

The update to the Shoreline Management Plan is due June 30, 2013. The state Department of Ecology has provided grant funding to the county to cover the costs of this mandated update. Funding not used by the deadline must be returned.

Tuesday, January 29 county, the council approved 5-1 a motion, made by Council member Rich Peterson, pushing the project out past the deadline and funding.

The series of public open houses set up for February 19, 20 and 21 have been postponed. Peterson believed the SMP process will interfere with the community conversation meetings the council has set. He doesn't want to be driven by the state.

The community conversations are a series of meetings the council decided to hold after discussing the concept at their retreat earlier this month.

The SMP update has been in process for more than a year. Public open houses are part of the public participation plan which was approved last year by the county Council. The purpose of the open houses is to inform the public about the Shoreline Master Plan update. Input from the public would be incorporated into the draft which would be revised before it goes to the county Planning Commission.

Council member Patty Miller suggested the open house step could be eliminated and citizens could just make comments at the planning commission hearings. Ultimately the update goes before the county Council for hearings and adoption.

Notices of the open houses have already been given to the printer to be inserted in the tax statements. Citizens will receive their statements by the end of next week according to county Treasurer Jan Sears.

After the motion made by Peterson and seconded by Council member Bob Jarman, county staff was instructed to contact the printer to see if the notices can be removed.

If the notices cannot be removed, Peterson said the county can publicize that the meetings will not take place and notices can be put up at the meeting locations letting people know the meetings were cancelled.

The council directed Interim County Manager Bob Jean to ask the governor if the state funding can be extended. If the funding is not extended the county council will need to use county general fund revenue to pay for the SMP update.

Ultimately, the Department of Ecology can write its own SMP update for the county if the county fails to do one.

Council members Bob Jarman, Marc Forlenza, Patty Miller, Jamie Stephens and Rich Peterson voted to postpone the public open houses.

Council member Rick Hughes voted to go ahead with the open houses since they were already scheduled.