

APPROVED
Minutes of the Meeting

Withlacoochee River Basin Board
Southwest Florida Water Management District

Brooksville, Florida

April 10, 2008

The Withlacoochee River Basin Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District convened for a regular meeting April 10, 2008, at 9:00 a.m., at District Headquarters.

Board Members Present

Ronald Oakley, Chair Ex Officio
Janey Baldwin, Secretary
Jack Dennis, Member
Patsy Nathe, Member
Albert Rooks, Member

Board Member Absent

Seeth Trimpert, Vice Chair
Paul Mazak, Member

Staff Present

Lou Kavouras
Bruce Wirth
Daryl Pokrana
Linda Pilcher
Eric Sutton
Mark Hammond
Mike Holtkamp
Marty Kelly

Veronica Craw
Ken Herd
Beth Putnam
Miki Renner
Brian Armstrong
Carl Wright
Doug Sanders
Jimmy Brooks

Recording Secretary

Annette Zielinski

A list of others who were present and signed the attendance roster is filed in the permanent files of the Basin. Compact discs of the audio and copies of the materials and handouts, as set out in full herein, are also filed in the permanent files of the Basin.

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

Chair Oakley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Zielinski noted a quorum was present. (CD1/Track 1 - 00:00/0050)

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

Chair Oakley led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. **Additions and Deletions to the Agenda**

Ms. Kavouras noted there was one deletion and one addition to the agenda.

Item 4, Oath of Office for Appointed/Re-Appointed Board Members, has been deleted.

The addition is a request from the City of Dunnellon to address the Basin Board regarding a potential funding request.

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

This item was deleted from today's agenda.

5. **Consent Items:**

a. **February 14, 2008, Meeting Minutes**

Staff recommended approval of the February 14, 2007, meeting minutes, as presented.

Following consideration, **Mr. Dennis moved, seconded by Ms. Nathe, to approve Consent Item 5.a. as presented. Motion carried unanimously.** (CD1/Track 2 - 00:00/02:01)

b. **District's Watershed Management Program and FEMA Map Modernization – Hernando County Cooperative Funding Agreements**

Staff recommended the Governing Board authorize the Executive Director to execute the Amendments to the Cooperative Funding Agreements with Hernando County to allow

the funds originally budgeted for alternatives analysis to be used to update the watershed models for the Blue Sink (\$109,190) and Little Withlacoochee River (\$83,500) watersheds.

Mr. Mark Hammond, Director, Resource Projects Department, responded to Ms. Baldwin's inquiry regarding remaining project cost; he said the planned amount to be expended is \$190,000.

Following consideration, **Mr. Dennis moved, seconded by Ms. Baldwin, to approve Consent Item 5.b. as presented. Motion carried unanimously.** (CD1/Track 1 - 02:01/03:08)

6. **Discussion Items:**

a. **Election of Officers and Committee Representatives**

Election results were the following:

Vice Chair: Patsy Nathe

Secretary: Janey Baldwin

Basin Board Land Resources Committee:

Primary Representative: Bo Rooks

Alternate: Jack Dennis

Basin Board Education Committee:

Primary Representative: Patsy Nathe

Alternate: Janey Baldwin

Citrus/Hernando County Waterways Restoration Council

Primary Representative: Bo Rooks

Alternates: Janey Baldwin and Jack Dennis

(CD 1/Track 2 - 03:08/07:22)

b. **Consumer Fertilizer Task Force Report**

Ms. Veronica Craw, Manager, Resource Projects Department, provided the Board with a brief overview of the work of the Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force and a summary of its final report to the 2008 Florida Legislature.

The Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force was created within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) by the Florida Legislature on July 1, 2007 to review and provide recommendations on the state's policies and programs addressing consumer fertilizers. The Task Force strove to assist local governments to comply with state and federal water quality standards, and to provide uniformity while accounting for geographic diversity and variations within Florida.

It was recommended that the Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance certification be expanded to include fertilizer best management practices. In addition, a model ordinance concerning the use of nonagricultural fertilizer was developed for use by local governments who chose to adopt it. The Task Force supported public education regarding fertilizer use based on the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences' six best practices for lawn care, and it recommended the continued support of ongoing research projects on fertilizer management. Finally, the Task Force recommended a dedicated funding source be provided for education and training by authorizing DACS to increase their tonnage fee on the sale of nitrogen and phosphorus.

The Final Report was adopted unanimously by the Task Force at its January 11, 2008 meeting and DACS was authorized to transmit the document to the Legislature on January 15, 2008. The Task Force was abolished upon submittal of the Final Report. This item was for the Board's information only; no action was required. (CD 1/Track 3 – 00:00/10:12)

c. **Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Preparation**

Mr. Bruce C. Wirth, Deputy Executive Director, Division of Resource Management, began the budget discussion by making comments to orient members on their first look at a preliminary budget for fiscal year (FY) 2009. He emphasized the importance of their direction concerning funding levels of the various budget categories, including prioritization of Cooperative Funding proposals and other Basin projects. First-time cooperative funding proposals, after staff review, were tentatively ranked as 1A, High, Medium, or Low priority. Mr. Wirth explained that the Cooperative Funding project ranking was preliminary. He also explained that the budget was prepared assuming ad valorem revenue at five percent below FY2008. This is due to tax reform legislation enacted in 2007, the constitutional amendment approved in January 2008, and declining property values. In June, staff will provide an updated ad valorem revenue estimate to the Basin Board and present a revised budget, based on the Board's input and further investigation by staff. At the July meeting, the Basin Board will vote on a final FY2009 millage rate and budget for recommendation to the Governing Board.

The preliminary budget assumes the millage rate will remain at 0.2308 and ad valorem revenues will be five percent below FY2008 for a total of \$5,132,622. For FY2008, the Withlacoochee River Basin Board adopted a millage rate of 0.2308. This rate was 12.9 percent less than the FY2007 millage rate of 0.2650. The millage rate had been held at 0.2650 for the previous five years, and not increased in 13 years since FY1995 when the rate was increased to fund the Partnership Agreement. Funding from state sources (in addition to Save Our Rivers funding) will be incorporated into the Basin budget following the end of the 2008 legislative session. (CD 1/Track 4 – 00:00/10:14)

The staff and/or cooperators made presentations on the following significant projects prior to review of the overall budget.

Mr. Mark Hammond, Director, Resource Projects Department, said the New Development Reclaimed Water Distribution Initiative would address concerns about increasing the amount of reclaimed water and how much water was being offset by the use of reclaimed water. The Initiative would also be an incentive to developers to install distribution lines, during residential construction, to facilitate the use of reclaimed water in residential developments. Funds would be budgeted yearly if the Board feels it is appropriate; \$200,000 is included in the FY2009 budget for the Board's consideration. Ms. Baldwin thought this was a good project; however, it being a tight budget year, she thought perhaps it could be brought back in a few years. Mr. Rooks and Ms. Nathe were in favor of adding the project. Mr. Rooks said disbursement would not likely happen for another three to four years. Ms. Nathe said we need to be building better developments now. (CD 1/Track 5 – 00:00/14:42)

Mr. Mark Hammond said it is a high priority of the District to obtain floodplain information that will help identify areas at risk for flooding. With the heavy rains of the mid-1990s, the need for the Watershed Management Program was evident. Mr. Hammond used the Zephyrhills area of eastern Pasco County as an example of mapped flood zones compared to areas where flooding complaints were made by the public, and local governments asked for assistance from the District to identify areas at risk for flooding.

He reviewed the Program goals and the relationship to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Map Modernization Process, which is integral to the Program. He closed by emphasizing the importance of prioritizing the watershed studies in order to get "ahead of the curve" and alleviate the need for costly new "fixes" in the future. (CD 1/Track 6 – 00:00/09:55)

Mr. Eric Sutton, Assistant Director, Land Resources Department, provided information on Environmental Education Centers. This was a task identified from the Governing Board strategic planning exercise in 2006. Staff was tasked to evaluate the need for other education centers the District might sponsor. Mr. Sutton explained the assessment process which would find "gaps" in information to determine where environmental education centers would best serve the community. He reviewed the challenges in making a center successful and spoke briefly on the steps involved in the process. (CD 1/Track 7 – 00:00/05:02)

Mr. Ken Herd, Water Supply Program Director, said that proposed is a Basin initiative Project B279, which would assist the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) transition into a more institutionalized structure and become a true regional utility, similar to other water supply authorities in the District. The proposal presented is a request for \$400,000 per year over the next five years for start-up funds to enable the transition to occur. After the initial five years, the WRWSA member governments would be expected to provide funding necessary to enable sustainable operation of the administration. Proposed funding would be equal between the Coastal Rivers and Withlacoochee River Basin Boards at \$200,000 each. However, \$400,000 is not a firm figure; staff is anticipating an agreement on that figure will be reached by June 2008.

Mr. Herd introduced Mr. Jack Sullivan, Executive Director of the WRWSA. Mr. Sullivan stated his purpose in addressing the Board was to request the Board help fund the WRWSA's transition. He provided information to help the Board make its decision, including why the WRWSA has lagged in becoming a full-time utility, changes to population and ground water availability, and complexity of water supply. He also spoke on the need for permanent office space and professional staff, development of legal and financial documents and implementation plans, and a commitment toward working cooperatively on future water supply projects. Proposals to make the transition, long-term goals, and financial considerations were also presented.

In conclusion, Mr. Sullivan stated that without District financial assistance, the WRWSA cannot make the transition—and the transition needs to happen now in order to meet water supply needs into the future.

Hernando County Commissioner Rose Rocco, Chair of the WRWSA addressed the Board on the importance of regional planning and being proactive instead of reactive. Beginning an action plan now, she said, will ensure a Board that is cohesive, with strong leadership and direction. She expressed her appreciation to the Basin Board for cooperating with Mr. Sullivan as this process moves forward.

Mr. Al Grubman, representing the Too Far organization, voiced his agreement about the importance of regional planning; however, he told the Board of his concern about taking water out of the Withlacoochee River before it passes the Tsala Apopka Lakes. He asked for the Board's help and oversight in managing the situation and making it a success. (CD 1/Track 8 – 00:00/40:24)

Ms. Baldwin expressed her opinion regarding the support for transitioning the WRWSA into a more formal organization. She believes the WRWSA will be needed in the future, but in these tight economic times believes the request is premature.

Mr. Wirth reviewed the budget and thanked the Basin Board members for their comments and direction. He said staff greatly appreciates their guidance. (CD 1/Track 8 – 40:24/64:24)

Chair Oakley heard public comment at this time.

Ms. Joan Bradshaw, Director, University of Florida, IFAS Extension Office in Citrus County, expressed her appreciation on behalf of the University to the Basin Board members for supporting programs dedicated to public education such as the Florida-friendly landscaping initiative. She said she believes educational programs help especially during a drought like we are currently experiencing. (CD 1/Track 9 – 00:00/02:06)

Add-On Item: City of Dunnellon

Dr. Burt Eno, President, Rainbow River Conservation, Inc., said the group has over 200 members who are dedicated to the protection of the River and its surroundings. Dr. Eno presented a proposal for cooperative funding for the Blue Run of Dunnellon Park project. The components of the project include: parking improvements, increased access for kayak and tuber activity, an observation platform, and interpretive wayside exhibits.

Mr. Jim Couillard, Park Designer, Marion County, presented strategies that can be incorporated to correct limerock runoff that is currently being experienced at the park. Low impact development strategies can improve and maintain water clarity.

Discussion ensued regarding project costs and timelines. Ms. Kavouras explained this was the first time staff has seen project details. Dr. Eno offered Basin Board members a tour of the area and the proposed project sites. Mr. Wirth said staff will work with Dr. Eno and Mr. Couillard to gather more information and bring this item back to the Board.

Following consideration, **Ms. Baldwin moved, seconded by Ms. Nathe, to direct staff to continue to work with the City of Dunnellon, Marion County, and the Rainbow River Conservation, Inc., on the details of the Blue Run of Dunnellon Park. Motion carried unanimously.** (CD 1/Track 10 – 00:00/24:48)

7. **Reports:**

a. **Basin Board Education Committee**

Ms. Putnam said the report for the March 11, 2008 meeting was included in the Basin Board information notebook. The Water Conservation Hotel and Motel Program (Water CHAMP) has a new coordinator, Ms. Robin Grantham. The District has a new water saving program for restaurants called Water PRO. (CD 1/Track 11 – 00:00/02:04)

b. **Report on Governing Board Activities**

At Chair Oakley's request, staff played the pre-recorded highlights of the March 25, 2008 Governing Board meeting.

8. **Announcements:**

Ms. Kavouras directed the Board's attention to announcements listed on the agenda and emphasized that the Basin Board will meet on July 24, 2008.

9. **Adjournment**

The day's business being complete, Chair Oakley adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m. (CD 1/Track 12 – 00:00/08:22)

★ ★ ★ Information Items ★ ★ ★

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

1. A Restoration Cost Share Agreement Between the United States of America Natural Resource Conservation Service and the Southwest Florida Water Management District for the Flying Eagle Shinn Ditch Hydrologic and Wetland Restoration (SA06) - Execution Notice
2. Withlacoochee River Watershed Initiative (H066)

Attest:

Chairman

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