

EAST CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021, 10:30 A.M.

CHAIR SEAN PARKS

In Attendance:

County Representatives:

Commissioner Sean Parks, Lake County
Commissioner Doug Shields, Lake County
Commissioner Emily Bonilla, Orange County
Commissioner Mayra Uribe, Orange County
Commissioner Ricky Booth, Osceola County
Commissioner Lee Constantine, Seminole County
Commissioner Amy Lockhart, Seminole County
Commissioner Craig Estep, Sumter County
Commissioner Oren Miller, Sumter County

Municipal Representatives:

Council Member Mindy Gibson, Space Coast League of Cities (City of Satellite Beach)
Mayor Dale McDonald, Tri-County League of Cities (City of Maitland)
Commissioner Jim Fisher, Tri-County League of Cities (City of Kissimmee)
Commissioner Jordan Smith, Tri-County League of Cities (City of Lake Mary)
Commissioner Chris Cloudman, Volusia League of Cities (City of DeLand)

Gubernatorial Appointees:

Mr. John Lesman, Seminole County

Ex-Officio Members:

Ms. Susan Davis, St. Johns River Water Management District

Members not in Attendance:

Commissioner Bryan Lober, Brevard County
Commissioner John Tobia, Brevard County
Commissioner Jeff Gold, Marion County
Commissioner Craig Curry, Marion County
Commissioner Peggy Choudhry, Osceola County
Council Member Jeff Brower, Volusia County
Council Member Billie Wheeler, Volusia County
Commissioner Patty Sheehan, City of Orlando
Council Member Brent Malever, City of Ocala
Commissioner Julian Green, City of Wildwood
Mr. Jose A. Rivas, Orange County
Ms. Judy Pizzo, Florida Department of Transportation
Mr. Aaron Watkins, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Ms. Laura Kelley, Central Florida Expressway Authority
Mr. Mike Radzik, City of Groveland
Ms. Amye King, City of Sanford

Others in Attendance:

Mr. Tim McClendon – Lake County

Mr. Jeff Hoppe – Seminole County

ECFRPC Staff in Attendance:

Mr. Hugh Harling, Jr.

Ms. Lori Cox

Ms. Tara McCue

Ms. Pegge Parker

Ms. Jenifer Rupert

Ms. Julie Bowes

Mr. Cody Brown

I. Call to Order and General Business

- Chair Parks called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.
- Ms. Parker called the roll and announced a quorum was present.
- Mayor McDonald led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements: Chair Parks announced that two new members joined the Council: Commissioner Jordan Smith – Lake Mary - representing the Tri-County League of Counties and Commissioner Oren Miller, Sumter County.

II. Consent Agenda

- January 2021 Council Meeting Minutes
- December 2020 and January 2021 Financial Reports

As there were no objections to the two items on the Consent Agenda, Commissioner Uribe made a motion to approve and Mayor McDonald seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion to approve the Minutes and the Financial Reports passed unanimously.

III. Presentation: Membership Consideration to Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) –

Ms. Jenifer Rupert, Regional Resilience Officer, ECFRPC

Ms. Rupert gave a presentation on the Global Covenant of Mayors and membership consideration. She discussed the requirements and benefits of having the membership.

Commissioner Parks explained that this is not anything outside of what we already do for the Collaborative. It's just more of a collaborative effort with another organization where we can share data. Jenifer explained that the requirements are what we are already doing and we can use their expertise for free.

Commissioner Uribe asked what the time commitment was for the meetings and Ms. Rupert explained that they have been meeting virtually over the past two years but she is not aware of their meeting schedule. She will research the answer and get back to the Council. Commissioner Uribe also asked if there was any financial commitment to becoming a member. Ms. Rupert responded that there wasn't any financial commitment and that the City of Apopka and Orange County are also considering membership. She stated that there are already Climate Mayors in Kissimmee, Orlando and Satellite Beach. The RPC would be an extension as a regional organization.

Commissioner Cloudman asked if there is any risk to the RPC joining and not being able to meet standards. Ms. Rupert replied there are no repercussions to not meeting targets.

Commissioner Lockhart asked if it originated in Europe and, although it doesn't look like there is any harm in participating, the RPC would need to stay on top of their core mission.

Commissioner Fisher asked if this is like a Paris Climate rebirth and what are we committing to do.

There was discussion about concerns, commitments, and staff resources.

Commission Uribe made a motion to approve the membership to the Global Covenant of Mayors and Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion.

Commissioner Lockhart asked if the charter could be circulated for further review. Commissioner Parks suggested tabling the discussion until the Chair's Report at the end of the meeting to give the Council a little extra time to consider the membership.

Commissioner Uribe made a motion to table the discussion until the chair's report. This was seconded by Commissioner Fisher.

IV. Presentation: Council Retreat / Action Plan Discussion – Ms. Lori Cox, Planner III, ECFRPC

Ms. Cox reviewed the Relevance Framework Action Plan which was developed following the Council Retreat in January. She started with the objective of the Action Plan which is to continue providing valuable services, tools, and collaboration opportunities to our member communities while advancing the mission of the ECFRPC. Staff objectives determined by the Board include developing a framework to ensure relevance, provide assistance to local governments and communities and elevate regional collaboration efforts. One of the key action steps discussed at the retreat was enhancing Board engagement, and methods to enhance Board engagement. Ms. Cox reviewed the included spreadsheet document which detailed strategic objectives, action steps, task leader (Staff or Board Members) and priority levels. At the next Executive meeting there will be a mission workshop session to update the RPC Mission Statement which will be reviewed and refined, and then brought to the Council for their approval in July.

Other action items discussed included the creation of an annual calendar. Commissioner Constantine suggested distributing an annual calendar with photos such as the one created by the Florida Association of Counties. It includes input from counties, member cities and agencies regarding calendar of events. It could also include planning projects with descriptions and locations. Commissioner Bonilla agreed that it is a very well received document. Other suggestions for the calendar included top things to do in counties such as trails and parks and focusing on regional resilience.

Regarding task leaders for the action steps, Commissioner Lockhart discussed delineating which staff, and their level, including Executive Director, are responsible for certain action items.

Commissioner Smith emphasized updating the website should be a number one priority and Commissioner Parks agreed it should be moved up from a priority two. Commissioner Bonilla stated a marketing plan should include some of the items listed such as the newsletter and the website and then they will be the same priority as the marketing plan.

Council Member Gibson discussed the Interlocal Agreements and how important it is to get counties to agree to them. She suggested getting them in writing as quickly as possible as the situation like SB 62 may come again. Commissioner Parks hoped to have them ready in May to take back to staff and attorneys. Council Member Gibson also talked about her visit to Tallahassee to speak in opposition to Senate Bill 62 and on the values of RPCs.

Commissioner Booth suggested keeping the mission statement and other themes positive and avoiding negative words and connotations.

V. Planning Director's Report – Ms. Tara McCue, Director of Planning & Community Development, ECFRPC

Ms. McCue discussed the FY2019-2020 Annual Report which included annual highlights and staff accomplishments and overall funding sources for the year, as well as expenses. Brief reviews of projects by category were also included in the report; such as Community Planning, Economic Development, Transportation, Emergency Preparedness, Resiliency, and local government technical planning. A list of staff contact information is also included.

Ms. McCue briefly reminded the board about the How Did We Grow Trend Report which was developed in fall 2019 to assess trends since the 2007 How Shall We Grow effort. Besides the analytical data collected, the RPC wanted to get public input and perception on how the counties and communities are implementing the goals of that vision, trends and values of the region. A survey was developed and originally planned to be released last spring, but instead will be released in April with updated questions including new questions relating to pre-COVID-19 and post-COVID-19.

A “Save the Date” handout was provided to the Council for the upcoming virtual First Summit of the Regional Resilience Collaborative (R2C) scheduled for May 7th. The R2C has created six advisory committees over the past year which were tasked with pulling together a strategic action plan to develop goals. One of these goals was to develop a regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory. The RPC secured grant funding for the project through the DEO, Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and the Environmental Defense Fund.

VI. Executive Director's Report

- Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Update: Mr. Hugh Harling gave an update on items discussed during the recent FRCA meeting which included Senate Bill 62 and the Statewide Hurricane Evacuation Study.
- Tampa Bay RPC – Statewide COVID-19 Economic Impact Analysis 2021: Mr. Harling stated that Tampa Bay RPC has hired a new staff person to assist all RPCs with REMI Modeling, specifically the modeling of the economic impact of COVID-19.
- Emergency Preparedness – Community Flow Study: Mr. Harling explained that this is a special kind of transportation analysis project which identifies the type and amount of hazardous materials transported through a specified geographic area, such as a single community, a large urban area, a region, or a state, and the routes used for transporting these commodities. It provides information that can be used to help anticipate conditions and systematically identify potential problems and workable solutions to hazmat incidents. A Commodity Flow Study has not been conducted in our region since 2013. In lieu of a regional hazmat symposium due to COVID-19, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC) funding will be used to update the highway and rail Community Flow Study in our region.
- Mr. Harling also discussed the 2020 U.S. Census Thank You Certificate the RPC received.

VII. Chair's Report

- Senate Bill 62 / Interlocal Agreements: Commissioner Parks stated they are working on Interlocal Agreements and will have to the counties as soon as possible.

- Regional Resilience Collaborative Summit – May 7, 2021: As a reminder, a handout was given to Council to “Save the Date”.
- Resolution 02-2021 – Statewide Office of Resiliency: As there were no objections to the Resolution, Commissioner Constantine made a motion to approve and Council Member Gibson seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion to approve passed unanimously.
- Membership Consideration to Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM): As discussed earlier in the meeting, there is an active motion on the table but if further discussion is needed, the Council can take additional time to consider. Commissioner Cloudman asked if it would be possible to amend the document. Commissioner Parks answered that while the commitment is in the letter, the RPC could do a separate statement stating that the vote is not unanimous. Commissioner Constantine asked if there was a time requirement or if there would be more time allowed to review. He also suggested doing a resolution instead or tabling until the next meeting. Commissioner Uribe was going to ask her County where they stand and approves the tabling of her motion now and moving it to the May agenda, as did Mayor McDonald who had seconded the motion. Commissioner Constantine made a motion to table this item for this meeting and add to the May Agenda. Council Member Gibson seconded the motion. Additional information on the organization would be required and to see how the Paris Climate Agreement is involved. The RPC specifically would like to know what they are agreeing to. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

VIII. Public Comments

There were no “Request for Speaking” forms received prior to the meeting and no public comments requested during the meeting.

IX. Brief County and League of Cities (LOC) Updates

- Counties and LOC representatives provided brief updates on activities in their areas.
- City of Maitland – Mayor McDonald thanked the Board for the fabulous experience he has had being part of the Council.
- Orange County – Commissioner Uribe provided an update on the COVID-19 vaccine distribution in her county, including homebound seniors, as well as their eviction program. She stated she was happy to see the hospitality industry advancing.
- Seminole County – Commissioner Constantine thanked Mayor McDonald for his service. He stated that he is on the Board of Directors for National Association of Regional Counties (NARC) which includes Georgia and Florida districts. They will hold their National meeting virtually in June and he will give a report at the next meeting. He is also on the Executive Committee of the Florida Association of Counties (FAC), and they had a legislative meeting recently and the counties are very strong in opposition to Senate Bill 62. He is also on the Executive Board of the 1000 Friends of Florida and they are also opposed. The FRCA Executive Director, Ron Book, is also one of the leading lobbyists in Tallahassee and he feels strongly that the bill will not pass in its present form.
- City of Satellite Beach – Council Member Gibson stated they have a lot of elderly people and shut-ins in their community and she would like to see them go back to door-to-door service for seniors as well.
- Osceola County – Commissioner Booth stated he believes in the value of organizations and provided information on his background.

- Lake County – Commissioner Shields stated that Kroger Grocery will start online grocery store deliveries for homes within a 90-minute drive from Groveland. They will be providing 1,000 jobs. Also, an Amazon warehouse is coming.
- Sumter County – Commissioner Estep stated vaccinations are coming online quicker and businesses and entertainment are ramping back up.
- Seminole County – Commissioner Lockhart opened a discussion asking if any of the counties still had their EOCs at full level and if there were metrics established for working to reduce mitigation efforts for Covid. There was discussion about finding local subject experts to scale back mitigation efforts. There is fatigue in the community and we need to develop a plan to step down. Discussion resulted in the ask to have this discussion on our next meeting agenda and bring in representatives to assist in the discussion.

X. Next ECFRPC Council Meeting: May 19, 2021

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, Commissioner Parks adjourned the meeting at 12:25 p.m.