

**MINUTES OF THE  
SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

**SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

The South Florida Regional Planning Council met virtually and in person on this date at the South Florida Regional Planning Council, 1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, FL 33020. Chair Geller welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m., and asked Councilmember Furr to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. The recording of this meeting can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbaaGdyiwH4>

**I. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call**

Chair Steve Geller  
Councilmember Mario J. Bailey\*\*  
Councilmember Frank Caplan  
Councilmember Craig Cates  
Councilmember Joseph Corradino\*\*  
Councilmember Beam Furr  
Councilmember René García\*  
Councilmember Oliver Gilbert, III\*\*  
Councilmember Cary Goldberg\*  
Councilmember Denise Horland  
Councilmember Samuel Kaufman\*  
Councilmember Michelle Lincoln\*  
Councilmember Kionne McGhee\*  
Councilmember Greg Ross  
Councilmember Michael Udine\*

\* Virtually Present

\*\* Absent

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

The following Ex-Officio Members were virtually present:

- Dat Huynh, representing the Florida Department of Transportation, District VI
- Sirena Davila, representing the Florida Department of Environmental Protection

**II. Welcome and Approval of Council Agenda**

*Chair Geller motioned to approve the Agenda. Councilmember Lincoln moved the motion and Councilmember Ross seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

**III. Presentations and Updates**

SFRPC Appreciation of James Murley on the occasion of his Retirement

Chair Geller recognized former South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) Executive Director James Murley on his retirement from Miami-Dade County. He summarized Mr. Murley's career as an SFRPC Planner, the Director of Resource Planning and Management at the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), then served as the Secretary of DCA by Governor Lawton Chiles, led the 1000 Friends of Florida, in 2011 return as SFRPC Executive Director, and 2015 worked with Mayor Carlos Gimenez and Deputy Mayor Jack Osterholt as Miami-Dade County's first Chief Resilience Officer until today.

Mr. Murley spoke about his career and the history of the Council. Mr. Murley congratulated Mrs. Cosio Carballo for her leadership of the Council. Mrs. Cosio Carballo thanked Mr. Murley for his nice comments and the Council Board for their leadership and support which makes all Council successes possible.

Chair Geller congratulated Mr. Murley on his career of distinction. Mrs. Cosio Carballo gave Mr. Murley a personal gift on behalf of the Council (no taxpayer funds were used).

#### Central and Southern Florida Flood Risk Study Section 203 Studies Update

Chair Geller recognized Jennifer L. Jurado, Ph.D., Deputy Director and Chief Resilience Officer, Broward County Resilient Environment Department to give her presentation.

Dr. Jurado stated that since her last presentation Section 216 Study Scope has been under substantial pressure with the Level 3 engineering requirement driving descopeing and appropriations not meeting budgetary needs. The timeline for study completion is increasingly uncertain. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), Broward County, and Miami-Dade County were evaluating alternative paths forward including cost share funding needed and alternative authorizations and programs. Broward County Commissioners began voicing C&SF as a budget priority. Broward County staff discussed with the SFWMD a potential financial partnership to accelerate the study. A C&SF study cost share proposal advanced as a Broward County Commission budget priority with \$5 million included in the Commission's final FY '25 Budget for cost share. The goal is to include Broward C&SF Resilience Projects in WRDA 2026 (Water Resources Development Act). Simultaneously the SFWMD was working to move the planning study for Reach A forward with the anticipated cost-share from Broward County.

On July 17, 2024, the SFWMD submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) a letter of intent to undertake Section 203 Study for Reach A of 216 Study (Broward and Hillsboro Basins). On August 22, 2024, Assistant Secretary of the Army Micheal Connor authorized the USACE to enter into MOA w/ SFWMD for technical assistance and federal activities in support of Section 203. SFWMD assumed the lead for a planning study for Reach A. Reach B (Little River basins) are primarily addressed through FEMA projects. Reach C (Miami River basins) and D (Sought Miami basins) remain within the Section 216 process.

An Interlocal Agreement between Broward County and SFWMD is being advanced. MOA and scopes of work between SFWMD and USACE are underway. The timeline for approvals is sensitive and requires vigilance. The target completion date for the Section 203 Study is May 2026. This study requires approval

via the Chief's Report for Summer/Fall 2026. The County is targeting WRDA 2026 for project authorization and appropriations. Strong advocacy is required, and a Comprehensive Study is still required for recommendations beyond Section 203 Study.

Chair Geller recognized Ana Carolina Coelho Maran, P.E., Ph.D., District Resiliency Officer, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to give her presentation. Dr. Maran stated that the project study area includes nine watershed basins, nine primary canals and rivers, eight coastal water control structures, and other non-damaged watersheds downstream of coastal water control structures. She shared a project schedule which is available on the Council website. Flood control funding sources include ad valorem taxes, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Planning Studies, Senate Bill 1863 (General Revenue), Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities and Mitigation Grants, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) State Resiliency Program.

#### **IV. Action Items**

##### **A. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

*Chair Geller motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes for July 15, 2024. Councilmember Ross moved the motion and Councilmember Horland seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

##### **B. Financial Report**

The Director of Finance and IT Leo Braslavsky Soldi presented the Financial Report in detail.

*Chair Geller motioned to approve the Financial Report. Councilmember Udine moved the motion and Councilmember Ross seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

##### **C. Consent: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews (\*Property Rights)**

Legal Counsel, Sam Goren, read the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews, Proposed.

#### **Proposed:**

- Town of Davie 24-02ER
- City of Florida City 24-01ESR
- City of Hallandale Beach 24-01ESR
- Village of Key Biscayne 24-01ESR
- City of Miami 24-01ESR
- City of Miami Beach 24-01ESR
- City of Miami Springs 24-01ER
- City of North Miami 24-02ESR
- City of North Miami Beach 24-01ESR
- City of Plantation 24-01ESR

- City of South Miami 24-01ESR
- City of Southwest Ranches 24-02ESR
- Town of Surfside 24-01ER

**Public Hearing**

Chair Geller opened the Public Hearing and asked if there were any comments or questions.

**Public Comments**

There were no comments or questions from the public in person or virtually.

*Chair Geller motioned to approve the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Councilmember Horland moved the motion and Councilmember Cates seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

Legal Counsel, Sam Goren, read the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews, Adopted.

**Adopted:**

- Monroe County 24-02ACSC
- City of Dania Beach 24-01ER
- City of Hialeah Gardens 24-01ESR
- City of Homestead 24-01ESR
- City of Margate 24-02ESR
- City of North Miami 24-01ER
- City of Oakland Park 23-02ER
- City of Pompano Beach 24-01ER
- City of Southwest Ranches 24-01ESR

**Public Hearing**

Chair Geller opened the Public Hearing and asked if there were any comments or questions.

**Public Comments**

There were no comments or questions from the public in person or virtually.

*Chair Geller motioned to approve the adopted Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Councilmember Caplan moved the motion and Councilmember Ross seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

- D. Regional Issues: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Review  
None
- E. Legal Counsel Annual Review / Contract

Chair Geller noted that Mr. Goren received the highest possible rating from all members of the Executive Committee who submitted evaluations and read their reviews which all spoke highly of his performance.

Mr. Goren stated that he does not take the assignment of Legal Counsel for granted. He is pleased, honored, and privileged to have served in this role for 42 years.

*Chair Geller motioned to renew the contract. Councilmember Caplan moved the motion and Councilmember Cates seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

F. Executive Director Annual Review / Contract

Chair Geller noted that Mrs. Cosio Carballo received the highest possible rating from all members of the Executive Committee who submitted evaluations and read their reviews which all spoke highly of her performance.

Chair Geller noted that the COLA and merit increase amounts are blank. He stated that the Executive Committee met earlier and recommended keeping the three percent COLA. There was consensus to wait for the FY 2024-25 Proposed Operating Budget to be presented before agreeing on a merit increase. Once the Proposed Operating Budget was presented and agreed upon, the three percent merit increase for the Executive Director was updated.

*Chair Geller motioned to renew the contract. Councilmember Caplan moved the motion and Councilmember Cates seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

G. FY 2024-25 Proposed Operating Budget

Mr. Braslavsky Soldi presented the FY 2024-25 Proposed Operating Budget in detail.

Chair Geller asked how salaries are increasing, and fringe benefits are decreasing. Mr. Braslavsky Soldi replied that in the Council's fringe expenses, it calculates FRS and health insurance for all employees. This year two staff members are no longer covered by the Council's health insurance plan.

Chair Geller asked Mr. Goren if his budget of \$45,000 was adequate. Mr. Goren replied presumptively yes. Mr. Goren noted that the loan transactions litigation is reimbursable through the court system. *(Staff note: Any work performed by Legal Counsel's firm related to the Council's revolving loan fund programs is paid by the revolving loan funds programs. These programs are separate and in addition to the budget line for general legal support.)*

Chair Geller asked about the Council's reserves. Mr. Braslavsky Soldi stated that the Council will be adding \$25,000 to its reserve fund base.

Chair Geller asked about the merit increase for the Executive Director in the Proposed Operating Budget. Mr. Braslavsky Soldi replied that the Council looked at counties and other regional planning councils and found increases of 3 percent for both COLA and Merit for staff across the board.

Councilmember Horland stated that the Council could save on expenses by not printing full agendas for every Council Meeting. Councilmember Lincoln agreed and stated that all backup information can be viewed online.

Councilmember Udine agreed in lowering printing costs if possible and noted that the core operating increase is less than 2 percent which is better than most governmental entities this upcoming fiscal year.

*Chair Geller motioned to accept the FY 2024-25 Proposed Operating Budget. Councilmember Udine moved the motion and Councilmember Lincoln seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

#### H. SFRPC Personnel Policy

Mrs. Cosio Carballo stated that Class Titles and minimum and maximum salary ranges were updated. Staff used Broward County's classifications and salary ranges as a benchmark. In addition, the Executive Director was authorized to permit an employee to use vacation leave during the first six months of employment if deemed appropriate. New language was added stipulating that remote work is an optional Council benefit that may be granted or withdrawn by the Executive Director to ensure the optimal operation of the Council and its staff. The Council's corporate office is identified as the primary work location for employees. Lastly, the holiday leave schedule was updated to reflect that when two or more of the region's counties have a holiday, Council staff may also enjoy the holiday. Juneteenth (June 19) is added to the Council's list of approved holidays. Lastly, the Personnel Policy was updated to bring myriad personnel policy effective dates into conformity with the Council's Fiscal Year commencing on October 1st and ending on September 30th.

*Chair Geller motioned to accept the changes to the Personnel Policy. Councilmember Furr moved the motion and Councilmembers Caplan and Udine seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.*

#### **Public Hearing**

Chair Geller opened the Public Hearing and asked if there were any comments or questions.

#### **Public Comments**

There were no comments or questions from the public in person or virtually.

#### **V. Program Reports and Activities**

##### A. SFRPC Revolving Loan Funds Status Report

B. SFRPC CARES Act RLF Status Report

Mr. Jeff Tart, Senior Loan Officer and Manager of the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Programs stated that the CARES ACT RLF Program has provided \$7.78 million to 36 businesses to date, and all borrowers are current and in good standing. The Loan Administration is processing the closing of a previously approved \$500,000 loan to Renaissance Riviera Beach and Community Partners of South Florida for affordable housing services. The program has approximately \$465,000 in available funds due to successful loan repayments. The loan administration team continues to reach out directly to business prospects and referrals within the region and receive assistance from coalition partners and Council Members in developing new leads.

The traditional RLF Program has provided \$5.40 million to 27 businesses to date. Loan administration is in the process of closing a previously approved loan to the Housing Foundation of America, Inc. and Tayan Alliances of \$470,000 for affordable housing residential services. Currently, the program has approximately \$554,000 available to lend. Council staff continues to actively network and reach out to prospective small businesses in the region.

Goren, Cherof, Doody & Ezrol, P.A., the SFRPC's Legal Counsel, continues to represent the Council in the ongoing collection efforts related to Angela Dawson, P.A. On August 8<sup>th</sup>, Judge Bidwill entered an order granting the Council's motion for summary judgment in part and denying it in part. Thus, the judge granted summary judgment in favor of the Council on all of Ms. Dawson's counterclaims against the Council (removing them from the case). The court also granted summary judgment as to Ms. Dawson's remaining affirmative defenses. The next steps are to continue preparing for a bench trial in 2025. Mr. Tart thanked Mr. Goren and his legal team for their dedication to providing legal expertise relating to this litigation. Full details have been shared in the backup to agenda item V.A.

The RLF administration team, in conjunction with the Clean Cities Director, is planning to host a webinar on October 10<sup>th</sup> focusing on providing financial and technical resources to small businesses that support the Clean Cities Initiative in South Florida. This includes introducing EV vehicles to help reduce the carbon footprint. Details of the webinar have been provided in the agenda and posted on the Council website and social media.

The Southeast Florida Community Development Fund (SFCDFI) and the SFRPC's RLF were recently acknowledged at the Community Partners of South Florida's ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 17<sup>th</sup> for the completion of an affordable single-family home to a first-time minority homebuyer in West Palm Beach, Florida. The home developed by Community Partners of South Florida was attended by representatives from the Palm Beach County Housing Finance Division, the City of West Palm Beach, and the SFRPC's RLF programs. Highlights of the event have been shared in the backup to agenda item V.A.

Minority Builders Coalition of Broward County will be developing four new single-family residential homes in the Washington, Park, Roosevelt Gardens, and Broward Park sections of Broward County as part of the county's in-fill lot program. Funding has been made possible through the SFCDFI's partnership with

the HFA of Broward County. Additionally, the Black Business Investment Fund (BBIF) has conveyed interest in partnering with the SFCDFI to help further expand the affordable housing initiative. The Council's affordable housing initiative has resulted in the construction of 33 single-family affordable homes for qualified and eligible homebuyers earning less than 120% of the average median income (\$80,640 in Broward County).

With regards to the SFRPC's Brownfields Initiative, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced on June 18, 2024, that the Council secured an additional \$3.5 million in supplemental funding to help address the cleanup of the former public works site in Hollywood which was a former incinerator ash dump. The site will be transformed into affordable housing and commercial space. The supplemental funding will also address the contamination and cleanup of Claude Pepper Park in North Miami. Both projects have commenced their initial planning and clean-up initiatives. The Council will provide project progress reports throughout the cleanup. Highlights of the Claude Pepper Park project have been included in the backup to agenda. Additionally, the Council has been instrumental in applying and coordinating an EPA targeted Brownfields Assessment for Habitat for Humanity of Key West and the Lower Keys in Monroe County. The Council, along with Stantec Environmental helped coordinate the assessment efforts needed by the EPA and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). Additionally, FDEP highlighted the recent EPA awards to the SFRPC's Brownfields Cleanup RLF program in the recently published 2024 Annual Brownfields program report. Full details of the past EPA awards to the Council are available on its website.

C. SFRPC / TCRPC Regional Conference: Preparing for the Silver Tsunami

Mrs. Cosio Carballo gave Councilmembers a draft agenda for the November 15, 2024 Joint Conference. She stated that the Council has been working closely with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council. Mrs. Cosio Carballo noted that the biggest challenge is that there are so many issues related to the conference topic that it is impossible to cover everything in one day.

Councilmember Lincoln shared that there is a group in Monroe County called JOY (Just Older Youth) and that it could be helpful to work with them.

Chair Geller stated that if the speakers are confirmed the conference will be worthy of national attention.

D. Council Highlights

Council Highlights coincided with the Executive Director's Report. Mrs. Cosio Carballo noted that at the end of the highlights is a U.S. Department of Energy block grant opportunity for eligible municipalities in South Florida. The application ends on October 31, 2024.



## **VI. Discussion Items**

### **A. Executive Director's Report**

Mrs. Cosio Carballo recognized and thanked Council staff for their work throughout the year.

### **B. Legal Counsel Report**

Mr. Goren noted that his firm recommended, and the Executive Committee approved, the engagement of outside counsel (Johnson, Anselmo) to assist with the Dawson foreclosure case; their rate is \$350.00 an hour which is a governmentally assigned rate. Mr. Goren noted that the Council's only remaining issue is its case against the defendant for foreclosure because all counterclaims were dismissed.

### **C. Council Members Report**

Councilmember Lincoln noted that Councilmember Cates from Monroe County was present. She also noted that in August 2024 Monroe County broke ground on a resilient road project, matching funds from appropriations. She thanked Congressman Carlos A. Gimenez, the Florida Resiliency Fund, and the South Florida Water Management District. Councilmember Lincoln announced that Monroe County was awarded \$1.8 million in 2022 WRDA. She is excited that Broward County will be applying to WRDA and competing with Monroe County.

### **D. Ex-Officio Report**

Mr. Huynh spoke about the recent regional workshop for the Southeast Florida region as part of the 2055 Florida Transportation Plan and thanked Mrs. Cosio Carballo for coordinating with Tom Lanahan, Executive Director of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, on giving a unified regional perspective. The workshop was attended by more than 100 participants including local municipalities, the Miami-Dade TPO, Florida Highway Patrol, elected officials, and Council staff including Randy Deshazo, Deputy Director, Chief of Staff & Director of Economic Development and Research, and Christina Miskis, Principal Planner.

## **VII. Announcements and Attachments**

### **A. Attendance Form**

### **B. Correspondence and Articles**

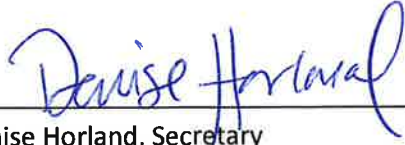
### **C. Upcoming Meetings**

- 1) October 21, 2024, 10:30 a.m. (SFRPC)
- 2) November 15, 2024 (SFRPC/TCRPC Joint Conference, Florida Atlantic University)
- 3) November 18, 2024, 10:30 a.m. (SFRPC)
- 4) December 2024, unless upon call of the Chair

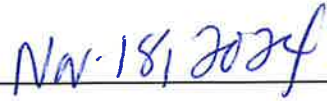
## **VIII. Adjournment**

Chair Geller adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.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 September 30, 2024, executive committee meeting of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL adopted on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024.



Denise Horland, Secretary  
Councilmember, City of Plantation



Date