

Saint Marys River Management Committee Report  
November 6, 2023

Attendees:

Baker- Ed Barber, Danny Norton (FL Chair), James Croft (by phone)

Nassau- Paul Lore

Camden- John Myers, Rick Frey, Jay Smith

Charlton- Merrill Varn (Secretary), James Everett

Other-

A quorum was not present; no business was conducted.

### Land Use

- Baker-
  - Boat Ramp - The revised Boat Ramp was bid but, because of errors, the sole bid was not accepted. It will be rebid. The deadline for completion of the project is June 2024.
- Camden-
  - Blue Bridge- The Board of Commissioners has condemned the riverfront property next to the Blue Bridge so that it can be used for a public boat ramp..
  - Temple Creek- The Board of Commissioners voted to renovate the boardwalk and upgrade the nature trail. DNR will replace the boat ramp.
  - Raydient- no report
- Charlton-
  - Camp Pinckney land- The county has not heard from Alexander Land
- Nassau-
  - Development
    - Community Development Authority- Will continue to use the land across from the riverfront for greenspace rather than converting it to parking
    - Modified Land Use Code to increase density (who did this?)
    - Amelia Baptist Church is planning to sell riverfront property along Amelia River for condominium project
    - Plans for two 45 ft tower condominiums (or is this the two hotels?) still in litigation with county
    - Three parcels of land the Port Authority delayed until Port Authority can agree on the terms

### Water Quality

- NPDES permits- Plug Power permit is open for public comment. SMRMC considered this new permit during the application phase and found no issues. No comment will be sent
- Spanish Creek- Merrill will check with City of Folkston on the progress of the Folkston WWTF upgrade.
- Spanish Creek (Clay Branch 319 Grant)- The ditch sampling project had to be rescheduled to October rather than Spring of 2024 because Courtney Balling, the

MAREX partner, was moving to Athens. She held a training session on October 7th and repeated it on October 14th. The second training session was followed by a sampling event. It had rained two days before and then again the day before so the sample data was within the no sample period for Adopt A Stream E. coli sampling protocol. Since the goal of the event was public outreach and to show citizens that E. coli could reach ditches in which children play after rain storms, the Steering Committee held the event despite it being within the no sample period. The eight Citizens Action Team members counted the plates on Sunday and found that there was E. coli in most ditches and there were some hotspots. Merrill Varn and Emily Floore sampled at two of the proposed Clay Branch sampling sites and found E. coli at both sites. Emily will work with EPD to relocate the before Homeland site if necessary. A Project Steering Committee meeting was held October 14 to make plans for Founders Day, the septic system pump and repair bidding process, septic sign ups, and volunteer sign ups. The 18 septic sign ups were concentrated in the Hatchers Watershed rather than the Clay Watershed. November 4th was Founders Day. We had 102 people, including children, sign the attendance sheet. Bobby Canipe gave a short talk about the program and was available to answer questions. Merrill Varn and Chip Campbell staffed a table where residents could pick up educational material and sign up for the pumpouts or to volunteer. Five more households in the Clay Watershed signed up. Four volunteers signed up. The first quarterly report is due November 15.

- Septic Think Tank- no report
- E&S spreadsheet- no discussion
- FL TMDL Planning- Ed Barber spoke with Kevin O'Donnell who told him that TMDL work was concentrated elsewhere in the state where there were impairments. He did not know of any efforts to keep clean waters clean.
- Georgia EPD Comprehensive Nutrient Permitting- no report. Merrill will try again to get in touch with Tyler Parsons.

### **Water Quantity**

- Stormwater Management/Resiliency-
  - Baker- Ed Barber reported that North Florida Regional Planning Council has funding to provide data tools for area counties to accommodate heavy rainfall events in their permitting, ordinances, infrastructure planning, and resiliency plans. Participation is required by the state but there are incentives for the counties to enroll. Ed attended the October meeting and said the professional team NFRPC has assembled is impressive. Another meeting is planned for December 2024.
  - Camden- John Myers reported that the Resiliency Center should be completed in January and services relocated by the end of February. Camden Board of Commissioners have begun the five year revision of the Resiliency Plan. He also reported that the City of St. Marys is considering a living seawall along the bulkhead.
  - Charlton- No update
  - Nassau- Nassau County has spent the past year digitizing data.

- Georgia Water Councils
  - not scheduled to meet for several months
- NFRWSP- no update

### **Regulatory/Comp Plans**

- Nassau County No Wake Zone- Paul Lore was able to get in touch with Brandy Carvalho to schedule a meeting.

### **Administrative**

- Inactive County Appointees- Charlton County needs a letter of resignation from Russell before they can vote on a new member.
- New Admin- The committee approved paying up to \$20/hr with a maximum time of 12 hr each month. The salary would be commensurate with experience (knowledge of area governmental and nongovernmental entities, google apps, word, excel, website management).

### **Partner Reports**

- SJRWMD- None
- Riverkeeper-
  - Low Country Boil Fundraiser was held October 21 at Sugar Hill; they raised \$X?
  - National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation is visiting Baker Co to discuss expanding the current paddle trail.

### **Committee Member Reports**

- None

### **Public Comment**

- None

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm

Next Meeting December 4, 2023 Callahan Fire Department Building