***Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District - Board of Supervisors***

**Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: 02/21/2023**

Meeting Location: HSWCD Conf. Room – Bert Harris Center

 **FINAL – Approved March 21, 2023**

Recorded by: Susie Bishop

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| **Name** | **Title** | **Organization** | **Present** |
| **ATTENDANCE** |  |  |  |
| Dr. John CauseySteve SmithDoug DeenSara SebringT.J. WohlScott Kirouac | ChairmanVice-ChairmanSecretary/TreasurerSupervisorSupervisorLiaison  | Highlands Soil & WaterConservation DistrictHighlands Co. Board of County Commissioners | YYYNYY |
| Susie BishopDrew PittsKayla NickersonCarlos Torres | Executive DirectorMIL ManagerBMP Tech.District Cons. | Highlands Soil & Water Highlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterUSDA-NRCS | YNNY |
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 **Meeting Scheduled Start: 3:00 P.M. Call to Order: @ 3:07 P.M.**

 **Public Meeting Announcement Read by Chairman**

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **Approval of Agenda –** Motion to approve agenda as presented (Smith/Deen) Unanimous Approval.
3. **Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 3, 2023 -** Motion made to approve the minutes as presented (Wohl/Smith). Unanimous Approval.
4. **Financial Activity**
5. **Overview & Approval of Financial Reports- December 2022 & January 2023:** Review of bank statements, financial reports and CD statements were reviewed. Motion to approve the financial reports as presented (Smith/Wohl). Unanimous Approval.
6. **CDs purchased –** Bishop explained the levels of CDs purchased via Equitable. No action taken.

 **VI. Agency Partner Updates**

**a. FDACS –** Bishop reported OAWP has a new Director, Mr. West Gregory who was

 formerly an attorney for DEP. The new Assistant Director is Mr. Bret Prater, who

 was formerly in a capacity at The Capital. Commissioner Simpson selected both of

 Directors for the Department independent of each other. No Action.

1. **MIL** –Bishop reported MIL Evaluations are at required amount. Interviews will take place on February 22 & 23 for the MIL Manager & MIL Technician. MIL Manager Pitts has decided to leave his position in Mid-March. No Action.
2. **NRCS** – Torres gave updates on upcoming deadlines for application for their programs. He reminded that all producers need to keep their owner information current with USDA-FSA office in Okeechobee. An email inquiry from U.S. Fish & Wildlife was received by Torres regarding office space for a new position in the area. Bishop will correspond with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife contact and report back to the Board. No Action.
3. **HCBCC –** Kirouac reported on County projects and decisions. No Action.

 **VII**. **Old Business**

 **NONE**

**VIII. New Business**

1. **AFCD Annual Meeting –** Bishop reported on the Annual Meeting including the number of new Supervisors in attendance and election of new officers for AFCD. No Action.
2. **OPPAGA -** Bishop distributed details & information acquired at the AFCD Annual Meeting regarding the upcoming OPPAGA. It will commence in Fall 2023 and HSWCD can expect to be heavily involved. Supervisors were asked to review the materials in an effort to be prepared for potential individual interviews by OPPAGA Team. No Action.
3. **Staffing –** Bishop announced a new BMP Technician has been hired, Ms. Lauren Ahrens. She will start on March 1, training under Kayla Nickerson. The MIL Positions will be filled soon since interviews are this week. No Action.
4. **FDACS Training –** Bishop explained the SWCD Admin. Training she and Audrey Driggers developed and conducted per a request from FDACS-OAWP. The training was well received and appreciated. No Action.

 **IX. Executive Director’s Report**

 **Items presented:**

* Community Garden is at full capacity
* Annual Audit – CPA has completed the review of the books and released them to the audit firm.
* All County Commissioners and the County Administrator have been presented the Annual Report via a face to face meeting.
* Supervisors who received a letter from the state regarding their non-complete Oaths of Office were informed that Bishop corrected and re-submitted them.
* Central Florida Regional Planning Council asked HSWCD to partner with them to host the Land Owner’s Expo in early June. Concensus of the Board was to sponsor it again.
* Bishop taught Leadership Highlands Class Ag Day in January.
* Bishop presented the Local Working Group Results to the State Technical Committee in January.
* The future of Ag Venture program was discussed.

**IX. Citizens Not on the Agenda – None**

 **X. Supervisor Comments**

None

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Meeting Adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

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**John Causey, Chairman Doug Deen, Secretary**

 **Post Meeting Action Items**

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| ***Action*** | ***Assigned To*** | ***Deadline*** |
| *Submitted Corrected Oath of Office Statements for Board to Florida Dept. of State* | *S. Bishop* | *Feb 2023* |
| *Conduct Interviews and selection of MIL Manager and MIL Technician* | *S. Bishop* | *Feb. 24, 2023* |
| *Orientation of new BMP Technician* | *S. Bishop* | *March 1, 2023* |
| *Review of request for office space from U.S. Fish & Wildlife* | *S. Bishop* | *Feb. 24, 2023* |
| *Monitor Annual Audit & Prepare for OPPAGA* | *S. Bishop* | *June 2023* |
|  |  |  |
| *Explore the creation of a new hybrid MIL/HSWCD Position with FDACS & BOS* | *S. Bishop* | *Until filled* |
| *Monitor need for a lobbyist*  | *S. Bishop* | *Ongoing* |
| *Continue to monitor and distribute Hurricane Ian Recovery Programs* | *S. Bishop & Staff* | *Ongoing* |
| *Monitor SB 1078, SWCDs statewide* | *S. Bishop* | *Ongoing 2023* |
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