**ESCAMBIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MINUTES May 16, 2024**

# Board Members in Attendance

Mr. Travis Tharp, Chair; Mr. Johnnie Odom, Vice-Chair/Acting Treasurer; Mrs. Carollyn Taylor, Secretary.

# Attendees

Mr. Joshua McElhaney, USDA/NRCS; Mrs. Debbie Williams, Escambia County NRCD.

# Call to Order

Mr. Travis Tharp called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

Those present stated the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag in unison.

# Minutes of the Last Meeting

Mr. Johnnie Odom made a motion to approve April 18, 2024 regular Board meeting minutes. Seconded by Mrs. Carollyn Taylor. Motion carried.

Mr. Odom made a motion to approved May 2, 2024 workshop minutes. Seconded by Mrs. Taylor. Motion carried.

# Acknowledgment of Public Notice

Meeting advertisement published.

# Treasurer's Report

Mr. Odom had visited the Warrington Bank for a printout of the bank statement for review. The original bank statement was mailed to the office. After review, Mr. Odom’s printout and the original bank statement were correct.

# Reports

Mr. Joshua McElhaney, District Conservationist, gave an update on the office workload pertaining to Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Mr. McElhaney informed the Board of the grant from NACD for the Feral Swine Program in which Blackwater SWCD was rewarded. The grant covers Santa Rosa and Escambia County. Mr. McElhaney stated another grant opportunity may be available through the RCCP for conservation easements. This program would be a partnership with Santa Rosa county and possibly Okaloosa county. Once he receives more program details, he will let the Board know.

# Old Business

The upcoming AFCD Area meeting will be held on Thursday, May 30, 2024 in Marianna. Mr. Tharp and Mrs. Taylor are planning on attending. The meeting will also have available a free required Ethics training available.

Mr. Tharp stated there had been no more information requests for OPPAGA review process.

Regarding an ‘eco minute’ segment and the possibility of nonprofits billboards, Mr. Odom stated he is waiting for return calls.

Mr. Odom inquired about the upcoming Native Plant Society meeting in which Mr. Tharp will attend and speak at. Mr. Tharp said he would have the PowerPoint for the Board’s review before the Native Plant Society meeting.

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Mrs. Taylor did attend one night of the Tate Rodeo. She stated it was a good turnout and nice event.

Mr. Odom asked if any news had been received regarding the submitted Board's budget. Mrs. Williams stated she is not in the upper management group who reviews or submits the proposed budget for final approval, therefore hasn't received any information on the status.

**New Business**

Mr. Tharp has been extensively researching journals and abstracts on milkweed and the many varieties there are. All milkweed plants are native except for 1, which is native in Polk County. There are three native species generally available as seeds in Florida nurseries.

Mr. Tharp stated through his research, the non-native tropical milkweed definitely needs to be eliminated. In addition for information, bees are the pollinators of the plant, not the Monarch butterfly. However, the plant is the host plant for the monarch in which the larva feed on.

Mrs. Debbie Williams distributed the updated Jones Swamp Wetland Preserve Management plan for the Board's review. The Board will review the plan and provide feedback/comments via email to Mrs. Williams.

It was noted the NACD-Feral Swine program sign up deadline is June 14, 2024.

Also, the Florida Association of Special Districts (FACD) meeting being held June 10-18, 2024 in Orlando, FL was briefly discussed.

A representative from the Education & Outreach Company reached out to the Board regarding free educational samples. Mrs. Taylor did speak with her and the representative will be sending out the free samples soon.

As reminders, the next Board workshop meeting will be Thursday, June 6, 2024 beginning at 4:45. The meeting will be held at the Pensacola Library on Spring Street

The July workshop meeting will be held directly after the regular Board meeting on Thursday, July 18, 2024.

With no further business coming before the Board, Mr. Odom made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second by Mrs. Taylor. With all in favor, meeting adjourned at 10:00a.

Signed Minutes on File

Mrs. Carollyn Taylor, Secretary