



Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District

Monthly Meeting – December 8, 2008

Supervisors in attendance: Chairman: David Gunter, Vice-Chairman: Robert Adair, Jr.,
Treasurer: Alexander (Lex) Kromhout, Member: Robert Lindsey,
Member: Marvin Carter

Staff in attendance: Brenda Davis, Staff Assistant II, IRSWCD
Kevin Sullivan, Area Soil Scientist, USDA/NRCS
Christine Kelly-Begazo, Ag. Extension Director

Guests in Attendance: Marian E. Fell, Assistant County Attorney

OLD BUSINESS

1. The IRSWCD meeting was called to order at 1:15 PM by David Gunter, Chairman.
2. There were no changes to the agenda.
3. There were no changes requested to the November 10, 2008 meeting minutes.

Motion: A motion to accept the November meeting minutes was made by Lex Kromhout and seconded by Marvin Carter. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Treasurer Lex Kromhout gave the financial report for the month of November.

Motion: A motion to accept the November financial report including the petty cash and credit card registers was made by Marvin Carter and seconded by Robert Adair. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Chairman Gunter invited Christine Kelly-Begazo to speak about the email received by Lex through the IR Citrus League from George Hochmuth with the University of Florida. Christine summarized the email by stating that the five year period for funding research has rolled over and a new five year period is starting and they are very interested in specialty crops. Christine offered to find out what earmarks there are for the current \$1.8 million. She continued by informing the Board that UF/IFAS would be sending out requests for proposals (RFPs) in which to distribute some of the funds for research. She felt that a lot of this would be for the citrus industry. She read that they are very interested in looking at specific new specialty crops for Florida such as lychees, pomegranates, and macadamias.

Lex stated that he received this email from the Citrus League and that he understood that they were asking the league for input from the production committee on how to spend the \$1.8 million. The league's main concerns were greening and canker, in that order.



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Christine stated that concerns of this nature would be considered when the RFPs are received and evaluated. Christine offered to send future emails regarding this topic directly to the Board members.

Bob Adair offered feedback to Christine by saying that there is a large amount of money that has been put together collaboratively by the citrus industry from box taxes and the citrus commission, to work on greening, but the \$1.8 million, in his opinion should be used to look for a specific specialty crop that fits the paradigm of bedded land and that lends itself to existing packing houses. He offered that pomegranates and avocados would. Christine added that another aspect that would have to be looked at along with alternative crops is diversity. Farmers and the community are vulnerable when growing just one crop.

A brief discussion on psyllids ensued.

A lengthy discussion on crops and alternative fuels followed. Due to the lowering of gas/oil prices many operations, especially those within the infrastructure such as processing plants are going bankrupt, leaving investors leery about investing in other types of alternative fuel operations. Lex mentioned that orange juice could be fermented and further refined into a fuel, and processed at the existing Ocean Spray plant. Christine brought up the fact that our landfill produces methane gas that could be used for fuel, yet is presently being burned.

Christine suggested that she and the Board collaborate on writing a paper with a list of suggestions to send to the University. Bob agreed and suggested that in addition to asking for 5 or 6 alternative crops is funding of a field trial. When people see concepts in action, such as wind breaks, it encourages them to participate.

A lengthy discussion on perennial peanuts and horse hay ensued. Christine stated that she has done a lot of research on this plant and if anyone was interested in it she can furnish seeds and stems. Vice Chairman Adair asked Christine if she would find out the number of horses in the county to determine what kind of market is here for hay growers. Lex added that a large hay operation would overwhelm the local market and said that you would have to expand your market south to Palm Beach. Christine informed the Board that in the coming years there will be a lot of polo ponies moving to this area. Lex added that the forecast of the polo ponies coming here is due to the people in Wellington moving north. Christine suggested that a group of ranchers get organized and talk to the people in Wellington about moving to this area. Lex stated that there is also a large trail riding community in the area.

6. Chairman Gunter asked the Board if they received the 2009 meeting list.

Motion: A motion to accept the 2009 Board Meeting Schedule was made by Bob Adair and seconded by Lex Kromhout. Motion carried unanimously.



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7. Brenda submitted the draft of the 2007 Annual Report for Board approval.

Motion: A motion to accept the 2007 Annual Report was made by Lex Kromhout and seconded by Bob Adair. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

Vice Chairman Adair: Vice Chairman Adair handed out copies of a page taken from the Wild Turkey Ground Water Impact Analyses done by BCI Engineering. He called attention to the first sentence in the second paragraph that reads:

“The simulations generally indicate that there will be drawdown away from the mine cut, with draw downs exceeding 0.5 ft extending 900 ft or more past the dewatering ditches.”

Bob’s concern for agricultural users, not so much irrigated citrus because they use artesian water, but for non-irrigated ag land, particularly cattle pasture is that there really could be some problems. He continued that if this report was reliable, then there are genuine concerns of dewatering. Marvin added that Sean Sexton is interested in having some WTOWs installed to begin recording background data. A discussion on data loggers followed.

Kevin Sullivan: Kevin updated the Board on some of the projects he is currently working on, noting that he is in charge of the South Florida Natural Resource Inventory and he is on the National Civil Rights Committee.

Christine Kelly: Christine reported that she does a once a week radio show and invited the Board to send topic ideas to her and she would discuss them on her show. Her listening audience is around 10,000.

Carol Johnson: Absent.

Kay Nickel: Absent.

Brenda Davis: Nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 2:35 PM. Next meeting is January 12th, 2009.

David Gunter

Date

Alexander Kromhout

Date