***ESCAMBIA***

***SO/LAND WATER***

***CONSERVATION DISTRICT***

DISTRICT SUPERVISORS' MINUTES

November 21, 2024

## District Supervisors in Attendance at Call to Order of Meeting

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

## District Supervisors in Attendance at Call to Adjourn Meeting

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

Mr. Chris Curb (Appointed) Mrs. Karen Sindel (Appointed)

## Attendees

Mr. Trevor Huff, District Aide to Representative Salzman; Mr. Chris Curb, Flood Defenders, Guest; Mrs. Karen Sindel, Guest; Mr. Joshua McElhaney, USDA/NRCS; Mrs. Debbie Williams, Escambia County NRCD; Mr. Christian Feliberty, USDA/NRCS.

## Call to Order

Mr. Travis Tharp called the meeting to order at 9:13. Quorum was present to officially hold meeting.

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

## Welcome of Guest/Introductions

Mr. Trevor Huff introduced himself. Mr. Huff is a District Aide to Representative Salzman and was attending the Board meeting to learn about the Board.

Mrs. Karen Sindel introduced herself. Mrs. Sindel is retired from the county's planning board, she is a timber farmer, and is interested in the Board.

Mr. Chris Curb introduced himself. Mr. Curb is retired from the county's engineering department, is a technical advisor for Flood Defenders, and is interested in the Board as well.

## Minutes of the Last Meeting

Motion was made by Mr. Jeff DeWeese to approve the minutes from the November 2024 regular meeting. Seconded by Mr. Johnnie Odom. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Odom to approve the minutes from the October 2024 workshop meeting. Seconded by Mr. DeWeese. With all in favor, the motion carried.

## Acknowledgment of Public Notice

Meeting advertisement published.

Mrs. Debbie Williams stated the notice on myescambia.com had the meeting incorrectly listed as a workshop meeting but other information was correct. The notice which appeared

in the Sunpress was name correctly. In addition, the county will now begin to use the Pensacola News Journal as meeting announcements instead of the Sunpress.

# Treasurer's Report

The bank statement ending October 30, 2024 was reviewed by the Board. Mr. Odom stated no activity has occurred and all information is correct Mr. Odom will go by the Warrington Bank to deposit some funds to maintain the account as active.

# Reports

Mr. Joshua McElhaney, District Conservationist with USDA/NRCS gave a DC report Discussion on number of contracts for EQIP and CSP, acres enrolled, and funding amount

allocated.

Discussion held on the new Farm Bill and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). The ACEP protects the agricultural viability and related conservation values

of eligible land by limiting nonagricultural uses which negatively affect agricultural uses and conservation values, protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring or conserving eligible grazing land, and protecting and restoring and enhancing wetlands on eligible land.

Mr. McElhaney will obtain more information regarding the program, along with avenues in which the District, Farm Bureau Board, and other county entities could partner with USDA/NRCS to help implement the program.

Discussion held on verbiage of different policies and procedures outlined not only at the county level, but at Legislative levels as well. One in particular were the policies of trespassing signs, the interpretation of the policies and ones who would enforce them.

# Old Business

Discussion was held on the proposed draft budget as stated before and located on the Board's webpage. Mr. DeWeese made a motion to approve the budget Mr. Odom seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Discussion held on the Board's vacant seat. It was the intention to appoint Mr. Curb to the vacant seat at the meeting. Mr. Curb has been to a couple of meetings and has stated his interest in serving.

Mrs. Sindel was invited to the meeting to meet the Board with the possibility of her having interest in serving on the Board as well.

With the meeting being the first for Mrs. Sindel, informative discussion was held on SWCD having to have a full Board with at least one meeting being held with all 5 members, background on Legislative changes, and the direction the Board wants to go with projects and programs.

After further discussion on an appointment to the current vacancy. Mr. Odom made a motion to appoint Mr. Curb to group 5. Mr. DeWeese seconded the motion.

With all in favor, the motion carried.

Mr. DeWeese stated he had previously sat on the Board many years ago but was approached a few months back regarding serving again on the Board since there was a vacant seat Although Mr. DeWeese still supports and wants to be involved with programs, he believed Mrs. Sindel would be an asset to the Board.

Mr. DeWeese stated he would like to step-up and requested the Board accept his resignation immediately but wanted to reiterate Mrs. Sindel should be appointed to his seat

Mr. DeWeese further added, although not sitting as a Supervisor on the Board, he will remain in the bullpen so to speak in order to help with the aquaculture project and other projects/programs if needed.

With Mr. DeWeese's resignation, Mrs. Taylor made a motion to appoint Mrs. Sindel to vacant seat 3. Mr. Odom seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

It was mentioned the two appointed seats will need to run in the 2026 general election.

Regarding the availability of the Board for meetings, a change in meeting day would be needed. Mr. Odom made a motion to move the meeting day to Wednesday at 9:00am beginning in January 2025. Mrs. Sindel seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

The meeting date will be January 15, 2025 at 9:00am.

Regarding of the county's Natural Resources moving to a larger facility and Mrs. Williams having the District files with her to continue administrative duties, discussion held on moving the District files with her.

Mr. Odom made a motion the files be moved to the new county location for availability when needed by Mrs. Williams. Mrs. Taylor seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

The files will be moved when Mrs. Williams relocates to the new facility.

The Board discussed changing the official mailing address. The address will be changed to the new county facility in order for Mrs. Williams to have access the District's notices.

As a reminder, the next workshop is Thursday, December 5, 4:45 at the Tryon Branch library.

The regular December meeting will be held on Thursday, December 19, 9:00am at the

Molino Farm Bureau building.

**New Business**

Review was done of the Records Compliance statement The Board agreed to being in compliance and noting electronic records were disposed of from the official Board website.

**Add-On**

Before adjourning, Mr. Odom showed the draft design for the Monarch plant digital billboard. The Board discussed the design, incorporating a link citizens could go to in order to learn more, interest of the Native Plant Society to help fund a billboard, and items to put on the Board's website.

Mr. Odom will bring updated design to the workshop meeting and will provide Mrs. Williams

so she may put on the website.

With no further business coming before the Board, Mr. Odom made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Chris Curb.

With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 10:50am.

**Signed minutes on file**

Mrs. Carollyn Taylor, Secretary