



Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative

www.lrpi.us

Meeting Agenda

July 8, 2024, 12:00 p.m.

Town of Jupiter Utilities Field Office

3133 Washington Street

Jupiter, FL 33458

Chair Deb Drum called the meeting to order at 12:10 PM.

1. Attendance

Committee membership list

Deb Drum, Chair (Palm Beach County) – *Present*

John Maehl, Vice Chair (Martin County) – *Present*

Marjorie Craig, Secretary (Village of Tequesta) – *Present*

Albrey Arrington (Loxahatchee River District) – *Present*

Amanda Barnes (Town of Jupiter) – *Present*

Patricia Magrogan (PBC Landowner Representative) – *Present*

Jim Davis (Jupiter Inlet District) – *Present*

Joe Chaison (Jupiter Inlet District – Alternate) - *Present*

Vacant (Jonathan Dickinson State Park, division of FDEP) – *Scott Duncan has been invited*

Chad Kennedy (IRWCD) – *Present*

John Melson (Martin County Landowner Representative) – *Present*

Vacant (FDEP) – *Position has been posted*

Jenny Smith (SFWMD) – *Present*

Attendance notes

- John Lakich – has taken a new job in the keys, Chad Kennedy has taken the position of executive director for the IRWCD and will be attending in his new role
- Scott Duncan is the new park manager for Jonathan Dickinson State Park and will be cycling in as the new representative, Deb has reached out and will get him on the mailing list, etc
- Deb Drum – introduction of Green Futures Interns from Palm Beach County's Environmental Resources Management to see government in action
 - Prior to meeting, she was asked if this was the same group that was set up by Florida statutes to oversee the wild and scenic NW fork of the Loxahatchee River?
 - No, that is the Loxahatchee River Management Coordinating Council (LRMCC), they were set up with the official bylaws of Florida statutes
- The Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative (LRPI) is the initiative that was set up to
 - Share and understand the needs of the river
 - To have the agencies and entities around the table and beyond, to come to us

with proposals every year to identify the greatest needs for the river, whether it be clean water quality or habitat restoration

- This is the group that annually ranks projects submitted to the legislature for requested funding
- Then we have our collective legislative teams that go to Tallahassee annually to make and help support those legislative appropriation requests

2. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

3. Old Business

A. Review and approval of Initiative meeting minutes for February 5, 2024, and June 10, 2024

- i. Pat makes a motion and Jim seconded – all in favor – passed unanimously
- ii. It was noted that in the June 10th minutes that under the report on the legislative session that “CERP” was spelled “SURF” and needs to be corrected. Albrey moved and Jim seconded approval of the minutes with that correction

4. New Business

A. FY25 Legislative Request / House Appropriations Request Update & Confirm Project Funding Allocations - Ed gives an update, and Casey does the work in Tallahassee

- Ed – talked about the one project that was in the process, but was vetoed; \$90k project; of the 281 water projects in the budget that made it through, almost 60% of the projects were vetoed; we need to steer the projects to existing mechanisms, taking the pressure off the legislature process; Casey – asking to go back to the House, go back to the original process, but new legislative reality is not as optimistic
- Chad – sounds like the governor is directing us to use agencies that already have funding set aside. Should the LRPI be reaching out to FDEP for funding?
- Ed – conflicting timelines for DEP vs LRPI Initiatives and ranking make it difficult
- Casey
 - Recent legislation passed that directed some revenues from the Seminole gaming compact to these programs
 - One was the water quality prep improvement grant program and the other was the resilient FL grant program, it will be interesting to see the status of the water projects and what is funding
 - It would be prudent to discuss your projects with FDEP to see whether your project fits in
 - If they get feedback from several stakeholders, they will often go back to the legislature to request
- Chad at the table – can we ask, to see if FDEP will be receptive to the LRPI – for discussion, would it make sense for us to reach out to the FDEP and

explain what we do, here is who we are; went to Resilient Florida website and not very intuitive

- Deb – we're in this transition time, and we need to put priority ranking for projects that are meaningful to the Loxahatchee and the watershed; especially in the transition, we don't know how it is going to go in terms of legislation direction; very important that we know what the priorities are and where we get the biggest bang for the buck, where it is for the grant program, etc., where we as an initiative can say, this is where we have x amount of years of experience with the river until we have a better understanding how it's going to play out in the legislative process
- Pat – we have been through this before, and we wait it out
- Deb – value in putting together a glossy of all our projects – talking to all our chambers, legislature, FDEP, our councils, we want more connections with the business community
- Albrey
 - Whether we're in a mindset of wait and see – invariably there are changes
 - In the immediate, Ed and Casey are pretty clear, in what they are saying, if we want a representative, from the LRPI (*Chairman or designee*), to have a conversation with the entities that are holding or managing the grant funds
 - If the LRPI can help sort through a mountain of projects; we have criteria that we use, who's to say that we don't add other criteria, write a cover letter, we as the initiative, have reviewed with this criteria, with one or other, criteria set, if we can provide something and review them as how we understand the goals of the grant, could the initiative help FDEP understand and help prioritize the projects
 - If the potential exists for us to be the initiative and sit around and review the projects and provide input, and we provide that input, we feel like we have done this before with the legislature and help them prioritize projects, surely we could do a similar activity with the agencies
- Chad – would we still go down the legislative path too?
- Deb – we would submit with whatever process they've provided us. In the past, the House and the Senate have had different processes. Deb would be happy to have further discussions with FDEP and their grant program leads (with Ed and Casey's help) to get into those meetings, to talk about the initiative, and what value we can bring to their grant assessment as they look at the grants, to try and make a difference that way
- Albrey – we're not unique in being an initiative, we set the path for many of the initiatives, this could be another trailblazing opportunity
- Jenny - SFWMD – the district has a grant program as well for resiliency projects as well for flood control and things like that and I can volunteer to talk to the resiliency director to see if we can help with prioritization or ranking
- Chad – the district license plate funds, rarely people apply for them, still

money left on the table

- Jenny – ton of projects, they are hiring all the time with the resiliency department it is growing constantly, there is more funding coming in from different sources
- Deb – agrees, resiliency has finally gotten attention statewide as a massive issue that deserves funding behind it, to address it
- Deb – Chad is talking about the license tag program, the Indian River Lagoon, Kathy LaMartinez, with SFWMD, who does the governmental outreach for Martin County – also does the Indian River Lagoon license tag program (not sure if this funding is available for non-profit; we should broadcast; we are all representatives for the Lox – would like to see all the money used)
- Deb – asked Jenny if she would reach out to Kathy LaMartinez to find out the status of the IRL license tag programs in terms of timing of applications and the amount of money available, with Jennifer Aitonto follow up
- Albrey – communicating with the resiliency grant team and the water management district
- Deb - coming up on the application deadlines – they are going to be due before we can have someone from the district's resiliency program come in and talk about the kind of funding that is available. Not sure if it will make a difference to make a request; but maybe at the next meeting to start cycling in some presenters on the grant programs through FDEP and the SFWMD.
- John – not all on the same schedule, could create a whole group of parallel path for support
- Deb – **FOR FUTURE AGENDAS FOR ENTITIES TO DO PRESENTATIONS ON GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR ENTITIES,**
 - FDEP
 - SFWMD
 - NRCS (?)– maybe
 - Duck's unlimited
 - FWC
 - Florida Wildflower Foundation
 - Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS)
- Albrey – for this, look at thresholds; projects, surely \$100k on average; might prioritize on magnitude of funds available; let's try to understand the largest opportunities with the first efforts
- Deb – agrees with that; tasking herself with this, not reaching out to every entity, will start with DEP and SFWMD, if anyone else would like to help just let them know at the table; don't go off on your own
- Jenny – graciously agreed to follow up on the Indian River license tag program and the resiliency program funding
- Deb – as developing your scope for the initiative, also be taking a look at developing your scopes for your individual submittal through the grant portals if you are looking at funding to get aligned for next year

B. Accomplishment Spreadsheet YTD

- Jenny – there was one, a very detailed one
- Deb – wasn't very long ago – very frustrated not being able to find it
- Pat – turned over to Pat Walker when she left
- Deb – can everyone please take a look for a hard copy or digital
- Nestor had them, and most of them are hard copies; Jenny has been scanning them in her free time; but does have project information for every year back to 2010; can re-create it if we need it
- Deb – even if 2010 – something – in, approved, vetoed, where is it; we're finding very important legislatively on where we are and what we've gotten done
- Albrey – if found send it to Jenny, he forwarded one from 2018

C. Agency Update

i. South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)

- CERP representative not available, table until future meeting, no update

ii. Loxahatchee River District (LRD) – Bud Howard

- a. Jones Creek – vegetation and data study
 - Background – persistent poor WQ – many years of poor results for bacteria
 - The 1990s converted over to central sewer
 - Designated impaired by FDEP/ EPA
 - Lack of septic systems key factor
 - Amount of decaying vegetation and organic-rich sediments; lots of exotics
 - If open, some of the sunlight, improves water going through and reduces leaf litter
 - FDEP – did a significant analysis that showed that the problem was not due to a big WW deposal
 - Not the 20,000 or more due to like a WW break
 - Studying extensively
 - Heard from the Town on some of this – TOJ vegetation trimming project improve that flushing
 - Lessons done in the past – JID and LRD did in the past, after the project is done and area left where it wasn't maintained and vegetation came in and choked it out
 - Town of Jupiter came in and said – we'll do an initial clean up but the residents need to do the program maintenance – figured out every 2 years; that process
 - Takes a long time, takes engaged residents, to commit to agree to an expensive add-on to their tax bill (non-ad valorem)
 - Sherlock Tree company – did the initial work, working in crazy conditions; brutal job
 - Maintenance, the residents will comment to a \$130k re-trim every 2 years - \$600 PER YEAR PER LOT

- Mats of vegetation; LRD – extensive monitoring throughout the system; TOJ has been a great partner, taking samples and send to the lab; a few different areas of study
- Monitoring – various sampling timing before, during, and after the project; also some control sites
- Have some instrumentation – every 15 minutes; neat probes with chlorophyll measurement; gives a sense of algae in the water
- Jerry – light sensors – worked out ways – par system, light penetration through water; figures out a way to calibrate sensors; done a deployment to get measurements
- Lastly – make sure to quantify, drone contract shot super high-resolution photography
- Digitize probably be a manual process
- Looking to the south; the change is striking; an area that you could not get through and now can get through; profound change
- Drone photography – showed before, and after – to the west is you can see a huge difference this area completely impassible;
- Water quality – updated daily on the website as updated – refer to that; bacteria – enterococci and fecal coliform
- Web data, you can sort data for graph
- What learned through the nanobubble project – it is the sediments that are driving the bacteria – did not expect the levels to drop – showed went down; and then sampled after 3 inches of rain – showed high spike; so captured times where big rains, no rain, etc.
- When looking at the rain vs – sometimes the first flush shows and sometimes not
- Total N, total P, chlorophyll, A – graphs – average of all the samples across sites
- Chlorophyll caught eye, initial shock, and then back to normal
- [https://loxahacheeriver.org/Jones Creek/](https://loxahacheeriver.org/JonesCreek/)
- Next steps – WQ monitoring – ongoing data review; data comparisons; 2024 collection underway
- Drone imagery – digitization and quantification and light measurements
- Deb – question about sediment – muck, could that be a driver?
 - Bud – were frustrated because we did DEP funded water quality project used nanobubbles but – sadly, it didn't work; did some additional studies – did beaker water, teaspoon beaker studies beakers that we added the muck, the bacteria, the back in the muck persisted longer and longer than expected; muck is optimized for bacteria
 - Dr. Paul Gray – would be a great person to kick around the results that you saw (from Deb) sounds like a mini Lake Okeechobee legacy
- Bud – can see the water flowing in and out;
- Deb – John and I – seen these issues through the years, seen technologies, nanobubbles, you've done such a fantastic job; to give it that additional Band-Aid (Jupiter did the work)

- Albrey – really how degrading these muck areas are – can go in and find them; curious that the TOJ did a huge de-mucking of the area, back in the day; it reminds us that there are still projects that we need to solve
- Amanda – the residents very much want the Jones Creek area dredged again; at that time we had a vacant lot to dump muck on; estimated \$4 to \$5 M to dredge that area

iii. ERM - Melissa Colbert – presentation on Lox Slough natural area

- 13,000 acres, largest natural area, the headwaters to the Loxahatchee River
- Been doing work since 2000
- Completed by 2010
- By 2015 all the hydrologic restoration was completed, improving flows and benefiting the river
- Current project habitat restoration
 - Fuel reduction, safely reintroduce prescribed burns to benefit Palm Beach Country Estates and Jupiter Farms
 - \$300k project
 - Adding on to the hydrological restoration
 - Benefited the river and the species
 - Two active wading bird rockeries – most of the chicks that fledge all types of herons
 - Heart of the slough – snail kites that nested historically, even now nesting since 2015, just reconfirmed this year
 - Swallow tail kites roost in the evening, pre-migration in anticipation of their 8000-mile journey – at the end of the month
 - If you want to observe, get there by 7:30 AM or an hour before sunset
- Deb – has gone out with Melissa and it was truly amazing
 - One year, when snail Kites were not roosting in other areas, they WERE nesting in PBC areas, inspiring UF to

5. Other Business

- Pat – there are a lot of turtles in the river. Everyone is commenting on the amount of turtles and manatees in the river. It's very exciting to see so many!
- Deb – had 6 sea turtle egg evening events. Turtles were at 4 out of the 6!
- Deb – internationally –it's recognized that the month of July is "*Plastic Free July*." Plastics and microplastics are a massive issue on our beaches and in the ocean. Our board has passed an off-site proclamation, on July 20th from 10 AM – 2 PM, at Loggerhead Marine Life Center – recognizing, plastic-free July – no single-use plastic, no plastic grocery bags, please try to support plastic-free July!

6. Public Comment

- Lindsey Brewer – (*geologist with DERM*) Noted, our discussion in the last LRPI meeting about funding opportunities outside of DEP. In the last blue-green algae task force meeting they talked about the Florida Department of Agricultural and

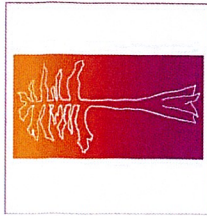
Consumer Affairs having special projects funding. It might be something we might want to look into.

7. Adjourn

Jim moved adjournment, and Jenny seconded it. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 1:18 PM.

Remaining 2024 Initiative Meeting Schedule:

- October 21: General Meeting




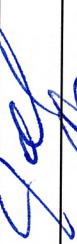



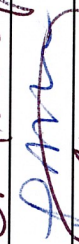


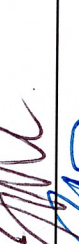
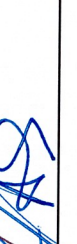

LOXAHATCHEE RIVER
PRESERVATION
INITIATIVE

SIGN-IN SHEET

July 8, 2024

Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative

Town of Jupiter Utilities Field Office
3133 Washington Street, Jupiter, FL 33458

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Albrey Arrington	Loxahatchee River District	albrey@lrecd.org	
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John Melson	Martin County Landowner Representative	jmelson57@gmail.com	
Jenny Smith	SFWMD	jennysmith@sfwmd.gov	
	FDEP		



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