

OCEAN HIGHWAY & PORT AUTHORITY



Miriam R. Hill – Secretary/Treasurer - Commissioner, District 1
Danny Fullwood – Chairman, District 2
Scott Hanna – District 3
Carrol Franklin – Commissioner, District 4
Mike Cole – Vice Chairman, District 5

Special Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2021

The Ocean Highway and Port Authority of Nassau County held its Special Meeting on Thursday, June 17, 2021 at the County Commissioners Chambers at the James S. Page Government Complex, 96153 Nassau Place, Yulee, Florida 32097.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM by Chairman Fullwood.

The invocation was given and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Fullwood. Roll call was conducted by Rossana Hebron. All Commissioners were present. Also in attendance was Patrick Krechowski, Port Attorney.

Interview RFQ Candidate – RS&H

Representatives from RS&H were in attendance to present their draft scope of Work to the Board and Q&A thereafter. Members are Justin Cole PE, Project Manager, and David Kaufman, Strategic Planning Expert. They were joined via Zoom virtual connection by John Martin PhD., Task Manager, and Jeff Sweeney, Task Manager.

Some highlights from the PowerPoint (PPT) presentation are as follow: (excerpts taken from the PPT with the permission of Mr. Cole)

Task 1: Project Management and Coordination

- Development of Project Management Plan (within 7 days of Notice to Proceed and defines all project protocols and processes)
- Coordination with Terminal Operator and Port Commission
- Identify stakeholders/Technical Steering Committee
- Finalize project schedule (status meetings, public/stakeholder meetings, milestones and deliverables)

Activities and deliverables include: Project Management Plan, detailed project schedule, all coordination meeting agendas and materials, and monthly invoicing and progress reports.

Task 2: Assessment of Global Trends and Conditions

- Review existing data sources (Engineering/facilities, environmental, marketing studies, and past Master Plans)

- Review of historical and current cargo market trends (global, national, and potential)
- Interviews with current and potential customers
- Identification of industry trends, issues, and policies

Activities and deliverables include: coordination to review and finalize literature and information sources, literature review, interviews, and documentation of industry trends, issues and challenges.

Task 3: Review and Coordination with State and Regional Requirements

- Identification and review of regulations/requirements (Federal and state regulatory requirements)
- Identification and review of relevant planning documents (development of list of plans, studies, and documents at state, regional, Comprehensive plans, regional transportation plans, and statewide plans)
- Review of OHPA's Charter and Operating Agreement (identify opportunities and constraints)

Activities and deliverables, in addition to aforementioned, include documentation of review results.

Task 4: Stakeholder and Public Coordination

- Stakeholder Committee (meets regularly throughout the process)
- Stakeholder Technical Subcommittee (involved in technical planning details and analysis)
- Public engagement (reach all community members, including Environmental Justice population, and coordination on outreach format)

Activities and deliverables include: three meetings each of coordination on identification of Stakeholder Committee and Technical Subcommittee, two public workshops and documentation of all outreach.

Task 5: Port Existing Conditions, Challenges, and Opportunities

- Infrastructure Development and Improvement component (complete infrastructure inventory and assessment)
- Intermodal Transportation Facilities Component
 - Identify all intermodal facilities and linkages
 - Assessment of current intermodal network and Port connectivity
 - Identify freight generation and capacities/constraints
 - Conduct safety assessment
 - Identify other transportation infrastructure elements

- Economic Development Component (SWOT analysis)
 - Competitive market analysis (assess competitive position of marine cargo facilities and identification of hinterland and potential opportunities)
 - Identify and assess potential threats
 - Develop cargo projections
 - Develop baseline financial models of cargo tenant operations
 - Develop baseline economic impact model
- Physical Environmental, Regulatory Barriers Component (assess hydrographic and topographic conditions; historic, cultural, and natural resources; environmental resources and constraints; and sustainability and resilience)
- Intergovernmental Coordination Component (coordination with local government and community groups and state and national agencies)
- GAP analysis (comparison of market projections and baseline facilities and identification of infrastructure needs – structural and non-structural)
- Develop planning level costs for market driven infrastructure investment

Activities and deliverables include:

- Documentation and assessment of Port infrastructure; intermodal transportation facilities; environmental resources and constraints; economic analysis, projections and results; and sustainability and resiliency.
- Desktop review to identify cultural, historic and community resources
- Meetings and presentations to local governments, boards, and agencies
- Ongoing coordination with national and state agencies
- Complete documentation of all elements

Task 6: Developing the Strategic Master Plan

- Infrastructure projects (improvements, cost estimates and funding gaps, and project list – economic impact and financial returns and feasibility)
- Policy Strategies (business plan development, potential funding strategies, and strategies to address regulatory requirements or improve current processes)
- Technology (improvements and cost estimates)
- Final Deliverables
 - Draft Master Plan (present to Technical Subcommittee and Stakeholder Committee and address all comments)
 - Final Master Plan (electronic format and all supporting files, documentation and GIS files)

Draft Project Schedule

The graph showed timelines of the project outlined throughout the presentation with Task 5 to begin first focusing on Market analysis for the first 3-4 months. RS&H plan to conduct monthly team meetings as well as the public workshops, and technical sub-committee and stakeholder meetings. Accordingly, RS&H can begin work pending the Board's request.

Mr. Martin explained it is essential to have the ability to build consensus but only to the point where detailed strategic plans are secured during the meetings with stakeholders. There will be public and individual private meetings with the Board each month taking into considerations the Florida Sunshine Law.

Questions and Discussions

Chairman Fullwood asked if RS&H have any thoughts of who would comprise the stakeholders and committees. Mr. Kaufman requested inputs from the Board and Mr. Ragucci. Obviously, customers, city and county representatives, the public, Economic Development representatives, and the like will be considered. Chairman Fullwood affirmed that the Board needs to have influence in choosing the committees. He ensured to include the public in composing the Master Plan to avoid mishaps from the past. Additionally, it is essential to consider the City and County Comprehensive Plans. Rayonair owns land nearby; therefore, their input is necessary. The Economic Development Board is assisting OHPA to expand business into the County. Commissioner Hill emphasized including representatives from the neighborhood, city (Victoria Robas, harbor pilots, and stevedores), and county (Taco Pope) for the stakeholder list. Mr. Kaufman added that RS&H will look to the Board as part of the stakeholders for some perspective and guidance throughout the process. Mr. Martin explained that transparency is key to a successful relationship with the stakeholders in building consensus and community buy-in.

Mr. Ragucci asked what are the requirements in considering the technical committee. Mr. Kaufman explained individuals who have technical backgrounds and is involved with the day-to-day field operations, perhaps the city engineer. He added the stakeholders are mostly involved with the policy level of the Master Plan whereas the technical committee will lend ideas and feedbacks with the technical aspects. Technology improvements may include assessing automation with docking operations, enhanced vehicle and gate notifications to refine the flow of Port operations. Website management include postings of public and customer notifications and documents for public records. Mr. Kaufman noted that the Port's live cam feed needs to be promoted more showcasing the live activities at the Port with considerations for security issues.

In terms of business plan development, Mr. Martin explained it is essential to consider the Port's revenue and financial perspective. It is a collaboration of the Board and RS&H to compose a business plan together focusing on sustainable streams of projects and investments that provide continuous revenue.

The Port may benefit by including Crawford Diamond in the process and also the planned bypass from I-10 to Hwy 95 from the TPO. Mr. Ragucci suggested considering collaborating with Nassau County's Economic Development Board to promote the rail system to the manufacturing industry in Nassau County, northern Duval, Clay, and other surrounding counties.

Mr. Ragucci explained the unique post-pandemic economic situation (inflation and wage inflation) where Fernandina is in a difficult place within the region surrounded by three larger manufacturers paying higher wages to the workforce. The Port is busier now and its workforce strained. Therefore, methodologies and studies on how to overcome those issues are welcome. One of the greater benefits of the Master Plan is the economic benefit studies (direct/indirect and induced jobs) placing a dollar amount in the overall economic benefit of the Port to the community, city, and county. It is also beneficial in pursuing grants.

Chairman Fullwood emphasized that the city has to adopt the Port's Master Plan into the Port element of its Comprehensive Plan. It is necessary that RS&H become familiar with the Charter. Mr. Kaufman had been at some of the meetings and is familiar with the issues. He will advocate for the Port highlighting its existence and necessary elements for the Port's success. The city needs to understand this and in turn, the Port should be aware of the city's pressure points to best address those points as part of the Master Plan.

Commissioner Hill explained one of the requirements to include in the Plan is to address the modes and methods of coordination. It is an issue with the two public Boards.

Mr. Ragucci offered to collaborate with RS&H in generating a tentative list of potential stakeholders and technical committees to invite. The Board is welcome to provide comments and inputs. Chairman Fullwood added it is necessary to include one of the Commissioners in that selection process.

Last topic of discussion was the fee. Mr. Cole explained the consulting team may put in some work and hours toward the scope and provide a cost estimate. He wants to ensure the Board agrees with the scope of work before submitting a final fee cost. The team can provide a fee estimate by task to show a breakdown specifically extra public workshops if necessary. Commissioner Hill explained she wants to offer the public the best opportunity to observe and learn about the process. Mr. Martin advised that surveys are unproductive as a form of public outreach. Mr. Sweeney suggested a public coordination meeting with board presentations of the different aspects of the Master Plan, and the public is welcome to view and ask questions to the team.

The Board consented for RS&H to proceed and provide a cost estimate. Mr. Cole will email the information to Mrs. Hebron to distribute to the Commissioners.

The Board thanked members of RS&H for attending and presenting their draft scope of work.

Adjourn

With no other questions brought before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Danny Fullwood
Danny Fullwood, Chairman

7/14/2021
Date