

HIGHLANDS SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT - BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: 07/16/2024

MEETING LOCATION: Conf. Room 3 – Bert Harris Center

FINAL – Approved 8/20/2024

Recorded by: Susie Bishop

MEETING SCHEDULED START: 3:00 P.M. CALL TO ORDER: @ 3:01 P.M.

PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT READ BY CHAIRMAN

I. Welcome & Introductions

Name	Title	Organization	Present
Dr. John Causey	Chairman	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Steve Smith	Vice-Chairman	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Doug Deen	Secretary/Treasurer	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Sara Sebring	Supervisor	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
T.J. Wohl	Supervisor	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Scott Kirouac	Liaison	Highlands County Board of County Commissioners	N
Susie Bishop	Executive Director	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Kayla Nickerson	BMP Tech.	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Lauren Ahrens	BMP Tech.	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Chad Harmon	MIL Manager	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Wade Smith	MIL Tech.	Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District	Y
Carlos Torres	District Conservationist	USDA-NRCS	N
Jared Lee	Finance & Grants Admin.	City of Sebring	Y

II. Approval of Agenda

Motion to Approve the Agenda with the addition of Item III.b City of Sebring Projects – Jared Lee (Wohl/Sebring). Unanimous Approval.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes - May 21, 2024

Motion made to approve the minutes as presented (Smith/Sebring). Unanimous Approval.

B. City of Sebring Projects – Jared Lee

Mr. Lee explained a few projects the City is pursuing funding for to improve the quality of Lake Jackson. Bishop explained she had shared the SWFWMD Cooperative Funding Initiative program to the City, which Lee is working on now. Consensus of the Board advised Lee to return when he knows if The City is being considered for a Grant so HSWCD can discuss providing some of the required local match of funds. No Action.

IV. Financial Activity

A. Overview & Approval of Financial Reports- May & June 2024:

Review of bank statements & financial reports. Motion to approve the financial reports as presented (Sebring/Wohl). Unanimous Approval.

B. **CD Investments**

Bishop reported the CDs with LPL were withdrawn with earned interest and reinvested in First Southern Bank and Heartland National Bank. No Action.

C. **FY Oct. 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023 Audit Filed**

Bishop explained the Audit was submitted to all required filings on June 27, 2024. She referred the Board to page 59 of the Final Audit to review the revised language regarding the CD investments. Bishop also shared a conversation she had with the Auditor General's office regarding the CD Investments with positive feedback as to how easy our response to their future inquiry will be since the issue cited has been corrected. No Action.

V. Agency Partner Updates

A. FDACS

K. Nickerson updated the Board on the status of the new process for the OAWP cost share program, no definitive details have been made available to staff so there is little activity

with producers at this time. BMP Manuals are in the Rule Making stage and language in Scopes of Work have changed a lot too. Next week Bishop has a call with the Contract staff to review these changes. No Action.

B. MIL

Harmon reported they completed the contract year with a total of 226 Of the required 163 evaluations being completed. Work is still being completed on the MIL Scope of Work and the Standard Operating Procedures. No Action.

C. NRCS - No report

D. HCBCC - No Report

VI. Old Business

A. OPPAGA

Bishop shared the District edits, inaccuracies and response to recommendations she will submit to the OPPAGA Auditors. Explanation and attachments were provided for the responses. No Action.

B. Ethics Training

Bishop reminded the Supervisors to complete their Ethics Training. No Action.

C. Landowner Expo, June 11, 2024 Recap

A summary of the survey results was presented. No Action.

D. NACD SE Regional Meeting – June 16-19, 2024 Recap

Bishop reported on the meeting and the special event Florida hosted. The event and conference were all well received with many positive comments. No Action.

E. NRCS State Technical Meeting-June 12, 2024 Recap

K. Nickerson reported on the results from our Local Working Group meeting being presented at this meeting with a request to be informed of what changes are made as a result of her presentation and the state technical meeting. No Action.

F. Administrative Specialist/NRCS Agreement

Bishop reported Nickerson has completed all of the extensive paperwork for the agreement with her screening as the only task left to be completed. Bishop shared proposed salary and payroll expenses for the new position with 50% of these costs being paid via the NRCS Agreement. Motion made to accept the proposed salary level for Nickerson in this new position (Smith/Sebring) Unanimous Approval. Bishop stated Nickerson plans to transition

into the new position on or around September 3, 2024. The new position was opened to all HSWCD staff with interest in transferring to the position received from Nickerson only.

VII. New Business

A. Trainings for Leadership

A brief description and costs affiliated for upcoming training opportunities for K. Nickerson to participate in was presented. Motion made to increase funding for training in the budget by \$3000.00 in the upcoming 2024-2025 fiscal year. (Wohl/Sebring). Unanimous Approval.

B. Anticipated Legislation

Bishop explained everyone is anticipating legislation to surface in the Fall with Bills being filed in the 2025 Session. No knowledge yet as to what exactly will be filed but she beginning to work to assemble Districts to create ideas and suggestions that will work for all as much as possible. Farm Bureau Federation will be contacted to see if they will help us to get organized

VIII. Executive Director's Report

Nickerson & Ahrens are converting all of the hard copies for producers in the programs managed by the District to electronic files.

Staff continues to work a summer schedule and it is working well.

IX. Citizens Not on the Agenda – None

X. Supervisor Comments

- A. Smith – None
- B. Deen – None
- C. Sebring – None
- D. Wohl – None
- E. Causey – None

Meeting Adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

John Causey, Chairman

Doug Deen, Secretary

POST MEETING ACTION ITEMS

Action	Assigned To	Deadline
<i>Stay abreast of City of Sebring-Lake Jackson projects & funding</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Monitor, review and discuss FDACS-OAWP revised procedures and policies</i>	<i>S. Bishop & K. Nickerson</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Provide Ethics Training Links to Supervisors</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>July 17, 2024</i>
<i>Complete OPPAGA Responses & engage with auditors regarding the edits, inaccuracies and responses</i>	<i>S. Bishop & K. Nickerson</i>	<i>July 31, 2024</i>
<i>Complete revision of MIL Appendix, SOW & SOP</i>	<i>S. Bishop & MIL Staff</i>	<i>TBD</i>
<i>Complete the USDA-NRCS Partnership Agreement & Funding</i>	<i>S. Bishop & K. Nickerson</i>	<i>September</i>
<i>Conversion of Hard Copy Records to Electronic</i>	<i>K. Nickerson & L. Ahrens</i>	<i>September 30, 2024</i>
<i>Manage DEP Stolen Saddle Ranch Contract</i>	<i>S. Bishop</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Engage with Farm Bureau regarding potential Legislation</i>	<i>S. Bishop & K. Nickerson</i>	<i>August 1, 2024</i>
<i>Attend AFCD Board Meeting in Tallahassee</i>	<i>S. Bishop & K. Nickerson</i>	<i>August 2, 2024</i>
<i>Training Registrations for Staff</i>	<i>S. Bishop & K. Nickerson</i>	<i>Oct. 31, 2024</i>