

LIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES CLUSTER GROUP MINUTES FROM 3/9/05

Meg Lowman welcomed the group, introductions were made and Mack Reid from the Lee Wetherington Boys and Girls Club welcomed us. They hosted the meeting of the Cluster. He gave us an overview of what the Club does in the community and the impact they have on the children in Sarasota County. There are 6100 boys and girls in the County who benefit from the programs offered.

Diane Andrews gave the EDC update and told the group about availability of funding for 2005 for Sub Group Cluster initiatives. She reminded people about the Biomimicry luncheon and passed around an article about Roskamp Institute that was in the Longboat Key paper.

Dr. Kevan Main volunteered to be the Chair for the Integrated Aquaculture and Horticulture Production initiative. She will be convening her committee in the next couple of weeks.

Jodi John spoke about E-Fest and had flyers passed out for people to sign up for sponsorships and for a booth. The dates are May 27 and 28, 2005.

Steve Suau from Kimley Horn gave a power point presentation entitled "Watershed Solutions for Sarasota County" He spoke about managing the land first not the water. Watershed management is understanding the natural systems and restoring the environment to its natural systems. He had diagrams of the dams and dikes throughout the County and they have data that is over 70 years old to assist them in the history of Sarasota County's water systems.

Sub Group Reports

CRO (Clinical Research Organization) is on track according to Irvin Katz, Co-Chair and they are working on an RFP for a Marketing Feasibility Study firm. They want to stay in the County but this is highly specialized study and may have to branch out to the region to find the right firm. This study needs to be correctly done and be feasible.

Healthy Sarasota's Chairman Laura Morton was not present and Diane Andrews gave her report for her. They will be having another meeting soon of the committee and a preliminary budget and program has been determined. The plan is still looking at January/February 2006 date.

The Satellite Imaging Workshop is still being planned at Mote Marine for September 15-17, 2005. Raymond Keiser is the Chairman of this event and will be working with EDC staff on the logistics. Irwin Katz said we should make sure High Tech (new name 82° Tech) is aware of this Conference.

Meg Lowman spoke about the new strategy: Attract Scientific Leaders and Professionals to Sarasota County with the development of a Biological Field Station or other measures to attract talent. In order to get grants and to get scientific talent interested in Sarasota County, we need to publish more peer-reviewed publications. The County is sorely behind our sister counties in the region for these publications which shows the studies that have been conducted in sound science reviews. Meg feels that scientists from the North would be delighted to come to Sarasota County instead of shoveling snow in the winter to study our environment, our canopies and our eco-systems. We need to attract this talent in order to better understand our own environment from a scientific viewpoint. Her committee is meeting to discuss the measurable outcomes for this strategy and put together a funding proposal for 2005 from the EDC.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 20, 2005 at the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.