

MINUTES
December 1, 2014

Mayor : John B. Arnold, Jr.
Commissioners : Heyward H. Strong, Jr.
: Kay Hamilton
: Joe Morgan
City Clerk : Tammy Johnson
City Engineer : Roy Petrey
Police Chief : Joe Hart
Recorder : Beth Millsaps

Others in attendance: (Not inclusive) Mike Griffith (Bay Beacon), Lee Lewis

Mayor Arnold called the meeting to order and said that Comm. Browning would not be attending due to a family situation. He said the purpose of the workshop was to hear a briefing regarding the Okaloosa Restore Advisory Committee to be given by Mr. Lee Lewis.

Attendance

Mr. Lewis said there are five pots, with pot 4 and 5 being for research type projects only. He said the City of Niceville received 4 to 4.5 million under the criminal fines pot. Mr. Lewis said another round of funding coming in about a year would be from the Gulf Coast Environmental Benefit Fund, this money would be for environmental projects and the DEP would have further information on this pot. Mr. Lewis said most projects will fall into the first three pots, pot 1 35% Equal State Allocation, pot 2 30% Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council Allocation and pot 3 30% Oil Spill Restoration Impact Allocation. Mr. Lewis said that the BP trial starts in January and that monetary award could be anything from 10 to 20 billion dollars. He said Transocean, a subcontractor to BP, previously settled for \$1 billion and that money that is coming down to the county level will be split into three payments with Okaloosa County receiving \$6.4 million. Mr. Lewis said his company and Mr. Nodjomian were hired 18 months ago to work with the county. He said the primary focus is on pot 1 with several counties moving quickly to qualify for a part of the money. Mr. Lewis said the Okaloosa County Board of Commissioners voted to establish the ORAC committee, the committee was formed July 2013 with eleven members, all with diverse interests. Mr. Lewis said they are working to put the project application on line and make it simple to use. Mr. Lewis said the model will be used to score the applications, multiyear plan to fit in funding once application is approved it will be taken back to the county commissioners for approval. He said the county commissioners will have the liberty to modify as they feel necessary because the county is responsible for all the funding. Mr. Lewis said this will be a multiyear implementation plan. The first step will be the receiving and evaluation on projects, present draft plan to the Board of County Commissioners, if the BCC approves the draft plan there will be a 45 day period for public comments, project would be revised as needed and once the BCC approves the plan it will be submitted to the US Treasury for funding.

Briefing
Regarding
Okaloosa
Restore
Advisory
Committee

Mr. Lewis said the applications will be submitted and evaluated based on quantitative score 70% plus qualitative score 30% equals final score. He said the three categories of the proposed quantitative factors are Economic at 38%, General at 23% and Environmental at 39%. Each category is broken into smaller categories of significance for a certain percentage. Mr. Lewis said the qualitative score will include community acceptance, quality of life enhancement, expert judgment, and equity of distribution.

Mr. Lewis said all projects will be compared to one another the summer of 2015 ORAC will recommend the projects to the BOCC and submit those to the treasury, with annual updates, throughout the process the ORAC will continue to have meetings.

Mr. Lewis said the application process is still being refined, Comm. Hamilton said the city wants to make sure we are on track. Mr. Lewis suggested keeping an open mind in what the city wants to do. Comm. Hamilton said what we are looking at is investing some money on our part to make sure we have all the meters on the sewer system so we can report proper date. Mr. Lewis said that would help with leverage in kind. Comm. Hamilton asked if we were receiving other grant money would that look good, Mr. Lewis said it would be good to show what we have on the return from additional grant money.

Mr. Lewis said Okaloosa County will have the final decision on submitting to the treasury. Mr. Lewis said the treasury may come back and request additional information if they feel it is necessary. Mr. Lewis said up to 15% had been set aside for small projects, approximately \$960,000 for project request up to \$90,000. Mr. Petrey asked if the application was available now. Mr. Lewis said the direct component application is available at the U. S. Treasury, he will send a link to him. Comm. Hamilton said we would probably have to employ someone for the process as we have done for grant writers. Mr. Lewis said this comes with 3% for administrative fees. All this will be on the website if you want a copy of the draft part A, B and C I would suggest you contact Rick Owens with the County. They anticipate the project proposal portal to open Spring 2015.

Comm. Hamilton asked what if you are inundated with application and you did not make the \$6.4 million cut, would you be able to reapply? Mr. Lewis said the short answer is yes you would be able to resubmit but the process has not been established as of yet.

Comm. Strong said stormwater might also fit into pot 3. Mr. Lewis said that is a much bigger pot of money but it will be spread over 23 counties and no rules for that have been established yet, they have a long way to go. Mr. Petrey asked if the project being “shovel ready” would be an advantage, Mr. Lewis said it would score well on one of the nine factors. Mr. Petrey said dreaming big is good but we can’t make large projects shovel ready.

Mr. Lewis encourages everyone to do their research on the process and the benefits. Comm. Strong said we should go with our engineer’s ideas. Comm. Hamilton said all costs would need to be tracked well.

Mayor Arnold said the major job right now would be to identify what to do and see what we want to go forward with. Mayor Arnold said the ORAC committee has done a good job and he appreciates the time they have put in. Mayor Arnold thanked Mr. Lewis for attending our meeting and for the information he provided.

Adjourn

ADJOURN

There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.

John B. Arnold, Jr.
Mayor

Heyward H. Strong, Jr.
Chair, VCA

ATTEST:

Tammy Johnson, CMC
City Clerk

December 1, 2014

The DVD labeled December 1, 2014 contains the audio and video of this meeting and will be kept as a permanent part of these minutes.