

July 8, 2016

# MINUTES OF THE COLLIER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Naples, Florida, July 8, 2016

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Collier County Watershed Improvement Program Committee in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 9:00 AM in a REGULAR SESSION at the Growth Management Department Building, Room 609/610 2800 N. Horseshoe Drive, Naples, FL with the following persons present:

Chairman: Jocelyn Nageon De Lestang  
Vice Chairman: Dennis Vasey (Excused)  
Gregg Strakaluse  
Chad Chustz  
Brent Bachelder  
Jeff Carter  
(Vacancy)

ALSO PRESENT: Jerry Kurtz, Stormwater Planning - Staff Liaison  
Gary McAlpin, Director, Coastal Zone Management  
Robert Wiley, Principal Project Manager  
Tabitha Stadler, Stormwater Planning  
Gino Santabarbara, Principal Planner  
Rhonda Watkins, Principal Environmental Specialist  
Kris Van Lengen, Community Planning Manager  
Alex Sulecki, Coordinator, Conservation Collier

*Any persons in need of the verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the audio recording from the Collier County Growth Management Department – Contact Mr. Evy Ybaceta at 239-252-2400.*

**1. Call to order**

**Chairman De Lestang** was present and called the meeting to order at 9:14am and a quorum was established. Committee Members Strakaluse, Carter and Bachelder were also present at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Chustz arrived during the meeting.

**2. Approval of Agenda – Committee action requested**

**Mr. Strakaluse moved to approve the Agenda. Second by Mr. De Lestang. Carried unanimously 4 - 0.**

**3. Approval of Minutes – Committee action requested**

**Mr. Carter moved to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2016 meeting as presented. Second by Chairman De Lestang. Carried unanimously 4 - 0.**

**4. Staff Announcements – Jerry Kurtz, Collier County Government**

None

*Mr. Strakaluse left the meeting at 9:22am*

**5. Workshop/Discussion Session – Tabitha Stadler, Collier County**

**Ms. Stadler** reported the goals of the meeting are to obtain Committee direction for developing recommendations on the Immokalee/Lake Trafford area and review data on the Golden Gate Area in anticipation of developing recommendations at the next meeting.

The Committee noted their function should include providing tools to the Board of County Commissioners to assist them in their decision making process for the areas of study. Consideration should be given whether the recommendations should include specific projects to be undertaken.

**Topic Immokalee/Lake Trafford Area**

**a. Immokalee/Lake Trafford Area Stormwater Projects - Principal Project Manager Robert Wiley, Collier County (20 minutes)**

**Mr. Wiley** presented the PowerPoint “*Immokalee Stormwater Master Plan Update Currently Identified Projects, July 8, 2016*” noting County Staff is working with area representatives including those of the Seminole Tribe of Florida to identify the location of existing facilities/infrastructure for inclusion in a GIS map for planning purposes. He highlighted the following proposed County projects or areas of study:

**Lake Trafford Road Ditch Culvert Upgrades**

The area is characterized by undersized culverts and narrow roads. The project is a two pronged approach in conjunction with Transportation Division and includes improvements to roadways and drainage swales/culverts in the area. One advantageous existing condition is the area currently slopes toward Lake Trafford. A water quality treatment pond is proposed with the project.

**Fish Creek**

The Creek in its current state is undersized and the proposal is to add a detention pond and widen the channel, however, in certain areas the existing landowner is opposed to the widening of the creek as it would disrupt its existing natural state.

**Immokalee Drive/Carson Road**

The project involves construction of a water quality treatment pond and reconstructing swales along the roadways. Certain flows in the area are directed to the State Road 29 area where a drainage bottleneck exists and investigation is underway to determine if some of the flows may be redirected to the west to reduce the backup of water.

**Madison Creek Ditch**

The project involves reconstructing the ditch and installation of a water quality treatment pond. Redirection of flows westward would assist this area capacity to handle stormwater discharges.

**Slough Cross - Drain Additions**

The project is in the data gathering stages at this point in time.

**West Westclox St. Area Project**

The project involves addressing neighborhood flooding by reconstructing the existing infrastructure in the area.

**East Delaware Ave. Area Project**

The project involves addressing neighborhood flooding however the area is consists of privately owned and maintained streets. Concepts include the owners deeding the roads to the County and upgrading the facilities in the area. The ultimate solution may require cooperation from the Seminole Tribe of Florida given the flows may impact their lands

**Eden Park Project**

The project involves addressing neighborhood flooding by reconstructing the existing infrastructure in the area.

**Miscellaneous**

**Mr. Wiley** noted:

1. The County is identifying various sites having the potential to be utilized for stormwater treatment. The owners of the properties are being contacted to determine if they are interested in selling lands to the County so the facilities may be constructed.
2. County Staff is installing a series of monitoring stations in the area to help provide data to address the issues.

*Mr. Chustz arrived at 9:55am*

**b. Discussion of Immokalee/Lake Trafford Recommendations (30 minutes)**

**Ms. Stadler** provided a copy of the spreadsheet “*Comprehensive Watershed Improvement Program (CWIP) Ad Hoc Technical Advisory Committee Immokalee Lake Trafford Area Recommendations from Committee Members, July 2, 2016*” for information purposes. She noted the document outlines responses from Committee Members on questions posed by Staff to assist in developing Committee recommendations.

Under Committee discussion, the following was noted:

- Consideration should be given to restoring historic ground water flows by use of retention areas and ground percolation reducing the probability of unwanted discharges to Lake Trafford.
- The solution needs to be addressed on two levels, the immediate needs of the residents to reduce flooding (short term) and developing a plan to manage the water quality in the lake area (long term).
- There are already projects proposed to address the short term issues which the Committee should endorse however, their recommendations could include the County identifying an oversight committee to address the long term issues.

*Mr. Strakaluse returned at 10:05am*

- A goal should be to ensure the short term solutions do not create a problem with water quality over the long term which could require significant expenditures of public funds to rectify the impairments.

***The Committee requested Staff to summarize the comments into recommendations for their consideration at the next meeting.***

**Speaker**

**Bobbie Lee Davenport, Cypress Cove Conservancy** addressed the Committee seeking support for a Florida Community Trust Grant request they are developing to purchase the “Gore Property,” a 200 acre parcel located north of I-75, between Everglades and Desoto Blvds. The main purpose is to provide a wildlife corridor in the area but a secondary benefit is improved retention of groundwater.

***The Committee requested Ms. Davenport to submit an information packet to them outlining the proposal.***

**Topic: Golden Gate Estates Area**

**c. Wetlands and Stormwater Management in Golden Gate Estates - Principal Project Manager Jerry Kurtz, Collier County (20 minutes)**

**Mr. Kurtz** presented the PowerPoint “*Stormwater Management in Golden Gate Estates, July 8, 2016*” highlighting:

- The area was developed in the 1960’s and is characterized by grid lots with the street ditches draining to a series of canals.
- Areas to be addressed include the fractured connectivity of the area and the lack of capacity of canals to handle the runoff which eventually ends up in Naples Bay.
- Many studies have been completed in the area including Belle Meade Area Stormwater Management Master Plan - 2006; Horsepen Strand Conservation Area Feasibility Study (Phase 1) - 2008; Collier County Watershed Management Plan - 2011; NGGE Flowway Restoration Study (Phase 2) - 2013 and Culvert Installations – 2014.
- The goals of the County are to identify potential hydrologic adjustments to the existing system utilizing the historic flowways located within the 34-square mile area, improve surface water conveyance utilizing existing low lying areas, enhance connectivity of low-lying areas, optimize utilization of remnant sloughs and wetland areas such as Winchester Head, Horsepen Strand, and Winchester Strand, for better surface water management, redirect surface water flows to low lying areas reducing the burden placed on the canal system, reduce flows to Naples Bay and enhance aquifer recharge for public water supplies.

- Solutions under consideration include redirecting flows using ditch/swale blocks and additional culverts to provide connectivity within the wetland system re-establishing historical flow patterns, increasing small sections of canal areas (scaloping) to gain additional capacity and designating an area as a mitigation area and creating incentive programs to obtain properties and to generate funds to implement the project.
- Other considerations include evaluating the presence of roadside berms that restrict sheet flow and determined if they may be adjusted lower to improve connectivity, determining the maximum groundwater elevation that is allowed for proper function of septic system in the immediate vicinity, considering the affects of increased sheetflow on downstream properties, evaluating flow rates and storage capacities within the system and size culverts accordingly.
- Benefits include an improved wetland hydrology in the proposed flowway, provision of additional water quality treatment, increasing groundwater recharge and well field and water supply sustainability.
- Concerns include elevated groundwater level may affect septic systems and or increase flood risk for residential properties near the vicinity and solutions may require purchase of private property within the primary flowway.

The Committee noted one concern of lowering roadside berms to improve connectivity of areas is the unintended potential consequence of faster discharges of storm waters to the canal systems.

**d. FDEP and Golden Gate Estates**

*Assistant Director Jennifer Carpenter, South District Office, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (15 minutes)*

**Ms. Carpenter** addressed the Committee on two areas the Department is involved in noting:

- The Estates area was developed by Gulf America Corporation (GAC) in the 1960's absent of obtaining any necessary permits given the administration of rules was in its infancy stages.
- In the 1970's the developer entered into an agreement and agreed to pay a fine in the amount of \$1M to mitigate the issues in this area and Cape Coral, the other area developed at the time.
- Approximately \$600,000 of the funds is still available for use in the two areas.
- The funds have been, and are to be used for water quality projects in the areas, in the Estates case for flowway restoration projects.
- The Agency also issues permits for wetland development including single family homes.

Under Committee discussion the following was noted:

- The options available to offset wetland impacts include onsite storage or restoration; however the main avenue utilized is mitigation banks.
- The GAC funds may also be utilized in conjunction with other grant funding or loans for qualifying projects.
- It may be advantageous to consider options for storing higher volumes of water than those required on site for those facilities on County lands.
- Regulatory constraints for mitigation banks have hindered the Counties developing local mitigation banks.
- One option that should be considered is providing incentives (monetary, etc.) for individual lot owners to store additional water on site other than that required for their development.

**e. Gulf America Corporation (GAC) Lands - Principal Planner Gino Santabarbara, Collier County (15 minutes)**

**Mr. Santabarbara** presented the PowerPoint “*Golden Gate Properties of Interest, July 8, 2016*” highlighting:

- The County is investigating use of the GAC lands (16 – 20 parcels) held by the County to assist in addressing storm water management issues.
- The County Attorney’s Office will be issuing a determination if the lands may be utilized for stormwater management.
- Staff is also ascertaining input on the concept from the Real Property Division and Golden Gates Estates Land Trust Advisory Committee.
- Potential uses of the land include filter marshes, wetlands, stormwater detention and redirecting surface water flows to low lying areas in order to provide water quality treatment, increasing the water storage in the area, increasing groundwater recharge opportunities, etc.
- Perhaps these lands could be swapped with owners from areas within the high quality wetland areas such as Horespen Strand and Winchester Head.

**f. Regional Water Quality Monitoring - Principal Environmental Specialist Rhonda Watkins, Collier County Pollution Control (20 minutes)]**

**Ms. Watkins** presented the PowerPoint “*Regional Water Quality Monitoring: Golden Gate, July 8, 2016*” highlighting:

- The basin features 72,785 acres and receives flow from Corkscrew Marsh, Cocohatchee (Inland Segment), Lake Trafford, Cow Slough and drains to Cocohatchee (Inland Segment), and Naples Bay (Coastal Segment).
- The land uses in the area are 55% Fixed Single Family, 19.3% Rural Residential, 23% Wetland.
- The area houses well fields for Collier County’s Golden Gate, Orangetree Utility and Florida Governmental Utility Authority (FGUA) Golden Gate City.
- The County has a series of monitoring stations in the area and the main issue is the presence of iron and dissolved oxygen from groundwater sources.
- The groundwater sources are a concern given the canals system is highly influenced by these water sources.
- Secondary contaminants are Nitrogen and Phosphorous which enter the system as it migrates to Naples Bay.
- Staff is working with the FDEP to demonstrate the iron and dissolved oxygen impairments are high in the area due to groundwater sources.
- The challenge in resolving the issue is developing means to limit the volume of groundwater sources entering the system.

The Committee noted the solutions to this area are more “policy oriented” where some items (i.e. Iron/Dissolved Oxygen content, single family home development, etc.) need to be dealt with at the source of contamination as compared to the proposed infrastructure projects/improvements associated with the Immokalee area.

**g. Transfer of Development Rights Program - Planning Manager Kris Van Lengen, Collier County (15 minutes)**

**Mr. Van Lengen** presented the PowerPoint “*TDR Rural Fringe and Golden Gate Estates Possibilities, July 8, 2016*” reported:

- He notified the Committee on the study in November of 2015 on the County’s efforts to restudy the Rural Fringe Mixed Use District and related Transfer of Development Rights Program.

- The report to the Board of County Commissioners on the Growth Management Oversight Committee findings may include the possibility of allowing strategic, but limited locations within Golden Gate Estates as qualified Sending areas where the number and types of credits may be different than other areas of the program.
- The CWIP Committee may provide comment or recommendations on the restudy should they so desire.

**h. Golden Gate Estates – Conservation Collier Projects - Coordinator Alex Sulecki, Conservation Collier (20 minutes)**

**Ms. Sulecki** presented the PowerPoint “Golden Gate Estates – Conservation Collier Projects, July, 2016” highlighting:

- The Program has 3 multi parcel projects in the Estates area, Horsepen Strand, Red Maple Swamp and Winchester Head.
- The projects involve the County acquiring all the numerous privately owned individual parcels within the defined boundaries.
- The County has acquired 200 acres of the 305 in Red Maple Swamp, 80 acres of the 158 in Winchester Head and 3 parcels in Horsepen Stand.
- These areas are open for participation in the County’s stormwater management/treatment projects, flowway restorations, etc. as these activities are a part of the Program’s mission.

**i. Conservation Easements (10 minutes)**

**Ms. Stadler** provided a copy of a handout from the internet “*There is no one-size-fits-all conservation easement*” prepared by the Nature Conservancy for information purposes stating that Collier County does not currently utilize conservation easements as described in the handout, but that it is a strategy being used in other areas, and by other municipalities. It was noted the USDA has a wetlands easement program as well.

**6. Member and Citizen Comments**

None

**7. Old Business**

**RESTORE Recommendation**

**Gary McAlpin** addressed the Committee requesting a letter supporting the RESTORE projects given they voted to endorse them at the previous meeting. He noted the letter may be brief in nature outlining the Committee action and it will be included in the application package he submits to the Council overseeing the distribution of funds.

Committee discussion occurred noting the letter should be reviewed by the Members before it is issued to ensure the content is acceptable. Also suggesting that the letter, take the format of a memo since it is from Collier County and to Collier County.

*Mr. McAlpin to work with Mr. De Lestang on drafting the letter.*

**Committee Composition**

**Ms. Stadler** reported a FDEP representative will not be able to be seated on the Committee given manpower constraints and consideration may want to be given to proposing a change in the Resolution.

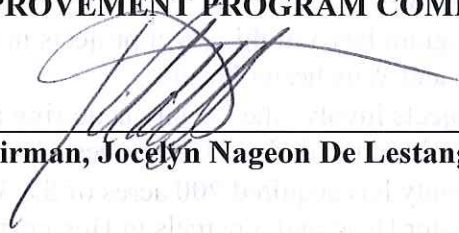
**8. New Business**

None

- 9. **Set or announce next meeting date**  
August 26, 2016 – 1:00pm

**There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by the order of the Chair at 12:50 PM.**

**COMPREHENSIVE WATERSHED  
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE**



**Chairman, Jocelyn Nageon De Lestang**

These Minutes were approved by the Committee on 9-23-16, as presented , or as amended \_\_\_\_\_.