

Indian River County Florida

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



Meeting Minutes – Final

Monday, March 11, 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

Charles Kennon Hendrix, Member: 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 1:31 PM.

Supervisors in attendance: Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman
Dr. David L. Cox, Vice-Chairman
Charles Kennon Hendrix
George F. Hamner, Jr., Legislative Liaison

Staff in attendance: Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II
Eric Charest, IRC Interim Natural Resources Director
Andrea Lazzari, IRC Extension Director; UF/IFAS
Jennifer Abbey, District Conservationist, USDA/NRCS
Matt Cox, Environmental Specialist III- OAWP-FDACS
Stephen Wright, Environmental Specialist II-OAWP-FDACS

Public in attendance: Marcel Barbier, Clean Water Coalition of IRC
Honey Minuse, Vero Beach Resident
Laura Moss, BOCC of IRC

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

A. The Minutes for the Board Meeting of February 12, 2024 were approved as written.

Motion: A Motion to approve the February 12, 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 February 2024 was available and reviewed by the Board.

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

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

- ❖ **Farm Bill Programs:** 24 of 56 Active contracts totaling approximately \$1,190,000 over approximately 11,900 acres.
- ❖ **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):** 15 Active Contracts
- ❖ **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):** 9 Active Contracts
- ❖ **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP – WRE) :** 0 application
- ❖ **Conservation Applications: February - March**
 - 1 - Well, Solar pump, pipeline
 - 4 – Livestock water facility
 - 2 – Heavy use areas under troughs
 - 44.5 ac – Annual forages for grazing systems
 - 1 – Well plugging

- 1586 ft – Fence
- ❖ **Other:** Continue conservation implementation field inspections and FY 2024 EQIP application field visits. Developed conservation plans, assessment, and ranking for CSP and EQIP applications. Soil Health Tunnel display at St Lucie County Fair
- ❖ **Next Month:** Continue FY 2024 EQIP application field visits. Complete ranking for CSP applications. Continued conservation implementation filed inspections as needed. Attend and staff booth at Citrus Show April 3. Prepare for the Florida Envirothon competition.

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

- ❖ 2024 Indian River Lagoon Envirothon held Wednesday March 6, 2024 at The Environmental Learning Center. 23 Teams (4 people to a team) participated. Great turnout.
- ❖ Small & Beginning Farms Conference Planning: Possible date to be on a Thursday in September 2024 at the Intergenerational Recreation Center. Will provide the UF/IFAS publication of the Florida Direct Marketing Handbook, food, and possible have a small registration fee.
- ❖ Test Soil Health for Free: A one-time free soil health test for livestock producers in Florida to help improve soil management in rangelands. The opportunity is funded by the Florida Cattlemen Enhancement Board and UF-IFAS Archer Grant.
- ❖ UF/IFAS Extension IR Spring 2024 Programs:
 - Home Gardening Lecture Series – November through April 19, 2024 Brackett Library: 2nd Tuesday 12 PM to 4 PM; North County Library: 2nd Thursday 10 AM to 1 PM. (Free-Pre-Registration Required)
 - FL Master Naturalist Coastal Systems – Begins March 19, 2024, Various Dates/Times Brevard County Extension Office. (\$350.00 Registration Fee)
 - Raising Backyard Chickens – March 20, 2024 @ 6 PM to 8 PM; April 6, 2024 @ 10 AM to 12 PM IRC Extension Office. (\$15.00 Registration Fee)
 - Backyard Wildlife: Feathers Friends & Furry Neighbors – March 28, 2024 @ 10 AM to 11:30 AM Intergenerational Recreation Center. (\$10.00 Registration Fee)
 - Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Certification – Begins April 10, 2024 IRC Extension Office. (\$250.00 Fee)

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

- ❖ No Updates.

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

1. Question:

SWCD: Several supervisors as to what party would ultimately be responsible for enrollment in the program. The suggestion was made to change “Producer” or “Landowner” to “Landowner/Producer” when referring to the responsible party.

FDACS: Mailout letter and enrollment in the BMP program have been vetted by OAWP leadership and are final. The recipient of the letter will be the Landowner. It will ultimately be the landowner’s responsibility to enroll or to get their lessee to enroll in the BMP program.

2. Questions:

SWCD: Offer a link at the end of the letter to the FDACS OAWP website to help explain what agricultural BMPs are.

FDACS: The letter has a brief description as to what BMPs are. The intent is to have the response to the letter directed to the contractor whose first step will be to

determine whether the parcel(s) are agricultural. If they are determined to be agriculture, the contractor and FDACS staff will ultimately have a detailed conversation with the respondee about BMPs.

3. Questions:

SWCD: Include a map of the BMAP with each letter.

FDACS: A map of the BMAP was included in previous mail outs and caused considerable confusion. OAWP decided to leave it out of this mailout effort to avoid confusion

4. Questions:

SWCD: Indian River County Natural Resource Director asked if FDACS OAWP could provide information as to individual properties that were initially found to be agricultural and later found to be non-agricultural during the enrollment. The county would like this data to remove non-agricultural property from their nutrient allocation data set and reassign these properties.

FDACS: The request will be sent to OAWP leadership. FDACS OAWP will not be able to produce any document until after the mailout is complete

E. Eric Charest, Indian River County Interim Natural Resources Director

- ❖ Well drilling by the end of March 2024. Department of Transportation will be well plugging an area on the Eastside of U.S. Highway One North between 41st and 43rd on the sidewalk.
- ❖ Water Consumption: Withdrawal in the County versus different Districts. Pulled data from SJRWMD, number one usage is Public consumption and then next is Agriculture.

F. Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II:

- ❖ **FDACS:** *(No Changes since last month)* Contract 27690: \$315,041.26; Disbursed \$279,226.72 in funds. Balance \$35,814.54 for FY 2024 Cost-Share FY 2023-2024.
- ❖ **FCDEA:** Monday, March 19, 2024 Teleconference @ 2:00 P.M. March 24-25, 2024 FCDEA Mid-Year Meeting in Gainesville.
- ❖ **AFCD:** Area 4 meeting will be held May 23rd from 8:30 am – 1:30 pm CST. At 4505 George Blvd. Sebring, FL 33875. You will need to bring a brown bag lunch. The required four-hour ethics training will be provided during the meeting, free of charge. The agenda is currently being drafted and will be sent out in a few weeks. The free training offer and contests are open to all Districts, however, if your District wishes to participate in any AFCD Business, please send in your Districts 2024 Dues. AFCD is hosting the 2024 NACD Southeast Regional Meeting being held in Gainesville, FL from Sunday - June 16, 2024 through Tuesday - June 18, 2024. Will need FCDEA to assist with Registration, etc. those days.
- ❖ **ENVIROTHON:** Envirothon Competition Wednesday, March 6, 2024 Environmental Learning Center 15 high school teams and 8 middle school teams
- ❖ **OFFICE:** Monthly Meetings Agenda, Minutes. FDACS Cost-Share funding; FCDEA Agenda and Minutes. Poster Contest Conservation theme for 2024 Poster Contest: “May The Forest Be With You Always.” Poster Deadline is March 15, 2024. Sort, judge, inform schools of winners and present awards. OPPAGA Audit: Second Virtual Meeting to be held week of March 18, 2024. FDACS required Audit with Kmetz Elwell , Graham & Associates, PLLC. : In progress. Respond to emails as submitted from CPA. Daily check on legislative Bills: HB-1075/SB-1772 and HB-7013/SB 1058.

5. DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS:

A. House and Senate Bills Filed (Status): *(No action required.)*

- i. House Bill 1075 filed 12/30/2023, Last Action: 03/08/2024 House - Died in Infrastructure Strategies Committee; Related Senate Bill 1772 filed 01/05/2024; Last Action: 03/08/2024 Senate – Died in Community Affairs
- ii. House Bill 7013: Special Districts - filed 12/13/2023, Last Action: 03/07/2024 House – Engrossed, then enrolled; Related Senate Bill 1058 filed 12/21/2023, Last Action: 03/04/2024 Senate – Laid on Table, refer to HB 7013

B. OPPAGA Update (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability):

- i. OPPAGA Audit: Kickoff Zoom Meeting Thursday, February 29, 2024 @ 2:30 -3:30 P.M Audit with State in process.

C. Financial Audit for year ending 2023 (per FDACS contract):

- i. Kmetz, Elwell , Graham & Associates, PLLC. *(No action required.)*

D. Indian River County Farm Bureau hosting a legislative luncheon regarding statutes and laws pertaining to local agriculture. This event will be held on Friday, April 12, 2024 from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM @ Schacht Groves – 6100 12th Street in Vero Beach. An educational seminar will be provided by Florida Farm Bureau Federation Senior Director of Policy and Outreach, Jaime Jerrels. Lunch will be served at noon and will be supplied by locally grown & processed beef by FL Home Grown Meat Co.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Indian River Lagoon STEM Advisory Committee Update:

- i. Small grant program currently accepting grant applications for Indian River County.

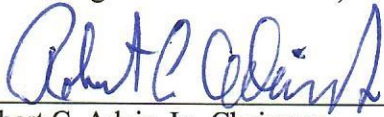
B. Poll Ranking of Board Priorities and the review of June 2007 Business Plan:

Motion: A motion made by Dr. David L. Cox to have the Board of Supervisors review the June 2007 Business Plan and amend the plan to use for our Board Priorities. Each Supervisor is to update and send to Office Staff to prepare for the next meeting April 8, 2024. The Board will review to consider and adopt the plan at the next meeting and Seconded by George F. Hamner, Jr. Motion carried unanimously.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

8. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:18 PM.



 Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman

4-8-24

 Date



 Christine Kelly-Begazo, Secretary/Treasurer

4-8-24

 Date