

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC WORKSHOP
COURTHOUSE ANNEX – COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
SEPTEMBER 20, 2016
1:30 P.M.
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: William Massey – Chairman, Joseph Parrish – Vice Chairman, Noah Lockley, Cheryl Sanders, Rick Watson

Others Present: Alan Pierce – Director of Administrative Services, Michael Morón – County Coordinator, Michael Shuler – County Attorney, Marcia M. Johnson-Clerk of Court, Lori P. Hines-Deputy Clerk to the Board.

Chairman Massey called the Workshop to Order.

1. Dewberry Presentation

a. Planning Grant Update

Ms. Stella Wilson, Dewberry, appeared before the Board. Ms. Wilson said they are the Restore Consultants for the MYIP (Multi-Year Implementation Plan). She introduced Ms. Jade Marks and Mr. Rick Harter, Ecology & Environment, who are on the team to work on the MYIP. She explained this meeting will give the Board the opportunity to discuss their priorities for the MYIP and she will emphasize specifically what is required by the U.S. Treasury. She reported the County Commission has the ultimate authority over this pot of money and will select which projects are funded. She reported Treasury will review the projects for eligibility. Ms. Wilson stated the Board can provide input in the beginning, middle or end of the process. She explained in other counties they have found if the Board is involved throughout the process, it will run smoother. She said a Restore Advisory Committee (RAC) meeting will be conducted next month and then the Board will have another meeting to review the work they have done. She explained this is the way the process will work. Ms. Wilson provided a slide presentation. She explained the five steps in the process and said the County is on step 1. She presented each Commissioner with a copy of the presentation. She said this presentation will also be posted on the website at franklincountyrestore.com.

b. Meeting Treasury Requirements for the MYIP

Ms. Wilson reported Treasury is concerned about public input and she explained the things the County will do to meet this requirement. She explained the Restore Act requires as part of this component that the projects are based on some kind of criteria. Ms. Wilson stated they want the County to describe how they established the criteria, what the criteria were and how they applied it. She explained the process of developing the criteria. Ms. Wilson discussed the

forms for the MYIP. She stated the forms are the matrix of projects, narrative of projects and location map and she described each item. She commented they will also have to document the public input. She explained Treasury will allow the County to put as much of the allocation as they want into the MYIP. Mr. Pierce said the restore money references percentages for certain items but it does not for pot #1. Ms. Wilson agreed there are no caps, limits or specific percentages for pot #1. Mr. Pierce said the County is in the process of change as they are not sure if the bay will come back so it is difficult to determine what the future is. He stated the County may need to wait until they know where the future is going as they do not want to encourage the Board to put the money in the wrong direction. Commissioner Watson asked if they can use the same criteria of environmental and economic development. Ms. Wilson answered they can approve almost the same items for pot #3. She reported at the Consortium meeting the consultant was directed to move forward with the next task order so they will be contacting the county soon to set up a half day workshop. She said their goal at this workshop will be to get the County's project priorities for pot #3. Ms. Wilson reported by then there are things Dewberry can do that will help with this goal. She commented by October a draft of the needs assessment will be ready and they will be starting to narrow it down to the selection criteria. She explained this process will help the Board find their priorities. Ms. Wilson said they will review these priorities for eligibility and the eligibility analysis can be used for pot #3. She said the only difference in pot #3, besides the Governor's approval, is an infrastructure cap of 25%. Commissioner Parrish stated the rest of pot #3 must be used for environmental and economic development. Ms. Wilson agreed. Commissioner Parrish reported the Restore Act money can be used for whatever the Board wants it to be used for but pot #3 must be used for economic development, environmental restoration and the 25% cap on infrastructure. He expressed his opinion that it would not be advantageous to the County to use both pots of money for these 3 items. He explained this pot of money can be used in many different ways but pot #3 can only be used in 3 ways. Commissioner Parrish reported if the County wants to do economic development or environmental restoration then they should use pot #3. Commissioner Watson asked if he is talking about using the other money from pot #1 to upgrade the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Commissioner Parrish answered yes. Commissioner Watson asked if infrastructure means roads and bridges. Ms. Wilson reported in the Restore Act pot #1 has 9 eligible activities. She explained one of the activities is infrastructure that benefits ecological resources or has a community resiliency component and the EOC would fall under this category. Commissioner Parrish stated an EOC is desperately needed and is a top priority. He explained it is the worst EOC in the state and the County has applied for grants every year and been denied. He went on to say the EOC does not meet federal guidelines as it is located in a flood zone but they have not asked the County to move it. He suggested they use a portion of these funds to leverage federal and state funds to use on the overall cost of an EOC. Commissioner Parrish explained using the funds to leverage matching funds is what they have talked about doing to maximize the money. Ms. Wilson explained Gulf County approved a slate of about 30 priority projects and looked for matching funds for the top 10. She reported beach re-nourishment is priority number one in their multi-year plan as they have a 3 to 1 match. She stated they are using \$3 million of direct component restore funds to get \$9 million in matching funds for the project. Ms. Wilson

reported in seeking additional funds, some projects get more points because they have matching funds. She discussed the different pots of money and the eligible activities. Mr. Pierce reported there is \$23 million in pot #1 and \$11 million in pot #3. He stated the consortium pot is \$12 million. Ms. Wilson said the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) is administered by the National Fish & Wildlife Federation. Mr. Pierce stated Franklin County has been the recipient of GEBF in such areas as the bird sanctuary project. Commissioner Watson stated NRDA funds have also been spent here. Ms. Wilson reported in the packet there is a list of projects being completed in Franklin County but there are also more out there in every single pot of money. Mr. Pierce reported the County submitted some projects for NRDA and the state selected some of the projects to complete. Ms. Wilson explained the Franklin County Restore Synopsis. She said this will go to the RAC and then back to the Board to review. Commissioner Lockley inquired about the time frame involved with this process. Mr. Pierce reported they are trying to get the needs assessment done quickly. Ms. Wilson said the needs assessment draft will be finished in two weeks. Mr. Pierce reported this needs assessment came from Ms. Wilson reviewing the Board meetings over the last year or so and finding out what needs have been discussed. Mr. Pierce stated the County has a lot of environmental needs but Apalachicola Bay is a state resource and they do not know what assistance will be provided on the state level. Ms. Wilson stated the County cannot take on restoration of the bay as it is a state resource but the county could commit some money for restoration or preservation of the bay. Commissioner Sanders explained at the Consortium meeting with their consultants, ESA, they referenced Wakulla County and Gulf County submitting projects. She asked if Ms. Wilson knows what projects were submitted as the County wanted to be involved with submitting projects for pot #3. Ms. Wilson reported Gulf County decided to submit their city sewer upgrades for the City of Wewahitchka and the City of Port St. Joe as the cities are providing the matching money. Ms. Wilson explained Wakulla County has an adopted infrastructure plan and they submitted projects for sewer upgrades. Commissioner Sanders inquired about the artificial reefs. Mr. Pierce replied these projects were submitted to the GEBF. Commissioner Parrish stated this project is moving forward as they came down and reviewed some of the sites to insure they will not interfere with the fisheries. Ms. Wilson reported the projects for Gulf County and Wakulla County will be categorized as water quality/environmental restoration projects because they involve septic tank abatement. Commissioner Watson asked if the derelict vessel removals are water quality issues. Mr. Harter stated he has been involved with derelict vessel removal done by Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC) and these projects can be claimed as environmental improvements or economic development if it improves the safety of the waterways. Chairman Massey explained they are only classified as derelict vessels if they are 15-20 feet from the dock. Mr. Harter agreed they have criteria for the vessels. He stated if the County has an interest in removing derelict vessels then they can use some of the money to leverage state funds to remove the vessels. Ms. Wilson explained the derelict vessels, channel dredging and artificial reefs will all be included in one document and it will be up to the Board which projects to fund in the first year. Commissioner Parrish reported derelict vessels should be considered environmental restoration and they should use pot #3. Commissioner Sanders said Commissioner Parrish mentioned saving some of the money and she agreed they don't want to spend all the money in case they need it later. Commissioner Parrish stated they

should also be looking at projects that benefit everyone. He explained the two municipalities do not receive these funds so an EOC building will benefit everyone. Commissioner Parrish reported the cities can submit projects just like the non-profits. Mr. Pierce explained all the money will come to Franklin County and the cities can ask for a portion of the money for their projects. Commissioner Watson asked if this will be included in the development of the selection criteria. Ms. Wilson commented Gulf County put points in the selection criteria for the number of citizens that would benefit from the project. She said the cities can apply for the funds in all pots except pot #3. Commissioner Parrish stated the reason for this meeting was to give Dewberry the priorities of the Board so the RAC has some direction about the priorities of the Board. He said the RAC members are volunteering their time and he appreciates it and does not want them to waste their time. Commissioner Watson said if other counties are further along in the process then the County will benefit from what other counties have done. Ms. Wilson said Gulf County's adopted criteria and their needs assessment is included in the packet. She reported Gulf County and Walton County have submitted their MYIP. Commissioner Lockley asked if they know what the state is going to do about the bay. Commissioner Parrish said he has been dealing with FWC about the check stations. He expressed his opinion if the county does not start controlling what is being taken out of the bay then it will never come back. He reported he discussed the County partially funding the check stations. He said the state would pay the salaries and the County would pay the room and board and per diem for the officers to man the check stations. He explained it would cost about \$120,000 for 9 months out of the next 3 years. He explained 3 officers will come from down south and 1 officer from here. He suggested using \$120,000 of the consortium funds for this project. He inquired how the other Board members feel about this proposal. Chairman Massey said he is all for saving the bay. Commissioner Parrish reported once the check stations are in place, they cannot sell oysters without a tag from the check station. He explained this will bring dealers and harvesters in check. He asked how the Board feels about this proposal. The Board agreed with this proposal. Commissioner Sanders reported they need to do everything in their power, even though they do not have jurisdiction, to bring the bay back. Commissioner Parrish agreed and said some of the county's money will make an impact on the bay. He said without the oysters, they will not have anything else in the bay. He explained the oysters filter all the sediment and that is why people are planting oysters for water quality in other places. Commissioner Lockley said if the state would say what they were going to do then the county would know what they need to do. Chairman Massey explained the state spent \$10 million in the last 3 years on shells. Commissioner Parrish stated shelling has been done and more needs to be done. Commissioner Sanders reported they need to make sure they get the right product to place in the bay to make the oysters. Commissioner Parrish stated it is getting worse because they want to use limerock. He discussed reports he has showing the amount of spat when limerock or crushed concrete is used. He expressed concern that these reports have been produced since the shelling started but the Board has not been receiving them. He stated the Board will start receiving the reports now. Commissioner Parrish said they could move forward with the check stations. Mr. Pierce stated he does not know when the state expenditure plan will be approved so they may need to use funds from pot #1. Ms. Wilson reported the state expenditure plan is not scheduled to be approved until early

2018 and the County still has to do a grant application and get it approved through Treasury. She explained funds from pot #3 will not be flowing until 2018. Ms. Wilson reported if they move fast, money may be received from pot #1 late next year. Ms. Wilson said the MYIP can be used to advantage all the pots of money. Ms. Wilson reported the State knows Franklin County has \$35 million coming over the next 15 years. She went on to say every year it will be about \$2.1 million for pot #1 and pot #3 so now the County can start building their story of their top priorities. Commissioner Parrish said the County needs to enhance and protect what has already been done in the bay to see if the bay will come back. He reported the money will be funded the first year for the check stations so the project can get started and then the County will reimburse the agency when they receive their money. Ms. Wilson reviewed the recommendations of the Board. She said one of the Board's priorities is that the projects have a county wide benefit.

c. BOCC Considerations

Ms. Wilson discussed the percentage allocations by category. Ms. Wilson said Gulf County set a leveraging goal of 3 to 1. She reported they have 4 to 1 on their first project and 3 to 1 on two other projects. Commissioner Parrish said a lot of state agencies have BP money and it is just a matter of putting together a good project and leveraging the funds. Ms. Wilson agreed and said it also about how the project is projected and the specific outcomes. She explained a project may have a purpose but it may also achieve another goal for another agency so it may qualify for 2 pots of money. Commissioner Parrish said if the check stations are put in and the benefits starts showing then it may be easier to get other funding. He said there is no benefit at the end for the bay without the check stations. Ms. Wilson agreed if the projects do not meet the goals then it may be harder to get funding. Commissioner Parrish said these reports about the bay are being sent to agencies that provided funding for shelling. He explained a cost benefit analysis is done at the end and that is what helps with the funding. Commissioner Watson asked if the problem is they do not have continuing projects. Commissioner Parrish answered yes, and said the state will no longer plant shells. He said this is why they talked about saving some of the money as the bay may need to be replanted and the state will not do it. He said the RAC needs to understand that the County will only get a certain allocation each year. He reported only a certain amount of projects can be done the first year. Ms. Wilson agreed and said the County will only receive \$1.3 million from pot #1 and \$800,000 per year from pot #3. She explained in relation to pot #3, the state will always control the project, the program and the money and the County may be considered a sub-grantee. She pointed out if the State controls the program then the administrative work will also fall on the state. Commissioner Sanders said they are still deciding how to handle this money at the state level and she does not think it is going to be easy. She explained it will be an issue with the Legislature this year with the Triumph fund. Commissioner Sanders stated it is good BP is providing this money but sometimes people lose their focus. She said 11 people lost their lives and a legacy in multiple states was destroyed. She stated they need to be mindful of how the money is spent because a lot of things were lost because of this event. Ms. Wilson reported Walton County set aside around \$200,000 the first year to use for small projects of about \$50,000. Commissioner Parrish reported the County would need to be careful doing that as it

may take several years to get the allocation large enough to build an EOC. Commissioner Parrish stated this is the only time they will have the money to complete some of these projects. He said they have applied for grants but have been denied. Commissioner Sanders reported the Governor stated there are 12 EOC's in the state that are a priority. Commissioner Watson asked how much money will be needed for the EOC. Commissioner Parrish estimated \$1.3 million. Commissioner Sanders agreed the RAC needs to be aware the Board has priorities for these funds. Ms. Wilson said the UWF HAAS Center will be conducting a market study of the current economic status and future projections for employment so the County will have this tool to use. Commissioner Parrish said there are a lot of economic development studies going on and when they know a business is coming then they will need to go to workforce to bring in the training to get the jobs. Commissioner Parrish stated they need job creation but they will also need specialized training for the citizens to fill these jobs. Ms. Wilson reported pot #1 will fund job creation and workforce development training items. Commissioner Watson said they need some health care, vocational and construction training. Ms. Wilson addressed the entities that would be eligible to submit projects. She reported Gulf County allowed non-profits, high educational institutions, and municipalities to submit projects. She explained Dewberry will do an initial scoring of the projects to make sure they meet the federal guidelines. She explained the Board can score the projects or have the RAC score the projects. She said they could take the scores from the Board, RAC and Dewberry and add them together and rank the projects. She explained some counties use the Board's scores, some used the RAC scores and some combined the scores.

d. Proposed MYIP Development Process

Ms. Wilson presented the MYIP Development process and said there is Board input at all the steps. She said no projects will go forward until Dewberry determines if they are eligible. Commissioner Parish asked if Dewberry will be monitoring the portal. Ms. Wilson answered yes, and said they will bring the summarized results to the Board.

e. Next Steps

Ms. Wilson reported with the schedule they have, the selection criteria will be in place before the portal opens in January, 2017. She said they want people submitting projects to already know what the point system is. Commissioner Parrish asked if Ms. Wilson will now meet with the RAC and give them a summary of this meeting. Ms. Wilson answered yes, in October. She explained they will probably present a draft of the needs assessment to the RAC and the Board. Ms. Wilson stated they will review it, make changes and finalize the document.

2. Questions & Discussion

Mrs. Anita Grove, Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve, asked about the needs assessment process. Ms. Wilson said they reviewed every Board meeting since 2010 and summarize the projects the Board focused on but did not have money for. She reported they also reviewed economic studies and the comprehensive plan. She explained they will submit the draft to the Board and RAC and then put it online for the public to comment on. She stated

they will then make changes the Board suggests and finalize the document. Ms. Wilson said the draft is 22 pages long and only includes a quick summary of the Board meetings but they have many pages of write-ups. Mrs. Grove pointed out there has been studies in the past that have findings that are not what they want. She stated the county needs better paying jobs. Ms. Wilson commented that sometimes studies are done and there is no money to implement the recommendations but this is different as the money is there. She explained the goal is to write the plan for how the County wants to spend the money. She reported Treasury will review the MYIP for conformance with the Restore Act. Commissioner Watson asked if all the economic studies will inventory the current industry and what it contributes to the economy. Ms. Wilson stated a research expert from the HAAS Center can come and discuss this item with the Board. Mr. Pierce reported FGN and the HAAS Center have already completed these studies. Ms. Wilson said this information will be provided to the Board in a report. She explained they will look at this study and provide projections of how the industries will grow or shrink 5-20 years out. Mr. Pierce reported he was shocked to find out almost 50% of the workforce works out of the county. Ms. Wilson stated the purpose of the meeting was to get some ideas from the Board and give some feedback to the RAC and it was a good first step.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

William Massey - Chairman

Attest:

Marcia M. Johnson - Clerk of Courts