

Local RESTORE Act Pot 1 Committee
Minutes
October 4, 2017

localrestoreact@co.walton.fl.us

The Local RESTORE Committee met on Wednesday, October 4, 2017 at 4:00 PM Courthouse Board Room, DeFuniak Springs, Florida.

The following Committee members were present: Tim Pauls (Tourist Industry), Crystal Steele (Health and Human Services), George Abert (Coastal Restoration and Management), Dr. Matt Aresco (Environmental), Trey Nick (Fishing Industry), Cindy Neale (Educator), and Brandon Elkins (Arts and Culture).

Committee members not present: Amy Stoyles (Business South End of County), Bruce Naylor (Business North End of County), Frank Schupp (Economic Development) and Laurie Hood (Community Leader).

Staff members present: Commissioner Sara Comander (Chairman), Melinda Gates (Environmental Specialist, Coastal Resource Liaison), Billy Williams (RESTORE Act Coordinator), Sidney Noyes (County Attorney) and Melinda Wickham (Commissioner's Aide).

A quorum was present and proof of Public Notice was given.

Sara Comander Chair, opened the meeting at 4:00 PM.

Welcome and Introductions: Commissioner Comander opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. She thanked everyone for giving of their time and for taking on the responsibility and challenges of overseeing this endeavor.

Approval of Agenda:

This is the initial meeting to inform the committee members about the RESTORE Act Pot 1 funding initiatives and guidelines.

Approval of Minutes:

There were no minutes to present at this meeting.

Committee member Introductions: Commissioner Comander asked that everyone introduce themselves and tell how they represent the community.

RESTORE Act and Triumph Overview: Billy Williams is the Walton County Restore Act Coordinator, Mr. Williams presented an overview and analysis of the Restore Act of 2012 and the Gulf Coast Corridor Act that provides an insight into how the Clean Water Act and the Resources and Ecosystem Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf coast States Act was developed to direct a portion of the Clean Water Act civil penalties from the Deepwater Horizon incident to Gulf restoration.

Mr. Williams continued to provide information about the governing body that is tasked with how the funds are spent, the process that the Treasury Department mandates and the breakdown of Pots 1, 2, and 3. Pot 1 is the portion that the 23 Consortium counties share with the eight disproportionate counties receiving 75% of the Pot 1 funds, Pot 2 has an 11 member committee and is the Federal Government's Environmental portion, Pot 3 is the 23 county Consortium portion and Pots 4 and 5 are based in NOAA, EDA monitoring, Science and Research based.

Mr. Williams mentioned that the new Triumph Board has been formed and Senator Gaetz is the Chairman, along with Stan Connelly, Pam Dana, Jason Show, Bob Bonezzi, Steve Riggs and Allan Benz as board members. Triumph board meetings are televised on the Florida Channel and the website is: MyFloridaTriumph.com

Legal Overview: Sidney Noyes, County Attorney stated that since this committee is an advisory board and it falls under the entity of the Board of County Commissioners, everyone has to abide by the Florida Sunshine Law, including ethics and public records. Ms. Noyes will be scheduling a one hour training class for the members in November or early December. She explained that according to the Sunshine Law no member can speak to another member about committee matters outside of a public meeting. She explained that all public records will be kept at county level and if anyone sends an email to a committee member regarding Restore Act matters, the email(s) should be forwarded to Sidney or to Melinda Gates or Melinda Wickham. Ms. Noyes also mentioned that notes taken in a meeting can be public record, along with any text messages; basically anything written is a public record. It is very important to comply with the regulations. Restore email address: localrestoreact@co.walton.fl.us Any conflicts of interest have to be fact specific and the need to recuse if involved in a project or partnership relative to RESTORE Act matters, if unsure, defer to the county attorney for guidance.

The Accepted Walton County RESTORE Multi-Year Implementation Plan (M.Y.I.P.): Ms. Gates provided information regarding the Local Restore Committee Phase 1. She explained the application and evaluation process of the submitted projects of which 17 went to the BCC. These projects ranged from education to stormwater. Walton County had a consultant write the M.Y.I.P and it was sent to Treasury in August 2016 and was accepted by Treasury on August 17, 2017. The 17 projects are back on paper and submitting grant applications that will go back to Treasury for approval. Ms. Gates explained that Walton County will receive 13.712411372% of the funds disbursed to the eight disproportionate counties and by 2031 we should have received \$38,257,126.55 for approved projects.

Mission, Structure, Duties and Responsibilities: As we move forward in this process, we may have to change some strategies and plans, depending on other key issues, i.e. there are 650 septic tanks that are linked to the US Highway 331 expansion; this could be one project. There are timelines regarding projects and matching funds and we cannot miss the window of opportunity. We have to be diligent and the county needs to solicit projects that are environmental and economic based. Mr. Williams continued to explain about the RESTORE Act and Triumph funds appropriations and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Treasury Department and the State of Florida.

Questions and Public Comments: Mr. Craig Barker asked about the Legislative process and if Visit Florida is an applicate for the Triumph funds and how will it affect the counties. Mr. Williams stated that the governor has discretion over the \$85 million jobs bill. Mr. Williams stated that for more detailed information on the RESTORE Act, go to the Florida Association of Counties website – under Advocacy, click Consortium and you can access all information.

Next Local RESTORE ACT Committee—Regular Meeting: Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at the Freeport Community Center, 6040 Business 331, Freeport at 4:30 p.m.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Melinda Wickham, Commissioner’s Aide, District 4.