

**MINUTES – WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, MARCH 21, 2007**

**DATE:** March 21, 2007  
**TIME:** 4:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** City Commission Chambers, City Hall  
151 SE Osceola Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor,  
Ocala, Florida 34471

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Joyce Valentino, Citrus County Commissioner  
Dennis Damato, Citrus County Commissioner  
Richard Hoffman, Sumter County Commissioner  
Rose Rocco, Hernando County Commissioner  
Mike Francis, Sumter County Commissioner  
Dale Swain, Bushnell City Councilman  
Sophia Diaz-Fonseca, Inverness City Councilwoman  
Kent Guinn, Ocala City Councilman

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Gary Bartell, Citrus County Commissioner  
Joe Bernardini, Brooksville City Councilman  
Diane Rowden, Hernando County Commissioner  
David Russell, Hernando County Commissioner  
Christopher Kingsley, Hernando County Commissioner  
Daniel Owen, Ocala City Councilman

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Jack Sullivan, Executive Director  
Larry Haag, WRWSA Attorney  
Barbara Sullivan, Recording Secretary  
Henry Hicks, Ocala Utilities  
Jimmy Brooks, SWFWMD  
Al Grubman, TOO FAR, Citrus County  
Jan Grubman, TOO FAR, Citrus County  
Pat Francis, Sumter County  
Peter Rocco, Hernando County  
Matthew Sullivan, Marion County

**Agenda Item #1 Call to Order**

Chair Joyce Valentino called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

**Agenda Item #2 Roll Call**

Jack Sullivan, Executive Director, called the roll and a quorum was declared present.

**Agenda Item #3 Introductions and Announcements**

Mr. Sullivan introduced Rose Rocco, new Board member from the Hernando County Commission. Mr. Sullivan also introduced members of the public and welcomed them to the meeting. Mr. Sullivan reminded the Board that there would be a Water

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Conservation Summit held in Ocala at the Hilton Hotel on March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9 am to 4 pm. Mr. Sullivan said that he was unaware that the conference required a \$50 registration fee. He asked Board members to pay the fee and then provide him with their travel and registration receipts and he would have their travel reimbursements prepared for them. He also announced that on March 30, the SWFWMD and the SJRWMD would co-host a public meeting to take public testimony on designating portions of Marion and Sumter counties as “Water Use Caution Areas” (WUCAs).

**Agenda Item #4      Approval of Minutes of February 21, 2007 Meeting**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MIKE FRANCIS TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2007 MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DENNIS DAMATO AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item #5      Discussion of City representation on WRWSA Board ... Jack Sullivan, Executive Director**

Mr. Sullivan stated that he had prepared a Memorandum in the Board Package regarding representation on the Board by small cities. He said this issue has arisen because of confusion between Inverness and Crystal River over who should be representing the small cities in Citrus County. Both cities would like representation. However, the Authority rules only allow one representative from each county to represent small cities. Currently, Sophia Diaz-Fonseca was serving the second year of her two-year term on the Board and was concerned about surrendering her seat in mid-term. Mr. Sullivan said that the issue of who is to represent the small cities should be resolved by Inverness and Crystal River, but they needed to caucus and appropriately select a person to represent both cities to serve on the Board.

As a side issue, the question was posed to Mr. Sullivan as to whether a County Commission could appoint an elected municipal representative to fill one of its allowable seats. Mr. Sullivan stated that the Authority’s rules do not allow for that. The rules say that counties will appoint “County Commissioners.” Therefore, in order for a County to appoint a municipal representative, the Authority would have to change its rules to allow it. Mr. Sullivan said that his report was background and he then left the issues to the Board to discuss and provide him with direction.

Chair Valentino stated that she had considered the issue of whether a County Commission should appoint a municipal representative to serve in one of its seats. She felt that the County Commission seats should be represented by a County Commissioner. She felt it was her obligation to come to the meetings and stay informed of the issues and represent her constituents in the area of water resources and water supply. She also indicated that she had spoken with Commissioner Gary Bartell, who although absent at this meeting, was a very committed representative regarding water and had done a significant amount of work at the local, regional and state level on water resource and water supply issues. She said he also did not want to relinquish his seat for a municipal representative. Chair Valentino did say that she was sympathetic to Ms. Diaz-Fonseca’s desire to remain on the Board for the remainder of her term because of the amount of time she had devoted to becoming familiar with the issues the Authority had to deal with and her regular attendance at the Board meetings. She felt that she should serve out her remaining term.

Commission Damato stated that he had also talked with Ms. Diaz-Fonseca. He felt that he did not want to surrender his seat to appoint an additional municipal representative. He pointed out that neither Inverness nor Crystal River have a very large population base relative to his district,

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and he feels he serves a much larger constituency than either of the cities in water issues. In fact he feels that he does represent Crystal River on issues that come before the Authority. However, he said he also feels that Ms. Diaz-Fonseca should serve out the remaining year of her term in March 2008 and then the City of Inverness and Crystal River should caucus and select a person to represent the cities for the next two-year term on the Board. He suggested that if Crystal River wants to serve on the Authority, it should begin sending a representative to the Board meetings to get into the flow of the issues being considered by the Authority. He thought Mr. Sullivan should invite a Crystal River delegate to attend.

Commissioner Francis stated that he was also not in favor of changing the Authority's rules to allow for a municipal representative to be designated to fill a County Commission seat. Commissioner Rocco, stated that when an elected official is appointed to a Board to represent his/her county, it was their obligation to learn what was necessary to serve on the Board and to attend the meetings. She was against changing the rules as well.

Larry Haag raised the issue of how a tie vote in the small cities caucus would be resolved. Currently, the Authority's rules do not address this issue. The Board decided to address this issue at a later time.

After further discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that they did not desire to change the Authority's rules to allow for designation of a municipal representative to serve in a county commission allotted seat. However, the Board concluded that Councilwoman Sophia Diaz-Fonseca had been duly appointed to a two-year term on the Board, even though the City may not have been aware of the fact that the term was for two-years. Consequently, the Board directed the Executive Director to write a letter to Crystal River and copy Inverness indicating that Ms. Diaz-Fonseca should serve out her term through March 21, 2008. Prior to the end of her term, the cities of Inverness and Crystal River should caucus and select a delegate to represent the small cities of Citrus County on the Board for the next two-year term. In the letter, Mr. Sullivan should invite a representative from Crystal River to attend the Board meetings in preparation for possible future service on the Board.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY DALE SWAIN TO NOT CHANGE THE AUTHORITY RULES TO ALLOW APPOINTMENT OF A MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVE TO FILL A COUNTY COMMISSION SEAT AND TO DIRECT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO WRITE A LETTER TO CRYSTAL RIVER AND COPY INVERNESS INDICATING THAT SOPHIA DIAZ-FONSECA SHOULD SERVE OUT HER TERM THROUGH MARCH 21, 2008 AND PRIOR TO THE END OF HER TERM, THE CITIES OF INVERNESS AND CRYSTAL RIVER SHOULD CAUCUS AND SELECT A DELEGATE TO REPRESENT THE SMALL CITIES OF CITRUS COUNTY ON THE BOARD FOR THE NEXT TWO-YEAR TERM. MR. SULLIVAN SHOULD INVITE A DELEGATE FROM CRYSTAL RIVER TO ATTEND THE BOARD MEETINGS TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE SERVICE ON THE BOARD. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DENNIS DAMATO AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item #6      Executive Director's Report ... Jack Sullivan, WRWSA**

**a.      Bills to be Paid**

Mr. Sullivan stated that the bills for March had been handed out separately. They total \$16,354.40.

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**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MIKE FRANCIS AND SECONDED BY SOPHIA DIAZ-FONSECA TO PAY THE MARCH 21, 2007 BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$16,354.40. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**b. Report on Water Resources Development Account**

Mr. Sullivan reported that the Water Resources Development Fund earned \$4,632.76 in interest during February. The fund balance on February 28, 2007 was \$1,090,151.78.

**c. Legislative Issues**

Mr. Sullivan stated that Diane Salz is tied up in committee hearings and could not make the meeting. She provided her report in the Board Package as well as an update of that report, which was handed out separately. Mr. Sullivan discussed several of the issues reported on by Ms. Salz. He stated that the State is going to realize a shortfall in revenue this year and currently the Legislature is looking at several trust funds to raid for additional revenue. The “alternative water supply” funds were being looked at as one source of funds. Mr. Sullivan also reported that it appeared as though Senator Nancy Argenziano is going to be appointed to the Public Service Commission, leaving her Senate seat vacant. A number of people are looking at contending for that race including Representative Dennis Baxley, Richard Corcoran, who challenged Nancy Argenziano in her original run for her seat in the House of Representatives and Representative Charlie Dean. Mr. Sullivan also discussed several other issues raised by Ms. Salz in her report.

**d. Update on Marion County Issues**

Mr. Sullivan said he had received the Marion County Water Resources Assessment and Management Study (WRAMS). He indicated that he had provided in the Board Package a copy of the Table of Contents, the participants, an Executive Summary and the specific pages of the study dealing with the recommendation on rejoining the Authority. He said he had requested a cost estimate from Water Resources Associates to determine the cost of bringing the Marion County study into the Water Supply Plan. He will get with the Marion County Manager and possibly then with the individual County Commissioners to discuss the possibility of Marion County rejoining the Authority. Mr. Sullivan said that he hoped he would be able to report something by next meeting.

**e. Hydrologic Report**

Mr. Sullivan said he downloaded the hydrologic report from SWFWMD’s web page. He stated that the weather report is about the same - we still need rain. Aquifer levels have improved slightly from last month, but are still below normal range. Rainfall is below historic levels and lake levels continue to fall with the lack of rain. River flows in the Withlacoochee are well below the normal range.

**f. Correspondence**

Mr. Sullivan reported that the only correspondence was letters he had sent out to all the counties and cities in the region apprising them of the fact that the Local Government Grant Program will open for applications on May 1 and go through June 29<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the last time we dealt with the amount of money being spent on local government grants, the Board set a limit of \$125,000 per year for three years, and this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Next budget cycle, we need to reassess the amount of money we are spending on local government grants.

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**g. News Articles**

Mr. Sullivan said he included a number of news articles that the Board can read at its leisure.

**Agenda Item #9 Attorney's Report ... Larry Haag, WRWSA Attorney**

Mr. Haag reported that he and Jack Sullivan had been working on the language of the base contract with Water Resources Associates and he felt most of the language issues had been worked out. The contract had been sent to WRA to review. He reported that the Scope of Services portion of the contract had undergone considerable changes and those changes were close to being concluded as well. He felt the contract should be ready for the next Board meeting.

As a comment, Mr. Haag stated that he has owned a home on the Suwannee River for 27 years and this is the lowest he has ever seen the river in that time. Two springs near his home on the river have stopped flowing.

**Agenda Item #8 Other Business**

No Board member had any additional business to bring up at the meeting.

**Agenda Item #9 Public Comments**

At this time, Chair Valentino asked if there were any comments from the public. In the absence of Alys Brockway, Hernando County Water Conservation Coordinator, Chair Valentino reminded the Board that Hernando County was sponsoring a Groundwater Guardian Workshop on May 10, 2007. She said that Alys had invited all Board members to attend.

Al Grubman, President of the TOO FAR organization stated that his organization wanted to look at doing things to help future flow from lakes to rivers.

Sophia Diaz-Fonseca made the comment that with the low rainfall and the dried up lakes, now would be a good time to come in and clean up the muck on lake bottoms.

With no further comment from the public, the public comment portion of the meeting was closed.

**Agenda Item #10 Next Meeting Time and Location**

Chair Valentino stated that the next meeting would take place on April 18, 2007, 4:30 p.m., Sumter County Courthouse, Commission Meeting Room 222, 209 N. Florida Street, Bushnell, FL 33513

**Agenda Item #11 Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Sophia Diaz-Fonseca and seconded by Dennis Damato to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

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Joyce Valentino, Chair

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Jackson E. Sullivan, Executive Director