

FINAL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
of the
HARRIS CHAIN OF LAKES RESTORATION COUNCIL
October 14, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council (Council) was held at 9:03 a.m. on October 14, 2016 at the Lake County Board of County Commissioner Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida.

Council Members Present

Robert Johnson, Chairman
Skip Goerner, Vice-Chairman

Council Members Absent

Don Nicholson, Secretary
Sid Grow
Keith Truenow
Stephanie Bishop
Vacant, Attorney
Vacant, Physician
Vacant, Environmental Science/Regulation

TAG Members Present

Rolland Fulton (St Johns River Water Management District, SJRWMD)

TAG Members Absent

Mark Hoyer (University of Florida, UF)
Mike Perry (Lake County Water Authority, LCWA)
Kevin Coyne (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, DEP)
Dennis Renfro (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, FWC)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Johnson called for a moment of silence. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

3. COUNCIL ROLL CALL; REMINDER FOR OTHERS TO SIGN IN

Chairman Johnson called the roll. Council members Nicholson, Grow, Truenow, and Bishop were absent.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from September 9, 2016 were not approved as there was no quorum.

5. PRESENTATIONS / ACTION ITEMS

* Action items requested by council members are in bold.

A. Review of Second Draft of 2016 Annual Report, Denis Frazel, Harris Council Administrative Support

Denis Frazel, Harris Council Administrative Support, presented the second 2016 draft Annual Report. Mr. Frazel discussed the Executive Summary noting bulleted recommendations would be updated with comments provided during the meeting and presented in the final draft in November. Mr. Frazel noted the recommendations in the Executive Summary are presented as a separate sheet attached to the front of the document. Mr. Frazel also provided a draft cover page showing a map of the Harris Chain of Lakes. Council approved of the cover for review in November.

Mr. Frazel reviewed major comments provided by Council on the second draft.

Under **Section 4.1 Lake Water Level Management**, Mr. Frazel added August, September, and October to the sentence discussing regulation schedules.

Under **Section 4.2 Lake Apopka Restoration**, a paragraph describing water chemistry trends by Dr. Canfield was added, including the figures Dr. Canfield presented at the August meeting. Dr. Fulton reported differences between Dr. Canfield's data and SJRWMD data. **Council requested Dr. Canfield be contacted to clarify the sources of his information.**

Council recommendations for Section 4.2 for 2016 were revised as follows:

- **Council supports ~~bubbler projects for aerating lake waters and oxidizing flocculent sediments, and projects utilizing the Mitton cavitation process and wedgewire screens for removing sediments and phosphorus.~~**
- **Council supports dredging in Lake Apopka to create areas for vegetation.**

Under **Section 4.3 Aquatic Vegetation**, text describing a presentation by Mr. Dennis Renfro was added as follows:

“Mr. Dennis Renfro, FWC, reviewed the status and coverage of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in Lakes Griffin, Harris, and Apopka in 2015. It is Council's opinion hydrilla is growing at an advanced pace in the Harris Chain of Lakes, and requires immediate agency attention.

Mr. Renfro advised the Council of FWC's efforts to reconnect certain areas of the Emerald Marsh on the east side of Lake Griffin. FWC's efforts will result in a reconnection of drained marsh habitat to the major system. Mr. Renfro noted four wildlife islands are planned using 30 foot by 15 foot sections of internal levee upon which native trees and emerged vegetation will be planted.”

Also, in **Section 4.3**, Chairman Johnson requested the presentation order for Figure 3 and 4 be reversed.

Under **Section 4.4 Fish Attractor Program**, the following text and recommendation was added:

“Mr. Renfro discussed partnerships with the LCWA and local fishing clubs in building and installing fish attractors to enhance angling opportunities. Mr. Renfro discussed aerial images of Lake Griffin and Lake Harris and the locations of woody and artificial fish attractors in the lakes.

Mr. Renfro advised FWC plans to purchase seven to ten more attractors for installation in either Lake Eustis or Lake Dora.

Council recommendation:

Council supports the installation of additional artificial structures in the Harris Chain.”

Under **Section 4.6 Fishery Research**, Dr. Fulton provided the following revised text.

“Nearly all pesticide levels in the fish samples fell below the TRVs, so it was determined to be safe to shallowly flood the North Shore Restoration Area.

Other areas in the NSRA had much higher frequencies of exceedance of the FDOH screening values.”

Under **Section 5.0 Proposed Projects by Partners**, Mr. Frazel provided the following text,

“The Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council will review proposals for restoration projects from federal, state, and local agencies that benefit Harris Lakes during the next fiscal year. Priority projects that demonstrate economic benefit, improve water quality, enhance aquatic vegetation, or improve fisheries will be recommended for funding by the Florida Legislature in the 2017 Annual Report.”

Dr. Fulton provided project information to Mr. Frazel that would be added to the section, in addition to information previously provided by Kevin Coyne, FDEP.

Finally, Mr. Frazel noted a copy of the Harris Council Plan Letter had been added to the Annual Report.

There were no further questions.

6. COUNCIL & AGENCY QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Dr. Fulton reported to Council on the approximate costs for Emerald Marsh Restoration, noting reconnection of Area 2 was estimated at \$100,000, with Area 4 costing \$200,000. Area 3 restoration is budgeted at \$1,025,00 million, including \$543,000 for levee breaches, the installation of four habitat islands, and the removal of the ditch plug. Vegetation mat removal is budgeted at \$277,000. Dr. Fulton noted costs are dependent on what exactly needs to be done internal of the levees, and Emerald Marsh cost estimates are not necessarily representative of Lake Apopka reconnection.

Dr. Fulton updated Council on Hurricane Matthew, reporting Lake County receiving the most rainfall, with southeast corner of Lake Apopka accumulating approximately 4-6 inches of rainfall. Two inches of rain were reported on the north side of Lake Apopka. Lake levels increased throughout the Harris Chain of Lakes with hurricane-related rainfall but were all still below regulation schedule.

Chairman Johnson asked Dr. Fulton about the SJRWMD response to the plan letter. Dr. Fulton reported SJRWMD had queried agencies about interest in providing a joint response. Council indicated a preference for individual responses, and any joint response should include individual responses as well.

Chairman Johnson requested **Susan Davis provide a list of email addresses of Council members** so he could remind them of meeting attendance.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

8. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Chairman Johnson and Vice Chairman Goerner discussed membership on the Council, suggesting advertising in the Village Sun newspaper. Susan Davis, SJRWMD, suggested also advertising on Lakefront TV. Current open vacancies include positions for an attorney, physician, and environmental science/regulation.

Chairman Johnson requested Dr. Fulton describe the Trout Lake project. Dr. Fulton noted it was a private company running the project under sponsorship by the Florida Department of Agriculture, with City of Eustis contributing the land for the project. Dr. Fulton described the project as being located on the north side of Trout Lake, where water from Hicks Ditch is treated in a wetland before moving into Trout Lake. Canal water from the lake would also be treated then returned back into Trout Lake. Vice Chairman Goerner inquired where the alum treatment is to occur. Dr. Fulton was unsure if alum treatment was before or after the wetland, or whether it is permitted through SJRWMD or FDEP. Susan Davis noted the project was issued an Environmental Resource Permit through SJRWMD Ms. Davis indicated **would forward a copy of the technical report to Council.**

Chairman Johnson reviewed the “Requests for Action” list from October, with comments as follows:

Item 18. Hydrilla treatment information. Vice Chairman Goerner requested further clarification from Dennis Renfro. was not available.

9. REQUESTS FOR ACTION

- a. Chairman Johnson requested Dr. Canfield be contacted to identify the sources of the data he presented at the September meeting.
- b. Vice-Chairman Goerner requested a copy of the technical report on the Trout Lake project ERP permit from Susan Davis.
- c. Chairman Johnson requested Susan Davis provide a list of email addresses of Council members.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.