

FINAL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
of the
HARRIS CHAIN OF LAKES RESTORATION COUNCIL
October 6, 2017**

The regular meeting of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council (Council) was held at 9:00 a.m. on October 6, 2017 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
Don Nicholson, Secretary
Keith Truenow
John Stump
Stephanie Bishop

Council Members Absent

Sid Grow
Vacant, Attorney
Vacant, Physician

TAG Members Present

Dennis Renfro (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, FWC)
Mike Perry (Lake County Water Authority, LCWA)
Kevin Coyne (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, DEP)
Rolland Fulton (St. Johns River Water Management District, SJRWMD)

TAG Members Absent

Mark Hoyer (University of Florida, UF)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

Chairman Johnson called the roll.

4. REMINDER FOR OTHERS TO SIGN IN & FILL OUT SPEAKER CARDS

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from August 11, 2017 were approved. Minutes from September 22, 2017 were tabled for review in November.

6. PRESENTATIONS / ACTION ITEMS

* Action items requested by councilmembers are in bold.

A. Update on Lake Apopka Dredging, Bob Naleway, P.E., SJRWMD

Chairman Johnson introduced Bob Naleway, engineer with SJRWMD. Mr. Naleway provided an overview of his presentation on SJRWMD Lake Apopka dredging projects, noting the current approved and funded dredging projects include sump dredging, vacuuming, and Newton Park Channel dredging.

Mr. Naleway reported current sump dredging project, funded by FWC, has been fully designed and is permitted. The contract for the first dredging project (one sump) was issued in September 2017, with dredging set to begin in December. The dredge spoil will be moved by hydraulic pipe and deposited in Cells F and G within the marsh flowway in North Shore Restoration Area (NSRA).

Mr. Naleway noted the navigation component was excluded from permit as a result of archeological issues, which are currently being addressed. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) requested the review, as bottom soundings found several potential archeological areas. Mr. Naleway further noted such reviews are generally required on most projects. An aerial image of the dredge site showed the area of archaeological avoidance as well as two additional sump sites that may be developed if the test sump is successful. Water from the dredge spoil moves by gravity discharge into an intake channel in the C-2 cell then moves back to Lake Apopka. Water can be treated with alum before moving into marsh flowway. The current project will not use alum initially, but can adapt, if necessary. Vice-chairman Goerner questioned the amount of phosphorus (P) in the dredge material. Mr. Naleway noted when pumping into the flowway, the goal is to reduce P to 0.1 ml/l (100 parts per billion -ppb) into the cell.

Councilwoman Bishop queried Mr. Naleway about funding and dredging timeframes. Mr. Naleway reported FWC has cleared funding for the first sump out of three, and FDEP may have additional funding to continue. The project contractor is the environmental firm AMEC Foster Wheeler. Project dredging cannot continue year-round as dredging is not permitted for mid-June to mid-September. These blackout periods are intended to minimize the possibility fish kills from high water temperatures during that time period. Sump locations were identified as good collection sites, independent of navigation channels. According to Mr. Naleway, the timetable for completion of sumps 2 and 3 is about 2-3 years out. SJRWMD will monitor sump one to evaluate how quickly material moves into the sump.

Councilman Truenow inquired about the bubbler and cavitation/rundown screen projects in the lake. Mr. Naleway noted both pilot studies were completed, and final project reports are expected soon. A third project, using a ferrite and rock oxidation treatment system to treat to very low P concentrations has also been completed, and a project report is forthcoming. All three reports will be passed to Council. Councilman Truenow suggested mobilizations could cost double the money if the dredging of sumps 2 and 3 is delayed.

Mr. Naleway discussed the unconsolidated flocculent (floc) vacuuming project which uses a suction pipe with holes in the top of a PVC pipe at the end of the suction pipe to remove material. A cutting head is not used, only water (and floc material) is moved, therefore a dredge permit is not needed. The pump only system is used to "vacuum" the upper 12"-18" unconsolidated floc layer from the bottom of the water column at the rate of about 800 gallons per minute. Mr. Naleway suggested about 2-300

ppb of P is vacuumed in the process. Vice-chairman Goerner queried Mr. Naleway about developing a permanent facility. Mr. Naleway indicated a permanent facility could be built. Mr. Naleway noted phases 1 and 2, which we funded by FWC are complete, with phase 3, funded by FDEP through legislative funding, set to begin in early 2018. In discussing an aerial image of the vacuuming locations, Mr. Naleway noted the phase vacuuming sites were located to avoid any planted areas.

Mr. Naleway described the Lake Apopka – Newton Park Access Channel Dredging project, designed to provide and access channel from Newton Park Boat Ramp to Lake Apopka in Winter Garden, Florida. The completed channel, funded by FDEP through legislative funding, will be approximately 4,000 feet long, and will provide better access for boaters, while minimizing disturbance of the muck layer on the lake bottom. Dredged material will be placed on Lake Apopka NSRA. The project is currently in conceptual design phase, scheduled for completion in early 2018. The final design anticipated later in 2018, with construction planned for 2019. The Newton Park project is expected to remove 335,00 cubic yards of material. The Newton Park project will likely fill back in quickly, though if lake levels remain higher, the channel will stay clear longer. Mr. Naleway noted dredging is still cheaper than other alternatives.

Potential future projects of targeted lake wide dredging described by Mr. Naleway included, additional sumps, additional vacuuming, a Montverde boat ramp channel, and a Magnolia Park channel. Other activities involving Lake Apopka dredging include an archeological evaluation of Lake Apopka which will generate a high and low probability map of potential artifacts, generate surveys of 50 acres of high probability areas for “remote sensing”, and provide for up to five “hits” in the 50-acre area for diving study. Mr. Naleway noted the State historic preservation office approved the scope of work. In addition, a complete Lake Apopka hydrodynamic model to aid in selection of dredging locations is planned.

Mr. Naleway noted the September SJRWMD Governing Board approved selection of AMEC Foster Wheeler to provide dredging design services. Councilwoman Bishop inquired about the selection process. Mr. Naleway noted SJRWMD generally gets 2-5 submittals on these projects and the bids are qualification-based, with Governing Board approvals for all rankings. In addition to AMEC Foster Wheeler, Taylor Engineering out of Jacksonville is providing engineering services.

Councilman Stump discussed changing regulation schedules to help move flocc using wind fetch with low water. Vice-chairman Goerner noted when the lake is drained down it helps move flocc into sumps before moving downstream. Councilman Stump requested that Mr. Naleway be scheduled for another update in the next quarter.

Councilman Truenow inquired about the status of north shore levee repairs. Mr. Naleway reported no more water was flowing across the breach site, as fill was trucked to the breach site. Lake level has returned to near the max desirable level, but still above regulatory level. Mike Perry, LCWA, showed graphs of current lake level status as of October 5, showing levels just above regulatory stage. Mr. Perry noted the Nutrient Reduction Facility (NuRF) flow was maxed out at 300 cubic feet per second (cfs). Currently 100% of outflow is going through the NuRF for treatment. Mr. Perry noted there was intermittent alum treatment after the passing of Hurricane Irma due to limited supplies of alum. There was no damage to NuRF infrastructure, though for a period of time the banks were overtopped due to high winds. **Councilman Stump requested a copy of the Powerpoint presentation from Bob Naleway be provide to Council.**

B. Review of Second Draft of 2017 Annual Report, Denis Frazel, Harris Council Administrative Support

Denis Frazel, Harris Council Administrative Support, presented the second 2017 draft Annual Report. Mr. Frazel reviewed all sections of the second draft report, including major comments provided by Council on the initial draft. Mr. Frazel noted table numbers had been updated as new tables had been inserted.

Specific comments are as follows:

Table 2. Mr. Frazel noted the discussion of Hurricane Irma by Harris Council members was added to the table. Mr. Frazel further noted the presentation by Bob Naleway would be added.

Section 4.1 Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration

The following paragraph was approved and inserted as paragraph 4 of the section.

“Council discussed the restoration funding history of Lake Apopka and the Harris Chain of Lakes at several Council meetings during the reporting period, and requested a summary of agency expenditures on restoration efforts from 1998-2016. Table 4 lists the agency expenditures for Lake Apopka and the Harris Chain of Lakes using the best available information provided by each agency. Data sources for listed expenditures are included as numbered notes below the table.”

Table 4. Agency Expenditures on Lake Apopka and the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration from 1998-2016, was added to the document under Section 4.1.

Text stating “Over \$100 million (based on available data in Table 4) has been expended on Lake Apopka and Harris Chain of Lakes restoration efforts since 1998 and Council is concerned that the expenditures have not resulted in adequate restoration of the targeted areas,” was proposed for insertion after Table 4. Council discussed the missing data in the Table, suggesting the dollars spent on restoration was closer to \$250 million. Mr. Frazel noted the current figure was the best available data. Mr. Frazel suggested retaining the text as underlined for further discussion at the November meeting.

Council also voted to exclude response letters to Senator Baxley by SJRWMD, LCWA, and FWC that were tentatively included as appendices to the document.

Council approved the addition of the following recommendation under Section 4.1.

- Council requests an OPPAGA review of restoration activities by SJRWMD, FWC and LCWA for Lake Apopka and other lakes within the Harris Chain of Lakes.

Section 4.2 Lake Water Level Management

Council approved two new recommendations for 2017.

- Council recommends closely maintaining the Harris Chain of Lakes regulation schedule during hurricane season, and,
- Council requests SJRWMD and pertinent Council technical advisory group agencies (FWC, FDEP, LCWA) to provide current scientific data in a presentation to the Council that allows

the North Shore (NSRA) to either be connected or not connected to Lake Apopka. If reconnection is an option, the presentation should include required steps, cost and time line.

Section 4.3 Aquatic Vegetation

Council approved the 2017 recommendation, "Council supports expanded efforts and funding for invasive aquatic plant management."

Chairman Johnson introduced two email communications he had received from the State Toxicologist, Dr. Kendra Goff, regarding fish toxicity. Chairman Johnson requested they be included in the Annual Report as appendices, and that recommendations pertaining to his request for fish toxicity analyses in the NSRA be included in the text of the report.

Mr. Frazel discussed the Executive Summary, noting bulleted recommendations would be updated with the comments provided during the meeting and presented in the final draft in November. Mr. Frazel noted the recommendations in the Executive Summary will also be presented as a separate sheet attached to the front of the document. A cover page showing an aerial image of the Harris Chain of Lakes is being prepared by SJRWMD staff.

COUNCIL & AGENCY QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A. Agency Updates

Rolland Fulton, Ph.D., SJRWMD, briefed Council on Lake Apopka conditions following Hurricane Irma. Dr. Fulton noted SJRWMD is pumping down cells F and G, then the marsh flowway. The project could take several months to get to proper level in the marsh of 18-24" water depth. Dr. Fulton noted an extraordinary amount of water inflow caused a breach of 100 meters of dike. Water both overtopped and breached the dike. Councilman Nicholson questioned whether water levels were above regulation schedule. Dr. Fulton reported prior to the storm, the water levels were just below regulation, and SJRWMD started discharging days before Hurricane Irma. Rapid movement of water is limited by the Dora Canal which has limited conveyance. **Vice-chairman Goerner requested to see data on any pumping from the north shore associated with the hurricane.**

Vice-chairman Goerner inquired about the SJRWMD chain of command in making decisions regarding implementing the regulation schedule. Vice-chairman Goerner noted according to the Four Rivers manual, under the local cooperative agreement between SJRWMD and the Corps, SJRWMD is supposed to hire a superintendent. Dr. Fulton noted the basin engineer is John Richmond, but that ultimate decisions on regulation are up to the Executive Director Dr. Ann Shortelle.

Council expressed concern SJRWMD did not release water soon enough to minimize flooding potential. Vice-chairman Goerner suggested flood damage could have been reduced, and requested information on how much new nutrient input was placed on the system. Council discussed lowering the regulation schedule during hurricane season, and other options regarding flow changes.

Vice-chairman Goerner discussed St. Johns River flows and whether Lake Apopka flooding contributed to St Johns River flooding. Dr. Fulton did not believe Lake Apopka discharges caused

St. Johns River flooding, noting SJRWMD did its best to manage a difficult situation. **Chairman Johnson suggested a USACE representative come to a Council meeting for a presentation.** Vice-chairman Goerner noted he had spoken with a USACE individual (unnamed) that could speak to Council.

Councilman Truenow discussed flow management, suggesting flooding of his property could have been avoided. Councilman Truenow was disappointed no one from SJRWMD ever called him regarding his flooding situation.

Councilman Nicholson discussed straightening of the Ocklawaha. Dr. Fulton noted the Sunnyhill Restoration Area, part of the historic Ocklawaha River floodplain, was used for some storage upstream of the control structure. Mr. Perry noted in 2004-2005 during low water conditions there were numerous requests to maintain high water conditions in Lake Apopka at all times. Mr. Perry suggested any discussions about regulation schedules should consider historical perspectives on water levels.

Kevin Coyne, FDEP, had no updates for the month.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

8. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Chairman Johnson inquired about Council personal information on the Council website. Susan Davis, SJRWMD, noted only a single point of contact is required. Chairman Johnson suggested including his P.O. Box number, email and cell phone be included as the point of contact. **Vice-chairman Goerner requested personal information of Council members be removed from the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council website.**

Chairman Johnson discussed a letter he submitted to University of Florida (UF) Vice-President Payne in response to letter from UF to SJRWMD Executive Director Ann Shortelle regarding an appearance at the Council by Dr. Dan Canfield. Council was of the opinion Dr. Canfield was speaking as an individual, not as a representative of UF. Councilman Johnson asked Council members if they knew who was the official representative for UF on the Council TAG. All members indicated they knew Mark Hoyer was the official representative for UF on the TAG. **Chairman Johnson requested Council Administrative Support to provide copies of the letter to Council and TAG.**

Chairman Johnson requested Kevin Coyne describe the FDEP funding process. Mr. Coyne noted FDEP is essentially a pass-through funding entity. Funds from the legislature go to FDEP and are then distributed to SJRWMD and elsewhere. Mr. Coyne noted that is the way all appropriations are handled. Bob Naleway noted his office executes a new revenue agreement with FDEP every year.

Councilman Nicholson expressed interest in knowing pre-1998 dollars spent on the Harris Chain of Lakes. Chairman Johnson suggested the data should be available somewhere.

9. REQUESTS FOR ACTION

- **Councilman Stump requested a copy of the Powerpoint presentation from Bob Naleway be provide to Council.**

- **Vice-chairman Goerner requested to see data on any pumping from the north shore associated with the hurricane.**
- **Chairman Johnson suggested a USACE representative come to a Council meeting for a presentation.**
- **Vice-chairman Goerner requested personal information of Council members be removed from the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council website.**
- **Chairman Johnson requested Council Administrative Support to provide copies of the letter to Council and TAG.**

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:44 AM.