**Lake Soil and Water Conservation District**

**Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting**

**November 6, 2019**

The Board of Supervisors, Lake Soil and Water Conservation District (LSWCD), met on November 6, 2019, at the UF/IAS Lake County Extension Center at 1952 Woodlea Road, Tavares, Fl 32778. Those present were:

**Supervisors:**  Banks Helfrich, Rose Fitzpatrick, Robert Myatt, and Cassandra Brown

**Absent:** Supervisor Tim O’Connell. He has now resigned his position as Supervisor.

**Guests:** Megan Mann, Extension Services Director; Lauren Dorval, FDACS, OAWP; and Diedre Irwin, Water Conservation Coordinator, SJRWMD

**Staff:** Sharon Redding, Administrative Assistant, LSWCD

At 3:00, Banks Helfrich, Chairperson, called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting had been noticed and proof of publication was presented. Also proof of publication for the legal ad placed in the Daily Commercial was presented.

**Welcome:** Banks Helfrich introduced Diedre Irwin, our guest speaker for the meeting. Mrs. Irwin is the Water Conservation Coordinator, Bureau of Water Supply Planning, for the St. John’s River Water Management District. There was a slide presentation, as well as a handout presented, concerning the conservation of water. The handout was specific to projects of SJRWMD in Lake County (which there are many). Mrs. Irwin will send several links of interest to the Board to Ms. Redding for the Board’s use in the future. She also hope to partner in a project in the future.

**Public Comment:** the floor was open for public comments; no public comments were brought forth.

**Meeting Minutes:** The September minutes was approved as submitted.

**Financial Report:** The September financial report was approved as submitted.

**Correspondence/Action Items:** A bill from The Daily Commercial was given to Rose Fitzpatrick, Treasurer. This was for the legal placed to notice the public re the removal of a Supervisor. This is not a recurring bill.

**USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS):** Chuck O’Rourke could not attend the meeting, however, he emailed his report to everyone prior to the meeting. The report is as follows, read by Rose Fitzpatrick:

* Kevin Hill is the new District Conservationist in the Tavares office. He will be reporting on December 9, 2019. I plan on working with him and introducing Kevin to the Lake County customers I have worked with over the past 5 months. Kevin and I will work together on the Land Judging contest scheduled for February 27, 2020. I will assist Kevin with the Soils section of your Envirothon scheduled for March 26, 2020.
* For Fiscal Year 2019, Lake County, there were 23 EQIP contracts obligated totaling $346,608 on 1,163 acres. Also, 3CSP contact obligation totaling $86, 324 on 606 acres.
* We are currently working on certifying installed/implemented conservation practices and making payments. Also, working with program participants in modifying their conservation contracts to reschedule late practices.
* NRCS Florida has not announced a batching date for 2020 financial assistance applications because new rules and policy for the 2018 Farm Bill are not finalized yet. We hope to begin processing applications in January and February of 2020.

**FDACS Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP):** Lauren Dorval reported that since the beginning of their fiscal year, July 2019, she has completed two cost share projects. One was an irrigation retrofit to enhance the irrigation system to run more efficiently on a vegetable farm. The second was a manure spreader with a GPS on a cattle/hay operation which improves the rate and efficiency nutrients are applied. There are three more projects that are still in the process of being completed.

**Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL):** No one was present from MIL, but Adam Boykin sent the following report: 35 of 69 evaluations have been completed. Also, the invoice has been completed and submitted to FDACS for payment. James Fort with FDACS is checking on the status of Direct Deposit. The past payment should have been Direct Deposit and we received two checks. Adam Boykin will update with any additional information on the deposit status.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Resolution to remove a Supervisor:** Rose Fitzpatrick read a letter from Timothy O’Connell, dated August 1, 2019. Tim sent the letter to Governor Ron DeSantis, in Tallahassee. The mystery of why LSWCD never received the letter is solved since the letter was mailed to Tallahassee. The LSWCD Board accepted Tim O’Connell’s resignation. Rose Fitzpatrick read Mr. O’Connell’s letter to the Board, where Mr. O’Connell stated he resigned due to family issues. Also, Tim O’Connell has a new mailing address which is 10751 Crescendo Loop, Clermont, FL 34711. Mrs. Fitzpatrick has spoken with Clegg Hooks, Deputy Director, Office of Agricultural Water Policy, FDACS. He suggested that we check with the State of Florida Supervisor of Elections, as well as our County Supervisor of Elections. Banks Helfrich, Chairperson, suggested we put the word out that we need another supervisor to fill the vacancy of Tim O’Connell—that term will continue until the end of 2020. Discussion. Several names were mentioned as possible candidates; a couple of Board members said they would make contact with the suggested names. Banks Helfrich will also post the vacancy on our Facebook page.

**Website:** Rose Fitzpatrick is working on the website; it’s still a work in progress. Mrs. Fitzpatrick took photos of Banks Helfrich, Robert Myatt, and Cassandra Brown to post on the website.

**Mission Statement:** After much discussion, it was decided that this subject is too broad and complex to be discussed and decided at this meeting. This subject is tabled until the December meeting.

**County Commissioner’s Report:** No report given

**“Green Leap” Meeting Report:** No report given

**Seacoast Bank a sponsor?:** Rose Fitzpatrick will be glad to ask Seacoast Bank to be a sponsor for LSWCD as soon as she has a flyer to distribute.

**2020 Events:**

* **Tree Give-Away:** Banks Helfrich reported this year we will be giving out the following trees: Green Ash (90), White Dogwood (90), American Elm (90), Red Maple (90), and Slash Pine (250). The Florida Department of Agriculture gave us $300 this year as compared to $200 last year. Lauren Dorval suggested a source for liners for next year’s Tree Give Away. Sharon Redding reported that Traci Anderson, of the City of Tavares, is already getting many phone calls asking about the trees/types—people looking forward to the event. Banks Helfrich will look into other things to promote.
* **Flyer and Environthon :**  Robert Myatt gave everyone a sample of the flyer he has in mind. He is having many issues with his printer/computer and cannot get the flyer to print the way he wants. Discussion. Please review and let him know if you would like any changes to your contest before the Board makes the final decision next month. Mr Myatt will be checking costs of having the flyer printed. The Environthon has a new part of the event this year -- Current Events and will need assistance. A person is needed to make up the test and monitor the test. He is also going to contact the person who ran the Environthon in Marion County last year. Discussion.
* **Scholarship:** Cassandra Brown still working on the project. Ms. Redding gave her information that was found in records from last year.
* **Land Judging:** Rose Fitzpatrick has been working closely with Sumter County. This year’s Land Judging Contest will be February 27, 2020.
* **Speech:** There will be no speech contest.

**Report contest dates//times/contacts to School Board:**  Cassandra Brown will contact the School Board and give them the requested information.

**Facebook photo contest and poster contest**: Banks Helfrich wants to have a photo contest on Facebook. A person must submit a photo of themselves and the winner will be announced the next month. All the details of the contest not yet worked out. A motion was made by Rose Fitzpatrick, seconded by Robert Myatt, to have the photo contest on LSWCD’s Facebook page, with Banks Helfrich as the administrator. Motion carried unanimously. The contest is to start in January, 2020. Banks Helfrich has no information on the poster contest, as all that information had been given to Tim O’Connell. However, the poster contest will be on March 2, 2020. Megan Mann made a flash drive with the poster contest information and gave to Mr. Helfrich.

**Farm Tour:** Too late to get tickets, completely sold out.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Meeting date for 2020:**  The Board decided to have a meeting every month in 2020. The dates are as follows: 1/15/20; 2/19/20; 3/18/20; 4/15/20; 5/20/20; 6/17/20; 7/22/20; 8/19/20; 9/16/20; 10/21/20; 11/18/20; 12/16/20

**Invoice for Florida Department of Economic Opportunity:** Rose Fitzpatrick, Treasurer, paid the invoice upon receipt.

**Board Comments:**

Banks Helfrich has a special project that is a non-partisan project concerning voting. Let’s talk—“VOTE.” Doesn’t matter what political party you belong to, just get out and vote.

Cassandra Brown suggested that LSWCD should contact the area colleges for help and assistance. They might want to partner with us concerning water conservation.

**Adjourn:** No further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:57 pm and the next meeting will take place on December 6, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Redding, Administrative Assistant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_