**Gadsden Soil and Water Conservation District**

**Minutes**

**January 24, 2022**

# ***Supervisors Present****:* Jeff Moore, Bryan Baxley, Lance Watson, Michael Brown

***Others Present****:* Robert Jones CED, Pam Tribue, Edith Turner, Stephen Monroe, Staff.

**Guests:** Stephen Fulford, FDACS-OAWP, Lisa Mustain, FDACS-OAWP, Chris Denmark, FDAC-OAWP, Larry Clayton, Vincent Moore, Morgan Baxley

The Gadsden Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting was called to order at 6:07pm by Chairman Jeff Moore. The meeting was held at Gadsden County Extension Office, 2140 W Jefferson Street, Quincy, FL.

Prayer by Chairman Jeff Moore

**Review and approval of November 15, 2021 minutes.**

*Motion to approve November 15, 2021 minutes by Lance Watson and seconded by Bryan Baxley. Motion carried 4-0*

***Treasurers’ Reports:***

**GSWCD**

* As of January 21, 2022 the ending balance in the GSW regular account is $141,403.26.

**FDACS**

* As of January 24, 2021 the ending balance in the Cost Share Contract #27701 is $116,804.84.
* As of January 24, 2022 the ending balance in the Technician Account Contract #26229 is $20,822.71.

*Motion to file the Treasure reports by Michael Brown seconded by Bryan Baxley, Motion carried 4-0*

**Reports:**

**NRCS -**

* No NRCS Report

**FDACS** –

Visitors from FDACS introduced.

**Stephen Fulford** – New Environmental Manager West Florida. Covers the territory from Jefferson to Escambia county.

**Lisa Mustain** – Deputy Director for Office of Agriculture Water Policy

**Chris Denmark** – Environmental Administrator for North Florida.

Mr. Monroe gave his report. Busy with training and visits Moving forward with helping the producers implement best practices with the cost share money. The money has to be spent by June 2022 so they are trying to identify the priorities utilize the fund by the June 2022 deadline. Trying to finish up things from before Byron left. Includes fencing to keep wildlife out of wetland areas, grain drills, pasture drags, and monitors of soil probes. Need to get with the producers to have their irrigation systems evaluated. This is at no cost to the producer, only time.

**Old Business**

* Replacing the Board Vacancy left by William Hackney. Two interested candidates, Mr. Vincent Moore, and Mr. Larry Clayton gave a brief statement about themselves and what they hope to bring to the Board.

 First speaker was Mr. Vincent Moore. Recently moved back to Gadsden County after a 20+ year absence. Mr. Moore has 90 acres off Concord Road in Havana (old Barber Farm) and believes he can bring a different level of leadership to the Board in looking at things from a different perspective. He stressed whether he is appointed to the Board of not, he’s looking forward to helping out in any way possible.

Second speaker was Mr. Larry Clayton. Amr Clayton too is a native of Gadsden county. He has 40 acres of pine on Dodger Ball Park Road, and has recently started experimenting with Bamboo farming. He’s also a Master Gardner. Mr. Clayton stressed that he wants to be a part of the organization and make contributions wherever he can.

*The Boards’ thoughts are that between now (January 24, 2022) and the next Board meeting, a Special Meeting be held to make a recommendation for the vacant Supervisor’s position.*

* 7’ drill update. Mr. Jones reported it is his understanding is that the 7’ drill manual is in the County workshop but they don’t fix it anymore. Still has to figure out if we can get it fixed. Since the last meeting in November the drill has gotten in really bad condition. Some of the cultivators are now falling off. Some of the things could be repaired. Last discussion was that if a new drill were purchased that the old one could be used for wildlife food plots, and open cultivated land for the new one. Finding someone to fix the old drill remains an issue. Clark Tractor used to fix it but they don’t anymore, so they’re trying to find someone who can. The drill is over 20 years old. Our busy season is April and November. Robbie will get with Clark Tractor to see if they work on Sunflower drills because Ag-Pro does not. Mr. Fulford stated that Suwannee Equipment might work on Sunflower. Mr. Jones will contact Suwannee Equipment.

Mr. Vincent Moore suggested that once a new piece of equipment is purchased, some rules on who, producer or staff, is to make sure of what to check when the equipment is checked out for use. Should be someone who has knowledge of the equipment.

Board decided to go ahead and purchase a new 7’ drill. Mr. Jones will start contacting vendors for prices on a new drill. FDACS, per Lisa Mustain, is interested in a cost share on the new drill but would like a bit more about the program itself, i.e; who it’s offered to, what producers, where housed, maintained, warranty, etc. Ms. Mustain stressed that it’s important that majority of users be enrolled in the BMP program. Mrs. Tribue suggested that it be part of the contract that users be part of the BMP program. Presently they do sign a contract and they are to report any problems with the equipment upon return and if they caused the damage, they will be held responsible covering the cost of repairing it. Our clientele is mostly repeat users, and in most cases they are the ones who report any problem with the equipment. Mr. Moore stated that we have all the records of users, and it is offered to anybody in Gadsden County, to be used *only* in Gadsden County. Maintenance is a challenge but with a new drill and properly used, the drill wouldn’t need constant maintenance like the old one.

* Mr. Jones suggested to the Board a higher rental rate for the new drill and a reduction of the rental rate for enrolling in the BMP Program as an incentive. Our current rental rate is $6 an acre and a minimum of $50 a day. Supervisor Moore agreed that we should increase our rental rate especially if we get a new piece of equipment. Per Mr. Fulford, the market rate is $15 and acre. Mrs. Tribue will have Ms. West do a recap of usage so the Board can get an idea of the average use. Ms. Mustain said that FDACS would be willing to do at least 75% cost share toward a new 7’ drill.

*Motion by Bryan Baxley to move forward with the purchase of a new 7’ drill with the contingencies of getting the details on estimated time of delivery from CED Robbie Jones and input from FDACS on potential cost share. Seconded by Michael Brown. Motion carried 4-0.*

* Poster and Speech contest – Response from school’s follow-up and judges needed. Mrs. Turner and Mrs. Tribue will do follow-up with schools. Deadline for school response date has to be set. Decision on who provides the meals for the contest to be decided. Options for catering meal will be provided at the next meeting.

**Correspondence:**  Commission on Ethnics letter. Everything is now done electronically with February 1, 2022 deadline. Mrs. Tribue will handle getting it completed by deadline.

Credit card for Stephen needs to be taken care.

**New Business: 2021 Audit**

Mrs. Tribue has been in contact with our auditor Grimsley and Associates. They have provided the letter of agreement that cost of audit is not to exceed $5200. Information for 1099’s is ready for pickup. Mrs. Tribue will pick those up and get them mailed out.

**Update on Senate Bill 1028.**

Bill was originally proposed to eliminate Soil and Water Districts. That part has been stricken from the Bill but with some revisions. One such revision was that they were going to have all Supervisors that were elected to the Boards live in geographical districts that would mirror either the School Board or the County Commission, and you have to be actively involved in farming or animal husbandry. They are working on what is the exact definition of *“farming”.*

NACD is moving forward with the in person meeting in Orlando. Supervisor Moore will be attending February 11-16, 2022. Florida is the Host State. Meeting will be held at Disney Springs.

**Adjournment:** *Motion to adjourn at 7:03pm by Supervisor Michael Brown and seconded by Supervisor Bryan Baxley.*

*Motion carried 4-0*

**Next meeting February 21, 2022**