

HIGHLANDS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES

November 3, 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, November 3, 2009 in Conference Room 3 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 (HCBCC), Leroy Crockett (RC&D) and Bo Griffin, (FDACS)

This is the Financial Report for October 26, 2009

DEPOSIT:

One deposit of \$180.56 was made. The funds were admin fees for Contract 14811.

CHECKS WRITTEN:

Check 1434 for \$59.07 to Comcast for internet service.
 Check 1435 for \$175.00 to Florida Department of Community Affairs for Special District Fees.
 Check 1436 for \$500.00 to Highlands County Lakes Association for donation for the Lake Watch picnic.
 Check 1437 for \$84.75 to Garden Supply Co. for the Air Potato Grant.

HSWCD balances as of October 26, 2009

Highlands Independent Bank	Checking	\$ 5,521.69
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 2,000.00

Money Market Account

Balance as of September 29, 2009	\$389,624.80
IWMID encumbered	50,000.00
Two dep. Admin Fees	880.87
Interest	<u>361.32</u>
Balance as of October 26, 2009	\$ 390,866.99

Lake Okeechobee Storage and Treatment

Balance as of September 29, 2009	\$210,991.79
Interest	<u>174.57</u>
Balance as of October 26, 2009	\$211,166.36

FHREDI Contract

Balance as of October 26, 2009	\$ 0.00
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BMP Contract #14811

Balance as of September 29, 2009	\$ 1,334.38
Deps State of Fla	\$ 95,615.62
Checks 747-750	<u>\$ 13,241.67</u>
Balance as of October 26, 2009	\$ 83,708.33

Petty Cash

Balance as of September 29, 2009	\$ 130.35
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10/7/2009 Taylor Rental – CARES event	10.60
10/14/2009 Publix – Air Potato Grant	19.42
10/15/09 Dollar Tree – Air Potato Grant	2.14
10/23/2009 Dunkin Donuts – APAFR Tour	<u>23.75</u>
Balance as of October 26, 2009	\$ 74.44

Jackie was asked to check out interest rate on CDs. In the packet was 3 years of expenses, the prepared budget and a blank budget. Discussion was moved to the end of the meeting. Wayne Zahn said he would assist Jackie with preparing a budget.

Northern Everglades/Estuaries Protection Act (NEEPA) – Bo explained to the Board due to FDACS budget cuts only \$750,000 was approved for our area for BMPs and that amount was split between Okeechobee and Highlands SWCDs. Our BMP contract was funded for \$350,000 for this year. Most of these funds were already obligated for FRESP projects.

FDACS and SFWMD are in negotiations to obtain an additional 3 million dollars for projects in the Highlands/Okeechobee area through DEP. These funds will be used for turning dirt projects; such as culverts and earthwork in the Everglades area. No administrative funds can be paid with DEP funds. Possibly the BMP contract’s admin fees can be changed to 10% to pay for the DEP contracts. The new contract goes before the SFWMD in December or January. Bo will bring the new contract and BMP amendment back to our board.

Bo stated that Okeechobee SWCD bought a building with their money. HSWCD needs to be aware that our records are public information and others do see the amount of money in our accounts. Wayne Zahn stated in the future we may want to create an endowment for scholarships. HSWCD and their partners are a benefit to the agricultural community; bringing millions of dollars into Highlands County annually.

Four Audit Bids were received. A motion was made by Jimmy Wohl to engage Wicks, Brown and Williams to perform the audit for Fiscal Year 2008/2009; if preparation of the audit starts now and is completed before June we will pay them on June 30, 2010; if preparation of the audit begins in June, 2010 the audit must be completed by September 15, 2010. Motion seconded by Gregg Hartt. Motion passed.

Revised MOU – Jimmy Wohl made a motion to approved the MOU with the removal of the “the” before “County” and “District” and an apostrophe be added to Districts in sentence three on page two. Gregg Hartt seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Annual Reports – The Supervisors reviewed the annual reports to the County and commented the numbers looked good and the BCC should be happy with our accomplishments.

MIL – The section of the draft MIL Cooperative Funding Agreement between HSWCD and SWFWMD requiring a rain sensor ordinance was reviewed. It was stated that FS 373.62 requires rain sensors on all irrigation system installed since 1991. The City of Sebring has an ordinance; Highlands County does not. HSWCD does not have the authority to establish or enforce an ordinance. Can the agreement be modified? The Board suggested to perform the first 35 evaluation and follow ups in the City of Sebring where an ordinance already exist and also lies in the SWFWMD boundaries. The project must be completed by March 30, 2012. The purpose of the project is to have visible water savings and to educate the public. Corine informed the Board with Dee Dee’s helped Wal-Mart has donated \$1,000 to the MIL project. Gregg Hartt made a motion to accept the Cooperative Funding Agreement between HSWCD and SWFWMD

with the ability to negotiate changes within section 3.6. To initiate the MIL project in The City of Sebring where an ordinance already exist, or perform evaluation outside of Sebring pursuant to forfeiting the 25% (\$1,700) as non-refundable. Jimmy Wohl seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The deadline to apply for next F/Y funding from SWFWMD is December 4. It was the consensus of the Board that Corine applies for next year's funding to continue the MIL project.

NACD Conference will be held January 31 through February 3, 2010 in Orlando. Deadline for early registration is November 20th. Jackie asked which Supervisors would be attending the conference. She stated staff members would like to go but the District would have to pay travel expenses. It is exciting the National Association is having their conference in our backyard and we should take advantage of it and showcase our accomplishments. Ida Jackson made a motion to pay registration and accommodation expenses for Jimmy Wohl and Jackie to attend the conference. Gregg Hartt seconded the motion. Motion passed. Other HSWCD Supervisors may attend the conference.

NACD sponsorship HSWCD has sponsored events at other organization's conferences to advertise our name. Sponsoring at the NACD conference would get our name out to Districts and Supervisors nationally. Ida Jackson made a motion to spend \$5,000 to sponsor events at the NACD conference. Motion died from lack of second. Spending \$5,000 on the NACD conference is not unreasonable. It is beneficial to Supervisors to attend meetings; to get a perspective on other districts and their projects. Jimmy Wohl stated when he went to the conference in New Orleans he enjoyed the inspirational program. Jimmy Wohl made a motion that HSWCD sponsor the Inspirational Program on Sunday Morning, January 31, 2010 at a cost of \$1,500.00. Ida Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

NACD dues invoice was received at the office. Jackie explained that the dues of \$900 were historically paid by the County; with the budget cuts this year the county would only pay \$300. Would the Board like to pay the balance? Jimmy Wohl made a motion to pay \$300 of the dues from the County budget and HSWCD pay the additional \$600 to NACD. Ida Jackson seconded the motion. Motion failed. Discussion included funds generated through should stay in Highlands County. The funds to sponsor the Inspirational Program will go to NACD. Jimmy Wohl made a motion to pay \$300 of the dues from the County budget. Ida Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Istokpoga Marsh Watershed Improvement District's Project (IMWID) – No discussion

Contract Activity report – The General BMP contract has a balance of \$179,155.03. The FHREDI contract has a balance of \$26,658.72. The FHREDI contract may be finished and the balance will not be used. Producers and contractors were paid \$12,611.11 for the month of October 2009.

Lakes Management Assistant report – Erin shared the before and after photo station of the Lake Jackson Shoreline Restoration Project. Erin will prepare a presentation for the next meeting.

District Conservation Report – The report reflected active obligation of \$3,543,520.83 and Payments of \$1,787,235.70 for EQIP, WHIP and AWEP for FY 2009. One person was served

through conservation application, six people were served through conservation planning and fifteen people were served through inventories and evaluations.

The State Office has tasked Carlos with Map Units to be considered for Unique or Locally Important Farmland status. The definition of unique farmland is land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high value food and fiber crops. These units are either more than 500 acres or greater than 10% of the map unit or used for high value crops. The Board was asked to identify soil types as unique. Discussion included what was the purpose of identifying soils as unique? What will the identified areas be used for; easements, to protect the land, to take into consideration with zoning request? What are the long term ramifications of the lands and soils identified?

Ida Jackson made a motion that more time is needed to study the documents and more information was needed before the Board could vote on identifying lands and soils in Highlands County as unique or locally important farmland. Gregg Hartt seconded the motion. Motion passed. Carlos will bring more information back to the board at a later time.

The Community, Lake Management Specialist, and the Natural Resources Specialist reports were in the packet.

The next board meeting was set for **Thursday, December 3, 2009** in the **General Services Board Room at 3p.m.**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Recording Secretary

Chairman