

LAKE BELT MITIGATION COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary

South Florida Water Management District

3301 Gun Club Road, (Bldg. B-1, 3rd Floor, Storch Room)

West Palm Beach, Florida 33406

This meeting was conducted as a teleconference call at (561) 682-6800

Meet-me number (855) 682-6800 - Meeting ID #992 154 294

Wednesday, March 25, 2020 9:00 AM

1. Call to Order by Robert Progulske, Vice Chair

- a) Meeting began at 9:00 AM

2. Attendees

Robert Hopper introduced the new Committee Members:

Jennifer Reynolds (SFWMD) and Dianne Rosensweig (USACE)

a) Committee Members

- 1. Jennifer Reynolds, SFWMD
- 2. Robert Progulske, USFWS (Teleconference)
- 3. Dianne Rosensweig, USACE (Teleconference)
- 4. Cecelia Harper, USEPA (Teleconference)
- 5. Ed Smith, DEP (Teleconference)
- 6. Jason Hight, FWCC (Teleconference)
- 7. Michael Spinelli for Craig Grossenbacher, DERM (Teleconference)
- 8. Jeff Rosenfeld, MDLPA (ex-officio) (Teleconference)

b) Other meeting attendees

- 1. Robert Hopper, SFWMD
- 2. Lourdes Elias, SFWMD

c) Other teleconference attendees

- 3. Alexis Carryl, SFWMD

4. Ray Palmer, SFWMD
5. Matt Morrison, SFWMD
6. Orlando Rivera, DEP
7. Tom MacVicar, MDLPA

3. Selection of Committee Chair

After some discussion, the Committee voted for Jennifer Reynolds to be the new Chair. Jennifer presided over the remaining portions of the meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes

Draft LBMC Meeting Minutes from August 16, 2019 were reviewed by the Committee members. The minutes were moved for approval by Ed Smith, with a second by Dianne Rosensweig. The minutes were approved by the Committee.

5. Submittal of Invoices for Acceptance by LBMC – Robert Hopper / Jeff Rosenfeld

Jeff Rosenfeld discussed the invoices submitted since the last Committee meeting and Robert Hopper presented a spreadsheet (copy attached) summarizing the invoices to be accepted by the Committee. These invoices included: 1) one Dade-Broward Levee Construction Monitoring Phase II invoice totaling \$83,961.62 (which closed the project); 2) four Dade-Broward Levee Construction Monitoring Phase III invoices totaling \$173,834.87, and 3) three Lake Belt Water Quality Monitoring invoices totaling \$101,562.48. The total for the invoices since the last Committee meeting was \$359,358.97. Robert Progulske moved to accept the invoices and Ed Smith seconded the motion. The motion to accept the invoices was approved by the Committee.

6. Approval of 2019 LBMC Annual Report – Jeff Rosenfeld

Jeff Rosenfeld presented a copy of the draft 2019 LBMC Annual Report to the Committee. Jeff discussed the financial aspects of the report as summarized in Appendix C and the history of the mitigation fee changes included in Table 1. Ed Smith moved to approve the 2019 Annual Report and the motion was seconded by Robert Progulske. The Annual Report was approved by the Committee.

7a. FY 21 Funding Request: C-139 Annex restoration project – Jeff Rosenfeld

A motion was presented to “Approve the expenditure of \$2 million of additional funding for the C-139 Annex Restoration Project. At an estimated cost of \$15,248 per WRAP credit, this expenditure authorizes the award of 131.2 WRAP credits for 2020, subject to the final credit determination and cost estimate for the project”. It was discussed that this was the ninth annual payment (as proposed in the cash flow analysis discussed during the initial approval by the Committee in 2012) and that the LBMC funding was front-loaded to provide the original estimated \$35 million needed for the restoration of the project by 2017. With this request, the current project funding will be \$41 million. The credit award is based on the WRAP scoring approved by the Committee in 2012, which has not yet been finalized through Corps permitting. It was discussed that the SFWMD will be coming back to the Committee with an updated cost and mitigation credit estimate after the Corps permit was issued. Ed Smith moved to approve the motion and it was seconded by Robert Progulske. The motion to fund the C-139 Annex Restoration Project was approved by the Committee. Miami-Dade County voted against approval, all others were in favor.

7b. FY 21 Funding Request: Lake Belt Water Quality Monitoring – Jeff Rosenfeld

A motion was presented to “Approve the expenditure of \$131,149 for estimated water quality monitoring costs during the period between March 2020 and February 2021”. This estimate was based on actual monitoring expenditures between March 2019 and February 2020. Ed Smith moved to approve the motion and it was seconded by Robert Progulske. The motion to fund the Lake Belt Water Quality Monitoring Project was approved by the Committee.

8. Monitoring data updates – Dade-Broward Levee and L-31N Phase 2 projects – Jeff Rosenfeld

The Dade-Broward Levee berm repair was completed in 2016. Jeff showed that the change in relationship between USGS monitoring wells after the repair continued through the 2019 wet season. This change in the relationship after 2016 indicates that the berm repair has resulted in higher relative water levels in the Pennsuco wetlands.

The new West Wellfield Protection Canal structure was completed in May 2018. Historical upstream and downstream canal stage data suggest that the new water control structure has resulted in a wet season canal stage increase of approximately 0.8’ in the canal reach

adjacent to the Pennsuco wetlands. Comparison of the upstream 2018 and 2019 wet season canal stages with monitoring wells in the Pennsuco wetlands indicates that the canal is now recharging the wetlands (due to the higher stage), while historically the canal drained the adjacent wetlands.

Construction of the 3 additional miles of the L-31N seepage barrier was completed in April 2016. Jeff showed that the 2018 and 2019 wet season monitoring well water level data confirmed the 2016 and 2017 results previously presented to the Committee. Based on the hydrology benefits indicated by consistent 3-year wet season monitoring results for the 2-mile seepage barrier and an additional 4 years of consistent data for the 5-mile seepage barrier, Jeff recommended stopping L-31N monitoring. He also mentioned that some of the sensors were beginning to fail and indicated that he didn't want to spend mitigation funds to re-equip the monitoring network at this point. Committee members said that they would discuss the request within their respective agencies and provide feedback to Robert Hopper. In the meantime, Robert Progulske suggested that the monitoring should continue until the Corps has finalized the mitigation credit award but that no additional funds should be spent on equipment replacement until the Committee discusses the request at the next meeting.

9. Status update of Pennsuco acquisitions – Ray Palmer / Robert Hopper

Robert Hopper reported that SFWMD is currently discussing acquisitions with property owners who own 15 acres. SFWMD has also been contacted by a property owner with 125 acres of nearly continuous parcels in the northern part of the Pennsuco. Ray Palmer asked for confirmation that SFWMD has the ability to move forward with these acquisitions as long as they meet the criteria that the Committee established several years ago. Jeff Rosenfeld described the criteria for the new Committee members and said that the intent of the Committee several years ago was to allow SFWMD to make acquisitions that met the criteria without having to come to the Committee for a specific approval. Ray said that they would report back at the next meeting on the ongoing negotiations.

10. Public Comment

None.

11. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is uncertain at this point. The updated C-139 restoration project will be discussed at the next meeting, which will be scheduled once the Corps permit is issued and the updated cost estimate is finalized. The status of the L-31N seepage project monitoring will also be discussed.

12. Meeting Adjourned