

# Minutes

Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD)

Regular Board Meeting

2710 East Silver Springs Boulevard

Ocala, FL 34470

April 14, 2025

9:00 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.*

## 1) Call to Order

### a) Roll Call

Chairman, Vivi Serena, called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

Roll Call was taken. In attendance was Vivi Serena, Chairman; Justin Albright, Vice Chairman/Treasurer; and Lenora Deonath, Supervisor. Colleen Stenstream, Secretary and Amy Davis, Public Relations were not in attendance. Others in attendance were Sierra Ayers, NRCS (arrived at 9:25 AM), Ada Napiatek, Green Hoofs (arrived at 9:25 AM/Left at 9:37 AM) and Ann Bishop, MSWCD.

### b) Proof of Publication

Proof of Publication was given. It appeared in the Ocala Gazette on October 4, 2024 and was reposted on January 24, 2025. The Florida Administrative Weekly posted it on October 7. NRCS received notice of the 2025 meetings on December 12, 2024. Marion County Board of County Commissioners received notice of the meetings on December 11. The meeting is also posted on the District website with the agenda uploaded on March 3, 2025.

## 2) NRCS Report

### a) Monthly Report

Sierra Ayers presented her monthly report and stated that they are still scheduled to relocate their office in August to probably Gainesville.

b) Local Working Group (Recap)

Sierra Ayers gave a recap of the Local Working Group Meeting. We had five in attendance, and the attendees learned a lot about NRCS programs.

3) FDACS Report

FDACS is terminating all contracts on June 30 and reissuing them in July. The May Workshop was discussed, and the Board decided not to hold it, since the contract is terminating.

a) Payment(s)

Ann Bishop gave an update on payments and mentioned that she reached out to FDACS regarding the termination of the contract and how to handle the turn around of funds.

b) Agreement(s)

The Board received another agreement for 83 Farms LLC (Gilchrist), which was sent to the Board via email.

4) New Hire

Vivi Serena and Ann Bishop served on an interview panel and are in the process of hiring the new employee, Ashlee Rice.

5) Financials

a) CD

Justin Albright didn't roll over the CD but stated that he will go to the bank today.

b) 501c3

The District was granted the 501c3 status, which requires additional reporting. Ann Bishop gave a recap on this.

c) Audit

Jim Davis is in the process of conducting our audit.

d) MC Budget

Ann Bishop presented the budget to the Board and mentioned that she will need to do a budget amendment for this year.

PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved to accept the MC Budget as presented.

Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.

## 6) Legislation

Ann Bishop gave a recap.

## 7) Staff Report & Recap

### a) Outreach

#### i) Buzz and Bloom (Recap)

*Ann Bishop gave a recap. Rainbow River State Park would like to do this event again next year but in March. Partnerships were established: connected a beekeeper to a few farms to place their bees, Home Depot wants to partner on doing a conservation presentation.*

#### ii) Farmland Preservation (Recap)

*Ann Bishop gave a recap; Brent London assisted with this event. Ann Bishop networked with a few organizations: State Parks, O2O, and Alachua Land and Trust.*

#### iii) Library Programs (Update)

##### (1) Kids – Color Our World

Ann Bishop mentioned that this event is scheduled for July 10 at the Belleview location; we will probably make butterfly/dragonflies and discuss the importance of pollinators.

##### (2) Seed Library

The Seed Library will be at Headquarters on April 19 at 10:30 AM. It was in the Ocala Gazette.

### b) Meetings

#### i) NSF (Recap)

*Ann Bishop gave a recap.*

#### ii) Pollinator Ambassador Academy (Recap)

*Lenora Deonath gave a recap and stated that she will bring the list of native plants to the next meeting.*

iii) Clean Earth Initiative (Recap)

*Ann Bishop gave a recap of Clean Earth Initiative and their meetings.*

*PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that MSWCD become a coalition member of the Clean Earth Initiative. Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.*

iv) SE Partnership for Forests and Water

*The SE Partnership for Forests and Water Forum was discussed.*

*PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that Ann Bishop participate in the Forests and Water Forum. Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.*

v) UF/IFAS FL Ag Policy Outlook Conference

*The UF/IFAS FL Ag Policy Outlook Conference was discussed.*

vi) FASD

*The Board all agreed to the slate of officers; Ann Bishop will send it to FASD.*

*(1) Legislative Forum (Recap)*

*Ann Bishop gave a recap on the Legislative Forum. At the meeting David Ramba told a District if they dissolve prior to the Statute taking effect then they can designate where their assets go. Also, at the meeting, Ann learned that all digital content: website, presentations, documents, etc. must be ADA compliant by April 26 2027 and old digital content can be saved as archived.*

*(2) Annual Meeting*

*The FASD Annual Meeting was discussed.*

*PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that Ann Bishop attend the FASD 2025 Annual Meeting. Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.*

vii) FCDEA

*The FCDEA annual meeting was discussed.*

*PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that MSWCD attend the FCDEA 2025 Annual Meeting. Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.*

c) Miscellaneous

i) Stefani's Farewell

*Ann Bishop gave a recap.*

ii) Contests

*Ann Bishop asked the Board to think about the budget for next year's contests, so we can discuss it at next month's meeting.*

*(1) Envirothon*

*Alachua 4-H Tardigrades advanced to Nationals, which will be held in Canada this June.*

(2) Awards

Lenora Deonath took the awards to the Dunnellon schools. The District has one poster and one tray that have not been claimed. The student of a found art project asked if the District could take her project to West Port since her teacher has not been able to get it. The Board agreed that Ann Bishop should take it to the school.

iii) Shirts

*District apparel was discussed.*

*PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that MSWCD purchase shirts for staff and supervisors when funding is available. Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.*

iv) Scholarship Committee

*The Scholarship was discussed. Amy Davis, Tom Cartwright, and Justin Albright all agreed to be judges. Ann Bishop is going to find out about postponing the scholarship for a year due to District funding.*

*TABLED: MSWCD pause the scholarship program for the 2025-2026 fiscal year until funding is available.*

v) Year in Review

*The year in review was discussed and the Board decided not to meet with the commissioners this year.*

*PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that MSWCD approve the Year-in-Review as discussed. Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.*

vi) Vehicle

*Ann Bishop gave a recap on the repairs done to the vehicle.*

## 8) CONSENT AGENDA

a) MSWCD Board Minutes

b) MSWCD Board Financial Report

*PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved that MSWCD approve the consent agenda as presented. Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.*

## 9) Upcoming Events

FCDEA Monthly Meeting – April 15  
Holiday Office Closed – April 18  
Seed Library Event – April 19  
State Annual Report Due – May 1  
MC Budget Request Due – May 1  
Water School – May 1-2  
UF/IFAS FL Ag Policy Outlook Conference – May 8  
Marion SWCD Meeting – May 12  
Preferred Event – May 12-13  
Rainbow River Cleanup – May 17  
FCDEA Monthly Meeting – May 20  
Holiday Office Closed – May 26  
Last Day of School – May 29  
General Public Comments

## 10) Supervisor Comments

Justin Albright mentioned that he will not be able to attend next month's meeting and Vivi Serena stated that she will probably not make it as well.

PROPOSED MOTION: Justin Albright moved to cancel next month's meeting (May 12); Lenora Deonath seconded; all were in favor.

Vivi Serena asked if anyone heard of Gambler 500; they are a group of individuals who own antique cars and pick up trash in the forest.

## 11) Meeting Adjournment

- a) Our next meeting is June 9, 2025 at 9:00 AM in the Growth Services Building.
- b) With no other business needing addressed Vivi Serena, Chairman, adjourned the meeting at 10:05 AM, until our next meeting.

*MSWCD's regular meetings are held at 9:00 AM on the 2nd Monday of each month, and their workshops are held the 4th Monday of each month at 9:00 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.*