

MINUTES OF THE COLLIER COUNTY
COASTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Naples, Florida, January 13, 2022

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 (via phone)
Jim Burke
Robert Raymond
Erik Brechnitz
Robert Roth
Raymond Christman

ALSO PRESENT: Andy Miller, Principal Project Manager
Colleen Greene, Assistant County Attorney
Farron Bevard, Operations Analyst
Chris Johnson, Office of Management & Budget

Any persons in need of the verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the video recording from the Collier County Communications and Customer Relations Department or view 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 eight was established.

Mr. Koziar moved to allow Mr. McCann to participate in the meeting telephonically due to extraordinary circumstances. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously, 7-0; Mr. McCann abstained.

IV. Changes and Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair Burke moved to approve the agenda. Second by Mr. Koziar. Carried unanimously, 8-0.

V. Public Comments

None

VI. Approval of CAC Minutes

Dec. 9, 2021

Vice Chair Burke moved to approve the minutes of the Dec. 9, 2021, with the following change: Joseph Burke participated remotely at the last board meeting, not Jim Burke. Second by Mr. Koziar. Carried unanimously, 8-0.

VII. Staff Reports

1. Extended Revenue Report

The Committee reviewed the “FY22 TDT Collections Revenue Report” dated Dec. 31, 2021.

Chris Johnson, from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), gave a report on the FY22 numbers:

- Budgeted collections were at \$2.8 million, but today they’re at \$5.1 million, 82.5% over budgeted expected actuals to date.
- In November, \$2.25 million was expected; and December, \$2.9 million in TDT collections.
- Compared with years past, it’s 83.3% for the month of December over FY21 collections, 89.78 for November and 86.08% overall from FY21.
- Overall, it’s 48.8% above FY20 and 137.26% above FY19.

During Committee discussion, it was noted:

- Collier County is above budgeted collections and it’s not expected to let up any time soon.
- The overage for the 195 Fund at the close of FY21 was not reflected as a rollover; this reflects just the current year’s revenues.
- There was a forecasted revenue, but actual revenues beat the forecast by \$2.4 million and beat the budget by over \$4 million.
- The difference between the forecasted amount and the actual numbers will become part of the carry forward going into programing in the next budget cycle in February or March.

- Those monies will be available to budget in the FY23 budget.
- Fund balances for beach park facilities and beach renourishment can be provided to the committee in the future.

During a discussion about interfund transfers with Budget Director Ed Finn, the following points were made:

- There is a dedicated component of the TDC dedicated toward the Sports Complex, about 7/10ths of the fifth penny.
- There is a nominal surplus above and beyond the debt that penny is pledged against.
- That delta will be available to repay that almost \$9- to \$10 million loan out of the 195 Fund.
- The timing is not clear until the Sports Complex's final phase, when we'll come up with a program to repay that.
- The 7/10ths is pledged to the Sports Complex so that money isn't available for use now for renourishment projects.
- \$52 million is programed in the five-year plan for the Army Corps project.
- \$30 million represents reserves in the program.
- Those program funds are independent of the \$9 million-\$10 million that was advanced.
- This is what is accounted for; the \$9 million is not coming back.
- The five-year beach renourishment spends in the prior period were \$13 million.
- This is the same amount of funding for beach renourishment as what was spent in the past five years, plus \$30 million in reserves, plus \$53 million allotted for the Corps' project, so the program is sufficiently funded.
- The \$9 million, while desirable to get back, is not a critical part of the program.
- There are many water issues, and the county needs to be aware of the possibility that things may not be *status quo* in the next five years.

VIII. New Business

1. Update on the FY2022 Beach Renourishment Truck-Haul Project

Mr. Miller presented the "*2022 Beach Renourishment Truck Haul Project Map*" for informational purposes and provided the following update:

- The project is down to 24,000 tons of sand yet to come from the mine; the entire project was about 230,000 tons, so it's down to the last 10% of the project.
- Naples Beach was finished before Thanksgiving.
- Vanderbilt Beach was completed before Christmas.
- Work picked up after the New Year holiday and hauling should finish by Thursday or Friday, when it will be ready for the punch list.

During committee discussion, the following points were noted:

- There was a discrepancy between what was planned versus implemented; less was placed on the Naples Beach.
- The original design was based on old data from last January. Before it started, the engineer surveyed immediate conditions and instead of 268,000 tons set forth in the original design, the project was whittled down to 230,000 tons.
- On Naples Beach, it decreased from 105,000 tons to about 86,000 tons.
- Vanderbilt Beach was originally 135,000 tons and was reduced to 118,000 tons.
- They borrowed 2,000 tons from Vanderbilt Beach for Naples Beach, so Vanderbilt went

down to 116,000 tons.

- Pelican Bay Beach still received 30,000 tons of sand.
- In volume versus weight, the conversion for a cubic yard is 1.5 tons.
- This was larger than the 2020 truck haul and was the largest truck haul since 2013.
- This came within the normal beach renourishment cycle, four to five years.
- The work could not have been completed without teamwork by City Council and traffic control by Naples Police.

2. **Update on FY2022 Wiggins Pass & Doctors Pass Dredge Project**

Mr. Miller said he had a pre-construction meeting with the agencies – FDEP, Army Corps of Engineers, Fish & Wildlife, the contractor – and county staff last Tuesday. He reported that:

- They plan to start the Wiggins Pass dredging next week, mid-week.
- 65,000 cubic yards of sand will be removed from Wiggins Pass.
- Two-thirds of that will be placed on Barefoot Beach and one-third will go to the State Park beach.
- A land-use agreement with the state park was worked out with the BCC this week.
- The state was very excited to get the sand.
- The project is expected to take about one month, depending on the weather and production of the dredge.
- Doctors Pass dredging will follow that, with 25,000 yards of sand taken out and put on Lowdermilk Park Beach; it will take a little longer to get in the water and inlet so it should extend the time period between the major dredges.

During Committee discussion, the following was noted:

- The contract was just under \$2 million but was about \$2.2 million with staff and design.
- Doctor's Pass should take two to three weeks and should be finished by mid-April.
- The major dredging cycle takes place every four to five years but is shorter for Wiggins Pass due to shoaling problems.
- There was an interim dredge of 17,000 cubic yards, but nature put a lot of sand in the inlet to the point where people were having trouble getting in and out, even during high tide. The Wiggins Pass process was accelerated because it was a much-needed dredging.

3. **Update on USACE Collier CSRM**

Mr. Miller said at the last minute, just before the chief's report was sent to Congress for the appropriation, the Army Corps of Engineers realized that the cost of materials (concrete, steel and all construction materials) had risen so much that they had significant concerns about the projected benefit-cost ratio, particularly the cost side. Before the document went to the chief, they asked the project development team to rerun the numbers. There was so little time between that point and when the report was due that the project development team asked headquarters for an extension of money and time to do a thorough re-analysis of the report.

It's still being reviewed by headquarters. Before Christmas, he asked for the status. On Dec. 21, he was told that the exemption request for additional time and funding is being reviewed by the Policy Review Team. They've reviewed it and will soon provide comments. Following the resolution of comments, the waiver request package will be routed for review and signature by headquarters and then the district commander will brief a Senior Leader Panel. Following a favorable briefing and signature, the package will be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for review and signature. If approved, we will need to develop a scope, schedule and project management plan and coordinate a feasibility cost-sharing agreement for this effort. The

effort will be a 2½-year time extension and a \$2.5 million cost increase. The county is now awaiting comments on the waiver request.

During Committee discussion, the following was noted:

- The original feasibility study plan included seawalls, surge gates at Wiggins and Doctor's Passes, critical structure protection, major improvements to beaches and dunes, and costs for concrete and steel structures.
- In the end, the project development team recommended reducing the scope to beach only and some minor critical infrastructure protection.
- The bad news is if the project moves forward, it will be delayed for about two years.
- The good news is the bitter complaints (environmentalists and the advisory committee) about the original feasibility study will be reduced if the recommended plan, as modified, goes forward.
- The environmentalists were bitterly opposed to including hardening and that won't be in the modified plan.
- The Army Corps is recommending minimizing what structures to floodproof.
- The result is a smaller project, less expensive, limited in scope and more in line with what the community was looking for.
- The Army Corps is looking at it from the perspective of the value of federal flood protection insurance, so their exposure is static. (As the cost of materials escalate, its exposure stays the same.)
- The five-year projected amount of the 10-year plan is \$52.6 million. The county planned \$14.3 million and in previous five years, the county spent \$13 million. These funds are allocated for FY2022-26.
- Mr. Miller will provide the CAC with the amount currently in the fund at next month's meeting.

A discussion ensued:

- Mr. Christman** noted that the county is now looking at a downsized project that has been delayed 2½ years and the county would be engaged with other competitive projects nationwide. Is the county on track with setting aside tens of millions of funds for this purpose? If we are or have, and given our projections about our own funding increasing, should we be looking at ways to reallocate that money in the years ahead? Are there ways we should consider spending funding that haven't been considered to address water quality and other important water and beach issues?
- **Chairman Trecker** said it's important to realize there is no immediate commitment for expenditures while the Army Corps reviews the waiver request.
 - **Mr. Christman** said that reasonable people could ask why the county is sitting on tens of millions of dollars for a project that may not happen when there are other significant, water-related needs that should be attended to in the more-immediate term.
 - **Mr. Miller** agreed, noting the project could die and it's 50-50 whether it will move forward. He said the Army Corps is not the only one in the resiliency game and said Collier County is a vulnerable community relative to sea-level rise and storm surge so that money could potentially be used for the county's own resiliency efforts, or something better suited for the wishes of the community.
 - **Chairman Trecker** noted that Collier County ranked 9th in the nation at a risk for \$43 billion in recost money for storm surges and destructive hurricanes. He agreed the county was vulnerable and the county should consider that.
 - **Mr. Brechnitz** asked if deciding where the money would go was the responsibility of the

TDC and BCC, not CAC.

- **Mr. Miller** said it would be up to the BCC, as well as CAC.
- **Vice Chair Burke** said we're ignoring the likelihood of a catastrophic event here. We have an opportunity to take advantage of this and should engage with the Army Corps to understand what the options from a flood-control standpoint. If we eliminated the hardened structures, we haven't solved anything. We prevented high-velocity erosion at the beach, but back-bay and flooding of the waterways will occur. I don't think we've accurately presented the risk to the public. If you look at the NOAH models, it does not paint a good picture for the City of Naples.
- **Mr. Roth** said the models have been consistently wrong for two decades.
- **Vice Chair Burke** agreed they have been wrong since Collier County hasn't been hit by a straight-on event. He's taking sea-level rise out of the equation. Risks are there and the consequences are catastrophic, but he wasn't sure how likely the event is and we don't have a good way of accurately measuring the likelihood.
- **Chairman Trecker** noted that it's important to remember that the government will pay for a large part of it and that shouldn't be ignored.
- **Mr. Christman** said we don't want to discourage working with the Army Corps of Engineers on a program that could get funded and receive broad support of the community. He noted that it's being delayed two to three years, so there's more uncertainty now. The county is sitting on a growing pot of money that we were going to allocate as matching funds and our TDC tax revenues continue to grow. He suggested there could be some resilience-related efforts the county could be taking that would be important to do until it's known whether the federal program is possible.
- **Chairman Trecker** said the decision is only months away, this all may die, so we should wait for a decision.
- **Mr. Christman** asked for a report at the next meeting on how much money has already been collected and set aside for this purpose.
- **Vice Chair Burke** asked if there was a backup plan if the Army Corps bailed out.
- **Mr. Miller** said there was no Plan B, but the committee could explore resiliency projections and use the Corps' study for guidance to choose what's practical and feasible.
- **Mr. McCann** questioned the decision-making process, noting that the BCC's decision on dedicating tens of millions of dollars to the project is so far down the line, which he called odd.
- **Chairman Trecker** said the timing will depend on an agreement from the stakeholders in the final engineering plan, which is several years from now. He noted Congress still must approve it and allocate money. Collier County already won the competitive battle against other communities that wanted the money. If it moves forward, there are many more steps and about three years before the final design and funding numbers.

4. Recommendation to authorize the expenditure of \$15,704.00 to Grippo Pavement Maintenance, Inc. under Contract No. 21-7837

Mr. Miller said the county had owned a parcel of land, a half-acre at the north end on the east side of S.S. Jolley Bridge, that's historically been used by private construction firms and the county for deep-water access, dredge projects, off-loading and loading onto barges and staging of vessels, including dredges. Coastal Zone came into possession of this parcel within the last year. It's one of the only sites within the county that's publicly owned that has deep-water access and is available to do those activities. This item would put a layer of #57 Stone, a crushed-stone aggregate, on the area to get suitable stabilization and suitable grade to make the site operate more efficiently – and to clean it up.

The recommendation is to authorize the expenditure of \$15,704 to Grippo Pavement Maintenance Inc., under Contract No. 21-7837, for the purchase of the aggregate stone to stabilize the county owned barge loading site at S.S. Jolley Bridge and make a finding that this expenditure promotes tourism.

Chairman Trecker asked how the county knows this quote will be adequate and if it's been subject to engineering approval.

Mr. Miller said the county took the available land, added six inches of #57 Stone, calculated the amount and asked for quotes from Grippo and others. Grippo's was the lowest quote.

Mr. Roth said he drives by the site every day and asked the county to consider the aesthetics, so it doesn't look like a construction site. He suggested screening or a vegetative buffer.

Mr Miller said this work will probably be Phase 1 of a long-term future effort and there are many opinions of what this site should be long-term, such as a formal docking facility.

Vice Chair Burke asked who would be doing the work.

Mr. Miller said the stone will be delivered and county staff will grade it.

Mr. Brechnitz noted that the site is very important for Marco Island. There's a move on the island to prohibit staging seawall construction on empty lots, so it was severely restricted recently, and residents want it restricted further. This site is just about the only place where seawall contractors can stage seawall construction. He agreed it could look nicer.

Mr. Brechnitz moved to authorize the expenditure of \$15,704 to Grippo Pavement Maintenance Inc., under Contract No. 21-7837, for the purchase of the aggregate stone to stabilize the county owned barge loading site at S.S. Jolley Bridge and made a finding that the expenditure promotes tourism. Second by Mr. Jim Burke. Carried unanimously, 8-0.

5. Water Quality Subcommittee Report

Mr. Roth provided a report on the Water Quality Subcommittee meeting Monday at the GMD building. He reported that:

- Several ideas for new county programs were identified to promote clean water and water quality.
- Ideas range from feasibility studies for projects to public relations involving county departments spreading the word to make the public aware of the county's issues and efforts.
- At the subcommittee's next meeting on Feb. 7, members will select the top ideas and will make a report to provide to the CAC and BCC in March.

Chairman Trecker asked for more details about projects the subcommittee is considering.

Mr. Roth said one was re-establishment of seagrass beds. He cited a prime spot in Caxambas Pass on Marco Island that used to have a lot of seagrass and manatees, but they've vanished this year. The county could retain a consultant to do a feasibility study about potential sites and what efforts could be made. He noted that Collier County has a Lake Watch program, a freshwater program where residents get involved and submit data to the county. That could be expanded to salt water.

Mr. Christman said the subcommittee also talked about strengthening the county's stormwater management code for new development and looking at what the city of Naples had done recently. He said there's a need in the county.

Mr. Roth noted that the city addresses stormwater issues when new developments come in, but the county does not, despite having more development. He said if it's successful and feasible in Naples, it should be expanded to the county.

Chairman Trecker noted that the county discussed that years ago, but it was tabled.

Vice Chair Burke asked if there was any plan to do outreach. He asked about a private, non-profit putting oysters in Moorings Bay to improve water quality.

Mr. Roth said work is going on in Fort Myers and that was the idea for seagrass re-establishment here. He cited a program on the East Coast on St. John's River, where people take burlap and weave sea grass through it and add oyster crates. However, he noted that something killed seagrass, chances are it had a lot to do with water quality, so that needs to be looked at. He noted there were several private projects in other areas and that county government needs to get involved because it owes that to residents. He noted that no one was talking about water quality five years ago, so he hopes some of these programs are embraced and become a reality.

Mr. Brechnitz asked if Mr. Roth was aware of the seagrass restoration at Tigertail Beach Park, where a permit has been issued, with conditions. There's still some mitigation they're looking for that hasn't been resolved, but it has progressed. He suggested that as another seagrass restoration project, noting that nine manatees were stranded there in the past two months.

Mr. McCann said a large part of Collier County's water quality problem is that it doesn't inspect septic tanks or mandate periodic proof to show they're working. Evidence indicates it's a massive problem. Naples solved most of its problems by switching to sewers. The county has an enormous septic issue. He said he understands it's a costly expense to build new ones and noted that it's often elderly people with older homes and limited funds. But he said the county is hiding the problem by not dealing with it when many other communities help fund it. Most states require homes to be brought up to full compliance when a house is sold within five years. He said there are five-year, low-interest loans to deal with it. All those materials and nitrates go into waterways, the Gulf and other bodies of water. He called it a tragedy that it's not considered a water-quality problem and branded nitrates as the county's biggest problem. It must be dealt with or the county's waterways won't ever be cleaned up.

Mr. Roth said that in Massachusetts, they don't allow a property to be sold unless the septic system is inspected and certified to show it meets current codes, or there must be an effort approved by the Massachusetts DEP before a sale.

Assistant County Attorney Green reminded the board that they must stay within the functions, powers and duties of the ordinance, which is limited to coastal communities. The 195 Funds for beach renourishment may not be eligible for water-quality issues. It depends on the nature of the proposal. The lagoon improvement on Marco Island is eligible, but not all are. They must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and the CAC may have to look at other sources of funds for a lot of these water-quality issues.

IX. Old Business

Mr. Brechnitz asked Mr. Miller about the permit for the dredging of Collier Creek. He asked if the jetty was part of that project.

Mr. Miller said that was the permeable groin. He said there was a small jetty at the very tip of the island, as well. There's an existing one, but they would rebuild a smaller one to protect the mangroves.

Mr. Brechnitz asked if the sand dredge would be put out in the Gulf.

Mr. Miller said some sand will be put in the Gulf and some will go on the beach to the east, between the permeable groin and Collier Creek.

X. Announcements

None

XI. Committee Member Discussion

None.

XII. Next Meeting

1 p.m. Feb. 10, 2022 - **CANCELED**

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chair at 2:17 p.m.

Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee

David Trecker, Chairman

These minutes were approved by the Committee on _____, as presented, _____ or as amended _____.