

**Minutes**  
**Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD)**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**2710 East Silver Springs Boulevard**  
**Ocala, FL 34470**  
April 8, 2024  
9:30 AM

**PLEASE NOTE:** Individuals wishing to address the Board will need to sign in. A three-minute time limit will be administered to each of these individuals. PLEASE MUTE ALL PHONES. This agenda acts as a guidance for the structure of the meeting. Thank you.

Chairman Vivi Serena called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM.

▪ **Roll Call**

Vivi Serena, Chairman/Treasurer  
Richard McGinley, Vice-Chairman  
Justin Albright, Public Relations  
David Shults, Supervisor

**Absent**

Lee Black, Secretary

**Others in Attendance**

Sierra Ayers, NRCS  
Ann Bishop, MSWCD Staff  
Stefani Duarte, MSWCD Staff

▪ **Proof of Publication**

Star-Banner – On February 11, an email was sent regarding this meeting; a reminder was sent on March 30.  
Florida Administrative Weekly – It was posted in the FL Admin Weekly on December 29.  
NRCS – On January 8, an email was sent regarding this meeting; a reminder was sent on March 30.  
Marion County Board of County Commissioners – On December 18, an email was sent regarding this meeting; a reminder was sent on March 30.

II. **NRCS Report**

▪ **Local Working Group (Update)**

Stefani Duarte and Sierra Ayers gave an update on the Local Working Group.

▪ **RCPG Grant**

Ann Bishop mentioned the RCPG Grant that is due July 2. Two webinars will be offered regarding the application process. These will be on April 23 and May 30. Vivi Serena will look at her calendar to see if she can attend the April 23 meeting.

**Tabled.**

III. **FDACS Report**

▪ **Cost Share Agreements**

**Sanchez Farms, LLC – Dixie – \$250,000 – Soil Moisture Probe (90%), Center Pivot Retrofit (90%), GPS End Gun Shutoff (75%), and Weather Station w/ ET Measurements (75%)**

➤ **PROPOSED MOTION:** Justin Albright moved that MSWCD approve the cost share agreements as presented. David Shults seconded; all in favor.

The Board was told that FDACS overlooked the audit and other incidentals, e.g. QuickBooks, in the amended contract. Ann Bishop stated that she is waiting on a reply from FDACS, but the Board might incur these expenses.

#### **IV. Staff Report & Recap**

##### **▪ Meetings**

###### **- AFCD Area Meeting**

Ann Bishop gave a reminder that the Area II Meeting will be held on May 9 from 9:30 am - 2:30 pm, located at NRCS Building, 4500 NW 27 Ave, Gainesville. The meeting requires you to bring your own lunch. Also, the four-hour ethics training will be offered at this meeting. Vivi Serena stated that she is interested in going but will let Ann Bishop know.

###### **- SENACD**

Ann Bishop presented the Board will information on the SENACD Meeting, scheduled for June 16-18 at the University of Florida, Hilton in Gainesville.

- **PROPOSED MOTION: Richard McGinley moved that MSWCD approve Ann Bishop to attend the SENACD meeting in Gainesville in June and to allow her to assist in this meeting. David Shults seconded; all were in favor.**

###### **- AFCD Annual Meeting**

Ann Bishop presented the Board will information on the AFCD Annual Meeting, scheduled for November 1-2 in Miramar Beach at the Sandestin Golf Beach and Resort.

**Tabled.**

##### **▪ MCBCC Budget**

###### **- Budget**

- **PROPOSED MOTION: David Shults moved that MSWCD approve the presented budget and for staff to make any minor changes prior to its submission on May 1. Richard McGinley seconded; all were in favor.**

###### **- Commissioner Meetings**

Stefani Duarte is working on the District's Year in Review and will present it at next month's meeting. Ann Bishop mentioned that days and times that Vivi Serena will have her One-on-One Commissioner Meetings.

##### **▪ Contest (Recap)**

###### **- Envirothon**

Ann Bishop, Stefani Duarte and Sierra Ayers gave a recap on the Envirothon. It was agreed upon that next year the District look for another cater, since the cater did not give the District everything they paid for. Also Ann suggested tickets or wrist bands for the food.

###### **- Conservation Landscape Tray**

The Board reviewed the thank you letters from the students. The end of the year meeting is scheduled for May 6.

###### **- Scholarship**

The scholarship is being finalized; Vivi Serena and Tom Cartwright agreed to judge. Stefani Duarte is looking for an additional judge.

##### **▪ Outreach (Updates)**

###### **- Library Program**

The Freedom Library Program will be forest-themed, focusing on Smokey the Bear's 80 birthday and held on June 13 at 11 AM. Ann Bishop mentioned that she ordered items through the reimbursable account: tree cookies and NACD stewardship items.

- **Farmland Preservation**

Justin Albright stated that he will not be able to attend the Farmland Presentation located at Majestic Oaks, 17500 N US Hwy 441, Reddick, on April 13 from 9 am – 3 pm.

- **SWCS Event – Journey through Watersheds**

The Soil Water Conservation Society – Journey through Watersheds, Emerging Leaders' Event is April 13 from 11 am – 4 pm, at Silver Springs State Park, with the event from 12 pm – 3 pm. Marion SWCD sponsored the shirts, which cost \$321 for 20.

- **Run for the Springs**

The Run for the Springs will be held on April 27 at Little Lake Weir, Carney Island. Registration will begin at 6:30 am with the race beginning shortly after.

▪ **Miscellaneous (Updates)**

- **Website Domain**

The domain was discussed and the .gov site that the Board now has is [www.marionswcdfl.gov](http://www.marionswcdfl.gov). The Board discussed keeping the old site: [www.marionswcdfl.org](http://www.marionswcdfl.org).

- **PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that MSWCD pay for another five years to keep the old domain name. Richard McGinley seconded; all were in favor.**

- **OPPAGA**

Ann Bishop gave an update on OPPAGA. Ann presented the FDACS map to the Board that was created for OPPAGA.

Ann also mentioned that with new performance monitoring the Board might consider an application that creates surveys and URLs; Canva was also discussed.

**Tabled.**

- **Audit**

Ann Bishop gave an update on the audit and alternative software. Ann will find out and let the Board know if the District will need to repurchase QuickBooks.

- **501c3**

Ann Bishop gave an update on the change to the District's tax status.

- **PROPOSED MOTION: Richard McGinley moved that MSWCD approve the conflict of interest form and the tax status change letter as presented. Justin Albright seconded; all were in favor.**

**V. CONSENT AGENDA**

i. MSWCD Board Minutes

ii. MSWCD Board Financial Report

- **PROPOSED MOTION: Richard McGinley moved that MSWCD approve the consent agenda as presented. David Shults seconded; all were in favor.**

**VI. Upcoming Events**

The Board reviewed the upcoming events.

- SWCS Silver Springs Event – April 13
- Farmland Preservation – April 13
- FCDEA Meeting – April 16
- Florida Agricultural Policy Outlook Conference – April 17

- EarthFest – April 20
- State Envirothon – April 20
- FCDEA Midyear – April 24-25
- Run for the Springs – April 27
- MCBCC Budget Due – May 1
- Preferred Education Day – May 1-2
- AFCD Area II Meeting – May 9
- MSWCD Monthly Meeting – May 13
- Local Working Group – May 18

**VII. General Public Comments**

**VIII. Supervisor Comments**

**IX. Meeting Adjournment**

- Our next meeting is May 13, 2024 at 9:30 AM in the Growth Services Building.

With no other business needing addressed, Chairman Vivi Serena adjourned the meeting at 10:38 AM, until our next meeting.

MSWCD's regular meetings are held at 9:30 AM on the 2nd Monday of each month, and their workshops are held the 4th Monday of each month at 9:30 AM, tentatively. Both meetings are located in Growth Services, located at 2710 E. Silver Springs, Ocala, FL 34470. For more information, call (352) 438-2475.