IRL COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes from the meeting of

November 12, 2024

10:15 AM

Historic Sebastian Elementary School, 1235 Main Street, Sebastian, FL 32958

In-person Attendance: Terri Breeden, Tom Campenni, Tony Catanese, Melisa Diolosa, Amy Eason, Joseph Falzone, Jake Fojtik, Stu Glass, Carter Henne, Chuck Jacoby, John Leslie, Melissa Meisenburg, Matthew Mitts, Judy Orcutt, Marina Owens, Beth Powell, Gary Ritter, Kevin Shropshire, Charles Vogt III, Laura Wilson

Online Attendance: Bob Musser, Dave Fuss, Janet Zimmerman, Jennifer DiMaio, Jim Sullivan, Jennifer Spain, Laurilee Thompson, Mike McCabe, Kelli McGee, Yesinia Escribano, Jim Moir, Brian Benton

In-person Guests: Pete Eggert, Lauren Hall, Thomas Heller, Steven Bostel, Jim Cannon

Online Guests: Jeff Collins, Jessy Wayles, KJ Ayres-Guerra

1. **Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance** (Beth Powell, Chair)

   Ms. Powell called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **Introductions** (Beth Powell, Chair)

   Ms. Powell led the group in introductions. Dr. Duane De Freese introduced Kevin Walker as the NOAA Transformational Grant Project Manager.

3. **Agenda Revisions** (Beth Powell, Chair)

   No agenda revisions were brought forward.

4. **Minutes Approval** (Beth Powell, Chair)

   Requested Action: Approval of Minutes from the Management Board meeting on August 20, 2024.

   MOTION WAS MADE BY TOM CAMPENNI TO APPROVE THE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 20, 2024. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY STU GLASS. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **Finance Sub-Committee Report** (Stu Glass, Chair)

   Mr. Glass reported that the committee reviewed the quarterly financial statements and recommended approval of the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Amendment.

   Requested Action: Accept Committee Report.

MOTION WAS MADE BY TONY CATANESE TO ACCEPT THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION SECONDED BY TOM CAMPENNI. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Public Comment

Mr. Stu Glass announced that the Finance Subcommittee needs members. If interested, please contact Kathy Hill or Erin Bergman.

7. Water Quality Reports

a. Northern and Central IRL (Lauren Hall, SJRWMD)

Ms. Lauren Hall presented the rainfall data from August through October, noting that recent hurricanes have led to increased rainfall. As a result of these rain events, salinity levels decreased. The decline in temperature is typical for this season. Dissolved oxygen levels remain above 2 mg/L, with the exception of a sensor at the Titusville station. Low concentrations of chlorophyll-a were reported, with no significant algal blooms observed. Turbidity spikes were noted as a consequence of storms. Changes in Dissolved Organic Matter (FDOM) were recorded at the Vero and Eau Gallie monitoring sites. Overall, water clarity has been maintained.

The 2024 Preliminary Seagrass Cover report indicated growth in specific areas, with significant increases observed at the Northern IRL Epcot and Southern IRL Midway sites. The most notable rises occurred at South Mosquito Lagoon Biolab and North Banana River KARS Park. However, the Central IRL Shooters sites did not show any seagrass coverage.

b. Southern IRL (Sherry McCorkle, SFWMD)

Erin Bergman for Sherry McCorkle reported that the data was through November 3rd, and the weekly averages covered October 28 through November 3rd. The greatest freshwater inflow has occurred from the Tidal Basin and the C-23 and C-24 Basins. Early September saw a large influx associated with heavy rainfall; the late September peak was due to Hurricane Helene. Hurricane Milton contributed to the early October inflow. There were no releases from Lake Okeechobee.

The salinity for the most recent 7-day period fell into the damaging range for oysters at the HR1 site on the surface and lower stressful ranges on the bottom. The US1 Bridge site was in the lower stressful range. The salinity at the A1A bridge remained in the optimal range. Salinity decreased sharply in September and remained low most of the past couple of months, with a brief increase occurring between rain events. Juvenile oyster (spat) recruitment rates peaked in May and June. Settlement rates began decreasing in July and continued to decrease over recent months when salinities were below optimal (<10) for oysters. The fall months have seen another peak, but the low salinities have kept larval oyster numbers low.

Oyster density was lower in 2024 but increased slightly during the September survey. This suggests that older adult oysters have survived the lower salinities.

8. Presentations

a. Space Florida Wharf Study Update

Mr. Pete Eggert, VP of Environmental Health and Safety at Space Florida, presented the *Wharf Study Update*. The presentation started with an introduction to Space Florida, its mission and the impetus for conducting a study of maritime intermodal transportation. The goal is to provide a sustainable long-term solution to support space transportation

operations and meet industry and government needs for an improved quinti-modal transportation system. A robust discussion concluded the presentation.

b. NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration Grant Award Update

Dr. Duane De Freese, Executive Director of the IRLNEP, gave the *NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration Grant Award Update.* The timeline and cost value were reported. The responsibilities of the IRLNEP staff were outlined, and Kevin Walker, the Project Manager, was introduced. The details of the progress to date were covered, and the story map of restoration sites and the Socio-Economic Assessment of Data draft has been completed. A list of Project Deliverables was submitted.

9. Old Business

None

10. New Business

a. Fiscal Year 2025 Final Budget Amendment

Dr. Duane De Freese noted changes to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

Requested Action: Motion to recommend that the IRL Council Board of Directors approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Final Budget Amendment by Resolution 2024-07, pursuant to Florida Statutes.

MOTION WAS MADE BY TOM CAMPENNI TO RECOMMEND THAT THE IRL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 FINAL BUDGET AMENDMENT BY RESOLUTION 2024-07, PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTES. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY TONY CATANESE. MOTION PASSED. KELLY MCGEE ABSTAINED.

b. 2025 IRL Council Meeting Calendar

Ms. Bergman presented the tentative dates. Dates are chosen due to the availability of the Council Chamber space. It was noted that the November 11th meetings fell on Veteran's Day. Ms. Bergman subsequently contacted the City of Sebastian to determine new dates for November meetings and presented this information at the Board of Directors meeting.

Requested Action: Motion to recommend the IRL Council Board of Directors approve the 2025 IRL Council Meeting Calendar.

MOTION WAS MADE BY TOM CAMPENNI TO RECOMMEND THE IRL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE 2025 IRL COUNCIL MEETING CALENDAR WITH THE NOVEMBER DATES TO NOT INCLUDE VETERN'S DAY. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MATTHEW MITTS. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

c. Request for Qualification (RFQ) solicitations for Grant Writing Services to replace vacancies and expand list of contractors

Dr. De Freese explained the need to expand the number of grant-writing service providers.

Requested Action: Motion to recommend that the IRL Council Board of Directors authorize staff to develop and release RFQs for Grant Writing services to replace vacancies and expand the list of contractors.

MOTION WAS MADE BY TOM CAMPENNI TO RECOMMEND THAT THE IRL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS AUTHORIZE STAFF TO DEVELOP AND RELEASE RFQS FOR GRANT WRITING SERVICES TO REPLACE VACANCIES AND EXPAND THE LIST OF CONTRACTORS.

MOTION WAS SECONDED BY TONY CATANESE. MOTION PASSED. KELLY MCGEE ABSTAINED.

11. IRLNEP Staff Reports

a. Community Engagement Report (Kathy Hill)

Ms. Hill reviewed the metrics for Facebook and Instagram social platforms. The top post had 4.3M views. Six new podcasts are available. The Community Engagement Coordinator's activities were highlighted, and 684 interactions took place in Fiscal Year 2024.

b. Information Technology and Data Science Report (KJ Ayres-Guerra)

Ms. Ayres-Guerra announced two webinars were delivered this quarter and completed courses, including the ADA Compliance and the Master Gardener. Ms. Ayres-Guerra sat on the IRC interview panel for the new Lands Asset and Data Manager and worked on the NOAA Required Monitoring Plan.

c. IRL Project Update (Duane De Freese)

Dr. De Freese presented on behalf of Mr. Kolodny that twenty-six projects were completed in Quarter four, with fifteen projects still in progress. Fiscal Year 2025 will see twenty-six new projects beginning.

d. Executive Director Report (Duane De Freese)

Dr. De Freese gave an update on the Executive Director's activities and the impact of the articles in the Frontiers in Marine Science publication. Also highlighted was the work completed by the summer intern, Victoria Carpenter. A request was made for members to complete the survey of the vital signs. The IRL Council will celebrate a decade of progress as a host agency for the IRLNEP and 35 years as a National Estuary Program in 2025.

12. Final Comments (Committee, Staff, Public)

Terri Breeden commented that the SORIL Citizens Oversight Committee is looking for volunteers.

Bob Musser reported opportunities to use dredge spoils are available and announced a link in the chat for dredging the Canaveral Harbor Sand Bypass Project: https://www.portcanaveral.com/About/Environmental-Stewardship/Sand-Bypass-Project https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Navigation/Navigation-Projects/Canaveral-Harbor-Florida-Sand-Bypass/

13. Next Meeting

Tentative, Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 10:15 a.m.
Historic Sebastian Elementary School, 1235 Main Street, Sebastian, FL 32958

14. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

NOTE: If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes (2014).

Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this workshop/meeting is asked to advise the agency at least 48 hours before the workshop/meeting by contacting Erin Bergman at (314) 347-5854. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service at 1(800) 955-8771 (TDD) or 1(800) 955-8770 (Voice). For more information, you may contact Erin Bergman, IRL Council, 1235 Main St, Sebastian, FL 32958, (314)347-5854, or by email at bergman@irlcouncil.org