

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (NCFRPC)

MEETING NOTES (UNOFFICIAL)

March 9, 2015

**ROBERT W. WILFORD, ALACHUA CITY COMMISSIONER
ALACHUA CITY COMMISSION LIAISON TO NCFRPC**

Commissioner Wilford Note: NCFRC is comprised of the following eleven counties: Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union Counties.

The monthly meeting of NCFRPC was conducted on February 26, 2015, at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites in Lake City. Mr. Christian Doolin, Legislative Consultant, Small County Coalition, made a presentation to the council concerning the upcoming Florida legislative session. Mr. Doolin reported that:

- The legislative session starts on March 2 and is scheduled to end on May 1.
- Governor Scott's budget for rural counties/small cities is very strong. His proposed balanced budget was submitted last month.
- Senator Andy Gardiner (parts of Brevard and Orange Counties) is President of the Senate and Representative Steve Crisafulli (part of Brevard County) is Speaker of the House. There is a significant change in leadership positions in both houses.
- There are over 1,400 bills being filed. Only 261 bills became law last year and this year's bills actually becoming law are anticipated to be approximately the same number as last year.
- The major issues for this year are:
 - The budget which is starting with a surplus of one billion dollars.
 - Making tax cuts totaling approximately \$700 million.
 - Amendment I regarding distribution of document stamp revenues (33% to water and land projects).
 - Child welfare issues.
 - Gambling issues including the Seminole pact.
 - Guns on university campuses.
 - Prison issues including penalties for abusive guards.
 - Stadium incentives which currently has seven million dollars earmarked for improvements.
 - School testing.
- The specific issues affecting small counties and rural areas for this year are:
 - Protecting what is already in place.
 - Libraries are taking a big hit.
 - State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) funds are taking a big hit due to Amendment I.
 - County Medicaid cost shift is still an issue.
 - Water project issues with an estimated \$1.2 billion being allocated for over 400 projects.
 - Nature Coast oyster issues (establishment of advisory organizations).
 - School funding with expected increases being made in rural areas.

- Economic development.
- Sun-setting of “Enterprise Zone” legislation which is scheduled for December 31, 2015.

COMMISSIONER WILFORD NOTE: Detailed information regarding specific legislative bills being considered is contained in the “Legislative Report” topic under the Executive Director’s agenda item.

Minutes of Previous Council Meeting

A motion was approved to accept the January 22, 2015, minutes.

Consent Agenda

Financial Report for Previous Council Meeting. A motion was approved to accept the January 2015 financial report. No “red flags” were noted and the condition of the council remains sound.

Experience North Florida Sponsorship. A motion was approved for NCFRPC to become a “Titanium Level” sponsor in the amount of \$1,000. This sponsorship level entitles NCFRPC to have one attendee participate in group functions and to have the council’s logo featured on all printed materials, on the website, and prominently displayed on on-site signage. The North Florida Economic Development Partnership is a public-private partnership that promotes economic development in the 14-county North Central Florida Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern. This partnership is conducting an event entitled “*Experience North Florida*” at Steinhatchee Landing on April 19-21, 2015. The purpose of this event is to connect site location consultants representing North Florida targeted industries with economic development professionals, state and regional project managers, state and local elected officials, corporate business leaders, and other key decision makers who are committed to attracting investment in the region.

Transportation Disadvantaged Program Local Coordinating Board Program Planning Grant Agreement Resolution for Fiscal Year 2015-16. A resolution was approved authorizing the chair to enter into the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Grant Agreement with the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged for Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, Suwannee, and Union Counties, authorizing the chair to sign the assurances, agreements and/or contracts, and authorizing the chair to sign invoices, warranties, and certifications for the program. The council receives approximately \$19,000 on an annual basis per county on a cost reimbursement basis to provide these services.

Transportation Disadvantaged Program Local Coordinating Board Appointment. A motion was approved to appoint Ms. Lori Newman as the alternate Public Education Representative on the Madison County Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board.

Chair Report

Introduction of New Council Members. The following new members were introduced: Commissioner Everett Phillips (Columbia County Board of County Commissioners) and Commissioner Jason Evans (City of High Springs).

Resolution of Appreciation. A resolution was approved recognizing Commissioner Frank Ogburn, Archer City Commission, for the dedicated service he has rendered to NCFRPC since August 2010 and for his concern for the future growth and development of this area and the State of Florida.

Transportation for the Disadvantaged Resolutions of Appreciation. Resolutions of appreciation were approved for Mr. William Cummings (Citizen Advocate on the Gilchrist County Local Coordinating Board since June 2005), Ms. Donna Hagan

(Citizen Advocate-User on the Madison County Local Coordinating Board since February 2007), and Ms. Betty Touma (Elderly Representative on the Dixie County Local Coordinating Board since April 1996).

Employee Certificate of Service. Mr. Steven Dopp, Senior Planner in the Regional Planning, Economic Development and Transportation Programs, was awarded a “Certificate of Service” for thirty years of commitment to NCFRPC.

Committee Reports

Executive

No report.

Clearinghouse

A motion was approved regarding a University of Florida Draft Campus Master Plan Update (2015-2025).

A motion was approved regarding a City of Starke Comprehensive Plan Adopted Amendment (DEO No. 15-1ER).

A motion was approved regarding a City of Jasper Comprehensive Plan Draft Amendment (DEO No. 15-1ER).

Regional Planning

Each Florida regional planning council is required every five years to perform an “Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)” of its strategic regional policy plan in a manner similar to the process that is required by local governments. The due date for NCFRPC’s next EAR is January 1, 2016. The purpose of an EAR is to identify those areas of the plan in need of revision based upon new information, new or changing state comprehensive plan policy, or changing regional trends and conditions. The specific guidance for performing an EAR review is provided in *Rule 27 E-5, Florida Administrative Code*. An EAR consists of two steps. The first step involves the preparation and adoption of the EAR itself while the second step involves the preparation of amendments, if applicable, to the strategic regional plan. Such amendments are required by the guidelines specified in the aforementioned *Rule 27 E-5, Florida Administrative Code* to occur within one year of the EAR due date.

The NCFRPC strategic regional policy plan contains of five subject areas of concern. They are: Affordable Housing, Economic Development, Emergency Preparedness, Natural Resources of Regional Significance, and Regional Transportation. In addition, the plan contains lists and maps of regionally significant resources and facilities, a coordination outline, an appendix which contains the council’s dispute resolution rule, a glossary of terms, maps of natural resources of regional significance, and descriptions of the listed species’ habitats.

Commissioner Wilford Note: Interested parties are directed to review the NCFRPC January report that outlines the conditions and trends, problems, needs and opportunities, and goals and policies for each subject area of concern. This report was presented to the Alachua City Commission at its February 23, 2015, meeting.

A report was made to council members at this meeting regarding the “Affordable Housing” subject area of concern. The specific topics contained in this subject area of concern are:

Conditions and Trends to include number of units constructed, home ownership, mobile homes, housing quality (plumbing facilities and overcrowding), and affordability.

Affordable Housing and Local Government Comprehensive Plans to include Land Development Regulations (LDRs) which promote the construction of dwelling units affordable to low- and very low-income households, and Future Land Use Map

(FLUM) classifications which establish higher densities of residential development within urban areas and the allowance of mobile homes within specified land use classifications.

Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Affordable Housing Rule, which was formerly adopted by the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), now the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, requiring, under certain circumstances, the provision of an adequate number of housing units for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households be available at the project site.

The Regional Planning Committee will review and revise the “Affordable Housing” regional goals, policies, and indicators for presentation to the full council for approval at the September 2015 NCFRPC meeting. This committee is scheduled to review the “Economic Development” subject area of concern at the March 2015 committee meeting.

The proposed schedule of committee meetings to address each subject area of concern and finalizing the EAR is:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
January 2015	Overview of the EAR Review Process and Adoption of Committee Review Schedule.
February 2015	Affordable Housing Subject Area.
March 2015	Economic Development Subject Area.
April 2015	Emergency Preparedness Subject Area.
May 2015	Natural Resources of Regional Significance Subject Area.
June 2015	Regional Transportation Subject Area.
July 2015	Regionally Significant Resources and Facilities. Appendix. Executive Summary. Introduction Coordination Outline.
August 2015	Committee Approval of Draft EAR. EAR Forwarded to Council for Consideration at September 2015 Council Meeting.
September 2015	Council Adoption of EAR. EAR Forwarded to Executive Office of the Governor, State Agencies, and Local Governments.

COMMISSIONER WILFORD NOTE: The members serving on the Regional Planning Committee representing Alachua County are: Commissioner Charles Chestnut, IV (Alachua County Board of County Commissioners), Commissioner Randy Wells (Gainesville City Commission), and Commissioner Robert W. Wilford (Alachua City Commission). Commissioner Wells is chairing the committee and Steven Dopp, NCFRPC Senior Planner, is serving as staff liaison to the committee.

Ex-Officio Member Reports

Roni Jordan, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)

The department is still in the process of streamlining permitting requirements.

Jordan Green, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

- Department is watching closely the effects “Amendment I” may have on FDOT’s funding.
- Department is reviewing its five-year plan. Regional forums will be conducted throughout the state.
- A survey may be forthcoming to assist the department in making changes.
- Roads and bridges are a perpetual area of concern for the department.
- The transportation issue in Alachua County is on the department’s radar.
- Department remains focused on economic development and job creation.
- Department spends one million dollars a day on projects.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Executive Director Report

Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Monthly Activity Report. Florida’s 11 regional planning councils have been in existence since the early 1960s. The FRCA is the statewide organization of the 11 regional planning councils existing to strengthen its individual and collective efforts, partner with government and business entities thereby enhancing regional economic prosperity, and improve the consistency and quality of regional planning councils’ programs to ensure they add value to state, regional, and local initiatives. A policy board, which is comprised of three representatives (county, municipal, and gubernatorial) from each regional planning council, governs the association while the executive directors of the 11 regional planning councils advise the policy board. The following NEFRPC members are currently serving on the FRCA policy board: Commissioner Daniel Riddick (Bradford County), Mayor Carolyn Spooner (City of Starke), and Charles Williams (Hamilton County Gubernatorial Appointment). FRCA is committed to:

- Ensuring regional planning councils are effective service organizations to the state, its local governments, and the citizens they serve.
- Ensuring regional planning councils are consensus builders and problem solvers who serve as conveners of the region by helping to articulate multijurisdictional issues that need resolution.
- Encouraging and promoting opportunities for regional planning councils to become partners in state programs and initiatives while observing the unique themes of each region within the state and legislative environments.
- Monitoring substantive state and federal legislative issues for the benefit of its members and promoting mutually supportive policy positions among the regional planning councils.
- Representing regional planning councils in national and regional organizations such as the National Association of Regional Councils, National Association of Development Organizations, and Southeast Regional Directors Institute.
- Fostering and coordinating relationships with state, regional, and national associations and organizations, nonprofit entities, public-private partnerships, the governor’s office, state agencies, and others related to issues of mutual interest and concern mirroring FRCA’s goals and programs.

The monthly activity report, which was prepared by Sheri Coven, FRCA Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, includes the following outreach, resource development/capacity building, legislative support, and association management activities for January 2015:

Outreach

Met with Mr. Bill Killingsworth, Director of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's (FDEO) Division of Community Development, to discuss several issues including the need to move forward with Governor Scott's economic development appointments to the regional planning councils. Brian Teeple, Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRPC), and Chair of FRCA's Executive Directors Advisory committee, participated in these discussions.

Met with representatives of the FDEO's Division of Strategic Business Development and Bureau of Labor Market Statistics to explore better coordination opportunities between these two groups. Mr. Teeple participated in these discussions.

Met with Ms. Jenna Titcomb and Mr. John Thomas, who represent the Florida League of Cities, regarding the coordination of regional activities of the Florida Local Government Coalition with the appropriate regional planning councils.

Provided support to FDEO to assist in the completion of its application for a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Special Merit Grant. If awarded, a small amount of funding will be provided to the regional planning councils to increase community resiliency capacity at the local level through a variety of training tools.

Resource Development/Capacity Building

Participated in the following meetings to strengthen the relationship between regional planning councils and their state and federal partners: Rural Economic Development Initiative, Florida Defense Support Task Force, Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI) Stakeholders Council; EFI's Legislative Committee, and EFI's Board of Directors.

Prepared and submitted FRCA's 2014-15 second quarter report to FDEO demonstrating implementation of the *Florida Strategic Plan of Economic Development*.

Attended the initial meeting of FDOT's Florida Transportation Plan/Strategic Intermodal System Plan Update Steering Committee.

Participated in a planning meeting for the Florida Civic Advance inaugural annual conference which is an initiative of the Florida Consensus Center.

Participated in the Florida Chamber Foundation 2015 Future of Florida Forum Partners meeting to begin the planning process for next year's forum.

Participated in a planning meeting for the Florida Civic Advance inaugural conference which is an initiative of the Florida Consensus Center.

Distributed funding announcements from FDEO, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Homeland Security/FEMA, and U.S. Department of Transportation.

Legislative Support

Provided support to Mr. Ron Book, FRCA Executive Director, and Chair Teeple to address legislative issues.

Coordinated with Mr. Book to ensure FRCA was represented at the Sadowski Coalition's meetings with Florida Senate and House leadership.

Finalized the 2015 FRCA legislative agenda that was approved by FRCA's Policy Board on January 9, 2015; posted agenda on FRCA's website.

Created and distributed a legislative highlights report covering the "Interim Committee Week" period, January 5-9, 2015, and reviewed pertinent legislative bills and issued related legislative bill tracking reports.

Association Management

Finalized the logistics, secured speakers, developed agendas, and drafted meeting summaries for the February 12-13, 2015 FRCA meetings.

Florida Chamber Foundation Scorecard. The Florida Chamber Foundation developed the Florida Scorecard to provide state leaders with the metrics needed to secure Florida's future. In performing this task, the Florida Chamber's primary objective is to develop a 20-year statewide strategic plan which requires a commitment to measuring the state's current status toward accomplishing the stated goals of the "Six Pillars" which were established to measure trends and progress. The "Six Pillars" incorporate the strategic thinking of a diverse range of stakeholders including Century Commission for a Sustainable Future, Florida Council of 100, Enterprise Florida, Florida State University, Workforce Florida, 1000 Friends of Florida, and others. Metrics for each of the "Six Pillars" are reported on a regular basis in the Florida Scorecard and are benchmarked to the nation's other 49 states for relative comparison of success. The six pillars are:

- Talent Supply and Education.
- Innovation and Economic Development.
- Infrastructure and Growth Leadership.
- Business Climate and Competiveness.
- Civic and Government Systems.
- Quality of Life and Places.

The Florida Scorecard for February was reviewed. Florida continues to fare well in five of the pillars. However, in the Talent Supply and Education pillar, Florida still ranks around 38th in the country and there remains a critical need for increasing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) skills in the state.

Legislative Report. The legislative session will convene on March 3, 2015. A summary of bills of interest follows:

- **Regional Planning Councils**
 - **Senate Bill 484 (Senator Simpson)/House Bill 873 (Representative Mayfield).** Language in these bills strike regional planning councils from all state statutes and transfers their duties and responsibilities to other entities.
- **Development of Regional Impact (DRI)**
 - **Senate Bill 562 (Senator Simpson)/House Bill 579 (Representative Gaetz).** Language in these bills requires that plan amendments proposing a development that qualifies as a DRI to be subject to the state coordinated review process and provides that new proposed developments are subject to the state coordinated review process and not the DRI review process.

➤ **Sector Plans**

- **Senate Bill 832 (Senator Simpson)/House Bill 933 (Representative La Rosa)**. Language in these bills requires that a comprehensive plan amendment to an adopted sector plan follow the specific state coordinated review process; establishes that this section is intended to promote development of a long-term vision for conservation, development, and agriculture on a landscape scale; provides that an applicant may request a pre-application conference with the local government that has jurisdiction before filing an application for a detailed specific area plan which may be subject to certain requirements; and, provides for the applicant to submit a detailed specific area plan and to transmit copies of the application to specified reviewing agencies for review and comment.

COMMISSIONER WILFORD NOTE: A lengthy discussion ensued over these bills regarding them potentially restricting “Home Rule” protection for counties and municipalities. Commissioner Cornell (Alachua County Board of County Commissioners) indicated that his board approved a resolution at a recent meeting opposing this legislation. It was also reported that the management of “Plum Creek” has decided to oppose this legislation.

➤ **FDEO Web Page**

- **House Bill 75 (Representative Combee)/Senate Bill 232 (Senator Hays)**. Language in these bills require that FDEO create a web page which is accessible through its internet website that provides certain information with a specific explanation of the purpose of the web page.

COMMISSIONER WILFORD NOTE: This is the third legislative session in a row that some form of the creation of a FDEO web page has been proposed.

➤ **Freight Logistic Zones**

- **House Bill 257 (Representative Ray)**. Language in this bill defines the term freight logistics zone and authorizes a county or two or more contiguous counties to designate a geographic area or areas within its jurisdiction as a freight logistic zone.

➤ **Private Property Rights**

- **House Bill 551 (Representative Perry)**. Language in this bill requires local governments to address protection of private property rights in their respective comprehensive plans.

➤ **Water and Land Conservation Amendment**

- **Senate Bill 586 (Senator Dean)**. Language in this bill provides that specified distributions to the “Land Acquisition Trust Fund” are not subject to the service charge under *Section 215.20, Florida Statutes*.

➤ **Agritourism**

- **Senate Bill 594 (Senator Stargel)**. Language in this bill prohibits a local government from enforcing an ordinance, regulation, rule, or policy that prohibits, restricts, regulates, or otherwise limits an agritourism activity on land classified as agricultural land.

➤ **Water Conservation**

- **House Bill 605 (Representative Porter).** Language in this bill authorizes local governments to adopt certain residential and nonresidential landscape irrigation conservation measures and authorizes water management district governing boards and FDEP to issue water shortage notices in public information releases and post such notices on the district's or the department's website.

Economic Development District Grantee Performance Report. NCFRPC is recognized by the federal government as a designated economic development district by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. The annual report for the period January 1, 2014, through December 31, 2014, was presented. An estimated \$476,000,000 in private investment and an estimated \$21,000,000 in public investment occurred on five projects during the reporting period.

Competitive Florida Partnership Program. FDEO established the "Competitive Florida Partnership Program" last year to assist rural communities value and market local assets and challenge them to set realistic goals for advancing their economic development vision. The City of Newberry, City of Starke, and Town of White Springs are participants in this year's program.

Check Fraud Status Report (Wells Fargo). The council remains in litigation with Wells Fargo over a disputed check in the amount of \$49,523 which the bank honored on March 20, 2013, that was not approved or signed by an authorized NCFRPC signatory. After many months of legal maneuvering, a hearing was held on January 24, 2014, in the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for Alachua County on the motion to compel arbitration filed by Wells Fargo to resolve the dispute between NCFRPC and Wells Fargo. At the conclusion of the hearing, the court granted the motion to compel arbitration which will be binding on both parties. Following one year of additional legal maneuvering (haggling) regarding the selection of an arbitrator, both parties, NCFRPC and Wells Fargo, mutually agreed early last month to select an arbitrator who is located in Jacksonville. In contesting the action of Wells Fargo in this matter, the legal fees for NCFRPC as of November 2014 are \$33,371. Upon receiving a question from the floor once again concerning the reimbursement of legal fees providing NCFRPC is successful in prevailing in this dispute, NCFRPC's legal representative, Jonathan Wershow, Attorney at Law, indicated that reimbursement of his legal fees would be requested as part of the settlement but there is little likelihood that the council will be reimbursed for fees.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of NCFRPC will be held on March 26, 2015, at 7:30 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites in Lake City.

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NOTE: In addition to representing the Alachua City Commission on NCFRPC, Robert W. Wilford, Alachua City Commissioner, serves as a member of the council's Board of Directors and Regional Planning Committee.