

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

February 15, 2024

Members present: Mark Curenton, Walter Armistead, Alan Pierce, Chuck Marks, and Krystal Hernandez

Others present: Cathy Davis

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chuck Marks. The minutes from the November 16, 2023, meeting was reviewed, and a motion was made by Walter Armistead to approve the minutes. Alan Pierce seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mark Curenton gave the Treasurer's report, and the current balance is \$5,513.23. A motion was made by Alan Pierce to approve the report. Walter Armistead seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Scott Williams was unavailable for the meeting, due to a deadline, but sent the field office report by Cathy Davis. The office has 63 applications for Fiscal Year 24. 42 being regular Environmental Qualities Incentive Program (EQIP) and 21 in Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The pre-approval process started back a couple weeks ago and will be running through the summer. The office will be holding a Local Work Group (LWG) meeting April 10, 2024, at 10:00 AM central, at the USDA office in Blountstown to determine our local resource concerns and needs for the 4 counties we cover for F.Y. 2025. We are unsure of the amount of money that will have available. In F.Y. 2024 will have \$300,000.

We have a new Soil Conservationist hired and will start work February the 26th. Our next hire will be a partner, Forester. Hopefully, sometime later this year.

This year we will be funding nearly twice as much money as last year, which was the most in history of the office.

House Bill 1075, related Senate Bill 1772 was discussed with the board.

Florida Commission on Ethics “Financial Disclosures” will have to be completed online this year. Supervisor of Elections in Calhoun County said the form for District Supervisors would still just remain source of income.

The OPPAGA Report is an arm of the Florida Legislature to identify what the district is doing. The Zoom call is scheduled for February 26th.

Supervisors up for election this year are Seats 2,3, and 4. Which is, Walter Armistead, Alan Peirce, and Mark Curenton.

Alan Pierce brough to the attention of the board an ongoing problem going on in Franklin County, it’s called Lethal Bronzing. It is a bug that appears in Cabbage Palms and will eventually kill the tree, if not treated early enough. He discussed with the board possibly funding the pesticide. Alan said, he would talk with the Franklin County Extension Erik Lovestrand for more information.

Our next scheduled meeting is scheduled for April 18th.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.