

**CITY OF TEMPLE TERRACE, FLORIDA  
RIVER WATCH TASK FORCE  
REPORT OF MEETING**

**Wednesday, January 19, 2011  
Council Workroom  
4:30 p.m.**

The Temple Terrace River Watch Task Force met on Wednesday, January 19, 2011, in the Council Workroom at City Hall.

**PRESENT WERE:** Task Force Chairman Jack Westberry and Task Force Members Frank Chillura and Ron Smith. **ABSENT WAS:** Task Force Member Terry McMahon.

**ALSO PRESENT WERE:** Council Liaison Robert Boss, Legislative Secretary Sobeida LeBlanc, Task Force Liaison Joe Gross, Staff Member Greg Stevanus, Community Development Planner Mary Myers Ogle, Shawn College, Dr. Marty Kelly, and John Rodgers.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairman Westberry.

**1. Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meetings:**

Upon motion of Task Force Member Chillura, seconded by Task Force Member Smith, and unanimously carried, the **REPORT** of the December 20, 2010, meeting was **APPROVED**.

**Persons Wishing to be Heard on Items NOT Listed on the Agenda:**

None.

**2. Overview of Comprehensive Plan Policies for the Hillsborough River – Mary Myers Ogle:**

Task Force Liaison Gross introduced Community Development Department Planner Mary Myers Ogle. He explained he thought it was a good idea for her to review some of the policies in the Comprehensive Plan related to the Hillsborough River because some of the work done by the Task Force is complementary to some of those policies.

Planner Ogle stated there are approximately 700 policies in the Comprehensive Plan. She distributed copies of a six-page matrix, a copy of which is a part of the record, which includes policies that deal with the Hillsborough River.

Planner Ogle explained the reason her department put this matrix together is because there is an EAR (Evaluation & Appraisal Report) process being done through the Planning Commission and the State, where they periodically review the City's Comprehensive Plan to see if they are actually implementing the policies in said plan or whether the policies need to be updated. She said this matrix will help them get a head start in figuring out what they are supposed to be doing before the EAR process formally begins.

Planner Ogle reviewed the different departments within the City doing most of the policies already. Chairman Westberry questioned how far upstream on the river these policies cover, to which Planner Ogle responded these policies cover the river within the City limits.

Task Force Liaison Gross introduced Planning Commission Staff Member Shawn College. He explained Mr. College's role is to review the City's Comprehensive Plan and make sure it is consistent with the City of Tampa's and Hillsborough County's Comprehensive Plans.

Shawn College stated the Planning Commission's intention is not only to coordinate, but also specifically assist jurisdictions with monitoring, updating, and maintaining their Comprehensive Plan. He said they will be starting a process in approximately six months, in which they will take a hard look at the entire Comprehensive Plan. He added he will probably return in about a year to formally give the Task Force a presentation on these policies.

Planner Ogle expressed interest in the Task Force partnering up with the Community Development Department to improve public education and awareness.

Task Force Member Chillura expressed concern about agencies making their paperwork process too complicated to the extent that people avoid the legal process and do projects on their own. He relayed his personal experience when trying to obtain a permit for building a boat dock on the river. He recapped that dealing with the City was painless, but dealing with EPC [Environmental Protection Commission] was like "an Act of Congress." He added the cost to pull a permit was almost half the cost of the project, and it took him two months before he was able to obtain his permit.

Mr. College interjected this problem is out of the City's control, but suggested that City staff, in conjunction with the Planning Commission, can work with EPC to find out if this is a systemic problem or whether it was an unusual situation. Task Force Member Chillura emphasized the importance of finding a way they could look at that or have an input in helping to improve the process. Planner Ogle pointed out that a lot of the language on these policies encourages coordination between the State and other agencies.

Task Force Member Chillura questioned who dictates the different guidelines or requirements that each agency has on their Comprehensive Plan. Mr. College responded that at some point in history when the plans were first done they were somewhat consistent, but with time, agencies encounter problems, they make changes to their plan, but those changes don't go into the other jurisdiction's plans, therefore, they become inconsistent.

Planner Ogle asked the Task Force to review her handout, take notes, and submit suggestions to staff; the revisions will go to the Planning Commission who in turn will then take it to the City Council for approval. Mr. College added he is the person who will ultimately create the document.

John Rodgers, 933 N. Riverhills Avenue, informed the Task Force that the Planning Commission will be reviewing buffers. Mr. College explained Hillsborough County's Comp Plan established buffers 20+ years ago and when they did, they did it really quick and without any science. He continued they now have found some money and want to study the buffers scientifically to determine what the appropriate buffers for freshwater and upstream should be. Task Force Liaison Gross questioned whether that will impact the City of Temple Terrace. Mr. College replied it will not impact initially, but if they find scientific evidence that suggests they need wider buffers, he would introduce it to the three cities and hope they apply it as necessary.

### **3. Current River Water Level:**

Dr. Kelly reported the Fowler Avenue gauge indicated 22.27 feet and the middle river has come up about one foot. He submitted a copy of the USGS Real-Time Water Data and Rainfall Report dated January 19, 2011, for the record. Dr. Kelly continued there has been dramatic rainfall this week, which was not predicted. Although things are looking good, he said they still have February, March, April and May to get through, which is a long time.

Task Force Member Chillura said he noticed the Bypass Canal was pretty low yesterday and questioned whether water was being pumped out of the Bypass Canal into the middle river to help offset the City of Tampa's demand. Dr. Kelly responded affirmatively, adding once the water level in the middle pool drops below 14 feet, there is no water going over the dam, and if the amount of water coming down the river exceeds the potential withdrawal by the City of Tampa, Tampa Bay Water can request to augment the river from the middle pool, which means they can draw the middle pool down to 12 feet as stated on their permit. He explained they cannot draw any further than that without an emergency order from the District.

#### **4. Liaison Report:**

Task Force Liaison Gross introduced and welcomed new Council Member Boss as the Task Force's Council Liaison.

Task Force Liaison Gross reported the "Keep Hillsborough County Beautiful Committee" is planning a Recycle Regatta on the river on March 26, 2011, which has been expanded to be called "Reuse-A-Palooza," where kids will be making boats out of recycled materials and racing from Tower Park to Lowry Park. He noted they are looking for canoers, kayakers, and boaters who may want to help in making sure the kids encounter no problems.

Task Force Liaison Gross reported that the Livable Tampa Roundtable met on January 12<sup>th</sup>. He said this group is looking at expanding their presence, and they are talking about meeting half hour in advance of their meetings to resurrect the River Roundtable.

Task Force Liaison Gross continued that the Technical Advisory Council met yesterday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. He said he was unable to attend, but staff member Len Valenti was present, instead. He recapped the meeting: the presentation on the Sulphur Springs Wier was deferred to their February meeting; there is going to be a joint River Board and Technical Advisory Council meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup>; the Rivergate (lot in Hillsborough County) dock permit was carried over to their February meeting; and Temple Terrace resident Robert Carnahan was again selected as Chairman of this Board.

Task Force Liaison Gross stated the Hillsborough River Watershed Alliance met today and was actually hosted here. He said they are collaborating with Lowry Park in something called the Frog Listening Network, which is a way to gauge the health of things by the presence of frogs.

Task Force Liaison Gross recapped upcoming meetings: Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium on January 28<sup>th</sup>; the Florida Invasive Species Partnership meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup>; and the Hillsborough River Basin Board meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **5. Introduction of new Marine Patrol Officer/Marine Officer Report:**

Chairman Westberry welcomed and introduced Staff Member Greg Stevanus. He summarized that the Task Force looks forward to hearing from him on his monthly report. Staff Member Stevanus reported it has been business as usual; he has been out on the water about half a dozen times. He said with the water levels rising it has made navigation that much easier. He noticed a couple of trees down within the City limits and will make a note of those.

Staff Member Stevanus reported he did about 25 safety inspections, checked about 30 fishing licenses, and made one arrest last month. He said there haven't been a lot of a people on the river due to the cold weather.

Task Force Member Chillura questioned how much time is allocated for Staff Member Stevanus to spend on the river. Staff Member Stevanus responded he does not believe there are specific guidelines. He explained with the gas prices going up he would not launch the boat on the river if he saw just one boat at the ramp.

Task Force Member Chillura expressed concern about the high activity level in Temple Terrace ramps caused by other boat ramps charging a fee to launch a boat. He acknowledged it is slow now, but activity will pick up.

Task Force Member Smith stated there seemed to be a shift between the two previous Marine Patrol Officers. He explained it seemed like Carl Avari-Cooper's main focus was to be on the water, whereas Rick Scilabro had other duties that seemed to take him away from the water; therefore, they noticed a big decline of a patrol presence on the water. Staff Member Stevanus assured the Task Force he would be out on the water as much as he could, weather permitting. He added he is not on any specialty teams that would require more time from him, adding that he plans to be out on the water on weekends, as well.

#### 6. Other Business:

Council Liaison Boss commented he was glad to be the liaison to the Task Force and apologized for not being able to attend December's meeting.

#### 7. Election of Chair and Vice-Chairman:

Chairman Westberry stated that although Task Force Member McMahon is not present this evening, he has expressed interest in serving as Chairman of the Task Force this year.

Chairman Westberry nominated Task Force Member Terry McMahon as Chairman. Upon **Motion** of Task Force Member Chillura, seconded by Task Force Member Smith, the Task Force elected **Terry McMahon** to serve as **Chairman** of the Temple Terrace River Watch Task Force. Vote on the motion being: Task Force Members Chillura, Smith, and Westberry voting "aye," no "nay." Task Force Member McMahon was absent and did not vote.

Before proceeding with the election of Vice-Chair, Task Force Member Smith questioned whether it would be appropriate to hold off on electing a vice-chair until a new member gets appointed to the Task Force next month, so that this person too, has the opportunity for election. Task Force Member Chillura opined that it is extremely important that members appointed to any board sit in on the board at least a year before they are elected for those positions. He said it would not be fair to the Task Force, nor the person, having no history or background of the board. He volunteered to sit-in as vice-chair if Task Force Member Smith was not interested. Task Force Member Smith indicated he would accept the seat of vice-chair.

Task Force Member Chillura nominated Task Force Member Ron Smith as Vice-Chairman. Upon **Motion** of Task Force Member Chillura, seconded by Task Force Member Westberry, the Task Force elected **Ron Smith** to serve as **Vice-Chairman** of the Temple Terrace River Watch Task Force. Vote on the motion being: Task Force Members Chillura, Smith, and Westberry voting "aye," no "nay." Task Force Member McMahon was absent and did not vote.

For future reference, Task Force Member Chillura questioned whether the Task Force's rules specifically say that the vice-chairman automatically becomes the chairman the following year. He explained many of the boards he's familiar with open up each position yearly, and not necessarily obligates the vice-chair to take on that responsibility that he/she may not want.

Task Force Liaison Gross said he would try to line up someone from the EPC who handles dock permits to come to their next meeting and give them an overview. Also, he said he would look up the Task Force's rules and regulations and have them emailed to the Task Force along with the next agenda, in order for members to have time to review them.

Chairman Westberry questioned if it was possible to include the rules and regulations on docks on their website. Task Force Liaison Gross replied that Community Development has a dock permit link on their website in which they can just hyperlink to the Task Force's page.

Task Force Member Chillura thanked Chairman Westberry for his leadership in leading the Task Force in the right direction this past year. Chairman Westberry expressed appreciation, adding he, too, enjoyed his position as Chairman.

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sobeida LeBlanc  
Legislative Secretary