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

**Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: 05/23/2023**

Meeting Location: HSWCD Conf. Room – Bert Harris Center

**FINAL – Approved 06/20/2023**

Recorded by: Susie Bishop

**Meeting Scheduled Start: 3:00 P.M. Call to Order: @ 3:01 P.M.**

**Public Meeting Announcement Read by ChairmaN**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dr. John Causey  Steve Smith  Doug Deen  Sara Sebring  T.J. Wohl  Scott Kirouac  Susie Bishop  Kayla Nickerson  Lauren Ahrens  Chad Harmon  Wade Smith  Carlos Torres  Sierra Arens  John Davis | Chairman  Vice-Chairman  Secretary/Treasurer  Supervisor  Supervisor  Liaison  Executive Director  BMP Tech.  BMP Tech.  MIL Manager  MIL Tech  District Cons.  Soil Consv.  Auditor | Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Co. Board of  Commmissioners  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  Highlands Soil & Water  USDA-NRCS  USDA\_NRCS  Wicks, Brown, Wms. | Y  Y  Y  Y  Y  Y  Y  Y  Y  N  N  Y  Y  Y |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **Approval of Agenda –**  Motion to approve agenda as presented (Deen/Sebring)

Unanimous Approval.

**Presentation: Audit – Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2022**

John Davis with Wicks, Brown, Williams, CPA Firm presented the Audit Report. There were no findings and he expressed the accuracy of the records of the District. Motion to accept the Audit as presented (Smith/Deen). Unanimous approval

1. **Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2023 -** Motion made to approve the

minutes as presented (Smith/Sebring). Unanimous Approval.

1. **Financial Activity**
2. **Overview & Approval of Financial Reports- April 2023:** Review of bank statements, financial reports. Bishop shared a new bank account has been opened for the DEP/Stolen Saddle Ranch Contract. Motion to approve the financial reports as presented (Wohl/Smith). Unanimous Approval
3. **Agency Partner Updates**

**a FDACS –** Bishop & Adams reported on the OAWP Statewide meeting. The

moratorium on IV Visits staff has been lifted and new procedures were trained at the

meeting. The revised IV procedures are a bit simplified. There are numerous new

field staff throughout the state and more positions to fill. No Action

1. **MIL** –Bishop reported the April Invoice was submitted with all required evaluations being completed. Staff attended the Quarterly MIL ICC meeting in Citra. Beginning June 1, the MIL staff will begin working four 10 hour days per week. No Action.
2. **NRCS** – Torres reported NRCS is still working on Hurricane Recovery projects and the emergency funding has extended its deadline to July 24. Applications are being taken for year 2024. NRCS is seeking to fill a Soil Conversationalist and Soil Scientist positions for the Sebring office. No Action.
3. **HCBCC –** Kirouac reported on County projects and decisions including recent appointment of Billy Barben to NRAC, the burn ban is still in effect, updates on IMWID, and budget work. No Action.

**VI**. **Old Business**

**a.Stolen Saddle Ranch Project –** Bishop reported all documents/contracts have been

fully executed. Once the firm conducting the study submits its first set of invoices the

District will work with DEP to receive funds to make payments. No Action.

1. **New Business**
2. **LOCAR – Lake Okeechobee Component A Reservoir Project** – S. Smith and Bishop reported on the public meeting sharing the map of the proposed area for the vast project. Being such a large project it will take several years to start and complete.

**VIII. Executive Director’s Report**

**Items presented:**

* Bishop explained a new billing arrangement with Carlson Accounting for the monthly, quarterly and annual services they provide to the District. Board supports the presented fee structure. No Action.
* OPPAGA is collecting surveys from Districts now and will soon be deciding if they will conduct the audit internally or contract out. Bishop will keep the Board informed regularly as to the status of our OPPAGA.
* Gratitude was expressed to Scott Kirouac and the County for the continued support of the Community Garden with the donation of some peat soil and a dump truck delivery. The garden is at full capacity and thriving.
* The June 13 Landowner Expo flyers were distributed to the Board. HSWCD is providing the lunch and staff support of the event.
* Updates on other SWCDs were shared – Polk being dissolved; Lake appointing 3 new Supervisors recommended by Representative Truenow; Hillsborough Board terminated its Executive Director and Highlands SWCD may assist them with payments from their contract to producers.
* Ag- Venture future was discussed. Bishop asked what the Board was willing to commit to the program to support paid staff to administer the entire program with support of an advisory board. Per discussion and consensus, the Board wants to see an estimate of hours and calculate an hourly rate to get to a salary and then will consider up to $5000.00 towards the salary. Bishop will report back on this next month.

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

**X. Supervisor Comments**

Deen - None

Sebring – None

Wohl – None

Smith – None

Causey - None

Meeting Adjourned at 4:52p.m.