

Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program Citizens Advisory Committee
Approved Minutes of the Wednesday, May 16, 2007 Meeting
Winter Haven Library ~ Winter Haven, Florida

Attendance

John Brenneman	Polk County Extension Service-Polk
Mike Britt	City of Winter Haven Natural Resources-Polk
Warren Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardener-Lee/Cape Coral
Joan Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardener-Lee/Cape Coral
GeorgAnn Carlton	Explorations V Children's Museum-Polk
Debra Highsmith	ECOSWF: Environmental Confederation of South West Florida
Carla Kappmeyer	FDEP Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park-Lee/Charlotte
Ernesto Lasso de la Vega	Lee County Hyacinth Control District-Lee/Charlotte
Kayton Nedza	Hardee County Outdoor Classroom-Hardee
Ellen Peterson	Sierra Club and Estero Bay ABM-Lee
Frances Reimondo	San Marco Waterways-Charlotte
George Ruby	Peace River Audubon Society-Charlotte
Marian Ryan	Friends of the Parks/Polk Sierra Group-Polk
Rachelle Selser	City of Winter Haven Natural Resources-Polk
Jean Srodes	Turtle Talks-Charlotte
Anne Yasalonis	Polk County Extension Service-Polk
Maran Hilgendorf	CHNEP
Lisa Beever	CHNEP

Several members met at 9:30 to enjoy a boat tour of several lakes in the Winter Haven Chain of Lakes. Special thanks to Mike Britt and Rachelle Selser from the city for offering these boat tours and to Rachelle for arranging the meeting location.

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 2:00 after members and guests enjoyed a carrot cake to celebrate the first ten years of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The CAC first meeting was held in April 1997.

Parliamentarian Highsmith reported that a quorum was obtained.

Agenda Item 2: Agenda Review

The agenda was then accepted.

Agenda Item 3: Consent Agenda

MR. BUSH, SECONDED BY MS. PETERSON, MOVED THE APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. THE AGENDA ITEM INCLUDES:

a. Approval of the minutes of the March 21, 2007 CAC meeting.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (a) Nomination and Election of Honorary Members

Ms. Hilgendorf reported that three members have resigned since the last CAC's annual meeting: Paul Andrews, Ellen Hawkinson and Stuart Stauss. Director Beever stated that Ms. Hawkinson was a founding member of the CAC and served on several committees and Mr. Stauss has served the CAC as an officer for several years.

Ms. Kappmeyer moved, seconded by Ms. Highsmith, that Ms. Hawkinson and Mr. Stauss receive honorary status. The motion carried unanimously.

Some discussion ensued regarding if Ms. Hawkinson might be able to be persuaded to join the committee and if Mr. Andrews should be considered for honorary status.

Ms. Hilgendorf said that some of the presenters need to leave and asked if the agenda could be changed so that at least three people can give their presentations. Each presenter is conducting environmental education in Polk County and many of them have received financial support from CHNEP.

Ms. Carlton then provided an overview of the Explorations V Children's Museum in Lakeland and the WaterMatters panels, exhibits and classroom training supported with CHNEP public outreach grants.

Mr. Britt provided an overview on the Keeping the Peace conference and the positive consequences as a result of the conference, including that recreation provides an opportunity to link science and environmental needs with recreational opportunities. Lakes Education/Action Drive (LE/AD) will conduct a lake management conference in October. The city just closed on a property near Lake Hartridge where an environmental education facility will be built.

Ms. Ryan provided an overview of the Friends of the Park, including Park Partners that took over the Adopt-a-Park Program from the county. Eight parks are now adopted by 20 groups. Park Partners worked with Sherriff Training & Respect Program (STAR) Vocational Horticulture Program to grow native plants for the parks. A \$10,000 grant allowed for the construction of a 30 x 90 ft shade house so even more plants can be grown for use on environmental lands property. The program is expanding to include growing native plants in backyards and schools. Workshops are offered twice a year and will now offer CEU for teachers. They are rewriting a manual written by Bill Bissett on school projects for public parks projects. Trek Ten Trails Program will be launched this year with new environmental lands to feature 10 of 125 miles of trails in Polk County. The Partners are working hard to address "nature deficit disorder."

Ms. Hilgendorf thanked Ms. Selser and Ms. Yasalonis for suggesting people within Polk County to be featured in the in-progress Neighbor-to-Neighbor Florida friendly video that CHNEP is producing with WGPU. Ms. Ryan is one of the featured neighbors as are Mr. and Mrs. Bush.

While Ms. Yasalonis was setting up, Ms. Hilgendorf provided an overview of the Florida friendly workshops in Hardee and DeSoto counties. Based on input from workshop participants, Ms. Yasalonis presented a session on rain barrels that was incorporated in the last round of workshops – and was very well received. As a result of the popularity of the workshops, the state FYN coordinator submitted a grant request to SWFWMD to fund new FYN staff in both Hardee and DeSoto counties.

Ms. Yasalonis conducts the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Programs in Polk County, focusing on youth education, homeowner education, and builders and developers.

Mr. Brenneman provided an overview of the Polk County Water School. The school is held every election year and targets elected officials. In five classes there have been 50 to 55 participants. Many of them have enjoyed a field trip to Charlotte Harbor and another touring county water-related project. Manatee County has conducted similar programs. He also presented the “Living on the Lake” five session citizen workshops

Mr. Brenneman has been active on the CAC until in 2005 when he accepted a promotion and has not able to attend as many meetings.

Ms. Selser provided an overview of the Lakes Education/Action Drive on behalf of Johnna Martinez who was not able to attend. She distributed a draft of material that’ll be distributed through realtors to new lakeshore residents. This project is being funded with a CHNEP public outreach grant. Peace River Environmental Education Network (PREEN) is supported with CHNEP micro-grants. Lake Appreciation Month is celebrated every July and is often funded by micro-grants. This lake clean-up event is sponsored by North American Lakes Management Society (NALMS) and involves many others, such as the Keep America affiliate. LE/AD has created a number of environmental education signs that target watershed education, many of which many have been supported with CHNEP grants.

On behalf of the City of Winter Haven, Ms. Selser distributed a map showing access and facilities on the Chain of Lakes. Using in-house resources, she created the brochure “Lakes, Stormwater and You: It’s all Connected” that had been submitted for POG funding. This grant wasn’t received but she found other partners to print the brochure and requested micro-grants to mail the brochure to 2,500 lakeside residents. She also talked about the Lakes Awareness Educational Series that is featured in the brochure. She is showing a series of new videos, produced by Karst Productions, during June, July and August.

A brief discussion ensued to encourage participation in the CHNEP CAC as well as encouragement to invite others.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (b) FY08 Workplan

Director Beever reminded members that the CAC had already voted on the workplan. The EPA budget was cut by \$78,000, not as great of a cut as originally been feared. Table 24 lists the public education and information projects as of October 1, 2006. By moving the random sample survey to the technical projects, SWFWMD will provide additional funding and guidance. Another partner will be the Stormwater Academy.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (c) Caloosahatchee Initiative and Northern Everglades
Director Beever said that with the passage of this legislation, funding of up to \$100,000 is available for short-term projects.

Ms. Reimando moved, seconded by Ms. Peterson, that CHNEP should apply for the funding made available as part of the Caloosahatchee Initiative and Northern Everglades. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (d) Caloosahatchee Back-Pumping Letter

Director Beever provided a brief history of the need for the letter. Some discussion ensued, including adding language suggested at the Management Committee regarding back-flow of the river to the lake.

Ms. Peterson moved, seconded by Ms. Highsmith, the approval of the letter. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (e) C-43 Reservoir Project Implementation Report (PIR)

Director Beever provided a brief history, including the 1,000-page plan report. Some aspects should be endorsed including the construction of the 170,000 acre-feet reservoir to reduce number duration of extreme hydrologic events, inclusion of a 1500 cfs pump, oyster restoration plan, use of water quality prediction tools and water quality monitoring but recommend incorporating a water quality component, construction of littoral areas and placement of shade trees native to the area.

Ms. Highsmith moved, seconded by Ms. Reimando, the approval of the letter. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Report from Officers

No report was made.

Agenda Item 6: Program Reports

Director Beever has been developing a pre-development vegetation map (year 1883) as well as a land-use map (year 2000) that'll be included in the *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)*.

She then mentioned some of the design updates made to the CCMP. The NEP paid half of the cost of a new computer server because the files associated with CCMP are large.

Ms. Hilgendorf provided members with an update on several CAC-initiated projects and encouraged members to continue to encourage others to participate. Projects include:

- National Estuaries Days,
- Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival,
- the CHNEP 2008 calendar: deadline to submit images is July 20 with images available for voting in August while design and text are completed),
- public outreach grant applications are due September 5,

- professional development training on sustainable communities will be offered in December,
- the Charlotte Harbor Watershed Summit will be held the last week in March 2008 at Edison College in Punta Gorda, and
- the summer issue of Harbor Happenings will be completed in June.

Agenda Item 8: Member Comments

Mr. Lasso de la Vega attended the groundwater seminar for teachers organized by USGS and he recommended others attend future seminars. The Florida Lake Management Society annual meeting in June in Naples.

Agenda Item 10: 2007 Meetings

The CAC agreed to cancel the June 20 meeting of the CAC. The July 18 meeting will be held in Punta Gorda and will include a discussion of membership, bylaws and the CHNEP friends group. The August 15 meeting will include a discussion on the strategic communication plan.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:20.