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## South Florida Water Management District

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### **BIG CYPRESS BASIN BOARD MINUTES**

October 24, 2013

9:00 AM

Big Cypress Basin Service Center  
2660 N. Horseshoe Drive  
Naples, FL 34104

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
John Vaughn		Present	
Rick Barber	Chair	Present	
David Farmer		Present	
Alice J. Carlson		Present	
Ralph H. Haskins		Present	
Marielle Kitchener		Present	

**1. Call to Order - Frederick Barber, Chairman, Big Cypress Basin Board**

Mr. Barber called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance - Frederick Barber, Chairman, Big Cypress Basin Board**

Ms. Kitchener led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Recognition of Big Cypress Field Station and Collier County Road and Bridge Department - Presented by Chris Doherty, Superintendent, Big Cypress Field Station**

Mr. Doherty recognized Collier County Road and Bridge staff and the Big Cypress Basin (BCB) Field Station crew for their dedication and hard work during recent heavy rains.

Travis Gossard from Collier County commented on the positive partnership between Collier County and BCB and appreciates the ease and efficiencies of the working partnership.

Mr. Farmer and Ms. Kitchener thanked staff for their communication and efforts before, during, and after the rain event.

**Board Comment**

Mr. Farmer thanked Ms. Koehler and Mr. Doherty for keeping BCB Board members informed.

**4. Approval of minutes for the August 22, 2013, Big Cypress Basin Board meeting held in Naples, Florida**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	David Farmer
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Marielle Kitchener
<b>AYES:</b>	Vaughn, Barber, Farmer, Carlson, Haskins, Kitchener

**5. Agenda Revisions - Lisa Koehler, Administrator, Big Cypress Basin Service Center**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**6. Abstentions by Board Members from items on the Agenda**

There were no abstentions.

**7. Northern Golden Gate Estates (NGGE) Flowway Project and Collier County Watershed Master Plan Update - Nick Casalanguida, Administrator, Collier County Growth Management Division**

Mr. Casalanguida, Administrator for Collier County Growth Management Division, provided a presentation on the Northern Golden Gates Estates (NGGE) Flowway Project beginning with a history of the surface water and the Naples Bay Watershed. The project will:

- Install 40 - 42 new culverts,
- Divert runoff into low laying areas of NGGE,
- Increase Aquifer Recharge, and
- Timing of flows to Naples Bay.

The proposed culvert installation is within existing road right-of-ways with an estimated construction cost of \$581,000. The approved project is being funded as a 50/50 cost share with Collier County and is scheduled to be completed by June 2014.

In response to a question from Mr. Farmer, Mr. Casalanguida explained that low laying areas are owned by individual land owners.

Mr. Casalanguida provided an overview of phase one of the culvert system and the possibilities of going forward with phase two. Phase two would include installation of ditch blocks, land acquisitions/exchange, and land acquisition in lieu of fee mitigation.

Mr. Casalanguida would like the BCB engineers to review the feasibility of phase two of the project, and the District to partner with Collier County on the project.

### **Board Comment**

Mr. Farmer discussed the Corkscrew mitigation bank and the limitations of funding other mitigation banks in this area of the District.

Mr. Barber discussed operation and control of the flow way during rainy season.

### **Public Comment**

Michael Ramsey supports the project because it meets the criteria needed to reduce flooding and believes that mitigation would assist the area. Mr. Ramsey also believes it should be a higher priority than other areas.

### **8. Picayune Strand Restoration Project Update - Janet Starnes, Principal Project Manager, Everglades Policy & Coordination (ext. 7735)**

Ms. Starnes presented an update on the Picayune Strand Restoration Project and provided a history of the project and project features. The Merritt Pump Station is scheduled to be completed in December 2013 and commissioned in January 2014, canal plugging is scheduled to begin in March 2014. The operational testing and monitoring period is April 2014 – 2015, and is scheduled to be transferred to the District in May of 2015.

Ms. Starnes presented the construction and completion scheduled for the Faka Union Pump Station, Miller Pump Station, details of the Manatee Mitigation feature land purchases, and the Limited Re-evaluation Report (LRR). Ms. Starnes explained the LRR is the congressional authorization for an increase in project costs. The project cost increased due to:

- Additional tie-back levee,
- The addition of the Manatee Mitigation features,
- Reduction in protection features, and
- Revisions to real estate needs.

Additionally, the LRR identifies loss of benefits if the additional funds are not authorized.

Ms. Starnes reviewed the next steps which include:

- In December a letter of support request for the LRR will be brought to the Governing Board,
- In January the land agreement with FDEP will be revised and brought to the Governing Board. The agreement allows the District to use the land, and it will be amended to include the Belle Meade parcels and revise the Fakahatchee parcels.

### **Board Comment**

In response to Mr. Barber's request, Ms. Starnes stated that, due to the government shutdown and subsequent furlough, the final report has been delayed. Ms. Starnes will provide the draft report to BCB Board members, and once the finalized LRR is revised to include the total budget, it will also be provided.

Mr. Farmer asked how the additional funds will be acquired. Mr. DeLisi explained the appropriations, cost shares, and the Save Our Everglades Trust Funds.

Mr. Barber discussed the monitoring necessary for the project, ways to reduce monitoring costs, and avoidance of duplicate efforts. Ms. Starnes commented on the monitoring requirements of the permit.

Ms. Kitchener discussed the monitoring scope of work.

### **9. Ecological Conditions Report on Naples Bay - Dr. Michael Bauer, Natural Resources Manager, City of Naples**

Dr. Bauer presented ecological conditions of Naples Bay beginning with the salinity level fluctuations, freshwater deliveries into the Bay, nitrogen levels, and other contaminants. Dr. Bauer presented a pilot test planting of floating plant islands and landscaper certification for businesses that provide fertilizer services to the City of Naples.

Dr. Bauer presented a program to reduce phosphorous using a filter marsh, as well as rain gardens, in Naples to help manage storm water runoff from impervious surfaces.

Dr. Bauer presented historic habitat losses over the last sixty years and the success of oyster reef projects.

Dr. Bauer discussed the importance of mangroves and seagrass and their effect on water quality. Dr. Bauer presented a plan to create a habitat spoil island with mangroves, seagrass and oysters.

## **Board Comment**

Ms. Kitchener discussed the cost and effectiveness of plant islands.

Ms. Koehler commented on the success of City of Naples' floating plant islands and also commented on Collier County's project to create plant islands as well.

### **10. National Estuarine Research Reserve System Science Collaborative Project: Planning for the Future of Freshwater in Southwest Florida, Managing Freshwater Flows in the Henderson Creek Watershed - Tabitha Stadler, Coastal Training Coordinator, Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve**

Ms. Stadler provided a presentation on restoring the Rookery Bay Estuary. The project's mission is to connect people and science for long-term community benefit by promoting informed decisions about coastal and environmental resources through research, education, and stewardship.

Ms. Stadler presented a map of the rookery, defined what an estuary is, and the economic benefits to Collier County.

Ms. Stadler presented details on the Rookery Bay Reserve project which received a science collaborative grant from NOAA in the amount of \$815,000 and presented the five pieces in the two-phased project:

- Modeling,
- Ecological,
- Social science,
- Partnership, and
- Outreach and education.

### **11. Big Cypress Basin Capital Projects Update - Jeff Kivett, Division Director, Operations, Engineering and Construction (ext. 2680)**

Mr. Kivett presented an update on BCB capital projects, including the status and schedule of the Miller Weir 3 project, the BCB Field Station progressive design-build contract, and the structure inspection program which includes 16 structures.

### **12. Lake Trafford Update - Lisa Koehler, Administrator, Big Cypress Basin Service Center (ext. 7603)**

Ms. Kitchener provided a report on the Lake Trafford project discussing the management of the Lake, water quality, and data analysis. The BCB Board requested additional information before moving forward with the project. Ms.

Kitchener explained the project may not be solely the District's responsibility and funding opportunities may be available elsewhere.

Mr. Rod Braun stated that the FY14 scope of work will include continuing submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), mapping and planting 30 plots. Funds not expended in FY14 will be rolled over to FY15.

Mr. DeLisi and Ms. Koehler discussed the Lake Trafford restoration project. The restoration falls within the District's mission, however the District is seeking funding from other responsible local governments and agencies including FWC, DEP, Collier County, and the Immokalee Community Redevelopment Agency.

**13. FY15 Budget Update - Doug Bergstrom, Division Director, Administrative Services Division (ext. 6214)**

Mr. Bergstrom provided an update on fiscal year 2015 (FY15) budget requirements.

By January 15, 2014, each water management district shall submit a preliminary budget for legislative review. He also presented FY intergovernmental contract options and impacts on fund balances, and the forecasted fund balances remaining after ten years.

Mr. Bergstrom outlined the next steps in the FY15 budget process, stating the finalized FY15 preliminary budget will be submitted to DEP and the Governor's staff in January 2014.

**Board Comment**

The BCB Board discussed options of the intergovernmental funding level for FY15 and the potential availability of additional funds from the sale of BCB District properties, once a decision is made on the location of the BCB service center.

Ms. Koehler commented on local government projects and possible future funding requests.

After further BCB Board discussion, the Board directed staff to move forward with Option C as part of the FY15 intergovernmental contracts budget.

**14. General Public Comment**

There was no General Public Comment.

**15. Field Station Activity Report - Chris Doherty, Superintendent, Big Cypress Basin Field Station (ext. 7811)**

Mr. Doherty provided the September BCB operation and management activities.

**16. Basin Administrator Report - Lisa Koehler, Administrator, Big Cypress Basin Service Center (ext. 7603)**

Ms. Koehler announced the 2014 BCB Board meetings will be held at the Collier County Commission Chambers and held on Tuesdays. The 2014 meeting schedule is available on the BCB website.

**17. Board Comment**

Mr. Vaughn proposed to reintroduce an invocation at the beginning of the BCB Board meeting. The BCB Board directed staff to look into the matter.

**18. Adjourn**

Mr. Barber adjourned the meeting at 11:40 AM.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	David Farmer
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Ralph H. Haskins
<b>AYES:</b>	Vaughn, Barber, Farmer, Carlson, Haskins, Kitchener

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Frederick T. Barber, III  
Big Cypress Basin Board Chairman  
South Florida Water Management District

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Lisa Koehler  
Big Cypress Basin Administrator  
South Florida Water Management District