

HIGHLANDS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES
September 2, 2008

The regular meeting of the Supervisors of the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District was called to order by Interim Chair Wayne Zahn at 3:05 p.m., Tuesday, September 2, 2008 in Conference Room 3 at the Highlands County Agri-Civic Center, Sebring, Florida.

Supervisors present: John Causey, Gregg Hartt, Ida Jackson, Jimmy Wohl and Wayne Zahn

Staff present: Carlos Torres, District Conservationist
Jennifer Abbey, Soil Conservationist
Jackie Bailey, Office Manager
Corine Burgess, Natural Resources Specialist
Clell Ford, Lakes Management Specialist
Erin McCarta, Lakes Management Assistant

Guests: Linda Crane, June Fisher and Julie Fowler

The Agenda was amended to add AFCD/FCDEA reports, and to remove the Istokpoga Marsh Watershed Project and the Lake Blue PowerPoint. Minutes of August 5, 2008 were approved with the following changes; adding the sentence; John Causey requested Charlie Filler be reminded to fill out the Financial Disclosure form and send it to Tallahassee to avoid penalties. Also to change the sentence, Gregg Hartt made a motion to appoint Jimmy Wohl to Seat #5 until his term begins on January 1, 2009. To read; Gregg Hartt made a motion to appoint Jimmy Wohl to Seat #5 until the expiration of the term.

This is the financial report for August 26, 2008.

DEPOSIT:

No deposits were made this month.

CHECKS WRITTEN:

Check 1352 for \$300.00 to Petty Cash.
Check 1353 for \$44.10 to Comcast for Internet.
Check 1354 for \$109.60 to Media General for advertising the Avon Park Air Force Range project.
Check 1355 for \$36.35 to Enviroscape for extra parts for the Enviroscape model.
Check 1356 for \$80.20 to Ida Jackson for reimbursement for flowers.

HSWCD balances as of August 26, 2008

Highlands Independent Bank	Checking	\$ 4,773.23
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 2,000.00
HSWCD Money Market Account		
Balance as of July 28, 2008		\$374,682.66
Interest		876.89
Dep-SWFWMD		4,988.00
Dep-Admin fees on four contracts		<u>31,791.14</u>
Balance as of August 26, 2008		\$412,338.69

Lake Okeechobee Storage and Treatment

Balance as of July 28, 2008	\$324,292.09
Interest	<u>758.96</u>
Balance as of August 26, 2008	\$325,051.05
Balance as of August 26, 2008 (Regular Checking)	\$528.62

<u>Avon Park Air Force Range Grant</u>	
Balance as of July 28, 2008	\$270,312.16
Interest	<u>632.63</u>
Balance as of August 26, 2008	\$270,944.79
<u>FHREDI Contract</u>	
Balance as a of July 28, 2008	\$4,917.58
Check 103 FHREDI	<u>4,917.58</u>
Balance as of August 26, 2008	0.00
<u>B4/Butler Oaks through SFWMD</u>	
Balance as of July 28, 2008	\$ 0.00
Dep – SFWMD	175,000.00
Checks 97-98	175,000.00
Balance as of August 26, 2008	0.00
<u>Ag Stormwater Systems #12941</u>	
Balance as of July 28, 2008	\$ 21.55
Dep- State of Florida	485,936.98
Checks 531-536	<u>485,936.98</u>
Balance as of August 26, 2008	\$ 21.55
<u>BMP Contract #12942</u>	
Balance as of July 28, 2008	\$ 8.75
Dep – State of Florida	6,754.33
Checks 667-668	6,763.05
Balance as of August 26, 2008	\$ 0.03
<u>Concentrated Feed Operations #12943</u>	
Balance as of July 28, 2008	\$ 27.78
Dep – State of Florida	90,000.00
Checks 701-702	<u>84,613.41</u>
Balance as of August 26, 2008	\$ 5,414.37

The Board asked Jackie to close the checking account for the Storage and Treatment grant and place the money in the Storage and Treatment Money Market Account.

Julie Fowler from the NCT Group presented the audit arrangement letter for F/Y 2007/08. Julie explained there are new auditing standards raising the level of assurance, which is driving the cost of audits up by 20%. This year the letter states a quote range of \$13,800 to \$17,500. Discussion included the number of transactions, if a bookkeeper is hire to make the books audit friendly would that cut the cost? Julie explained that in the last audit we were sited for material errors; the issues were no separation of duties and funds placed in incorrect accounts. She stated that a bookkeeper with fund accounting experience would ensure funds are posted to the correct accounts. Okeechobee SWCD budgets \$3,000 a year for bookkeeping services. Ida Jackson made a motion to sign the arrangement letter with the NCT Group to perform the audit for F/Y 2007/08. John Causey seconded the motion. Motion Passed unanimously.

The Board discussed and made changes to the Services to Governmental Agencies, Objective 1 of the Long Range Plan. The section will be updated accordingly. Jimmy Wohl stated that conserving the natural resources of Highlands County is important and HSWCD should be involved in decisions changing the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Both Envirothon competitions are in the planning stages. Sebring High School will be participating this year. The regional contest is set for December 12th and the state contest will be April 25, 2009. Ag Venture is set for October 28 through the 30th. Bob Stobaugh from NRCS

State Office is interested in filming Ag Venture, the Lake Jackson Shoreline Restoration Project and a training film for Envirothon. Jackie contacted the Ridge Trails, \$600 of last year's proceeds from the Big Canoe Challenge was donated to the City of Lake Placid Trails and Pal and the remainder of the money was placed in their general fund account. Board would still like to know if any trails were created or improved with the money. The Association of Florida Conservation Districts and the Florida Conservation Districts Employees Association held their annual meeting on August 14 through 19, 2008. Jackie included in the packet the minutes and financial reports from these meetings. Jackie was elected President of the FCDEA and Corine is the Treasurer for the association. Justin Smiley, who won the Area VI Speech Contest took second place at the state. He did a great job! The Highlands County Fair Association sent the announcement that the fair will be held January 23 through 31, 2009. Booth rental is \$150.00. John Causey made a motion that we support both Envirothon events by sending a donation of \$1,000 to each and \$150 be sent to the Highlands County Fair Association for booth rental this year. Jimmy Wohl seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The Contract Activity Report was reviewed. Linda Crane stated no funds are available for NEEPA.

Lake Management Specialist Report – Clell reported that Highlands County has received over 9” of rain in the last month. Clell included a graph showing the amounts of rainfall in different areas throughout the County. He also presented a graph showing the slosh in Lake Istokpoga during TS Fay. The Avon Park Air Force project contractor has been hired. The Request for Proposal for the assessment stage of the Ridge Residential Canal Evaluation and Maintenance was advertised and a pre-bid meeting was attended by 17 contractors. Carlos requested Emergency Watershed Protection assistance from NRCS for the maintenance of the Josephine Creek, staff will visit the area next week. Clell began the Leadership Highlands program.

Lake Management Assistant Report – Clell reported the lab results from Hickory Branch. He stated the nitrogen levels were high and the phosphorus levels were very low.

District Conservationist Report – Carlos attended the District Conservationist Meeting in Panama City. The Florida Operational Priorities include utilizing conservation planning, employ the farm bill to address resource concerns, enhance partnerships and increasing team work. Through the EWP program Pines Ranch and Jack Creek are being considered to receive 1.5 million dollars in funding to restore these properties. Carlos included the trip review of the Fisheating Creek Watershed in his packet. One person was served through conservation application, six people were served through conservation planning and thirteen people were served through inventories and evaluations.

Natural Resources Specialist Report – Corine asked the board how interested they were in obtaining a Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL)? She stated we had most of the equipment we need already and could find grants for equipment. She had spoken with the Earth Team volunteers and the Master Gardeners to man the lab. One purpose of the lab was to be more visible to the urban sector of the population. The evaluation performed would help homeowners conserve water by checking the systems for problems. Landscaping choices would also be reviewed. Board requested a business plan for the MIL at the next meeting.

The next board meeting was set for October 7, 2008 in Conference Room #3 at 3p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:15p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Recording Secretary

Chairman