

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
of the South Indian River Water Control District  
Held on July 21, 2022**

The regular meeting of the South Indian River Water Control District was held on July 21, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the District Work Center, 15600 Jupiter Farms Road, Jupiter, Florida, and via Zoom video conferencing. Present in person were Supervisors John Meyer, Tom Powell, Michael Howard, John Jones, and Susan Kennedy. Also present in person were Karen Brandon, engineer; Mike Dillon, manager of operations; William Capko, attorney; Donna DeNinno, public information; and Jane Woodard, secretary. Seven landowners were present in person. Present via Zoom conferencing were Charles Haas, treasurer; and one landowner.

Mr. Meyer called the meeting to order, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was given.

Mr. Meyer opened the floor to landowner comments. There were no questions or comments.

Mr. Powell made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Jones seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Haas presented the treasurer's report. He presented a flow chart for the proposed budget of 2022-23. Mr. Haas commented this is a difficult year due to vendors who are reluctant to project costs for the coming year. There are also inflationary pressures. Proposed assessments have been submitted to the County for the Trim bill. A budget information meeting is scheduled for August 4th at the Work Center to go over the budget with any interested landowners. The final budget hearing will be August 18th as part of the Board meeting.

Mr. Haas discussed the highlights of the proposed budget in detail. He explained that the Internal Service Fund distributable costs are increased by \$150,500. In Jupiter Farms, the water control assessments will increase by \$100,000, the capital projects will decrease by \$159,500, and road maintenance will increase by \$145,000. The Section 7 grant funding increases to \$89,500. In Palm Beach Country Estates, water control and capital project assessments are unchanged. Road maintenance is increased by \$103,000. Water distribution bonds assessment is decreased by \$65,000. Egret Landing's water control assessments are unchanged. Debt service funds are unchanged.

Mr. Haas then presented a summary of assessment rates. Jupiter Farms has an increase of 6% in water control, a decrease of 62% in capital projects, and an increase of 17% in road maintenance. Palm Beach Country Estates has an increase of 61% in road maintenance and a decrease of 6% in water distribution bonds.

Mr. Haas presented an analysis of grant funding for Canal C in Palm Beach Country Estates. He explained that this is a matching fund, and the District needs to come up with \$312,500. He further explained there are carryover funds of \$65,000 from Canal C assessments and a transfer from the Road Renewal and Replacement Fund of \$247,500, which is a loan that will be paid back over several years, with interest. He noted transfers like this have been done in the past, and this loan is not expected to cause a shortfall in the Renewal and Replacement Fund.

Ms. DeNinno presented the public information report. She asked for comments regarding the draft of the fact sheet for the District's video. Ms. Kennedy stated she was disappointed in the time it has taken to prepare a first draft, noting the process began in December. She commented that the printed fact sheet needs to be in language easy to understand, not in engineering terms. A production company was hired last month, and they are on schedule to release the video portion this summer. The first portion will cover drainage, and then how it is connected to the regional system. Engineering is putting together simplistic graphics, highlighting the restoration programs. Mr. Meyer noted the draft looks like a typical South Florida Water Management District fact sheet, with storm drains, etc., and it is not pertinent to South Indian River Water Control District. He requested that it present an understanding of not only drainage swales, but how landowners' yards are also part of the drainage system. He requested emphasis on how South Indian River Water Control District is different from other communities. Mr. Howard noted it was difficult to read through all the printed information and suggested including graphics on the front page to break up the text. Mr. Jones inquired about what can be done to move forward on this project. Ms. Kennedy stated she will set aside time to work on the draft.

Mr. Haas next explained the analysis of the Section 7 improvement funding. The estimated project costs are \$435,724 and engineering costs are \$134,000. The grant amount is \$353,650. This is not a matching grant. The District has agreed to come up with \$216,074. Mr. Haas has proposed moving \$80,000 from Fund 350, \$30,470 from Fund 345, and \$20,000 from Fund 120. The remaining \$85,604 will be an assessment to the landowners. This will be a one-year assessment.

The Board then had a lengthy discussion of the proposed budget. Mr. Meyers noted that the District has been ambitious in its undertakings over the past three to four years. Other than Section 7 and Canal C, most of the projects have been one-time expenses. He had hoped to see the budget decrease and questioned if there are ways to trim the budget, specifically trimming the cushions that are built into certain budget items. Mr. Haas noted that, using a typical parcel computation, Palm Beach Country Estates has a \$12-13 increase for the average parcel, and Jupiter Farms has a \$26 increase for road maintenance and water control.

Mr. Powell was concerned about borrowing from the Renewal and Replacement fund and asked for assurance from Mr. Dillon that this will not cause a shortfall. Mr. Dillon stated he has looked at this budget closely with Mr. Haas and did not believe there will be any shortfall in the fund. Mr. Haas stated the loans will be paid back in five years.

Mr. Meyer questioned the increase in the Operations and Maintenance budget. Mr. Howard questioned if borrowing from a fund will delay any work in the future. Mr. Dillon stated he has a 20-year spread sheet for the paved roads showing when they are due for maintenance. Mr. Jones stated the Budget Committee has tried to minimize increases in the assessments. The projects budgeted are things that need to be done. He also did not believe anything is expected to cause a shortfall in the Renewal and Replacement fund.

Ms. Kennedy questioned where the funds for the vegetation removal for maintenance purposes are coming from. Mr. Haas stated this is in the Jupiter Farms water control budget. Ms. Kennedy also requested further clarification of the per parcel increases, which Mr. Haas explained.

Mr. Meyer requested clarification of non-recurring expenses for next year, which Mr. Haas explained. Mr. Meyer suggested that the special revenue budget could be trimmed and had questions regarding the

capital projects funding. He was concerned that there was not enough work being done in-house. Mr. Dillon assured him that as much work as possible is being done in-house. Mr. Meyer then questioned if cushions are necessary in the budgets for water quality, culverts, and riprap. Mr. Dillon and Mr. Haas discussed specific costs for these items.

Ms. DeNinno presented the public information report. She presented a short one-minute preview of the District's public education video. The full five-minute video is expected to be ready for the next Board meeting. Ms. Kennedy noted the printed material is also expected to be ready by the next meeting. Ms. DeNinno reported Chapters 7 and 8 of the Policies and Procedures Manual are completed. Mr. Capko noted that Chapter 9 is being reorganized and will be ready in the next week or two. Ms. DeNinno reported the next newsletter will have the budget overview and election information. The Family Day budget has been discussed with Mr. Haas and estimates will be obtained.

Mr. Dillon presented the manager of operations report. The Canal E work is moving along with trees cleared and the fill work completed. He noted this work has been handled in-house. He is now working with the contractor regarding the embankment. This project is expected to be completed in a month or so.

Mr. Dillon briefly reported on Section 7. Bids must be received by August 9th.

Mr. Dustin Fazio, District employee, reported on the Canal 5 tree clearing which was completed today. Access on the north side of Canal 5 has now been created where there previously was overgrowth reaching across the Canal. Comments from landowners were mainly those of curiosity. The only negative comments were regarding the removal of pine trees. He confirmed that the only trees removed were out of necessity for access. The budget for this project was \$35,000; \$32,866 was actually spent.

Ms. Brandon presented the engineer's report. Regarding fill permits, the County's signed Memorandum was just received. Ms. Brandon has not yet had a chance to review it in detail but is aware minor changes have been made. She will report back to the Board once it is reviewed.

Regarding Section 7, only one bid was received. Since this is grant-funded, she has advertised for additional bids which are due August 9th. The staff has responded to the Request for Information.

Ms. Brandon noted that Mr. Dillon already reported on Canal E. Quotes have been requested from contractors for adding riprap to stabilize the banks.

Ms. Brandon has drafted a letter to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection regarding Canal C, confirming coverage under the exemption for maintenance. She needs to review quantities, and this will be done next week.

Cost estimates have been prepared for the last road paving petition involving two lots on 160th Street North between 72nd Drive North and 71st Drive North. Pricing has gone up and the cost is expected to be \$62,000 for that section. This will be one-owner financing. Ms. Brandon noted another petition is contingent upon this one.

Ms. Brandon presented a summary of her research regarding permitting fees charged by other districts. Permit application fees range between \$250-500 with specific application fees for administration costs. Utility fees are all over the board. Culvert connection fees range between \$50-500. Many of the districts

require a deposit up front. Then after the engineer reviews the plan, that deposit is used to pay engineering fees. The last category is the inspection fee. Ms. Brandon noted this information is for discussion purposes and Board consideration. She recommended 100% reimbursement, including underground utility expenses. This fiscal year there were many permits. She estimated about \$50,000 in engineering fees was related to permits. Mr. Meyer noted there are times when a project falls through and an upfront fee would then cover expenses. Ms. Kennedy was also concerned about recovering such expenses. Mr. Howard also agreed. Mr. Powell questioned if this will be addressed in the Policies and Procedures Manual. Ms. Brandon stated this will be in Chapter 9. She requested feedback from the Board in order to complete the policy for the Manual.

Ms. Brandon discussed the District's water quality monitoring. She compared South Indian River Water Control District and Loxahatchee River District statistics. She presented a graph showing the monitoring locations for both. Annual trends were discussed. E. coli monitoring was discussed as well as bacteria, fecal coliform, phosphorus, nitrogen, and chlorophyll. In comparison, South Indian River Water Control District has a lot of metal, probably because of the nurseries. Loxahatchee River District has more E. coli. Ms. Brandon stated the Department of Environmental Protection has asked South Indian River Water Control District to test for E. coli versus fecal coliform. E. coli is more indicative of human waste, although both E. coli and fecal coliform can be from wildlife. Mr. Meyer suggested looking at trends for metals and possibly replacing with E. coli, sucralose, and chlorophyll A, depending on costs. Ms. Brandon will look into the cost of the various tests and report back to the Board.

Ms. Brandon discussed the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System storm sewer system permit. South Indian River Water Control District is a co-participant. The program consists of a series of structural control and collection systems. Maintenance activity is tracked and reported yearly. Informing the public is required and this is done through the District newsletter. Everything must be documented, including construction site runoff, erosion, and sediment control. The District now has to prepare a water quality assessment report. It has been noted that nitrogen is trending down but there have been no issues. Ms. Kennedy was concerned that the Loxahatchee River is protected, and that the District look at trends of phosphorus, fecal coliform, and metals. Mr. Meyer noted that under Department of Environmental Protection's 5-year 4E Plan, of which the District is a stakeholder, nitrogen has been identified as requiring additional reduction in order to meet Total Maximum Daily Load levels established by the State for the Loxahatchee River. Ms. Brandon will obtain cost estimates for performing various other tests. Mr. Powell noted that the District's previous engineer, Mr. Lindahl, recommended 30 years ago that the District establish an historical data base. The District has benefitted because this was done.

The Board requested that information regarding the change in fill permits be placed in the next newsletter.

Mr. Capko reported that he and Mr. Dillon are working on the issue regarding the landowner in Section 33, and it is close to being resolved.

There was no further business to come before the Board at this time. Mr. Powell made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNED.