

# Rivers Coalition

## Meeting Minutes

---

Date: April 17, 2014

**Called to Order:** 11:03

Attendance: Leon Abood, Charles Grande, Todd Weissing, Marty Baum, George Jones, Darrell Brand, Pam Joy, Jim Harter, Paul Gray, Phil Tafoya, Annie Potts, Clint Starling, Mark Perry, Mike Conner, Dennis Phelan, Jill Pinkham, Tom Gilson, Don Voss, Charlie Burns, Jackie Tracynger, Joanne Swann, Shari Anker, David Wisehaupt, Richard Erth, Dennis Killila

### **Chairman's Comments:**

Leon Abood thanked everyone for their support of sending a letter to publicly oppose HB 703, which did not pass.

### **Special Presentation – Congressman Patrick Murphy:**

Leon Abood introduced Congressman Murphy, who proceeded to give an update on the actions he was taking to ensure the restoration and health of the St. Lucie River and estuary.

The update can be watched at [www.youtube.com/user/RiversCoalition](http://www.youtube.com/user/RiversCoalition)

Following Congressman Murphy's presentation, Leon Abood made a motion to write a letter of support to Congressman Rooney for advocating in the Appropriations Committee to keep the \$38m for C-44 in President's budget, Jim Harter seconded motion, motion passed

Leon Abood made a motion to write a letter to the SFWMD and Sec. Darcy, Rep. Rubio and Rep. Nelson for support of making Ten Mile Creek operational and utilizing it, Jim Harter seconded, motion passed.

### **Special Presentation – Senator Joe Negron:**

Leon Abood introduced Senator Negron, who also gave an update on his efforts of advocacy for the St. Lucie. The update can be watched at [www.youtube.com/user/RiversCoalition](http://www.youtube.com/user/RiversCoalition)

### **River Kidz**

Nic Mader announced that the River Kidz event called "Get the Muck Out", using river muck to tie-dye t-shirts, was a great success, the River Kidz have numerous events and projects coming up which include: a reef ball building project, a mangrove restoration project with the City of Stuart and Kevin Henderson. The River Kidz presented Marty Baum with a \$200 check to thank him for his help with their Get the Muck Out event. Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch announced she spoke to Governor Scott about our river issues and was able to send some Get the Muck Out t-shirts to him and his staff.

### **Speaker's Bureau:**

Todd Weissing announced to new members how to arrange a Rivers Coalition speaker and the next speaking engagements are as follows: Kevin Henderson will be speaking on 5/27/14 to the Kiwanis Club at Manero's Rest in Palm City at 12pm; George Jones will be speaking on 6/3/14 to the Ft. Pierce Yacht Club at their clubhouse in Ft. Pierce at 7:30pm; Jim Harter will be speaking on 8/8/14 at the Manatee Center in Ft. Pierce at 12pm.

### **Martin County:**

# Rivers Coalition

## Meeting Minutes

---

Deborah Drum gave an update on Martin County: Go to [www.riverscoalition.org/reports-info/martin-co-sfwmd/](http://www.riverscoalition.org/reports-info/martin-co-sfwmd/) for the full report.

### **South Florida Water Management District:**

Kathy LaMartina gave an update on the South Florida Water Management District: Go to [www.riverscoalition.org/reports-info/martin-co-sfwmd/](http://www.riverscoalition.org/reports-info/martin-co-sfwmd/) for the full report.

### **Federal & State Issues-CERP/IRL & Lake Okeechobee:**

Paul Gray announced that the lake is looking healthy and current level is 13-<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> ft., but there is hope that the lake will drop more before the rainy season arrives. The Holey Land, an area south of the lake, is in desperate need of water and also the Caloosahatchee is in need of water to maintain their salinity levels west of the lake, which would be a win-win, lowering the lake level at the same time.

### **Local Issues & Estuary Water Quality:**

Mark Perry announced that some water is being released from the lake at Port Mayaca and also into the Caloosahatchee. The SFWMD is trying to lower the lake to 12 ft. by June 1<sup>st</sup> to prepare for the rainy season. The local water quality currently looks good due to limited releases. The FOS is continuing to recycle oyster shells and build beds in partnership with local Stuart restaurants.

### **WRAC - “Water Resources Advisory Commission”:**

Mark Perry announced that at the past District Advisory Board meeting, they decided to support CEPP, which wouldn't be a solution but a big help to get water moving south. WRAC put together a table illustrating current and planned projects and their current levels of funding and how much more is needed. There will be a WRAC meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup> in Broward County.

### **Indian River Keeper:**

Marty Baum asked everyone to be proud of the City of Stuart and other towns along the St. Lucie and IRL for passing meaningful fertilizer ordinances. The Land Legacy meeting was held on April 16<sup>th</sup> on Amendment 1, which would allow us more control over purchases of wetlands to protect our waterways, a 60% victory is needed for it to pass. The River Kidz had an event for Earth Day at the Ft. Pierce Environmental Studies Center, Marty asked everyone to please encourage and support our kids who advocate for the river and are the next generation of torchbearers.