting the Republican Party has changed their minds on all the things they had opposed with respect to septic tanks. He said originally there was a law requiring septic tank inspections every five years, but it was repealed. He stated the Governor's office said our water pollution problems are a septic tank problem, and then they said it is a development problem. He stated if it is a development problem, then it is a great opportunity for Council to become involved, and the people who are opposed to the development should be coming to Council and saying there is too much development and it is ruining the water. He indicated he believes the real problem is permitting of wetlands destruction and the fact agriculture sits on the EAA where the water historically flowed. He said he believes there is room to purchase land, have a reservoir, and still have agriculture. He stated the problem now is the area is very dissected and the assumption is that as soon as it begins to flood you move the water. He said putting a reservoir south of the Glades area cities will actually improve their safety and provide jobs. He stated he thinks it is a shame there is a bridge being built through a state park that will make the water quality even worse.

Kelley Burke from Commissioner McKinlay's office noted Commissioner McKinlay is Palm Beach County's representative on a 16-county coalition responsible for Lake Okeechobee. She stated

Commissioner McKinlay has requested an emergency meeting of local, state, and federal partners to address the algal blooms in the area.

STAFF COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m. This signature is to attest that the undersigned is the Secretary or a designated nominee of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and that the information provided herein is the true and correct Minutes of the July 15, 2016 meeting of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.

Date

Signature