

Indian River County Florida

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



Indian River Soil and Water
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Meeting Minutes – Final

Monday, October 7, 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 1:30 P.M

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

IRC Staff and**Partners in attendance:**

Jennifer Abbey, District Conservationist, USDA/NRCS
Matt Cox, Environmental Specialist III- OAWP-FDACS
Kari Cundiff, IRC Floodplain Manager
Jake Fojtik, Farm Bureau, Assistant Director Government &
Community Affairs
Andrea Lazzari, IRC Extension Director; UF/IFAS
Sean Leiske, IRC Utilities Director
Melissa Meisenburg, IRC Senior Lagoon Environmental Specialist
Sara Wappes, IRC Lagoon Environmental Specialist
Stephen Wright, Environmental Specialist II-OAWP-
FDACS
Kylie Yanchula, IRC Natural Resources Director
Laura Yonkers, IRC Engineering - Stormwater

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
Aaron Vos, Vero Beach City Council Candidate

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

A. The Minutes for the Board Meeting of September 9, 2024, were approved as written.

Motion: A Motion to approve the September 9, 2024, Minutes was made by George F. Hamner, Jr. and Seconded by Dr. David L. Cox. Motion carried unanimously.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

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

Motion: A Motion to accept the September 2024 financial report as presented was made by George F. Hamner, Jr. and Seconded by Dr. David L. Cox. Motion carried unanimously.

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

- ❖ **Farm Bill Programs:** 28 of 67 Active contracts totaling approximately \$1,400,000 over approximately 12,300 acres
- ❖ **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):** 15 Active Contracts 2025 Application Deadline: November 1, 2024
- ❖ **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):** 13 Active Contracts 2025 Application Deadline: November 1, 2024
- ❖ **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP – WRE) :** 2025 Application Deadline – Oct 4 and Dec. 20
- ❖ **Conservation Applications: September – October**
 - 1.8 ac – Mulching
 - 6.7 ac – Cover Crop
 - 2.1 ac – Conservation crop rotation
- ❖ **Other:** Completed 2024 contract status reviews. EQIP implementation checkout. CSP activity documentation. Continued site visits to EQIP and CSP applicants for 2025. Attend and presented at Small and Beginning Farmer Mini-Conference
- ❖ **Next Month:** Continue conservation implementation field inspections as needed. Continue site visits to EQIP and CSP applicants .

B. Andrea Lazzari, Indian River County (IRC) Agricultural Extension Director/ University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF IFAS) Report:

- ❖ Small & Beginning Farmers Conference at the Intergenerational Recreation Center was held on Thursday, September 12th for an all-day event. Attendee Breakdown: 26 Attendees, 13 Speakers & Guests, 3 UF/IFAS Staff, Total of 42. Presentation Topics: Agricultural Exemption, Agriculture Rules, Regulations, & References, FDACS BMP Programs, Pastures Management, Business Planning, and Marketing. Participants' feedback was overwhelmingly positive and included many requests for Agricultural Extension to host similar events in the future.

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

- ❖ The IRL mailout we have contacted 570 landowners, 535 have been assigned to field staff. We have 223 new enrollments. We have now made cost share funding requests all online through our website at BMP Cost Share Program / Agricultural Best Management Practices / Water / Agriculture Industry / Home - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (fdacs.gov). Here producers can find eligibility requirements, cost share funding percentages, and project types available for cost share funding. FDACS-OAWP is moving forward with cost share projects and data collection requirements for certain project types. This is subject to change as we move forward, and the full requirements will be outlined in the cost share agreement with the producer.

D. Stephen Wright, Environmental Specialist II, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:

- ❖ OAWP BMP Cost Share Program Data Collection for 75% and 90% Cost Share Projects: Data collection requirements for 75% and 90% projects are the same. Producers will provide data listed below based on the subcategory item they received funding for at the time of their next IV (for 75%) or next two IVs (if 90%). All approved project types are listed under a subcategory for Nutrient Management, Irrigation Management, and Water Resource Protection. These subcategories (e.g., Dry Fertilizer Implements) have a bulleted list of data collection requirements. Any new item that is approved for funding will be designated into one of the subcategories prior to executing a cost share agreement.

- ❖ Nutrient Management, Precision Agriculture, Liquid Nitrogen Applicators, Conservation Tillage, Cover Crop Management, Other Implements: Manure Spreader, Pasture Renovator, Portable Feeder/Hay Wagon; For Aerator; Roller Crimper; Pasture Renovator. Irrigation Management, Water Resource Protection: Water Conservation, Fencing Storage Facilities, Water Resource Protection, Services and Cover Crops.
- E. Kylie Yanchula: Indian River County Natural Resources Director:**
- ❖ County is currently undergoing preparative action due to Hurricane Milton. Currently out surveying the beaches, documenting the existing conditions. Preparing stormwater treatment facilities for potential rain associated with the hurricane. Expecting possibly 10-inches of rain in the area. Doing everything we can, so we are as ready as possible.
- F. Melissa Meisenburg, Indian River County Natural Resources Senior Environmental Specialist**
- ❖ Four (4) vessels have been removed from the lagoon. Additional boat to be removed prior to the storm. Several other boats have been stickered to be removed.
- G. Sean Lieske, Director, Indian River County Department of Utility Services:**
- ❖ Provided update on Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) authorized on September 10, 2024 for Hobart Park and Oslo WTP-CUP #: 10524-11 and the recently issued FDEP permit #: FL0166511 dated August 21, 2024 for Spoonbill Marsh (IRCUD-North County Demin Concentrate).
- H. 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. New Non-Coercion for Labor or Services Affidavit required. The producer will need to complete the listed form from the link in the agreement and return to the Districts within 10 business days from the contract execution date. This is a mandatory requirement for all agreements between governmental and non-governmental entities per F.S. 787.06 (13). Annual Audits: Usual GASB 34 Financial Statement per 582. F.S. Possible “2nd” Audit required. Waiting on clarification from Jana Musgrove, FDACS-OAWP.. Left message – no response.
 - ❖ **FCDEA:** Brainstorm Workshop sponsored by FCDEA to be held October 10, 2024 *Postponed* due to Hurricane Milton. Florida Farm Bureau in Gainesville. Future legislation. . Attendees: FI Cattlemen’s Association, FL Citrus Mutual, FL Farm Bureau, FL Forestry Association, FL Fruits & Vegetable, FNGLA Executive Directors & Lobbyist Team.
 - ❖ **AFCD:** AFCD Annual Meeting November 1, 2, 2024 Sandestin, FL *Postponed* Due to devastation brought on by Hurricane Helene affecting many members who are now busy with recovery and with uncertainty of other possible storms that could impact Florida in the next few weeks, the AFCD Executive Board voted to postpone the AFCD Training and Annual Business Meeting. This is in addition to low meeting registrations received for this year’s events.
 - ❖ **OFFICE:** Monthly Meetings Agenda, Minutes. FCDEA Agenda and Minutes. 2024 Budget Amendments, 2025 Proposed Budget, and 2024 Audit preparations. FDACS required Audit, need to interview new firm. Waiting on FDACS-OAWP to response to email sent this morning regarding possible 2nd audit. Working on Website Updates, Strategic Plan as per OPPAGA Audit.

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

- i. Brainstorm Workshop sponsored by FCDEA *Postponed* @ Florida Farm Bureau in Gainesville. Future legislation. . Attendees: Fl Cattlemen’s Association, FL Citrus Mutual, FL Farm Bureau, FL Forestry Association, FL Fruits & Vegetable, FNGLA Executive Directors & Lobbyist Team.

B. Supervisor for District 3 Vacant (Discussion)**C. IRSWCD Budgets:**

- i. FY 2024 IRSWCD Amended Budget and Resolution No. 2024-1.

Motion: A Motion to Amend the FY 2024 IRSWCD Budget and Resolution No. 2024.1 as presented was made by George F. Hamner, Jr. and Seconded by Christine Kelly-Begazo. Motion carried unanimously.

- ii. FY 2025 IRSWCD Proposed Budget and Resolution No. 2025-1.

Motion: A Motion to approve the FY 2025 IRSWCD Proposed Budget and Resolution No. 2025.1 as presented was made by George F. Hamner, Jr. and Seconded by Christine Kelly Begazo. Motion carried unanimously.

D. 2024-2025 Board Meeting Schedule:

- i. FY 2025 Board Meeting Schedule

Motion: A Motion to approve the FY 2025 Board Meeting Scheduled as presented was made by Dr. David L. Cox and Seconded by Christine Kelly Begazo. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Chapter 189 F.S. Special District Accountability Act:

(Table until November 4, 2024 Meeting)

- i. Complete Strategic Plan with long-term and short-term Goals, Priorities, and Objectives for the District.
- ii. Complete performance measures and standards used by the District.

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

- i. STEM Advisory Committee Update. *(No update until November 15, 2024 Meeting.)*

8. NEW BUSINESS:**A. Update on Morningstar Farms (Ms. Judy Orcutt, Clean Water Coalition)**

- i. Tuesday - October 1, 2024 several people from Pelican Island Audubon Society, Clean Water Coalition of IRC, SJRWMD Gatekeeper toured the draining system on Grady and Gail Hudmon’s property (17.13 Acres). Hudmon’s also own 299.25 acres NE of Morningstar Farms. Hudmon’s 17.13 acres of property is NW of Morningstar Farms and

FP & L Power plant. The drainage from Morningstar Farms and the FP & L Power Plant drain into Hudmon's 17.3 acres property, into the DOT ditch along 60 adjacent to Fort Drum Marsh. conservation land, 300 acres cattle

Judy Orcutt spoke: DEP met with owner of the property on Wednesday October 2, 2024. The property will eventually become a CAFO property (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation) that will require a lot of DEP requirements: Waste Management plant, Drainage Plant. Morningstar Farms plans will be in phases: bring in some chickens under the required permitted number required of 40,000 chickens. By the time Morningstar reaches the CAFO permit limit/requirements, they will have a management plan in place. Clean Water Coalition of IRC has reached out to Ms. Janet Bencomo, Manager of Morningstar Farms for a meeting on-site. There are still a lot of questions not addressed: How are they planning to handle the waste stream, bio-disposal facility. This is a state-of-the-art facility – what are your plans? Paul Gray, Ph.D. Science Coordinator for Audubon Florida's Everglades Restoration Program has been informed of the property.

Dr. David L. Cox mentioned the potential issues that could occur to Lake Blue Cypress like algae bloom. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. Someone needs to address these issues – Federal Regulations

Laura Yonkers mentioned if this was a normal site: The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Program regulates point source discharges from three potential sources: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s), construction activities and industrial activities. This is agriculture, so someone else's jurisdiction. The agricultural building specifics are exempt, but the two-story chicken coops are not waived from Federal Flood Plain requirements. This property is in the Flood Plain. There are no flood openings on the buildings required one foot above the flood plain. They are not waived from Federal FEMA Audit, something FEMA decides whether Indian River County can get Flood Insurance. Will bring the property to the attention of Code Enforcement. The exposed soil, then add in the phosphorous and nitrogen loads when the chickens are on the property. All the runoff needs to stay on the property site, but it will be up to FDEP and SJRWMD to enforce the requirements.

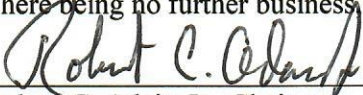
Kari Cundiff mentioned that the County can enforce the requirement of the Type C Flood Management System Permit which requires a plot plan that includes (Permission to build in a flood plain.): Existing topography, proposed grades, 100-year flood elevation, wet season water table, and compensatory calculation.

- B.** Consideration of requirements for agricultural operations to obtain Soil and Water Conservation District approved plans for activities such as land clearing (IRC Code 927.06(4)) and wastewater treatment for Commercial Egg Production Facilities (FDEP 62-670.600).
- i.** Kylie Yanchula mentioned that the IRC Code 927.06(4) has not been stricken and that agricultural operations are to obtain the County's SWCD approved plans for such activities. Also, the County has received numerous telephone calls regarding Morningstar Farms. County wanted to bring this up, as things are being submitted to SWCD for review and consideration. County wants to make sure that we are coordinating and communicating what this looks like.

Robert Adair mentioned that the property was completely cleared, including ditches and the perimeter ditches.

2. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 3:04 PM.



Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman

11-4-24
Date



Christine Kelly-Begazo, Secretary/Treasurer

11-4-24
Date