



**ESCAMBIA
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MINUTES
May 18, 2023**

Board Members in Attendance

Mr. Travis Tharp, Chair/ Acting Secretary; Mr. Johnnie Odom, Vice-Chair/ Acting Treasurer.

Attendees

Mr. Joshua McElhaney, USDA/NRCS; Mr. Levi Blackmon, USDA/NRCS;
Mrs. Debbie Williams, Escambia County NRCD.

Call to Order

Mr. Travis Tharp called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

Those present stated the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag in unison.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

With no objection, March 2023 Board minutes were approved.

Acknowledgment of Public Notice

Meeting advertisement published.

Treasurer's Report

No activity with bank account and no funds available for NACD dues.
Mr. Johnnie Odom asked for approval to donate personal funds to the Board's bank account. Funds will be used to pay AFCD membership dues. Paying AFCD dues will allow the Board to have voting rights. Request had no objections.

Reports

Mr. Levi Blackmon gave an update regarding the current workload in the office. Brief background and discussion given on pre-approval of several applications, number of applications for forestry and livestock. Discussion held on the benefits of the conservation programs including funding process. Additional discussions held on the county's Water Quality Nutrient Management report for the NRDA program, wetland and HEL compliance reviews for FSA, and the SEED meeting Mr. Blackmon attended. Mr. Odom and Mr. Tharp requested more information pertaining to SEED, Mr. Blackmon will forward the information to them. Mr. Blackmon stated the Farm Tour committee has meet and are planning a farm tour in the spring of 2023. General discussion held on the tour, highlighted agriculture operations and invitations.

Old Business

Mr. Tharp and Mr. Odom are still searching for citizens who may be interested in being appointed to the Board's 3 vacancies.

Mr. Tharp and Mr. Odom have updated the bank records by adding their names as authorized account holders and removing prior Board members

Mr. Odom did attend the youth livestock show held at the Escambia 4-H facility. He was able to speak with a few attendees and he has an overall good outlook on the youth in agriculture. Mr. Odom will still speak with Escambia county school district representatives regarding urban agriculture in schools.

Pertaining to the Farm Tour, Mr. Odom gave several names to add to the invitation list.

Mr. Odom gave an update to the AFCD Area One meeting. Many discussions were held including district programs and how funding is done for projects. He stated the meeting was very informative.

Discussion was held on the possibility of beginning small projects, which the first may involving forest lands. Outreach to those who have lands but aren't aware of conservation programs available. Urban agriculture resources will be looked into at the State and Federal by Mr. Tharp. Mr. Odom will focus on the local county resources.

New Business

Mrs. Debbie Williams stated the Natural Resources Conservation division is looking to obtain funding for educational signs for a park which has the protected Gopher Tortoise on it. Three Rivers RC&D may be able to fund signs and if so the funds would go through the District if interested.

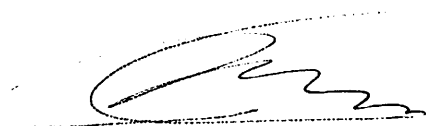
Mr. Odom made a motion to accept Gopher Tortoise educational sign project, request funding from Three Rivers RC&D, and have the funds come through the District. Motion had no objections.

Mrs. Williams will be working with coworkers on more details including sign design and costs.

Mr. Odom requested the June 15, 2023 Board meeting be moved to June 22, 2023. There were no objections.

Mrs. Williams will get with county to have the date changed in their meeting notice advertisements.

With no further business coming before the Board and with all in favor, meeting adjourned at 10:03a.



Mr. Travis Tharp, Chair and Acting Secretary