

HIGHLANDS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES

February 10, 2009

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, February 10, 2009 in Conference Room 1 at the Bert J. Harris, Jr., Agricultural Center in Sebring, Florida.

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

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

Guests: Don Bates, Leroy Crockett, Bo Griffin, Cheryl Moffat and Audrey Vickers

This is the Financial Report for January 29, 2009

DEPOSIT:

Two deposits were made this month totaling \$166.21. \$100.00 in bid package sales, \$35.35 in sales and \$30.86 from CD interest.

CHECKS WRITTEN:

Check 1381 for \$227.92 to Petty Cash.
 Check 1382 for \$59.00 to Comcast for Internet.
 Check 1383 for \$2.58 to The News Sun for advertising meeting dates.
 Check 1384 for \$37.25 to Fla. Dept. of State for advertising meeting dates in the FAW.
 Check 1385 for \$965.50 to Clifford Rhoades for professional services.
 Check 1386 for \$226.02 to Media General for advertising APAFR Request For Bid.
 Check 1387 for \$43.98 to Fla. Dept. of Revenue for sales tax collected.
 Check 1388 for \$274.24 to Petty Cash.
 Check 1389 for \$59.00 to Comcast for Internet.

HSWCD balances as of January 29, 2009

Highlands Independent Bank	Checking	\$ 4,423.96
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 December 29, 2008		\$408,355.14
Interest		738.25
Check 104 for \$1,500 to Total Site Solutions		<u>1,500.00</u>
Balance as of January 29, 2009		\$407,593.39

Lake Okeechobee Storage and Treatment

Balance as of December 29, 2008		\$299,692.03
Interest		541.80
Check 1001 to Lykes Bros.		85,582.36
Check 1002 to HSWCD		<u>4,279.12</u>
Balance as of January 29, 2009		\$210,372.35

Avon Park Air Force Range Grant

Balance as of December 29, 2008		\$273,355.66
Interest		<u>494.19</u>
Balance as of January 29, 2009		\$273,849.85

FHREDI Contract

Balance as of December 29, 2008	0.00
Two Deposits	\$10,664.20
Checks 1502 and 1503 to FHREDI	<u>\$10,664.20</u>
Balance as of January 29,2009	0.00

MiniFarms 13882

Balance as of January 29, 2009	\$ 6,250.00
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BMP Contract #13929

Balance as of December 29, 2008	\$42,416.68
Dep State of Fl	7,583.33
Checks 690 – 693	<u>13,241.67</u>
Balance as of January 29, 2009	\$36,758.33

Minutes of January 6, 2009 were approved as written. Today's agenda was approved. NCT Group is performing the audit at this time. Supervisors agreed with the suggestion to write checks only out of the general fund not the money market fund. The petty cash totals will be added to the Financial Report each month.

Jimmy Wohl attended the NACD conference in New Orleans on January 31 through February 3, 2009. Jimmy was impressed at the professionalism of the conference, he enjoyed the speakers, the breakout sessions and meeting people from SWCDs, NRCS, NACD and other SWCD partners. Jimmy was amazed at the success stories of districts throughout the country. Districts in other states have some regulatory duties, the regulator duties in Florida are handled through the WMDs. Our district needs to be more involved in decision making of conservation planning for the natural resources in Highlands County. SWCDs need congressional representation at state and federal levels. Next year the NACD meeting will be held in Orlando on January 30 through February 3. Jimmy recommends that all Supervisors attend the meeting.

Partnerships are important, we need to forge better relationships with the partners we have and actively seek new partners. Grant funding for projects needs to be pursued. Tax payer's money is being used whether the funds are coming from NRCS, WMD, FDACS, BCC or other governmental agency. State funding is being cut. This year there was a 2.6 million short fall, next year it will be 5 billion. Note, the first four FRESP projects were funding through FDACS and administered through HSWCD. The four new projects are funded through the WMD.

Cheryl Moffat from Avon Park thanked HSWCD for all the continuous support given to her teams to participate in the regional and state Envirothon competitions. There would be no teams without our support. The state competition will be held on April 25, 2009.

Istokpoga Marsh Watershed Improvement District's Project – A wide range of questions were asked about the project including funding possibilities, organization of the project, organization of the IMWID advisory board, the order in which tasks will be completed, alternatives to the current project and partnerships.

The only committed agency at this time is SFWMD, which has encumbered \$3.8 million for acquisition of land; these funds must be used this fiscal year. Will SFWMD keep in mind what is best for Highlands County? HSWCD has a positive relationship with both WMDs. Can HSWCD recommend where the funds are spent; engineering, design, construction? If the project is deemed unsuccessful and our money has not been spent we will get our money back.

Don Bates stated the IMWID landowners have know since the 1990's the amount of discharge of P leaving the area exceeded the limits set by SFWMD. It took many years for this group of growers to agree to comply with the project as one unit of land. Now is the time to fix the problem. If the amount of Phosphorous is not reduced, SFWMD has the ability to close the outlets S1 and S9 which enable the water to flow out of the area. Gregg Hartt and John Causey stated we have a responsibility to the land owners of this County and we should be represented at the decision making meetings.

Ida Jackson made a motion that HSWCD support the IMWID project verbally and monetarily up to \$50,000, provided we have input in the project. HSWCD will designate the task in which their money is to be spent. Motion seconded by John Causey. Motion passed unanimously.

The permits for the Avon Park Air Force Range project have been received. EnviroTech was selected as the contractor at a bid of \$353,000. This project should create 15 to 20 jobs.

The Contract Activity, Lake Management Specialist, the Lake Management Assistant, the District Conservationist and the Natural Resources Specialist Reports were in the meeting packet.

Carlos informed the board that the cut off date for EQIP has been extended to March 13, 2008. The Local Working Group determined exotic invasive plant management as very important in the ranking of EQIP/WHIP projects.

Ida Jackson made a motion that the Board donate \$100 to the Emmanuel United Church of Christ in memory of Paul Orth. Gregg Hartt seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

John Causey made a motion that the Board pay dues of \$30.00 as an affiliate member of FCDEA. Gregg Hartt seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Corine has been organizing the 2nd Annual Conservation Connection Day to be held March 7, 2009. HSWCD is hosting this event with a partnership with the Extension. She has been scouring for donation to help defray the cost of the event. Though she has a few maybes, only Publix has committed to the event. The event will bring together 20 environmental agencies. There will be speakers, displays, vendors and a kids section. Gregg Hartt made a motion to spend up to \$1,000 for the Conservation Connection Day event, but staff members will continue to look for donations. John Causey seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Supervisors will turn in their suggestions of changes to the Long Range Plan by February 24th.

The next board meeting was set for March 3, 2009 in Conference Room #3 at 3p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:10p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Recording Secretary

Chairman