



IRL COUNCIL CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting of April 19, 2018

1:00 PM

Environmental Learning Center, 255 Live Oak Drive

Attendance:

Frank Brownell, Jessy Wayles, Billy Rotne, Keith Winsten, Mike Coneen, Heather Stapleton, Cynthia Vandevoorde Hall, Dave Carlson, Jim Moir, Becky Bruner, Ken Grudens, Zack Judd

Agenda Item 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Jim Moir, co-chair, called the meeting to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item 2. Agenda Revisions

None.

Agenda Item 3. Minutes Approval

Requested Action: Approval of minutes from January 18, 2018 and November 28, 2017.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BECKY BRUNER, SECONDED BY BILLY ROTNE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 18, 2018 AND NOVEMBER 28, 2017. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item 4. Introductions

Members and staff present introduced themselves.

Agenda Item 5. Public Comment

Billy Rotne mentioned that he would have liked to been made aware that the Volusia County Reasonable Assurance Plan was brought before the STEM Advisory Committee. Staff agreed to send agendas and meeting packages to the entire Management Conference as they are issued.

Agenda Item 6. Old Business

Listening meetings were postponed to both purchase and Audience Response System and to gather

public comment and input for the revised CCMP. Making Listening meetings dual purpose may make it likely that more people will attend. Follow ups will occur as CCMP becomes refined and the IRLNEP will have solid basis for moving forward.

Keith Winsten suggested dry running the ARS before a big meeting to avoid confusion.

Ken Grudens suggested that the focus of Listening Meetings had shifted to CCMP and away from a focus on what people think about lagoon issues. Kathy Hill suggested that staff want to collect both kinds of information. Keith Winsten suggested separating topics into things the NEP controls and what people might be willing to do to help the lagoon. Ken mentioned that the CCMP is a lot for people to absorb in a short amount of time. Keith mentioned that the meeting could have a general intro an hour before the actual meeting, and topics could be covered in separate rooms. Billy Rotne mentioned to give people at least a month's notice to get on the public's radar. Heather Stapleton suggested that if the meeting is held on a Saturday, that an event be built around it – barbeque or picnic – to get people to the meeting.

Kathy suggested that during the next meeting, the group could come up with some goals for the Listening Meetings, wordsmith some questions based on goals and test out the ARS.

Agenda Item 7. New Business

a. Small Grant Program Proposal Review

Requested Action: By Separate Motion-

1. Motion to recommend to the Management Board that the IRL Council Board of Directors approve the final ranked list of CAC-recommended list of small grant proposals.
2. Motion to recommend to the Management Board that the IRL Council Board of Directors approve funding for the projects recommended by the CAC, contingent and consistent with the FY 2017-2018 Budget.

Process discussion:

Heather Stapleton mentioned that the evaluation plans for most proposals were severely lacking. She suggested changing the application next time to emphasize evaluation more and formalizing the scoring rubric for next time where numbers were more spread out and reviewers can have more of a range to vote on. Staff may host a webinar for applicants next time so they can be clear on what is expected.

Some discussion focused on the misunderstanding that developing information is the same as educating the public. The committee stressed that developing signs and handing information out is not the same as education. Staff will clarify this in the next proposal request.

Keith Winsten suggested adding additional dollars (~\$500) at the end of the grant so that grantees become trained in being outcome-based. Staff could sit down with them at the end and evaluate their projects.

Jim Moir offered that staff could provide some guidance to proposers on how to do a better proposal, become outcome-based, and have better evaluation plans for the next round of proposals.

Keith suggested that the group view the rankings and call out anything they feel doesn't belong in the "Funding" category, and advocate for ones that do not appear in the "funding" group.

Dave Carlson offered that he had some specific questions that may be helpful in clarifying the rankings.

Discussion moved to review of proposals:

Pilot Scale Seagrass Planting: Several members had ranked this project highly, but many felt there was only one method used and most of the project was to cover salary, so they ranked it lower.

Heather Stapleton asked about whether it had been established that grants don't go primarily toward salaries. Members recalled discussion that the group felt that the bulk of the grant should go toward materials and supplies rather than salary. Also that the group consensus was that these grants are designed to engage the community.

Florida-friendly Landscaping Seminar: Thumb drive component of the project was considered wasteful by those present. Members present felt that funding could be much better spent.

General comment: Satellite Beach, while doing a lot of great things, did not use this process very judiciously. Would have like to see one or two excellent projects come to the CAC rather than a bunch of slapped together ones.

International Coastal Cleanup: This is an ongoing event for a long time. Not sure what the value-added is for this. Jessy Wayles mentioned that there is no set funding for this event.

Marine Discovery Center Oyster Restoration: Members wonder about having just the 2 interns as the engagement audience. Jessy Wayles stated the important part of the project comes at the SHORE conference that engages hundreds of people.

Ocean Tree Studios: People had trouble following the proposal, there many components to it so it didn't have much focus. "It was like taking four steps at once". The shoreline restoration project states that partnerships will occur but there is no evidence of that and there is no funding set aside to cover permitting.

Vero Beach Native Planting: Bulk of the funding goes toward planting 9 palm trees, six of which were not native. Rather than not funding it, can't CAC ask them to utilize native palms only? Or, recommend other plants in place of palm trees? Palms are not great teaching tools or demo tools. They are simply not valuable in home landscapes.

Native plants for a sustainable future: No emphasis on shoreline plants. No emphasis on IRL-Friendly yards. Ongoing public education is the best part of the project. The seed collection aspect is important. There is no native plant nursery in Indian River County, so this could be valuable.

North Regional Lake Planting: not well written, but a great project. Community is economically disadvantaged. Partnering with Farm Workers is important and would have big impacts to an underserved population and keep nutrients out of the IRL. Visibility of the lake has real inspirational implications for the community. The more people see going on in their communities, the more engaged they can become.

Holland Cares: Not well-written but a great program. They did not clarify what the zoo budget items were for but the engagement factor is very high. Has excellent long-term impacts for the IRL and great engagement for the kids involved. Getting wet and dirty is the best way to bring education home to children. The only thing that leads to behavior change is behavior. It's more impactful to participate in a project and actually practice conservation. The research backs this up.

MRC Expanding Mangrove Capacity: MRC's mangrove area is a mess. It's all thrown together and lacks an organized and polished look. This funding could go towards helping them get organized. There is no impact on the IRL for them to relocate their nursery – it's a convenience for MRC not a help to the lagoon. Could we ask them to include more of an educational component?

Happy to see **Wesley Island Ecocamp** ranked highly – very cool program!

Climate Video: Not motivational – reaches many people but won't influence people to take any action. It's people like us that would even watch the whole 4 minutes.

Satellite Beach Junior Sustainability: Some ranked this high but many did not. What was missing for them? Budget was main problem – not explicit. Not clear the number of students they will impact, not tight on how idea would be executed.

So disappointed in the **Friends of St. Sebastian proposal.** No follow through whatsoever. They just expected the education to happen. Very disappointing.

Hospitalized children: Had some potential and a huge service to the kids but not a big impact for the lagoon. But, important to get lagoon info into Orange county rather than just repeating message in lagoon counties.

Committee took several minutes to check their rankings and rescore, if desired, based on discussions.

Final Rankings List: see attached.

Projects ranked 13 and 14 were tied and both on the funding bubble. CAC decided to award \$1,000 toward each project. They are existing projects, good projects and CAC wants to contribute to them in order to further the programs, with the caveats of funding applicable – no thumb drives for Florida-Friendly Landscaping Seminar, and no palm trees for Vero Beach demonstration planting project, encourage the plants that help limit runoff to the IRL.

BECKY BRUNER MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND TO THE MANGEMENT BOARD THAT THE IRL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE FINAL CAC-RANKED LIST OF SMALL GRANTS PROPOSALS. CYNTHIA VANDEVOORDE HALL SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CYNTHIA VANDEVOORDE HALL MOVED TO FULLY FUND THE TOP 12 RANKED PROJECTS AND PROVIDE \$1,000 EACH TO FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING SEMINAR AND TRANSFORMING LANDSCAPES ALONG THE IRL PROJECTS, WITH THE FUNDING CAVEATS DISCUSSED. HEATHER STAPLETON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item 8. IRLNEP Staff Report

Duane De Freese updated the members about the flushing study talks that will be ongoing in investigating whether cutting a new inlet makes sense for the lagoon. IRLNEP will move the idea

forward not as a solution, but as a relief measure, if the science concurs, that perhaps could be undertaken for the lagoon when conditions get bad. This kind of pilot project could advise many other topics. Currently, Port Canaveral, Kennedy Space Center and Patrick Air Force Base. Actually conducting a project is years away, but concepts to pilot test are moving forward.

Agenda Item 9. Final Comments

Mike Conneen: How can we communicate that these funds are in addition to the Save Our IRL Plan monies? There is wide misunderstanding of what the Brevard sales tax is funding. It's complicated and needs to be effectively communicated.

Keith Winsten: Struck in going through this process that IRLNEP funding may really need to fall into 3 buckets rather than 2. Surprised by who applied for funding and maybe there's a need to address this. There could be 3 levels of funding: Big major projects of \$50K and over, small projects of less than \$5K and a middle, experimental ground of up to \$10K that could fund some of the conceptual, experimental projects that came in as small grants, but which probably could have used more.

Duane De Freese asked whether people had a good sense of when the next round of funding should go out? Staff will look at the calendar to tighten submittals. Funds for this round will be available beginning in July 2018.

Cynthia Vandevoorde Hall mentioned that Sebastian Chamber of Commerce is holding a county commissioner candidates forum in August. Cynthia is involved in writing questions for the candidates and would like members to submit topics or specific questions for candidates. 3 seats are up for election. Members suggested waste water treatment as a hot issue, septic, plans to make more robust stormwater planning, expanding educational processes for living shorelines, what would they do to help the IRL, how do they see urban development affecting the lagoon, ask a leading question to gauge their understanding and then a follow up to see where their minds are at.

Ken Grudens: Save Florida Estuaries Coalition. What is the NEP role? Duane De Freese explained that the IRLNEP and the other 3 Florida NEPs partnered to do a Memorandum of Understanding to work together on estuary issues. NEPs requested Legacy funding 2 years ago. That did not move in the Florida Legislature. Last year there were 2 formal bills that did not get heard. There is a groundswell of support to do something for Florida Estuaries for local cost-share and recurring funds. Wayne Mills is spearheading the coalition locally. Position is not to tell legislators where to get funding or how much is needed, but to let them know that funding estuary restoration is important.

Agenda Item 10. Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned.