

# Indian River County Florida

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



Indian River Soil and Water  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## Meeting Minutes – Approved

Monday, October 6, 2025

1:30 PM

### Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors

*Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman: Seat 1*

*Christine Kelly-Begazo, Vice Chairman: Seat 4*

*Dr. David L. Cox, Secretary/Treasurer: Seat 2*

*Adam W. Honour: Seat 3*

*George F. Hamner, Jr., Legislative Liaison: Seat 5*

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Robert C. Adair, Jr. called meeting to order at 1:31 P.M

**Supervisors in attendance:** Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman – Seat 1  
Dr. David L. Cox – Seat 2  
Adam W. Honour – Seat 3

**Supervisors absent:** Christine Kelly-Begazo – Seat 4  
George F. Hamner, Jr. – Seat 5

**IRC Staff and**

**Partners in attendance:** Eric Charest, IRC Natural Resources Assistant Director  
Matthew Cox – FDACS-OAWP  
Steven Wright – FDACS-OAWP  
Andrea Lazzari, IRC Extension Director; UF/IFAS IRC Extension

**Public in attendance:** Honey Minuse

**2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA/EMERGENCY ITEMS:**

None

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. The Minutes for the Board Meeting of September 8, 2025 were approved as written.

**Motion: A Motion to approve the September 8, 2025 Minutes as presented was made by Supervisor Cox and seconded by Supervisor Honour. Motion carried unanimously.**

**4. FINANCIAL REPORT:**

A. The Financial Report for September 2025 was submitted by the Treasurer for review by the Board. Interest under the FDACS Checking Account was found to be in error on the summary document. Interest earned on the Checking account for the month of September was \$0.07, not the \$0.7 reported on the sheet. An edit was made to the Treasurer's report to reflect the updated interest amount.

**Motion: A Motion was made by Supervisor Honour to accept the amended Treasurer's Report. Motion was seconded by Supervisor Adair and passed unanimously.**

**5. REPORTS:**

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

❖ Not in attendance due to Government shut down.

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

❖ Andrea provided an update that as of October 1, 2025, The UF/IFAS Extension was now located under the Natural Resources Department within the County and not under Parks, Recreation and Conservation Lands. This organizational change more accurately aligns with the County's effort to focus on the Natural Resources within the County.

- ❖ Andrea also explained the current vacant 4H staff position and her ability to begin recruiting for the position.
  - ❖ Supervisor Adair asked about future tabling efforts for the Soil and Water Conservation District materials at the Small Farmer’s Conference and inquired about any additional feedback beyond the update presented by Andrea at the previous meeting. No additional information was available.
  - ❖ Supervisor Adair inquired about any laboratory results from groundwater samples thought to be collected by UF/IFAS at the Morningstar Chicken Farm. Andrea responded that she had only provided instructions on sample collection and that she did not collect any samples nor was she aware of any laboratory results from any samples that may have been collected at that site.
- C. Matthew Cox, Environmental Specialist III, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:**
- ❖ Matthew provided a report that 3 Cost Share applications had been received for Projects within Indian River County, involving pump automation and water control structures.
  - ❖ Supervisor Cox inquired about whether or not the FDACS Cost Share programs would be available for Imperiled Species efforts. Matthew was unsure about applicability of FDACS cost shares for that program.
- D. Stephen Wright, Environmental Specialist II, Office of Agricultural Water Policy- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (OAWP-FDACS) Report:**
- ❖ Steven reported that recent FDACS cost shares within Indian River County have involved cross-fencing.
- E. Eric Charest, Indian River County Natural Resources Assistant Director:**
- Report presented on on-going efforts to provide the SWCD Supervisors with control for the District’s website and Facebook page. Discussion continued from previous District meeting with regards to the on-going level of support of the District by the County. Mr. Charest reiterated the County’s commitment for a Staff II level of support to provide assistance to the District for on-going District Board meeting agendas and meeting minutes. This assistance would also include use of a County facility for hosting District Board meetings, such as Room B1-501. The County would not assume responsibility for managing the District’s FDACS grants and would not be responsible for the District’s audits nor maintaining the District’s compliance schedules.

## **6. DISTRICT MATTERS:**

**A. IRSWCD Responsibilities as they relate to annual FDACS Grant requirements:**

No updates provided on this.

**B. Website Updates**

Eric Charest provided the District with information on the District’s need to assume control over the District’s website, and make the required updates in order to become compliant with the State requirements for Special Districts. Supervisor Honour offered to work on the District’s website and requested information from Eric regarding information on the District’s current website and requirements to become compliant with State standards. Eric to provide this information via a Onedrive link.

**C. Point of Contact for District Moving Forward:**

- ❖ Supervisor Honour requested a digital copy of the prior Staff Assistant II’s Operation Manual that she had prepared for the District. This document is to be provided to the District Supervisors by Eric Charest electronically. Supervisors are then requested to identify pertinent tasks they feel the District should continue with in order to have a future discussion on a brand identity for the District and what efforts the District will

undertake and that will drive the future website for the District that Supervisor Honour will assist the District in developing.

- ❖ Eric Charest provided the District with reassurance that any communications received by the County that should be pointed to the District will continue to be disseminated as has been done in the past. As of the October 8, 2025 Board meeting, only 1 call since Linda's departure had been received inquiring about what was thought to be a District item, but rather was an activity of the UF IFAS Extension group. That caller was put in touch with the UF IFAS Extension group operating under the County's Natural Resources Department. No motion needed on this item.
- ❖ Recognizing how important maintaining a network of connections with Other Special Districts is, a discussion was held on the need to maintain Linda's network of connections. This was just a discussion as no Supervisor action was taken on this nor was a new point person within the District Supervisors identified.

#### **D. Future Meeting Frequency and Schedules:**

Supervisor Adair feels that in-person monthly meetings are still required during this timeframe with the current legislative microscope for Special Districts within Florida. Supervisor Cox remained in agreement with this schedule as well. No motion made regarding any changes to current meeting schedule.

### **7. OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **A. Consideration of the use of IRSWCD's cash funds**

No further discussion was had on this topic.

#### **B. Groundwater discussion**

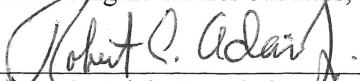
Supervisor Adair brought up the on-going topic of the need to have a Groundwater Modeling effort undertaken in the County, this time facilitated by hearsay regarding the possibility of leaking wells at the FPL Okeechobee Clean Energy facility due to suspected increase in salinity levels in agricultural wells. This discussion included topics on what the St Johns River Water Management District is responsible for versus what other entities may be able to do. No Supervisor action was taken on this item.

### **8. NEW BUSINESS:**

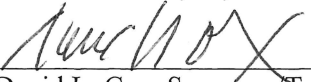
- ❖ Honey Minuse provided an update to the District Supervisors on the change in direction for NextERA (parent company of FPL) that previously sought to become the Nation's supplier of water services, but is now stepping away from that goal. Also Ms. Minuse provided an update on the upcoming groundbreaking on the City of Vero Beach's Water Reclamation Facility.
- ❖ Supervisor Adair discussed Florida Statutes 582.20 that enables Soil and Water Conservation Districts to make available opportunities for property owners or farmers certain equipment or machinery. This may include creating 'demonstration farms' with funds from the District. Similar examples appear to be currently underway, funded through programs such as through UF/IFAS. Supervisor Honour discussed possibly looking into a simpler project scope, but during additional discussions this may be duplicating efforts already in place through other organizations such as UF/IFAS. 582.20 also provides opportunities for training. Conversation ended with Supervisor Adair asking Andrea at UF/IFAS Agricultural Extension if she could find out if the possibility exists for UF/IFAS to do some demonstration projects or training within the Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District boundaries. No motion was made, nor was any Supervisor action needed on this.

### **9. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 15:30.

  
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Robert C. Adair, Jr., Chairman

Nov. 10, 2025  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David L. Cox, Secretary/Treasurer

11/10/2025  
Date