

MINUTES OF THE COLLIER COUNTY
COASTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WATER QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Naples, Florida, April 14, 2022

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee Water Quality Subcommittee, in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 1 P.M. in REGULAR SESSION at the GMD Horseshoe Square South Conference Room, 2685 Horseshoe Drive S., Unit 103, Naples, Florida, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Bob Roth
VICE CHAIRMAN: Bob Raymond
Ray Christman (absent)

ALSO PRESENT: Andy Miller, County Coastal Zone Manager
Rhonda Watkins, Principal Environmental Specialist
Danette Kinaszczuk, Pollution Control Manager

I. Call to Order

Chairman Roth called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Roll call was taken, and a quorum of two was established.

IV. Changes and Approval of Agenda

No changes were made.

V. Approval of CAC Sub-Committee Minutes

None

VI. Public CommentsNone

VII. Staff Reports

None

VIII. New Business

None

IX. Old Business

Mr. Miller said Vice Chair Christman asked him to bring up one of the recommendations the CAC should bring to the BCC in its report. His first recommendation would be to ask the BCC to support the work related to Sen. Bill 712, the [Clean Waterways Act](#).

Chairman Roth asked if that was contrary to coastal waterways, what the subcommittee is charged with focusing on. We're supposed to avoid freshwater and focus on coastal waterways that pertain to Collier County.

Mr. Miller said he couldn't answer the specifics, but Ray may be implying that the inland waterways feed the coastline.

Chairman Roth said the CAC is supposed to limit recommendations to those that pertain to Collier County.

Mr. Raymond noted that the CAC isn't supposed to get involved with small lakes, just the coastal waterways.

Chairman Roth said (CAC Chair) Dave Trecker can be a stickler about that, and he even brought it up at the last meeting.

Mr. Miller said Ray is only asking the BCC to support any work that would affect coastal water quality coming out of Sen. Bill 712.

Chairman Roth (*reading from Trecker's past report*) said the only issues they should focus on affect the County's bays, inlets, estuaries and shorelines. These were deemed inappropriate for additional focus: redundancies; existing sampling and testing protocols; existing surface and groundwater monitoring programs; signage warnings on health; ongoing research of harmful algae blooms and associated toxins under study by the State; preventative measures underway to toughen airborne-nutrient standards; new

legislation; the Clean Water Act, written or to monitor septic systems and curb runoffs; planned increases in stormwater management systems, such as street sweeping and mechanical harvesting.

Ms. Kinaszczuk said that was deemed inappropriate because it's part of Stormwater Utilities.

Mr. Miller said hopefully Ray (Christman) will call in. Ray also asked that they recommend that the BCC possibly support the work associated with the Belle Meade (Flow way) Restoration Project.

Chairman Roth (*reading from a note from Vice Chair Christman*) *The Belle Meade Restoration Project has important implications, not just for water quality for in the Gordon River, Naples Bay and Rookery Bay, but for our broader coastal waters, as well. This is a large complex project that has been proceeding in fits and starts over time. Big Cypress, based in Southwest Florida Water Management and Collier County, are lead agencies on that initiative. He understood that Gary McAlpin has rejoined the County staff.*

Mr. Miller said he (Gary) is working on the Belle Meade project and some of the Army Corps work that we've done.

Chairman Roth said we've been told not to do anything anybody else is doing. They don't want us conflicting with anything. Go find something no one is working on, such as oyster gardens or feeding the manatees.

Mr. Raymond asked if he was reading from the "Bible," the list of their duties.

Chairman Roth said he was, and prior minutes. Report 1 said to focus on fertilizers and advanced-wastewater treatment. That's his recollection: Don't touch anything that's been touched otherwise. The CAC's roles are limited. It's charged with providing recommendations to the BCC on coastal areas and should focus on tangible measures on the local level and present comprehensive packages to the BCC, as opposed to piecemeal items, and the cities should be included. They want us to stay away from State issues. The County might not want us to get behind a Senate bill.

Mr. Raymond asked if they had to make a decision now.

Chairman Roth said he hoped they could nail down two or three things, such as Vertical Oyster Gardens and research whether there are more resistant strains of seagrass, or contact this coastal engineering company to see what they're doing so the subcommittee could try to formulate a memo today to go to the CAC to talk about. So, this is all good stuff. Even with Belle Meade, being that Collier County is the lead agency on this initiative, we don't have to remind the County to do that.

(He continued reading a note from Vice Chairman Christman.) *"State Stormwater rulemaking: The FDEP is moving forward with the rulemaking process for stormwater portion of the Clean Waterways Act passed in 2020. The first step was a technical advisory committee, followed by public workshops. ... Stormwater pollution continues to be a major water-quality problem in Florida's waters, especially including coastal waters and estuaries. Chairman Roth said he agreed with that. This is the first time the State has looked at this issue in over a decade and it's an important opportunity to have an impact. My suggestion is that this group should urge the BCC to make this a priority and actively engage in the rulemaking process with comments and recommendations. Others locally, like SWFL Conservancy, will be engaged, as well. But all that is contrary to what we're supposed to be doing.*

Ms. Kinaszczuk asked if that process was done, or is it still ongoing?

Ms. Watkins said that process, the stormwater TAC summary recommendation report, is out. The DEP

still has to follow through with the actual handbook and rulemaking.

Ms. Kinaszczuk asked if that's when they make comments.

Ms. Watkins said it was.

Chairman Roth said all that is in the works. He believed they were looking for new ideas and thoughts. He noted that Advanced Wastewater was the first of the CAC recommendations. The County already has said any changes moving forward would be advanced and any new treatment would be advanced.

Ms. Kinaszczuk said the County has said that. She wasn't certain what the cities' stance or Ave Maria's stance was on that.

Chairman Roth said Marco Island is a battle he's trying to wage on his own. He didn't know where they were going to get on it, but at least they have the engineers working on it. The other recommendation was fertilizers, which is great, but it's not enforced. We can reiterate that. Advanced wastewater was the first and fertilizers was the second recommendation that Dave's group came up with: Former working group to meet with landscape maintenance companies. These ideas already have been passed on to the BCC. He noted that Dave's group cited what issues are deemed inappropriate due to redundancies, existing sampling protocols, DEP and other groups, existing surface and groundwater monitoring programs, ongoing research into harmful algae, new legislation. They don't want us talking about all that stuff. He's wary of bringing something back, such as Sen. Bill 712.

Mr. Raymond noted that the Clean Waterways Act already was in progress.

Chairman Roth said he wished Ray were here to provide insight. But he believes it's not appropriate. We should put it aside and go back to vertical oyster gardens and seagrass.

Mr. Raymond asked if they were making proposals to the CAC.

Chairman Roth said they were. There's a video on the VOGs and we can show that to the CAC with a recommendation. He moved to make it a recommendation for the County to consider developing a VOG program similar to the Greater Sarasota Bay program.

Ms. Watkins said they'd talked about partnering with the Conservancy and Rookery Bay and using their facilities to set up stations there.

Mr. Raymond said that was correct, but they needed to first present their findings to the CAC.

Chairman Roth noted that the VOGs video was very informative, and Collier County should be doing this, too. If they like the idea, then it will be assigned to someone other than the inland water employees.

Ms. Kinaszczuk noted that the non-profits have a lot of volunteers to handle that.

Chairman Roth asked if the County could encourage the non-profits to do this or does the County have to pick this up on their own? If they don't, why can't the County do it?

Mr. Miller asked who will fund it and how will it be funded?

Ms. Kinaszczuk said they talked about capitalizing on existing volunteer networks and facilities.

Mr. Raymond said the Conservancy and Rookery Bay were two they talked about.

Chairman Roth asked if the County Water Quality Program had volunteers.

Ms. Kinaszczuk said only for very specific programs at a park, but no water quality volunteers. The County does help teach part of (UF/IFAS's) Florida Lake Watch, but the County doesn't have a network of 40 volunteers like the Conservancy or Rookery Bay do, or an educational facility.

Chairman Roth said he thought the Commissioners had, at least in their back of their minds, an idea to create a committee within the Coastal Advisory Committee to look at water quality and that whatever comes out of this committee is going to be something that may cost money to implement, even telling them to look at the fertilizer program.

Mr. Raymond said they won't spend the money to help with that or enforce it.

Chairman Roth said that's a detail beyond the idea. It's an interesting concept that could help and engage the public, which is the main thing. People get excited about this stuff, having an oyster garden on their docks. It may only pertain to residents with docks, but that's fine.

Mr. Raymond said it doesn't hurt to start talking about that.

Chairman Roth made a motion to ask the CAC to recommend to the BCC that Vertical Oyster Gardens be a countywide project. Second by Mr. Raymond. The motion passed unanimously, 2-0.

Mr. Miller said the important part is to create an executive summary detailing that recommendation.

Chairman Roth said he'd write the recommendation. But he thought they needed a second or third item. He is not satisfied with the fertilizer option because he doesn't believe anything has been done on that, other than the County already has a law on the books.

Mr. Raymond said they should push this and see what happens.

Chairman Roth asked if they could share this internally, their work in progress. He'll draft something to send to Mr. Miller, who can send it to (Assistant County Attorney) Colleen Green.

Mr. Miller said he can put it in the MinuteTraq system, which is a way of submitting an executive summary, and include Colleen.

Chairman Roth said he thought this was a fair recommendation.

Mr. Raymond said non-profits can get involved.

Ms. Kinaszczuk said Rhonda just pulled up a notice showing that Rookery Bay was holding an Oyster Prism Building Workshop on April 20, so this is definitely something they're interested in. This would be an opportunity to build on that.

Chairman Roth said he'd like to see the County more ingrained with Rookery Bay. He asked if that's where fertilizer testing occurs.

Ms. Kinaszczuk said it was.

Chairman Roth said there is no follow-up after testing, which is a problem. They just take a class.

Ms. Kinaszczuk said the class is to get that license and you have to show that to get your business license.

Chairman Roth said and then you're good to go. He said landscapers aren't willfully throwing fertilizers around. He's more against re-use water when they don't test nutrients. They're just spraying it on the ground. He asked if she could share that oyster workshop information with them.

Ms. Watkins showed a photo of the oyster prism. They don't do it off the dock, so there can be some worth in encouraging people to do something off their dock.

Mr. Raymond said what we're proposing is a lot easier.

Chairman Roth said that's what's important.

X. Announcements

None

XI. Committee Member Discussion

None

XII. Next Meeting Date/Location

TBD

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chair at 1:32 p.m.

**Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee
Water Quality Subcommittee**

Chairman, Bob Roth

These minutes were approved by the Subcommittee/Chairman on _____, as presented (choose one) _____, or as amended _____.