

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
of the
LAKE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY
November 20, 2019

The Regular Hearing of the Board of Trustees of the Lake County Water Authority was held at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 20, 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
Brian Nagy, Field Services Manager
Anna Ely, Recording Secretary
Elizabeth Hyatt, Financial Administrator
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 3:30 p.m. and everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MR. BONJORN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAKE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY MEETING OF OCTOBER 23, 2019 - REGULAR MEETING. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion.

Motion approved 7-0.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Perry addressed the Board and gave the water level and rainfall report. He reported that Lake Apopka is currently at regulatory schedule and has been for several days. He noted one hundred percent of the flow has been moving through the NuRF since September 11. He stated that the flow has been at 10 cfs except for a couple of days that it was 100 cfs.

He noted that Lake Eustis, Lake Harris and Lake Dora are either slightly below or at regulatory schedule and flow through the Burrell Lock has been at 18 cfs since the early part of September, when it was above 1,000 cfs.

Mr. Perry noted that Lake Griffin is just slightly below regulatory schedule, with the Moss Bluff Lock and Dam open at the minimum flow of 23 cfs. He stated that total rainfall is slightly above average by about half an inch and we are currently at 101% of the expected year-to-date rainfall. He stated that the month of September was a bust rainfall wise, but the rainfall in October made up for it, with about two and a half inches above the historic average, so we are right where we are supposed to be for this time of the year.

He stated that flow from Big and Little Creek is currently at 88 cfs combined flow, which is much higher than it was this time last year but is about the same as it was the year before. He noted that there was decent rainfall in December and January, and it will be interesting to see what this year brings.

Mr. Perry noted that Lake Minnehaha is right about 97.1 msl which is the target elevation for the Clermont Chain and staff has been reducing the flow through Cherry Lake and Villa City over the past few weeks and currently it is at approximately 11 cfs and it is up to nature to determine what the lake levels are going to be.

He stated that Hurricane Season goes the end of November, and noted that as of this morning, Tropical Storm Sebastien has formed, but fortunately it is moving away from us and is not forecast to be a factor in our weather.

He noted that the Clermont Chain is about 2/10 of a foot higher than it was at this time last year and staff will be keeping an eye on it and doing the best they can do to try and maintain as much water in the Chain through the dry season as is possible.

Mr. Perry reported that NuRF has been accepting 100% of flow from Lake Apopka, which is currently at 10 cfs and has been since September 11, except for a two- or three-day period of flow at 100 cfs at the end of October.

He stated that the staff at NuRF is still working two shifts, seven days a week, and it is likely to stay that way through Thanksgiving. He explained that staff is working on dredging an area of the East Pond that hasn't been dredged recently, so the sediment is thick, and it will take a while to dredge that section.

Mr. Perry noted that staff had received the draft report of the NuRF Study by Pegasus and each Board member should have received a copy via email. He explained that the final report is due to staff in December and it will be on the agenda for discussion in January.

Members of the Board asked what would be different between draft version and final version of the report.

Dr. Danaher addressed the Board and explained that the final version will contain more clarification on the dredging technologies, as well as the centrifuge, along with suggestions such as improvements to the road way and alternative uses of the sediments.

Dr. Danaher explained that the final report will also contain suggestions on budgeting and give an overview on the cost of the proposed upgrades. He also stated that would make suggested on what key improvements should be completed first.

Mr. Perry informed the Board of a transfer of funds from the Money Market account to the operating funds (checking) account.

He stated, “In accordance with Board policy, when the operating funds account falls below \$2,000,000 staff may transfer funds from the Money Market account to the operating funds (checking) account and report to the Board when a transfer is made.” He informed the Board that “on November 14th, staff transferred \$500,000 from the Money Market account to the operating funds (checking) account, following all transfer protocols with the bank including Chairman Stone’s approval.”

Mr. Perry also informed the Board of recent staff changes and noted that Brittany Africano started on October 30th replacing Linda Richardson as a Land Management Ranger and that Doug O’Neil was promoted from part time Park Attendant to full time Field Ranger on September 30th to fill a vacant Field Ranger position.

He noted that Elizabeth Hyatt replaced Chris Rider as the Financial Coordinator on November 18, 2019 and that Sean White was hired for NuRF Operator position and will start in two weeks.

He stated that this still leaves a Field Ranger position and a Lead Field Ranger position open.

Mr. Perry updated that Board on the status of the search for a new Executive Director. He noted that each of them had been provided with copies of the applications that Ms. Sellers has deemed qualified.

Several members of the Board requested to have a workshop where they could go over the applications and discuss the applicant’s qualifications and how they might meet the needs of the Water Authority.

The Board decided to hold the workshop in the Conference Room of the Lake County Water Authority office on Thursday, December 12 at 3 pm.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

MR. BONJORN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Vice Chair Maimone seconded the motion.

Motion approved 7-0.

- a. Authorization to Replace the Boat Dock Bumper Boards

AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH JOHN MURPHY INC. TO REPLACE THE BOAT DOCK BUMPER BOARDS AT HICKORY POINT FOR A TOTAL PAYMENT NOT TO EXCEED \$13,250. THERE IS A \$3,000 DOWN PAYMENT FOR MATERIALS THAT WOULD NEED TO BE PAYED IN

ADVANCE. THE FINAL PAYMENT OF \$10,250 WOULD BE PAID WHEN THE PROJECT IS COMPLETED.

- b. Authorization to Award Safety Improvements Contract

AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO WORK WITH WOODARD AND CURRAN TO IDENTIFY ITEMS WITHIN THEIR PROPOSAL THAT RESULTS IN A RESOLUTION TO ANY SAFETY CONCERNS AT NURF FOR A COST THAT IS WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S SPENDING AUTHORITY.

- c. Approval to Purchase Variable Frequency Drive for Centrifuge at NuRF

AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PURCHASE AND INSTALL A NEW VFD FOR THE CENTRIFUGE MOTOR FROM PARALEE COMPANY, INC. IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$19,000.

- d. Authorization for Budget Transfers for Hickory Point Fence and NuRF Bobcat Brush Cutter

AUTHORIZE THE FY 2018-2019 BUDGET TRANSFER OF \$11,400 FROM 9898730-830460 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE TO 9898400-860630 HICKORY POINT SITE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE HICKORY POINT FENCE.

AUTHORIZE THE FY 2019-2020 BUDGET TRANSFER OF \$10,405 FROM 9898730-830460 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE TO 9898710-860640 MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE BOBCAT CUTTER HEAD ATTACHMENT.

6. REGULAR AGENDA

- a. Vegetation Mapping in Harris Chain of Lakes

Nathalie Visscher, the Regional Biologist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, addressed the Board regarding the status of hydrilla in the Harris Chain of Lakes.

She stated that in March of 2019, Lake County Water Authority had approved to spend \$1.5 million from its FY 2018-2019 budget to supplement FWC's hydrilla management efforts on the Harris Chain of Lakes. She noted that FWC had also provided an additional \$680,000 in funding.

She stated that that a total of 235 acres were treated on Lake Dora including part of the Tavares Waterfront and 35 acres along the southwest shoreline. She also noted that they had treated a new 10 acres infestation near Squirrel Point.

She explained that several locations were treated along the Dead River, as well as Helena Run, the Singletary Boat Ramp and the Venetian Gardens Boat Ramp.

Ms. Visscher explained that in total they were able to treat 795 acres with the funding received from the Water Authority and 595 acres with the extra funding provided by FWC.

She stated that the fall survey showed no significant hydrilla growth on Lake Harris and noted that a lot of the native grasses are starting to come back in the lake. She noted that no treatments were done on Lake Harris in the fall, and they would be conducting a survey of the lake in the spring.

When asked why she thought Lake Harris had responded so well, she stated that her theory was that in the areas of 15 feet the mass was too heavy and couldn't get enough light, and with the summer activity on the lake, the hydrilla was breaking off and washing up on shore. She noted that residents reported raking it up along their shore areas. She stated that the dark tannic water and wave action of the lake also helped.

Ms. Visscher explained that 235 acres of hydrilla were treated in Lake Eustis during the spring, and the fall study showed there was no significant hydrilla growth on Lake Eustis, so no treatment was done in the fall.

She also explained that while there was hydrilla in Lake Griffin by Haines Creek the flow of water from Haines Creek was too great and they couldn't treat the hydrilla there. She noted that the only treatment in Lake Griffin was 30 acres along Herlong Park.

She explained that the fall study still showed some hydrilla by Haines creek, but lots of native plants are also growing and it is looking pretty good. She stated that area was not treated during the fall, due to duck hunters, but will probably be treated next spring.

Ms. Visscher stated that they treated 280 acres on Lake Griffin along different areas of the shore and 100 acres on Lake Beauclair.

Ms. Visscher stated that 497 acres of Lake Yale were treated in the spring, and by fall they only needed to treat 5 acres near the boat ramp.

She also stated that 875 acres are slated to be treated on Lake Apopka including the North Shore, Winter Garden Waterfront, the AB Canal, Smith Island and a portion near Montverde.

Mr. Farner stated that they have done a great job and is very pleased it is working. He noted that Lake County has discussed requesting 7.5 million dollars in additional funding for hydrilla control and Ms. Visscher stated that she doesn't know where they came up with that figure.

Mr. Farner asked Ms. Visscher if she thought it would be improper for the Water Authority to ask Fish and Wildlife to refund the money provided by the Water Authority.

Ms. Visscher stated that Fish and Wildlife didn't come asking for money, the Water Authority volunteered, and she didn't know how the well such a request would be received by their Board.

b. Update on Lake Yale Internal Nutrient Loading Control Project

Jason Danaher updated the Board on the status of the RFB for the Lake Yale Internal Nutrient Loading Control Project. He explained that staff received two responses to the bid with each of the bids being greater than the Board's expected cost. He stated that there was quite a difference

in the cost between the two bids, so he had reached out to each company in order to determine why there was a such a wide gap in the costs.

He explained that in talking with each company he determined that while both companies based their bids on the same report by ERD, they used different information in the report to come up with two different plans for alum application.

He explained that one section of the report breaks the lake down into eight sections as determined by the nutrient concentrations of each section and HAB Aquatic Solutions, LLC used this information to come up with a plan to specifically treat each section of the lake based on the concentration of nutrients of those areas.

Dr. Danaher noted that while Texas Aquatic Harvesting, Inc. submitted the lowest bid, their plan was to treat the whole lake based on the overall average concentration of nutrients in the lake. He explained that taking this approach would result in under-dosing and over-dosing in much of the lake, which could have long-term effects on the ecosystem. He noted that this is a matter that Board members need to take this into account when moving forward with this project.

He also noted that the Board had instructed staff to reach out to a variety of stakeholders. He explained that FDEP (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) has recommended holding off on this project as they are concerned that it is not a permissible activity as using alum as a whole-lake treatment process would be considered filling and is considered filling and is prohibited in sovereign submerged lands owned by the state.

Dr. Danaher explained that he has inquired of FDEP as to why other agencies have been allowed to complete more than three dozen similar projects but has not yet received an answer from them.

He noted that the SJRWMD (St. John River Water Management District) has treated several bodies of water on their properties, but their treatments did not require FDEP permits because SJRWMD was the owner of the water body, whereas the state is the owner of Lake Yale.

He explained that their only concern is that a split treatment like what is proposed for Lake Yale, may lead to microfloc formation, which can stay suspended in the water column for months before settling out. He noted that because it has been several years since the ERD study of the lake, that samples needed to be taken to determine whether the water chemistry of the lake has changed, which would affect the dosage needed.

Dr. Danaher stated that LCWA staff also held a conference call with FWC (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission) representatives and they did not feel that the suggested the total alum treatment would affect invertebrate populations but they would prefer treatment of the lake not occur during fish spawning season from January through March or during duck hunting season in the fall.

It was also noted that Nathalie Visscher, Regional Biologist in charge of hydrilla treatments, would like to remain in close communication with LCWA staff to coordinate alum treatments around herbicide treatments for hydrilla. Representatives with FWC were also concerned with the potential expansion of hydrilla resulting from increased clarity.

Dr. Danaher noted that a list of residents and businesses on Lake Yale has been compiled but nothing will be mailed out until we have received more info from FDEP, as well as confirmation that the project would be allowed to move forward. He asked the Board how they would like to proceed.

VICE CHAIR MAIMONE MADE A MOTION TO REJECT ALL BIDS AND RELEASE A NEW RFB FOR LAKE YALE CHEMICAL INACTIVATION OF AVAILABLE PHOSPHORUS USING ALUM THAT SPECIFICALLY DEFINES A SCOPE OF WORK, IN A MANNER THE BOARD DETERMINES IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE WATER AUTHORITY AND RELEASE THE NEW RFB AFTER FDEP MAKES A FINAL RULING ON WHETHER OR NOT THE PROJECT MAY PROCEED FORWARD. Mr. Farner seconded the motion.

Ms. Visscher stated that she knows that there have been some whole-lake alum treatments done in some of the lakes in Winter Park.

Mr. Hart explained that plants rooted in the sediment will not be affected, but any plants that are floating or poorly rooted and feed from the nutrients in the water column, such as hyacinth and coontail, etc., would have slower growth.

Mr. Farner stated that native plants need a lot more clarity to the water to grow than hydrilla requires. He stated that this project would clear the visibility and native plants would take advantage of that and grow more aggressively.

Dr. Danaher stated that this is the goal of the project and noted that this is a very large project, and if completed, would be the largest whole lake project in the United States.

Dr. Danaher stated that currently he has hit a road block with current contact at FDEP.

Motion approved 7-0.

c. Naming of Collins Lake

Ron Hart stated that there has been a citizen's request to name a local lake Collins Lake after his grandfather. He explained that staff has researched the name and there are no other lakes by that name in Lake County and staff has no objection to what they are proposing.

MR. BONJORN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE OF THE RESIDENT'S REQUEST TO NAME THE AFFECTED WATERBODY COLLINS LAKE. Ms. Cox seconded the motion.

Mr. Hendrick asked if the lake has a local unofficial name and Mr. Hart stated that the lake doesn't have a local or official name at this time.

Motion approved 7-0.

7. LEGAL COUNSEL REPORT

Attorney Stone stated that he has enjoyed contacting and consulting with several Board Members and reminded them that he is always available to them should they have any concerns.

8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Farner noted that – wolf branch creek – has anyone

Mr. Perry haven't forgotten

Mr. Farner also about the past request for an idle zone for a portion of the Palatlahaha and if anything had ever been resolved. Mr. Hart explained that the State had informed staff that they would not allow or permit an idle zone on the Palatlahaha.

Mr. Farner asked if staff could follow up on that process and find out who the players were that made the decision.

Ms. Cox asked if any of the residents had attempted to lobby the State and Mr. Hart stated that he had forwarded the messages from the State to residents requesting the idle zone.

Mr. Hart explained that the State did grant an idle zone on another canal in that area, but one of their stimulant's when agreeing to look into that particular request was not to bring up the Palatlahaha request or they wouldn't be willing to even the that request.

Mr. Hart stated that the State has made it clear they wouldn't be willing to discuss the Palatlahaha.

Mr. Farner asked if they could ask legal staff to investigate it and Vice Chair Maimone stated that it would need to be an agenda before they could take any action. Mr. Farner asked that it be put on a future agenda.

He also asked that discussion regarding requesting a reimbursement from FWC for the funds that were provided by the Water Authority for hydrilla treatment be put on a future agenda.

Ms. Cox stated that the City of Minneola is holding a Moonlight Christmas Parade on December 14 and it will last about 40 minutes. She suggested that she and Mr. BonJorn take the Bug and participate in the parade.

Ms. Maimone mentioned that she might use her own boat to participate in the Leesburg Boat Parade Carolyn.

Mr. BonJorn thanked staff on their efforts to maintain the water level on the Clermont Chain of Lakes.

He asked why they were holding a workshop to discuss the applicants for the Executive Director position, instead of doing it as part of the December meeting, and it was noted that it would run the December meeting extra-long whereas holding a workshop would be more casual and that would be the only thing they would be discussing.

Mr. Perry stated that Wendy Sellers, The HR Lady, would not be able to attend the workshop on December 12 as she would be on vacation. He noted that she had informed him that she would be out of town most of the month of December.

Chairman Stone stated that she felt that the Board members were intelligent to hold their own discussion and workshop and that it was not critical that Ms. Sellers be there.

It was decided to keep workshop on December 12 at 3 pm.

9. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Mr. Farner asked that the idle zone request for the Palatlakaha be put on a future agenda.

He also requested that discussion regarding requesting a reimbursement from FWC for the funds that were provided by the Water Authority for hydrilla treatment also be put on a future agenda.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

- Staff Reports

11. ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- Board Workshop - Thursday, December 12, 2019 (3:00 pm)
LCWA Conference Room/Lake County Water Authority Office
- Board Meeting - Wednesday, December 18, 2019 (3:30 pm)
BCC Chambers/Admin. Building

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm