



**Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

*Approved Minutes of the Wednesday, April 22, 2009 Meeting
Charlotte County Cultural Center ~ Port Charlotte, Florida*

Attendance of Voting Members

Joan	Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardener
Warren	Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardener
Gail	Giles	Jobean Community League, Inc
Debra	Highsmith	ECOSWF: Environmental Confederation of South West Florida
Merrill	Hoswill	Palm Island Environmental
Rene A	Janneman	Sarasota County
Wilma	Katz	Coastal Wildlife Club, Inc.
Stefan	Katzaras	CF Industries
Randee	LaSalle	Rotonda Lakes Environmental Resource Committee
Ernesto	Lasso de la Vega	Lee County Hyacinth Control District
Jackson	Mosley	Paynes Creek Historic State Park
Harry	Phillips	Cape Coral ERD
Pete	Quasius	Lee County resident
Kathi	Rader-Gibson	Lemon Bay Park
John	Reynolds	DeSoto County resident
Forest	Reynolds	DeSoto County resident
Kathleen	Rohrer	Lee County resident
George	Ruby	Peace River Audubon Society
Kevyn	Schweim	Coastal Wildlife Club
Thomas	Simmons	DeSoto County resident
Jean	Srodes	Turtle Talks

Attendance

Sandra J.	Beardsworth	DeSoto County
Cliff	Fredrickson	Sierra Club - Great Charlotte Harbor Chapter
John G.	Phillips	Florida Master Naturalist Program
Alfred	Yeno	U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Lisa Beever Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
 Maran Hilgendorf Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Bush called the meeting to order at 10:05. Self-introductions were made. Ms. Highsmith reported that there is a quorum of appointed members in attendance. She then presented padfolios to Ms. LaSalle and Kevin Schwerin, who are sharing one, Mr. and Mrs.

Reynolds, who are also sharing one, and Mr. Mosley. Mr. Quasius opted not to accept a padfolio.

Agenda Item 2: Agenda Review

No changes were made to the agenda.

Agenda Item 3: Consent Agenda

Ms. Highsmith offered congratulations on the workplan and all that is accomplished by the CHNEP.

Director Beever provided a brief explanation of the estuary turbidity report, item 3d on the agenda. She explained it's a place of increased turbidity that greater productivity. She'll translate the information into a diagram for the committee to review at the next meeting.

Mr. Lasso de la Vega asked for more information about the ANEP meeting that CHNEP is hosting in the fall of 2010 that is referenced in the workplan. Director Beever explained that staff from all 28 programs will participate in this meeting. It's an opportunity for technology transfer and she hopes that CAC members will be featured.

Ms. Giles moved, seconded by Ms. LaSalle, the approval of the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously. Agenda items approved include:

- a. Approval of the minutes of the February 18, 2009 CAC meeting.
- b. FY10 Workplan
- c. Seagrass Targets for Charlotte Harbor Update
- d. *Fate and Transport of Caloosahatchee ETM Sediment*, report produced as a FY07 Research and Restoration Partner Grant project

Agenda Item 4a: Nomination of Members

Mr. Bush introduced the three people who had submitted applications: Mr. Al Yeno, Mr. John Phillips and Mr. Cliff Fredrickson. Mr. Yeno and Mr. Phillips' applications were included in the meeting packet and Mr. Fredrickson's was distributed at the meeting. Ms. Giles expressed her pleasure with the credentials of each of the three applicants.

Ms. Highsmith moved, seconded by Mr. Quasius, the nomination of the three applicants as voting members. The motion carried unanimously.

The nominations will be considered by the Policy Committee at their next meeting.

Ms. Beardsley submitted an application that will be considered by the CAC at their July meeting.

Agenda Item 4b: Reservoir Workshop

Director Beever said that the workshop was a packed two days that focused on gaps of knowledge and considerations. The facilitators are preparing a summary of the workshop that will include summaries developed by three excellent peer reviewers. This summary will be ready for the Management Conference to consider at the next meeting cycle.

Ms. Highsmith said that she doesn't believe that the report will include the locations of all the current, planned and funded reservoirs and mines planned for all types of reservoirs.

Ms. Rohrer said that concerns of costs were not considered, including development, maintenance, quality assurance and the cost of allowing the land to remain natural with water percolating into the aquifer where it is more easily protected from contamination. We're trying to mechanize what can have a natural solution. You can't build on a reservoir. Ms. Highsmith said that Percy D'Angelo said she mentioned cost benefit but it wasn't raised to a priority.

Mr. Lasso de la Vega said that this issue can't simply be captured in a report.

Ms. Rohrer wished to thank all for a well done workshop but all of our thinking today is based on the presumption that Florida 50 years from now will be the same as it is now – and it won't be. We're not looking at the big picture. Speaker John Cassani said to be concerned with salt water intrusion but the reservoirs are being planned close to the shoreline.

Ms. Giles hopes that a lot of Ms. Rohrer's concern will be addressed after the report.

Ms. Reynolds said that she agrees with everything that has been said and that their lifetime of experience gives them cause to worry. They prepared comments that will be included in the report.

Mr. Reynolds encouraged everyone to read Cynthia Barnett's book because it is well done. As a child digging post holes, water would fill the hole but that isn't the case today. He then elaborated on his lifetime of experience in southwest Florida.

Ms. LaSalle said that even though the two days were intense, she was glad she attended and learned a lot. She would like an analysis be done on *how* the water in the reservoirs would be used. She also wondered who she'd trust to release the water to the system throughout the year for the benefit of the environment.

Mr. Yeno said he enjoyed the workshop and learned a great deal but there were a number of self serving presentations. He is a firm believer in science but the science has to be evaluated first and it has to be looked at with balance.

Ms. Rohrer said that interpretation of the science is important. Ms. Barnett said that not to go to SWFWMD to change their policies but should instead focus on Tallahassee. Water needs to be treated with the greatest respect and is a limited resource.

Ms. Katz said that we want to be careful about engineering and science. She made assumptions about what would be covered at the workshop. She then asked who on the CAC originated the concern, who helped develop the workshop and why they were concerned. Those who helped plan the workshop gave brief comments.

Ms. Highsmith said that it started at the CAC meeting in January 2008 when a map was displayed showing all the potential sites of future reservoirs. They wanted to know what the impact will be on freshwater flow to the estuaries. Others thought they needed more information about reservoirs, construction, water budgets, etc. The workshop raised good questions.

Ms. Giles said we need to wait for the report so we can carefully review the core values and the 165 issues raised by audience members. She wondered about the number of reservoirs and the privatization.

Mr. Katzaras agreed with Ms. Giles. He said that the workshop helped make him want to know more. It was a gateway to a bigger, broader topic. He liked that both benefits and impacts will be addressed.

Mr. Quasius said he was concerned that it not only focuses on the Peace River watershed but also the Caloosahatchee watershed. Reservoirs planned in the Caloosahatchee watershed are mostly planned to aid in environmental restoration.

Ms. Bush said that the technical information was great but that it needs to be rewritten so the general public – the greater community -- will be able to understand.

Mr. Fredrickson said that we need to do a cost benefit analysis. We need to organize a response to the report and we need to consider alternative technologies.

Mr. Reynolds asked who monitors water withdrawal from the river. Mr. Janneman said that SWFWMD monitors the Peace River.

Mr. Simmons said that when he moved back to Arcadia he was concerned about the Peace River running dry. He believes that damming of the river in Lakeland is the cause of the lost flow in Wauchula. The decision will be politically made once the steam roller starts.

Mr. Reynolds said that the Floridan aquifer has also dropped so the springs have stopped flowing and there are no sinkholes.

Ms. Reynolds echoed Ms. Lasalle's concern and told of off-the-wall amounts of certain radioactive contaminants.

Agenda Item 5: Report from Officers

Ms. Hilgendorf said that at the last CAC meeting, Mr. Nedza, Ms. Katz and Ms. Rodgers accepted the nomination to serve as officers. Ms. Katz said she attended the last Policy meeting and was encouraged by their discussion. She would like others on the CAC to also attend the Policy Committee meetings.

Agenda Item 6: Committee Reports

Mr. Lasso de la Vega thanked everyone who has participated in the development of the environmental progress report.

Mr. Ruby attended the ceremony for the Peace River Park in Homeland off SR17. They doubled the size of the park and the signs were beautiful. The signs were supported with a CHNEP public outreach grant.

Ms. Hilgendorf asked if those on the grant committee would let her know if they are willing to serve again this year.

Agenda Item 7: Program Reports

(a) Deliverables February 1, 2009 to March 31, 2009

Director Beever brought the deliverables to the committee's attention, noting how many outreach efforts had been undertaken.

(b) Children's book: Ms. Hilgendorf reported that the books will be delivered to the seven districts by the week of April 13. Three partners bought into the press run. The book is posted on the website as PDF files. A Spanish translation and more detailed maps will be posted on the website. Copies are available for a donation of \$8.95 plus \$5 if mailed. If multiple copies are requested, the cost is \$5 a copy plus mailing expenses. We're asking others to make the book available for sale to the public.

Ms. Giles suggested water associations might be interested in purchasing the book. Mr. Quasius thought the name should be changed to be more inclusive. Ms. Hilgendorf reminded members that the priority for CHNEP is those that live within the CHNEP study area.

(c) CHNEP calendar

The deadline to submit images for consideration in the 2010 calendar is July 14, 2009. Ms. Hilgendorf encouraged members to critically review the calendar and offer improvements in the look, content and distribution. Mr. Bush encouraged more members to participate in the September 2 meeting, which is when images are selected. Mr. Simmons thought that only images captured within the recent year should be accepted.

(d) CHNEP newsletter *Harbor Happenings* and website

The 16-page spring 2009 issue was mailed to 7,550 subscribers in early April. An additional 3,000 copies are available for distribution by centers, libraries and at events. The newsletter is translated into Spanish and posted on the website.

(e) CHNEP strategic communication plan

A professor at FGCU is under contract to help write the plan. We will ask CAC members to review the plan by email and at the next meeting.

(f) Peace River Environmental Education Network (PREEN)

PREEN met March 18 at the Polk Nature Center at the Circle B Bar Reserve in Lakeland. Approximately 30 people attend to hear Ralph Montgomery of PBS&J provide an overview of findings from the Peace River Cumulative Impact Study, a behind-the-scenes

tour of the news center and those in attendance were given an opportunity to update all present on projects. People from Polk, Hardee, Desoto and Charlotte counties attended the meeting. The presentations are posted on the website at www.CHNEP.org.

Mr. Fredrickson said the meeting was held at a beautiful venue with about 30 people in attendance. The presentation included an overview of the Peace River Cumulative Study. He was concerned about limited data offered.

Ms. Hilgendorf then offered CHNEP post-it notes, CHNEP mugs and small osprey prints to members.

Agenda Item 8: Member Comments

Mr. Ruby expressed concern about Mr. DeBruler's position and asked that everyone take action to support his work so that the county will continue his employment. An online survey is posted at www.CharlotteFL.com.

Mr. Quasius said that the EcoVoice website crashed over the weekend.

Ms. Giles attended Babcock presentation on placing solar panels on 400 acres of property. This project would require FPL financial support and legislative action.

Ms. Katz said that sea turtle season begins May 1. Coastal Wildlife Club will hold a public meeting on May 11 in conjunction with Sarasota County. For the fifth time, in July two teacher workshops will be held. This year it is supported with a CHNEP micro-grant but in the past it has been supported with a public outreach grant.

Ms. Rohrer announced that People for Trees will hold its annual meeting this Saturday.

Mr. Lasso de la Vega announced a new issue of the Latino Environmental Education Network quarterly newsletter. They will hold a meeting of Hispanic leaders this Saturday in Wauchula and the Hispanic community in Immokalee.

Mr. Fredrickson said that Punta Gorda is holding an Earth Day celebration and that FrontLine produced an excellent program named Poison Water

Ms. Bush said the FYN conference was held February 21 with 135 people participating. They will be participating in a program to teach residents of Fort Myers Beach about rain barrels. Barrels are being provided with funds from a grant from SFWMD. They produced a video on how to create a rainbarrel. An annual native plant sale was held in Cape Coral. Through the workshops in Lee County, 1,400 rainbarrels have been deployed!

Ms. Lasalle said that the Greater Charlotte Sierra Club has started an award to super citizens. The first award was given to a couple for their work in banning harvesting of freshwater turtles, including those in the Rotunda canals.

Mr. Simmons announced that the animal sanctuary Lions, Tigers and Bears moved from Charlotte to 40 acres in Desoto County. It's on natural environment and is open to the public from Thursday to Sunday.

Ms. Srodes announced that, with her husband's retirement, she is moving from the area so will need to resign from the CAC. Zander received another award and is in a teacher book sells that for \$18. Groups at a high school and elementary school are continuing his work.

Mr. Phillips said that the City of Cape Coral with Keep Lee Beautiful held their second annual canal cleanup. This year three tons of garbage was removed! Ms. Kim Cressman will be speaking to students about exotic reptiles as part of their Earth Week celebration.

Ms. Mosley said that the third annual Peace River awareness day that was organized by Mr. Nedza. Students learned about the local natural environment. On May 9 is the Hardee Lakes NatureFest.

Ms. Lasalle said that it's also shorebird nesting season. Several people are involved with a stewardship program to teach beach-goers about the shorebirds.

Ms. Katz said that during an interview with a reporter from Englewood Sun she stressed that dogs should be walked elsewhere during shorebird nesting season. FWC officials will meet in mid-June to establish rules on a variety of issues.

Ms. Rohrer offered a few issues of Harbor Style, a magazine that featured Lemon Bay Conservancy in their April 2009 issue.

Agenda Item 9: Public Comments

No comments were made.

Agenda Item 10: Upcoming Meetings

In 2009, the CAC will meet July 15, September 2 (to develop calendar) and October 21.

Ms. Hilgendorf mentioned that CHNEP is holding a few other meetings that were featured in the newsletter. EPA is holding a green infrastructure workshop on July 1-2 that CHNEP is assisting with and CHNEP is conducting workshops as part of grants received as climate-ready estuaries. The first workshop was held April 9 with more than 30 attending. Director Beever explained the work of the climate-ready estuaries grants.

Agenda Item 11: Adjourn

The meeting concluded at noon.

Meetings were prepared by Maran Hilgendorf.