

**Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program  
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**  
Final Minutes of the Wednesday, October 21, 2009 Meeting  
Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve ~ Fort Myers, Florida

**Attendance of Voting Members**

Warren	Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardener
Roger	DeBruler Jr.	Sea Grant - Charlotte
Debra	Highsmith	ECOSWF: Environmental Confederation of South West Florida
Rene A	Janneman	Sarasota County
Wilma	Katz	Coastal Wildlife Club, Inc.
Lou	Kovach	
Ernesto	Lasso de la Vega	Lee County Hyacinth Control District
Kayton	Nedza	Hardee County Outdoor Classroom
Harry	Phillips	Cape Coral ERD
John G.	Phillips	Florida Master Naturalist Program
Pete	Quasius	Lee County resident
Kathi	Rader-Gibson	Lemon Bay Park
Frances	Reimondo	San Marco Waterways
Forest	Reynolds	DeSoto County resident
John	Reynolds	DeSoto County resident
Kathleen	Rohrer	Lee County resident
George	Ruby	Peace River Audubon Society
Alfred	Yeno	U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

**Attendance**

Sarah	Larsen	FGCU student/Estero River Conservancy
Sally	McPherson	South Florida Water Management District

Maran Hilgendorf            Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program  
Liz Donley                    Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program  
Chris Wright-Isak  
Jim Beever                    Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council

At 9 a.m. several members participated in a presentation on the green building aspects of the Six Mile Cypress Slough.

**Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**

Mr. Nedza called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Because of Ms. Wright-Isak's schedule, the meeting began with agenda item 4a *Strategic communication plan development*. Members' contributions will be incorporated into a plan being developed for CHNEP.

**Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**

Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

## **Agenda Item 2: Agenda Review**

Ms. Hilgendorf stated that Ms. Harmeling with FDEP is sick and won't be able to attend and give the presentation on FDEP phosphate mine permitting process and reclamation research. She has already agreed to give the presentation at the next CAC meeting on January 20. The agenda was accepted.

## **Agenda Item 3: Consent Agenda**

**Mr. Bush moved, seconded by Mr. Quasius, the approval of consent agenda item a, b, d, e, f, g and j. The motion carried unanimously. Agenda items approved include:**

- a. CHNEP Citizens Advisory Committee minutes of the July 15, 2009 meeting.
- b. FY10 Public Outreach Grants Funding Recommendation by the CAC Grants Committee with funds in the FY10 workplan
- d. City of Punta Gorda Climate Ready Adaptation Plan
- e. Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan Update: Smart Charlotte 2050
- f. Wild Turkey Strand Preserve Restoration, project funded with a CHNEP Research and Restoration Partner Grant in FY08
- g. Developing Numeric Nutrient Criteria for CHNEP
- j. CHNEP Review Procedures for Project

**Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Ms. Katz, the approval of consent agenda item 3c using the national rate of \$20.25. The motion carried unanimously.**

- c. Approval of Public Outreach Grant Guidance Document for FY11

**Ms. Katz moved, second by Mr. Quasius, that the wording be changed to the most recent national published rate and not the specific dollar amount. The motion carried unanimously.**

After discussion, it was agreed that the Grants Committee should discuss the idea of requiring match since the maximum public outreach grant award has now increased. Ms. Katz suggested that a meeting be held that is open to all to discuss this idea.

**Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Mr. Quasius, that the Grants Committee come back to the CAC to discuss if matching funds should be required with Public Outreach Grant applications. The motion carried with Mr. Bush dissenting.**

**Ms. Highsmith moved, seconded by Mr. Rohrer, the approval of the 3c the Public Outreach Grant guidance document for FY11. The motion carried unanimously.**

**For 3h, Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Ms. Katz, that the concerns expressed by subcommittee participants be included in the Lower Peace River and Shell Creek Minimum Flows and Letter letter addressed to the SWFWMD Governing Board stipulated in 3h of the draft letter. The motion carried. The concerns include:**

**Incorporate consideration of future concerns, especially anticipated sea level rise and associated higher salinities.**

**Incorporate discussions of reserving adequate water supply for natural systems.**

**Incorporate discussions of developing "optimal" flows vs. "minimum" flows, recognizing that MFLs potentially cause some level of harm to the natural systems.**

**Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, that the letter be approved with the amendment. The motion carried unanimously**

**For 3i, Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Mr. Yeno, the acceptance of the Reservoir Workshop Priorities Survey Results with the recommendation that the top eight highest priority items be considered for funding. The motion carried unanimously.**

Discussion ensued regarding why the items selected are being recommended for funding. Because of wording, the third item is not an actionable item.

**Agenda Item 4b: Nomination of Members**

Ms. Highsmith asked if all the members with voting rights have completed a short biography. Ms. Hilgendorf explained that they were requested and all those that had been received were provided to the Policy Committee per their request. All members did not submit a biography but no further action has been required by the Policy Committee.

**Mr. Bush moved, seconded by Mr. Ruby, the approval of the nomination of Ms. Rodgers, Mr. Dixon and Mr. Kovachs. The motion carried unanimously.**

After discussion, it was decided that staff should prepare a document to help new members increase their understanding of the program, the study area, and the issues of concern, outreach needs and how business is conducted. A mentoring system was also discussed.

**Agenda Item 4c: Public Interest Policy**

Ms. Highsmith stated that CHNEP found itself in an untenable position accepting public interest funding. It's the first conflict that she had experienced.

Ms. Donley explained that the public interest money are mitigation funds and that every project that occurs within the aquatic preserve must also have a public interest component. In the past, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) accepted the funds themselves. FDEP does not have a formal process to determine value of the public benefit interest that is placed on the project. They have decided that it is self-serving for the aquatic preserve to accept the dollars themselves for projects but aquatic preserve staff disagree. The CHNEP does not have a say in this portion of the process. For this particular project, someone had suggested to FDEP that CHNEP accept the dollars and that they be used to benefit the aquatic preserves. The amount was already determined and the project was already approved.

Members asked if CHNEP wants to accept all dollars offered to the program. The CHNEP is not the default recipient of these dollars.

Ms. Highsmith explained that there was a Punta Gorda project that needed to determine the project was clearly in the public interest. FDEP decided to give the funds to the resource management side, not regulatory side, of its own agency. Ms. Highsmith questions whether the funds flowed-through the CHNEP. Ms. Donley explained that nothing has happened yet.

Ms. Highsmith explained that she does not want the CHNEP to ever be in a position of passing funds through itself so one branch of the DEP can give funds to another branch through CHNEP.

This public interest project is a dock being built at the Best Western Hotel. The dock is located in an aquatic preserve. The required mitigation is a public walkway. The public interest includes signage, boater education and a check for \$100,000 to a public benefit interest project. FDEP didn't want the funds to be received by FDEP. It has already been approved by Governor and Board of Trustees who said the permit is contingent on these projects occurring. The \$100,000 is to be spent on quality assurance on seagrass monitoring and water quality monitoring over two years. The person would take on activities

such as training volunteers and representing a regional quality assurance program known as RAMP so that the data is deemed acceptable for use by projects such as Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL), etc.

The scope of work was written in cooperation between staff at CHNEP and the Aquatic Preserve. CHNEP had funded this position for four years but those funds are no longer available.

Much discussion ensued.

Ms. Rohrer suggested that part of the problem was the timing in that the committees weren't involved until the funds had been accepted.

Ms. Donley said a screening process would be a good thing to prepare. Ms. Highsmith and Mr. Quasius volunteered to serve on this committee.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Report from Officers**

Mr. Bush thanked everyone for attending the memorial service for Joan, his wife, and for their kind words.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Committee Reports -- Nominating Committee**

Ms. Rohrer said that, because of the demands placed on the CAC officers, the Nominating Committee's slate of officers include three people: Mr. Nedza, Ms. Katz and Mr. Bush. These three people also represent three areas of the geographic area covered by the program.

**Mr. Quasius moved, seconded by Mr. DeBruler, the approval of the slate of officers at the next meeting.**

The bylaws provide for election of officers at the first meeting of the calendar year. Ms. Rohrer then asked for nominations from the floor.

**Mr. Quasius moved, seconded by Mr. DeBruler, that Mr. Bush fill the current vacancy in the slate of officers. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item 6: Committee Reports – Grants Committee**

Ms. Rader-Gibson explained that the funds dedicated to public outreach grants weren't fully allocated.

**As chair of the Grants Committee, Ms. Rader-Gibson moved that the funds for the public outreach grants be used for micro-grants. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item 7: Program Reports**

Ms. Highsmith asked about the review of permits that are listed in the deliverables. She asked that advocacy and review comments and statements be provided to the CAC. Members who requested receiving these items include Ms. Highsmith, Mr. Quasius, Ms. Reynolds and Ms. Rohrer.

Ms. Hilgendorf provided members with a report on the CHNEP calendar and newsletter.

Ms. Donley explained that she is tracking rule-making, designated uses of water, Florida Forever programs, stormwater rule, offshore drilling, San Carlos Bay being designated as an aquatic preserve, and making sure the Aquatic Preserves have funds designated as this year they were disproportionately affected by FDEP budget cuts.

The meeting packet also provided updates on mapping predevelopment land cover and surface waters in Charlotte and Manatee counties within the HCNEP boundaries (funded in FY08) and a volunteer survey of the shoreline.

**Agenda Item 8: Member Comments**

Mr. Quasius said that water use (370) is under review. He invited everyone to join the Snook Foundation annual dinner at Fisherman's Village. He reminded people that EcoVoice is a tool to promote events and projects.

Mr. Bush announced that FNPS is having native plant sale and rain garden. They have now installed 2,000 rain barrels in Lee County.

Mr. Lasso de la Vega distributed a flier on an urban pond and aquatic species seminar.

Mr. Phillips said that Cape Coral is distributing monofilament bins – 133 bridges within city.

Mr. Reynolds said the solar plant was brought online in DeSoto County yesterday.

Ms. Hilgendorf said that Audubon Corkscrew Swamp staff offered a behind-the-scenes tour to members of the CAC. She will provide information to members by email.

**Agenda Item 12: Adjourn**

The meeting concluded at approximately 12:15. Immediately following the meeting, several members participated in a tour of the Six Mile Cypress Slough buildings.