

Okeechobee Soil and Water Conservation District

Board of Supervisors September Meeting Minutes

Approved Date: November 21, 2024

Location: 200 NW 5th Street Conference Room

Minutes:

- I. Motion to approve the August 14, 2024, Meeting Minutes (Sellers/Figley). Motion passed unanimously.
- II. Motion to approve the Financial Report as presented (Rutledge/Figley). Motion passed unanimously. The Board requested that bank reconciliation reports stay on record in the office and will review them when they come in to sign other documents.
- III. Staff Program Reports
 - a. Howard Harrison, NRCS District Conservationist announced his last day as the Okeechobee Field Office D.C. is October 4th. He will be the new Area 4 Resource Conservationist assisting all Field Office in the area. There are 42(Glades-19, Okee-23) active EQIP and 56(Glades-16, Okee-40) CSP contracts staff are managing.
 - b. Sheila Kitaif, Environmental Manager gave an update on the FDACS BMP Cost Share program and requirements. Audrey Kuipers will send out the information via email to the Board.
 - c. FSA- no new programs. The office is finishing up Hurricane Ian applications.
 - d. Vicki Wheeler and Audrey Kuipers gave the OSWCD program update. Vicki is working on developing classroom presentations geared towards 3-4 graders. Vicki has been working diligently on making our website ADA compliant, while her and Audrey reorganize and add new information. Audrey Kuipers reported that our hardship request was denied by NRCS, but they want to revisit it in 2027. The BOCC will meet on September 26 to adopt their final budget which includes our grant agreement. Audrey shared that AFCD Board members are resigning and that the FASD and Representative Keith Truenow are requesting FDACS cancel their contract with AFCD and let the FASD take over.
- IV. Unfinished Business
 - a. Motion to support the SECDEA Conference at the Gold level (Sellers/Figley). Motion passed unanimously.

- b. Audrey Kuipers went over the Ethics Training requirements. The Board will be reviewing the free trainings online to satisfy the 2-hours of ethics and will review the Open Government power point presentation during the October and November Board meetings.

V. New Business

- a. Motion to approve the FY 25 Meeting Schedule, Payroll and Holiday Schedules (Sellers/Figley). Motion passed unanimously. The approved meeting schedule will be posted at the Service Center, on our website, and in the newspaper.
- b. Legislative Priorities were discussed. It was the consensus of the Board to stay a single-county District but would support Commissioner Simpson's plan and the best interests of agricultural producers. There was no strong opinion on elected versus appointed. Supervisor Sellers will represent the Board at the October 10th Legislative meeting in Gainesville, FL.
- c. Motion to approve the FY 24 Budget Amendments (Sellers/Rutledge). Motion passed unanimously.
Motion to approve a 3.2% COLA for staff (Sellers/Rutledge). Motion passed unanimously.
Motion to approve the FY 25 Proposed Budget which reflects the COLA adjustment and \$350 deducted from line item 537.054 Books, Dues, Memberships and \$5000 deducted from line item 537.031 Professional Services (Sellers/Figley). Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Supervisor and Public Comments- None

- a. Upcoming Events and Deadlines
- b. Board of Supervisors Meeting: October 9
- c. FCDEA Legislative Workshop: October 10; 10am-2pm; Gainesville, FL
- d. AFCD Annual Meeting: November 1-2; Destin, FL
- e. SECDEA Conference: November 5-6; Pigeon Forge, TN
- f. Board of Supervisors Meeting: November 13
- g. Farm City Day Luncheon: November 21

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Adopted at the November 21, 2024, meeting.