

# **APPROVED**

## Minutes of the Meeting

### **ALAFIA RIVER BASIN BOARD** Southwest Florida Water Management District

Tampa Service Office                      February 7, 2008

The Alafia River Basin Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District convened for a regular meeting at 9:08 a.m., February 7, 2008, at the Tampa Service Office.

#### **Board Members Present**

Jennifer E. Closshey, Chair Ex Officio  
James D. Selvey, Vice Chair  
Stephen J. Bissonnette, Secretary  
J. C. Tort, Member  
Cheryl E. Johnson, Member

#### **Staff Members**

Bruce C. Wirth  
Eric DeHaven  
Michael Molligan  
Linda Pilcher  
Eric Sutton  
Kathy Scott  
Veronica Crow

Jeannette Seachrist  
Trisha D. Neasman  
Ralph Tack  
Randy Emberg

#### **Via Teleconference**

D. F. Pokrana

#### **Board Member(s) Absent**

None

#### **Recording Secretary**

M. Frances Sesler

A list of others who attended and signed the attendance roster is filed in the permanent files of the Basin. Compact disks of the audio and copies of materials and handouts, as set forth in full herein, are also filed in the permanent files of the District.

*The numbers preceding the items listed below correspond with the published agenda.*

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Closshey called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. Ms. Sesler called the roll and noted a quorum was present. (CD 1/Track 1)

2. **Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag**

Chair Closshey led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and asked for a moment of silence.

3. **Oath of Office for Appointed/Re-Appointed Board Members**

This item was deleted from the agenda.

4. **Additions/Deletions to Agenda**

Ms. Sesler stated that Agenda Item #3 was deleted from the agenda since there were no gubernatorial appointments or Senate confirmations concerning this Board. The agenda also included one addition, Polk County Comprehensive Water Supply Plan – Funding Request.

5. **Consent Items:**

a. **October 4, 2007, Meeting Minutes and Workshop Minutes**

Staff recommended to approve the October 2007, meeting and workshop minutes as presented.

- b. **Declaration of Cooperation of the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium (W027)**
1. Approve the attached "Declaration of Cooperation of the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium" and the "Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Strategy, 2007 Update to the Reasonable Assurance Document."
  2. Recommend the Governing Board Chair execute the Declaration of Cooperation.
- c. **Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems – Hopewell Business Center, LLC (H541), Hillsborough County**
- 1) Approve the Hopewell Business Center, LLC FARMS Project for a not-to-exceed project reimbursement of \$112,500, with \$28,125 provided by the Alafia River Basin, \$28,125 provided by the Governing Board, and \$56,250 provided from State Appropriations;
  - 2) Authorize the transfer of \$28,125 from fund 011 H017 Alafia River Basin FARMS funds, \$28,125 from fund 010 H017 Governing Board FARMS funds, and \$56,250 from the 2005 State Appropriations allocated to fund 010 H017 FARMS funds, to H541 Hopewell Business Center, LLC FARMS project fund;
  - 3) Authorize the Executive Director to sign the agreement.

Following consideration, **Mr. Tort moved, seconded by Ms. Johnson, to approve the consent items as listed. Motion carried unanimously.** (CD 1/Track 1)

6. **Discussion Items:**

**ADD-ON**

**Polk County Comprehensive Water Supply Plan – Funding Request**

Brian Armstrong, Water Supply and Resource Development Manager, presented this item to the Board requesting out of cycle funding for the Polk County Comprehensive Water Supply Plan. Mr. Armstrong noted this request was anticipated over the previous two years during the financial engine presentations. About 45 mgd were identified that needed to be developed to support Polk County water needs in the next 20 to 25 years. He said there were no specific projects that were identified at the time and this is the next step in being able to identify those projects that would fit into the financial engine. The purpose of the plan is to quantify available sources within Polk County. Once identified the sources would be moved to a planning level design which could include withdrawal locations, intake structures, water treatment processes and storage options. The next step would be the cost and identify potential partners within the county. The total project cost is \$955,318 and the District is being requested to fund \$477,659, half of the project cost, and the Alafia River share will be \$52,542.

Staff recommendation is to 1) approve the transfer of \$52,542 from the Alafia River Basin Board's Water Supply and Resource Development Reserves for the Polk County Comprehensive Water Supply Plan; and 2) recommend the Executive Director enter into an agreement with Polk County for the Comprehensive Water Supply Plan for a total cost of \$955,318, with the District's share not to exceed \$477,659, to be divided among the Governing Board, Peace River and Alafia River Basin Boards. District funding will be reduced if contribution is received from the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

Mr. Bissonnette, noted the importance of the project, and Gary Fries, Polk County, thanked the Board for its support of the effort. Ms. Closshey questioned the timeframe for knowing whether SFWMD would assist with project funding. Mr. Wirth stated the SFWMD Executive Director, Carol Wehle, supports the project, and will request funds for it in March.

Following consideration, **Mr. Bissonnette moved, seconded by Ms. Johnson, to approve the staff's recommendations as listed. Motion carried unanimously.**

a. **Twenty Years of the Surface Water Improvement and Management Program**

Jeanette Seachrist, SWIM Manager, Resource Data & Restoration Department, presented the Board an overview of the District's Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program. For 20 years, the District's SWIM Program has improved water quality and restored habitats in ten priority water bodies which include Tampa Bay, Rainbow River, Banana Lake, Crystal River/Kings Bay, Lake Panasoffkee, Charlotte Harbor, Lake Tarpon, Lake Thonotosassa, Winter Haven Chain of Lakes and Sarasota Bay. Since 1987, the SWIM Program has completed over 200 habitat restoration and water quality improvement projects, resulting in more than 3,000 acres of restored habitat. The SWIM Program and these projects have received 39 environmental excellence awards. The Florida Legislature established the SWIM Act to protect, maintain, and restore Florida's surface water bodies. The Act required the five water management districts identify and select a list of priority water bodies of statewide significance within their boundaries, and develop programs to improve them. As a result of these efforts, water quality, seagrass acreage, and natural ecosystems have significantly improved in Tampa Bay.

One of the keys to the success of the SWIM Program has been the District's Basin Boards and many partnerships. For example, for Tampa Bay the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, Hillsborough, Manatee, and Pinellas Counties, and the cities of Clearwater, Gulfport, Largo, St. Petersburg, and Tampa have been key partners in the success of the Program. State and federal agencies have also been key partners with funding or with in-kind services. The state has provided approximately \$11.25 million from the Water Protection and Sustainability Trust Fund and \$4.9 million from state appropriations for the District's SWIM Program in the last three years. Ms. Seachrist said SWIM 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary event was held in November at Cockroach Bay. For fiscal year 2007-2008, \$18 million is targeted for implementing best management practices and capital project expenditures for implementing TMDLs: 83.33 percent (\$15 million) is directed to FDEP's Water Quality Assurance Trust Fund to address water quality impacts from nonagricultural non-point sources and 16.67 percent (\$3 million) is to be transferred to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to address water quality impacts from agricultural non-point sources.

Ms. Johnson congratulated SWIM on its accomplishments and commented on the sighting of roseate spoonbills in the restored portion of the Newman Branch project. **This item was for the Board's information; no action was required.** (CD 1/Track 1)

b. **District Coordination on Total Maximum Daily Load Efforts**

Veronica Crawl, Manager, Environmental Section, Resource Projects Department, gave a brief overview of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and reviewed the responsibilities and current activities of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), the District, and local governments in relation to the TMDL process. As required by Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act, the State of Florida, through FDEP, must develop TMDLs for impaired waters (i.e., do not meet their designated uses). While FDEP is the lead agency in the development of TMDLs, Chapter 62-40, F.A.C. states that Water Management Districts (and other stakeholders) are expected to cooperate with FDEP in the development of TMDLs through sharing of existing plans, data and information. A TMDL is the maximum

loading of a particular pollutant that can be discharged in a surface water and still meet its designated uses and applicable water quality standards.

Mr. Selvey entered the meeting at this time.

Ms. Craw said the FDEP has decided to implement the five phases of the TMDL program described by using a watershed approach (i.e., managing water resources within their natural boundaries) that addresses the state's 52 major hydrologic basins in five groups. The five phases of the state's TMDL program for each group are completed in annual cycles on a rotating schedule. Currently there are 23 verified impaired waters (including Tampa Bay segments) as well as three final TMDLs within the Alafia River Basin boundary. TMDLs have been completed for Thirty Mile Creek, McKay Bay and Delaney Creek. Recent legislation titled "Water Protection and Sustainability" (CS/CS/CS/SB 444) is intended to address the "water sustainability" portion of growth management legislation. The legislation outlines a specific process through which TMDLs will be funded and implemented.

Mr. Bissonnette complimented Ms. Craw on the presentation and questioned the financial challenges for local governments. Ms. Craw commented on the availability of SB 444 dollars, and the Florida Stormwater Association's effort to educate local governments on pollution prevention. Mr. Wirth noted tremendous financial pressures are expected, and the District's role may increase in the future. Mr. Selvey inquired about the status of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program's Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) goals. Ms. Seachrist stated the nitrogen goal, which calls for an annual load reduction of 85 tons, is being met. **This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.** (CD 1/Track 1)

c. **Tampa Bay Regional Reclaimed Water Project (H300)**

Bruce Wirth, Deputy Executive Director, provided the Basin Board an update on the Tampa Bay Regional Reclaimed Water Project and the City of Tampa's plans to postpone moving forward on the project and instead focus on expanding the South Tampa Area Reuse Project (STAR). It has been the Governing Board's intent to encourage the use of reclaimed water flows at Tampa's Howard F. Curren Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant (HFC Plant) since 2000, when the Board was presented with an overview of reclaimed water in the Tampa Bay area showing less than 40 percent utilization of available flows at the plant. For much of the project, Tampa Bay Water had been the lead agency due to the downstream augmentation portion of the Regional Project, wherein surplus reclaimed water would be discharged downstream of structures of the Hillsborough and Palm rivers in exchange for fresh water withdrawals upstream. In October 2006, the Tampa Bay Water Board voted to move forward with expansion of its enhanced surface water system without the downstream augmentation component.

Mr. Selvey questioned the need for downstream augmentation on the Hillsborough River and the status of land acquisition for the Pasco reclaimed water reservoir. Mr. Wirth explained that Tampa Bay Water stops diverting water from the Hillsborough River to the Tampa Bypass Canal before it reaches the established minimum flow, about 20 cfs, and the lower Hillsborough River (area below the dam) is augmented at the minimum flow to prevent environmental degradation. He noted the reservoir is under construction and moving forward.

Mr. Wirth mentioned the District, through the Northwest Hillsborough and Hillsborough River Basin Boards has been working with Tampa on its plans for the STAR Project,

and other uses for the HFC Plant flows. In 2002, the District joined with the City, Hillsborough County, Pasco County, and Tampa Bay Water on what is known today as the Tampa Bay Regional Reclaimed Water Project (Regional Project) to use approximately 60 million gallons per day (mgd) of untapped flows at Tampa's HFC Plant. The collaboration associated with the Regional Project was expected to also allow the other entities to maximize the use of their reclaimed water resources within the Tampa Bay area. The focus was to help reach the mutual goals of: (1) reducing the use of traditional water supplies for non potable needs (irrigation and other purposes); (2) increasing the beneficial use of wet-weather reclaimed water flows, rather than continue the practice of discharging them to tide or deep wells; and (3) helping to restore the natural systems in Pasco and Hillsborough counties.

In September 2007 the City of Tampa requested, in a letter to the District, that funds budgeted by the District to assist the City with its share of the Regional Project be used, instead, to support its STAR Project expansion. The letter clearly stated Tampa's intent to pursue the expansion of the STAR project first as a means to use the flows available at the HFC Plant. The STAR expansion has a reduced residential element, instead focusing on serving reclaimed water to industrial and commercial water customers and, where opportunity may exist, potential interconnections to Hillsborough County's reclaimed water system. The preliminary STAR Project Evaluation based on a conceptual plan and completed by consultants for the City in July 2007, estimates the project will cost approximately \$40 million and take about eight years to construct. The City has made clear it will devote its financial resources to the STAR project expansion first.

The STAR Expansion project, including the interconnections, has been identified as parts of an even larger project. Water Partners, Inc., whose members include the City of Tampa, Hillsborough County, the Tampa Electric Company and Mosaic Fertilizer, Inc., proposed a project to maximize the use of the reclaimed water in Hillsborough County, including the municipalities. The project proposes for Tampa to continue working on its revised plans for the STAR project which, when completed, will leave excess flows at Tampa's HFC Plant.

Based on the current position of the City and in light of Hillsborough County focusing its financial resources on a public/private partnership to bring its south county reuse to TECO in Polk County, the Regional Project is being postponed. In response to Mr. Wirth's comments on the proposed Water Partners Inc. project, Mr. Selvey questioned TECO's need for potable quality water. Mr. Wirth stated it requires some water of potable quality. **This item was for the Board's information only; no action was required.** (CD 1/Track 2)

d. **State Board of Administration Local Government Investment Pool (SBA LGIP) Status**

Governing Board Treasurer, Jennifer Closshey, has written a letter to the members of each Basin Board regarding the status of the SBA LGIP and the District's investment in the SBA LGIP through January 22, 2008. Daryl F. Pokrana, Finance Director, via satellite from the Brooksville office, gave an update on the status of those funds and how the Basin would be affected. Mr. Bissonnette stated his appreciation for the update. Ms. Closshey commented the report was intended to provide information on the health of the Basin's funds. **This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.** (CD 1/Track 2)

e. **Budget Update in View of the January 29 Special Election**

Linda Pilcher, Assistant Finance Director, provided an update on the result of the January 29, 2008, Special Election on the proposed constitutional amendment, (*Amendment No. 1, Property Tax Exemptions; Limitations on Property Tax Assessments*); and discussed the anticipated impact on ad valorem property tax revenue for FY2009. Ms. Pilcher noted that the effects of Amendment 1 will not be known until July when values are certified. She stated that staff will continue to update the Board and will be back in April. **This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.** (CD 1/Track 2)

f. **Changes to the Governing Board's Cooperative Funding Initiative Policy 130-4**

Bruce Wirth, Deputy Executive Director, provided an overview and status of changes to the Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) Policy 130-4. Over the past decade, the District has received numerous requests from local governments to cooperatively fund the development of brackish groundwater desalination facilities. The issue was raised again in April 2007 when the City of Tarpon Springs requested the Pinellas-Anclote Basin Board ask the Governing Board to revisit its "long-standing" position on funding brackish groundwater desalination projects. At the May 2007 Governing Board meeting, District staff provided an overview of the Board's funding practice as it was confirmed in 2006. During discussion of this item, it was noted that the District did not have a formal written policy regarding the Board's position. Several Board members expressed the need to formalize its position in the CFI policies and procedures.

Mr. Selvey questioned the number of project proposals in the Alafia Basin affected by the new policy. Mr. Wirth responded he is uncertain at this point, and the message of the new policy is the Districts supports regional water supply entities. In response to Mr. Wirth's comments that the new policy creates a level playing field, Mr. Bissonnette asked for clarification. Mr. Wirth stated it sets guidelines for Governing Board funding participation in projects, opens the door for the Boards to consider alternative water projects and compares the cost of water to what is happening in other places. Ms. Closshey added it provides a framework for how everyone will be treated, and reaffirms the Governing Board's strong commitment to regional water supply authorities. Ms. Johnson questioned the origin of the supplier diversity language. Mr. Wirth stated the language is currently included in all District contracts, but is a new addition to the Cooperative Funding Policy. Ms. Johnson noted that she represented the District at the Black Pages event and questioned the availability of statistical information on minority suppliers. Chair Closshey voiced an interest in having a future presentation on the subject. **This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.** (CD 1/Track 3)

g. **Fiscal Year 2009 Cooperative Funding Requests**

Trisha Neasman, Senior Planner, Planning Department, provided a brief overview of the project submittals received and reviewed the District's project ranking process. Ms. Neasman advised the Board of the Cooperative Funding applications received for Fiscal Year 2009 budget cycle and the review process they undergo.

Applications for the FY2009 Cooperative funding cycle were received in December and are provided to the Basin Board. Ms. Neasman said that staff will return to the April meeting with initial project recommendations and rankings. She noted in June staff will provide the Board a final draft ranking of the projects and budget information to assist in approving a final project ranking and tentative millage for FY2009. In July/August, the Board will be asked to approve and adopt the final FY2009 Budget and millage rate. (CD 1/Track 4)

7. **Reports:**

a. **Basin Board Education Committee Meeting**

Michael Molligan, Communications Director, provided an overview of the Basin Board Education Committee meeting held November 13, 2007, at the Tampa Service Office. His overview included reports on FY2008 media messaging, Water CHAMP, Florida Yards & Neighborhoods community association outreach, Community Education Grants, teacher training and the Watershed Education Resource Box for kindergarten through third-grade students. Mr. Molligan also reported on a St. Petersburg homeowners association whose collaboration with local water conservation efforts (e.g., FYN program etc.) resulted in significant water savings, the ongoing grassroots messaging effort, upcoming advertising and drought messaging. The next committee meeting is March 11.

b. **Basin Board Land Resources Committee**

The Committee meeting was held December 7, 2007, in Sarasota following the Public Land Acquisition and Management Partnership Conference. Mr. Bissonnette provided an overview of the committee's meeting discussions. Eric Sutton, Assistant Land Resources Director, commented on the importance of partnerships to land acquisitions and the public relations effort for the upcoming Starkey prescribed burn. He thanked everyone for supporting the land conference. (CD 1/Track 4)

c. **Governing Board Activities**

A pre-recorded video, which was narrated by Robyn Hanke, Communications Manager, was played highlighting major milestones at the Governing Board's January meeting.

8. **Announcements:**

Ms. Sesler noted that the announcements were listed on the agenda.

9. **Adjournment:**

There was no further business to come before the Board. A motion was made by Mr. Selvey, seconded by Mr. Tort to adjourn. Chair Closshey adjourned the meeting at 11:11 a.m. (CD 1/Track 4)

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\*\*\*\*Information Items\*\*\*\*

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The item(s) listed below are for the Board's information, intended to keep the Board apprised of completed projects, cancelled projects, and projects that have executed contracts and are ready to begin. The items did not require Board action at this time.

1. Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems – Berry Bay Farms at Jaymar, Inc. (H542), Hillsborough County
2. Tampa Bay Estuary Program Non-Federal Funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Work Plan (W027) - Execution Notice
3. Determining Specific Irrigation Volumes and Frequencies and Fertilization Rates for Strawberry Cultivars (B254)
4. Reducing Nursery and Landscape Water Use by Genetically Altering Nandina Plants B257) – Execution Notice
5. Automated Citrus Irrigation Management to Reduce Water Consumption (B256) – Execution Notice

6. 2008 Community Education Grants in the Alafia River Basin
7. Christina Watershed Management Program Implementation of Best Management Practices (L967) – Execution Notice
8. City of Lakeland Pre-Rinse Spray Valve Retrofit Project (L915) – Execution Notice
9. City of Lakeland Plumbing Retrofit Project (L914) – Execution Notice

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