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P R E S S R E L E A S E :

NEFRC Establishes Northeast Florida Economic Resilience Taskforce

Jacksonville, FL – The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC), a government agency that serves seven counties and 26 municipalities, recently established the “Northeast Florida Economic Resilience Taskforce” to assist the region in responding to economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Taskforce, which convened for the first time in October of 2020, is scheduled to convene for its second meeting on Thursday, November 19th between 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

The official charge of the Taskforce states that, “In responding to the coronavirus pandemic and current economic disaster, the Taskforce will comprehensively assess the conditions with which local communities in Northeast Florida are dealing. Once context is established, and baseline economic conditions are clearly understood, the Taskforce will recommend actionable strategies that will assist member governments and communities in meeting short-term economic recovery objectives relating to the coronavirus pandemic.”

In ensuring that community perspectives are accounted for throughout the process, membership will be comprised of expert representation from across the 7-county region:

- **Valerie Jenkins**, Wells Fargo
- **Bill Garrison**, NEFBA
- **Bob Rhodes**, Retired Attorney
- **Denise Bevan**, City of Palm Coast
- **Jonathan Griffith**, City of Palatka
- **Greg Anderson**, JAXUSA Partnership
- **Cathy Hagan**, SBDC at UNF
- **Roxanne Horvath**, City of St. Augustine
- **Taco Pope**, Nassau County
- **Jeff Sheffield**, North Florida TPO
- **Dr. Perry Bechtle**, Mayo Clinic
- **Darryl Register**, Baker Chamber
- **Bill Lazar**, St. Johns Housing Partnership
- **Kristopher Smith**, LISC Jacksonville
- **Reuben Franklin**, City of St. Augustine
- **Bruce Ferguson & Rebecca Livingston**, CareerSource NE Florida

“The NEFRC looks forward to working closely with members of the Taskforce on identifying economic recovery strategies that will assist the region in bouncing forward out of these unprecedented times,” said Beth Payne, Chief Executive Officer of the NEFRC. “Innovative solutions for economic resilience will be of vital importance to local governments in the months and years ahead.”

During the second Taskforce meeting, membership will receive the recently published “[Northeast Florida Economic Resilience Taskforce Briefing Guide](#).” According to Sean Lahav, NEFRC Resiliency Coordinator, “The purpose of this briefing guide is to provide Taskforce Membership with a comprehensive perspective on where the region stands today. In establishing context for the strategy



development work that lies ahead, our objective is to utilize this guide to better inform collective decisions that will soon be made.”

The Northeast Florida Economic Resilience Taskforce was made possible by a 2020 CARES Act Supplemental Award provided by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). For more information, please contact slahav@nefrc.org

To learn more about the work of the Taskforce, please visit www.nefrc.org/taskforce

The NEFRC is an independent, regional government agency serving Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Putnam, Nassau and St. Johns counties. It provides a regional perspective toward growth management, economic development, emergency preparedness, resiliency and community development to enhance the quality of life of Northeast Florida residents. For more information about the Northeast Florida Regional Council, visit www.nefrc.org

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