



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 20-1698A, Version: 1

Subject:

Resolution to delegate authority to Melanie Weed, Public Works Department Environmental Management Division Director, as Pinellas County's Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast Act Authorizing Official, to execute the certification required by the United States Treasury Financial Assistance application for direct component funds.

Recommended Action:

Adopt the proposed resolution to delegate authority to Melanie Weed, Public Works (PW) Department Environmental Management Division Director, as Pinellas County's Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast (RESTORE) Act Authorizing Official, to execute the certification required by the United States Treasury Financial Assistance application for direct component funds.

- Resolution designating Melanie Weed, PW Environmental Management Division Director, as certifying agent for County to receive RESTORE Act funds.
- The County's previously designated certifying agent recently retired and a new official must be named to execute the required certifications.
- RESTORE Act establishes funds designated for Gulf Coast stakeholders under the Federal Clean Water Act
- Approximately \$2.2 million in Direct Component funds are currently available to Pinellas County with additional funds becoming available over time.

Authorize the Clerk of the Circuit Court to record this Resolution in the public records of Pinellas County.

Strategic Plan:

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.3 Protect and improve the quality of our water, air, and other natural resources

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources;

5.3 Ensure effective and efficient delivery of county services and support.

Summary:

RESTORE Act Direct Component funds are acquired through a County proposed and Treasury approved multi-year implementation plan. The plan identifies each project the County intends to apply for grant funding. Application packages include a series of certifications that must be executed by a "senior authorizing official" designated by the County's "highest official." The senior authorizing official must certify that the County is eligible to receive federal assistance, that it provides a drug-

free workplace, that it will disclose lobbying funds directed to the proposed project, and, most significantly, that proposed projects comport to RESTORE Act (e.g. projects are based on best available science).

Melanie Weed is best suited to receive the senior authorized official designation. Ms. Weed has been designated as the County's Director of Public Works Environmental Management Division (with over 20 years of environmental monitoring, assessment, and enforcement experience) and is the "Authorizing Official" to submit Direct Component funding applications on GrantSolutions.gov. Ms. Weed will work with designated County professionals and the County Attorney's Office to ensure the County complies with all certifications. Each individual grant application will navigate the County's directed contract review process(es).

Background Information:

The RESTORE Act was signed into law on July 6, 2012. The Act establishes the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund and, under the Federal Clean Water Act, eighty percent (80%) of the civil penalties paid in connection with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill are being deposited. Varying amounts in the Trust Fund are available to Gulf Coast stakeholders, particularly states and counties, from three (3) distinct components: The Direct Component, the Comprehensive Plan Component, and the Spill Impact Component. The Direct Component, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury (Treasury), provides funding directly to Florida counties for ecosystem restoration, economic development, and tourism promotion.

Approximately \$2.2 million in Direct Component funds are currently available to Pinellas County with additional funds becoming available over time. The Treasury issued four (4) grant awards to the County in 2016 totaling \$1.54 million under the existing multi-year implementation plan. One (1) project was completed in March 2020 and the remaining three (3) projects are ongoing. The multi-year implementation plan will be amended with additional projects as Direct Component funds continue to become available.

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Staff Member Responsible:

Kelli Hammer Levy, Director, Public Works

Partners:

U.S. Treasury Office of Gulf Coast Restoration

Attachments:

Proposed Resolution No. 20-
Resolution No. 15-12