

HIGHLANDS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES

September 7, 2010

The regular meeting of the Supervisors of the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District was called to order by Chairman, Jimmy Wohl at 3:00p.m., Tuesday, September 7, 2010 at the Bert J. Harris, Jr. Agricultural Center, Conference Room 3, 4509 George Blvd., Sebring, FL.

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

Supervisors absent: Gregg Hartt

Staff present: Carlos Torres, District Conservationist
Jennifer Abbey, Soil Conservationist
Jackie Bailey, Office Manager
Corine Burgess, Natural Resources Specialist

Guests: June Fisher (HCBCC), Wayne Godwin (FECLOG), Vicki Pontius (Parks and Rec), Betty Simmons (Professional Bookkeeping Systems), and Audrey Vickers (Supervisor Elect)

Minutes of August 3, 2010 were approved with the addition of Immokalee and Belle Glades as towns served by FHREDI, the deletion of the sentence, The employees in our office are HSWCD staff regardless of who signs the paychecks, the addition of the word "final" to the revised Long Range Plan. The Chairman requested that future meeting be recorded. Supervisors requested a Profit and Loss statement which provides a better overview of the Districts finances be submitted as the Financial Report.

Action Items:

Sharon Nance, NRCS Acting Area Conservationist was not able to make the meeting today.

Wayne Godwin, Chairman of FECLOG informed the Board that a 26,000 acre Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) through NRCS has been approved for Fisheating Creek. The WRP will be managed by a governmental entity and the landowner's group will no longer be responsible for maintenance. He stated that the landowners have been self taxing for the maintenance of the canal since the 1960's. The FECLOG has decided to continue in a consultant capacity. Who will be responsible for the maintenance of the structure? Who owns the structure? Is the structure on sovereign land? The structure is beneficial to downstream water quality. The rights of the landowners north of the structure, not participating in the WRP, need to be protected. The WRP will change the hydrology of the canal. Water will stay on the ground longer to reduce phosphorus runoff and filter water. John Causey made a motion every decision made down the road to the structure, Fisheating Creek Landowner's Group will be informed, consulted and notified. Motion passed.

CD rates from Wauchula, Heartland and Highlands Independent Banks were presented. Supervisors will visit the banks to see if they can make a better deal and find out what the penalties are for early withdrawals. A package will be presented at next month's meeting.

The quotes for bookkeeping services were in the packet. Wayne Zahn made a motion to retain the services of Professional Bookkeeping Systems at \$225.00 per month. Ida Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Mark Cox was not available to answer questions about the audit comments. Ida Jackson made a motion to retain the services of Anita Kovacs, CPA as suggested by our accountant per the audit. John Causey seconded the motion. Anita Kovacs would review the financial statements and footnotes for the year ending 9/30/10. Her review would help avoid comments of material weaknesses in the audit. John Causey made a motion to table the motion until next month when Mark Cox and Anita Kovacs would be able to be at our meeting. Wayne Zahn seconded the motion. The arrangement letter will also be discussed at the next meeting.

Jackie with help from Vicki has been working on a budget for F/Y2010-11. The budget shows anticipated revenue, committed anticipated expenses, and previously funded events/projects. Supervisors requested expenditures from previous years. Supervisors requested staff to make all requests for events and projects at the beginning of the year. Vicki has created a form for participation requests. The Board decided to have a special workshop on October 4, 2010 at 8am to discuss the budget. Expenditures for previous years, the revised budget and participation requests will be presented at the workshop.

Erin and Corine have been working with the elementary schools to create Pollinator Gardens. As part of the program each school that wants them will be receiving rain barrels and composters. Dee Dee Jacobsen with the Extension will be supplying the rain barrels. The schools received grants for the gardens. The Earth Team volunteers have donated the labor to make the composters. Corine requests enough money to buy materials to make the six composters. 175 students will be learning the importance of reuse and recycling. John Causey made a motion to donate \$300.00 for materials to make six composters. Wayne Zahn seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Jimmy Wohl stated the MOU needs to be signed sooner than later. He asked if the Board had other issues with the MOU besides the 20% of the admin fees being given to the HCBCC? Audrey Vickers asked the Board to wait to make decisions until new members are on the Board. New members will have to live with the MOU longer. Using funds for projects will elevate status of the Board. HSWCD is a true partner of HCBCC and a resource to the County. Giving money to the County does not accomplish the goals of the District. Supervisors would like to use 20% of funds on future projects.

Old Business

Is the Hairy Vetch going to be planted? Not sure where.

Northern Everglades/Estuaries Protection Act (NEEPA) – Jackie stated an amendment to Contract 16021 is coming from DACS to add \$50,000 to the contract. A new contract for \$500,000 for BMP's will also be arriving soon.

New Business

Updates

Received an invoice for \$450.00, reimbursement requested from SWFWMD. In six months follow up evaluations will be performed to check and see if improvements have been made.

Announcement

Ag Venture will be on October 26, 27 and 28, 2010.

A special Budget Workshop was set for October 4, 2010 at 8am. The next board meeting was set for Tuesday, October 5, 2010 at 3pm.

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

Respectfully submitted:

Recording Secretary

Chairman