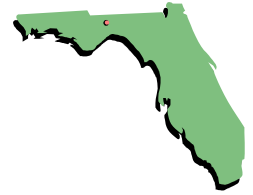




ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



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AFCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 21, 2005

The Association of Florida Conservation Districts Board of Directors Meeting was held January 21, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room in the Natural Resources Conservation Service State Office in Gainesville, Florida. The Board of Officer attending were: Andy Jackson, President (Suwannee County CD); Earl "Bill" Ziebarth, Jr., 1st Vice-President (Volusia SWCD); Marcus Edwards, 2nd Vice-President (Gadsden SWCD); John Chamberlain, Secretary/Treasurer (Alachua SWCD) and Blas Gomez, Area II Vice-President (Ochlockonee River SWCD). Others in attendance were: Ken Murray, USDA-NRCS; Clegg Hooks, FDACS/OAWP; Phil Giorno, District Administrator (Volusia County); Barbara Gill, Resource Consultant (Suwannee County CD) and Teresa Owens (Suwannee County CD).

President Jackson called the meeting to order at approximately 10:15 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance to the meeting.

President Jackson gave an update on his activities since the last Board of Directors Meeting held October 2004. He stated that he had gone to Washington, D.C. around the first of December to participate in interviews for Southeastern NACD Representative. He stated that one-third of quota collected from NACD Dues goes to pay this salary. He stated that during a teleconference ten or eleven persons were interviewed and all were eliminated but four. He stated that during the trip to Washington Phylis M. Vandevere was chosen. Based on the 2003 NACD quota, here salary will be approximately \$50,000.00. He stated that she will be based out of her home. President Jackson stated that she can be reached at 75 W. Kathy Circle, Canton, MS 39046, (601) 941-8251. Ms. Vandevere's e-mail address is pvandevere@mswcc.state.ms.us. He stated that she should be coming on board sometime the first of February. More information will come out of the Atlanta trip. He stated that he was told that one of her first duties will be to help us here in Florida.

President Jackson stated that he still has not received any commitment from Area five and six for Area Presidents and Vice-Presidents. He stated that he has attended several meetings to see if he could get commitments on hosting Area Meetings. Secretary/Treasurer, John Chamberlain, stated that he has talked to a couple of people in Area V about hosting an Area Meeting but he has not heard anything yet. He stated it may be February before he can talk to Manatee about hosting a meeting.

After further discussion Clegg Hooks stated that he would ask his Field Staff from those areas to see if they could coordinate with someone from Palm Beach about potentially hosting Area Meetings. Bill Ziebarth, Jr., 1st Vice-President, stated that he would do what he could to contact someone from those areas.

A District Supervisors Roster and Supervisors Handbook was discussed. Clegg Hooks stated that his office could contact Suzie Still with the Division of Elections to get a list of all District Supervisors in the State of Florida. He stated that his office could compile that list to get an updated Supervisors Roster and work on a Supervisors Handbook.

Secretary/Treasurer, John Chamberlain, gave Financial Report. There was a revenue of \$3,375.24 received since October 29, 2004 from deposits and interest. He stated that there have been no expenditures since the last meeting. The ending AFCD balance as of December 31, 2004 is \$4,761.43. There have been a total of 23 Districts reported paying AFCD dues in full or part. Secretary/Treasurer Chamberlain presented bills that needed to be paid. He stated that the Suwannee County Conservation District (SCCD) was requesting reimbursement in the amount of \$403.00. He stated that this amount included the SCCD initially opening up the AFCD Checking account with \$250.00. He stated that they paid dues for 2003-04 and 2004-05 and were requesting reimbursement for the \$250.00 that opened up the AFCD Checking. Also included in the amount of \$403.00 is reimbursement of \$153.00 for bonding cost four non-paid Officers and one employee. Other bill include purchase of stamps in the amount of \$97.99. There being no further discussions First Vice-President Ziebarth moved bills be paid. Secretary/Treasurer Chamberlain seconded the move and move was so carried.

Minutes of the last Board of Directors Meeting was reviewed. Barbara Gill stated that she would like the minutes reflect that she not be listed as guest but as a Representative to the Florida Conservation District Employee's Association. Secretary/Treasurer Chamberlain moved that minutes of the last Board of Directors Meeting be approved as amended. This move was seconded by First Vice-President Ziebarth, and was so carried.

OLD BUSINESS –

President Jackson stated that he had contacted Jordan Agency, Inc. concerning Bonding of four non-paid officers and one employee. He briefly reviewed the Surety policy with the Board of Directors. The coverage runs from December 14, 2004 to December 14, 2005.

NEW BUSINESS –

President Jackson stated that Barbara Gill had done some inquiring of the potential of a State Web Site for the AFCD. He stated that with this Web Site the AFCD would be able to put information on the internet that could be easily accessible. Barbara Gill stated that the cost of this would run \$227.92. This is for the Domain and a set-up fee. This was dis cussed at great length. Phil Giorno, District Administrator for Volusia County stated that Volusia SWCD has a web site that the Board of Directors could look at. He stated that if the Board of Directors liked that site it could be developed the same with changes needed. It was noted that the Board of Directors needed someone set up the Web Site. It was noted that there would be some cost of developing the site. The possibility of asking NACD to help with the Development of the Web Site was suggested. It was asked of Clegg Hooks if there was a chance that the DACS has someone that could help with this. Mr. Hooks stated that he would have to discuss this with Chuck Aller, and there was a possibility that DACS could help but, he suggested that the Board of Directors start with NACD and then if they can't help he would pursue the possibility of assistance with

the development of the site. Barbara Gill stated that the cost of the domain name and space was covered for one year. It will have to be paid every year. Andy Jackson will find out at the NACD Atlanta Conference if the Phylis Vandevere can help the AFCD to set up a Web Site. There being no further discussions Secretary/Treasurer Chamberlain moved the AFCD Board of Directors pay \$227.92 for AFCD to obtain a Web Site domain name and set-up fee through NACD. This move was seconded by First Vice-President Ziebarth, and was so carried.

Barbara Gill discussed the State Speech Contest Rules and Issues with the Board of Directors. Barbara stated that a question has been raised concerning previous winners of State Speech Contest competing again. She stated that the old FACD rules stated that no contestant winner from the previous year can enter the contest. She stated that Suwannee County has a contestant that won the State Speech Contest at the FACD Annual Meeting in Panama City, Florida and that he did not compete the last two years. She stated that this year he was interested in participating. It was noted by one of the Board of Directors present that this young man competed during the FACD contest. There has not been a contest held for the AFCD. It was also noted by another Board of Director present that only the names have changed and it is still an Association of Conservation Districts. After discussion it was suggested that Suwannee County Conservation District handle this within their District Speech Contest. Secretary/Treasurer Chamberlain moved the AFCD Board of Directors approve the 2005 State Speech Contest Rules. This move was seconded by First Vice-President Ziebarth, and was so carried.

Barbara asked the Board of Directors is they needed to address the cash award amount for the State Speech Contest. It was suggested that scholarship awards be dropped for the present time and an on site cash award be presented. President Jackson stated that maybe we could get sponsors to help with awards. First Vice-President Ziebarth stated that the Board of Directors needed to work on getting a 501C. First Vice-President Ziebarth stated that there is organizations out there that are waiting to help and if we had the 501C we would be able to approach such organizations. Area II Vice- President Gomez discussed possibly the 319 program. Clegg Hooks stated that the AFCD might want to talk to Eric Livingston about the 319 program. Secretary/Treasurer Chamberlain suggested that we work on and establishment of Foundation. It was noted that we need to prepare a brochure with the AFCD's Mission Statement and Objectives. Clegg Hooks stated that they have a new person on board that might offer some points. He stated that he could allow her to draft a brochure, but he would need to get information we wanted in it. Secretary/ Trea-surer Chamberlain stated he would contact Eric Livingston and also he would work on a draft for the brochure and get it to DACS. It was noted that RC&D would be a good contact to gather information on 501C. After further discussion of the benefits of a 501C, First Vice-President Ziebarth stated that he and Phil would contact their RC&D Office and start the initial work on the 501C.

Cash awards were further discussion on 2nd Vice-President Marcus Edwards moved to amend the move of acceptance of the State Speech Contest Rules to include that cash awards be determined annually by the AFCD Board of Directors. There being no further discussion, First Vice-President Ziebarth seconded the move, and the move was so carried.

President Jackson stated that the State Meeting July 29, 2005 was up next on the Agenda.

First Vice-President Ziebarth stated that Phil had made initial contact with Mission Inn in Howey-In-The-Hills, Florida. Phil stated that AFCD would only have to guarantee a minimum of 10 people attending for the price of \$99.00 per night single occupancy and \$105.00 per night double occupancy. He stated that if AFCD guarantees 50 the we would receive and free room and upgrade. He stated that the Inn is only 35 minutes from Orlando and 90 minutes from Tampa with close proximity to the Florida

Turnpike. The program for the meeting was discussed. President Jackson stated that he would make contact with Christa Harden of NACD to see if she can come on that Saturday and agree to be the Keynote Speaker. It was suggested that the meeting start July 29th and run through Sunday July 31st. President Jackson stated he would also see if he might get Phylis of NACD to help with the program and help with the meeting. Some items on the program would include; Executive Board Meeting, General Session, Workshops, Banquet, etc. After further discussion Secretary/ Treasurer Chamberlain moved that the AFCD organize the State Meeting at Howey-In-The-Hills on the dates of July 29th through the 31st at the rate of \$99.00 per night single and \$105.00 per night double, and for Phil and Ziebarth will coordinate with the hotel on the stay during these dates. This move was seconded by Marcus Edwards, 2nd Vice-President. There being no further discussion move was so carried. Phil stated that he would come back to the board with a draft copy of a registration. It was noted that as soon as we can get the Web Site set up all the State Meeting information can be posted.

Barbara Gill stated that she did not address the Board about continuing a State Poster Contest. After discussion, First Vice-President Ziebarth moved that the AFCD sponsor a State Poster Contest as well. This move was seconded by Area II Vice- President Blas Gomez. There begin no further discussion the move was carried.

Florida District's exemption on State Dues was presented for review. First Vice-President Ziebarth addressed the Board. He stated that he has been to several District Meetings. Several districts have sent dues, some the full amount, some partial. He stated that Seminole is not able to pay the dues the full amount, but sent \$25.00 and a letter requesting exemption. He stated that he will be attending the Orange SWCD in March. He stated that the District Conservationist in Brevard County was a big help in convincing the Board to send in dues. He stated that the same problem keeps coming up, the FACD. He stated that we need to show them this is not the FACD. He stated that they want to see a mission statement, and we need to get that brochure out to these districts. He stated that he does see more coming on board as the AFCD proves itself. He stated that he felt the AFCD needs to go ahead and take Seminole on Board. President Jackson stated that Santa Fe Soil and Water Conservation District also sent a letter stating that they could not, at this time, pay the full amount of the dues, but sent \$25.00. First Vice-President Ziebarth moved that AFCD except Seminole SWCD and Santa Fe SWCD at the rate of \$25.00 on the hardship membership clause for the 2005. This motion was seconded by Marcus Edwards, 2nd Vice-President. There being no further discussion the move was so carried.

President Jackson stated that AFCD had received a letter from South Dade SWCD and minutes from Blackwater SWCD and Escambia SWCD. He stated that South Dade SWCD letter states that at this time is in no financial situation to pay annual dues of \$250.00. He stated that they would like to attend an Area VI meeting but is in no position to host it this year, and they are anxious to observe how the new AFCD progresses and how it plans to operate for the benefit of the districts all over the state, with meetings at locations other than only at North Florida. He stated that the Escambia SWCD minutes states that they follow the organizations' progress but at this time not to pay any dues. It was noted that if dues are not paid then there is no voting rights. President Jackson stated Blackwater SWCD minutes read that they support the renewal efforts of the state organization by paying the dues. It was noted that they will prepare the invoice for payment.

President Jackson stated that a meeting date needs to be set. He noted that with all that is going on he felt that the Board of Directors need to probably meet more than three months. The next AFCD Board of Directors Meeting was set for February 25, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. in the USDA-NRCS State Office Conference Room.

President Jackson stated that Mark Cross had indicated to him that he wants to head up a committee to lobby the Legislature.

First Vice-President Ziebarth stated that there is one item that is not listed on the agenda that he would like to address. He stated that his district pays for most of expenses of travel to meetings. He stated he did not believe that it would be out of order for the AFCD to pay for at least the President and First Vice-Presidents mileage to the NACD Meeting in Atlanta and back. President Jackson stated that there is also a NACD Spring Legislative Conference the first of April in Washington, D.C. A rate of .37 cents per mile was discussed. Blas Gomez, Area II Vice-President, moved that mileage to Atlanta, GA and back be paid at a rate of .37 centers per mile for President Andy Jackson and First Vice-President Bill Ziebarth. This move was seconded by Marcus Edwards, 2nd Vice-President. There being no further discussion the move was so carried.

President Jackson stated that Ed Wright and he had discussed what strategies for AFCD needs to be accomplish during the next six months. These included:

1. Continue to work on getting a full complement of Area Vice-Presidents;
2. Continue to encourage broader participation from more conservation districts state-wide;
3. Encourage DACS to complete the up to date current mailing list of District Supervisors;
4. Encourage DACS to update the Supervisors Handbook;
5. Get information from NACD on the role of Conservation Districts and make it available to new supervisors;
6. Develop a list of different activities that District Conservation District are involved in and share with new supervisors;
7. When all Area Vice-Presidents are elected plan and schedule a meeting with Niles Glasgow and Commissioner Bronson and Richard Macheck to seek support for AFCD;
8. Develop and plan a strategy for AFCD for the next six months;
9. Begin planning for AFCD State Meeting for 2005;
10. Consider including workshop for New Supervisors at State Meeting and
11. Develop a marketing strategy for AFCD.

President Jackson stated that for the next meeting we need to have the brochure outlined so that we can move forward.

There being no further business items Blas Gomez, Area II Vice-President moved that he AFCD Board of Directors Meeting adjourn. This move was seconded by Secretary /Treasurer John Chamberlain. There being no further discussion the move was so carried.

Respectfully submitted,

John Chamberlain, AFCD