

Agriculture and Green Industry Advisory Committee

MEETING DATE – DECEMBER 6, 2018

AGRICULTURAL LIAISON REPORT – BRYAN K. BESWICK

GREEN INDUSTRY LIAISON REPORT – MARK TAYLOR

Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

- Ms. Lois Sorenson was not available to present so this item was deleted from the agenda.

AGMOD Nursery Allocations

- Mr. Mark Luchte, Agricultural Regulation program manager, explained the background of AGMOD as well as the factors involved when calculating nursery allocations. He explained Water Use Permit staff will work with users for any site-specific circumstances and there are Mobile Irrigation Labs available for free system evaluations.
- Special conditions were discussed in which juvenile strawberries need additional irrigation (cooling misters) to survive heat stress.
- Mr. Lewis referred to Dr. Thomas Yeager's study on managing irrigation in container nurseries and noted there are a lot of conservation efforts amongst nurseries. Mr. Lewis explained that acreage crops struggle with AGMOD numbers every year and asked to continue working on an overpumpage solution with growers until solutions have identified.

Reclaimed Water Progress within the Southwest Florida Water Management District

- Mr. Joseph Quinn, Water Supply project manager, shared the progress of reclaimed water use within the District. He explained the District utilizes 54 percent of its reclaimed water, compared to Florida's utilization of 30 percent reuse and seven percent on a national level.
- Members asked whether reclaimed water is safe to use in watershed areas and Mr. Quinn responded treatment has come a long way and potable water can be used in watershed areas.
- Members asked about the cost in dollars per gallon and Mr. Quinn replied the calculations of \$8 per gallon are for project development costs.

Invasive Plant Management

- Mr. Brian Nelson, Vegetation Management manager, provided an overview on the invasive plant species within the District and how the Southwest Florida Water Management District manages them, including physical, mechanical and biological control options, herbicides, integrated pest management and controlled fires.
- Members inquired about management options on specific species, such as Hydrilla and Caesar's Weed. Mr. Nelson mentioned treatments as well as ongoing research to address them.

Citrus Task Force (CTF) Update – Feedback and Opportunities

- Mr. Ross Morton, ombudsman, discussed the District's response to the feedback provided by agricultural growers, which included 10 consensus items on water use/permitting concerns, as well as two of the seven non-consensus items.
- Members asked whose responsibility is it to renew a permit when selling property with an expiring permit, and Mr. Morton suggested since water use permits go with the land, it would be the responsibility of the land owner to renew the permit.
- Members asked how a 20-year permit can differentiate between watering needs for a young tree nursery versus older trees and Mr. Morton explained the Regulation department will work with permittees to address certain situations.
- Mr. Lewis stated that he was not interviewed by the CTF, but he has seen a lot of these (referring to consensus items) frustrations and he appreciates the District's efforts in addressing them. Other members added their appreciation for the CTF's efforts.

Announcements

- Ms. Caroline McKnight, Board and Executive Services manager, announced the next meeting will be on March 8, 2018 and members will tour the CW Bill Young Reservoir, as requested at a previous meeting.