

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
of the
LAKE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY
December 18, 2019

The Regular Hearing of the Board of Trustees of the Lake County Water Authority was held at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, in the Lake County Administration Building, County Commissioners Chambers at 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida.

Members Present-District #

Amy Stone, Chairman (#5)
Carolyn Maimone, Vice Chair (#3)
Trampis BonJorn (#2)
Peggy Cox (#1)
Keith Farner (At-Large)
Butch Hendrick (#4)
Courtney Stokes (At-Large)

Staff Present

Michael J. Perry, Executive Director
Ron Hart, Water Resources Director
Dr. Jason Danaher, Water Res. Project Manager
Biago Gugliotti, Land Resources Director
Ben Garcia, IT Manager
Anna Ely, Recording Secretary
Elizabeth Hyatt, Financial Coordinator
Kevin Stone, Attorney

A list of others present that signed the attendance roster is filed in the permanent files of the Water Authority.

1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m. and everyone stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - NOVEMBER 20, 2019 - REGULAR MEETING

VICE CHAIR MAIMONE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAKE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY MEETING OF THE NOVEMBER 20, 2019 - REGULAR MEETING. Mr. BonJorn seconded the motion.

Motion approved 7-0.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Farner nominated Trampis BonJorn for Chairman and Mr. BonJorn nominated Chairman Stone for as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Lake County Water Authority. Mr. Farner voted for Mr. BonJorn; Chairman Stone, Vice Chair Maimone, Ms. Cox, Ms. Stokes and Mr. Hendrick voted for Chairman Stone. The vote was 6-1 in favor of Chairman Stone remaining as Chairman of the Board.

Chairman Stone was re-elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Lake County Water Authority.

Mr. Farner nominated Courtney Stokes for Vice Chairman and Mr. BonJorn nominated Vice Chair Maimone. Mr. Farner voted for Ms. Cox; Chairman Stone, Vice Chair Maimone, Ms. Cox, Ms. Stokes and Mr. Hendrick voted for Vice Chair Maimone. The vote was 6-1 in favor of Vice Chair Maimone remaining as Vice Chairman of the Board.

Vice Chairman Maimone was re-elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Lake County Water Authority.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Perry stated as there are some significant reports to be presented, he will just dispense with his report other than to report that water levels are good.

He noted that two items needed to be pulled from the Consent Agenda: Tab 2 – City of Clermont and the Add-On for the Executive Director Candidate Short List.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Authorization to Transfer Budget Funds for the Purchase of a Sewer Chewer used in NuRF Centrifuge Building

VICE CHAIR MAIMONE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE TAB 3 OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. Mr. Hendrick seconded the motion.

Motion approved 7-0.

AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO TRANSFER \$8,500 FROM BUDGET LINE ITEM NUMBER 9898710-880460 REPAIR & MAINTENANCE TO 9898710-880640 MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT TO ACCOUNT FOR THE GRUNDFOS SEWER CHEWER PURCHASE.

7. REGULAR AGENDA

- a. Authorization to Provide Budgeted Funds to the City of Clermont for the New Boat Ramp

Mr. Perry stated that there are Board approved funds included in this year's budget to support the City of Clermont's new boat ramp. He noted that during last week's workshop it was stated that the Board would like to have a representative from the City of Clermont here at the meeting to accept those funds.

MS. COX AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PROVIDE \$250,000 IN BUDGETED FUNDS TO THE CITY OF CLERMONT TO SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BOAT RAMP AT THE BELL CERAMICS SITE. Mr. BonJorn seconded the motion.

Motion approved 7-0

MS. COX MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LAKE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY AND THE CITY OF CLERMONT TO PROVIDE \$250,000 IN FUNDING FOR THE NEW BOAT RAMP. Vice Chair Maimone seconded the motion.

Motion approved 7-0

A photograph was taken of Board Members with James Kinzler, Deputy City Manager of Clermont. Board Member Trampis BonJorn presented Mr. Kinzler with a check in the amount of \$250,000.

Mr. Kinzler stated that the City is very appreciative of the Water Authority's contribution. He stated that the project is nearing completion and they would be notifying the Water Authority regarding the Ribbon Cutting, which is tentatively scheduled for January 10, 2020.

b. Approval of Executive Director Candidate Short List – add on

Mr. Perry stated that this add-on is related to the results from the workshop held last week related to the Executive Director Candidate Short List. He stated that this item was pulled from the Consent Agenda, as the Short List has changed.

Mr. Perry explained that he had gotten a phone call from Jeffrey Earhart today and he had asked to be removed from the list as he had accepted a position with the County.

He noted that Dr. Jason Danaher has expressed an interest in the position as well, so they can expect to have his application by the end of the week.

VICE CHAIR MAIMONE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION TO BE INTERVIEWED WITH THE CAVEAT THAT THE POSITION HAS BEEN ADVERTISED AS OPEN UNTIL FILLED AND SHOULD ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES APPLY WITH THE NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS, THE BOARD COULD ADD TO THIS LIST OF CANDIDATES TO BE INTERVIEWED AND TO ADJUST THE LIST TO REMOVE JEFFREY EARHART AND ADD DR. JASON DANAHER. Mr. Hendrick seconded the motion.

Ms. Cox asked if we know if the other candidates are still interested and Mr. Perry explained that after the Board takes action today, that Wendy Sellers, the HR Lady, would be contacting each of the candidates to determine their status.

Motion approved 7-0

c. Reinvestment of Maturing CD & Money Market Accounts

Elizabeth Hyatt, Financial Coordinator, addressed the Board and explained that the Lake County Finance Department had recently sent out an RFP (Request for Proposals) from different banks

for investments, CDs and Money Market rates. She explained that the Water Authority took advantage of that request to see the current rates being offered.

She stated that Bank United (where we currently have some of our assets) is offering a 1.85% money market rate, which is higher than the CD rates that are being offered, so we would like to consider moving \$5,000,000 from our SunTrust banking account to Bank United, and once our \$2,000,000 CD with Hancock Whitney matures at the end of January, to also move those funds to Bank United to take advantage of the 1.85%.

VICE CHAIR MAIMONE MADE A MOTION TO INVEST \$5,000,000 IN THE CURRENT MONEY MARKET WITH BANK UNITED AND TRANSFER THE \$2.1 MILLION HANCOCK WHITNEY CD TO BANK UNITED ONCE IT MATURES. Ms.

Cox seconded the motion.

Motion approved 7-0.

d. UF Research Study Report

Dr. Danaher addressed the Board and stated that last year the Agency had funded the University of Florida to do some research on the alum residual in the containment area. He explained that we requested that they look at that material as a potential tool for weed management and as a container substrate replacement for plant production. He stated that staff's hope was that the material would show some potential for either weed management or as an amended substrate for container plants and provide a long-term solution for moving that material off-site.

He explained that there is a lot of container production of plants in the local area and nurseries and showing potential for those uses could possibly increase the demand for that material.

He introduced Dr. Christopher Marble, who is a professor at the University of Florida and part of the Ornamental and Landscape Weed Management team at MREC (University of Florida's Mid-Florida Research & Education Center), located in Apopka. He noted that Dr. Marble's primary focus is on weed management and invasive species, but he also has extensive experience in looking at substrate replacements for container production of plants as well during his time at Auburn University.

Dr. Marble gave a Power Point presentation on the possibility of using the alum residual in ornamental horticulture production in Central Florida.

Dr. Marble stated that the objective of the project was to evaluate the alum residual as a component of nursery and greenhouse potting soils and as a weed management tool.

He explained that they conducted a 16-week study using four different ornamentals which were all native and commonly grown species.

He stated that during the study they looked at weed growth and it did decrease spurge growth by 28% to 48% over the 16-week study. He noted that spurge is the number one container weed species in Florida. He stated that while it didn't perform as well as an herbicide, it is a non-chemical alternative and the material did not provide a reduction in crabgrass growth.

He noted that there was there was no negative impact to the growth of the ornamental plants or difference in growth or marketability with any of the plants.

Dr. Marble stated that as the alum residual does have properties that make it very similar to clay soil there is an on-going experiment, to determine the potential benefits of using the material as a way to extend the life of applied herbicides.

He explained that clay soils absorb and hold herbicides very strongly, so herbicides last a lot longer when they are applied to clay soils as opposed to when they are applied to pine bark substrates in a container in a nursery.

He stated that adding the alum residual on top of the pine bark substrates it may be possible to extend the longevity of herbicides and reduce the number of herbicide applications in a nursery. He stated that it is too early in the study to make a definite conclusion, but it does look promising.

Dr. Marble explained that they also looked at using the material as a potting soil additive, by drying it out and crushing it with a steel roller, then sifting it down and mixing it with potting soil and other substrates like a nursery grower would do.

He found that by adding the alum residual to the potting soil it allows the plants to hold on to more water. He noted that as far as effect on the growth of the plants, it depended on the individual species as to whether there was any effect, with Viburnum being the most sensitive to negative impact.

He stated that it was found that overall by using the alum residual as a potting soil additive, it reduced the amount of water needed. He stated that the major benefits are higher water holding capacity, slightly heavier (which helps prevent blow over) and increases the pH which reduces the need to add lime.

He noted that the negatives aspects are the drying and processing prior to use, the shipping costs to nurseries and more work need to screen additional plant species or additional uses.

He stated that the alum residual has the potential to be a major benefit for use on landscapes, turfgrass, and field crops due to its water holding capacity.

Chairman Stone stated that she appreciated the research that was done and thanked Dr. Marble for coming to present the results to the Board.

e. Draft Final Report - NuRF Improvements - Pegasus, Inc.

Dr. Danaher addressed the Board and explained that the Board authorized a site evaluation of NuRF, to identify areas of concern that may require upgrades and improvements.

He stated that Pegasus Engineering is under a Continuing Services Contract with the Water Authority and they are a Civil Engineering company that focuses on stormwater management projects around the state. He explained that they also work closely with environmental research and design.

He noted that Pegasus and Water Authority staff met several times on-site at the NuRF and held several meetings as well as stayed in close contact as the project developed.

Dr. Danaher stated that the Board had requested a presentation regarding their findings and Pegasus representatives David Hamstra, Greg Teague and Dr. Harvey Harper with ERD were present to discuss their findings, as well as some of their suggestions on some of the upgrades that may be necessary to improve the site. He noted that ERD was instrumental in the original design of the NuRF.

Mr. Teague gave a Power Point Presentation and explained the Purpose and Scope of the work that was performed. He explained that they had basically divided the scope of work into nine specific areas to help keep things more focused.

Area 1 – Debris Passing Through the Primary Intake Structure

Area 2 – Alum Feed and Addition/Mixing Options

Area 3 – Flocculation System

Area 4 – Flooding of the Existing Centrifuge Building

Area 5 – Increased Sludge Dewatering Capacity

Area 6 – Improved Access to Flocculation Storage Area

Area 7 – Flocculation Disposal / Reuse Options

Area 8 – Water Wells

Area 9 – Alternative Treatment Options

He stated that they would be reporting on the evaluations and conceptual improvements of each focus area as well as the associated costs and the recommended phasing of implementation.

He stated that NuRF has been in operation for ten (10) years, an operational evaluation is required to identify opportunities for improving reliability, decreasing down time, and increasing treatment efficiency and/or capacity.

He noted that in evaluating the NuRF, they had broken the site down into different areas and each area was evaluated.

Following is the contents of the report and accompanying slides and pictures:

f. FWC Speed Zone on Palatlahaha

Mr. Hart stated that two years ago the Board had received some concerns from local residents about the erosion that was occurring at Waterside Point. He explained that Waterside Point is a subdivision on the Clermont Chain near the mine pit that is located within the Palatlahaha Marsh. He noted that the subdivision is located along the Palatlahaha that connects Lake Hiawatha to Lake Palatlahaha.

He explained that especially during higher water elevations, the Water Authority began receiving complaints and requests from the residents for a Speed Zone at that location, as boaters were causing wakes that were eroding their sections of the shoreline.

Mr. Hart explained that when staff talked with Fish and Wildlife with those concerns, they informed us that there is a Florida Statute that prevents the creation of speed zones on waterways that are wider than 75 feet, unless they meet certain conditions. He noted that this location did not meet any of the conditions needed to create a speed zone.

He stated that soon after, two boaters had accidents in the channel, with one of them being a young girl who crashed her jet ski into one the resident's docks and there was another push by residents to create a speed zone in that area.

He explained that staff presented the issue to the Board and the Board had directed staff to approach FWC to try and create a speed zone for that area. He stated that staff supported this request because as an agency, we didn't want the burden of the next boating accident or another young kid getting into an accident and possibly being killed, because of our inaction on that waterway. Even so, Water Authority staff knew it wasn't likely to be permissible.

Mr. Hart stated that staff has submitted multiple applications using just about every section in the Florida Statute to try and utilize the application. He noted that each time FWC has replied that a speed zone isn't justified in that area and we didn't have sufficient statutory ability to permit that speed zone for those purpose, and that it wasn't justified for the premise of the request.

He explained that one of the accidents was the result of the boater being under the influence, and you can't use a drunk boater to say that the conditions caused it. He stated that the second accident involved a minor who was inexperienced and operating their vessel in an unsafe manner.

Mr. Hart explained that FWC did not consider the accidents confident evidence, and even if they did, they would not issue a permit because two accidents do not create a long-term history of accidents.

He explained that because the channel is currently wider than 75 feet, we can't use width as a basis for a speed zone, but during droughts, when the water levels drop way down, it does become narrower than 75 feet, and sometimes it even goes dry, but FWC still stated it wasn't warranted, and even if they did agree to create a speed zone, it would only be for when the channel is low and almost dry.

He noted that the problem with this is not that the accidents are not when the channel is low, but when the channel is full of water and boaters are speeding through the channel.

Ms. Cox stated that if we (LCWA) can't make any headway with the FWC, then maybe the residents could talk to them.

Mr. Hart stated that the residents have talked to them and FWC is telling them the same thing; that Florida Statutes do not allow for the creation of a speed zone due to the width of the canal.

Mr. Farner stated that he wanted it documented and put in our records that we are fighting this decision. He stated if it was okay with the Board, he would like to have Water Authority legal staff write a letter to the FWC Board of Directors

Vice Chair Maimone stated that maybe there is flaw in the law that needs to be addressed.

Mr. BonJorn stated that while it would be safer, there are also those who don't want it, and it can be a problem when you start changing things for a small group. Mr. Hart stated that he has also have seen complaints from boaters who don't want a speed zone to slow them down.

g. BCC Canal Maintenance Ordinance

Mr. Perry informed the Board that on December 17, 2019 that the Lake County Board of County Commissioners approved the proposed Canal Maintenance Ordinance. He explained that any developer that creates new canals will have to provide some option to dredge and maintain those canals.

He also explained that should canal property owners wish they can also request to create a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) and would pay an additional tax that would provide for the maintenance of their canals.

Ms. Cox noted that the ordinance does not pertain to natural canals, but only pertains to man-made canals and modified canals within a housing area to create waterfront property.

Mr. Hendrick noted that Mr. Perry did a good job informing the Board of County Commissioners of the type of issues that might be involved. Mr. Perry stated that he just wanted to the BCC to be informed on what would be involved before they made any decision.

8. LEGAL STAFF REPORT

Nothing to report

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Members of the Board wished everyone a Happy Holiday and noted that they didn't have anything else to discuss at this time.

10. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. Staff Reports
- b. Monthly Financial Reports – September 2019

12. ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Regular Board Meeting - Wednesday, January 22, 2020 (3:30 pm)
BCC Chambers/Admin. Building

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.