

Indian River County Florida

*Indian River County Administration Complex
1800 27th Street, Building B
Room B1-501
Vero Beach, Florida*



Meeting Minutes – Final

Monday, September 11, 2023

1:30 PM

Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors

Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman: District 1

Dr. David L. Cox, Secretary/Treasurer: District 2

Charles Kennon Hendrix, Member: District 3

Vacant: District 4

Vacant: District 5

Linda Caggiano, District Staff Assistant II: IRSWCD

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Robert C. Adair, Jr. called meeting to order at 1:32 PM.

Supervisors in attendance: Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman
Dr. David L. Cox, Secretary/Treasurer

Staff in attendance: Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II, IRSWCD
Jennifer Abbey, District Conservationist, USDA-NRCS
John Santiago, Conservationist, USDA-NRCS
Matthew Cox, Environmental Specialist III- OAWP-FDACS
Jake Fojtik, Farm Bureau, Assistant Director Government &
Community Affairs

Public in attendance: George F. Hamner, Jr Indian River Exchange Packers
Dan Richey, Riverfront Packing Company
Mike Johannsen, Indian River Neighborhood Association
Honey Minuse, Vero Beach Resident
Laura Moss, BOCC of IRC
Keith Drewett, Clean Water Coalition of IRC
Dan Lamson, Clean Water Coalition of IRC
Judy Orcutt, Clean Water Coalition of IRC
Tricia Callahan, FP&L
Michele Murrell, FP&L
John Renfranz, FP&L
Will Sabayrac, FP&L
Matthew Silver, FP&L
Michael Sole, FP&L
Jeff Smith, FP&L

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA/EMERGENCY ITEMS:**3. NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Florida Power & Light Company – Solar Projects Team spoke and answered questions on solar farms.

4. REPORTS:

A. Jennifer Abbey, United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources

Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) Reports:

- ❖ **News: USDA Invests \$65 Million for Conservation and Climate Action on Private Lands as Part of the Biden-Harris Administration's Investing in America Agenda**
The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) today awarded over \$3.8 million in Fiscal Year 2023 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) funding to Florida. With this grant, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) will fund projects that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crop products and create new market opportunities for the state's specialty crop producers. Through the SCBGP, the FDACS will fund 20 projects.
- ❖ **Farm Bill Programs:** 27 of 65 Active contracts totaling approximately \$1,240,000 over approximately 11,900 acres
- ❖ **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):** 18 Active Contracts
- ❖ **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):** 9 Active Contracts
- ❖ **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP – WRE) :** 1 application

- ❖ **Conservation Applications: August - September**
 - 1 – High Tunnel
 - ❖ **Other:** Completed EQIP contract obligations, Completed CSP contract obligations, Completed conservation implementation field inspections, Attended Women’s Equality Day celebration webinar.
 - ❖ **Next Month:** Continue conservation implementation field inspections; Continue FY 2024 EQIP application field visits, Internal office Quality Assurance Review results, Existing contract management, CSP contract annual payments.
- B. Andrea Lazzari, Indian River County (IRC) Agricultural Extension Director/ University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF IFAS) Report: No Report**
- C. Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II:**
- ❖ **Office of Agricultural Water Policy – Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services: (OAWP-FDACS):** Contract 27690: \$100,000.00 for 2022-2023, Paid 9 Cost-Share Agreements \$132,504.98; Contract 27690: \$100,000.00 for 2023-2024, Paid Out \$32,504.98 from prior year. Have 2 Cost-Share Agreements totaling \$39,038.96 for the FY 2023-2024. Balance of \$28,456.06 remaining for the Cost-Share FY 2024; Mathew Cox, FDACS - Environmental Specialist III started new position first week of September for the Indian River County area; Contract 27690: \$100,000.00 for 2022-2023; Paid 9 Cost-Share Agreements \$132,504.98;
 - ❖ **Florida Conservation District Employee Association (FCDEA):** Monday September 25, 2023 FCDEA Annual Meeting will be held in Gainesville; Working on FY 24 Budget, FY23 Audit, Agenda and documents for meeting.
 - ❖ **Association of Florida Conservation Districts (AFCD):** Tuesday, Wednesday, September 26 and 27, 2023 - 2023 AFCD Fall Partner Workshop and Training at the UF Hilton, Gainesville, Florida
 - ❖ **Office:** Monthly Meetings Agenda, Minutes; FDACS Cost-Shares; Monthly Meetings Agenda, Minutes; FDACS Cost-Shares; NACD -NRCS : Perimeter Fencing for Feral Swine Grant Program research for Supervisors to determine if they want to move forward; Need Supervisor for District 4 and District 5; Meeting with all five Supervisors before December 2023 or as of January 1, 2024 will be dissolved and all assets shall be transferred to FDACS; OPPAGA: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability - October 1, 2023 they will start audit of each SWCD in the State of Florida. *Need to create a Strategic Plan to have available for OPPAGA*; NACD should be announcing and providing Conservation theme for 2024 Poster Contest: “May The Forest Be With You Always.”

5. DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS:

A. Indian River SWCD – Need Supervisor for District 4 & 5:

Motion: Dr. David L. Cox made a motion to nominate George F. Hamner, Jr. as a Board of Supervisors for Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District – District Five and Seconded by Robert C. Adair, Jr. Motion carried unanimously.

B. NACD – Perimeter Fencing for Feral Swine Program; Application deadline October 13, 2023.

Supervisors discussed the application: Need a technical assistant, time to go out to Farms, gather information and less than a month to apply. Board made a decision not to do anything.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Indian River Lagoon STEM Advisory Committee Update:

- i. Dr. David L. Cox reported: Septic to Sewer project is continuing. Staff changes at NEP; reported some initial seagrass growth in Northern part doing well-rebounded. Mosquito Lagoon and Banana River not doing well. The Central Lagoon Southern Brevard through Indian River Central South of Sebastian River very bad-not rebounding.

**B. IRSWCD Goals and Priorities for consideration by the Board of Supervisors in 2023.
(Still waiting for all the polls to be turned in.)**

7. NEW BUSINESS:

8. SUPERVISORS MATTERS:

9. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 3:22 PM.

Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman

Date

David L. Cox, Secretary/Treasurer

Date