

Indian River County Florida

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



Meeting Minutes – Final

Monday, December 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

Christine Kelly-Begazo, Member: District 4

George F. Hamner, Jr., Member: District 5

Linda Caggiano, District Staff Assistant II: IRSWCD

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Robert C. Adair, Jr. called meeting to order at 1:33 PM.

Supervisors in attendance: Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman
Dr. David L. Cox
Charles Kennon Hendrix
Christine Kelly-Begazo
George F. Hamner, Jr.

Staff in attendance: Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II
Eric Charest, Interim Natural Resources Director
Jennifer Abbey, District Conservationist, USDA/NRCS
Matt Cox, Environmental Specialist III- OAWP-FDACS
Raulie Raulerson, Environmental Manager-OAWP-FDACS
Stephen Wright, Environmental Specialist II-OAWP-FDACS
Jake Fojtik, Farm Bureau, Assistant Director Government &
Community Affairs

Public in attendance: Mike Johannsen, Indian River Neighborhood Association
Honey Minuse, Vero Beach Resident
Laura Moss, BOCC of IRC
Judy Orcutt, Clean Water Coalition of IRC

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA/EMERGENCY ITEMS:

Robert C. Adair, Jr, Chairman read the **CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA, ARTICLE II GENERAL PROVISIONS SECTION 5. Public officers.**

“(b) Each state and county officer, before entering upon the duties of the office, shall give bond as required by law, and shall swear or affirm:

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and of the State of Florida; that I am duly qualified to hold office under the Constitution of the state; and that I will well and faithfully perform the duties of (title of office) on which I am now about to enter. So help me God.”, and thereafter shall devote personal attention to the duties of the office, and continue in office until a successor qualifies.

SECTION 7. Natural resources and scenic beauty.—

(a) It shall be the policy of the state to conserve and protect its natural resources and scenic beauty. Adequate provision shall be made by law for the abatement of air and water pollution and of excessive and unnecessary noise and for the conservation and protection of natural resources.”

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. The Minutes for Board Meeting of November 13, 2023 were approved as written.

Motion: A Motion to approve the November 13, 2023 Minutes was made by George F. Hamner, Jr. and Seconded by Dr. David L. Cox. Motion carried unanimously.

B. The Minutes for Board Meeting of November 28, 2023 were approved as written.

Motion: A Motion to approve the November 13, 2023 Minutes was made by Dr. David L. Cox and Seconded by George F. Hamner, Jr. Motion carried unanimously.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

- A. The Financial Report for November 2023 was available and read by Dr. David L. Cox.

Motion: A motion to accept the November 2023 financial report as presented was made by Charles Kennon Hendrix and Seconded by Christine Kelly-Begazo. Motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS:

A. Jennifer Abbey, United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS)

- i. Civil Rights Policy Statement, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Anti-Harassment Policy, Nondiscrimination, “And Justice for All”, Sexual Harassment is Illegal and Annual Memorandum of Agreement between USDA-NRCS and IRSWCD signed dated 12/11/2023.
- ii. Report:
 - ❖ **Farm Bill Programs:** 24 of 61 Active contracts totaling approximately \$1,190,000 over approximately 11,900 acres
 - ❖ **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):** 15 Active Contracts
 - ❖ **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):** 9 Active Contracts
 - ❖ **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP – WRE) :** 0 application
 - ❖ **Conservation Applications: November – December**
 - 1 – Structure for Wildlife, owl nest box
 - 99 ac – Forage Planting (legume)
 - 1200 ac – Prescribed grazing
 - ❖ **Other:** Continue conservation implementation field inspections and FY 2024 EQIP application field visits. Completed CSP contract annual payments.
 - ❖ **Next Month:** Continue FY 2024 EQIP and CSP application field visits. Internal office Quality Assurance Review results. Outreach at UF IFAS Pasture Management event.

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. Matthew Cox, Environmental Specialist III, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:

- ❖ Continuing with Implementation Verifications (IV’s) with agricultural producers.

D. Eric Charest, Interim Natural Resources Director

- ❖ Indian River County Central Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan Presentation
- ❖ The Central Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) was established to require local governments, agencies and stakeholders to reduce nutrient loads (Total Nitrogen (TN) and Total Phosphorus (TP)) to the Indian River Lagoon.
- ❖ include only portions of the County that drain to the IRL
- ❖ IRC falls within 2 Segments: IRL SEB and IRL B
- ❖ The County’s efforts to improve the health of the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) began in 2002 pre-dating the State’s 2009 Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and the 2013 Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) programs
- ❖ Coordinated efforts of multiple County Departments:
 - Public Works (Coastal and Stormwater)

- Utilities
- Conservation Lands
- Community Development
- Natural Resources Department
- ❖ Indian River County Progress:
 - Stormwater-Stormwater treatment facilities, PC Main, Harvesting of water lettuce, Education and Outreach
 - Utilities: Septic to Sewer, Advanced wastewater
 - Current efforts represent more than \$80 Million in investments to date
 - Operation & Maintenance does not qualify for additional credits
- ❖ The County continues to pursue projects that benefit the Lagoon, with a focus on many water quality improvements that also count towards the County's BMAP reduction requirements. Those projects include:
 - Septic to Sewer Projects
 - Baffle Box Installations
 - Outfall Treatments
 - Lost Tree Island Conservation Area
 - A1A Shoreline Enhancement
 - Flood Studies and Flood Protections
 - Seagrass Pilot Plan and Restoration Projects
 - Muck Assessment and Removal
- Per Section 403.067, F.S., when DEP adopts a BMAP that includes agriculture, it is the agricultural landowner's responsibility either to implement BMP's adopted by Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) to help achieve load reductions, or to conduct water quality monitoring pursuant to Chapter 62-30, F.A.C. Landowners that do not enroll in the BMP program or conduct water quality monitoring are referred to DEP for enforcement action. To date, the FDACS Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP) has adopted BMP manuals by rule for cow/calf, citrus, vegetable and agronomic crops, nurseries, equine, sod, dairy, poultry, and specialty fruit and nut operations.
- Indian River Lagoon Protection Program:
 - Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (OSTDS)
 - Beginning January 1, 2024
 - Prohibits new OSTDS in BMAPs where sewer is available
 - When sewer is not available, requires enhanced nutrient-reducing OSTDS achieving at least 65% nitrogen reduction
 - By July 1, 2025
 - Commercial and residential property with an OSTDS within a BMAP must connect to sewer where available
 - When sewer is not available, requires upgrading to enhanced nutrient-reducing OSTDS achieving 65% nitrogen reduction
 - Advanced wastewater

E. Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II:

- ❖ **FDACS:** Contract 27690: Amended 10/17/2023 - \$15,041.26 due to Audit Cost. No Updates/Changes since November report.
- ❖ **FCDEA:** Next meeting scheduled Tuesday, December 19, 2023. Will be reviewing other SWCD's website to see if in compliance due to OPPAGA. No mention of any Districts being contacted by OPPAGA. No mention of any legislators filing any bills to dissolve SWCD's in Florida.
- ❖ **AFCD:** AFCD is planning the 2024 NACD Southeast Regional Meeting being held in Gainesville, FL from Sunday - June 16, 2024 through Tuesday - June 18, 2024. Will need FCDEA to assist with Registration, etc. those days. AFCD does not attend the Florida Association of Counties meetings, however, AFCD Secretary/Treasurer, Wilbur Dean, does attend those meetings in his role with his employer Levy County, not on

behalf of the AFCDD. Since the AFCDD represents Soil and Water Conservation Districts rather than counties, please let Indian River SWCD know that I have been attending the Florida Association of Special District meetings (FASD), as their association and meetings align more with the special district side of SWCDs.

- ❖ **ENVIROTHON:** Competition Day - Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at the ELC.
- ❖ **OFFICE:** Monthly Meetings Agenda, Minutes. Processed Membership Dues for AFCDD, NACDD. Poster Contest Conservation theme for 2024 Poster Contest: “May The Forest Be With You Always.” National Association of Conservation Districts (NACDD) still not available to provide to schools. Office will be closed week of Friday, December 22 and re-open December 26, 2023.

6. DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS:

A. Financial Audit for year ending 2023:

- i. Waiting on FDACS decision to either pay full \$8,000.00 audit bill or provide additional Cost-Share Contract to cover the expense of audit.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Indian River Lagoon STEM Advisory Committee Update:

- i. IRLNEP has posted Water Quality, Habitat Restoration, Community-Based Restoration, Science and Innovation Requests for Proposals for projects to commence in FY 2025. All RFPs are available at: OneLagoon.org January 5, 2024 – Deadline to apply for funding.
- ii. Introduction of the IRLNEP’s Master Project List (MPM 1.0) at the IRL Council Management Conference. This application is designed to showcase projects funded by the IRLNEP since the establishment of the IRL Council in 2015.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:14 PM.

Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman

Date

David L. Cox, Secretary/Treasurer

Date