



# Central Florida Regional Planning Council

## Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, June 11, 2025 | 9:30 a.m.**

Bartow Executive Airport | 5993 Airport Boulevard | Bartow, Florida 33830

Council Chair Nathaniel J. Birdsong, Jr. called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Council Attorney Norman White led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called and the following Council Members were in attendance:

- Mayor Nathaniel Birdsong, City of Winter Haven
- Commissioner Don Elwell, Highlands County
- Commissioner Michael Scott, Polk County
- Council Member Keith Keene, City of Arcadia
- Council Member Judy Wertz-Strickland, City of Arcadia, Ridge League of Cities
- Commissioner Kenny Miller, Hardee County
- Robert “Jeff” Kincart, Polk County Gubernatorial Appointee
- Councilman Noel Chandler, City of Okeechobee
- Commissioner Harrison Havery, City of Sebring
- Kelley Boatwright, Ex-Officio, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Cindy Rodriguez, Ex-Officio, Southwest Florida Water Management District

A quorum of members was present.

### **Recognitions**

The Chair presented Cindy Rodriguez, Senior Government Affairs Regional Manager with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) with a Certificate of Appreciation for her years of dedicated service and facilitating education and intergovernmental coordination. The Council wished Ms. Rodriguez well as she departs the SWFWMD.

### **1) Opportunity for Public Comments**

No comments were offered.

### **2) Council Administration**

A motion to approve April 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes was made by: Keith Keene

- The motion was seconded by: Noel Chandler
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the Financial Report was made by: Noel Chandler

- The motion was seconded by: Keith Keene
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

### **3) Welcome to Bartow Executive Airport!**

John Helms, Executive Director of the Bartow Executive Airport, provided an overview of the Airport and the Air Traffic Controllers Academy.



#### **4) Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Grant Agreement for FY 2025-26**

This is a recurring contract to support the LEPC Region 7 program. The LEPC is comprised of first responders and safety specialists from cities, counties, and private businesses in the five-county region. The Grant begins July 1, 2025. The Agreement with the Florida Division of Emergency Management provides funding for CFRPC staff to perform the Scope of Work to support the Local Emergency Planning Committee, its meetings, planning, and other activities. The grant agreement covers July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

A motion to approve the LEPC Agreement and Authorize Executive Director to Administer the Grant Agreement was made by: Jeff Kincart

- The motion was seconded by: Harrison Havery
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **5) Hazards Analysis (HA) Grant Agreement for FY 2025-26**

This is a recurring contract funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and passed to the Council through the Florida Division of Emergency Management for Hazardous Analysis (HA) services. The Grant begins July 1, 2024. At the local level, each of Florida's 67 Counties performs a Hazards Analysis (HA) or designates a Regional Planning Committee (RPC), in our case the CFRPC and its LEPC. Hazards Analysis (HA) data is included in the LEPC Emergency Response Plan (ERP) for Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHSs) required under EPCRA.

A motion to approve the HA Grant Agreement and Authorize Executive Director to Administer the Grant Agreement was made by: Jeff Kincart

- The motion was seconded by: Don Elwell
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **6) 2025 U.S. Economic Development Administration Disaster Supplemental Grant**

The US Economic Development Administration 2025 Disaster Supplemental Grant is anticipated to be available for communities recovering from Tropical Storm Debbie, and Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Staff requested authorization to submit, execute agreement, and administer this grant to prepare a study of the Peace River.

A motion to approve Resolution 2025-6A authorizing Executive Director to submit, execute agreement and administer EDA Grant was made by: Keith Keene

- The motion was seconded by: Michael Scott
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **7) 2025 U.S. Economic Development Administration Disaster Supplemental Grant**

The US Economic Development Administration 2025 Disaster Supplemental Grant is anticipated to be available for communities recovering from Tropical Storm Debbie, and Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Staff requested authorization to submit, execute agreement, and administer this grant to prepare an agriculture study of the region.

Approval of Resolution 2025-6B authorizing Executive Director to submit, execute agreement and administer EDA Grant:

A motion to approve the nominations was made by: Keith Keene

- The motion was seconded by: Noel Chandler
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **8) Heartland Regional Safety Action Plan**

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over 5 years, 2022-2026. The Central Florida Regional Planning Council, in partnership with the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization and its partnering counties, applied for and received a SS4A grant. That

grant funding, along with a local match, was applied to develop the Safety Action Plan for the Heartland counties. Transportation Director Marybeth Soderstrom presented the plan and discussed future opportunities.

A motion to approve the Heartland Regional Safety Action Plan was made by: Michael Scott

- The motion was seconded by: Don Elwell
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

**9) Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) Activities**

Transportation Director Marybeth Soderstrom briefed Council on activities of the six-county Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) and other transportation issues.

**10) Update on Local Government Planning Services and Completed FloridaCommerce Community Planning Technical Assistance and Competitive Florida Grants**

Executive Director Jennifer Codo-Salisbury presented an overview of Planning Advisory Services (PAS) that the CFRPC provides to local governments and communities, highlighting current projects. Staff will also provide an update regarding the FloridaCommerce FY 2024/25 Community Planning Technical Assistance Grants and Competitive Florida Grants.

**11) Status of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council**

Staff provided an overview of the organizational status of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. The CFRPC staff will attend the June 19, 2025 meeting of the SWFRPC and present three options for consideration including a 12-month probationary period. The CFRPC will offer to assist the SWFRPC in consensus building and capacity support.

**12) Executive Director's Report**

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, Executive Director, reported on Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) activities, and Council programs.

**13) Updates and Announcements from Local Governments and Agencies**

There were no updates.

**14) Next Meeting and Other Business**

- A) Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 at 9:30 AM at the Hardee County Agri-Civic Center 515 Civic Center Drive Wauchula, FL
- B) Other Business – No other business. Attendees were invited to attend an Optional Tour of Bartow Executive Airport Remote Virtual Tower Command Center.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Nathaniel J. Birdsong, Jr., Chair

