Minutes of the Meeting

WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER BASIN BOARD

Southwest Florida Water Management District

Lecanto, Florida February 9, 2006

The Withlacoochee River Basin Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District convened for a regular meeting at 9:05 a.m., February 9, 2006, at the Lecanto Government Center, Lecanto.

**Board Members Present**
- Talmadge “Jerry” Rice, Chair Ex Officio
- Seeth K. Trimpert, Vice Chair
- Robert "Ben" Huss, Secretary
- Martha Jane "Janey" Baldwin, Member
- John "Jack" Dennis, Member
- Albert L. "Bo" Rooks, Jr., Member

**Board Members Absent**
- Paul M. Mazak, II, Member

**Staff Members**
- Bruce C. Wirth
- Lou Kavouras
- Mark A. Hammond
- James A. Brooks, Jr.
- Rand Frahm
- T. Scott Harbison
- Michael L. Holtkamp
- Gordon L. McClung
- Philip Rhinesmith
- Douglas K. Sanders

**Recording Secretaries**
- Joan E. Riccardelli
- Tahla Paige

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 Rice called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Riccardelli called the roll and noted a quorum was present. Chair Rice said that if any member of the public wished to address an item, they fill out a blue speaker card and to be given an opportunity to speak at the appropriate time. (CD Track 1/0:01-0:57)

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
   - Chair Rice led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. (CD Track 1/0:57-1:11)

3. **Additions and Deletions to Agenda**
   Ms. Lou Kavouras, Executive Coordinator, stated there were no additions/deletions to the agenda. Ms. Kavouras introduced Ms. Tahla Paige, Senior Administrative Assistant, who will assume the Basin Board responsibilities of Ms. Joan Riccardelli, upon her retirement at the end of March. (CD Track 1/1:12-1:48)

4. **Consent Item:**
   a. **December 15, 2005, Meeting and Workshop Minutes**
      Approve the December 15, 2005 meeting minutes as presented.

      Following consideration, **Mr. Dennis moved, seconded by Mr. Huss, to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.** (CD Track 1/1:48-2:15)
5. **Discussion Items:**
   a. **United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Comprehensive Watershed Management Studies of the Withlacoochee River and the Green Swamp (B037)**

   Mr. Gordon L. McClung, Engineering Manager, Resource Management Department, gave an overview of the project. Mr. McClung stated District staff has identified five options for the Board to consider: (1) stay the course and seek to obtain federal funding by contacting Congressional representatives and have them pursue a line item appropriation; (2) have the Basin provide the remaining funding to the USACE to complete the Study; (3) have the Basin fund and have District staff perform the remaining tasks directly and request the USACE to serve as a peer review partner; (4) fund the remaining tasks without participation by the USACE; and (5) terminate the project.

   Staff does not foresee the USACE getting the necessary funding to move forward in a timely fashion. The Withlacoochee River Feasibility Study is too important and the information is needed to better manage the water resources. Therefore, it is the position of the staff that the Study needs to be completed within a reasonable time period. Staff is not recommending the District provide funding to the USACE to complete the Study. District staff can manage the critical remaining tasks more efficiently as these tasks are the typical watershed management plan tasks that District staff routinely manages with local governments. Staff is recommending the Basin Board consider funding the critical tasks with District staff managing the projects directly. The USACE’s involvement is important; and therefore, staff recommends requesting the USACE participate as a peer review partner. In this arrangement, the USACE could provide funding in the future for either the feasibility study or implementation, if they receive funding for this project.

   Staff recommended the Basin Board consider option 3, have the Basin fund and have District staff perform the remaining tasks directly and request the USACE to serve as a peer review partner, in developing its FY2007 budget.

   Chair Rice asked what would be the cost of the project to the District. Mr. McClung replied a specific dollar amount had not been determined, but it would be an additional cost to the current $15 million dollar budget. Mr. Bruce Wirth, Deputy Executive Director, clarified the Board is being asked to consider funding this project and if it agrees, a detailed budget would be presented at the April Board meeting. Mr. Wirth also stated that $2.9 million was budgeted in the current contract with USACE and the cost may exceed the contract amount. After some discussion, Ms. Trimpert agreed with the chairman the work done by USACE consisted of fluff, and felt the District may be able to complete the work without exceeding the contract amount. She asked if once the project was completed and if the USACE had not received funding for a peer review, could the contract be structured with an out clause for the District. Mr. McClung replied the contract would not affect the ability of the District to move forward on the project. Discussion continued.

   Following consideration, **Ms. Baldwin moved, seconded by Mr. Dennis, to approve staff recommendation to consider option 3.** (CD Track 2/0:01 – 34:58)

   At this time, public input was heard on the matter.

   Mr. Chester Bradshaw, a resident of Inverness, supported the District continuing with this project and suggested, due to the area affected, the Coastal Rivers Basin and the Pinellas-Anclote River Basin could participate in the funding.
Mr. Marco Wilson, a resident of Inverness and a Too Far member, expressed concerns about flooding of the Withlacoochee and riverine system due to increased hurricane activity. Mr. Wilson stated he was concerned about where the current monies were spent and would be spent. He felt, with the current weather conditions, it might be possible to obtain federal funding. (CD Track 2/34:58 – 41:43)

**The question was called, and the motion carried unanimously.**  
(CD Track 2/41:43 – 42:17)

Ms. Trimpert requested the budget numbers in April reflect the breakout of the project through 2010. Mr. Dennis requested the other affected basins be included for funding. Mr. Wirth replied one possibility was the Green Swamp and a request for funds would have to go before the Governing Board.

b. **Lake Panasoffkee Restoration Project (B480)**

Mr. Michael L. Holtkamp, Senior Professional Engineer, Resource Management Department, provided the Basin Board with a project progress report that included a status update on the areas dredged, the revised project schedule, and expenditures to date. Mr. Philip Rhinesmith, Senior Environmental Scientist, Resource Management Department gave an assessment of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) recruitment in the areas that have been dredged. Mr. Rhinesmith detailed the effects of water depth and light penetration on plant growth. Mr. Wirth noted, when considering the water depth of Lake Panasoffkee, that not only is the water level higher, but after dredging the lake it will be two feet deeper. (CD Track 4/0:00 – 22:43)

At this time, public input was heard on the matter.

Mr. David Starnes, a resident of Lake Panasoffkee, stated the project is doing great and expressed concern for the SAV levels. He told the Board that if the lake level had to be dropped to improve the SAV, there would be angry residents who currently live on canals where the water is only two feet deep. Mr. Starnes announced a Lake Panasoffkee Restoration Celebration Day is scheduled for May 27, 2006, which is funded by a grant from the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

This item was for the Board’s information only; no action was required.  
(CD Track 4/22:43 – 25:56)

c. **FY 2007 Cooperative Funding Requests**

Mr. Douglas K. Sanders, Basin Board Planner, Planning Department, stated the applications for the FY 2007 Cooperative Funding cycle were received in December and are provided in the Basin Board budget notebook. Mr. Sanders provided a brief overview of the project submittals received and reviewed the District's project ranking process. Staff will return to the April meeting with initial project ranking and funding recommendations for the Board's consideration. (CD Track 5/0:00 – 2:47)

Chair Rice requested the project rankings be sent to the Board members earlier than the usual mailing to have additional time for review. Ms. Kavouras stated the information could be sent one week earlier than the usual date.

Ms. Trimpert asked when the ranking work meeting would take place. Mr. Sanders replied they would take place in April and June. Ms. Trimpert asked to be notified of the
meetings so she could attend. Mr. Sanders continued with his presentation outlining the timeline of the ranking process.

Ms. Baldwin asked if more than one Board Member attended a ranking work meeting would it have to be noticed. Ms. Kavouras replied the meetings would have to be noticed three weeks prior to the meeting. She noted if there was not enough time to notice the meetings, only one Board member could attend.

Ms. Trimpert asked if any of the storm water projects would qualify for funding under the guidelines for the New Water Protection and Sustainability Trust Fund. Mr. Wirth said he doubted they would qualify and the exception would be if the water was used as an alternative water supply.

This item was presented for the Basin Board's information, and no action was required.

(CD Track 5/2:48 – 7:57)

6. **Reports:**
   a. **Governing Board Broadcast** Ms. Kavouras explained local governments were interested in broadcasting a summary of the District Governing Board meeting. A DVD was created with Ms. Kavouras narrating the summary of the Governing Board Meeting, which was played for the Basin Board Members.

7. **Announcements:**
   a. Social Marketing Workshop: Tuesday, March 7, 2006, Orlando
   b. Basin Board Education Committee Meeting: The March 14, 2006 meeting was cancelled; and the next meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2006.
   c. Basin Board Land Resources Committee Meeting: Thursday, March 16, 2006, 9:30 a.m., Sarasota Service Office
   d. Water Rally: Friday, March 17, 2006, 8:00 a.m., Wyndham Harbour Island Hotel, Tampa
   e. Next Basin Board Meeting: Thursday, April 13, 2006, 9:00 a.m., District Headquarters

8. **Adjournment:**
   Following consideration, **Mrs. Baldwin moved, seconded by Mr. Dennis, to adjourn the meeting.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

***Information Items***

The items listed below were for the Board's information. These items were included in the Basin Board’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 budget, or previous budgets, or were $50,000 or less; therefore, they did not require Board action. Formal presentations are not planned, but staff will make presentations and/or answer questions at the next Board meeting, if the Board so desires.

   1. Transfer Report
   2. Surface Water Improvement and Management Program – Environmental Careers Organization Associates
   3. Florida Automated Weather Network Data Dissemination and Education – Execution Notice

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