

# PUBLIC FORUM CHARTER

## **Chapter 152 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION VIA RECURRING PUBLIC FORUM CHARTER**

### **Sec. 152-1. - Creation.**

The South Florida Water Management District ("SFWMD") Governing Board hereby delegates to the Executive Director the authority to create a recurring Public Forum to encourage meaningful public participation in identifying efficient and effective means of implementing the District's mission. The Public Forum is a non-voting group established for information-gathering and fact-finding only. The Public Forum is not delegated, by form or function, any decision-making or advisory authority. The Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District exclusively retains all decision-making authority related to the tasks of the Public Forum.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)

### **Sec. 152-2. - Purpose.**

The Public Forum shall serve as an information-gathering and fact-finding body supporting the Executive Director and as a forum for improving public participation in water resource issues affecting south Florida by:

- (a) Ensuring broad public participation, engagement, and discussion on issues impacting water resources in the greater south Florida ecosystem;
- (b) Gathering information related to the effects of continued population growth, development, and agriculture on south Florida's natural resources; and
- (c) Gathering information related to the need to restore, preserve, and protect the greater south Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)

### **Sec. 152-3. - Tasks.**

The Public Forum shall carry out the following tasks at the direction of the Executive Director for the Governing Board:

- (a) Serve as a public forum to identify efficient and effective means for implementing Governor DeSantis' "Achieving More Now For Florida's Environment" Executive Order.
- (b) Serve as a public forum for coordinating information on the status of the numerous efforts under way to study, restore, manage, protect, and preserve south Florida's water resources.
- (c) Serve as a public forum for consensus building among stakeholder interests on a variety of water resource issues, projects and/or programs.
- (d) Gather information for the Executive Director's consideration for enhancing coordination in the approaches being taken to studying, restoring, managing, preserving, and protecting south Florida's water resources

among those Federal, State, and regional agencies, local governments, task forces, private and non-private organizations, and other parties that either have jurisdiction within south Florida or otherwise are involved in efforts impacting or benefiting south Florida's water resources.

- (e) Solicit and provide opportunities for public input on key issues involved in establishing and sustaining a healthy ecosystem and economy into the future.
- (f) Gather information for the Executive Director's consideration on specified topics, as selected by the Executive Director, including:
  - (1) Improving coordination and eliminating duplicative efforts among governments, agencies, task forces, and other organizations;
  - (2) Increasing understanding of the workings of south Florida's water resources, and the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project;
  - (3) Restoring, managing, protecting, and preserving south Florida's natural resources including the greater Kissimmee-Lake Okeechobee-Everglades ecosystem;
  - (4) Promoting sustainable and environmentally compatible urban and agricultural development that supports healthy ecosystems;
  - (5) Enhancing the public's understanding of the necessity for both preserving and restoring natural resources and supporting sustainable urban and agricultural development;
  - (6) Allocating and reserving water resources needed for the environment and all beneficial uses;
  - (7) Critical water resource issues;
  - (8) Implementation of regional water supply plans; and
  - (9) CERP implementation and other Everglades restoration initiatives.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)

#### **Sec. 152-4. - Status Reporting.**

Upon request of the Governing Board Chairperson, the Executive Director shall provide to the Governing Board a comprehensive summary of each Public Forum meeting. The Executive Director shall establish procedures to ensure Designated Public Representatives will have the option to submit their individual summaries of each Public Forum meeting to the Governing Board in connection with the Executive Director's comprehensive summary.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)

#### **Sec. 152-5. - Designated Public Representatives for the Public Forum.**

- (a) Designated Public Representatives for the Public Forum shall reflect the diversity of the overall south Florida community, including varying organizational membership levels and geographic locations, and shall include balanced and appropriate representation from the following six classifications:
  - (1) The south Florida business community;
  - (2) Water supply utilities;

- (3) Agriculture;
- (4) Public interest groups;
- (5) Local governments; and
- (6) Environmental organizations.

(b) The following agencies and entities shall be requested to identify and provide a representative to provide further technical assistance to the Public Forum:

- (1) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- (2) U.S. Department of the Interior;
- (3) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;
- (4) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- (5) Florida Department of Environmental Protection;
- (6) Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;
- (7) Florida Department of Community Affairs;
- (8) Florida Department of Transportation;
- (9) Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission;
- (10) Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida; and (11) Seminole Tribe of Florida.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)

**Sec. 152-6. - Selections.**

- (a) Designated Public Representatives for the Public Forum referenced in Governing Board Policy Section 152-(a) shall be selected by the Executive Director through an application process to ensure balanced representation and appropriate service time among the six classifications set forth in Section 152-5(a).
- (b) The Executive Director shall designate a District staff member to serve as facilitator of the Public Forum to ensure proper decorum.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)

**Sec. 152-7. - Scheduling of Public Forums.**

- (a) The District shall aspire to hold periodic Public Forums on a regular basis, as determined by the Executive Director, to complete the tasks assigned by the Executive Director. The dates and assigned topics for the Public Forums shall be determined by the Executive Director. In furtherance of public participation, all Public Forums shall be publicly noticed and open to all members of the public with an opportunity for public comment.
- (b) In addition to publicly noticing the Public Forums, the Executive Director shall make readily available to the public all materials associated with the Public Forum.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)

**Sec. 152-8. - Staff Support.**

The Executive Director shall provide a reasonable and appropriate level of District staff support to the Public Forum.

(Res. No. 2019-0717, § 3, 7-11-2019)