

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
Executive Committee Meeting
October 10, 2019

The South Florida Regional Planning Council's Executive Committee met on this date at the Council's office, located at 1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, FL 33020. Chair Ross called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Patricia Asseff
Councilmember Mario J. Bailey (absent)
Councilmember Daniella Levine Cava (absent)
Councilmember Steve Geller
Councilmember Samuel Kaufman (via phone)
Chair Greg Ross

Isabel Cosio Carballo, SFRPC Executive Director, and Sam Goren, Legal Counsel, were present.

Chair Ross designated Councilmember Asseff as a Member of the Executive Committee with full voting rights. A quorum is now present.

II. Approval of Council Agenda

Councilmember Geller moved to approve the Council Agenda. Councilmember Asseff seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote.

III. Executive Director Annual Review

Sam Goren, Legal Counsel, set the framework for the Executive Director's Annual Review. He explained this is a special meeting of the Executive Committee, requested by the Councilmembers at the previous Council Meeting, to perform the Executive Director's Annual Review, Isabel Cosio Carballo. Mr. Goren read aloud the Contract, dated January 28, 2019. It is a multi-year contract that states certain obligations to the Council. He stated that this is a publicized open meeting and any Member of the Council is welcomed to attend. The review of the merit and cost of living increase is under review from the compensation perspective. The Councilmembers provided the Executive Director Evaluations to Mr. Goren, in which copies were made and distributed.

Councilmember Geller reiterated his written comments which included the expansion of current projects into a more regional planning aspect. He gave Mrs. Cosio Carballo high rankings this year but if he does not see more movement geared toward regional planning those rankings will be reconsidered.

The Councilmembers praised Mrs. Cosio Carballo for her reputation in the community, she is well-liked, organized, is highly professional, knowledgeable of the Council business and its projects, and making the office move and transition showed her great leadership qualities. They are impressed with her ability to maintain the high-quality service provided by the Council despite the significant challenges regarding funding, etc. The Councilmembers recommended a merit increase.

Councilmember Kaufman agreed with the previous Councilmembers. He stated that Mrs. Cosio Carballo is an extremely valuable leader for the SFRPC. He looks forward to working with her towards strengthening the Council financially and making regional, positive policy impacts and planning events. He would like to see clearer recommendations in regard to staffing. He appreciated the extra time to review

the evaluation and would like to have the other Councilmembers input in the future. He supports the merit increase mentioned by Councilmembers Geller and Asseff.

Chair Ross commended Mrs. Cosio Carballo on the issues of the challenging times, office move, staffing positions, air conditioning issues, and that she met those challenges head on. She made it a level of importance to exist for a reason, not just to exist. He had three suggestions for improvement: 1) more ideas generating revenue; 2) more ideas on cost cutting; and 3) ideas on regional impacts. The SFRPC's progress is not just the Executive Director's job, the Councilmembers are also responsible for the SFRPC's progress by developing new ideas. Chair Ross complemented Mrs. Cosio Carballo on her staff for their communication skills, knowledge and accuracy. He is in favor of the merit / cost of living increase.

Councilmember Geller inquired if there was a cost of living increase for the rest of the staff. Mrs. Cosio Carballo replied that staff, including herself, will be getting a 3% increase. The cost of the living increase was included in the balanced budget in October.

Councilmember Geller moved to authorize the cost of living increase. Councilmember Asseff seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote.

Councilmember Geller inquired if the other RPCs offer a merit increase. Mrs. Cosio Carballo stated that she did not consider getting a merit increase nor did she build a merit increase in the budget for herself. She said that she would inform the Councilmembers if other directors received a merit increase. Councilmember Geller suggested a modest 2% on top of the 3% cost of living.

Discussion developed regarding merit increases for staff (11 employees, many who are long-term) and Mrs. Cosio Carballo. It was noted that the SFRPC may still have financial problems. Mrs. Cosio Carballo reminded the Councilmembers that staff has not had a merit increase in quite a few years (6-8), as well as the reduced hours staff had throughout the past and the impact it had on their retirement status.

Councilmember Asseff requested that the merit increase be deferred and reevaluate it in six months or so and then suggested a holiday bonus. It's always nice to recognize people, especially around the holidays. It shows that staff is respected and appreciated. There was mention of the Holiday parties from the past. Chair Ross agreed.

Discussion continued on deferring the merit increases, bonuses, etc. within various time frames. Mrs. Cosio Carballo stated that any merit discussion should come before it is incorporated in the budget.

Councilmember Geller had a series of motions and suggestions:

- 1. Defer any discussion on merit bonus for now and instruct the Executive Director to propose merit bonus for the rest of her staff exclusive of herself. When the Council votes on that they will then determine the merit bonus for the entire staff including the Executive Director, within six months. Mrs. Cosio Carballo stated that the budget will be worked on and see if the merit bonus can be included.*

It was requested that the Executive Director bring a recommended budget that includes merit increases for the staff and then once approved, the Council will determine a recommendation for a merit increase for the Executive Director.

Mrs. Cosio Carballo would like the flexibility to discuss this with the Finance Director and the Deputy Director.

- 2. Also move that Executive Committee ask Chair Ross to report back at the next meeting a proposal for an end of year bonus for this year.*

Original motions are withdrawn.

Mrs. Cosio Carballo explained that a 3% cost of living and a 3% merit increase was initially in the budget. It was decided in order to have a balanced budget the merit increase was left out.

Councilmember Geller motioned to direct the current and incoming Chair to work with the Executive Director to see if there is a possibility of finding money for merit increases in the next year and then present it to the Council when the next budget is presented. Councilmember Asseff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Goren clarified that bonuses are a very unique texture under Florida Law. You are essentially considering a one-time payment for previous work performed, not added to the base salary. What you plan on doing here is independent of the FRS Program. Councilmember Geller stated that he would prefer salary increases: a) they are permanent to nature; and b) those are the things the retirement is calculated on. Mrs. Cosio Carballo said she will look at different options.

Mrs. Cosio Carballo wanted to talk about two things: 1) the SFRPC November 25, 2019 Meeting, will be in Miami, next to the Brightline Station; and 2) have a discussion on the work program. The idea going forward is to develop a work program in order to address the Councilmembers request to include more regional planning.

For the record, the Joint Meeting is in Palm Beach October 25, 2019 and the November 25, 2019 Council Meeting will be in Miami at the Florida East Coast Industries offices, next to the Brightline Station. She requested the Councilmembers provide input for the November Agenda.

Mrs. Cosio Carballo stated that she has attended various meetings with affordable housing entities in the different counties and would like to organize a meeting on a regional platform. The first regional meeting should be among staff, with an eye to something larger and is asking for assistance. Baby steps on regional coordination/planning that starts at the staff level and matures into something larger.

Councilmember Geller stated the SFRPC needs a reason to exist other than the projects that keep us existing. The SFRPC should take on the role of convening regional meetings / regular conversation. His recommendation to Mrs. Cosio Carballo is to have every year or two years three major projects (septic tanks, affordable housing, mass transit, rising sea level, economic development). Occasionally have joint meetings with the Chairs of the Broward Alliance, Beacon Council, that does not involve all the elected officials. There was discussion on including Palm Beach County in the regional conversation along with Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties. The northern counties are not part of the same Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), they have different growths and characteristics. Mrs. Cosio Carballo reminded the Executive Committee of a past movement when Palm Beach County wanted to leave the TCRPC, but the municipalities vetoed that idea. The SFRPC dues, \$.175, are lower than the TCRPC dues, \$.43. Palm Beach County is the main financial support of the TCRPC. If Palm Beach County is invited to the regional meetings, members of the TCRPC should be invited too.

Councilmember Geller stated that for him to go before the Commission and request membership dues increase, the SFRPC would have to be the convening authority, maybe with the TCRPC, with the four counties, or the South Florida area, on economic development, affordable housing, sea level rise, etc. It was noted that sea level rise has the Climate Compact. Councilmember Asseff suggested businesses be included. Councilmember Geller suggested that there be a meeting on affordable housing with 100 elected officials, 100 business leaders, top 5 speakers from across the country / state, non-profits and the charities, and the faith-based communities. In which 500 people gather together and have regional planning. This would give Councilmember Geller a reason to go to the Commission and say this is why the SFRPC needs more money – look at what the SFRPC are doing. The SFRPC would have to charge for the event. Mrs. Cosio Carballo thanked the Councilmembers for their support.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

This signature is to attest that the undersigned is the Secretary of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL, and that the information provided herein is the true and correct minutes for the October 10, 2019 Executive Committee Meeting of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL adopted the 25th day of November 2019.

Samuel Kaufman, Secretary

Date