

Hardee and Peace River Soil and Water Conservation District

Quarter 3 Meeting Minutes

September 4, 2025

In attendance:

- Supervisors
 - Roy Petteway
 - Charles Matheny
 - Clint Hunnicut
 - Dustyn Maddox
 - Dan Ryals
 - Jim Selph
 - Ken Harrison
- Coordinator
 - Jennifer Gough
- Soil Techs
 - Laina Durrance
 - Bo Rich
- Ext Agent:
 - Jona Bosques

Call to Order by Chairperson, Roy Petteway at 9:08am

1. Approval of minutes
 - a. Board members reviewed and signed the minutes from the last meeting
2. Board action
 - a. Treasurer Matheny presented Hardee's financial statements and after which the board approved balances for all accounts.
 - b. Treasurer Barnwell reviewed PRSWCD account and approved all balances.
3. Reports
 - a. NRCS: The Wauchula Field Office is currently working on 19 EQIP 2025 Emergency applications, 11 Hardee and 8 in Desoto for a total obligation of \$1,139,914.22. Of these 19 contracts, 16 have been completed with payments totaling \$1,028,908.86. Wauchula FO has 51 EQIP 2025 classic

applications that were eligible and ranked but did not receive funding. They will be deferred to 2026. The deadline to apply for EQIP and CSP 2026 is October 3, 2025. IRA funds have been tolled over into the Farm Bill, and we are hoping to get more EQIP applications funded in 2026. We will be scheduling EQIP and CSP 2026 site visits in the next 1-2 months.

- b. FSA: Ms. Lambert was tied up and could not attend; Ms. Gough reports that a national jump team was recently in the office and the staff is working to finish 2022 Emergency EQIP and other applications ASAP.
 - c. FDACS: updated BMP manuals are available; there is a new addition “Small Farms and Specialty Livestock Operations” which demonstrates the popularity and feasibility (availability) of the BMP/CSA programs to everyone. Both soil techs reported from the field that they are busy, there are contracts steadily coming in and it’s first come first serve so with the cap on each payout being raised from \$50,000 to \$150,00 it is important to get the word out ASAP to any interested producer, farmer or rancher.
 - d. UF/Ext Agent: 4-H camp was the biggest improvement has been in the school access for 4-H type of educational programs and outreach. Ext Agent Bosques is excited that there’s new opportunities to participate in academia at the local level, bringing awareness about agriculture to our youth. On that note, Chairperson Petteway for Hardee and the board as well all supervisors for Peace River Soil & Water wanted to make it known that if/when the 4-H clubs (kids) need assistance, DO NOT HESITATE to ask because we “Soil and Water” are here to help where we can.
4. New Business
- a. Ms. Gough updated the board on the recent close-out of 5 years of contracts with OAWP and FDACS. Our new contracts for both areas have been executed and are set to run through June 30, 2028. The audit will be submitted to the state by end of September, and the beginning of 2025’s audit data review will begin shortly after that. Ken Harrison report on his meeting along with Jeb Smith of FL Farm Bureau and others in front of Sen. Truenow and resurgence this legislative session of a bill to dissolve or reorganize soil and water districts in Florida, so along with Ms. Gough he will continue researching ways to join both Hardee and Peace River SWCD for solidarity and safety in the future. Ms. Gough provided a map that shows regions being proposed as alternatives to the autonomy to individual districts, so there are several versions of what, how, who, when, where a bill will materialize in the Florida House and, or Senate and it’s proponents and opponents. More information to come as it is available. There was

roundtable discussion regarding group efforts to stay informed and connected in preparation of the upcoming legislative session, to avoid possible dissolution of “valuable districts that are working for the good of agriculture in the state of Florida in a variety of ways including educating the urban population, stormwater management, and realistic and responsible practices”. Further discussion will come on this topic soon.

5. Dates and reminders:

- a. December 31: annual ethic course online due
 - i. FASD members receive discount on the fee.
- b. March 2026: Meeting date