

MINUTES OF THE COLLIER COUNTY
COASTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Naples, Florida, April 13, 2023

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee, in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 1:00 P.M. in REGULAR SESSION at Administrative Building “F,” 3rd Floor, Collier County Government Complex, Naples, Florida, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: David Trecker
VICE CHAIRMAN: Joseph Burke
Steve Koziar
Thomas McCann (excused)
Jim Burke
Robert Raymond
Robert Roth
Raymond Christman
Erik Brechnitz (excused)

ALSO PRESENT:

Andy Miller, Coastal Zone Manager
Colleen Greene, Assistant County Attorney
Farron Turner, Management Analyst I, Coastal Zone

Anyone in need of the verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the video recording from the Communications, Government & Public Affairs Division or view it online.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Roll Call

Roll call was taken and a quorum of seven was established.

IV. Changes and Approval of Agenda

Mr. Raymond moved to approve the agenda. Second by Mr. Burke. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

V. Public Comments

VI. Approval of CAC Minutes

February 9, 2023

Vice Chair Burke noted that his comment on the top of page 3 should say “sieve-criteria,” not SID-criteria.

Mr. Raymond moved to approve the February 9, 2023, meeting minutes, as amended. Second by Mr. Koziar. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

VII. Staff Reports

Mr. Miller noted that two questions were raised at the last meeting. Bob Raymond asked where the money for the Paradise Coast Sports Complex money is. It’s the last item on TDC capital.

Chairman Trecker said Mr. Roth also asked for a direct comparison between last year and this year.

Mr. Miller said the Revenue Report was published prior to yesterday but we got the March numbers last night and there’s a faded line that shows last year’s entire revenues, as well as the budgeted revenues. We were running a little short of last year but are nearly caught up. We’re 1.65% short of what we were doing last year.

Mr. Roth thanked him for putting the line in to show the comparison.

Mr. Miller said Farron did it, so you can thank her.

Extended Revenue Report

“FY23 TDT Collections Revenue Report” dated March 31, 2023.

Mr. Miller detailed a PowerPoint presentation and reported that:

- Last year was a phenomenal year. He’s uncertain if it was a record year because he hasn’t verified that. March numbers are virtually tied with last year.
- We’re about 40% above budget.

Mr. Raymond noted that one of the reasons we’re a little bit down compared to last

year is a lot of the hotels were really damaged by the hurricane.

Mr. Miller noted that the Ritz is closed due to the hurricane.

Mr. Raymond said the Naples Beach Club closed before that, so we're doing good.

Mr. Miller said they're doing very well.

Chairman Trecker noted that when you compare the numbers to the five-year running average, which was 34% above budget, 39% above budget looks pretty good, so we're really in very good shape.

VIII. New Business

1. [Executive Summary – APTIM Environmental & Infrastructure LLC Preparation of the 2024-2025 LGFR for Collier County's shore protection projects Proposal](#)

Recommendation to approve a proposal from APTIM Environmental & Infrastructure Inc. to provide professional engineering Services for 2024-2025 Local Government Funding Request under Contract No. 18-7432-CZ for time and material not to exceed \$26,052 and make a finding that this item promotes tourism (Fund 195, Project No. 90065).

Mr. Miller outlined the recommendation and reported that:

- This is a yearly item.
- They help us put together the application packets to go to FDEP to request reimbursement for projects that we do with our beaches and inlets. They compete against the entire coastal state of Florida and they're ranked.
- APTIM does a great job and we typically get a roughly 42 percent reimbursement for beaches, while reimbursement for inlets varies from 50%-75%, sometimes 100%.

Chairman Trecker asked if this was requested by DEP.

Mr. Miller said that's correct. The DEP requires that it must be finished by July 31 and we're competing with others around the state.

Mr. Raymond moved to recommend approving a proposal from APTIM Environmental & Infrastructure Inc. to provide professional engineering service for 2024-2025 Local Government Funding Request under Contract No. 18-7432-CZ for time and material not to exceed \$26,052 and found that this item promotes tourism (Fund 195, Project No. 90065). Second by Mr. Burke. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

2. [Executive Summary – Humiston & Moore Engineers - Collier County Beaches and Inlets Annual Monitoring for 2023 Proposal](#)

Recommendation to approve a proposal from Humiston & Moore Engineers to provide professional engineering service for state-required Annual Monitoring of Collier County Beaches and Inlets for 2023 under Contract No. 18-7432-CZ for time and material not to exceed \$52,004 and make a finding that this item promotes tourism (Fund 195, Project No. 90536).

Mr. Miller reported that:

- This is an item we do yearly. It's our annual physical monitoring, a survey effort of beaches and a report based on the findings to recommend renourishment projects or inlet management projects.
- Humiston & Moore does these for us every year and they do a great job.

- The big difference this year is that typically this item runs about \$175,000 on up but it's reduced substantially mainly because we had an emergency survey effort done by APTIM right after the hurricane and we were told by FDEP that the survey effort from November-December would be sufficiently up to date without doing an entirely new effort.
- We're using the survey information to provide to Humiston & Moore to crunch the numbers and write the report. It's a much less involved physical effort, as far as surveying, but they'll still do the report.
- He outlined the recommendation.

Chairman Trecker said it was his understanding that Humiston & Moore would sweep in the data the county received from APTIM and we'll have a good composite report to see the total numbers.

Mr. Miller said that was correct.

Mr. Christman asked when the work will be completed, including the integration of the data with Humiston & Moore.

Mr. Miller said we're hoping to take this item to the BCC's last meeting in April, but it may be pushed to the first meeting in May, which would mean work would probably start mid-May. If that happens, we're going to try to push them to get that out in a draft form and not a final report. We just want enough information to tell us what kind of projects we need to do next November, December, January, etc., so he's hoping to get some of that draft information within the first month after they start, maybe early to mid-June.

Mr. Christman asked when the CAC would receive those recommendations from staff.

Mr. Miller said he'll bring them to the next meeting after he receives them. He'll go to work with the County Manager's Office to make sure they're on board with the proposals and then bring it as an item for the CAC's approval.

Mr. Christman asked if that would be around July or August.

Mr. Miller said yes.

Mr. Christman asked when the work was done by APTIM after the hurricane.

Mr. Miller said November and December, with some in January, when they were finishing up in the Marco Island area.

Mr. Christman asked if he was comfortable that our beach mouths were evaluated.

Mr. Miller said all were, including those we don't worry about.

Mr. Christman asked if he was confident the data was still valid.

Mr. Miller said he's fairly confident. A good news item is that APTIM is doing the emergency-berm design and the construction monitoring. They've already done a pre-construction survey, so they're going to supply that survey information to Humiston & Moore, as well. They're also going to do a post-construction survey to give us an idea that the berms were built correctly and to provide additional information on how that's evolved since January and February, around that time frame.

Mr. Christman said that makes sense, thank you.

Mr. Christman moved to recommend approving a proposal from Humiston & Moore Engineers to provide professional engineering services for state-required Annual Monitoring of Collier County Beaches and Inlets for 2023 under Contract No. 18-7432-CZ for time and material not to exceed \$52,004 and make a finding that this item promotes tourism (Fund 195, Project No. 90536). Second by Mr. Raymond. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

VIII. Old Business

1. Update – Emergency Berm Project

Mr. Miller told the CAC:

- Both contracts were approved by the County Manager’s Office. We’ll be routing those for the Board of County Commissioners’ ratification on April 25.
- The contractors both started Naples Beach, as we had planned, and we started the hauling effort last Wednesday. We went into Easter weekend, so we took Friday and Saturday off because we weren’t getting the production in the number of available truckers. We decided to wait and pull out all the stops this past Monday.
- As of this morning’s progress meeting, we have about 11,000-plus in tonnage placed on the beach.
- We started at Naples Pier, worked to the north and as of about 11 a.m. this morning, they were getting close to 8th Avenue South, on what we call Reach B, which is the northern project – Vanderbilt Beach, Pelican Bay, Barefoot. The contractor has placed mats at the end of Vanderbilt Beach Road and plans to start his trucks hauling next Monday morning.

Chairman Trecker said it’s his understanding that FEMA granted us an extension until June 29.

Mr. Miller said that was correct.

Chairman Trecker asked if they’d finish by Memorial Day.

Mr. Miller said that’s the target date.

Chairman Trecker said we’re looking at 400,000 tons versus about 230,000 tons for the recent reimbursement, so it’s a bigger project.

Mr. Miller said that’s correct.

Chairman Trecker noted they’d be working around turtle-nesting season, which starts May 1, and you said you’d work around those nests.

Mr. Miller said that’s correct. We discussed this in our progress meeting. What we plan to do is invite the county’s turtle monitor, who will go out every morning to look for the “crawl” from the beach to the nest. If she encounters one within or around the construction zone, she’ll mark it and put a 10-foot radius circle around it. The contractor will push sand up to the circle and leave enough sand to fill the circle when the hatchlings emerge. They call it “avoidance.” We’ll be avoiding the nest.

Chairman Trecker asked if they’d be receiving a 75% reimbursement by FEMA, possibly 87% with state contributions?

Mr. Miller said that was correct.

Chairman Trecker noted that:

- People tend to lose sight of the fact that this is really a three-phase project.
- The first is to clear the debris, flatten, reshape and get the beaches back so they’re safe to occupy and you’ve done that. Twelve are open now, possibly more, and many are being used.
- The second phase, the emergency berm, is what we’ve been talking about, the knee-high trapezoidal dunes, which give some protection against five-year storms. That was unanimously approved by county commissioners, which doesn’t always happen, so we have strong support.
- The third phase, which tends to get overlooked, is that this isn’t the end of it. People have asked, “What about planning?” But you made plans.

Mr. Miller told the CAC:

- If we had 20-20 hindsight and knew the hurricane was coming, we may have started plantings last year, enough for our June projects, but the hurricane snuck up on us.
- The immediate threat is from flooding. The plants do a great job of trapping the wind-blown sand and creating the dunes.
- What we want to do immediately is get the berm built to provide a semblance of protection. While we're building the berm, we're making efforts toward putting a work order in place to get a designer to create plans in a bid package to do the planting project right before wet season starts next year. That gives us time.
- It typically takes three to four months just to get plants to the point where they're viable to put in the sand, and we're talking about a million or more, so we'll take that time to grow plants to the point where they're hardy enough to put in the sand. Hopefully, we'll be ready to pop them in next March or April, before the rain starts.

Chairman Trecker said he'd indicated that he'd already been in contact with Naples Botanical Garden and that consultant is going to guide the choice of the plants, taking input from an *ad-hoc* group that we'll put together.

Mr. Miller said Naples Botanical Garden is one and the Native Plant Society is another. The City of Naples' environmental staff is on board, so we're going to create a task force. We don't know whether we'll formalize that, but we want to involve the people who want to see the appropriate plants – No. 1, for the beach and No. 2, for Naples proper.

A discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- The CAC can get involved if it desires.
- Phase 3 will require commission approval.
- The County Manager has the authority to execute the contracts for construction of the berm.
- It's doubtful that level of emergency effort is required for the June plants.
- We'll have plenty of time to get the design bid to the CAC, TDC and BCC for approval.
- We may be talking about future renourishment.
- What Mr. Miller plans to take from the Humiston & Moore report is if they've got enough to do either one or two mid-sized projects, 50,000-60,000 yard projects, we want to get those projects started by next fall or winter. To do that, we're going to have to do a quick design, a quick bid and a quick award of construction.
- If we do two smaller projects, they don't require a CCNA, the Consulting Competitive Negotiations Act. That process takes time, four to six months, and we don't have that time. If we do two smaller projects below the \$4 million threshold, we can circumvent that process and use our library contract to do the design work.
- If we have two beach sections in desperate need this November through March, we'll be able to do that construction then. After that, we'll probably return to our scheduled renourishment, typically a four- to five-year cycle.
- The emergency berm project includes Marco Island. It goes from Eagles Nest (Beach Resort) all the way down to Cape Marco. That beach section had enough losses that were eligible for FEMA reimbursement.
- The project includes Pelican Bay, but not Clam Pass because it's only for beaches or dunes that front developed property, with homes or structures behind them. It will probably go to the last building in Colony Bay. If there's a desire to go farther, that will have to be a separate project.
- Mats were installed yesterday at Vanderbilt Beach, so the trucks can go from the road to the beach, dump sand and return. Fencing and barricades to keep the public away from the construction site also was installed.
- Hauling will begin Monday.

- The county just reached out to the consultant yesterday and doesn't have to go through a bid process to get the consultant because it's below the \$4 million threshold. We have a library contract available and picked the next one in line, Taylor Engineering Inc., which did the dune planting design we finished last year.
- We're hoping to get a final proposal in a day or two, then will put together a work order for signatures. We can bring that to the CAC's May meeting, then it would go to the TDC in May and then the BCC's first June meeting.
- We need to ensure plants are growing within the time frame it takes to get them on the beach in March and April, so we'll have to get the designer on board to immediately work with stakeholders to get a consensus on what we want to plant.
- We'll do a rough, quick estimate on the number of plants we want to grow and take that to the Procurement Division to get an invitation to bid out to the growers to get it started. In the meantime, the designer can fine tune the design plans and bid package for construction later.
- The berm project isn't so temporary. It's a substantial amount of sand, 50 feet wide by 2 feet tall, like a renourishment. We'll be able to dovetail into the proper nourishment in the upcoming months and years. Although it's considered temporary work, it's considered Category B Emergency Work.
- The best thing about Category B Emergency Work is you avoid many of the issues related to environmental compliance, but must get the work done quickly. That's why they call it temporary. It's intended to stabilize things for future upcoming storms.
- Some of these will remain and be more a permanent five-year structure. If we get lucky, we'll ride the year out and get plants in the dunes next year and they'll do a great job of helping to fortify dunes, hold them together and accumulate sand.
- The county Communications Division sent out press releases with diagrams showing the areas we're proposing to do. There are plans for Marco Island.
- The invasive sea grape is known as non-native scaevola and the hurricane got rid of a lot of those on the beach. Last year's replanting project involved the removal of non-native scaevola that already were established and they replanted with native species. This effort will be much less involved as far as removal of scaevola and will just be a replanting project. Although there are some areas where the scaevola took a hard hit, it's a pretty hardy plant and is trying to get reestablished.
- There's also a native scaevola.
- If the trapezoidal berms that are going in now need reinforcement, we'll have an opportunity to do that in Phase 3.
- The top of the berm elevation is 6.0 NAVD, a little higher than mean sea-level datum, about 1-1½ feet higher. NAVD 6.0 was the elevation of a typical dune along a Collier beach. Right now, the sand is at elevation 3½-4 at the high end of the beach. The extra 2-3 feet will bring them back to where they were.

2. Status – USACE Project

Public Speaker

Ashley Jenkins told the CAC

- She has three requests, including one follow-up request. When you met in February, the CAC offered to let her and Shelley McKiernan participate in the Water Quality Subcommittee. She'd like to follow up on that after this meeting.
- Her second request is that post-hurricane, the county did a great job removing all the debris, but we still have cars in the Venetian and Doctors bays. We don't necessarily know all the debris that we're encountering in various coastal areas. But we did not create a policy or procedure to look at remediating the waste that ended up in storm ponds and storm drains.
- We had Category 3 downtown and she was elbow deep in it cleaning her home the day after. We have the ability to create a policy or recommendation to the Marco

Island City Council, Naples City Council and the County Commission on what the community needs to do to deal with that pollution because it hasn't been dealt with.

- She met with Councilman Christman this past week, and many people who have storm ponds with that intrusion said there's now algal leaching out into our coastal waterways, so that affects the impact of beaches that you oversee.
- Can you come up with a sand policy, what we do after a hurricane for the sand besides just removing debris and something from the water?
- She's committed to talking to the CAC about the Army Corps of Engineers' project. It came to her attention less than three days ago that there were really interesting proposed designs for the passes. We have not done anything to dredge those waterways or looked at them. We had a lot of sand that was displaced and are now looking at replacing it with the berms, but we haven't removed the sand.
- She's spoken to Seagate residents who can't get their boats out of the canals to get to the Gulf of Mexico because there's so much sand in there.
- She doesn't feel she's been informed enough about the Army Corps project and looks forward to hearing more.

Chairman Trecker said they're getting the subcommittee back together and will contact her about a meeting. He suggested she listen to the presentation about the Army Corps project because there's a lot of new information.

Ms. Jenkins thanked him for the information.

Chairman Trecker told the CAC:

- The BCC on Tuesday formally approved proceeding with the revised ACE feasibility study, which calls for a preliminary feasibility plan by October or the end of the year.
- This will cost \$3 million and is funded by the federal government.
- If the feasibility plan is accepted, extensive Army Corps of Engineers work is going to be done and cost estimates will be made.
- Congressional approval will be sought because we're competing with other areas for funding. This is many years away.
- The Army Corps has scheduled scoping meetings. (He provided CAC members with a handout on the meetings.)
- The first is a Zoom virtual meeting on April 18.
- Another meeting will be held at the South Regional Library on April 26.
- All stakeholders can participate and can also provide written comments by May 8.
- Any comments submitted prior to this must be resubmitted to Kathy Perdue.
- Commissioners will be taking a more active role than in the past, which is good. On Tuesday, the BCC created an *ad-hoc* committee to provide a forum for public participation. The CAC filled that role before.
- CAC members should apply, if interested.

Mr. Miller introduced Chris Mason, director of the new county Community Planning & Resiliency Division. He and the Coastal Zone Division will be involved with the Army Corps and will have a technical advisory role involving input on the project. I will be attending the design charettes and public meetings and taking information as it comes and, where appropriate, weigh in. But the administrative effort related to the three-year process is going to be taken over by Chris. He can tell you about the *ad-hoc* committee.

Mr. Mason told the CAC:

- His division was formed in October 2022 and he's the only person in the division at this time.
- We're in the process of assembling about seven staff members.
- Tomorrow, he officially will take over the county's administrative portion for

this project.

- A PE, a professional engineer, will join his staff in the next couple of weeks to work on the project.
- He'll be more on the high-level, public-speaking phase, of it but we'll have staff with engineering backgrounds who will be involved.
- He's only been involved for 2½-3 weeks. But he does have prior knowledge about the project.
- Toward the end of this month, we're going to have 2½ days of charrettes, which will comprise presentations, brainstorming and tabletop exercises. That will involve the Army Corps of Engineers, county staff and other stakeholders. That's by invitation only and will be at the South Regional Library. It's not a public forum.
- He started with the county six years ago and became the division director in October. He was previously the county's floodplain coordinator, which he still is, but he's also working on the Army Corps project.
- He's working on many recovery efforts with FEMA and the Building Department, so he's multitasking.

Chairman Trecker thanked him for the information and said they'll have an interesting time on the project because it raises a lot of heated feelings.

Mr. Mason said he was correct, that there are very strong emotions around this project. This is just a study that will end in a recommendation. The BCC has to agree to anything before any structural or nature-based solution is decided upon

Vice Chair Burke said he's heard the number \$3½ billion.

Mr. Mason said he's heard \$7-\$8 billion.

Chairman Trecker noted that it was initially \$2.1 billion.

Vice Chair Burke said his second observation is that there seem to be camps being set up between nature-based and hard structures, and there's not necessarily a bifurcation between them. As long as we keep referring to things as nature-based versus hard structure, it greens up something that necessarily isn't that great. He cautioned against bifurcating this into one way or another. There should be a combination of the two. Whatever method is selected, the end goal is it must prevent coastal flooding. He's challenged to see how some of the proposed solutions meet that goal.

Mr. Roth said there's nothing on the table so far. He saw an article this morning on WINK News and the implication is that this is what the Army Corps of Engineers is proposing. There's nothing on the table. We're at the very beginning of this process and these scoping meetings next week are so the Army Corps can develop a scope of work to prepare the environmental impact statement to study these concerns, such as sand, that still exist and have to be dealt with to move the project forward. There are things that everyone is probably not thinking about that will come out of the scoping sessions. Once they hold those, they will have a variety of things they need to ferret out for a complete study to present to us. Right now, there's nothing to react to. He was distraught by what he saw on TV this morning.

Mr. Christman said he has a different point of view. He's heard two things from the Corps on the reboot of the study. He's heard, as Bob said, that we're starting from a clean slate and he's also heard that we're going to be taking into account what was done in the Phase 1 study. He heard those two at different times and context. Common sense tells him that it's very ambitious to believe they can carry out a process between now and October or even December and complete a new plan with appropriate community input. That concerns him and the fact that they're having hastily called meetings at the end of April, when residents are going home after season. That may not provide the ability to capture people's attention

in April, let alone in the summer and early fall months, when most of the work is presumably going to be done. How is this going to be carried out at the county level and when will the *ad-hoc* committee members be named?

Mr. Mason said he didn't know the answer, but he knows he will be a regular participant with that committee, so he'll need to get that that information. He'll reach out to Trinity Scott to get that. **Chairman Trecker** said one member per district will be selected by the BCC.

Mr. Christman asked if it all comes back to the BCC for approval.
Mr. Mason said yes.

Chairman Trecker said five people can apply to be on the *ad-hoc* committee, one per commissioner, and two will be chosen for at-large seats.

Mr. Christman asked about the dates for the charrettes, which seem to overlap with the scoping sessions.

Mr. Mason said the charrettes will be from April 25-26, from 9 a.m. to 3 or 4 p.m., and April 27 will be a half-day.

Mr. Christman asked if the charrettes were all separate meetings.

Mr. Mason said it's 2½ days and different topics will be discussed each day.

Mr. Roth said it sounded like the scoping session was at the same time.

Mr. Mason said it's two hours later.

Mr. Christman noted that they're asking people to participate in a 2½-day session with only two weeks' notice.

Chairman Trecker noted that anyone could submit written comments by May 8.

Vice Chair Burke said there were areas that weren't addressed in the original Army Corps proposal and it's important for us to understand what we're going to do about those now going forward. If there's a way to phase this, there's low hanging fruit.

Mr. Christman said he's been telling people we just had the worst storm event in Florida's history, and arguably the third worst in the history of the country, so if we needed a wake-up call, he doesn't know what more we could have been waiting for in terms of coastal-storm risk. The fact that the Corps is coming back and saying we want to do a study of coastal-storm risk and look at ways to mitigate this risk going forward is something everyone should say is wonderful and is important. The question is, once you get past that, how will all the legitimate stakeholders have a voice? How do we get to an outcome that, as Joe said earlier, addresses the goal we're all trying to achieve? Process is very important here in terms of timing and sequence. He doesn't want to see this get off on the wrong foot and end up having many people getting frustrated and trying to shoot holes in it. The process will help us as a county and a community. It's important.

Chairman Trecker said he just spoke with a Pelican Bay group, the Mangrove Action Group, a very active group of environmentalists. One comment that's consistent is how in the world can we do this? How can we come to any sort of reasonable consensus, provide any sort of reasonable guidance in a short period of time? It's next to impossible, so it's interesting that you heard some of the some of the same concerns.

Mr. Christman said that's the major thing he's been hearing.

Vice Chair Burke asked if when they were providing comments, would it be as an individual or the CAC?

Chairman Trecker said they'll talk about that and thanked Chris for speaking with them, noting that they will be in touch more frequently now. We can wait to see how it goes at the scoping meetings or we could jump in and provide input before that. His

inclination is to do the do the latter and doesn't see a downside to putting it in writing. Provide the Army Corps with information about their thinking, maybe not collectively, but individually.

Attorney Greene said that pursuant to the Advisory Board Ordinance, if this advisory board wants to take a collective position, you'd have to make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners before you send it to the Army Corps. If you want to comment as a county resident, it should be made individually, not as a representative of the Coastal Advisory Committee.

Chairman Trecker said that was a good point. What about as individual members of the Coastal Advisory Committee?

Attorney Greene said the Advisory Board Ordinance provides that you can't hold yourself out as a member of a Collier County advisory board without going to the BCC with your collective action or recommendation. Otherwise, you can act as individual county residents.

Chairman Trecker said that's helpful, but that doesn't necessarily preclude his concern.

Mr. Roth told the board:

- He heard back from Kathy Perdue this morning after he submitted comments. He noted that Chairman Trecker submitted his six weeks ago. He did his this week and they were recorded and will be considered in the NAPA process and document, the scoping document.
- Ms. Perdue wrote that the plans are being reformulated and that the Army Corps has not yet identified a new array of alternatives, so there's nothing on the table. We will soon have a letter available on the project website that explains more specifically where we are in the planning process.
- She encouraged me to attend the upcoming public NAPA scoping meetings for further details on the status.
- Some of our comments are premature. If we have initial comments, it's a good time to get them in because they're being recorded.
- It's important that as many of us as possible attend these meetings and try to do what we can by the May 8 deadline.
- We should refer to the letter on the project website: bit.ly/CollierACEInput

Chairman Trecker said they can send in comments as individual stakeholders. He plans to.

3. Review – Water Quality Recommendations

Chairman Trecker told the board:

- He wanted to review what we said to the Board of County Commissioners two years ago, when the CAC provided a three-part recommendation, including advanced wastewater treatment.
- The rationale is that the current treatment is minimal. It's all that's required now and the resulting recycled water is full of a huge number of nutrients, which stimulates the growth of algae, either freshwater in the bay or the red tide algae in saltwater. This is relevant. If we could treat wastewater in an effective way, cut down the phosphorus and nitrogen, this could have a real impact.
- The first recommendation was to investigate the cost benefit of installing advanced-wastewater treatment to reduce nutrient levels in reclaimed water. The county's reclaimed irrigation water has high levels of nutrients, resulting in troublesome runoff. Even without added fertilizer, technology is available to significantly reduce nutrient levels and recycle water through advanced-wastewater treatment. However, installation of that equipment is costly. The

operation may add unwarranted expense, so the CAC recommends that a cost-benefit assessment be made.

- The CAC wasn't really recommending advanced wastewater treatment, but to conduct a cost-benefit assessment of that. It's a valid option to pursue.
- Less than a week ago, a new electric chemical procedure involving ruthenium, a copper catalyst, was shown to convert over 99% to ammonia.
- New technology is coming. We'll probably see more cost-effective technologies.

Mr. Roth provided a Water Quality Subcommittee update:

- Since we last met, some of this also was initiated with the Collier Citizens Council, another private group interested in the betterment of the county.
- He and another person met a second time with Bob Middleton, who heads the City of Naples' Wastewater Division. He met with him last and was pleased to hear how the city handles wastewater. They have an advanced wastewater treatment facility.
- The city has the option, but doesn't exercise it, to discharge wastewater into U.S. waters after it's treated.
- The city also has the option of using it for reclaimed water for irrigation, which is what it does.
- He met with Bob to get assurance that when they use it for reuse, they don't alter the process to make it less advanced wastewater because they don't have to. The FDEP permits for reclaimed water for land application have none of the criteria that you have to meet if you put it into waters of the United States. That means there's no concern for phosphorus or nitrogen when obviously there is, but as far as the state is concerned, it's free fertilizer, MiracleGro.
- Naples does the right thing. They use the highest standard that they can achieve and they use that for re-use irrigation citywide.
- The county doesn't have the same equipment in place for phosphorus removal. When he went to the county's North Plant a week ago, where 12 million gallons daily are treated, he found they do a good job. Even though they don't have to meet advanced standards, they come very close.
- We talked about what it would take to bring the county to advanced standards. They estimated at least \$120 million, so that's our cost-benefit analysis.
- Considering the level of quality they meet, they're doing more than the best they can. It probably doesn't justify that expense on existing operations.
- However, for anything going forward, they've been given orders that upgrades or expansions must meet advanced-treatment standards.
- We're hoping the state changes its criteria.
- Bob Middleton said every five years, city and county treatment permits have been renewed by the state. Naples hasn't received its information this year, so the state could be looking at it very closely. That would be good, in his opinion.
- The Naples plant operator says they already have a project in the pipeline to build a new headworks for the new plant, like a pre-treatment process. It costs several million dollars but is already budgeted. It's something the county is going to do.
- That doesn't mean we should lose sight of this issue because there's a lot of re-use irrigation in the county and all those numbers are good. They're not perfect.
- The concentrations and nutrients are based on current Florida legislation. The technology you just mentioned goes way beyond.
- In Florida, nitrogen is allowed to be 3 ppm in the water discharged into U.S. waters. That's not the 99% removal you just mentioned. Technology is out there.
- He didn't have an opportunity to reschedule the subcommittee meeting. We were thinking of May or even April.
- At the last subcommittee meeting, Janette and Rhonda from Collier County Pollution Control suggested they provide water quality updates or presentations.
- They'd assume that role if our subcommittee didn't exist, but that's not the case, so

he's not certain how to request their information. Maybe we can discuss getting an update from Collier County Pollution Control at our next meeting.

Chairman Trecker said even if this can't be brought up to speed quickly, it's important to pursue it. He offered to help with that.

Mr. Roth said the county's annual water quality report is coming soon. It usually comes out in April, so he expects the 2022 year-end report on the overall surface water quality of Collier County soon. Can you see if that's available to give us as a presentation, maybe a dry run before us before they bring it to other organizations?

Chairman Trecker said it's important that we don't get distracted from the big priorities, the hurricane recovery work. We don't want to lose sight of this, but we can't do it immediately. We could do it in the future.

Mr. Roth said we still have ongoing water quality, red tide and other issues.

Chairman Trecker asked if there were any further comments.

Mr. Roth asked if Farron can send an e-mail to the committee so we can look at our calendars in May for a subcommittee meeting. He asked that Ashley also be contacted.

Attorney Greene said Ashley Jenkins and any other members of the public can be invited to the subcommittee meetings and participate, but they will not be subcommittee members because you must be a member of the main CAC committee to be a member.

- X. **Announcements**
- XI. **Committee Member Discussion**
- XII. **Next Meeting**
May 11, 2023, 1 p.m.
- XIII. **Adjournment**

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the Chairman at 2:25 p.m.

Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee

David Trecker, Chairman

These minutes were approved by the Committee on _____, (check one) as presented, _____, or as amended _____.