

Okaloosa RESTORE Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes Summary
 November 6, 2013 – 2:30 P.M.
 Northwest Florida State College – Student Services Building

Meeting called to order at 2:30 PM by the Chair of the Okaloosa County RESTORE Advisory Committee (ORAC); those present:

- 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)
- Sal Nodjomian Matrix Design Group (Okaloosa County Consultant)
- Sarah Trenton Haas Center (Okaloosa County Consultant)

ORAC Member absent:

- Capt. Gary Jarvis Fishing and Seafood Representative
- Brian Haugen Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber

Others Present:

• John Humphrey, NWFSC	• Jim Trifilio, Okaloosa County
• Ruth Sykes, Mary Esther City Council	• Jessica Koelsch, National Wildlife Foundation
• Paul Marieski, Exec Dir, Air Armament Museum Foundation	• Mr. Bill McCartney (no organization captured)
• Mike Anderson, Fort Walton Beach Mayor	• Mr. Alexander (no organization captured)
• Dave Parisot, Okaloosa County Commissioner	•

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Tallman motioned to approve the October 3, 2013, minutes as amended. The amendments included adding the evaluation categories the ORAC chose to the meeting meetings. Ms. Frakes seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Consultant’s Administrative Report – Mr. Nodjomian

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be December 5, 2013 at 6 PM. The meeting is scheduled to be held at Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) and will take place in the large meeting room on the first floor of the Student Service Center (Room 302 has a scheduling conflict).

Mr Nodjomian will poll the ORAC members to find a suitable date for the January ORAC Meeting. As currently scheduled, the regularly scheduled meeting falls on January 1, 2014. Once a suitable date is found, Mr Nodjomian will work with either NWFSC or ECCC to secure a meeting location.

The committee was reminded that not all members have confirmed their ability to access their Okaloosa County e-mail accounts; 8 of 11 e-mail accounts have been confirmed. Please send confirmation e-mail to Mr. Nodjomian, for those who have not yet done so.

Mr Nodjomian used the Roadmap slide to capture tasks accomplished to date and to show the tasks remaining. He mentioned we will be on the current step (developing a model to help evaluate projects) for a while.

Mr. Nodjomian raised the point that there is no rush to finish the planning process, as the BP litigation is likely to drag out for quite some time, which will afford the committee adequate time to develop the model and ranking system.

Scheduled Presentation: No Presentation

Regional Meeting Updates –Mr. Nodjomian

Mr. Nodjomian provided information on the SAME Joint Engineer Training Symposium, held in Mobile, AL, October 22-23, 2013. The symposium was attended by nearly 450 people, including government representatives, engineering consultants, and vendors. Unlike previous symposiums, there was an entire technical track dedicated to the RESTORE Act. Many attendees were interested in projects that will be funded through RESTORE. He pointed out there was a significant amount of misinformation that the public currently has regarding RESTORE and the high expectations for the money coming from the RESTORE Act.

Mr. Nodjomian added that committee members should take any opportunity to talk to the public about RESTORE, especially to correct misperception. He also noted that the committee members could talk to members of the public about RESTORE, but not to fellow committee members (Sunshine Laws) regarding RESTORE Act items.

Mr. Nodjomian provided the committee with a Gulf Consortium Update. The meeting was held on October 25, 2013, in Tallahassee and was attended by 15 directors and alternates. The majority of the discussion was focused on comments to the proposed Treasury Rules, which were captured on the slides presented.

Mr. Nodjomian provided information on the Pensacola Watershed Meeting held in Santa Rosa County on October 31, 2013. During this meeting there was a review of the Pensacola Watershed Plan draft, as well as discussion on the types of projects/actions for each root cause that will filter and prioritize the project requests. Based on the volume of projects numerous communities are sifting through, it reinforces the concept of developing evaluation criteria and an intelligent collection tool prior to requesting project submissions.

Mission Statement and Goals

Mr. Nodjomian provided the Mission Statement for approval by the committee. He indicated that between meetings he had received two comments for proposed changes to the Mission Statement. The Mission Statement as originally proposed follows:

“The Okaloosa RESTORE Advisory Committee (ORAC), in conjunction with Okaloosa County staff and its consultants, shall develop a Multi-Year Plan and formulate a comprehensive strategy to maximize the benefits of RESTORE Act funding designated for Okaloosa County. The ORAC’s efforts will inform and assist the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners (BCC) in their task of approving the Multi-Year Plan. The ORAC shall recommend projects selected in a fair and transparent manner to the BCC to help restore and protect our portion of the Gulf Coast Region.”

Numerous ORAC members recommended minor edits, which resulted in the following modified Mission Statement for the ORAC:

“The Okaloosa RESTORE Advisory Committee (ORAC), in conjunction with Okaloosa County staff and its consultants, shall develop and recommend a Multi-Year Plan and formulate a comprehensive strategy to maximize the benefits of RESTORE Act funding designated for Okaloosa County. The ORAC’s efforts will inform and assist the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners (BCC) in their task of approving the Multi-Year Plan. The ORAC shall receive, review, and recommend projects selected in a fair and transparent manner to the BCC to help restore, enhance, and protect the natural resources and economy of our County.”

Ms Rasmussen made a motion to approve the Mission Statement as written above. Ms Frakes seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Nodjomian presented the goals of ORAC. He stated that he had received two comments on amending the goals since the previous meeting. The goals as presented:

1. Perform all tasks in a transparent and ethical manner while encouraging maximum public participation
2. Identify priorities and develop rigorous evaluation criteria
3. Design and field an efficient and effective project submittal process
4. Improve County website and other management tools associated with the RESTORE process
5. Develop an executable Multi-Year Implementation Plan

Ms. Rasmussen suggested the inclusion of the evaluation matrix in the goals. Dr. Azzaretto suggested removing Goal #4, because the nature of that goal is administrative and should be handled by the ORAC Coordinator. Mr. Shippee suggested adding a goal discussing project reviews. Based on these comments, the finalized goals follow:

1. Perform all tasks in a transparent and ethical manner while encouraging maximum public participation
2. Identify priorities and develop rigorous evaluation criteria and matrix
3. Design and field an efficient and effective project submittal process
4. Conduct project reviews using a rigorous and transparent evaluation process
5. Develop an executable Multi-Year Implementation Plan

Mr Shippee made a motion to approve the Goals as written above. Dr. Azzaretto seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Evaluation Tool

Mr. Nodjomian reviewed the evaluation tool and explained how he modified the terminology to alleviate some confusion from the previous meeting. He introduced the term *Quantitative Factor Significance*, which is the importance placed on the factors comprising the evaluation tool. Further, he reiterated the meaning of *ORAC Weight*, which is the importance placed on the quantitative and qualitative components of the evaluation tool.

Mr Tallman made the motion to approve the terminology as presented. Mr Owen seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Committee took a 5 minute recess in order to get Dr. Rod Lewis on the conference phone. Dr. Rod Lewis entered meeting via teleconference at 3:30 PM.

Evaluation Factors

Mr. Nodjomian reminded the committee of the main categories of evaluation factors that had previously been decided upon, including: economic, environmental, and general. The focus of the evaluation factors at this meeting was the economic category.

Evaluation factor slides were handed out prior to the start of the meeting, and were not included in the meeting slides e-mailed out to committee members. Mr. Nodjomian presented two *fictional* project requests entitled “Road to Riches” and “Fish Tails” to demonstrate the amount of information that will be provided in the requests, as well as the basic projection results (e.g., Gross Product), that will be determined using economic projection methods.

Mr. Breitenfeld raised a concern that if ROI is being used to evaluate projects, other aspects that may not produce a high ROI (e.g., building a park) will be excluded. Mr. Nodjomian responded that there will be numerous other factors considered in the process, not just ROI, before the overall ranking of a project is determined.

Several questions were raised as to what would happen if the project requestor was not truthful with their project input (e.g., amount donated, projected number of jobs created, etc). Dr. Lewis stated that there would be an initial face validity check (does information make logical sense) upon receipt of the request. Mr Nodjomian also noted that the requestor would have to upload all of their substantiating information along with their proposal. In the event proposal was untruthful (or fraudulent), the BCC will have a mechanism to draw back these funds at the expense of whoever submitted the proposal.

Mr. Shippee asked if there would be a way to address further considerations other than Gross Product, for example: in the Fish Tails example, would we be able to determine how the research conducted will add value to the

economy. Dr. Lewis stated that once the proposals are run through the model, a variety of variables will be produced that the committee will be able to look at, not just Gross Product.

Ms. Seevers suggested that future examples of the economic evaluation tool be presented with the same “Road to Riches” and “Fish Tails” example, in order to follow the proposals through the entire evaluation process.

Dr. Lewis left the teleconference at 4 PM.

ORAC Open Discussion

Ms. Seevers received a letter from Lieutenant General (Retired) Fornell requesting RESTORE funding for the Air Force Armament Museum Foundation. Ms. Seevers raised the question to the committee as to how receiving letters such as this should be handled in the future. Ms. Rasmussen indicated that she had received a similar letter from the City of Niceville and provided it to the consultant.

The committee decided that there should be a standard letter that is sent in response to all letters received by the committee/committee members, in order to prevent any issues of disclosing different information to different people. These letters will be sent out by the ORAC Coordinator (Okaloosa County employee).

It was suggested that all letters, such as these, received by individual members of the committee be e-mailed to the ORAC Coordinator and the consultants for distribution to all members of the committee. Further, it was determined that correspondence sent via email (discussing projects and proposals) should also be forwarded to the ORAC Coordinator and the consultants for distribution to the entire committee (it was noted all e-mails are public record)

The next meeting (December 5, 2013) will focus on the remaining economic factors and start on general factors.

Public Comment

Bill McCartney pointed out that a former environmental project (Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Destin Harbor Restoration) could not be quantified on an economic scale, but ending up having significant economic benefit. It was a surface water restoration projects that resulted in 1,000 new boat slips. Environmental projects can be economic development projects.

Commissioner Parisot stated that many people (FDEP, FL Fish and Wildlife, other counties) are looking at the process of evaluation that Okaloosa County is developing, and he would not be surprised if many locations adopted the same process. He also stated that Treasury may provide more guidance on several issues (applicability of NEPA; format of multi-year plan; monitoring federal grant processes; and, standardization of the application process) and that we requested additional time to review these changes. Commissioner Parisot also pointed out that once the ORAC has submitted the plan to the BCC there will be a mandatory 30 day public comment period *before* the plan is sent to the Treasury. Finally, Commissioner Parisot also noted that he agrees that the Okaloosa County website needs improvement; however, there is a lot of information available on the website through the links.

Mr. Paul Marieski thanked the committee for acknowledging the receipt of Retired Lieutenant General’s letter.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:35 PM.

Minutes transcribed by notes taken by Sarah Trenton (Haas Center) and are not verbatim. To view ORAC meeting in its entirety, please access at www.co.okaloosa.fl.us, View County Commission meetings.

//signed – ss – Dec 5, 2013 //

Sam Seevers, Mayor of Destin
Chairperson