

# BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MINUTES

## July 18, 2024

### **Board Members in Attendance**

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

### **Attendees**

Mrs. Debbie Williams, Escambia County NRCD; Mr. Joshua McElhaney, USDA/NRCS; Mr. Levi Blackmon, Santa Rosa County Natural Resources; Mr. Christian Fleliberty, USDA/NRCS Soil Technician.

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Travis Tharp called the meeting to order at 9:06am.

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 June 20, 2024, regular Board meeting minutes. Seconded by Mrs. Carollyn Taylor. Motion carried.

### **Acknowledgment of Public Notice**

Meeting advertisement published.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The original bank statement was mailed to the office. After review by the Board, all were in favor of the balance reflected.

Mr. Odom stated he hasn't reviewed any BOCC meetings as yet regarding any updates on the Board's proposed budget but will soon do so.

### **Reports**

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

Mr. McElhaney introduced the new Soil Technician, Mr. Christian Fleliberty, for USDA/NRCS. Mr. Fleliberty gave a brief background of himself and his interests within NRCS.

### **Old Business**

Mr. Jeff DeWeese stated he withdrew from election for the Group 4 seat on Monday and he should be officially removed from the election website today. He did speak with a representative at the Supervisor of Elections Office regarding any issue of him being appointed to the Board. There shouldn't be any issues for his appointment. After a brief discussion regarding the appointment of Mr. DeWeese, Mr. Odom made a motion to appoint Mr. DeWeese to Group 3. Seconded by Mrs. Carollyn Taylor. Motion carried.

#### Updates Discussions:

Mr. Tharp stated the Eco-minute review will be discussed further at the following workshop meeting being held after the regular Board meeting on July 18, 2024.

Mr. Odom stated the contact for outdoor billed board hasn't returned his call. He will try again next Monday if need be.

Regarding the required Ethics training, all Supervisor have completed the training along with filing their Form 1. Mr. DeWeese will do so by the next regular Board meeting in August.

Mr. Tharp had created a PowerPoint for the Native Plant Society's meeting however another guest speaker had been invited to the same meeting. Therefore Mr. Tharp will give his presentation at the next Plant Society on Tuesday, August 6, 2024.

Mr. Tharp stated there has not been any updates from OPPEGA regarding the Board's requested updates.

Mrs. Taylor stated the upcoming workshop locations have been confirmed. The August and September workshop meetings will be held on the first Thursday at the Tryon Branch Library. The October workshop meeting will be held on the first Thursday at the Pensacola Library (main branch) on Spring Street.

#### **New Business**

Mr. Levi Blackman gave an update pertaining to the Feral Hog Program. A grant was awarded by National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) in the amount of \$202,000.00. Eligible landowners with a feral hogs would be able to receive a cost share for installing fencing to certain specifications to deter hogs from crop/forest land.

Discussions held on the number applications, cost share guidelines, and fencing standards. Further discussions held on areas of most concern with feral hogs and the growth impact throughout the years.

Mr. Blackmon discussed a proposed project through RCCP, which would include the counties of Santa Rosa, Escambia, and Okaloosa. Project would be creating conservation buffers to along certain lands. Counties would need to match/input funding to go along with the funds being distributed by the State of Florida. This could be an opportunity for the Escambia SWCD Board to work with other counties, along with the BOCC, and create areas of conservation easements in areas that could be impacted negatively by development.

Mrs. Williams reviewed the letter of support for Natural Resources Conservation grant from Urban and Community. The grant will be an educational outreach about urban forestry.

Mr. Odom made a motion to support the project. Mrs. Taylor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Odom discussed emails the Board receives inviting each member to join a candidate's election gathering at different events. He suggested the Board may attend some events not as individuals but a Board to have more of a community involvement.

With no further business coming before the Board, Mrs. Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Odom. With all in favor, meeting adjourned at 10:25a.

Carolyn Taylor, Secretary  
(Official signed minutes on file)