

# **HIGHLANDS SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT - BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**MEETING DATE: 05/21/2024**

Meeting Location: Conf. Room 3 – Bert Harris Center

**FINAL – Approved 7-16-2024**

Recorded by: Susie Bishop

**MEETING SCHEDULED START: 3:00 P.M. CALL TO ORDER: @ 3:00 P.M.**

**PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT READ BY CHAIRMAN**

Name	Title	Organization	Present
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>			
Dr. John Causey	Chairman	Highlands Soil & Water	Y
Steve Smith	Vice-Chairman	Conservation District	Y
Doug Deen	Secretary/Treasurer		Y
Sara Sebring	Supervisor		Y
T.J. Wohl	Supervisor		Y
Scott Kirouac	Liaison	Highlands Co. Board of County Commissioners	Y
Susie Bishop	Executive Director	Highlands Soil & Water	Y
Kayla Nickerson	BMP Tech.	Highlands Soil & Water	Y
Lauren Ahrens	BMP Tech.	Highlands Soil & Water	Y
Andrew Adams	ES I	FDACS-OAWP	Y
Chad Harmon	MIL Manager	Highlands Soil & Water	Y
Wade Smith	MIL Tech.	Highlands Soil & Water	Y
Carlos Torres	District Cons.	USDA-NRCS	N
John Davis	Auditor	Wicks, Brown, Williams, CPA	Y

**I. Welcome & Introductions**

**II. Approval of Agenda** – Motion to approve as presented (Deen/Smith). Unanimous Approval.

**III. Approval of Meeting Minutes-April 16, 2024** - Motion made to approve the minutes as presented (Wohl/Sebring). Unanimous Approval.

#### IV. **Financial Activity**

##### a. **Annual Audit FY 2022-2023 Presentation – John Davis**

Davis presented the Audit Management Letter and the Independent Accountants' Report explaining the finding of CDs being invested with Non-Qualified Public Depositories and the breach of Florida State Statute. Per discussion one edit was requested to the Independent Accountants' Report. On page 59 of the Financial Statements Booklet in paragraph 4, line one, the words "FDIC insured" to be added after words "three different". Davis agreed to this request. It was advised to the Board by Davis to check on penalties for calling in the CDs and get them to a QPD as soon as possible so when the letter of the finding is received from the Auditor General's office we can reply with the correction already being completed. Staff will shop CD rates at QPDs and reinvest the funds once withdrawn via Tim Baker with LPL Financial consulting with Board Chairman before doing so. Motion made to accept the Audit with one edit as noted (Smith/Wohl). Unanimous Approval.

##### b. **Overview & Approval of Financial Reports- April 2024:** Review of bank statements & financial reports. Motion to approve the financial reports as presented (Wohl/Deen). Unanimous Approval.

#### V. **Agency Partner Updates**

##### a. **FDACS** – Bishop reported May and June will be wrapping up the cost share projects.

It is likely new cost share applications will not be accepted on July 1 due to Leadership at OAWP changing the entire program to electronic and this task not being completed by July 1. BMP Manuals are all being updated and will be greatly simplified per Commissioner Simpson's instructions.

There will also be an effort to align statewide what projects are eligible for cost share. Lastly there will be a new software database program implemented for field staff. No Action

##### b. **MIL** – Bishop reported progress has been made with the re-write of the SOW and SOP for the MILs statewide. Harmon reported numbers of completed evaluations. No Action.

##### c. **NRCS** – No Report

##### d. **HCBCC** – Kirouac announced a 30 day burn ban is in place countywide. He also gave an update on the IMWID project, still no action and no changes. No Action

#### VI. **Old Business**

##### a. **OPPAGA** – Bishop shared after many requests for additional information the Highlands Report is completed yet we won't be able to review it until July when all Districts will receive their individual reports. No Action.

##### b. **AFCD Area 4 Annual Meeting/Ethics Training** – Bishop shared the May 23 Agenda is primarily the Ethics Training. Dr. Causey will be attending and completing his training at the meeting. All other Supervisors are eligible to attend too, but have been registered with FASD to complete online. Deen stated he can't get on the course online, Bishop will troubleshoot this issue. No Action.

##### c. **Landowner Expo, June 11, 2024** – Bishop reported it is shaping up to be another great expo and the catered lunch provided by the District is fully arranged. No Action.

##### d. **NACD SE Regional Meeting – June 16-19, 2024** – Bishop explained the responsibility of this meeting has fallen upon the District Employees Association. In an effort to support the responsibilities of the conference Bishop has agreed to Chair the Taste of Florida event on Sunday, June 16. Giving the details of the event she requested Highlands SWCD be a Gold Level Sponsor and earmark the

funds to this event. Per discussion motion made to approve this request (Sebring/Smith). Unanimous Approval.

**VII. New Business**

- a. **UF/IFAS Range Cattle Research & Education Center Youth Field Day Sponsorship Request** – Bishop presented request. Consensus was to not provide a sponsorship.
- b. **Financial Reporting & Elections 2024** – Bishop reminded Supervisors to complete their individual Form 1 Financial Statements online by deadline of June 30, 2024. Causey & Smith will be seeking another term in Election of 2024. Bishop will provide them with the required qualifying forms. No Action.
- c. **HSWCD Summer Schedules** – Staff will alter their workday schedules during the summer months. MIL staff will work 4–10-hour days with every Friday off. BMP Tech. L. Ahrens will work 9-hour days with every other Friday off. BMP Tech K. Nickerson will alternate Fridays with Ahrens. No Action.
- d. **Staffing for HSWCD** – Bishop presented a description for a new position for HSWCD – Administrative Specialist. Also presented and discussed was an option to enter into a 5-year partnership with USDA-NRCS to share the duties and costs of this position. A succession plan for the Executive Director position was shared in detail and discussed. Motion made to approve the creation of the new position (Sebring/Smith). Unanimous Approval.  
Motion made to move forward with a partnership with USDA-NRCS for a 50/50 share of the position duties and funding with HSWCD having 100% of the management responsibilities of this position. (Sebring/Deen). Unanimous Approval.

**VIII. Executive Director’s Report - Items presented:**

- Due to a conflict with a statewide FDACS-OAWP staff meeting/training in Crystal River Bishop requested a change of date for the September 17 Board meeting. This will be discussed at July meeting when FDACS meeting details are known.
- Bishop & Nickerson will be attending the State Technical Committee meeting with NRCS in Gainesville on June 12 to present the outcome of our Local Working Group Rankings. These will include the top resource concerns.

**IX. Citizens Not on the Agenda – None**

**X. Supervisor Comments -**

Smith – None

Deen – Asked staff to keep engaged with the IMWID project as it could become a potential new contract for HSWCD.

Sebring –None

Wohl – None

Causey – None

Meeting Adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

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John Causey, Chairman

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Doug Deen, Secretary

**POST MEETING ACTION ITEMS**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Assigned To</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<i>Complete Cashing Out CDs invested with LPL</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>May 31, 2024</i>
<i>Complete Report for Avon Park Mitigation Inspection</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>May 31, 2024</i>
<i>Provide Election Filing Forms to Supervisor Causey &amp; Smith</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>May 31, 2024</i>
<i>Manage Land Owner Expo</i>	<i>S. Bishop &amp; CFRPC</i>	<i>June 11, 2024</i>
<i>Attend and Present at the NRCS State Technical Comm. Meeting</i>	<i>S. Bishop &amp; K. Nickerson</i>	<i>June 12, 2024</i>
<i>Issue Gold Sponsorship to AFCD for the NACD SE Regional Conference Organize and Present the Taste of Florida Event at the Conference</i>	<i>S. Bishop &amp; Staff</i>	<i>May 22, 2024 – June 16, 2024</i>
<i>Complete all Filings of FY 22-23 Audit</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>June 30, 2024</i>
<i>Monitor OPPAGA</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>July 2024</i>
<i>Complete Partnership Agreement with USDA-NRCS</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>September 2024</i>
<i>Prepare Succession Plan and Filling of new position</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>May 21, 2024</i>
<i>Manage DEP Stolen Saddle Ranch Contract</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Complete Amendments and SOW for MIL Work on SOP</i>	<i>S. Bishop &amp; MIL Staff</i>	<i>Unknown</i>

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