

**BYLAWS OF  
PINELLAS COUNTY  
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE FORUM**

**ARTICLE ONE – PURPOSE AND INTENT**

- 1.1 The Pinellas County Administrator created the Pinellas County Environmental Science Forum (hereinafter “Forum”) to provide science-related input on a variety of environmental projects that may affect County-managed park and environmental lands. The Forum shall review and provide comments and recommendations on significant projects and management activities potentially affecting Pinellas County’s parks and environmental lands and their associated water and biological resources. Comments and recommendations provided by the Forum shall be considered by County staff, the County Administrator, and the Board of County Commissioners in an advisory manner as appropriate. The deliberations of the Forum shall be conducted under Sunshine Law provisions.

**ARTICLE TWO – COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT**

- 2.1 Composition of the Forum. The Forum shall be composed of no more than 21 members, each of whom shall be appointed by the County Administrator and shall serve at the pleasure of the County Administrator. The Forum members are intended to represent a cross-section of the Pinellas County community and, to that end, shall have diverse scientific and policy backgrounds. The County shall strive to maintain a balance of science and policy backgrounds represented on the Forum. Forum members shall be selected for their unique experience and education and not necessarily to represent any particular group with which they may be affiliated. Members may, at their discretion, bring the perspective of their affiliated organization(s) to Forum discussions.
- 2.2 Forum Alternates. Forum members may recommend an alternate to participate in Forum meetings as their proxy in the event the member is absent. Each alternate must be approved by the County Administrator. Alternates, serving in the event the member is absent, shall have full rights, privileges, and responsibilities.
- 2.3 Term. Forum members shall serve a term of 24 months. The County Administrator may choose to appoint a Forum member for a second 24-month term, if the member agrees to serve.
- 2.4 Removal of Forum Members. Members that miss two consecutive full Forum meetings will be subject to removal from the Forum. Any Forum

member may also be recommended for removal upon a majority vote of the Forum whenever, in its judgment, the best interests of the Forum will be served thereby. Any such recommendation for removal of a member for any reason shall be subject to the approval of the County Administrator. The County Administrator also has the authority to remove a Forum member without a majority vote by the Forum.

- 2.5 Vacancies. In the event a vacancy is created by the inability of any Forum member to continue serving or the removal of any Forum member, the County Administrator may choose to reduce the number of Forum members. In the alternative, the vacancy may be filled via appointment by the County Administrator. The Forum may recommend member replacements to the County Administrator; however, final member appointments will be by the County Administrator.

### **ARTICLE THREE** **THE STAFF AND OFFICERS OF THE FORUM**

- 3.1 Staff. The Forum shall be staffed by the County Administrator or his/her designees. The County shall be responsible for providing meeting locations and audio/visual support, advertising Forum meetings as may be required by law, recording minutes of Forum meetings, and providing any other staff support deemed necessary.
- 3.2 Officers of the Forum. The officers of the Forum shall consist of two (2) co-chairs, both of whom shall be elected by the members of the Forum. One such co-chair shall be selected based on his or her scientific background, and the other co-chair shall be selected based on his or her policy background. The co-chairs shall preside at all meetings of the full Forum and perform such other duties prescribed in these Bylaws or assigned by the Forum. Co-chairs shall serve a term of 12 months, and can be elected to serve an additional term if the co-chairs agree to serve. Each co-chair shall recommend an alternate co-chair to serve in the event of the co-chair's absence, which shall be approved by a majority of those present and able to vote. Duties of the co-chairs shall include setting and prioritizing agenda items and presiding over the full Forum meetings.
- 3.3 Removal of Officers. Any officer elected or appointed by the Forum may be removed whenever, in its judgment, the best interests of the Forum will be served thereby.
- 3.4 Vacancies. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the Forum at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

## **ARTICLE FOUR – FORUM MEETINGS**

- 4.1 Frequency of Meetings. The Forum shall hold a minimum of 4 regular full Forum meetings each calendar year.
- 4.2 Time of Meetings. The date and time of the next regular meeting shall be scheduled prior to the adjournment of any regular meeting. To the extent practicable, the location of the next regular meeting shall also be scheduled prior to the adjournment of any full Forum meeting.
- 4.3 Notice of Meeting. Written notice stating the date, time, and place of any regular meeting of the full Forum shall be given to each Forum member not less than 14 days before the meeting. Such notice shall be deemed sufficient if provided via e-mail to the Forum members. A majority of those present at any full Forum meeting, whether or not a quorum exists, may adjourn any meeting of the Forum to another date, time, and place. Notice of any such adjourned meeting shall be given to those who were not present at the time of the adjournment.
- 4.4 Quorum and Conduct of Meetings. A quorum for meetings shall be a majority of the voting Forum members. Meetings shall be presided over by the co-chairs based on Robert's Rules of Order.
- 4.5 Voting Rights. Each member of the Forum who is present at any meeting of the Forum shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members, with the exception of the presiding co-chair. The presiding co-chair shall vote only to break a tie vote. The non-presiding co-chair is free to vote. Each Forum member shall vote on every matter submitted to a vote of the members unless he or she must refrain from doing so pursuant to the provisions of Article Eight.
- 4.6 Action of the Forum.
  - 4.6.a. Action by the Forum shall only be taken at full Forum meetings where a simple majority of voting members is present. Such action shall be by the majority vote of those present and able to vote.
  - 4.6.b. The Forum may form a Special Committee of at least three (3) Forum members, as defined in Article Five, to examine the scientific facts and information for any issue brought to the full Forum. The Special Committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Forum prior to action taken by the Forum.
  - 4.6.c. Prior to Forum actions on findings or recommendations, the Forum shall approve an action that sufficient scientific facts and information have been

gathered to make a fully informed conclusion. Such action shall be by a majority of those voting.

- 4.7 Recording of Actions. All actions of the Forum shall be recorded in minutes and shall be made available to members of the Forum as soon as practicable, but in no event fewer than 7 days prior to the next Forum meeting.
- 4.8 Non-Forum member participation. It is recognized that the Forum respects and encourages public input and will provide opportunities during the full Forum meeting for public comment, as by a majority of the Forum members.

#### **ARTICLE FIVE – COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 The Forum may create special committees to review specific matters before they are brought to the Forum for action as it deems necessary. Written notice stating the date, time, and place of any special committee meeting must be given to each Forum member at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting of the special committee. Such committees shall review the specific matter referred to them as soon as practicable and present their findings and any recommendation to the entire membership of the Forum at a regularly scheduled meeting of the full Forum. Any committee established by the Forum shall be chaired by a designated Forum member.

#### **ARTICLE SIX – STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE**

- 6.1 In General. A Forum member shall perform his or her duties as a Forum member, including his or her duties as a member of any special committee upon which he or she may serve, in good faith, with such care as an ordinary prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances, and in a manner he or she reasonable believes to be in the best interests of the Forum.
- 6.2 Forum Members Reliance. In performing his or her duties, each Forum member is entitled, but not required, to rely on information, opinions, reports or statements prepared or presented by appropriate County staff, including legal counsel thereto.
- 6.3 Communication. All communication between Forum members (including alternates) regarding non-administrative issues pertaining to environmental projects under consideration by the Forum shall be limited to noticed Forum meetings or noticed special committee meetings. Forum members may discuss Forum issues with their designated alternatives.

## **ARTICLE SEVEN – INDEMNIFICATION**

- 7.1 Indemnification for Good Faith Actions.
- 7.1.a No member of the Forum shall be personally liable for any obligation of the Forum or for any duties or obligations arising out of any acts performed for or on behalf of the Forum, so long as such member was performing within the course and scope of his or her role on the Forum.
- 7.1.b Should any claim or action pertaining to Forum business be brought or made against the Forum or any Forum member, the County shall be responsible for representing the Forum or individual Forum members, so long as such Forum member was acting within the course and scope of his or her role on the Forum when the act or omission that gave rise to such claim or action occurred.

## **ARTICLE EIGHT – CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

- 8.1 Voting Conflicts. All Forum members shall be held to the standards set forth in §112.3143, Fla. Stat. (2006), as it may be amended from time to time, as those sections apply to appointed public officers.

## **ARTICLE NINE – AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

- 9.1 Amendment or Repeal of Bylaws. The Forum may amend or repeal these Bylaws by two-thirds vote of those members present and able to vote, provided that any such amendment or repeal is submitted in writing to Forum members at the previous full Forum meeting. The amendment or repeal will not become effective until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the full Forum.
- 9.2 Writing. All bylaws and amendments shall be memorialized in writing.

**CO-CHAIRS CERTIFICATE**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that I am a co-chair of the Pinellas County Environmental Science Forum, and the foregoing amended Bylaws of said Forum were duly adopted by the membership of the Forum at a meeting held on March 5, 2009.

Cathy Hancock  
Co-Chair Signature

5/7/09  
Date

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have affixed my signature this 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2009.

William M. Quinn  
Witness Signature

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY that I am a co-chair of the Pinellas County Environmental Science Forum, and the foregoing amended Bylaws of said Forum were duly adopted by the membership of the Forum at a meeting held on March 5, 2009.

[Signature]  
Co-Chair Signature

27 MAY 09  
Date

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have affixed my signature this 27 day of May, 2009.

Nicole Gibbs  
Witness Signature