

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
MINUTES

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites  
Lake City, Florida

January 22, 2015  
7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

**LaBarfield Bryant, City of Jasper**  
**Charles Chestnut IV, Alachua County**  
Ken Cornell, Alachua County  
**Rick Davis, Madison County**  
Scarlet Frisina, Columbia County  
**Donnie Hamlin, Lafayette County**  
Timothy Marden, City of Newberry  
**James Montgomery, Columbia County**  
**Garth Nobles, Jr., City of Live Oak**  
Frank Ogborn, City of Archer  
Patricia Patterson, Taylor County  
Lee Pinkoson, Alachua County  
**Daniel Riddick, Bradford County**  
DeLoris Roberts, City of Hawthorne  
Larry Sessions, Suwannee County  
**Carolyn Spooner, City of Starke**  
James Tallman, Union County  
**Lorene Thomas, Dixie County**  
Randy Wells, City of Gainesville  
**Robert Wilford, City of Alachua**  
**Charles Williams, Hamilton County**

NON-VOTING DELEGATE PRESENT

None

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES  
PRESENT

Carlos Herd, Suwannee River Water Management  
District  
Russell Simpson, Florida Department of  
Environmental Protection

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ed Braddy, City of Gainesville  
Beth Burnam, Hamilton County  
Craig Carter, City of Gainesville  
Jim Catron, City of Madison  
**Louie Davis, City of Waldo**  
Jason Evans, City of High Springs  
**Sandra Haas, Suwannee County**  
Jason Holifield, Dixie County  
Robert Hutchinson, Alachua County  
Everett Phillips, Columbia County  
Lauren Poe, City of Gainesville  
David Sullivan, City of Perry  
**Kenrick Thomas, Gilchrist County**  
Helen Warren, City of Gainesville  
**Mike Williams, Madison County**  
Stephen Witt, City of Lake City

OTHERS PRESENT

Sandra Buck-Camp  
David Cobb  
Ralph Kitchens  
Stew Lilker  
Allison Megrath

COUNCIL ATTORNEY PRESENT

Jon Wershow

STAFF PRESENT

Steven Dopp  
Carmelita Franco  
Scott Koons  
Dwayne Mundy  
Jean Strong

**Board Members names are bolded**  
*Gubernatorial Members names are italicized*

I. INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Spooner called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with an invocation given by Ms. Lorene Thomas and a pledge of allegiance to the flag. Chair Spooner stated that there was a quorum.

Chair Spooner welcomed and introduced Sandra Buck-Camp and Ralph Kitchens, members of the Columbia, Hamilton, Suwannee Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board, Stew Lilker, Columbia County Observer and David Cobb from Florida Power and Light.

II. GUEST SPEAKER - Allison Megrath, Real Estate Manager  
Plum Creek

Scott Koons, Executive Director, introduced Allison Megrath, Real Estate Manager, Plum Creek. Ms. Megrath made a presentation to the Council concerning an overview of the future development of the Florida Intermodal Park, at the 500-acre North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity Catalyst Site located on property in Columbia County owned by Plum Creek, with a goal of creating jobs that benefit a 14-county region. She stated that the Catalyst Site is part of a larger 2,622-acre Plum Creek tract that has been designated as a Mixed-Use District with approval for up to eight million square feet of industrial use, 100,000 square feet of commercial land use and 300 dwelling units. Ms. Megrath also stated that the North Florida Intermodal Park is now certified as a Mega Industrial Park ready to attract industries, support job creation and serve as an inland port for the Southeastern United States.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - December 11, 2014

Chair Spooner asked that the minutes of the December 11, 2014 meeting be approved as written.

**ACTION: Commissioner Marden made the motion, with a second by Councilman Bryant to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2014 meeting as written. The motion carried unanimously.**

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Monthly Financial Report - November 2014 and December 2014
- B. Purchase order with the Northeast Florida Regional Council to Assist with Updating the Statewide Hurricane Evacuation Study
- C. Transportation Disadvantaged Program Local Coordinating Board Appointment

Chair Spooner asked if there were any questions regarding any of the items on the Consent Agenda and requested that these items be approved.

**ACTION: Commissioner Wilford made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Chestnut, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.**

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

- A. Introduction of New Members

Chair Spooner introduced new Council members, Commissioners Ken Cornell and Lee Pinkoson from Alachua County and Commissioner Scarlet Frisina from Columbia County.

B. Resolutions of Appreciation - Rusty DePratter

Chair Spooner asked that a Resolution of Appreciation for past services be approved for Rusty DePratter, who served as a Council member since January 2011.

**ACTION: Commissioner Patterson made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Roberts to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for Rusty DePratter. The motion carried unanimously.**

C. Committee Appointments

Chair Spooner asked that the appointments to the Clearinghouse Committee and the Program Committee be approved as recommended by the Chair.

**ACTION: Commissioner Wells made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Chestnut, to appoint Patricia Patterson to the Clearinghouse Committee and Scarlet Frisina to the Program Committee, as Vice-Chair. The motion carried unanimously.**

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive Committee

1. Resolution Recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the City of Fanning Springs

Mr. Koons stated that the City of Fanning Springs will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary this year. He gave a brief history of the City.

**ACTION: Ms. Thomas made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Ogborn to approve a resolution recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the City of Fanning Springs. The motion carried unanimously.**

2. Check Fraud News Release

Mr. Koons reported that a fraudulent check in the amount of \$49,523.00 written on the Council's bank account, processed and paid by Wells Fargo and Council staff filed an affidavit of check fraud concerning this matter with Wells Fargo and filed a crime report concerning this matter with the Gainesville Police Department. He stated that the Council authorized the Council Attorney to file a lawsuit against Wells Fargo to recover the unauthorized \$49,523.00, following the filing of the lawsuit, the Eighth Judicial Circuit of Florida ordered that this matter be resolved by arbitration. Mr. Koons also stated that to date, the Council has not been able to schedule an arbitration hearing before an arbitrator mutually agreeable to the Council and Wells Fargo. Therefore, he reported that the Executive Committee is recommending that the Council authorize Council staff to issue a press release to state and regional news media concerning the Wells Fargo check fraud issue.

**ACTION: Commissioner Pinkoson made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Chestnut to authorize Council staff to issue a press release to state and regional news media concerning the Wells Fargo check fraud issue. The motion carried unanimously.**

B. Clearinghouse Committee

Due to the absence of Clearinghouse Committee Chair Sandra Haas, James Montgomery, Clearinghouse Committee Vice-Chair, gave the Clearinghouse Committee report. He stated that the Clearinghouse Committee met previously on January 13, 2015 and reviewed one local government comprehensive plan amendment.

#5 - Dixie County Comprehensive Plan Draft Amendment (DEO No. 15-1ER)

Mr. Montgomery stated that this item was reviewed on behalf of the Council as per Council procedures for local government comprehensive plan amendments with a response deadline prior to the next regularly-scheduled Council meeting.

Mr. Montgomery further stated that the Clearinghouse Committee met earlier in the evening and reviewed one local government comprehensive plan amendment.

#21 - City of Gainesville Comprehensive Plan Adopted Amendment (DEO No. 14-3ESR)

Mr. Montgomery stated that the Committee found that the local government comprehensive plan, as amended do not create significant adverse impacts to Natural Resources of Regional Significance, regional facilities or adjacent local governments. He stated that the Clearinghouse Committee recommends forwarding these findings to the respective local governments and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

**ACTION: Mr. Montgomery made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Wells, to approve the Clearinghouse Committee recommendation concerning #21 City of Gainesville Comprehensive Plan Adopted Amendment. The motion carried unanimously.**

B. Regional Planning Committee - Evaluation and Appraisal Report of  
North Central Florida Regional Planning Policy Plan

Commissioner Wells reported that Section 186.511 of Florida Statutes requires the Council to prepare an Evaluation and Appraisal Report on its Strategic Regional Policy Plan at least once every five years and the last Evaluation and Appraisal Report was approved by the Council in December 2010. Therefore, the Regional Planning Committee met tonight, to begin preparing an Evaluation and Appraisal Report of the regional plan.

Commissioner Wells further stated that the purpose of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report will evaluate progress towards achieving the goals and implementing the policies of the regional plan, and the evaluation and appraisal process is a two-step process. He reported that the first step involves the preparation and adoption of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report, the second step involves the preparation and adoption of amendments to the Strategic Regional Policy Plan which implement the recommendations contained in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report. Commissioner Wells stated that earlier that evening the Regional Planning Committee received a presentation from staff regarding the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan and how it is used by the Council in fulfilling its review responsibilities. He reported that the

Committee also adopted a review schedule with the intent of presenting its recommended Evaluation and Appraisal Report for consideration by the Council at the September 2015 meeting

VII. EX-OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS

Carlos Herd, Suwannee River Water Management District, reported that legislation is being proposed concerning the use of land and water conservation funds from Amendment One. He also stated that the Management Districts are making presentations to legislation at this time.

Russell Simpson, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, stated that the Northeast District staff will be holding a free training workshop concerning regulations for used oil in their office in Jacksonville on February 13, 2015.

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Florida Regional Councils Association Monthly Activity Report

Mr. Koons reported that the Florida Regional Councils Association is the statewide organization of the 11 regional planning councils. The Association strengthens Florida's regional planning councils, partners with government and the business community to enhance regional economic prosperity and improves the consistency and quality of regional planning councils programs to ensure they add value to state, regional and local initiatives. He stated that the accomplishments of the Association's Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Sheri Coven, are reported each month to the Council. He also highlighted several of the accomplishments listed in the December 2014 monthly review report included in the Council meeting packet.

B. Florida Regional Councils Association Annual Report

Mr. Koons stated that the Florida Regional Councils Association is the statewide association of all 11 regional councils in Florida. It is governed by a Policy Board made up of three representatives (county, municipal, gubernatorial) from each Council who are in turn advised by the Executive Directors Advisory Committee comprised of all 11 executive directors. He further stated that Chair Spooner, Vice-Chair Riddick and Executive Committee member Charles Williams currently serve on the Florida Regional Councils Association Policy Board. He stated that the 2013-14 Annual Report for the Association was included in the Council packet and also distributed to Council members prior to the meeting.

C. Florida Regional Councils Association Policy Board Meeting Report

Mr. Koons reported that he, Chair Carolyn Spooner, and Vice-Chair Daniel Riddick, attended the semi-annual meeting of the Florida Regional Councils Association Policy Board held in Tallahassee on January 9, 2015. He stated that the Policy Board heard presentations from Joanna Turner, Executive Director, National Association of Regional Councils; Mark Wilson, President, Florida Chamber of Commerce; Amy Baker, Coordinator, Florida Office of Economic Demographic Research; Jim Wood, State Transportation Administrator, Florida Department of Transportation; Lisa Hurley, Legislative Director, Florida Association of Counties; and David Cruz, Legislative Advocate, Florida League of Cities.

Mr. Koons stated that the Policy Board adopted the 2015 Legislative Agenda, which was included in the meeting packet and the Policy Board also reviewed a financial report and made appointments to the Nominating Committee for 2015-16.

D. Florida Chamber Foundation Scorecard™

Mr. Koons stated that the Florida Chamber Foundation has developed the Florida Scorecard™ to provide Florida leaders the metrics needed to secure Florida's future. The Florida Chamber Foundation's objective to develop a 20-year, statewide strategic plan requires a commitment to measuring our current status and progress toward the stated goals of the Six Pillars 20-year Strategic Plan. He further stated that the Scorecard reports metrics for each of the Six Pillars benchmarked to the other 49 states. The Six Pillars are Talent Supply and Education, Innovation and Economic Development, Infrastructure and Growth Leadership, Business Climate and Competitiveness, Civic and Governance Systems and Quality of Life and Quality Places. He reviewed the January 2015 Scorecard™ included in the Council meeting packet.

E. North Florida Regional Water Supply Partnership

Mr. Koons stated that in September 2011, the St. Johns River Water Management District, the Suwannee River Water Management District and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection entered into an agreement that formalizes the coordination of water resource management in north Florida. He also stated that ensuring sustainable water supplies and protecting north Florida's waterways and natural systems is a collaborative effort among the water management districts, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, local elected officials and area stakeholders.

Mr. Koons stated that the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, which was formed in May 2012, serves as an advisory body to offer viewpoints from stakeholder groups to the St. Johns River and Suwannee River water management districts and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to help address the region's water supply issues. He also stated that the Stakeholder Committee is structured such that a wide range of public interests are included, while keeping the Committee small enough to be effective and productive. Mr. Koons further stated that Stakeholder Committee representatives closely coordinate with the constituencies they represent, as well as being responsive to the interested public and Committee meetings are open to the public so stakeholders beyond the Committee membership can attend and participate.

Mr. Koons reported that the Committee met on December 15, 2014 and the Committee reviewed and approved a groundwater demand methodology for use in the development of the 2035 Regional Water Supply Plan.

F. Sadowski Housing Coalition

Mr. Koons reported that the Sadowski Housing Coalition is a nonpartisan collection of 30 diverse statewide organizations, including the Florida Association of Counties, Florida League of Cities and Florida Regional Councils Association, and in 1992, the Legislature enacted the Sadowski Act creating a dedicated revenue source to fund affordable housing programs and funding the Catalyst Program for Training and Technical Assistance. He also stated that 70 percent of the funds are dedicated to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership program which funds housing in

all 67 counties and metropolitan cities. Mr. Koons also reported that 30 percent of the funds are for the State Housing Trust Fund for Florida Housing Finance Corporation programs such as the State Apartment Incentive Loan program.

Mr. Koons reported that the State Housing Initiatives Partnership funds can be used to, rehabilitate/renovate existing housing stock for seniors and persons with special needs; and provide first time homeownership with down payment and closing cost assistance. He also reported that the State Apartment Incentive Loan funds can be used to rehabilitate existing apartments or to build new units for the elderly and persons with disabilities and for every State Housing Initiatives Partnership and State Housing Initiatives Partnership dollar spent, four to six private sector dollars are leveraged. Funds available to be appropriated in Fiscal Year 2015-16 are an estimated \$266.87 million, It is estimated that these funds will create over 24,000 jobs. Mr. Koons stated that the Sadowski Coalition is urging the Legislature to use all of the housing trust fund monies for housing programs.

G. Original Florida Tourism Task Force Update

Mr. Koons reported that the Council provides staff services to the Original Florida Tourism Task Force to assist them in implementing their work program and in order to increase tourism generated revenues in the north Florida region, Mr. Koons stated that The Original Florida Tourism Task Force implements campaigns to increase tourist visits to the Natural North Florida region. He also stated that the Original Florida Tourism Task Force has recently completed a new Springs brochure, Bicycle Trails maps by county, which are available on the Natural North Florida website and a visitor survey. He stated that they have also planned during 2015 to attend travel shows in partnership with VisitFlorida, these travel shows will include Atlanta, GA, Berlin, Germany, Chicago IL, Madison, WI, New York, NY, Philadelphia, PA, and Washington, D.C., and in addition, they will be attending travel shows in Jacksonville, Tampa and The Villages.

Mr. Koons stated that the mission of The Original Florida Tourism Task Force is to promote the natural, historic and cultural attractions of the area to increase the number of visitors and to extend their stay in the region, and the goal is to enhance the economy of the area, image and quality of life through expanded revenues and employment opportunities.

H. Check Fraud Status Report

Mr. Koons reported that on March 20, 2013, a fraudulent check in the amount of \$49,523.00 that was written on the Council's bank account was processed and paid by Wells Fargo. Also on March 20, 2013, Council staff filed an affidavit of check fraud concerning this matter with Wells Fargo. On March 25, 2013, Council staff filed a crime report concerning this matter with the Gainesville Police Department. On April 18, 2013, the Council Attorney sent a letter to Wells Fargo requesting that Wells Fargo remit to the Council within 30 days the unauthorized \$49,523.00 released by Wells Fargo from the Council's account. He added that on June 3, 2013, attorneys for Wells Fargo responded via letter stating that Wells Fargo will not reimburse the Council for the \$49,523.00 released from the Council's account by Wells Fargo.

Mr. Koons stated that at their meeting on July 25, 2013, the Council authorized the Council Attorney to file a lawsuit against Wells Fargo to recover the unauthorized \$49,523.00, to engage Stanley Cushman from the law firm of Scruggs and Carmichael to

serve as co-counsel for the lawsuit and to designate Scott Koons, Executive Director, as the Council's representative concerning all matters related to such lawsuit. He stated that on August 6, 2013, a lawsuit was filed against Wells Fargo to recover the Council's funds.

Mr. Koons further reported that on September 9, 2013, Wells Fargo responded to the complaint by filing a Motion to Compel Arbitration. Council Attorney Wershow and Co-Counsel Stanley Cushman responded to the motion stating that arbitration does not apply to the dispute and have filed a motion for a hearing on the motion to compel arbitration. A hearing originally scheduled for October 30, 2013 in the Circuit Court of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for Alachua County, Florida on the Motion to Compel Arbitration filed by Wells Fargo to resolve the dispute between the Council and Wells Fargo was rescheduled for January 24, 2014. Mr. Koons reported that at the conclusion of the hearing, the Circuit Court granted the Motion to Compel Arbitration.

Mr. Koons reported that a letter was sent to Wells Fargo on May 13, 2014 requesting additional information concerning the disputed check. On September 24, 2014 a Notice of Arbitration and Statement of Claim was filed with the American Arbitration Association by Co-Counsel Stanley Cushman on behalf of the Council. On October 14, 2014 attorneys from Wells Fargo filed a Respondent's Answering Statement to the Statement of Claim.

Council Attorney Jon Wershow stated that an agreement has been reached with Wells Fargo concerning a mutually acceptable arbitrator, Robert Cowles from Jacksonville, FL. He also stated that a preliminary arbitration conference will be held within the next 30 to 45 days to set a date for the arbitration hearing.

Chair Spooner informed the Council that the next Council meeting will be held on February 26, 2015 at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites in Lake City. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

  
Carolyn B. Spooner, Chair

2/26/15  
Date