



LOXAHATCHEE RIVER MANAGEMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL

Monday, March 31, 2014 2:00 pm

The River Center - 805 N. US Highway 1, Jupiter, FL 33477

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Albrey Arrington called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

II. Roll Call

Albrey Arrington – Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District

Ann Broadwell – Florida Department of Transportation

Peter Dewitt – US Department of Interior

Deb Drum – Martin County

Chad Kennedy – Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Megan Jacoby – South Florida Water Management District

Susan Kennedy – Village of Tequesta

Pat Magrogan – Landowner Representative

Peter Merritt – Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council

Samuel Payson – Northern Palm Beach County Improvement District

Dick Roberts – Martin County Conservation Alliance

Anne Scott – Martin County

Hal Valeche – Palm Beach County

Herb Zebuth – PBC Local Environment & Conservation Group

III. Approval of Minutes from January 27, 2014

Minutes were not completed in time for this meeting; however, the minutes will be prepared and brought to the June 30th meeting for approval.

IV. Election of Secretary

Susan Kennedy was nominated at the last meeting to serve as Secretary of the LRMCC but because an alternate cannot serve as an elected officer, Ann Broadwell was nominated to serve as Secretary. Deb Drum made the motion and Pat Magrogan seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. Watershed Status Updates

A. Loxahatchee Oxbow Repair - Mark Nelson

Mark Nelson provided an update of the oxbow restoration relating to tour boat concerns in the Loxahatchee River. He presented a historical overview of what they have found going back in time of the Oxbow flow through the River and the two main tributaries affecting it - Cypress Creek and Moonshine Creek.

Comments/Questions

Pat Walker stated that Tom Howard did bring up this issue at the last Jupiter Inlet District meeting and they authorized Taylor Engineering to do an analysis and cost estimate. He did cite a couple of problems in that the Vallisneria beds may be an impediment to the dredging so this will need to be addressed but they are willing to mitigate. The other challenge will be how to get the dredge up to that area and barge the sediment out; however, they are willing to go forward with this. The question that came up is, if this project would qualify for LRPI funding. Pat Walker asked if there were any partners that can step up and that if we can spread the cost out between agencies and funding programs, it won't be a big hit on anyone.

Mark Nelson thanked the District for stepping up and giving him some preliminary numbers to start working with.

Susan Kennedy said she is all for doing the repair because it is important for the River long term but, what about long term without doing anything to Moonshine and Cypress Creek.

Mark Nelson said that there has been work done on Cypress Creek and it's not near what it used to be.

Dick Roberts discussed putting together a restoration team and said he will discuss it later in the meeting.

Deb Drum shared that Dick Roberts had a great idea about trying to get a technical working group together and that she has had interagency discussions about regional restoration activities. She agrees with Susan Kennedy that we are not able to afford to keep putting band aids on issues until they get the hydrology right. She said they have talked with the SFWMD about regional restoration opportunities and looking at Moonshine Creek in particular as a way to get some flows going and feels that they need to bring Tom Lindsey into these discussions. In their Capital improvement plan for board consideration later this year, there is a Cypress Creek weir and Groves STA project that they are very transparent about letting people know their intent in applying for LRPI grant later this year. They have had technical discussions that are focused on restoring regional hydrology.

B. Water Quality – Bud Howard, LRD

Bud Howard gave an update on Water Quality issues. In the last couple of months, there were a series of swimming advisories issued at Dubois Park due to water quality health concerns with bacteria issues from fecal pollution. The Department of Health partnered with EPA to do weekly monitoring of key beaches throughout the state. A great website to checkout is the Florida Healthy Beaches Program at the following link: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/%5C/healthy-environments/beach-water-quality/index.html>. So far in 2014, there have been five no swim advisories. Big rain events beginning in January may have contributed to these water quality issues. As for septic tanks, the Loxahatchee River District's Governing Board approved an Inter-local agreement with

Jupiter Inlet Colony and the Village of Tequesta to convert that neighborhood to sewer system. This is a major milestone and construction will begin April 2015.

Comments/Questions

Deb Drum shared that Martin County's Utilities department is engaging their first bacterial source tracking monitoring today and they are doing another one in August. They are doing a dry and wet season sample and they are testing for five different bacterial sources.

Hal Valeche said that Dubois Park has been a huge problem for the county and for the Town of Jupiter. The county had to cut back on its park ranger program due to budget concerns. Although it is a beautiful park, there are parking problems and it is over capacity. There are also issues with lifeguards and people trespassing on private property.

C. Lainhart and Masten Dam Repair Update – Megan Jacoby, SFWMD

Megan Jacoby provided an update on the Lainhart and Masten Dam Repair and shared that there is a press release on the South Florida Water Management District's website about this project. There are no major updates from last meeting except that surveyors are out at the locations. There has been very minimal trimming of vegetation. The surveyors are done at Lainhart but they have two more weeks at Masten Dam. The South Florida Water Management District expects that the plans for the repair work will be available at the end of April. The Council will be given an opportunity to review and comment on the plans. Since waiting until the next LRMCC may delay the permitting for this project, Megan suggested that a special LRMCC meeting be set up prior to the next scheduled meeting in June for the Council to review and make comments on the design for this project.

Comments/Questions

Chad Kennedy asked about funding.

Terrie Bates said that the funding is planned for this project.

Albrey Arrington asked if the preliminary plans were available and suggested that Kathy LaMartina email the plans to everyone to review prior to the next scheduled meeting and if anyone has a major issue that would need to be discussed with the Council, then Kathy will set up a special meeting prior to the June regularly scheduled meeting.

Chad Kennedy suggested that it would be better to meet in person to discuss.

Terrie Bates suggested that the plans be emailed to everyone so that everyone has a chance to review and they make note of any comments so that they are prepared to discuss at the next scheduled meeting in June.

Albrey Arrington offered the date of June 2nd at 2 p.m. for the special LRMCC meeting to discuss the preliminary plan design for this project so that the public has a chance to comment.

Chad Kennedy suggested that the SFWMD place a sign at the site about the special public meeting and Albrey Arrington agreed.

VI. Project Updates

A. Florida Department of Transportation raising of PGA Blvd from SR 710 to the C-18 canal and the G160 and 161 structures – Ann Broadwell

Ann Broadwell shared that FDOT will be raising PGA Blvd from SR710 to the C-18 canal. It will remain a two lane road with added paved shoulders. FDOT will be working very closely with PBC Environmental Resource Management to find the best location for a bridge with a wildlife underpass and sufficient height to allow passage of kayaks and canoes, similar to the one on SR 710 over the C-18 Canal. They are leaving the old culvert on the west end. An extensive hydrologic modeling exercise is being done with the help of the SFWMD. This will be a design-built contract which will be advertised in July 2014. FDOT will be going to the Palm Beach Gardens City Council meeting on Thursday, April 3rd to get input and feedback. There is a workshop set up some time in April. Ann will get exact date and location. Also, FDOT will be adding lanes to SR 710 – the two lane portion that will go to four lanes leading up to the Palm Beach/Martin County line. This is also a design-built contract and has already been advertised. Both of these are considered safety projects.

Comments/Questions

Pat Magrogan asked about Mitigation.

Ann Broadwell said that they're looking at advertising for the purchase of credits from privately held wetland mitigation banks and also have credits available at a site that they worked on with SFWMD. Their first preference is to buy credits.

Hal Valache asked Ann what would be the detour during the construction.

Ann Broadwell pointed out the project location on a map and said that if you would be coming out of Mirasol or Palm Beach Gardens and wanted to go south, you would take the Turnpike to Northlake and if you wanted to go north, you would take the Turnpike to Indiantown Rd.

Susan Kennedy asked regarding the design on Beeline, if there is a shoulder bike lane?

Hal Valeche said that he doesn't think there is one because of the wedge of the privately held land.

Ann Broadwell said that what they had looked at during the PD&E study is that they had enough right-of-way to do the roadway improvements, the on-sight stormwater treatment with ditches and swales and in order to put a bike lane or a shared use path they would have to purchase right of way. Because there are publicly owned properties, they would have to go through the 4F process so they are working with them in getting that connectivity in there without making it a major real estate investment.

B. Loxahatchee Wild and Scenic Management Plan 5-Year Implementation Schedule – Albrey Arrington

Albrey Arrington shared that we need to find a way to bring the implementation schedule to the dashboard. The dashboard is maintained and posted to the LRMCC website. The schedule lists the tasks to be completed during the 5-year period and the agencies responsible for the completion of each task. Albrey suggested that between now and the next meeting that everyone please take the time to review this schedule and see what they are responsible for and make appropriate updates on the schedule. This is an easy way to hold everyone accountable to make sure all updates are included in the schedule.

VII. Member Issues (brief, verbal status update)

- A. Land Management
- B. Flood Control
- C. Environmental Issues
- D. Recreation Opportunities
- E. Permits

Pat Magrogan shared that the North Bay Homeowners Association meeting was canceled due to the storm but was rescheduled for April 17th at the Town of Jupiter at 6 p.m. She introduced Abbey Brennan, Mayor of Tequesta. Abbey shared that the Village of Tequesta has significant concerns about *All Aboard Florida*. The biggest concern has to do with the railroad bridge over the Loxahatchee as it poses both a marine issue as well as land problem. The normally raised railroad bridge must be locked down to allow passage of a train. This lock down process has been experiencing problems. The only three exits from the peninsula to the east could be blocked by a train waiting for the bridge problems to be corrected. When the bridge is locked down, it disrupts boat traffic on the River. Representatives from *All Aboard Florida*, the Coast Guard, Loxahatchee River District and Jupiter Inlet District are all planning on attending the meeting scheduled for April 17th.

Albrey Arrington shared that if anyone is concerned or interested about the issues regarding *All Aboard Florida* on either side, Representative Patrick Murphy has an open letter to the public soliciting input on *All Aboard Florida*, so he encourages everyone to attend and communicate at this meeting.

Dick Roberts shared the information on the handouts he gave out on Cypress Creek Observations and showed a picture taken with Marion Hedgepeth, Yongshan Wan and Patti Gorman. He discussed the poor condition of the creek and its floodplain and talked about getting the Interagency Cypress Creek Restoration team back together. He pointed out some of the modeling efforts that were done in the past and said that the team has done plenty of studies and still have not convened in the last five years. He suggested we try to get this Interagency Cypress Creek Restoration team back together again to tackle these issues.

Terrie Bates suggested it would be helpful for a letter to come from the Council to the SFWMD saying that we need to move forward with some plans in this area and ask them to take the lead.

Herb Zebuth moves the motion for the Council to prepare the letter to the SFWMD's Executive Director and it was seconded by Pat Magrogan. The motion was approved for the Council to draft a letter to the SFWMD.

Albrey Arrington agrees that this property and issues that are being discussed are very high priority to the Council and suggested that if time permits at the conclusion of the June 2nd special meeting on Lainhart and Masten Dam, the Council begin a very high level discussion of ideas of things that need to get done.

Susan Kennedy shared that Cypress Creek west of the interstate is under lease right now for cattle grazing.

Megan Jacoby handed out a document with information about the lease that was discussed.

Deb Drum shared that the Gulf Stream Cattle lease is a preset item on their Martin County Board of County Commission agenda for their April 1st meeting at 2:30 p.m. for approval of the lease since they are co-owners with the SFWMD. The Gulf Stream Citrus Rd and Culpepper public access permit process is in place. They have received feedback from concerned users regarding their observations that those gates are being left open or unlocked and the permit requires that the gates be closed. They are working with the agencies to fix some of those issues. Also, on Gulf Stream Citrus Rd they recently received a report of vehicles traveling on the road at dangerous speeds so they have notified the District so that they can follow up with lessees of the area. Also, Construction is on the way on the Kitching Creek Central flowway. The clearing and grubbing is 85 percent complete on that property and excavation is expected to start this week and will be completed about a year from now. On the Ranch Colony berm, the work is complete. They are continuing to work with property owners on easement issues and will be requesting through the Martin County budget process, additional funds to address the remaining part of berm. As a result of technical discussions with the SFWMD and others, to develop new ideas for Loxahatchee River restoration using property acquired in the Cypress Creek Basin, Martin County obtaining cost estimates to design a new structure and a flow through marsh adjacent to the Ranch Colony Canal. The goal is to have a proposal prepared for the next round of the LRPI project request.

Albrey Arrington shared that before it gets too hot he encourages everyone to go out and hike on the old Indiantown grade from the Culpepper property all the way out to Pratt Whitney Road. He said it's a beautiful piece of watershed. It's a place where you can take your mountain bike, some hiking shoes and hike the trail. There is a great Martin County parking place out on Pratt Whitney Rd between 76 and Indiantown Road on the east side of the road.

Susan Kennedy shared that Pine Glades Natural Area has just recently been open. It's on the south side of Indiantown Rd just west of Jupiter Farms. It is unusually wet right now and is full of water and wading birds. It's a great fish and release spot and great spot to see the sunset.

VIII. Public Comment

Meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

The next meetings that are scheduled for 2014 are as follows:

June 30th, Sept 22th

DRAFT