



IRL COUNCIL STEM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting of February 8, 2022

1:30 PM

Up the Creek Farms, 3950 Valkaria Road, Grant-Vakaria, FL

Attendance: Bob Day, Frank Golan, Lisa Krinsky, Dale McGinnis, Rich Paperno, Beth Powell, Mitch Roffer, Chad Tuxall, Kelly Young.

Guests: Melanie Parker, Stacie Flood, John Windsor, Kyle Bartow, Doug Scherdt.

Agenda Item 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance (Chad Truxall, Vice Chair)

Mr. Truxall called the meeting to order at 1:43 PM and led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item 2. Agenda Revisions (Chad Truxall, Vice Chair)

There were no agenda revisions.

Agenda Item 3. Introductions (Chad Truxall, Vice Chair)

Mr. Truxall led roundtable introductions.

Agenda Item 4. Minutes Approval (Chad Truxall, Vice Chair)

Requested Action: Approval of Minutes from STEM meeting on May 11, 2021, August 10, 2021 and November 16, 2021.

THIS ITEM IS TABLED AS A QOURUM WAS NOT MET.

Agenda Item 5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 6. Water Quality Reports

a. Indian River Lagoon Water Quality (Dr. Chuck Jacoby, SJRWMD)

Dr. Duane De Freese gave the water reports for the northern, central and southern lagoon. He began with the water quality report for the central and northern lagoon where salinity, temperature, Chlorophyll-A (at or above bloom concentrations) and DO were discussed. Manatee provisioning began on December 20, 2021 with approximately 20-30 pounds of vegetation per day, however, it was not consumed. Active manatee feeding began on January 20, 2022 in warm water with approximately 15,000 pounds of vegetation provided per week. He next discussed the water report for the southern lagoon which included the inflows and outflows of Lake Okeechobee and mid-estuary and enterococcus. High sea and water levels were also discussed.

Agenda Item 7. Presentations

a. Fewer Wetlands, More Ditches: How Knowledge of Land Use Change Can Inform Water Quality Restoration in the Indian River Lagoon; Mark Rains, Professor, University of South Florida and Kai Rains, Research Associate Professor, University of South Florida

Dr. Mark Rains and Kai Rains presented their project timeline, which began in 2011, to map, classify and evaluate wetlands from the 1850's through the 2000's. The focus of this project was to quantify changes to wetland extent and distribution, quantify changes to landscape hydrological connectivity, and to use this and related information in conservation planning. Over 86% of wetland area was lost between the 1850's through the 2000's, and much of it in the western part of St. Lucie County. 77% of wetland loss was due to agricultural conversion. While discussing the changes to landscape hydrological connectivity, they explained the drainage density has increased from over 300% between 1850's to the 2000's. Dr. Kai Rains discussed the goal of having a multimetric toll for restoration and conservation prioritization in the IRL watershed. The finalization of the tool and outreach is underway with a finalization goal of Fall 2023. For more information on this project, please contact [Dr. Mark Rains](#), [Dr. Kai Rains](#) or by visiting their [project website](#).

b. GeoCollaborate and Additional GIS Project Update; Kirsten Jo Ayres, GIS Coordinator, IRLNEP

Kirsten Jo “KJ” Ayres presented her GeoCollaborate and additional GIS Project updates including metrics on the GeoCollaborate Instance #2 Webinar Series and outlined the Instance #3 Emergency Response Scenario basic storyline. The Instance #3 storyline will include a focus on the 2016 HAB and fishkill with a simulated emergency response. This webinar is planned for the end of March/beginning of April. Ms. Ayres further discussed the IRLNEP GIS Data HUB and completed maps including public boat ramps on the IRL, One Lagoon Monitoring Network locations, and the IRLNEP Lagoon boundary maps. Ms. Ayres discussed future projects including additional project maps, storymap of old fishermen tales along the IRL and defining our management conference.

Agenda Item 8. Old Business

- a. CCMP Concurrence Documents (Duane De Freese)
One Lagoon Habitat Restoration Plan and One Lagoon Monitoring Plan

Dr. De Freese discussed the EPA concurrence documents and requested for peer-review volunteers. He will arrange for the documents – the One Lagoon Habitat Restoration Plan and the One Lagoon Monitoring Plan to be emailed in PDF and word document format for peer-review from the STEM Advisory Committee.

Requested Action: Peer review and comment on draft documents prior to submittal to EPA for concurrence.

NO ACTION REQUIRED.

Agenda Item 9. New Business

- a. Election of Officers (Duane De Freese)
Requested Action: Elect Chair and Vice Chair for Calendar Year 2022 for the STEM Advisory Committee.

Dr. De Freese reviewed the election of officers. The STEM Advisory Committee would like to see Dr. Charles Jacoby and Chad Truxall to continue in leadership roles. Dr. Charles Jacoby and Chad Truxall will work out who is Chair and who will serve as Vice Chair.

A QUORUM WAS NOT PRESENT; BOB DAY MOTIONED TO ELECT CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022 FOR THE STEM ADVIOSRY

COMMITTEE. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LISA KRIMSKY. THIS MOTION WAS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY CONSENSUS OF THOSE PRESENT.

b. Fiscal Year 2023 RFPs (Daniel Kolodny)

Mr. Kolodny discussed the fiscal year 2023 RFP's including the highest ranked projects in the categories of water quality restoration, habitat restoration, community-based habitat restoration, Science and Innovation and Market Research.

Requested Action: Motion to recommend that the IRL Council Board of Directors accept the IRLNEP Management Conference recommendations and approve the final ranked list of proposals; fund the top proposals contingent and consistent with available funds and budgetary authority; and authorize staff to negotiate and enter into contracts with those applicants.

MOTION WAS MADE BY BOB DAY TO RECOMMEND THAT THE IRL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS ACCEPT THE IRLNEP MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPROVE THE FINAL RANKED LIST OF PROPOSALS; FUND THE TOP PROPOSALS CONTINGENT AND CONSISTENT WITH AVAILABLE FUNDS AND BUDGETARY AUTHORITY; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO NEGOTIATE AND ENTER INTO CONTRACTS WITH THOSE APPLICANTS. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY BETH POWELL. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY CONSENSUS OF THOSE PRESENT.

c. Fiscal Year EPA Workplan and IRLNEP Business Plan (Daniel Kolodny)

Mr. Kolodny discussed the EPA Workplan and how the budget and projects from the category four (Science and Innovation) will be included in the workplan. The deadline is June 1st and the IRLNEP is looking to assemble this plan with the projects that were awarded. This workplan goes into the IRLNEP Business Plan.

Requested Action: Recommend that the IRL Council Board of Directors to authorize staff to finalize and submit the FY 2023 EPA Workplan and complete the IRLNEP Business Plan.

MOTION WAS MADE BY BOB DAY TO RECOMMEND THAT THE IRL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO FINALIZE AND SUBMIT THE FY 2023 EPA WORKPLAN AND COMPLETE THE IRLNEP BUSINESS PLAN. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LISA KRIMSKY. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY CONSENSUS OF THOSE PRESENT.

- d. Planning for Congressional Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Law (Duane De Freese)

Dr. De Freese summarized the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Law. The timeline could be a challenge as EPA would like these projects to hit the ground quickly. The IRLNEP has identified five projects, one in each county, that meet the definition. These projects will start this year by allocating \$500K to those five projects. This will be a budgeting change, but not a project change. The IRLNEP plans going into October 2022 with 1.3 million in projects.

Requested Action: Discussion of procedures for identifying and funding eligible projects; recommend that the IRL Council Board of Directors authorize staff to develop and release a Request for Proposal or Request for Qualifications as appropriate.

MOTION WAS MADE BY BETH POWELL RECOMMEND THAT THE IRL BOARD OF DIRECTORS AUTHORIZE STAFF TO DEVELOP AND RELEASE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL OR REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AS APPROPRIATE. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY RICH PAPERNO. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY CONSENSUS OF THOSE PRESENT.

- e. Committee Quorum Update (Duane De Freese)

Dr. De Freese summarized several options to improve committee quorums, including reduced quorum size, alternates and mandatory attendance for at least 2 – 3 meetings per year.

Requested Action: Review and discuss potential options and recommend that the IRL Council Board of Directors direct staff to make policy changes as directed. No motion required.

NO MOTION REQUIRED; FOR DISCUSSION.

Agenda Item 10. IRLNEP Staff Reports

- a. IRL Project Update (Daniel Kolodny)

Mr. Kolodny highlighted the projects completed at the end of quarter one of fiscal year 2022, which included Coastal Resources: Pelican Island Phase V Restoration, IRLT: Validation of Inexpensive Impoundment Management Strategies to Increase Their Value as Vital Fish Nurseries Phase I, and FAU: Monitoring Prevalence of Microcyston Toxins Using SPATT.

- b. Communications Report (Kathy Hill)

Ms. Hill discussed the 2021 Annual Report in her Communications Report, along with metrics from the Guiding Flow Television IRLNEP sponsored episodes. Ms. Hill reviewed the social media metrics for October, November and December of 2021 and highlighted the top performing posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Also discussed was the IRL Specialty Tag update, which included next steps with the Florida Department of Transportation.

c. Executive Director Report (Duane De Freese)

Dr. De Freese highlighted the Manatee UME update in his Executive Director Report. He additionally discussed the Florida Legislative Sessions and the attached IRL appropriations. Dr. De Freese reviewed upcoming events including the FAU-HBOI IRL Science Symposium, the Bat Area Scientific Symposium, the 8th Biennial Water Institute Symposium and the Marine Technology Tech Surge with FAU-HBOI.

Agenda Item 11. Final Comments (Committee, Staff, Public)

No Final Comments.

Agenda Item 12. Adjourn

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 2022

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:36 pm.