

HIGHLANDS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES
April 4, 2006

The regular meeting of the Supervisors of the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District was called to order by Chairman, Don Bates at 2:05 p.m., Tuesday, April 4, 2006 in Conference Room 3 at the Highlands County Agri-Civic Center, Sebring, Florida.

Supervisors present: Chairman Don Bates, Charlie Filler, Ida Jackson and Wayne Zahn

Supervisors absent: Joan Hartt

Staff present: Larry Sharpe, District Conservationist
Eric Harper, Soil Conservation Technician
Jackie Bailey, Office Manager
Jennifer Abbey, Natural Resources Specialist
Clell Ford, Lakes Manager Specialist
Erin Mc Carta, Lakes Manager Technical Assistant

Guests: Joe Collins, Jack Ritchie, Paul Orth and Benita Whalen

DEPOSIT:

Three deposits were made totaling \$5,273.00. \$273 for sales. \$5,000 for Administrative fees for the Composting Grant.

CHECKS WRITTEN:

Check 1204 for \$235.60 was written to Jackie Bailey for mileage and reimbursement for placement of audit ad and website host bill.

Check 1205 and 1206 were voided.

Check 1207 for \$100.00 was written to Cheryl Moffat for the Envirothon Team.

Check 1208 for \$101.72 to Artistic Frames and Graphics for Speech Contest ribbons.

HSWCD balances as of March 27, 2006:

Highlands Independent Bank	Checking	\$11,334.97
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$ 2,000.00

Citrus Ridge VRT Grant account

Balance as of March 27, 2006	\$48,405.00
------------------------------	-------------

Lake Okeechobee Restoration Grant

Balance as of March 27, 2006	\$37,904.24
------------------------------	-------------

Lake Okeechobee Storage and Treatment

Balance as of March 27, 2006	\$502,114.81
------------------------------	--------------

Composting Grant

Check #93 McArthur Farms, Inc	\$ 74,000.00
Reimbursement from State of FL	100,000.00
Check #94 McArthur Farms, Inc	45,770.00
Ending Balance	\$ 55,230.00

Showerhead exchange/Toilet rebate

Beginning Balance	\$13,000.00
-------------------	-------------

Minutes of March 7, 2006 were approved as written.

Don Bates welcomed Erin Mc Carta as the new Lakes Manager Assistant. She is a Highlands County native. She got her degree in Biology from Florida State University. With her assistance the Lakes Program will now include all the lakes of the County.

Benita Whalen from SFWMD and Joe Collins from Lykes Brothers presented the Board with the contract for the West Waterhole Lease and Pilot Project Agreement. This contract is through the Lake Okeechobee Storage and Treatment Grant. Discussion included: it was the State's water that is to be treated. The retention area is approximately 2500 acres. The retention of water is not for quantity of water but for removal of phosphorus before leaving the property. Monitoring will be done as water enters the area and as it leaves. The engineer will sign off on the building of berms and the pump house before checks are written. This project is geared to find out how much it will cost a producer to remove phosphorus from their runoff. Ida Jackson made a motion that we sign the agreement with SFWMD, Lykes and HSWCD as the administrator of this project. Seconded by Charlie Filler. Motion passed. Wayne Zahn abstained from voting citing conflict of interest.

The Los Diablos from Avon Park came in third place in soils at the State Envirothon competition. The Speech Contest will be held today after our business meeting. Jennifer, Eric and Clell read to nine classes at five different schools for Ag Literacy Day sponsored by Florida Ag in the Classroom. Earth Day will be April 22 at Highlands Hammock State Park. Jackie stated that the lakes brochure have been mailed to 6,000 recipients.

Jennifer reported that a positive response has been received from our request for funding from FDACS for the Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL). FDACS suggested that the MIL should have a two-person team. She asked the board if we should change our proposal from one person to two people as suggested. After discussion it was decided that as a new project we should have one person. As the program grows then a request for a second person will be made. Though FDACS will be paying the person; a request to BCC will have to be made to add the position. FDACS will be reimbursing the County for monies spent. This position request must be received by Human Resources before close of business on Friday, April 17, 2006. There is a possibility of funding through the Tourist Tax Committee for evaluations preformed at golf courses and motels.

There are two applications for the Citrus Ridge VRT Grant. One is for Story Citrus Service, Inc to purchase a new machine. The VRT on the machine cost \$ 23,685, the cap payment of

\$10,200 will apply to the purchase. The second is for Story Grove Service, Inc to purchase a new machine. The VRT on the machine will be \$ 23,685; the cap payment of \$10,200 will apply to the purchase. Wayne Zahn made a motion to accept the two applications. Seconded by Ida Jackson. Motion passed unanimously. There were four requests for payment. Lykes Bros. a conversion that cost \$26,733, which will cap at \$10,200. Ag-Plus for a new machine, with VRT cost \$22,750, which will cap at \$10,200. Story Citrus Service, Inc for a new machine with VRT cost at 23,685, which will cap at \$10,200 and Story Grove Service for a new machine with VRT cost at \$23,685, which will cap at \$10,200. Ida Jackson made a motion that all four requests be paid. Seconded by Charlie Filler. Passed unanimously except that Wayne Zahn abstained from voting on the Lykes Bros conversion citing conflict of interest.

District Conservationist Report – Larry congratulated Jackie on receiving the County’s Pride Award which includes a 5% raise. Sixteen EQIP applications have been approved totaling \$1,379,988. This is a record for Highlands County. Sixteen people were served through conservation planning, three people were served through conservation application, and twenty-two people were served through inventory and evaluations. One governmental agency was served.

Natural Resources Specialist Report – Jennifer was out of the office most of the month. She was getting married and going on her honeymoon. Jennifer along with Florida Yards and Neighborhoods and the Master Gardener’s will sponsor a Rain Barrel Workshop on Friday, April 7, 2006. Twenty-five people have signed up for the workshop.

The Lake Manager Report – Eagle Nest area may receive funding from the Parks and Recreation Department, to remove trees and snags downed by Hurricane Wilma. The LIMC has been invited to attend the April 11 BCC meeting. Dr. Kenneth Langland of the U of F will speak on the topic of the management of invasive plants.

Should the Water Advisory Committee become an ad hoc committee of HSWCD? After discussion it was decided not to include the WAC as part of our Board. It was stated that HSWCD should be more aggressive in making recommendations to the BCC.

The next board meeting was set for May 2, 2006 in Conference Room #3 at 2p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Recording Secretary

Chairman