



**Board of Directors and
Annual Meeting of Corporation
Meeting Minutes**

January 31, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. CT
Escambia County Commission Chambers
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, FL 32502

[Meeting Recording](#)

This meeting served as the annual meeting of the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program, Inc., as required by Florida Law.

Members Present

Woody Speed, Chair	City of Orange Beach
Colten Wright, Vice Chair	Santa Rosa County
Vernon Compton	City of Milton
Mike Kohler	Escambia County
Jared Moore	City of Pensacola
Mike Norberg	Okaloosa County
Kerry Smith	Santa Rosa County

Members Absent

Cherry Fitch	City of Gulf Breeze
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Interested Parties Present

Matt Posner	PPBEP
Whitney Scheffel	PPBEP
Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Haley Gancel	PPBEP
Bailey Walkinshaw	PPBEP
Mary Jane Bass	Beggs & Lane
Thomas Derbes	Florida Sea Grant
Naisy Dolar	Santa Rosa County
Chips Kirschenfeld	Escambia County
Paul Looney	Water Resource Association (WRA)
Elizabeth Major	League of Women Voters Pensacola Bay Area (LWVPBA)
Brian Wyr	Gulf Coast Minority Chamber of Commerce (GCMCC)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call (Matt Posner, Executive Director)

Staff called the roll. Staff congratulated former Escambia County Commissioner Robert Bender for being appointed as the Escambia County Supervisor of Elections and thanked him for his time serving on the Program’s Board of Directors. A quorum was present.

3. Approval of Board Agenda



Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) made a motion to approve the agenda. Mike Norberg (Okaloosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of November 8, 2023, Board Minutes

Vernon Compton (City of Milton) made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Election of 2024 Chairman and Vice Chairman

Councilperson Jared Moore (City of Pensacola) nominated Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) as Chairman. Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilperson Jared Moore (City of Pensacola) nominated Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) as Vice Chairman. Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Staff Updates

a. Executive Director's Update (Matt Posner, Executive Director)

i. Hiring Update

- An offer was extended to a candidate for the Assistant Project Coordinator position, staff are expecting to hear back from the candidate by February 1st.
- PPBEP established the Jessica Bibza Panhandle Manatee Internship, which is closing today. Logan McDonald (Community Outreach Coordinator) and Bailey Walkinshaw (Community Outreach Assistant) will begin to review applications and expect to have the position filled in the next month.
- The Operations Manager position has closed, and staff are in the process of reviewing applications and scheduling interviews for February. Staff are hopeful that a candidate will be selected and announced at the next Board meeting.
- The Project Coordinator position is set to close on February 2nd; however, few qualified applications were submitted. Staff will pull and restructure the position if necessary.

ii. 501c3 Application

Mary Jane Bass (Beggs & Lane) and staff are working to complete the Program's 501c3 application and anticipate submitting it in a few weeks.

iii. RESTORE Council Grantee Training

Staff visited Gulf State Park in late 2023 for the RESTORE Council Grantee Training on best practices, policies, and rules surrounding federal grant management.



- iv.** 2nd Annual Staff Planning Workshop
Staff held a two-day annual internal planning workshop to plan and coordinate the upcoming year's activities and priorities.
- v.** First Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Closing
Staff officially closed the Program's first RFQ for the Pensacola Bay Oyster Restoration Initiative. Staff received responses from seven firms and the selection committee will be convening over the next month to shortlist the firms and hold interviews.
- vi.** Jessica Bibza Panhandle Manatee Slow Ride
PPBEP hosted the Panhandle Manatee Slow Ride in partnership with Bike Pensacola and supported by Susan Bastajian, Realtor at Keller Williams, as a memorial ride and fundraiser to keep Jessica Bibza's legacy alive through the Panhandle Manatee Program. The ride had over 100 participants and raised over \$800, which will support the Jessica Bibza Panhandle Manatee Internship Program.
- vii.** Perdido Bay Tour
Woody Speed (City of Orange Beach) and Matt Posner (Director) met with representatives from the South Alabama Land Trust and the Perdido Bay Environmental Association to discuss collaborative opportunities between Alabama and Florida in the Perdido Bay Watershed.
- viii.** Deadman's Island
Logan McDonald (Community Outreach Coordinator) joined staff from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District, City of Gulf Breeze representatives, and local neighborhood representatives for a tour of Deadman's Island. Staff coordinated an opportunity to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify funding opportunities for the City of Gulf Breeze to provide a long-term solution for restoration and stabilization of Deadman's Island. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have committed approximately \$100,000 to the initial conceptual study and for additional coastal engineering work.
- ix.** Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) Nonpoint Source Conference
Matt Posner (Executive Director) and Haley Gancel (Environmental Scientist) attended and tabled at the ADEM Nonpoint Source Conference held in Wetumpka, Alabama. The conference was a good opportunity for staff to build and foster relationships with partners in the northern region of the Program's watersheds. Overall, partners from the state level to local government expressed willingness to work collaboratively on monitoring, prioritized restoration, water quality opportunities, or furthering education and outreach.



- x. NOAA Proposals Update

PPBEP is a part of three NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge proposals with several partners. While there were approximately 800 Letters of Intent (LOI) submitted for the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge, only 59 LOIs were invited for full submittal, of which the Program is a part of three of those proposals. Full submittals are due by February 13th for funding awards ranging from \$50 million – \$75 million.

 - 1. Northwest Florida and Coastal Alabama Regional Resilience Initiative
Led by PPBEP, this proposal includes resilience projects from participating interlocal government members for a total funding request of approximately \$50.9 million.
 - 2. Bridging Resilience Gaps across Political Boundaries in the Perdido Watershed
This proposal is being led by The Nature Conservancy in Alabama for a total funding request of approximately \$74 million.
 - 3. Pensacola Bay System Oyster Restoration Initiative – Phase 1B
PPBEP would be a sub-awardee to Restore America’s Estuaries, if awarded PPBEP would receive \$4.5 million for 75 acres of oyster habitat restoration.

- xi. Legislative Priorities

State Legislative priorities updates were given during the Director’s Update.

 - 1. PPBEP Appropriation
PPBEP’s appropriation request of \$750,000 is running through Senator Broxson and Representative Andrade. Staff reported that the entire delegation has been supportive of the appropriation request in the past and staff are continuing to push for recurring appropriations in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) budget.
 - 2. University of West Florida (UWF) Water Quality Center
UWF has developed a \$5 million proposal to establish a Water Quality Center at the university. As part of the request, there would be a recurring appropriation for each Estuary Program in the region. Under the current proposal, PPBEP would receive a \$500,000 recurring appropriation.
 - 3. Northwest Florida Water Restoration and Protection Program
The proposal would fund a new \$15 million grant program administered through the Northwest Florida Water Management District. The primary objective is to fund Surface Water Improvement and Management



(SWIM) Plans and CCMPs actions for each of the estuary programs located in Northwest Florida.

4. RESTORE Component 2 Northwest Florida Program
Staff are working with DEP to try to allocate funds from the next cycle of Component 2 for Northwest Florida. There are now geographic grant programs for most of Florida, except for the Northwest and Big Bend regions. Since the Northwest and Big Bend regions do not have dedicated funding streams and RESTORE funds are intended for the most impacted region, staff are pushing for funds to come to the Northwest Florida region. Staff are continuing to work with all board members to push projects and opportunities for funding with Component 2. Discussion was held on what Component 2 is and background information on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council. The RESTORE Council has a funding cycle every few years and are currently evaluating pre-proposals. During the last funding cycle, the State of Florida received around \$80M-90M for hydrologic restoration, water quality projects, and coastal resilience.
 5. DEP Water Quality Grant Program & Resilient Florida Grant Program
This grant program has been adopted in statute to continue to support DEP and the Resilient Florida Grant Program for local governments.
 6. HB1557
HB1557 is DEP's legislative package that includes the addition of "estuary applicants" as eligible applicants for the Resilient Florida Grant Program.
 7. SB1638
SB1638 is a bill that would establish several different funding streams through DEP and other state departments. Staff highlighted two opportunities, one of which will be a local government grant program to maintain trails, perform land management, and establish a new Water Quality Work Program through DEP. DEP is working to address water quality protection and infrastructure needs across the state from local and state governments. The Water Quality Work Program would focus on developing a revolving loan fund and a prioritized list of water-quality infrastructure related projects.
- b. **Technical Update** (*Whitney Scheffel, Senior Scientist*)
- i. Staff attended the NOAA Facilitation Training for Coastal Managers; Whitney Scheffel (Senior Scientist) attended the in-person training at Weeks Bay NERR and Bailey Walkinshaw (Community Outreach Assistant) attended the virtual training. Estuary Programs throughout the area—St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program (SASJBEP), Mobile Bay Estuary Program, and the new Mississippi Sound Estuary Program—attended the trainings and allowed staff to



connect with other Estuary Programs.

- ii. Staff visited four of the ten living shoreline site locations that will be studied to evaluate the success of regional living shoreline projects. Zach Schang (DEP) and Liz Farmer (SASJBEP) accompanied staff to learn more about the history of the sites. Staff met with the property owners and already have a strong foundational relationship with the owners thanks to relationships developed by Zach Schang (DEP). The property owners expressed a willingness to allow PPBEP to monitor their living shorelines and excitement over having more monitoring at their property.
 - iii. Staff will be attending the Gulf of Mexico Conference in Tampa, FL and participating in workshops on seagrass monitoring, engaging communities, oyster restoration, in addition to engaging in networking opportunities—staff already have a meeting scheduled with the Tampa Bay Estuary Program.
 - iv. The Comprehensive Monitoring Workshop will be on February 29th to bring together representatives from agencies and organizations that conduct monitoring throughout Alabama and Florida. The goal of the workshop is to develop a framework for comprehensive monitoring across the watershed. There are already 40 people registered, and staff are expecting a turnout of approximately 50 people from non-governmental organizations, community groups, and state and federal agencies that conduct monitoring.
- c. **Outreach Update** (*Logan McDonald, Community Outreach Coordinator*)
- i. 3rd Annual Management Conference Meeting
Staff shared the save the date for the 2024 Management Conference Meeting along with this year's theme - Beyond Boundaries: Watershed Partnerships for Progress. The partnership theme is reflected by a Project Development Mixer breakout session that will encourage attendees from different entities to get together and collaborate on future regional projects and grant proposals.
 - ii. Education Programs
 - 1. B-WET support will continue through the 2024-2025 academic year. Starting in 2025, the Program will hold an annual Teachers on the Bay workshop where teachers can have immersive field experiences on restoration topics.
 - 2. During the summer, staff will develop field trip packages to offer to K-12 students. Staff are planning to develop three different field trip options: Seagrass Sleuths (seining), Kayaking, and Snorkeling. Seagrass Sleuths will be offered as a family activity once a month during the summer as well.



3. Homeschool activities will be offered once a semester due to demand.
 4. The Watershed Game will be offered in classrooms after staff are fully trained as facilitators and have trained volunteers as Watershed Game Facilitators. The Watershed Game is a board game developed for participants to learn about complex watershed issues in a fun, low risk environment. Staff are hosting a practice day on March 22nd at the PPBEP Office where volunteers are needed to act as participants while staff practice acting as facilitators.
- iii. Tours
1. Restoration Rambles is a new program offered from November to April to encourage community members to get out and learn about local restoration projects through a guided walking tour. Staff received positive feedback from the first Restoration Ramble which was held on New Year's Day at the Escribano Point Wildlife Management Area, exploring The Nature Conservancy's East Bay Oyster Habitat Restoration Project.
 2. Alternating with Restoration Rambles, staff will lead monthly kayak tours from May to October.
- iv. Outreach Programs
1. Tidal Talks will be a formal evening lecture series that is hosted quarterly at rotating locations.
 2. Staff will be hosting bi-monthly trivia due to the high demand. A total of 15 teams participated in the Program's last trivia night. Staff will also screen The Humble Oyster film at brewery pop ins throughout the watersheds.
 3. To reach a broader audience, staff will be targeting employers in the watersheds to coordinate Corporate Lunch and Learns.
- v. Upcoming Events
1. The next Restoration Ramble will be at Project Greenshores on Friday, February 9th from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM CT.
 2. Staff will screen The Humble Oyster at St. Michael's Brewing Company as a part of their Oysters & Pints Fest on February 10th.
 3. The 3rd Annual Mardi Gras Bead Tree Clean-Up is on Sunday, February 11th in downtown Pensacola from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM CT. The sign-up is



at capacity, so staff are anticipating a good turnout.

4. Manatees & Meadows Trivia Night will be held at Beardless Brewhaus in Pace on Tuesday, February 27th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM CT.

vi. Events Attended

1. Staff attended the Florida Marine Science Educators Association Fish Identification Workshop hosted at the Navarre Beach Marine Science Station.
2. Staff presented and screened The Humble Oyster film at the Santa Rosa County Tourist Development Office Snowbirds Program.

Staff attended the Southern Association of Marine Educators Annual Meeting at Gulf State Park in late January to network with other Gulf coast marine educators, including partners in Alabama.

3. Staff were invited to speak about the importance of oyster restoration and share the Program's Pensacola Bay Oyster Restoration Initiative at the Atlas Oyster House event "The World is Your Oyster: A Collaboration Dinner" on November 21st. Staff have already been invited back for another collaboration dinner in March.

vii. Volunteer Programs

1. PPBEP has fully taken over the program Panhandle Manatee, staff renamed the volunteer opportunity as "Manatee Ambassadors" for branding consistency.
2. Staff will be focused on continuing to grow the Bay Ambassadors program, along with Critter Catchers and Observation Tank Ambassadors.
3. Watershed Game Facilitators will be an added volunteer program once staff are trained and ready to bring on volunteers.
4. Vertical oyster gardening is expected to launch in the fall.

viii. Program Messaging Priorities for 2024

Program messaging in 2024 will focus on bay friendly yards, living shorelines, partnering with visitor centers to highlight Estuary Explorers, and developing materials for the oyster shell recycling program. The Trash Free Waters video series is expected to roll out this year and resilience mailers were already distributed in the City of Pensacola.

7. Action Items



a. **Approval of the FY23-24 First Quarter Financial Report**

Matt Posner (Executive Director) provided commentary on the FY23-24 First Quarter Financial Report prepared by staff and accounting services provider Carr, Riggs & Ingram, including that the Finance Subcommittee met before the Board of Directors meeting and approved the same FY23-24 First Quarter Financial Report, the Program will be reporting quarterly, and that staff expect to bring forward a re-budget in the March Board of Directors meeting.

Vernon Compton (City of Milton) made a motion to approve the FY23-24 First Quarter Financial Report. Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. **Affirm 2024 Bank Signature Authority**

Matt Posner (Executive Director) provided background that this motion is to update the signature authority for the appointments made for the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) made a motion to affirm calendar year 2024 signature authority for the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Executive Director for Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program's Hancock Whitney Bank accounts. Mike Norberg (Okaloosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. **Ratifying Approval of Executive Director's Action Authorizing Brett J. Cyphers of Anfield Consulting Group Inc. to Serve as Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program's State Lobbyist for FY23-24**

Discussion was held on the many benefits of having a dedicated lobbyist, potential conflicts with obtaining 501(c)(3) status, and whether PPBEP is anticipating paying for a lobbyist after FY23-24. PPBEP currently does not have a budget for lobbying services but could re-evaluate in the next fiscal year. Mary Jane Bass (Beggs & Lane) and Matt Posner (Executive Director) have previously discussed that there is no current issue with Brett J. Cyphers to serve as PPBEP lobbyist since PPBEP is not paying for it, but re-evaluation would be necessary if PPBEP were to pay for lobbying in the future to not jeopardize the 501(c)(3) designation. If PPBEP were to designate funding for lobbying, it would run accordingly with procurement policies.

Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) made a motion to ratify approval of the Executive Director's action authorizing Brett J. Cyphers of Anfield Consulting Group Inc. to serve as Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program's state lobbyist, at no cost, for FY23-24. Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

d. **Approval of a Purchase Order with Lensea Films, in the amount of \$20,000, for Video Production Services in Support of the Trash Free Waters Litter Prevention Campaign**

Discussion was held on the purchase agreement hosted through Escambia County.

Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) made a motion to approve a purchase order



with Lensea Films, in the amount of \$20,000, for video production services in support of the Trash Free Waters Litter Prevention Campaign. Vernon Compton (City of Milton) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e. **Ratifying Approval of a Minor Revision to Subaward Agreement No. NOAA23-02 to The Nature Conservancy, in the amount of \$351,417, in Support of the Pensacola Bay Oyster Restoration Initiative**

Matt Posner (Executive Director) provided context that there was a minor change requested by The Nature Conservancy since the last approval during the November 2023 Board of Directors meeting.

Vernon Compton (City of Milton) made a motion to ratify approval of a minor revision to Subaward Agreement No. NOAA23-02 to The Nature Conservancy, in the amount of \$351,417, in support of the Pensacola Bay Oyster Restoration Initiative. Mike Norberg (Okaloosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

f. **Approval of Subaward Agreement No. NOAA23-06 to The City of Orange Beach, in the amount of \$220,000, in Support of the Perdido Watershed Habitat and Community Resilience Initiative**

Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) made a motion to approve, and authorize the Executive Director to sign, Subaward Agreement No. NOAA23-06 to The City of Orange Beach, in the amount of \$220,000, in support of the Perdido Watershed Habitat and Community Resilience Initiative. Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Discussion Items

a. FY24-25 Florida Legislative Priorities

The FY24-25 Florida Legislative Priorities were covered during the Director's updates.

b. Florida Retirement System Update

Matt Posner (Executive Director) and Mary Jane Bass (Beggs & Lane) have been working through the process of enrolling PPBEP employees back into the Florida Retirement System (FRS) for approximately a year. Mary Jane Bass (Beggs & Lane) provided an update on the informal petition that was filed last year with the Department of Management Services, under which the Florida Division of Retirement falls. While there is nothing in the statute that says nonprofits are precluded from participating in the FRS, a section of a regulation states that membership is not permitted for officers and employees of any nonprofit association or corporation. Staff inquired about a legislative solution with Senator Broxson's staff, but passing a legislative solution seems improbable due to the complexity of opening FRS eligibility opportunities and potentially causing strain on the FRS. Mary Jane Bass (Beggs & Lane) recommended the board to pass a motion to withdraw the informal petition, terminating the proceedings, and authorize staff to look for alternative retirement options in the private sector. Discussion was held on potential structural solutions, such as where staff



are employed by a local government and loaned to an affiliate entity to gain FRS eligibility, however it was expressed that restructuring the Program would not be favorable, especially after working to gain independent status for the Program.

Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) made a motion to withdraw the informal petition, terminate the proceedings, and authorize staff to explore alternative retirement options. Commissioner Mike Kohler (Escambia County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Matt Posner (Executive Director) Pay Out

Discussion was held on Escambia County's ability to pay out the approved 80 hours of Paid Time Off (PTO) to Matt Posner (Executive Director). The Natural Resource Department does not have the funding budgeted for this fiscal year to pay out the 80 hours of PTO, so staff suggested reinstating the 80 hours of PTO to be spent within the calendar year.

Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) made a motion for Matt Posner (Executive Director) to be credited back the 80 hours of PTO to be used within this calendar year in lieu of Escambia County not being able to pay out the 80 hours of PTO. Vernon Compton (City of Milton) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Committee Updates

a. Technical Committee (*Paul Looney, WRA / Technical Committee Chairman*)

The last Technical Advisory Committee was on November 28th and had a turnout of 30 participants—coming from three states (Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi) and a mixture of affiliations from state, county, and university representatives to nonprofit or community organizations. Elections for Chairman and Co-Chairman were held, Paul Looney (WRA) and Casey Fulford (AACD) were appointed respectively.

Dr. Jane Caffrey (UWF) gave a presentation at the meeting on “A Historic Perspective on Seagrass Beds in Western Santa Rosa Sound”, providing a synthesis on historical seagrass coverage in the Santa Rosa Sound and current observations from the citizen science seagrass monitoring project. Overall, the seagrass beds are stable, though there are a couple of areas that experience heavy seasonal microalgal growth and some hydrogen sulfide issues. Barbara Albrecht (BFA/UWF AIMS) also shared by presenting “What Can Oysters Reveal About the Influences of Landscape Changes on Sedimentation in the Carpenter Creek-Bayou Texar Watershed?”. The presentation provided an overview of an oyster project funded by the Bayou Texar Foundation with additional support from the University of Florida and the Satori Foundation. This project will look at the effect of oysters on water quality improvement in Bayou Texar and builds off the Bream Fishermen Association Pensacola Oyster Project conducted in 2018. Students from the Trinitas Christian School have volunteered to help construct oyster cages and stringers for the project.



There was also a discussion around the data dashboard development, raising questions such as how to determine what data are acceptable due to varying methodologies and standards across different organizations, and how to develop a standard for what are considered acceptable data. Example dashboards, such as the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, were looked at and discussed, along with questions surrounding who the intended audience is and the development of visuals.

Two upcoming events were shared; the PPBEP Comprehensive Monitoring Workshop is on February 29th and the Society of Wetlands Scientists Conference will be held in June on Pensacola Beach.

- b. Education and Outreach Committee (*Thomas Derbes, FL Sea Grant / Education and Outreach Committee Co-Chairman*)
During the last Education and Outreach Committee meeting in December, Thomas Derbes (FL Sea Grant) and Rick O'Connor (FL Sea Grant) were elected as Co-Chairmen. The next meeting will be tomorrow, February 1st, and will focus on messaging for the Living Shorelines Cost Share Program.
- c. Oyster Subcommittee (*Thomas Derbes, FL Sea Grant / Oyster Subcommittee Co-Chairman*)
Thomas Derbes (FL Sea Grant) and Chris Verlinde (Santa Rosa County) are the current Co-Chairmen. There has not been a meeting since the last Board of Directors meeting, but the subcommittee will be meeting soon and will focus on holding one-on-ones with people in the oyster aquaculture industry. Discussion was held on where the plants for the Living Shorelines Cost Share Program are being sourced.

10. Board/Agency Updates

- a. Vernon Compton (City of Milton) acknowledged and thanked the following:
 - Santa Rosa County–Commissioner Kerry Smith and Commissioner Colten Wright, including the entire Board of Santa Rosa County Commissioners and staff–on the Naval Air Station Whiting Field Buffer Acquisition, a water quality and conservation project with recreational opportunities. This will be the second project that Santa Rosa County has taken the lead role on and has garnered positive feedback from the community.
 - Okaloosa County–Mike Norberg and the entire Board of Okaloosa County Commissioners and staff–on the Florida National Scenic Trail, a \$2.4M project that has been desired for over 20 years and the largest bridge project along the Florida National Scenic Trail. Okaloosa County with the Tourist Development Council are investing \$1M of the \$2.4M in the project.



- City of Pensacola—Councilperson Jared Moore, Mayor D.C. Reeves, and all the Council Members and staff—on the Bruce Beach Revitalization Project for the native tree selection, diversity of trees, and the huge stormwater and public benefits that this project will have for the community.

- b. Commissioner Colten Wright (Santa Rosa County) shared that he was able to meet with the Assistant Administrator of FEMA during his recent trip to Washington D.C. as part of the Northwest Florida Defense Coalition. Commissioner Wright shared that there are opportunities available for FEMA to fund significant improvements such as shoreline restoration, oyster habitats, and living shorelines by attaching the improvements to infrastructure projects that our municipalities may want to put forward. Commissioner Wright expressed that the staff should do additional research into these potential opportunities and that Board Members should consider FEMA funding improvement opportunities when discussing infrastructure projects as well.

11. Public Comment

No comments.

12. Adjourned