

Okaloosa RESTORE Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes Summary
August 1, 2013 – 6 P.M.
Okaloosa County Convention Center

Meeting called to order at 6 PM with Okaloosa County RESTORE Advisory Committee (ORAC) and Consultant introductions:

- Sam Seevers (Chair) Mayor of Destin (Okaloosa League of Cities)
- Dr. Jack Azzaretto (Vice Chair) FWB Chamber
- Jim Breitenfeld Citizen at Large
- Cindy Frakes Okaloosa County School Board
- Martin Owen Tourism Representative
- Kay Rasmussen EDC Representative
- Steve Shippee Environmental Representative
- Jonathan Tallman Citizen at Large
- Thomas Gordon Councilman (Okaloosa League of Cities)
- Capt Gary Jarvis Fishing and Seafood Representative
- Brian Haugen (N/V Chamber--not yet officially confirmed by BCC)
- Dave Parisot County Commissioner, District 2
- Sal Nodjomian Matrix (Okaloosa County Consultant)
- Lee Lewis AVCON (Okaloosa County Consultant)
- Dr. Rod Lewis Hass Center (Okaloosa County Consultant)

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Kay Rasmussen motioned to approve the minutes from the July 18, 2013 meeting; it was seconded by Martin Owen. After a few minor corrections made by Cindy Frakes, the meetings minutes were approved with modification.

General Administrative Issues

The ORAC decided to rotate monthly meetings between a day event and an evening event. The regularly scheduled daytime meetings will be on the first Wednesday of every other month from 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM at the Emerald Coast Convention Center. The regularly scheduled evening meetings will be the first Thursday of every other month. The location of the evening meeting is TBD (options include: Crestview Courthouse, Water and Sewer Building in Fort Walton Beach, and NWFSC in Niceville). Matrix will investigate options and provide input to the ORAC. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Sept 4, 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM, Emerald Coast Convention Center.

RESTORE Process – Continuation of Discussion

The Matrix Team (Sal Nodjomian and Lee Lewis) discussed the RESTORE process again, reiterating the ORAC's role in prioritizing Pot 1 funds only. However, it was restated that the ORAC must understand how all funding avenues are functioning (to include NRDA, NFWF, Triumph Gulf Coast, etc). It was recommended the ORAC attempt to preserve Pot 1 for projects not eligible for other funding.

There was additional discussion including criteria requiring applicants to disclose what other funds/sources they have applied for. The ORAC was reminded that RESTORE funds (as well as several other funding avenues) will not be available for a while.

Update of NRDA Meeting in Pensacola

Commissioner Parisot attended NRDA Public meeting in Pensacola, July 25; this was a listening session. The Commissioner provided several comments, specifically mentioning slowness of early restoration; streamlining permitting process; equality among Counties (Escambia being favored over others); consideration of Choctawhatchee watershed and storm water projects for NRDA restoration funding; and, expressed concerned about inappropriate projects (such as ferry system). Additional details from his trip meeting can be found as attachment 1.

Concepts for Project Prioritization

The Matrix Team (Dr. Rod Lewis) provided an economic overview of Okaloosa County for the ORAC. He presented Comparative Industrial Composition, where he compared several industries at the county and state level. Okaloosa County is heavily reliant on tourism and government. It was recommended steps be taken to develop economic resilience and diversification (eco-tourism; outside main tourism season; non-government manufacturing). A presentation of "Industry Super Clusters" reinforced how reliant the area is on high paying government jobs and tourism related activities. Finally, it was noted that the County needs to invest more in marketing and promotion.

Ms Rasmussen noted that there needs to be sustainable diversified industries.

Matrix developed a survey for the BCC to place relative importance on the allowed activities of Pot 1 (attachment 2). The ORAC was administered the same survey to gauge their priorities. According to the non-scientific survey, the top 5 priorities of the ORAC are: Workforce, restoration, infrastructure, mitigation, and tourism.

The Matrix Team introduced several concepts to consider for project evaluation and inclusion in a data collection tool. These concepts included:

- Economic diversification/resilience - reduce reliance on government and tourism
- Leverage - bring in external funds
- Life cycle cost - will project maintain income to cover cost over life of project
- External benefits - quality of life and benefit to citizens
- Project type (RESTORE Category) - give more weight to the higher priority categories
- Technical feasibility - can it be done / does technology exist
- Economic benefit - how many jobs created / magnifying effect on economy
- Public acceptance - does the public support

Several members of the ORAC wanted more detail under each category and wanted the opportunity to possibly add their own. Matrix will provided a more detailed list of criteria to the ORAC by Aug 15. The committee will have until the Sep 4 meeting to evaluate and provide comment. The evaluation criteria will be a main topic of the Sep 4 meeting. One of the desired outcomes of the Sep meeting will be clear direction for Matrix to refine the evaluation criteria and provide a draft final at the Oct meeting. Several specific ORAC comments follow:

Mr Jim Breitenfeld asked if the delayed Treasury rules may render the evaluation criteria non-applicable. Both the Matrix Team and Commissioner Parisot indicated they did not think the rules would negate the work the ORAC does.

Chairwoman Seevers suggested the term "ecology" needs to be in the evaluation criteria, noting how some projects may not have measurable benefit. Matrix noted that "External benefits" covered that.

After the evaluation criteria have been refined, Matrix will lead the ORAC through "mock project" evaluations.

Guidelines for Presentations and Public Comment in ORAC Meeting

The ORAC established guidelines for future meetings. If someone desires to make formal presentation, they must submit their request and materials one week in advance. They will be allocated 10 minutes for their presentation and 5 minutes for Q&A. There will be a limit of 3 formal presentations per meeting.

The ORAC voted to not allow any project based presentations until after the evaluation criteria were developed. However, they will accept presentations for education of ORAC members. After some discussion, it was decided future meetings would start with agenda review and admin (to include approving of previous minutes), public presentations, main meeting, public comment, close.

ORAC Members Open Discussion

The County will provide greater advance notice of future meetings, along with a posted agenda. In order to maintain

control and clarity, Chairwomen Seevers requested ORAC members raise their hands and be recognized before speaking.

Mr Martin Owen asked if ORAC members could invite speakers. The Chair responded “yes”

Ms. Cindy Frakes asked when we might we start accepting projects? Matrix responded that we should be ready by November.

Ms Rasmussen asked what is appropriate response to people who want to submit projects? The Chair suggested they defer to the website and encourage submitting for other funding sources.

Public Comment

Ruth Sikes - asked for more notice

Jessica Koelsch, NWF - commented the committee is moving in great direction; message “Restoring environment restores economy”.

Commissioner Parisot addressed notice of meetings; said the newspaper may not publish the notification even when the County provides them one.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 PM. Minutes transcribed by Rick Owen from notes supplied by the Matrix Consulting Group and are not verbatim.

//signed – ss – Aug 19, 2013//

Sam Seevers, Mayor of Destin
Chairman