



**NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**March 6, 2025**

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**MINUTES**

The Northeast Florida Regional Council Board of Directors held a meeting at 40 East Adams Street, Jacksonville, FL on Thursday, March 6, 2025; Vice President Bennett called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Roll call was conducted with the following members present, representing a quorum:

BAKER:           Commissioner Anderson  
                      Commissioner Bennett  
                      Mr. Griffis  
                      Mr. Register

DUVAL:           Councilmember Amaro  
                      Councilmember Gay  
                      Mayor Lynch  
                      Ms. Brown

CLAY:            Mr. Kennedy  
                      Mr. Bourre

FLAGLER:        Commissioner Dance  
                      Commissioner Pennington (virtual)  
                      Councilmember Gambaro

NASSAU:         Commissioner Huppmann  
                      Commissioner Martin  
                      Commissioner Minshew

ST. JOHNS:      Commissioner Joseph  
                      Commissioner Morgan

EX-OFFICIO:     Mr. Conkey, St Johns River Water Management District

Excused:         Ms. Craver (*DEP*), Mr. Dixon (*DOT*), Mr. Hart, Commissioner Condon,  
                      Commissioner Renninger, Commissioner Harvey, Commissioner Murphy,  
                      and Commissioner Wilkinson

Presenter:       Ms. Elizabeth Backe, Nassau County Planning Director  
                      Mr. Howard Holley, Foundation for the Museum of Black History

Guests: Will Hinton (FFWC), Holly Coyle (Nassau County), Brandy Carvalho (Nassau County), Kathy Posey (Rep. Ky Michaels Ofc.), Beth Carson (Clay County), Kellie Henry (Clay County), Amanda Thorpe (virtual-Gov. DeSantis' Ofc.), Darren (virtual attendee) and other members of the public

Staff: Monica Dominguez, Andrew Prokopiak, Tyler Nolen, Elizabeth Payne, Donna Starling, Apurva Jhamb, and others

#### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Bennett** welcomed new Board Member: Leann Pennington, Flagler County Commissioner.

#### INVITATION TO SPEAK

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Bennett** stated that members of the public are welcome to speak on any item before the Board and will be recognized during public comment.

#### \*CONSENT AGENDA

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Bennett called for a motion on the consent agenda. Mr. Register motioned to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Councilmember Amaro. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### OTHER REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS

##### \*Transportation Disadvantaged Overview / Membership Rosters

Ms. Jones provided a presentation detailing the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program; Key Definitions & Governing Statues of Program, who TD serves, organizational structure, the overseers of TD services in the State, the Council's designation as the Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA) and role with the Local Coordinating Boards (LCB), the Community Transportation Coordinators (service providers) across our region and the Chairs of each LCB. She informed the Members that, as the DOPA, the Council approves the LCB membership annually and presented the Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, and St. Johns County rosters for approval. The Baker County and Putnam LCB rosters will be provided at the Executive Committee for approval. A brief discussion followed.

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Bennett called for a motion. Ms. Brown moved approval of the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board Membership for Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, and St. Johns Counties and authorize staff to submit the membership rosters to Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged; seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.**

##### Council 101: Structure

Ms. Payne provided an overview of the Council's structure. This included the forming of the Council in 1977 by Interlocal Agreement and Florida Statute references. She shared how the Members are appointed to the Board, rotation of leadership, and committee assignments.

#### Presentation: Nassau Vision Update

Ms. Backe, Planning Director, Nassau County, provided an overview of the Nassau County 2050 Vision program; a five-phase process that began in the fall of 2023. Phase one involved setting the foundation by analyzing existing conditions; Phase two involved building the vision by engaging the public to identify community values; phase three involved creating your framework by establishing the growth and opportunities framework; phase four dealt with drafting the plan by preparing and reviewing draft plan; and phase five was the initiation of implementation through adoption of the final plan. Discussion followed.

#### Program Spotlight: St. Augustine Vision

Ms. Dominguez presented an update on the St. Augustine Vision Plan; and update to their 2014 Beyond Vision Plan. This was a six-month process. She highlighted the methodology, which included several neighborhood meetings throughout the City and surveys. Also discussed were the plan's four themes: Livability, Vitality, Resiliency and Authentic Character. The revised plan will go to the City commission for adoption on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

#### Black History Museum in St. Johns County

Mr. Holly, Foundation for the Museum of Black History, provided background information on how the Florida Black History Museum was established, site selection criteria and final selection of St. Augustine by the Governor and Legislature, and recent activities that included the NEFRC's request for support in its 2025 Legislative Priorities. He shared next steps that included development of concept design, engaging corporate and private donors, and building subscriber base for outreach and grassroots participation. Discussion followed.

#### Community Resiliency Update

Mr. Prokopiak provided an update on current resiliency activities such as, phase two of the Regional Resiliency Action Plan; working on the kickoff meeting for the Military Installation Readiness Review; the Regional Resilience Entity project in which vulnerability assessments reports are being collected and shared on the Resiliency First Coast website; collaborating with state and federal agencies, and Baker County on roadway segments that are most at risk; and the Flagler County Compound Flooding and Adaptation Plan.

#### Local Emergency Planning Committee Update

Mr. Nolen provided a brief overview of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for hazardous materials; why it was created, how it is funded, and membership. The LEPC have provided our Region's first responders access to multiple training opportunities, i.e., the Florida HazMat Symposium, a Pilot Maritime HazMat course under development, and CSX's Incident Responder Train hands-on exercise with several more scheduled for the remainder of the fiscal year. Additionally, following insights gained from an after-action report of a recent training exercise with CSX, the LEPC has received provisional approval to purchase leak control kits for the Region, further enhancing response capabilities.

Public Comment – None.

Local and Regional Issues Discussion - None.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS' REPORT

**Florida Commerce** – Mr. Register shared information from an article in Site Selection Magazine that it ranked States by number of economic development projects announced in 2024 in the South Atlantic region; Florida was number three behind Georgia and North Carolina.

**St. Johns River Water Management District** – Mr. Conkey reminded the Members that with the changing of the clock on Sunday, ahead one hour, lawn watering will be twice per week. He also encouraged local governments to get their Water Supply Plan done if they have not already done so, to avoid any potential penalties.

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission:** Mr. Will Hinton, Land Use Planning Program Biologist IV, Office of Conservation Planning Services, stated he is in the subsection for land use planning and oversees any type of development that takes place within the 17 counties that he oversees, whether it be from a Water Management District permit, the Army Corps of Engineers, or Department of Environmental Protection, anything that could potentially impact our wildlife, habitat resources or potential occurrence; reach out to him if assistance needed.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Ms. Payne introduced new staff member, Ms. Apurva Jhamb, Senior Regional Resiliency Planner.

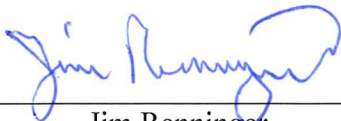
Members were asked to provide their three top issues on the index card provided. This helps staff provide information and speakers, when possible, that address some of the issues faced in member communities.

The Regional Leadership Academy has visited Baker and Putnam Counties and will be in Flagler County this month. Members of the Board are welcome to join when they visit your county.

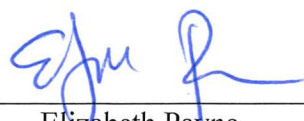
HB 1125 and SB 1264 have been introduced and call for removing Regional Councils from State Statute. The Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) is working with their Legislative Consultant to have the 'removal of Regional Councils' stripped from the Bill. Members are encouraged to contact their local legislative representatives and request that the verbiage be removed as well. Ms. Payne provided members with the Committees that the bills have been assigned to, their chairs and local members. Ms. Payne assured the Members that even if the Bills are passed, it does not eliminate Regional Councils, as we are formed by an Interlocal agreement with each of our seven counties. Staff will be monitoring the legislation and will provide updates as needed. Discussion followed.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:51 a.m.

Next Meeting Date: May 1, 2025



Jim Renninger  
President



Elizabeth Payne  
Chief Executive Officer