

Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program Citizens Advisory Committee
Approved Minutes of the Wednesday, February 21, 2007 Meeting
South Florida Community College ~ Arcadia, Florida

Attendance

Joan Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardeners
Warren Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardeners
Kim Cressman	Cape Coral ERD
Gail Giles	Lemon Bay Conservancy
Ellen Hawkinson	Peace River Audubon Society
Debra Highsmith	ECOSWF: Environmental Confederation of South West Florida
Ernesto Lasso de la Vega	Lee County Hyacinth Control District
Kayton Nedza	Hardee County Outdoor Classroom
Bobbi Rodgers	CHEC
Kathleen Rohrer	Gasparilla Island Sea Turtle Patrol
Jean Srodes	Turtle Talks
Stuart Stauss	Sanibel Island/Pine Island Sound
Kelly Westover	Sarasota County
Effie Keen	South Florida Community College
Lisa Beever	CHNEP
Maran Hilgendorf	CHNEP
Judy Ott	FDEP Aquatic Preserves

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Chair Stauss called the meeting to order at 10:15. Ms. Keen welcomed everyone to the campus and thanked the CHNEP for their contributions. Ms. Keen and Ms. Hilgendorf presented information on the next Florida friendly workshops that are anticipated to be held at SFCC in September.

Agenda Item 2: Agenda Review

The agenda was accepted.

Agenda Item 3: Consent Agenda

MS. HIGHSMITH, SECONDED BY MS. HAWKINSON, MOVED THE ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. THE CONSENT AGENDA INCLUDED:

- a. Approval of the minutes of the July 19, 2006 CAC meeting.
- b. Approval of the minutes of the October 18, 2006 CAC meeting.
- c. Acceptance of the "Keeping the Peace" October 5, 2006 conference report
- d. Find Research and Restoration Partners Grants Projects Review Subcommittee's ranking of proposals consistent with the Request for Proposal's evaluation criteria and the FY07 Workplan and in the appropriate order to best fulfill the CHNEP's objectives for these grants.
- e. (1) Find ranking of FY07 Workplan Projects consistent with the FY07 Workplan and in the appropriate order to best implement the CHNEP's Water Quality targets and Environmental Indicator system. (2) Find Shoreline Survey project top priority for

program support in the FY07 Workplan and the methodology in the project draft scope of work technically sound and satisfactory for addressing data gaps in the Environmental Indicators and CCMP.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of proposals from Mote Marine Laboratory that were received and recommended for funding. Mr. Stauss, who served on the Review Committee, said it was a concern discussed by the committee but that Mote is a good organization doing good work.

Ms. Highsmith brought to the attention of the CAC item 3e on the FY08 draft workplan, which is a survey tool to get a baseline study. Staff discussed that the FY07 funds dedicated to this project were nominal and that no progress has been made so the draft FY08 workplan includes more funding with the hope of involving more partners in the survey, including Water Management Districts and elected officials.

Ms. Hawkinson inquired about the response to the shoreline survey. Dr. Beever said the response has been phenomenal and that funding in the FY07 workplan dedicated to environmental indicators will be used to develop GIS associated with this project.

Ms. Stauss asked that each person provide self-introductions.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (a) Florida Governance in the Sunshine

After a discussion about “sunshine law” requirements, the CAC opted to “keep it simple” and agreed that they would prefer the CAC serve as an advisory committee because they wished to have the freedom to talk. Mr. Stauss said that the committee prefers free, unencumbered input from the community. Ms. Donley will be asked to present additional information to the CAC at a future meeting. Ms. Giles suggested that this be considered by the CAC once a year.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (b) Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Protection Act

Mr. Stauss asked that this agenda item be added. He reviewed the information, which is a bill that, as modified, includes estuaries in this legislation focused on Lake Okeechobee and that it is important to protect estuaries. The focus of the legislations is water quality. Legislation has been introduced but committees have not yet met to consider the legislation. Mr. Stauss would like a letter be written if it is consistent with the CCMP because he believed it would be good for the estuaries. Dr. Beever said this effort is consistent with the CCMP and includes a funding mechanism.

Ms. Hilgendorf will post the draft legislation on the website (since it wasn't included in the meeting packet) and will send an email to members letting them know it is posted.

At CAC request, staff will draft a letter for the Policy Committee to review and send. Ms. Rohrer asked that a model letter be sent to CAC members for their use.

MS. GILES, SECONDED BY MS. HIGHSMITH, MOVED THAT THE CHNEP FINDS IN FACT THE CHANGE OF THIS LEGISLATION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (c) CCMP Update Process

Dr. Beever reported that the revised CCMP continues to evolve. The version enclosed in the meeting packet has been edited, incorporating language that was added late, but is still very rough. Lee County and SFWMD have not yet come to consensus on the language regarding minimum aquifers.

Ms. Highsmith requested that the CCMP Update Committee meet again to look at the vision section, especially stewardship gaps. Ms. Hilgendorf will schedule a meeting that works for the majority of members within next two weeks.

Some discussion ensued regarding the language of the Babcock BMP. Ms. Giles said it is a great idea to write into legislation that BMP review will include site visits.

Ms. Hawkinson asked that the graphics include more details to aid in readability.

Ms. Highsmith asked about the schedule. Dr. Beever said we are on schedule.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (d) Charging for CHNEP Materials

Ms. Hilgendorf provided an overview. Ms. Giles suggested that it might cost more than is worth, especially for bookkeeping. Mr. Bush suggested charging enough to cover postage expenses. Mr. Nedza asked that staff provide a break-down of costs for the CAC to review at the next meeting.

Ms. Rohrer said that we're wasting tremendous resources with the Friends and invigorating this group should be a goal because it can serve the ways-and-means function for the CAC. This will be a topic of a future meeting of the CAC and Ms. Rohrer will also present this to the CHNEP Management and Policy Committees. She also suggested charging nonprofits to pay for a page within the CHNEP 2008 calendar. Mr. Nedza mentioned that there aren't enough people at this time to further the CAC but Ms. Rohrer thought that the Friends might actually work to encourage membership in the CAC. Ms. Ott suggested that it be incorporated into the CAC and have as one agenda item.

Agenda Item 5: Committee Reports

On behalf of the Membership Committee, Ms. Giles said she is inviting others from paternal groups and church groups to join the CAC. This topic will be added as an agenda item at the next CAC meeting

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Ms. Rohrer reported that Mr. Nedza has agreed to continue to serve as a co-chair but that, regrettably, Mr. Stauss is moving from the area and will no longer be able to serve as an officer. Mr. and Mrs. Bush have agreed to be nominated as co-chairs. Ms. Rohrer stated that if an officer is not able to serve as a CAC delegate at any of the CHNEP meetings, other CAC members will be asked to volunteer.

On behalf of the Grants Committee, Ms. Hawkinson reported that everything is progressing well with the grants. Ms. Westover provided an update on the Lemon Bay storm drain project supported with a public outreach grant and showed members an example of the placard and asked for suggestions to recruit volunteers. Ms. Srodes reported that Zander has distributed

10,000 English and 3,000 Spanish Turtle Talk books. He is one of 10 children to receive EPA's award that'll include dinner at the White House. He's now also writing about gopher tortoises. Mr. Bush mentioned that Lee FYN will hold a daylong conference using funds from other sources.

On behalf of the Workplan Committee, Ms. Rodgers explained that they have been conducting business via email.

On behalf of the Environmental Indicators Committee, Mr. Lasso de la Vega inquired about the status of information that'll serve as a base of this public report. Dr. Beever reported that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is updating the technical version of the environmental indicators and are developing a survey. They ask that CAC members complete the survey, which was then distributed. The survey will help direct spending and staff to pursue projects. Ms. Hilgendorf reported that this initiative is also waiting for contracts to be completed for the information the report will be based on.

Agenda Item 6: Report from Officers

Mr. Nedza reported on the Florida Friendly plant workshop in Hardee County and that he hosted the last PREEN meeting.

Agenda Item 7: Program Report

Dr. Beever provided brief overviews on the Colored Dissolved Organic Matter (CDOM) Workshop that CHNEP is hosting in May and that two large studies are now available. Because of the size of the files, she offered to provide members a CD with the final report from both the Peace River study and the nutrient management study.

Ms. Hilgendorf provided a brief overview on the program's work with WGPU, the grant from EPA to help develop a strategic communication plan, professional development workshops, upcoming National Estuaries Days/Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival, and the 2008 calendar.

Agenda Item 9: Member Comments

Ms. Rohrer thanked the CHNEP for a micro-grant to purchase a portable sound system and promoted three upcoming presentations/meetings.

Ms. Giles reported on several issues. She is Lemon Bay Conservancy's representative on ECOSWF and is working to oppose siting of a coal fire burning power plant on Fisheating Creek; Lemon Bay Conservancy wants wetland mitigation for illegal fill that occurred in the Lemon Bay watershed behind a locked gate that the new property owners now want rezoned; and that the Babcock Ranch Steering Committee are mapping sensitive lands for total overview of southwest Florida region. Dr. Beever suggested that this effort rely on work already completed by the Florida Natural Lands Inventory, CHNEP acquired lands and restoration plans map.

Ms. Rodgers announced a Lemon Bay Watershed Public Conference on March 24 at Tringali Center. This was developed using survey responses from the first CHNEP conference.

Mr. Lasso de la Vega announced a pond management workshop on April 28.

At the end of the meeting, several members toured a native plant maze at a nearby location. The maze was designed and planted by Lorna Ransom with the DeSoto County Parks & Recreation with support from a CHNEP public outreach grant.

Minutes prepared by Maran Hilgendorf.