

**RESTORE ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, PASCO COUNTY, FLORIDA
HYBRID/VIRTUAL MEETING**

ANNOTATED MINUTES

APRIL 1, 2021

**PREPARED IN THE OFFICE OF
NIKKI ALVAREZ-SOWLES, Esq., CLERK & COMPTROLLER**

**THE MINUTES WERE PREPARED IN AGENDA ORDER
AS PUBLISHED AND NOT IN THE ORDER
IN WHICH THE ITEMS WERE HEARD**

6:00 P.M.

**WEST PASCO GOVERNMENT CENTER, BOARD ROOM 1ST FLOOR
8731 CITIZENS DRIVE, NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA 34654**

Committee Members

Jack Mariano, Board of County Commissioners
Kathryn Starkey (Alternate), Board of County Commissioners
Cynthia Armstrong, School Board Representative
Dr. Lisa Richardson, College/University Representative - **ABSENT**
Victor Geiger, Science or Fisheries Representative
Lauren Micelli, Pasco Economic Development Council Representative - **ABSENT**
Kristin Tonkin, Tourism Representative
Nicholas Mudry, Citizen Representative
Bruce Mills, West Pasco Chamber of Commerce Representative - **ABSENT**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mariano called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**INVOCATION
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Jessica Rodriguez, Deputy Clerk, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman Mariano introduced Mr. Victor “Skip” Geiger, Science or Fisheries Representative, and Mr. Nicholas Mudry, Citizen Representative, as new committee members.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Rodriguez called the roll. Dr. Lisa Richardson, Ms. Lauren Micelli, and Mr. Bruce Mills were absent. Commissioner Starkey arrived to the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Due to COVID-19 operations and to safeguard the wellbeing and safety of our community and staff, citizens are given an opportunity to comment on items listed on the Agenda by participating via WebEx during the meeting, making comments at a public comment kiosk located outside the Board Room, or by sending comments via e-mail. A pre-registration process has been published on the Agenda and Minutes page and must be completed to participate by WebEx. The Board will take Public Comment on items on this agenda.

Chairman Mariano reviewed the procedures to be followed.

Ms. Marcia Lamanna stated she represented the Hudson communities of Leisure Beach and Signal Cove. She discussed how they had been following the dredging activity for several years, and stated there were questions about the community support regarding the dredging. She noted the community put a petition in place so the Board would be aware what the two community’s feelings were on the project. She discussed how the communities were in support of the releasing of the funds, that the communities were proactive in maintaining the canals and channels, that approving the funds would be beneficial to the community, and would provide safer canals and channels. She noted there were 396 signatures submitted between the two communities.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Minutes from February 4, 2021 RESTORE Meeting for Approval

The Committee approved the Minutes for the February 4, 2021 RESTORE Meeting.

INFORMATION ITEM:

RESTORE 101 - Refresher:

- **Projects Selected**

Ms. Pamela Lynch, Program Coordinator, used a PowerPoint presentation to discuss the item. She provided an overview of the RESTORE Act, a timeline of how the RESTORE Act was created, the results of the settlement from the BP oil spill, and the money flow from the 5 different pots. She provided the percentage break down of the pots, noted the County had requested funds from Pot 1, and that the treasury was who approved the funding. She provided an extensive review of the various pots and required criteria. She spoke regarding Pot 1 unobligated funds, submitted projects, processes followed that in order to qualify for funds in Pot 2 you were required to have a project that DEP was interested in fitting into their Comprehensive Plan, Pasco County had not been awarded money from Pot 2, Pasco had access to and had been awarded money from Pot 3, that Pot 3 was overseen by the RESTORE Council, Pot 3 funds went towards science based projects that also fit into a Comprehensive Plan, she discussed conditions of funding for Pot 3, and that Pot 3 unobligated funds totaled 1.4 million dollars.

Mr. Curtis Franklin, Program Manager, Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Administration, clarified the 1.4 million dollars had been re-obligated.

Ms. Lynch continued with the presentation and spoke regarding a study with GBA on the channel restoration project and the conclusion that a lot of work needed to be done and it would fit under Pot 3, which the application had been submitted and was approved by the Gulf Consortium. The RESTORE Council had possession of the application, and they expected the RESTORE Council would approve the project. She explained Pot 4 was reserved for NOAA, that Pot 5 was reserved for the Centers of Excellence, and Pasco did not have access to Pot 4 or Pot 5 funding. She provided a list of priorities and goals for RESTORE.

Chairman Mariano stated it was a great presentation and he suggested it be distributed to all the Board Members and felt it would be helpful.

Mr. Franklin explained an easy way to remember the pots was Pot 1 was money directed to the County, Pot 2 was federal money that all five states were competing for, Pot 5 was used for comprehensive projects, Pot 3 was guaranteed money to the County and that was split evenly between each of the 23 counties. The Board would be primarily concerned with Pots 1 and 3.

Chairman Mariano noted that Mr. Franklin had been involved since the beginning and that he did a great job getting the program started.

- **Project Status**
- **Scoring Criteria**

Ms. Pamela Lynch, Program Coordinator, reviewed the list of projects submitted and the scoring criteria used.

Mr. Curtis Franklin, Program Manager, Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Administration, provided clarification on the amount of projects that had been addressed and ranked, and stated there were only a few projects that had not been funded.

Extensive discussion followed between the Board Members and Staff regarding the multistep process; that the scoring criteria allowed for projects to move up and down based on when the money was provided; the funding was split over 15 years; the criteria was helpful because of the large number of projects that were reviewed; and the importance of public input.

Chairman Mariano explained when they submitted for the first allocation of the Pot 3 money they submitted for 5 million dollars, and that the first allocation was supposed to be for 4.3 million for the first 4 or 5 years. Because they liked their project so much they gave them the full allocation. He noted all of the information would be available online.

Ms. Tonkin spoke regarding an issue with the City of Port Richey projects and stated she wanted to be sure the funds were being used properly.

COMMISSIONER STARKEY ARRIVED TO THE MEETING AT 6:41 P.M.

Mr. Franklin discussed the original City of Port Richey's project, and that the scope had shrunk. The treasury agreed to hold the funds for their project but that they would need to reapply for the project. He understood they were now applying for dredging and he hoped to see a grant issued. He explained there were no RESTORE Act funds for the boat ramp, and that those funds could be pulled from the Florida Boaters Improvement Program.

Discussion continued between Ms. Tonkin and Mr. Franklin regarding how the City of Port Richey used funds to do the first part of their dredge.

Gulf Harbors and Hudson Channels Dredge Project Update

Mr. George Thomas, Public Works, provided an update regarding the project and explained the item would be presented at the May 18, 2021 BCC Meeting. They would be using a Town of Jupiter piggyback contract, that they anticipated adding Gulf Harbors and Gulf Landings back into the study, it could be added during the BCC Meeting, and they were working on getting an RSQ for additional consultants for the County so they wouldn't need to do any piggyback contracts for dredging or coastal engineering projects. He spoke regarding RSQ process.

Extensive discussion followed regarding which projects would be presented to the Board; the anticipated costs of the studies; what would be included in the studies; when the item was previously brought before the Committee and the Board; where information regarding the project could be found; the project being part of the State's Expenditure Plan; the process of studies for dredging; the cost of the study; the purpose of the project was to obtain the final engineering drawings as well as the permits; they would also negotiate the location for a more detailed analysis of the soil samples and where to dispose of them; past discussion regarding the project; and areas included in the project.

Chairman Mariano spoke regarding Sea Forest pulling out and then wanted back in.

Mr. Mudry stated that Gulf Landings had always wanted the dredging.

In depth discussion was held regarding shared channels; that the Woodlands had already contracted to do a portion of the channel, areas that need to be cleaned up; some areas had already been studied and could be eliminated from this project; the map displayed; the proposed cost of the study; meeting requirements for the members; the project area; that not all of the area needed to be dredged; GBA couldn't find records of the channel and it would be impossible to get it permitted; discussion about the mangroves; Baillie's Bluff; and that commercial businesses accessed the area from US 19.

Chairman Mariano stated the meetings would be set up.

Support Letter/Petition from Pasco County Coastal Residents

Chairman Mariano asked Ms. Lynch if she had the support letter.

Ms. Pamela Lynch, Program Coordinator, stated she had the letter.

Chairman Mariano asked that she distribute electronic copies to the Committee Members.

Project Funding Update

Ms. Pamela Lynch, Program Coordinator, stated that everything had already covered with the handouts that were provided along with the presentation.

Chairman Mariano addressed Pot 2 money and the septic and sewer project along the coast which was part of DEP's strategic plan to get it done. Hernando and Citrus did really good at getting State funding. He suggested a presentation be done in order to make a recommendation to the State.

Ms. Lynch explained that the reason why Hernando and Citrus were able to do these projects was because the sewers they were replacing were impacting springs; Pasco did not have that issue yet.

Commissioner Starkey noted that we did have a portion of that watershed.

Ms. Lynch noted that if it fit into their Comprehensive Plan funds may be available.

Extensive discussion continued regarding what could be done with the spoils; saving the islands or building more barrier islands; moving sand back at Anclote Key sandbar; that the State would not allow contaminated sand to be put back in the water; sewage problems; bacteria; and water clarity.

Chairman Mariano stated that for the past six months the numbers had been good; there was definitely an issue out there. He spoke regarding efforts being made at Hudson Beach.

Commissioner Starkey spoke about Gulf Harbors and the Lindrick system. She spoke regarding leakage, area septic systems, salt water going into the pipes, and her Legislative request was to obtain funds to fix the pipes. She spoke regarding efforts being made to obtain the funding.

Discussion continued regarding parts of Flor-a-Mar being sleeved; on the main road not on individual homes; run off from yards washed into the canals; problem areas; and storm water issues.

Commissioner Starkey stated she was excited that CERN had remained on the list.

Chairman Mariano led discussion regarding Pot 5 and the educational component.

Mr. Curtis Franklin, Program Manager, Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Administration, explained Pot 5 was run by the Marine Biology Center at USF St. Pete. He did not know if there was a process for applying for it were not a University.

Discussion was held about possible school partnerships; the FSU Institute of Ocean Research; clarification of the source of money; the CERN fresh water component and original project; that only a certain part of the project was approved; a boat for the Energy Management Center; the plan for students to help with the sea grass restoration project; and the artificial reef project.

ADJOURNED

Chairman Mariano adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.



RESTORE ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HYBRID/VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 1, 2021

Office of Nikki Alvarez-Sowles, Esq., Clerk & Comptroller

Prepared by: Carolyn M. Mendez
Carolyn Mendez, Records Clerk I
Board Records Division