

Indian River County Florida

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



Meeting Minutes – FINAL

Monday, May 13, 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 1:35 PM.

Supervisors in attendance: Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman – District 1
Dr. David L. Cox – District 2
Christine Kelly-Begazo – District 4
George F. Hamner, Jr. – District 5

Staff in attendance: Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II
Eric Charest, IRC Interim Natural Resources Director
Melissa Meisenburg, IRC Senior Environmental Specialist
Jennifer Abbey, District Conservationist, USDA/NRCS
John Santiago, Conservationist, USDA/NRCS
Micah Dettweiler, Conservationist, USDA/NRCS
Matt Cox, Environmental Specialist III- OAWP-FDACS

Public in attendance: Marcel Barbier, B&W Growers; Clean Water Coalition of IRC
Adam Honour, B&W Growers
Mike Johannsen, Indian River Neighborhood Association
Honey Minuse, Vero Beach Resident
Laura Moss, BOCC of IRC
Judy Orcutt, Clean Water Coalition of IRC

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

A. The Minutes for the Board Meeting of April 8, 2024, were approved as written.

Motion: A Motion to approve the April 8, 2024, Minutes was made by Christine Kelly-Begazo Charles and Seconded by George F. Hamner, Jr. Motion carried unanimously.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

A. The Financial Report for April 2024 was available and reviewed by the Board.

Motion: A motion to accept the April 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:** April – May

- None
 - ❖ **Other:** Completed ranking for EQIP applications. Contract obligations for preapproved CSP applications.
 - ❖ **Next Month:** Contract obligations for preapproved EQIP applications. Continue conservation implementation field inspections as needed.
- B. Andrea Lazzari, Indian River County (IRC) Agricultural Extension Director/ University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF IFAS) Report:**
- ❖ No Updates.
- C. Matthew Cox, Environmental Specialist III, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:**
- ❖ FDACS, via CRI has sent out 990 letters to landowners in the IRL BMAP areas. Those 990 landowners account for 2,126 parcels within the IRL BMAP area. Responses from the letters have come in for 617 parcels. 467 of those parcels have been assigned to staff for enrollment. So far, staff have enrolled 98 parcels.
 - ❖ Of the 617 parcels we have received responses for, 590 want to enroll, 11 inquired about WQ monitoring, 12 have been identified as Not Ag, 1 has been sold, and 3 are silviculture.
 - ❖ Field staff continue to conduct implementation verifications for enrolled producers on or prior to their individual due dates in BMAP's as well as completing cost share projects that are currently ongoing.
- D. Stephen Wright, Environmental Specialist II, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:**
- ❖ No Updates.
- E. Eric Charest, Interim Natural Resources Director:**
- ❖ The Indian River County Administrator has appointed Kylie Yanchula as the New Natural Resources Director, effective Tuesday May 28, 2024.
 - ❖ Eric will be the Assistant Director of the Natural Resources Department.
 - ❖ Linda's office has been moved to Building A as of last Thursday May 9, 2024.
- F. Linda Caggiano, Staff Assistant II:**
- ❖ **FDACS:** Contract 27690: \$315,041.26; Disbursed \$279,226.72 in funds. 2 Pending Cost-Shares and Audit \$34,256.13 to be paid for the Cost-Share FY 2023-2024. 03/29/2024 Mailout to Agricultural Landowners within the IRL Basin Management Action Plan.
 - ❖ **FCDEA:** FCDEA Mid-Year Meeting held in Gainesville. March 24-25, 2024. Prepare for the 2025 Legislative Session. Key function of SWCD's. Elected Pro's: Local Voice, possible lack of SWCD knowledge, constituents have vote, guaranteed Agriculture Representative. Elected Con's: Hidden Agendas, Appointed Local Voice. Mixed Board Three (3) Appointed and Two (2) Elected: Pro: Able to fill board easier. Con: Chance of too much controversy on the Board, then get dissolved. Seven (7) people Appointed by the Agricultural Commissioner. Sit down now, go over issues. Combined Districts-How can your SWCD still be effective? If regionalized, what happens to Staff? Add a component in NEW Law? Partners like USDA-NRCS have been combining offices. Look at the map, what other SWCD should your SWCD be combined with? Voice of Agriculture. Build relationships with law makers, social media, tag elected officials. Inform public of Districts actions. Annual Meeting September 3, 4, 2024 Gainesville. OPPAGA Report should be posted, mapping of Districts reorganization. SE Conservation District Employee Association Fundraiser: Each SWCD received 10 tickets to sell – 5 tickets for \$20.00. \$40.00 due to SECDEA Winning ticket receives a Solo Stove Bonfire 2.0 Backyard Bundle. (Supervisor George F. Hamner, Jr. contributed the \$40.00 and purchased the tickets.) SECDEA Mid-Year SECDEA Mid-Year: November 5 - 6, 2024 Music Road Conference Center, Pigeon Forge

- ❖ Supervisor George F. Hamner, Jr. contributed \$40.00 for the SECDEA Mid-Year fundraiser.
- ❖ **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. AFCD Annual Meeting November 1, 2, 2024 Sandestin, FL
- ❖ **OFFICE:** SWCD Office has been moved from Building B to Building A. Monthly Meetings Agenda, Minutes. FCDEA Agenda and Minutes. OPPAGA Audit. FDACS required Audit with Kmetz Elwell, Graham & Associates, PLLC.: In progress. Election: Districts 2, 3, 4 & 5 are up for General Election November 5, 2024.

6. DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS:

A. OPPAGA Update (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability): *(No action required.)*

- i. Audit with State in process.

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

- i. Review of Draft Audit, Client Representation letter, and AFR for Approval: Kmetz, Elwell, Graham & Associates, PLLC.

Motion: A motion to approve the 2023 Audit, Client Representation letter, and the AFR as presented was made by Dr. David L. Cox and Seconded by George F. Hamner, Jr. Motion carried unanimously.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Indian River Lagoon STEM Advisory Committee Update:

- i. STEM Advisory Meeting held May 7, 2024, in Sebastian. Dr. David L. Cox mentioned the passing of Dr. M. Dennis Hanisak, member of FAU Harbor Branch research faculty. Dr. Dennis Hanisak is remembered as an eminent marine scientist, a devoted teacher and mentor, and a pioneering conservationist for Indian River Lagoon.
- ii. Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) Spatial Watershed Iterative Loading (SWIL) Model Update Meeting Information from April 30, 2024.

Lack of information about ground water. There use to be a lot more monitoring and now we do not have the information.

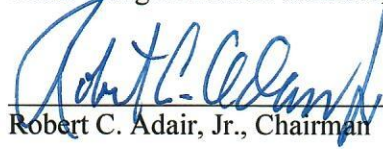
B. FDACS Enrollment within Central IRL BMAP.

C. Business Plan/Poll Ranking of Board Priorities:

- i. Table until June Meeting.

8. NEW BUSINESS:**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:36 PM.


Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman

06-10-2024
Date


Christine Kelly-Begazo, Secretary/Treasurer

6.10.24
Date