

**RESTORE ACT
Public Meeting
May 14, 2013**

Attendees: Ryan Bell, Board of County Commissioners
Shenley Neely, Board Employee Representing County's Interest
Chris Cowart, School Board Representative
Marilyn Ladner, Higher Education Institution
Leslie Sturmer, Aquaculture
David Pieklik, Economic Development Representative
Bruce Wilson, Tourism Industry Representative
Andrew Gude, Citizen Representative
Vacancy, Development/Job Creation Representative
Bill Williams, SCG Governmental Affairs
Fred Moody, County Coordinator
Anne Bast Brown, County Attorney

Comm. Ryan Bell opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. The invocation was given by Bill Williams followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

Bill Williams said he had sent information on scoring and on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation status on the criminal violations. Mr. Williams discussed a project that is being implemented by Pasco County with the school board utilizing various institutes to create a major project and by involving community centers, environmental institute and reaching out to universities for a state-wide project. Mr. Williams explained the Foundation of Fish and Wildlife will be publically releasing the dollars from the criminal fines today.

Andrew Gude explained that Seahore Key Marine Lab is a joint venture with the University of Florida and Santa Fe Community College located here in Levy County.

Mr. Williams said a joint effort from high school to academic institutions should be considered for the Pot 4 funds. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Gude, Mr. Williams said Bob Ballard was hired by Tallahassee Community College to run the marine institute and recommended Leslie Sturmer use her local contacts to bring other groups to Levy County.

Ms. Sturmer asked Mr. Williams to provide examples since he was traveling around the state for the Committee to review and to determine how they could be used at the local level.

Ms. Sturmer explained in response to Mr. Williams comments that the University of Florida was submitting a project for the Pot 2 funds and the deadline was July 7, 2013.

Ryan Bell inquired if there was going to be any flexibility on the date for the Pot 2 funds. Mr. Williams said there are no treasury rules or information but projects need to be submitted for state-wide significance tying into environmental and ecotourism. Mr. Williams

said he would consider asking Mr. Bob Ballard to the next Committee meeting to discuss the project he is doing. Ms. Sturmer said she had received the intent of their project through the Sea Grant program.

Mr. Bell said the Committee needs to get the local application process designed and organize the next steps.

Mr. Williams said this week he would provide the information from other counties such as Escambia, Gulf, and Wakulla on how they are going to be processing applications for the Pot 1 funds.

Mr. Bell stated with assistance County staff could formulate a RESTORE Act page on the County web site so the public will be able to go to a centralized location to obtain information and an application.

Mr. Williams said he understood that there would be a designation of stakeholders and a letter would be sent to the stakeholders, then there needs to be town hall meetings to go over the process. Mr. Williams said his impression was that the stakeholders would be the first step.

Anne Brown, County Attorney said it would be more appropriate for the Board of County Commissioners to send a letter inviting the stakeholders to partner with the Board on Pot 2 or Pot 3 projects and that this was an advisory committee whose primary responsibility is to review the applications for Pot 1 funds. Ms. Brown explained the Board of County Commissioners have no authority to review the applications for Pot 2 or Pot 3 funds.

Mr. Williams asked if a draft of the bylaws had been prepared.

Ms. Brown explained that the Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution for reviewing applications for the RESTORE Act funds from Pot 1. Ms. Brown explained her understanding was the Committee was to develop an application process for Pot 1 funds and review the submitted applications for projects to be recommended for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners. Ms. Brown cautioned that some of the individuals on the Committee would have internal conflicts as Committee members if asked to make recommendations on Pot 2 or Pot 3 funds.

Mr. Williams said it was a Board of County Commissioners' decision who vested the Committee with the recommendations for Pot 1 funds and the Committee members should not have a conflict as the Pot 2, Pot 3 or Pot 4 applications would not be placed before the Committee.

Mr. Bell said there is a possibility to match and leverage with the other funding Pots. Mr. Bell said the Committee needs to proceed with application process, designating stakeholders and report to the Board of County Commissioners promptly.

Ms. Brown explained the stakeholders would have more affect on the funds from Pot 2, Pot 3 and Pot 4 and several Committee members' employers already have active applications for some of those funds.

There was discussion among the Committee members on defining the stakeholders and if the stakeholders were county, state or federal levels of contact. Some Committee members clarified that the stakeholders list was for contacts to work with the Committee on its tasks.

Marilyn Ladner added that the Committee may receive an application for Pot 1 funds and upon review find it is more of a regional project that the applicant may want to team with another county or agency for funding through Pot 2 funds or other funding pots.

Mr. Williams said the overall mission is to look at Pot 1 funds but would be remiss if the information relating to Pot 2 funds which has a deadline of July 6 is not considered and he wants to inform the Committee of projects being pursued involving school systems, universities, colleges so opportunities are not lost.

Mr. Bell said the Committee needs to proceed with drafting a letter to stakeholders for the Pot 2 and Pot 3 funds, devise an application process and set a schedule for town hall meetings. Mr. Bell added the scoring of the applications also needs to be completed either by the Committee or by staff. Mr. Bell said when an application is received a determination can be made for which pot for funds is better suited for the project and a recommendation made to the applicant in a letter.

Ms. Sturmer explained it is to late to apply for funds in Pot 2 if it has not already been done. Ms. Sturmer said the University of Florida is submitting a project for Levy County and including Dixie County for oyster restoration.

There was further discussion on scheduling town hall meetings, education of the public and agencies within the County on funds that are available and the requirements for applying for those funds and the Pots of funds that are available. Discussion included informing the local stakeholders and the public of the meetings and education opportunities.

Chris Cowart moved to write a letter of invitation to provide an information session for the public with the dates to be decided, second by Bruce Wilson and the motion carried.

Fred Moody said meetings should be held in Cedar Key and Inglis and Yankeetown and local fishing clubs should be considered.

Ms. Ladner recommended notifying the local Chambers of Commerce.

Mr. Williams questions who would draft the letter and Ms. Brown advised she would draft a letter to be sent to the local stakeholders. It was determined the letter would be for the public as well.

After further discussion it was determined that the town hall meetings would be scheduled to be held as follows: Bronson Court House (Court Room A) on Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.; Cedar Key Community Center, Tuesday, June 13, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. and Inglis and Yankeetown on Tuesday, July 16, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. with Ms. Ladner arranging the location of that meeting.

Mr. Williams said he would send a press release, talking points, samples of applications from other counties and a draft stakeholder invitation by Monday, May 20, 2013.

Ms. Brown advised she would draft an invitation letter for Mr. Bell to review.

Mr. Bell requested that the stakeholders list be subdivided to local, state and federal levels.

Ms. Brown advised that the Board of County Commissioners need to develop their own list of projects.

Chris Cowart moved to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2013 meeting, seconded by Bruce Wilson and the motion carried.

Ms. Sturmer asked Mr. Williams to provide information on what type of projects other counties are considering for the Pot 1 funding and the protocols they are applying.

In response to Ms. Ladner's inquiry, Mr. Williams said that SB 1024 which was SB 7007 had the language removed referring to RESTORE Act funds and will only affect the funds that are secured by the suit filed by Pam Bondi, Attorney General and that a not for profit organization will be established with 9 elected individuals appointed by the Governor and Cabinet.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

RESTORE ACT COMMITTEE



Ryan Bell, Chairman