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

**Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: 08/15/2023**

Meeting Location: HSWCD Conf. Room – Bert Harris Center

 **FINAL – Approved 9/19/2023**

 Recorded by: Susie Bishop

**Meeting Scheduled Start: 3:00 P.M. Call to Order: @ 3:03 P.M**

**Public Meeting Announcement Read by Chairman**

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| Dr. John Causey Steve Smith Doug Deen Sara Sebring T.J. Wohl Scott Kirouac Susie Bishop Kayla Nickerson Lauren Ahrens Chad Harmon Wade Smith William Adams Carlos Torres Sierra Arens Crenel Francis Marcus Shorter  | ChairmanVice-ChairmanSecretary/TreasurerSupervisorSupervisorLiaison Executive DirectorBMP Tech.BMP Tech.MIL ManagerMIL TechES 1District Cons.Soil Consv.WRE-Easement Spec.Asst. State Conserva. | Highlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & Water Highlands Co. Board of  CommmissionersHighlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterHighlands Soil & WaterFDACS-OAWPUSDA-NRCSUSDA\_NRCSUSDA-NRCSUSDA-NRCS | YYYYYNYYYNNYYNYY |

1. **Approval of Agenda –** Motion to approve agenda as presented (Smith/Wohl).

 Unanimous Approval.

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

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

 **Special Presentation**: USDA-NRCS Assistant State Conservationist Marcus Shorter

 & WRE Easement Program Specialist Crenel Francis presented Easement

 Programs available to landowners in Florida. ALE-Ag Land Easements,

 WRE-Wetland Reserve Easements and GSS-Grasslands of Specific

 Significance. NRCS is seeking properties in Florida to purchase Easements

 Via these programs with considerable funding available. A Real Estate

Acquisition Training with targeted participation of Real Estate Agents is being organized for late November or early December to be held in Sebring.

1. **Financial Activity**
2. **Overview & Approval of Financial Reports- June 2023:** Review of bank statements & financial reports with detailed discussion regarding the Budget to Actual Report. Motion to approve the financial reports as presented (Sebring/Deed). Unanimous Approval.
3. **Agency Partner Updates**

**a FDACS –** K. Nickerson & Bishop provided updates on field staff work. HSWCD

 staff is ahead on their IV Completion List. Applications are being sought for

 Cost Share projects. No Action.

1. **MIL** – The MIL Team is ahead of schedule for completed evaluations. Bishop reported many hours have been spent working on the revisions of the Scope of Work, no final presented to date. The issues with the Project Manager at FDACS continues to be a challenge, but Bishop has been working with other MIL Staff and FDACS-OAWP leadership to address all the concerns. No Action.
2. **NRCS** – C. Torres reported 2024 applications are being accepted. For 2023 Year there are 6-7 Contracts for 2023 CSP and 12 contracts for EQIP. Also, there will be emergency funds available for use by farms, governments, etc.
3. **HCBCC –**Bishop reported on behalf of Commissioner Kirouac regarding the Budget, Mobile Home Parks Zoning/Ordinance and IMWID. No Action
4. **Old Business**

 a. **Strategic Work Plan** - Bishop distributed the current Short Term & Long Range

 Work Plans asking for input for the upcoming workshop. No Action.

1. **New Business**
2. **Warner University Scholarship –** Bishop presented an ask from the University for a Scholarship/s in the Ag. Degree Programs. By Board consensus, Bishop will request historical information of previously awarded scholarships. Tabled until Sept. 19, 2024...
3. **Ag-Venture Sponsorship Level –** Bishop explained plans for a part time Director Position for Ag Venture to be created and the goal to secure 2 year commitment sponsorships to increase the overall funds/budget. Per discussion, motion made to contribute $5,000.00 for 2024 & 2025, above the annual program donation of $2,000.00 (Smith/Deen). Unanimous Approval.
4. **Executive Director’s Report - Items presented:**
* The first payment for the Stolen Saddle Ranch project should be made this week.
* AFCD Mid-Year Annual Meeting in Gainesville Sept. 26 & 27. Bishop will attend part of the meeting.
* Community Garden work day with inmates will be Sept. 6 and all plots are secured by Gardeners.
* Having met with D. Ramba in Tallahassee, there are rumblings about potential SWCD Legislation... Bishop is working on ideas to be proactive if Legislation is presented.
* Commissioner has experienced negative experiences with Hillsborough and Bradford SWCDs.

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

 **X. Supervisor Comments -**

Smith - NoneDeen - None

 Sebring – None Wohl – None

 Causey - None

Meeting Adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

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