



**Wekiva River Basin
Commission**

**Wekiva River Basin Commission Meeting Minutes
October 29, 2013
1:30 PM**

East Central Florida Regional Planning Council
309 Cranes Roost Blvd. Suite 2000 Mayor John H. Land Board Room
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701

1. Call to Order and General Business

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Constantine at 1:35 p.m. Ms. Pegge Parker called roll and announced there was a quorum. The following members were in attendance:

Chairman Lee Constantine – Chairman

Mr. Charles Lee – Senior Vice President, Florida Audubon Society

Mr. William P. Battaglia – President and CEO, Battaglia Group Management LLC

Mayor John H. Land – Mayor, Apopka

Commissioner Brenda Carey – Seminole County

Mr. James Stansbury – Department of Economic Opportunity (via phone)

Ms. Michelle Maikisch for Mr. Joseph Berenis – Executive Director, Orlando/Orange County Expressway Authority

Mr. Brett Blackadar – Seminole County Expressway Authority

Mr. Jody Lee – Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

Mr. Kimberly Duffek for Mr. Gerald Briggs – Chief Bureau, Onsite Sewage Programs, Florida Department of Health

Mr. Alan Hyman for Ms. Noranne Downs – District Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation

Mr. Tom Shupe for Ms. Shannon Wright - Regional Director, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Mr. Jeff Prather – District Director, Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Ms. Nancy Christman for Mr. Hans Tanzler – Executive Director, St. John's River Water Management District

Mr. Harold Barley – Executive Director, Metroplan Orlando

Chairman Constantine called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from June 10, 2013. A motion was made by Ms. Christman and seconded by Mr. Charles Lee. The motion was passed unanimously.

2. Discussions of Key Reporting Timelines and Legislative Report

Surplus Conservation Properties Update – *Mr. Charles Lee / Mr. Jeff Prather*

Mr. Charles Lee and Mr. Jeff Prather addressed the surplus conservation property identification process. They had initially identified seven parcels within the Wekiva Springs area. Two of the largest parcels, nearly 400 acres of land, which were part of the formerly known Pine Plantation acquisition, have now been removed from the surplus list. Three other parcels are part of the Wekiva Springs State Park; two of them are on Markham Woods Road and are approximately 19 acres and 7 acres, and the third parcel, near the Neighborhood Lakes and Pine Plantation parcels, is approximately 10 - 12 acres. These parcels remain on the list. The other two parcels, located in Seminole State Forest, are also still on the surplus list.

The Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, The Sierra Club, Friends of Wekiva, and a long list of other organizations have commented at many public hearings, one of which was held here in Orlando. There were also public meetings in Jacksonville, Ft. Myers and Viera. Mr. Charles Lee stated that we are awaiting further decisions from DEP and hopeful that DEP will follow the considerable advice they have received and remove those remaining parcels from the list. There are approximately 77 parcels in total and 3,500 acres or so remaining on the surplus list. Out of those parcels, there are about 20 which are objectionable in some form or another.

Chairman Constantine commented that Mr. Prather has been very helpful in the discussions on the Wekiva property.

Altamonte Reclaimed Water Project – *Frank Martz, Ed Torres*

Mr. Martz, City Manager for City of Altamonte Springs, discussed the concept of creating alternative water supply opportunities such as eliminating retention ponds, recovering the water, cleaning and treating it, and re-using it for irrigation involving two different cities and counties. Mr. Martz then introduced Mr. Torres, Public Works Director for City of Altamonte Springs, who presented the A-First Altamonte Reclaimed Water - FDOT Integrated Reuse & Stormwater Treatment project in more detail.

Mayor Land discussed the history of Apopka's water re-use (about 25 years) and how the city is looking forward to working with the City of Altamonte Springs.

Mr. Charles Lee discussed the discharges from Cranes Roost into Wekiva River and whether it would eliminate the discharges altogether or just cut back. Mr. Torres explained it would reduce the amount of discharge by 50% based on the storms.

Mr. Battaglia discussed piping, the interchange project and whether there were any discussions of incorporating Maitland Boulevard into the system. Mr. Martz stated that would be a business decision not made by them and there are currently other entities competing against each other during the bidding process.

Commission Carey added that it's a great example of a "thinking outside the box" concept and will be a very good pilot project. Mr. Charles Lee noted there are big winners on all sides of this equation and this would be good time to encourage design-build competitors to come up with innovative solutions for water resources.

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Adoption of Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Land Development Regulations Pursuant to Recommendation 14 of the Final Report – Mr. James Stansbury (via phone)

Mr. Stansbury stated there was no activity of significance from within the Wekiva study area and no major amendments. All required amendments have been adopted and found in compliance. Chairman Constantine mentioned the last time Mr. Stansbury spoke, he was working with the Town of Eatonville to complete their activities. Mr. Stansbury replied that the town has completed necessary activities.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Establishment of Total Maximum Daily Loads Pursuant to Recommendation 6 of the Final Report – Mr. Jeff Prather

Mr. Prather stated there was nothing new to report since the June meeting. The TMDL is being reviewed by the Secretary and hope to have some news soon. Commissioner Carey posed a question regarding the springs protection bill and whether there have been any opportunities for collaborations with various jurisdictions. Mr. Prather responded that there has been collaboration and they are meeting tomorrow regarding an assessment.

Florida Department of Health, Rulemaking Activities on On-Site Disposal Systems Treatment Standards Pursuant to Recommendation 9 of the Final Report – Ms. Kimberly Duffek

Ms. Duffek gave an update on the Nitrogen study. The Nitrogen Study contractor has requested a one year, no cost extension until January 16, 2016. The Research, Review and Advisory Committee (RRAC) met Oct. 22 and voted unanimously for the Department of Health to extend that contract and support the final appropriation. There was also a meeting with the State Surgeon General regarding the contract extension issue. Mr. Charles Lee noted that he is concerned about the one year, no cost extension because it incorporates a cost of a year's delay on the outcome and the implementation of the outcome. Ms. Duffek responded that the reason for the delay is the short time period for sampling and getting back the results. A longer sampling period is needed. Commissioner Carey responded that after spending \$5 million, it's better to get it right rather than on the deadline date. Discussion continued on the extension and concern that there be no further extensions.

3. Current Agency Activities and Legislative Report

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services – Mr. Jody Lee

Mr. Jody Lee discussed the 50 statewide site visits for the Rural Lands and Family Conservation Easement program. The vast majority of visits, at least 30, were from the northern South Florida Water Management District. The main purpose of the site visits was to see how people were handling their operations and make sure they were conducting Best Management Practices. Quite a few of the operations had For Sale signs, which make them ripe for development when the time is right. It was good to see that people want to continue to do the right thing, stay in agriculture and keep the conservation lands. Mr. Jody Lee said he was not sure how many of them will get a piece of the pot which is about \$10 million this year, but hopefully most of them in our area will. The Agency is continuing to work with them on enrollment in agriculture operations and Best Management Practices, primarily cattle, cow/calf operations. The East Central Florida Rural Conservation District, the University of Florida

Extension and the Florida Cattleman's Association continue to conduct workshops to gain interest in the programs.

Mr. Jody Lee stated that Springs protection is a priority with Commission Putnam this year with Wekiva being one of the three hot spots followed by Silver Springs and Wakulla. Chairman Constantine stated that he realizes water resources is a priority with Commissioner Putnam but asked whether he has a plan and how is he going to address this with the legislature? He also asked whether there has been a task force set up with Mr. Lee's department, is he working with EED, and how do you see this coming out from DEP? Mr. Jody Lee responded that he has not been involved directly with the Commissioner's office but the agency will be working with other agency heads to formulate a plan on how they want to approach springs protection. There are also fertilizer ordinances that are part of that Springs protection.

St. Johns River Water Management District – Ms. Nancy Christman for Mr. Hans Tanzler

Ms. Nancy Christman stated that there is nothing new to report directly regarding the legislation but Springs protection is also one of the District's highest priorities. Last month Mr. Casey Fitzgerald provided an overview of the SJRWMD efforts and its strong executive management support. The Central Florida Water Initiative, which will have results and effects for the Springs in the area, is a project of the three water management districts that have boundaries in the Central Florida area, along with DEP, the utilities, and the Department of Agriculture. It will determine how much water can safely be taken from the aquifer thus lessening negative impacts to the natural system including the springs. The draft plan for Central Florida Water Initiative is coming out November 26th and will go on the SJRWMD website that day. There will be an open comment period. Then it will go back to the governing boards and should be adopted by all three water management districts by next spring.

SJRWMD is continuing with their Cooperative Funding Program which includes providing funding to the City of Altamonte Springs on their A-First project. The District just announced their next cost share program for the 2014-2015 fiscal year and anticipates an available \$13 million for cooperative funding on construction projects. The application form will go on the website January 22nd at www.floridaswater.com/funding. The emphasis will be on nutrient reduction, water resource development and alternative water supply projects and will be awarded next October.

Mr. Charles Lee noted that Hans Tanzler has received an invitation to visit the Wekiva Falls resort. Ms. Christman will update on this visit in the future if something progresses.

Chairman Constantine asked if there were any updates on consumptive use permits. Ms. Christman said that when people apply for consumptive use permits, they go by the rules. If they meet the rules, they issue a permit but there's also a lot of analysis that goes into that to make sure it is not harming the resources.

Florida Department of Transportation – Mr. Alan Hyman for Ms. Noranne Downs

Mr. Alan Hyman presented the Wekiva Parkway update, including all sections under procurement, where the alignment is and where we currently are in the process. He will provide an update at the next meeting on the main river crossing which is a big concern to everyone and should be a nice looking bridge especially for kayakers.

Chairman Constantine introduced Mary Brooks, the Public Involvement Coordinator for Wekiva Parkway, who provided an update on the trail in Section 5. She also discussed the public meetings and how they are helpful in getting the public to understand the need for the Parkway and that it is being done in an environmentally conscious way. Mr. Hyman said that public meetings will continue with updates on www.wekivaparkway.com.

Mr. Charles Lee asked what the status was of land acquisition and right-of-way acquisition for Sections 1A, 1B, 2A and 2B. Ms. Maikisch responded that they are in the process of working on that now by contacting property owners through letters.

Orlando/Orange County Expressway Authority – Ms. Michelle Maikisch for Mr. Joseph Berenis

Ms. Maikisch stated there will be another public meeting next Thursday, November 7th to discuss Section 2 presentations at the Northwest Orange County Improvement Association. Mary Brooks is being sent to groups to keep them informed. They are moving along very quickly.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – Mr. Tom Shupe for Ms. Shannon Wright

Mr. Tom Shupe discussed the FWC review and comments on permit and design modifications for Sections 4A and 4B. There was also additional discussion concerning the FDOT Design and Build team's diligence and conservation concerns on these projects.

4. Other Business

Upcoming Legislative Report – Chairman Constantine

Chairman Constantine discussed the Springs bill that Senator Simmons has been working on. He discussed his conversation with Representative Brodeur concerning sponsoring the bill. He discussed the struggle to come up with a consensus and the balancing act between all the different interest groups. Mr. Charles Lee attended a function with Senator Charlie Dean who made it very clear that it was high on the agenda for his natural resources committee. Mr. Charles Lee discussed how we should take more dramatic action and place significant restrictions on the use of water for landscape irrigation inside the spring sheds and generally not allow fertilizer on lawns for typical home and gardens to prevent overuse and error. The good news is that the majority of people in the legislature realize we need to do something regarding water quality. It's too expensive to go back and fix but going forward we need to do something. Chairman Constantine made a note to bring this issue to the next meeting.

Chairman Constantine discussed Wekiva Island's fire. Mr. Charles Lee discussed the access Wekiva Island provides to the river and the opportunities to encourage economic development projects for tourism on that land.

5. Public Comments

Scott Taylor spoke about Wekiva Marina and how he is very impressed with their interest in conservation and getting younger people involved. He also wanted to thank the committee today because out of the Wekiva River Parkway Protection Act came something very unique. He was also glad to hear the presentation from Altamonte Springs on the Reclaimed Water Project and the progress it is making.

6. Future Meeting Dates – *Chairman Constantine*

The next meeting will be scheduled for late February, 2014. Wekiva Island was discussed as a possible meeting location.

7. Adjournment

Chairman Constantine adjourned the Wekiva River Basin Commission Meeting at 3:35 pm.