



AGENCY ON BAY MANAGEMENT

4000 Gateway Centre Boulevard #100 · Pinellas Park, FL 33782

727.570.5151 Ext. 40

<http://www.tbrpc.org/abm>

MEETING MINUTES

Legislative Review Committee

July 14, 2022

2:00 - 4:00 PM

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

1. Call To Order / Welcome

Meeting called to order at 2:00 PM by Alana Todd.

2. Introductions/Attendance

Alana Todd, TBRPC

Jessica Lewis, TBEP

James Jacobs, Tampa Bay Water

Barbara Todd, Chair of the Agency on Bay Management

Sid Flannery, Friends of the Hillsborough River

Marian Ryan, Polk Forever

Suzanne Lindsey, Polk Forever

Vicki Parsons, Bay Soundings

Chris Pratt, EPCHC

Diane Jones, Pasco's Citizens Committee

Kevin Shelton, Wood PLC

Heather Maggio, City of Tampa

Keith Nadasky, Mosaic

Beth Le, EPCHC

Amelia Missavage, FWC

Mark Rachal, Audubon FL

Mark Luther, USF

Rick Muratti, EPCHC

Melanie Weed, Pinellas County

Haley Busch, 1000 Friends of Florida

Dan Fitz-Patrick, Manatee Port Authority

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this meeting, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council at (727) 570-5151 Ext. 10 within three working days of the meeting.

Paul Boudreaux, Stetson College

Charlie Justice, Pinellas County

Shawn College, Hillsborough Planning Commission

Cynthia Grizzle, PSG

Melissa Madden, FDEP

Willa

Melissa Charbonneau, Pasco County

J.P. Brooker, Ocean Conservancy

Nancy Stevens, Sierra Club

Jan McLean, GrayRobinson

Lindsay Cross, Florida Conservation Voters

MA Neff

3. Public Comment

No Public Comment

4. Polk Forever presentation – *Suzanne Lindsey, Chair of Polk Forever*

Polk Forever is a political committee of volunteers working to protect Polk's remaining wild and working lands through the passage of an environmental lands funding referendum. The Polk Forever presentation included the timeline of this grassroots initiative that was successfully approved to allow an environmental lands funding referendum on the November 2022 ballot. Polk Forever shared their past and future challenges, lessons learned, and the real work that lies ahead. To learn more, visit Polkforever.com

Comments:

This initiative resembles the way in which Pinellas County preserved much of their lands, such as Weedon Island.

Many of the properties that might be considered in the future are currently privately-owned (willing sellers), such as old agricultural lands.

This is a new tax, as the old program funding was diverted to other programs. The scoring criteria for considering land acquisition is also new (much of it borrowed from Alachua County), e.g., water recharge, species diversity, invasives etc., and so is the incorporation of conservation easements.

Tourist development councils and other tourism agencies might more specific numbers on ecotourism visitors and why they are here. Lee County gave a presentation on ecotourism at the Everglades Coalition, so they may have a process for tracking and metrics for ecotourism. Surfrider also did some ecotourism studies in Mid-Atlantic, so they may have a process for tracking.

During the past legislative session, there was a bill attempting to get an allocation from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund for work in the Heartland headwaters area. There was concern from the conservation community because the funding was not limited to restoration and conservation – it would have allowed for infrastructure projects to be funded (not consistent with amendment/what voters passed). The bill did not pass but it did move forward as a general revenue appropriation for \$20 million. If there had been guardrails and the bill was limited to conservation needs, this could be a way to match some funds in the future if the Polk County ballot referendum is successful.

Penny for Pasco presentation – *Diane W. Jones, Campaign Coordinator, Pasco's Citizens Committee*

The Penny for Pasco is a two-time, voter-approved Local Government Infrastructure Surtax in Pasco County. The Pasco's Citizens Committee is working to ensure that this penny sales tax is once again approved by Pasco County voters and is renewed for another 15 years. The Penny is split between the county, school system and the cities. It funds economic development, public safety vehicles and equipment, conservation of land and natural resources, transportation infrastructure improvements, and enhancements for educational facilities. This presentation shared why the Penny for Pasco is important to Pasco County, focusing on what it has funded in the past and what future projects will be funded should it be renewed. [Link to Presentation](#).

Comments:

The lands that would be pursued would help create wildlife corridors.

ELAMP funding comes from Penny for Pasco for land purchases.

Pasco County also has an Ecological Corridor Ordinance that is triggered when new development proposes an increase in density or intensity; Pasco will negotiate with the landowner to either transfer density, either to that property or another, or they will get a conservation easement, buy the property in fee, or combination of these options.

Their map of ELAMP lands is updated regularly with acquisitions that go on the nomination list or have been acquired; Pasco is currently in negotiation with five different properties.

Pasco also has a study underway that will look at corridors and ecological planning units to determine how much has changed since the program's inception as well as which properties to target with the next penny.

5. Proposed amendment to the Florida Statutes regarding the elimination of surface water discharges and associated reuse of reclaimed water – Sid Flannery, Friends of the Hillsborough River

This presentation provided an overview of the proposed amendment to the Florida Statutes (FS 403.064(17)) regarding the elimination of surface water discharges and associated reuse of reclaimed water, prepared by the Friends of the Hillsborough River. The proposed amendment is enclosed below. [Link to presentation](#)

Comments:

The City of Tampa is closely reviewing costs, but any costs in the presentation are general estimates.

This proposed bill does not throw out the 2021 statute, rather it introduces an amendment to allow for periodic variances from the average values in the statute.

The purpose of the proposed bill is to ensure flexibility and periodic variance from the values each utility is expected to meet for eliminating or rerouting surface water discharge. For example, according to Sid, the City of Tampa should not need to store 50 mgd of domestic wastewater and average that every year since there will be some years where it will not be necessary due to water quality considerations (like in a drought year). This amendment would allow the utilities to reduce the amount of discharge they need to eliminate or reroute. The underlying reasoning is to allow for more efficient use of the water and to protect the locations where the water would be relocated to (like the Floridan Aquifer).

Feedback clarified that one cannot amend a bill that has already become law, but you can change a statute with a bill through the legislative process. It was suggested that they use the correct terminology to better clarify intent. It was also suggested that the Friends of Hillsborough River create a 1-page summary that clearly describes what they want to do.

Sid requested that the ABM review the proposed bill in the future for a potential endorsement/letter of support. He was advised to revisit the LRC to discuss further before revisiting the full ABM.

6. Committee Next Steps

The Committee will further discuss the strategic planning goals and actions identified in previous meetings, including committee recruitment and leadership positions.

Jessica Lewis with the Tampa Bay Estuary Committee provided an overview of the legislative bills that were passed and signed into law as well as the 2023 Legislative Session dates, which begins March 7th (but committees will likely meet in January and February).

Good resources for bill tracking: Audubon FL and local chapters, Sierra Club's state team, 1000 Friends of Florida, Florida Local Environmental Regulatory Agencies (FLERA) group, Florida Conservation Voters

7. Announcements

All participants should feel free to share information or events that are pertinent to the LR Committee.

The TBEP [Bay Mini-Grants](#) application window just opened which provides up to \$5,000 for restoration, education, or outreach. The deadline is September 16th.

8. Other Items



AGENCY ON BAY MANAGEMENT

4000 Gateway Centre Boulevard #100 · Pinellas Park, FL 33782

727.570.5151 Ext. 40

<http://www.tbrpc.org/abm>

- a. Next Meeting date
 - October 13th, 2pm
 - b. Bay Soundings article ideas
- 9. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM