

HIGHLANDS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES
October 6, 2009

The regular meeting of the Supervisors of the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District was called to order by Supervisor, Gregg Hartt at 3:10 p.m., Tuesday, October 6, 2009 in Conference Room 3 at the Bert J. Harris, Jr., Agricultural Center in Sebring, Florida.

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

Supervisors absent: Wayne Zahn

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

Guests: Bo Griffin, (FDACS), June Fisher (County Admin) Dick Reaney and John Ruggiero (Highlands County Lakes Association)

This is the Financial Report for September 29, 2009

DEPOSIT:

One deposit of \$2,922.26 was made. The funds were admin fees for Contract 14811.

CHECKS WRITTEN:

Check 1429 for \$59.07 to Comcast for internet service.

Check 1430 for \$2,966.80 to SOS Materials and Hauling for the Lake Jackson Shoreline Restoration Project.

Check 1431 for \$1,000.00 to Southwest Gulf Coast Regional Envirothon for donation.

Check 1432 for \$80.56 to The News Sun for advertising for the Audit.

Check 1433 for \$54.92 to Media General for advertising in the Highlands Today for the Audit.

HSWCD balances as of September 29, 2009

Highlands Independent Bank	Checking	\$ 6,159.95
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 August 24, 2009	\$382,299.43
IWMID encumbered	50,000.00
Two dep. Admin Fees	1,993.71
One dep. Rain Sensor Grant Reimbursement	4,950.00
Interest	<u>381.66</u>
Balance as of September 29, 2009	\$389,624.80

Lake Okeechobee Storage and Treatment

Balance as of August 24, 2009	\$210,805.51
Interest	<u>186.28</u>
Balance as of September 29, 2009	\$210,991.79

Avon Park Air Force Range Grant

Balance as of August 24, 2009	\$ 66,371.64
Interest	49.34
Cashier's Check to SFWMD	<u>\$ 66,420.98</u>
Balance as of September 29, 2009	0.00

FHREDI Contract

Balance as of September 29, 2009 \$ 0.00

BMP Contract #14811

Balance as of August 24, 2009 \$ 70,583.33

Deps State of Fla \$ 43,034.53

Checks 736-745 \$112,283.48

Balance as of September 29, 2009 \$ 1,334.38

Petty Cash had no activity

Balance as of August 24, 2009 \$ 149.18

Publix for Air Potato Workshop 18.83

Balance as of September 29, 2009 \$ 130.35

Today's agenda was approved. Minutes of September 1, 2009 were approved with correction of typo. Minutes of the September 15, 2009 Workshop were approved as written.

Jackie requested to spend time at next month's meeting to complete the budget for FY 2009/10. She will prepare a report of all the expenses for the past three years.

Dick Reaney and John Ruggiero with the Highlands County Lakes Association requested a donation for the LakeWatch Volunteer Picnic to be held on November 1, 2009 at Windy Point Park. The LakeWatch program funded through the U of F has lost a significant amount of funding. Water sampling has decreased to every other month and clarity is checked monthly. The data collected by the volunteers is of tremendous value to the Lake Management Program. Decisions are made using the data collected by LakeWatch volunteers. 100 volunteers are expected to attend the picnic. HSWCD will be recognized as the sponsor of the picnic. John Causey made a motion that a donation of \$500.00 be made to Highlands County Lakes Association to sponsor the LakeWatch picnic. Ida Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Four Audit Bids were received. The decision to choose was tabled until the next meeting. Supervisors would like to know how long the bid quote will be honored and how long will it take to perform the audit. Wayne Zahn had spoken to Jackie on the phone and said he favored going with the lowest bidder.

Istokpoga Marsh Watershed Improvement District's Project (IMWID) No meetings have been held. The purchase of six parcels totaling 312.09 acres by the County was approved. Closing on the properties is expected in October. The idea to use cover crops as an alternative way to reduce nutrients in the soil was discussed. The idea should be researched and shared with the WMDs, NRCS, FDACS and other entities that may be interested in implementing cover crops as a BMP. Locate a producer that may be interested in planting a test plot. Use care in selecting plants to be used; do not want anymore invasive plants in Highlands County. Discuss idea with the Extension The plants could be discs to keep the nutrients in the field or harvested and used for cattle feed or fertilizer in other location. FDACS has funded research in the past. John Causey has more articles he will share with staff members.

Revised MOU June Fisher has rewritten the draft MOU. Supervisors requested a few small changes. The revised MOU will be presented at our next meeting with the signature block.

Community report – Jackie was contacted by a teacher at Sebring Middle School that would like to bring 24 students to the Speech Contest. Supervisors want to encourage public speaking

and discussed holding the contest at a different more comfortable place, or pre-screening the group. Ask teachers if they would like to narrow the field to five students.

NACD will hold their annual conference January 31 through February 3, 2010 in Orlando. The registration and the Exhibitors/Sponsorship forms were in the packet. 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. We have sponsored other organization to get our name out into the community and this time we could get our name out to the 1,000 Supervisors that would attend the conference. We could also see what other Districts are doing in other states and learn from each other. She handed out the draft agenda. Jimmy Wohl stated when he went to the conference in New Orleans he enjoyed the inspirational program.

The 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? This issue is tabled until next month when the budget is reviewed.

The schedule for the HSWCD video was reviewed. It was suggested that while at Rafter T Ranch to also film our partners, Bob Griffin with FDACS and Benita Whalen with SFWMD. HSWCD will have a booth at the CARES program on October 8, 2009.

Contract Activity report – Producers and contractors were paid \$106,936.64 for the month of September 2009.

Northern Everglades/Estuaries Protection Act (NEEPA) – FDACS and SFWMD are in negotiations to obtain an additional 3 million dollars for projects in the Highlands/Okeechobee area. Bo suggested that spreading the word of BMPs to smaller producers would help us achieve our goal of outreach and education on resource conservation and agriculture issues.

Lake Management Specialist report – Funding is still being sought for the IMWID. NRCS' AWEP and DEP 319 applications were denied funding. Istokpoga Residential Canal Maintenance Project has two canals with existing permits for dredging. Lake August hydrilla treatment options: re-treatment of lake and add more carp at an estimated cost of \$17,000 to \$30,000. County acquires land and make the lake public access.

Lakes Management Assistant report – The Lake Jackson Shoreline Restoration Project's final report was in the packet. Erin would like to make a presentation at the next meeting.

District Conservation Report – Carlos and Jennifer were at Wetland Training in Gainesville this week. Two people were served through conservation application, six people were served through conservation planning and fifteen people were served through inventories and evaluations. One practice was certified and cost share provided in the amount of \$8,806.00 for the month of September 2009. Contracts approved for FY 2009 for Highlands County in the amount of \$272,616.00.

Natural Resources Specialist report –Corine asked board approval for the Cooperative Funding Agreement with SWFWMD for the MIL. The MIL contract is for \$7,595. All of the 35 evaluations must be performed in SWFWMD area. She also presented the Invitation to Bid to hire a certified irrigation auditor. After one year of working under an auditor one of the volunteers the may apply for their own license. This is a reimbursable contract with a 30 day lag time. A County ordinance must be in place requiring a rain sensor on irrigation systems. This requirement is already a Florida statute. Corine drafted the ordinance and submitted it to June Fisher for review by the HCBCC. Supervisors do not want any part of an ordinance; can grant be written without ordinance? Three evaluations must be performed on metered systems, possible commercial. Discussion tabled until the next meeting.

The next board meeting was set for November 3, 2009 in Conference Room #3 at 3p.m. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:20p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Recording Secretary

Chairman