

# **Indian River County Florida**

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



## **Meeting Minutes – Final**

**Monday, September 9, 2024**

**1:30 PM**

### **Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors**

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

*Dr. David L. Cox, Vice Chairman: District 2*

*Vacant : District 3*

*Christine Kelly-Begazo, Secretary/Treasurer: District 4*

*George F. Hamner, Jr., Legislative Liaison: District 5*

**Linda Caggiano, District Staff Assistant II: IRSWCD**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Robert C. Adair, Jr. called meeting to order at 1:34 PM.

**Supervisors in attendance:** Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman – District 1  
Dr. David L. Cox – District 2  
Vacant – District 3  
Christine Kelly-Begazo – District 4  
George F. Hamner, Jr. – District 5

**Staff in attendance:** Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II  
Eric Charest, IRC Assistant Natural Resources Director  
Jennifer Abbey, District Conservationist, USDA/NRCS

**Public in attendance:** Mike Johannsen, Indian River Neighborhood Association  
Kelly Jackson, Indian River Pioneer Farms  
Honey Minuse, Vero Beach Resident  
Judy Orcutt, Clean Water Coalition of IRC

**2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA/EMERGENCY ITEMS:****3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. The Minutes for the Board Meeting of August 12, 2024, were approved as written.

**Motion: A Motion to approve the August 12, 2024, Minutes was made by Christine Kelly-Begazo and Seconded by George F. Hamner. Motion carried unanimously.**

**4. FINANCIAL REPORT:**

A. The Financial Report for August 2024 was available and reviewed by the Board.  
The Financial Report for July 2024 was available and reviewed by the Board.

**Motion: A Motion to accept the August 2024 financial report as presented was made by Christine Kelly-Begazo and Seconded by George F. Hamner. Motion carried unanimously.**

B. Investment of Districts Funds.

South State Bank has been instructed to proceed with closing the current Money Market account and transferring the funds into a 7-month CD. A transfer of \$23,275.29 from the General Checking account into the 7-month CD, which should give a total of \$39,000.00 in the CD. The General Checking account balance after the transaction should be \$3,333.04. The FDACS account remains "As Is".

**5. REPORTS:**

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

- ❖ **Farm Bill Programs:** 29 of 68 Active contracts totaling approximately \$1,400,000 over approximately 12,200 acres
- ❖ **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):** 12 Active Contracts
- ❖ **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):** 13 Active Contracts
- ❖ **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP – WRE) :** 2025 Application Deadline – Oct 4 and Dec. 20



- ❖ **Conservation Applications: August – September**
    - 226 ac – Herbaceous Weed Treatment (smut grass)
  - ❖ **Other:** Continued contract status reviews. EQIP implementation checkout, Planning for outreach efforts. CSP activity documentation, Began site visits to EQIP and CSP applicants for 2025.
  - ❖ **Next Month:** Continue conservation implementation field inspections as needed. Continue site visits to EQIP and CSP applicants. Attend and present at Small and Beginning Farmer Mini-Conference.
- B. Andrea Lazzari, Indian River County (IRC) Agricultural Extension Director/ University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF IFAS) Report:**  
*(Report provided, but not able to attend.)*
- ❖ Small & Beginning Farmers Conference at the Intergenerational Recreation Center on Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup> for an all-day event. Great response of 26 people registered. Andrea is having speakers from USDA-NRCS, FDACS, Farm Bureau, and IRC Property Appraiser attend.
  - ❖ Received the sponsorship funds from IRSWCD to cover lunch and the purchase of UF/IFAS Direct Marketing Handbooks for Small Farmers for all attendees.
- C. Matthew Cox, Environmental Specialist III, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:** *(No updates, not able to attend.)*
- D. Stephen Wright, Environmental Specialist II, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:** *(No updates, not able to attend.)*
- E. Eric Charest, Indian River County Assistant Natural Resources Director**  
❖ *(No updates from Natural Resources)*
- F. Sean Lieske, Director, Indian River County Department of Utility Services:** *(No updates, not able to attend.)*
- G. Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II:**
- ❖ **FDACS:** Contract 27690: Amended 07/10/2024 \$250,000.00 Annually for next three (3) years plus \$15,000.00 annually for two audits. Prior year balance cannot be forwarded to new year. TEAMS Meeting with FDACS-OAWP during the FCDEA Meeting. Annual Audits: Usual GASB 34 Financial Statement per 582. F.S. Possible “2<sup>nd</sup>” Audit required. Waiting on clarification from Jana Musgrove, FDACS-OAWP. Per Chris Denmark, Environmental Administrator and Project Manager for FDACS-OAWP; Legal Department is updating the Producer Cost-Share Agreement, as well as the new terms of the Cost share. Tallahassee is still working on the reimbursement changes of 65%, 75%, and 90% reimbursement now. FDACS try to implement data collection for these projects and depending on what data they can collect and how long 2 years for 65% and 75% and 4 years for 90%.
  - ❖ **FCDEA:** Annual Meeting held September 3, 4, 2024 Gainesville. In-depth Records Management Training for Florida Public Agencies by Stephanie Boggs (3-hour webinar); Future legislation.
  - ❖ **AFCD:** AFCD Annual Meeting November 1, 2, 2024 Sandestin, FL
  - ❖ **OFFICE:** Monthly Meetings Agenda, Minutes. FCDEA Agenda and Minutes. FDACS required Audit Need to interview new firm. Waiting on FDACS-OAWP



to response to email sent this morning regarding possible 2<sup>nd</sup> audit. Working on Website Updates, Business Plan and Investment Plan as per OPPAGA Audit.

**6. DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS:**

**A. Future Legislation: Impact of OPPAGA Summary (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability):**

- i. Requirements to be completed per Florida Special District Handbook.
- ii. Legislation changes: FCDEA is hosting a workshop Thursday October 10, 2024 Florida Farm Bureau – Gainesville, FL. Develop a unified position concerning potential legislation for the future functionality of SWCDs in Florida. George F. Hamner, Jr., Legislative Liaison - Supervisor District 5 and Linda Caggiano, District Staff Assistant II will attend and represent Indian River SWCD.

**B. Supervisor for District 3 Vacant (Discussion)**

**7. OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. Indian River Lagoon STEM Advisory Committee Update: (Supervisor Dr. David L. Cox)**

- i. STEM Advisory Committee meeting held on August 20, 2024. Grant funding RFP's and project reviews. Dr. Austin Fox with Florida's Institute of Technology on why muck removal in the IRL is so important. Continued discussion from the August 12, 2024 IRSWCD Board Meeting about the IRLNEP NOAA Habitat Transformation Grant that Melissa Meisenburg, IRC Senior Environmental Specialist for Natural Resources Department mentioned. IRC three years planting 22.8 acres of sea grass.

**B. Small Farms, Ranchettes, and Country Estates Best Management Practices (BMP's) Update (Supervisor Christine Kelly-Begazo)**

- i. Small Farms, Ranchettes, and Country Estates Best Management Practices (BMP's) reviewed booklet, which has old information from 2004. FDACS-OAWP is currently updating all their BMP manuals. Public does not need another manual. Suggested a brochure/tool to provide to the public. Provide website links for topics of where to look for information.

**8. NEW BUSINESS:**

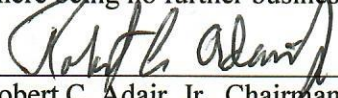
**A. Morningstar Farms OZ, LLC – Poultry Farm in Indian River County Update**

- i. Several issues 5-10% of mortality-burn or bury carcasses. Water quality test before start of the business to get a baseline. Has a permit been issued by SJRWMD

**Motion: A Motion to send a letter of concern to Douglas C. Bournique, Governing Board Member at Large with St. Johns River Water Management District to alert SJRWMD of the Poultry Farm and that a baseline water quality test needs to be performed before and after the business starts was made by Dr., David L. Cox and Seconded by George F. Hamner. Motion carried unanimously.**

**2. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:55 PM.

  
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Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman

10/07/2024  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Christine Kelly-Begazo, Secretary/Treasurer

10-7-24  
Date