

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
MINUTES

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites  
Lake City, Florida

September 27, 2018  
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Arreola, City of Gainesville  
Patricia, Bouie, City of Hawthorne  
Robert Brown, Hamilton County  
LaBarfield Bryant, City of Jasper  
**Charles Chestnut IV, Alachua County**  
**Louie Davis, City of Waldo**  
Rick Davis, Madison County  
Thomas Demps, Taylor County  
Fletcher Hope, City of Archer  
Linda Jones, City of High Springs  
Janice Mortimer, City of Starke  
Tim Murphy, Columbia County  
Daniel Riddick, Bradford County  
**Larry Sessions, Suwannee County**  
James Tallman, Union County  
Kenrick Thomas, Gilchrist County  
*Lorene Thomas, Dixie County*  
Helen Warren, City of Gainesville  
**Robert Wilford, City of Alachua**  
Stephen Witt, City of Lake City

NON-VOTING DELEGATE PRESENT

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES  
PRESENT

Barney Bennett, Florida Department of  
Transportation  
Ben Glass, Suwannee River  
Water Management District  
Sean Greene, Florida Fish and  
Wildlife Conservation Commission

COUNCIL ATTORNEY PRESENT

Jonathon Wershow

MEMBERS ABSENT

Anthony Adams, Lafayette County  
James Catron, City of Madison  
Ken Cornell, Alachua County  
Frank Davis, City of Live Oak  
Mike Deming, City of Perry  
Matt Hersom, City of Newberry  
Gene Higginbotham, Dixie County  
Robert Hutchinson, Alachua County  
John Meeks, Levy County  
*James Montgomery, Columbia County*  
Gigi Simmons, City of Gainesville  
*Mike Williams, Madison County*

OTHERS PRESENT

Tim Alexander  
Mary Nell Bell  
Duane Cannon  
Diana Davis  
Rocky Ford  
LJ Two Spirits Johnson  
Bob Jones  
Stew Lilker  
Merrillee Malwitz-Jipson  
Eric Simmone  
Toby Witt  
Jerome Wyche

STAFF PRESENT

Steven Dopp  
Scott Koons  
Jean Strong  
Tara Tucker

**Executive Members names are bolded**  
*Gubernatorial Members names are italicized*

I. INVOCATION

Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with an invocation given by Commissioner Demps.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Council and guests pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

III. INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Davis stated there was a quorum of the Council, and welcomed and introduced Rocky Ford, Columbia County Commissioner-elect; Toby Witt, Columbia County Commissioner-elect; Tim Alexander, County Manager of Dixie County; Duane Cannon, Assistant County Manager of Dixie County; Jerome Wyche, City Manager of the City of Madison; LJ Two Spirits Johnson, member of the Columbia Hamilton Suwannee Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board; Merrillee Malwitz-Jipson, candidate for Florida House District 10; Bob Jones, husband of Linda Jones from City of High Springs; Mary Nell Bryant, wife of LaBarfield Bryant from City of Jasper; Diana Davis, wife of Mayor Louie Davis from City of Waldo and Stew Lilker from the Columbia County Observer.

IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes - August 23, 2018
- B. Monthly Financial Report - August 2018
- C. Local Government Comprehensive Planning Services Agreement - Fiscal Year 2018-19 Levy County
- D. Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board Appointment

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

**ACTION: Commissioner Wilford made the motion, with a second by Councilman Bryant, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.**

V. APPROVAL OF REGULAR AGENDA

Chair Davis asked for approval of the regular agenda.

**ACTION: Mayor Mortimer made the motion, with a second by Councilman Bryant, to approve the regular agenda. The motion carried unanimously.**

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson, announced that a site visit to the City of Valdosta Water Treatment Plant will occur on October 3, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

LJ Two Spirt Johnson, announced that the Alligator Warrior Festival at O'Leno State Park will be held on October 20-21, 2018.

VII. GUEST SPEAKER - Dr. Eric Simonne, Extension Director - Northeast District University of Florida  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension

Scott Koons, Executive Director, introduced Dr. Eric Simonne, Extension Director - Northeast District University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences Extension. Dr. Simonne gave an overview of the Florida Extension Service organizational structure, funding and services. Chair Davis thanked him for his presentation.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT

A. Introduction of New Member

Chair Davis welcomed new Council member Linda Jones, Vice-Mayor, City of High Springs.

B. Resolution of Appreciation - Rick Coleman

**ACTION: Commissioner Demps made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Davis to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for Rick Coleman. The motion carried unanimously.**

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS -

A. Executive Committee -

1. Proclamation Declaring October 2018 as Community Planning Month

Scott Koons, Executive Director stated that the month of October 2018 has been designated to celebrate National Community Planning Month. The American Planning Association and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, endorse National Community Planning Month as an opportunity to highlight the contributions sound planning and plan implementation make to the quality of life in communities and the environment. Mr. Koons stated that the Executive Committee recommends that the Council join in the celebration of National Community Planning Month by proclaiming October 2018 as Community Planning Month to recognize the valuable contributions made by professional community and regional planners and to extend its thanks for the continued commitment to public service by these professionals.

**ACTION: Commissioner Demps made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Chestnut, to adopt a proclamation proclaiming October 2018 as Community Planning Month**

**in the north central Florida region, which has been attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. The motion carried unanimously.**

2. Proclamation Declaring October 5, 2018 as Manufacturing Day

Mr. Koons stated that October 5, 2018 has chosen to celebrate Manufacturing Day. He added that Manufacturing Day is an effective way to highlight the importance of manufacturing in our region and support those manufacturing and school programs that prepare our workforce.

Mr. Koons stated that the Executive Committee recommends that the Council proclaim October 5, 2018 as Manufacturing Day in north central Florida.

**ACTION: Commissioner Warren made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Davis, to adopt a proclamation proclaiming October 5, 2018 as Manufacturing Day, in the north central Florida region, which has been attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. The motion carried unanimously.**

3. Proclamation Declaring October 22-28, 2018 as Florida City Government Week

Mr. Koons stated that the Florida League of Cities has designated the week of October 22-28, 2018 as Florida City Government Week. The League encourages cities to promote their cities through civic education activities. Florida City Government Week is part of an ongoing effort sponsored by the League to raise public awareness about services that cities perform and to educate the public about how city government works. Cities are encouraged to involve their local schools, businesses, media and civic clubs in their Florida City Government Week activities. Mr. Koons stated that the Executive Committee recommends that the Council join in the recognition of city government by proclaiming the week of October 22-28, 2018 as Florida City Government Week.

**ACTION: Mayor Mortimer made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Demps, to adopt a proclamation proclaiming October 22-28, 2018 as Florida City Government Week in the north central Florida region, which has been attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. The motion carried unanimously.**

4. Engagement Letter for Fiscal Year 2017-18 Audit

Mr. Koons stated that the Council selects an auditor for a three-year period, with the condition that an engagement letter be approved each year to ensure that the auditor is conducting the audits in an acceptable manner. He further stated the current auditor was selected in 2016 and has conducted two audits under this series. Mr. Koons further stated that the Executive Committee recommends that a third engagement letter be entered into for the audit of Fiscal Year 2017-18. He reported that the lump sum fee has been set at \$16,267 in accordance with the proposal made by the auditor to adjust the fee each year in an amount equal to the percent increase/decrease of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, not to exceed five percent each year. Mr. Koons reported the proposed fee is \$466 more than the fee charged for the Fiscal Year 2016-17 audit.

**ACTION: Commissioner Wilford made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Warren, to authorize the Chair to execute an engagement letter with the auditing firm of**

**Powell and Jones, Certified Public Accountants of Lake City, to conduct the Fiscal Year 2017-18 audit of the Council's accounts, for a lump sum fee of \$16,267, with the understanding that this engagement letter includes an audit of the Council's Employee Pension Plan for the same fiscal year. The motion carried unanimously.**

5. Proclamation Declaring October 2018 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Mr. Koons stated that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Mr. Koons further stated that the Executive Committee recommends that the Council proclaim October 2018 Breast Cancer Awareness Month in north central Florida.

**ACTION: Commissioner Wilford made the motion, with a second by Mayor Mortimer, to adopt a proclamation proclaiming October 2018 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month in the north central Florida region, which has been attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. The motion carried unanimously.**

6. Middle and Lower Suwannee River and Withlacoochee River

Mr. Koons stated that the City of Valdosta, Georgia has experienced numerous raw sewage spills over the last several years, with the most recent spills occurring on June 26, 2018 and August 14, 2018. He stated these spills resulted in the release of 300,000 gallons of raw sewage into the Withlacoochee River, which flows into the Suwannee River, and 5.0 million gallons of raw sewage into Mud Creek which flows into the Alapahoochee River then into the Alapaha River and then into the Suwannee River and travels through the north central Florida region to the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Koons also stated this problem affects several counties on a regional scale, the Madison County Board of County Commissioners requested the assistance of the Council to help develop a cohesive plan to remedy the situation and restore the reputation of the Middle and Lower Suwannee River and Withlacoochee River as a tourist destination.

Mr. Koons stated all of the counties in the Suwannee River Basin and The Original Florida Tourism Task Force, with the assistance of the Council, have worked extremely hard to promote our rivers as eco-tourism destinations. He further stated Madison County Board of County Commissioners has also requested the Council to develop and facilitate a meeting with the affected counties, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison and Suwannee Counties, to develop a plan to promote our area and help restore the reputation of the rivers. Mr. Koons also stated pursuant to this request, the Council authorized the Executive Director to convene and facilitate a meeting with representatives from Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison and Suwannee Counties to develop a plan to promote our area and help restore the reputation of the Middle and Lower Suwannee River and Withlacoochee River. He reported on September 19, 2018, Council staff convened and facilitated a meeting of county commissioners, and county administrators, coordinators and managers at the Madison County Agricultural Extension Office in Madison. Representatives from Columbia, Dixie, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy and Madison Counties were in attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Koons stated by consensus, the county commissioners present requested the Council to establish a task force comprised of a county commissioner from each of the 11 counties, Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Suwannee and Union

Counties, in the Suwannee River Basin, including the Santa Fe River Basin, to address the issues of raw sewage spills by the City of Valdosta, Georgia. He also stated the county commissioners present also requested that the Council authorize its Executive Director to provide administrative support to the Task Force and to develop, in conjunction with county administrators, coordinators and managers, a strategic action plan to address the issue of raw sewage spills by the City of Valdosta, Georgia.

**ACTION: Commissioner Davis made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Wilford, to establish the Middle and Lower Suwannee River and Withlacoochee River Task Force comprised of a county commissioner from each of the 11 counties in the Suwannee River Basin, including the Santa Fe River Basin, Alachua, Bradford Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Suwannee and Union Counties and Taylor County; authorize the Executive Director to provide administrative staff support to the Task Force; and authorize the Executive Director, in conjunction with county administrators, county coordinators and county managers, to develop a strategic action plan to address the issue of raw sewage spills by the City of Valdosta, Georgia. The motion carried unanimously.**

7. Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation

Chair Davis stated that the employment contract between the Executive Director and the Council specifies that the Executive Committee shall adopt performance standards to annually review and evaluate the Executive Director. It further specifies that the annual review and evaluation of the Executive Director shall be conducted by the Executive Committee. It also specifies that at its discretion, the Executive Committee is authorized to provide a merit increase to the Executive Director on an annual basis commencing October 1st of each year.

Chair Davis stated that the Executive Committee has adopted performance standards to review and evaluate the Executive Director and that the performance review was conducted by each Committee member prior to the September 27, 2018 Executive Committee meeting. He reported that the review resulted in "exceeds job requirements" for all evaluation standards, with an overall average score of 5.0 on a 5.0 scale. Chair Davis stated that, based upon this review, the Executive Committee awarded the Executive Director a five percent merit pay adjustment. He reported that Mr. Koons requested that his merit pay increase for Fiscal Year 2019, along with his Fiscal Year 2018 merit pay increase, be deferred until Fiscal Year 2020. He further reported that the Executive Committee approved Mr. Koons' request concerning his merit pay increase deferment.

No Council action was required on this item.

B. Clearinghouse Committee

Mayor Mortimer, Clearinghouse Committee Vice-Chair, gave the Clearinghouse Committee report. She stated that the Clearinghouse Committee met earlier in the evening and reviewed the local government comprehensive plan amendments which were included on the Council agenda for consideration.

- #56 - City of Cedar Key Comprehensive Plan Draft Amendment
- #71 - Dixie County Comprehensive Plan Adopted Amendment
- #72 - City of Williston Comprehensive Plan Adopted Amendment

She reported that the Committee finds that that the local government comprehensive plans, as amended, are not anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts to regional facilities, Natural Resources of Regional Significance or adjacent local governments.

Mayor Mortimer stated that the Committee recommends forwarding these findings to the respective local governments and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

**ACTION: Mayor Mortimer made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Demps to approve the Committee recommendations concerning Item #56 - City of Cedar Key Comprehensive Plan Draft Amendment; #71 - Dixie County Comprehensive Plan Adopted Amendment; #72 - City of Williston Comprehensive Plan Adopted Amendment. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### X. EX-OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS

Barney Bennett, Florida Department of Transportation, District 2, stated that the Department will be hosting the third annual Local Government Transportation Summit on October 10, 2018 at the Florida Department of Transportation District 2 Office in Lake City. He also stated that applications from local governments for Small County Road Assistance Program, Small County Outreach Program, Transportation Regional Incentive Program, County Incentive Grant Program, and Transportation Alternatives projects will be due in January 2019. Mr. Bennett also stated that the Tentative Five-Year Work Program public hearing will be held December 6, 2018 in Jacksonville at the District 2 Urban Area Office.

Ben Glass, Suwannee River Water Management District stated that City of Valdosta representatives will be attending a Governing Board meeting in the coming months to discuss the raw sewage spills by the City.

Sean Greene, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission stated that the Commission has removed the southern fox squirrel from the state endangered and threatened species list. He further stated that delisting of a species is positive news, it means the species is doing well and no longer needs critical action for its survival.

#### XI. 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 ten 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 Association strives to accomplish these goals by carrying out the activities listed in the August 2018 activities report included in the Council meeting packet. He reviewed the activities listed in the August 2018 report.

B. 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 related to each of the Six Pillars. 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 September 2018 Scorecard™ included in the Council meeting packet.

C. Regional Directory

Mr. Koons reported that the 2018 Regional Directory was mailed to local, regional, state and federal officials, and planning and related agencies the week of September 10, 2018. He also stated the Council staff would like to thank everyone who assisted in compiling the information for the Regional Directory.

Chair Davis informed the Council that the next Council meeting will be held on October 25, 2018. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

  
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Louie Davis, Chair

10/25/18  
Date