

ALACHUA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

March 27, 2023 5:30pm
Alachua Chamber of Commerce
14801 Main Street, Alachua

Present: Archie Matthews(AM), Patricia Lee(PL), Walt Boyer(WB), Patrick Sell(PS), Jancie Vinson(JV), Monica Jones(MJ), Ken Cornell, Barton Wilder, Michael Lynch, Penny Weber

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 by Chairman Walt Boyer. A quorum was present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted with minor corrections. **Motion (JV) Second (PS), Motion passed.**

Treasurer's Report. – Balance in checking is \$1629.13, check for \$10.00 to NACD is pending.

NRCS

DC Jones reported that EQUIP and CSP signup deadlines were last Friday.

- There are 35 EQUIP applications for Alachua County. There is funding for planting pine trees, forestry and grazing.
- There are 7 CSP applications for Alachua County.
- A new employee is coming.
- The office is being remodeled
- Questions about getting information to landowners about EQUIP, CSP, etc. Answer: there is a statewide outreach coordinator.

FDACS/OAWP

Barton Wilder reported that there are staff changes.

- Cost share project begin with the new fiscal year July 1st.
- The AFCD Area meeting will be May 18th. The Gilchrist SWCD will be hosting the meeting. The location will be the Trenton Women's Club building.

Friends of Nature Parks

Penny Weber spoke about the Friends of Nature Parks, it is a 501(c)(3) organization focused on citizen education about nature parks.

- City staff is involved. There are 3 locations in Gainesville.
- Current focus is on elementary school education at Morningside Nature Center
- there are problems with getting funding for school field trips.
- Examples of nature poetry by students were distributed.
- Question: does Friends of Nature Parks fund school field trips? Answer: yes, 5-6 schools in Gainesville.
- Question: what is the difference between an active park and a nature park. Answer: active parks are those that have sports.

Alachua County Commissioner Ken Cornell

- Commissioner Cornell reported on funding from the County.
- Some funding is designated 90% conservation, 10% recreationere are

- Wild Spaces/Public Places is 80% 20%
- On April 4th there will be public discussion about a proposed meat processing facility near Newberry. There are concerns about funding for continuing operation. There may be some Federal funds available. The emphasis for this facility is locally sourced food. The facility will be run by the producers, not the County. The County is investing funds.
- There are concerns about the loss of agricultural lands. There is some funding available for the protection of farmlands.
- Chairman Boyer stated that he would like to make a presentation to the Commission.
- Ms. Weber expressed concerns about the funding process for conservation lands, some of the funding sources are anti-agriculture.
- Supervisor Sell commented that FWS has money available, but information is lacking.
- Chairman Boyer commented about the Koppers Superfund site and Hogtown Creek. Hogtown Creek is in need of restoration, there are concerns about the high fecal bacteria count.
- Commissioner Cornell noted that there is a City/County Water Board.
- Supervisor Sell reported that Jennifer McElroy from GRU will be here on June 26.
- Commissioner Cornell reported that there will be a County/City of Newberry meeting about the meat processing facility on May 8th.

Unfinished Business

- Banner. Seeking sponsorship. Renaissance Printing has been approached, not heard back yet.
- Supervisor Vinson suggested a printer in Chiefland that she has used.
- We are seeking partnerships. A sponsor could have their name placed on any printed materials they sponsor.
- Logo Kicks may be a source. The Chairman will contact them. Office depot was suggested. We would like to have a sponsor cover the costs.

New Business

- Community involvement. Chairman Boyer stated that we would like to find cash partners to help with awards and recognitions. We would like to emulate successful programs like Hillsborough County.
- We would like to partner with 4H and IFAS. Supervisor sell will make that contact.
- Questions about contacting the School Board. Supervisor Vinson will make contact.
- We would like to encourage student to participate in the Speech and Poster contests.
- Future plans include:
 - Stewardship Awards Banquet
 - Scholarship
 - Local Land Judging Contest.
- Question about Advisory members/Associate Supervisors
 - We want to have active advisory/Associate members
 - Supervisor Matthews volunteered to contact current Associate Supervisors to determine the level of participation they are able to provide. It was suggested that the Chairman contact them.

Announcements

- The Chairman announced that he will make a presentation to the Newberry City Commission on April 10th, the Hawthorne commission on April 18th.

-Supervisor Matthews announced that we are invited to the C.A.R.E.S program at the Suwannee Valley Research and Education Center on May 2nd. The District has traditionally provided some sponsorship for that event. **Motion by Matthews to send \$50 to sponsor. Second by supervisor Vinson. Motion passed.**

-The state Land Judging Contest will be in Suwannee County on March 31st.

-Supervisor Sell announced that Stacie Greco will be at the next meeting to talk about water. GRU engineer 6/26. There are funds available from the Florida Wildlife Commission for stream banks and watersheds.

-Supervisor Vinson will email a schedule of events to possible participate in.

-Supervisor Lee volunteered to design a brochure and business cards.

-Chairman Boyer is updating the website.

Next meeting will be April 24th at the Alachua Chamber of Commerce Building.

Motion to adjourn(JV), second(PS). Motion carried.

Adjournment at 7:47