

Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District

17th REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, May 15th 2018

The seventeenth meeting of the Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District board of supervisors was held on Tuesday May 15, 2018 at Polk State College campus in Lakeland, Fl. Room LTB 1124.

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman Upthagrove called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Guests in Attendance:

The Honorable Bill Braswell - Polk County Board Commissioner
Darin Varaday - Congressman Darin Soto's staff
Edward Sheehan - District Conservationist, NRCS
Matt Warren - Environmental Manager, Ag Water Policy, FDACS
Paul Webb - Polk County Ag Manager PC schools
Kyle Carlton - Polk County Ag Teacher
Kietha Bennett - Florida Farm Bureau
Drew Pitts - Polk County Soil & Water Conservation District

PC SWCD SUPERVISORS in Attendance:

Brett Upthagrove Chairman
Joe Garrison Treasurer (Via phone)
Mike Darrow Secretary
Kyle Carlton Supervisor

III. Approval of the last meeting 4/25/18 minutes.

Electronic Minutes were available at this meeting and sent out prior to the meeting.
Motion to accept minutes; Approved 3- 0.

IV. Supervisor Nominations to fill opening.

Chairman Upthagrove gave a brief explanation of a volunteer to join our board - Mr. Kyle Carlton. The open spot is from the resignation of Supervisor Dockery. He sent out his résumé and all supervisors have reviewed his resume as it is very strong in Education and Agriculture. A great addition to the board. Supervisor Darrow made a motion to approve Mr. Carlton a new Supervisor on the board.

Motion to accept Kyle Carlton as a new board member and supervisor to the PCSWCD; Approved 3- 0

IV. NRCS Agreement discussion:

Mutual cooperative agreement – District Conservationist, Mr. Sheehan informed us that no new information or progress was available. State office is trying to group all agreements together. New employee Mr. Pitts was now in the office working with them all.

V. NRCS Conservation report:

Conservation report - District Conservationist, Mr. Sheehan gave a Brief report. Ed talked about for this year's 2018 EQIP four have been approved. Now he is working and reviewing them for funding in Polk County by ranking 69 applicants for the next round of funding.

VI. Treasures Report:

Treasurer Garrison talked about accounts, checkbook, receipts, and banking he tabled the report until next month. Brett mentioned the purchase of a truck for the new employee. The truck was order by FDACS and a pass thru account must be set up for the purchase and payment of contract.

Brett discussed the need for reimbursement for expenses at \$223.34 receipts are to be filed with Treasurer Garrison. Supervisor Darrow made a motion to pay the expenses at \$223.34. Also cut a check for \$25.00 to the winners of the PCSWCD speech contest.

Motion to pay these expenses; Approved 4- 0.

VII. AFCD - PCSWCD Website Update:

Vice Chair Masters was not available , Supervisor Darrow reported he emailed AFCD about the website, and Ms. Charlene and Ms. Kaylee helped him out by sending passwords and information. He will be reviewing the information and trying to update the site. Interest is adding meeting time, minutes, and locations to the website. Hopes to get to it in the next 3 weeks.

IX. SWFWMD – Farms Program Report:

No Report this month.

IX. FDACS Report:

Mr. Matt Warren of FDACs spoke about and introduced our New Employee Mr. Drew Pitts of Bartow. Drew talked about his Ag, farming, and irrigation experience and that he previously worked for Highlands Soil and water conservation district as a project manager for the mobile irrigation la. He will be working now doing the same thing for all of Polk County. Matt talked about the revision of the MU. Brett was going to sign it after the meeting. Also his made mention the FDACs is paying for funding for the truck and insurance **Motion to sign MU and pay chairmen's expenses for cost share meeting; Approved 3- 0.**

PCSWCD employee Mr. Drew Pitts mentioned he need a chair and businesses cards. Chairman Upthagrove said he would work something out. Possible use of a debit card in the future. Also he talked his role is water conversation for Farming operations and visiting Polk Ag producers for cost share and BMP's.

XIII. New Business:

Chairman's report -

Chairman Upthagrove discussed the need to attend a meeting with FDACs contracts. Also mentioned the AFCD annual meeting August 23 -25 in Ocala. We will be discussing travel and who all is able to attend.

Goals & Strategic planning- Chairman Upthagrove mentioned some our action items and goals for the board are being achieved in our early history. He looked forward to working Mr. Pitts and Mr. Warren on this joint venture. He would like to continue to mend fences with Polk County and work in whatever way to improve cooperation.

Congressman Soto's Staff – Darin Varaday, thanked all for the invitation to attend the meeting. He came to inform us of the congressman's role for the Agriculture of Polk County as well as all of the State of Florida. He inform us all on progress for the area and project they were working on.

The Honorable Bill Braswell- Polk County Board Commissioner, Mr. Braswell- was glad to attend a meeting. He informed the board about conversation projects and Agricultures importance to the community and the county. One project was the Peace River reservoir for hold flood water in an old 8 billion gallon water storage for usage by the County in future needs. Project was estimated at 15 million dollars. He was working with multiple agencies on support. Mr. Varaday informed he would look into funding for this project. Mr. Braswell also asked the PCSWCD a letter of support when the time came to do so. This project sounds very viable for the future of water conservation in the county.

Mr. Paul Webb Polk County Schools - Mr. Webb talked the Polk and State Land Judging contest that was held at the FFA leadership center. Both where well attended and the state landing judging was most impressive event he thank all for the participation in the event. Polk school land judging winners were in the top five for the state competition. The school were George Jenkins HS and Citrus Ridge Middle School. Chairman Upthagrove thanked Him and Mr. Sheehan for their excellent work. Mr. Webb talked about the recent PCSWCD Speech contest for Middle school and high school students held at Citrus Ridge School. This year's event was successful. The schools are looking forward to the next poster event later this year.

XIV. The Next meeting:

The Next meeting is scheduled for 6/19/18 at the Polk State Lakeland Campus, Florida at 6:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Action items:

1. Future presentations by district conservationist on each program offered.
2. Develop a conservation district plan with goals and objectives for future. .
3. Look for grants and funding opportunities. **Partially complete**
4. Partner with other agencies to move conservation projects to Polk County.
5. Employee funding decisions or partnerships. **Partially complete**
6. Work to hoist a successful State land Judging contest in 2018. (FFA and 4H)
Completed in March 2018.
7. Identify projects to partner with the committee for conservation projects.
8. Develop a business plan.
 - Community gardens
 - Rain Gardens!
 - Urban forest grants
 - Cost share projects
 - Community education
 - Speech contest
 - Envirothon
 - Land Conservation
 - Water Conservation
 - Youth education projects
 - Employee funding
 - Grants

Respectfully submitted, Michael Darrow