

St. Marys River Management Committee
P.O. Box 251 Folkston, Georgia 31537

MINUTES OF MEETING
March 7, 2005

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its regularly scheduled meeting on March 7, 2005, at the Nassau County Building in Callahan, Fla. Committee members and visitors in attendance are listed on a separate sheet. A quorum of members was present.

Chairman Chip Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m. Introductions were made of those in attendance. The minutes from the February 2005 meeting were reviewed and approved. Winifred Stephenson presented the treasurer's report; the main account has a balance of \$9,917.39. Stephenson mentioned that there were several deposits currently outstanding that would be reflected in next month's balance.

Dean Woehrle said he had contacted Nassau County and explained the committee's budget process to them. He said the county commissioners each agreed to contribute \$100 of their discretionary funds for the committee. Committee members thanked Commissioner Floyd Vanzant, who was present at the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

St. Marys River Cleanup

Dean Woehrle informed the members that the annual river cleanup will be held on Saturday, March 19. He distributed notebooks with tickets and other information to the various site captains. Woehrle said that he has received more phone calls about participation in this year's cleanup than ever before, and he is therefore expecting a very high turnout. Woehrle reminded members that tickets are necessary for entrance into White Oak Plantation for the post-cleanup picnic.

Boat US Foundation Grant

Trish Gramajo provided an update on the installment of the anti-pollution signs, which were paid for with a grant from the Boat US Foundation. Gramajo brought all the signs to the meeting and asked members to take them for distribution. The signs are 8 feet tall and have a color picture of the committee's logo on them. The signs will be put up in Nassau County on March 8.

Vision and Direction Subcommittee

Rick Walsh discussed the proposed amendments to the committee's bylaws. Walsh said the only comment he received about the amendments was from Barbara Yarbrough, regarding the officer residency requirement. Yarbrough did not support the proposed amendment and felt the original bylaw language should stand as is. Chairman Campbell agreed to strike the proposed amendment to achieve a consensus. Chairman Campbell made a motion to strike the amendment; Walsh seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Chairman Campbell mentioned that a supermajority of votes (13) was

necessary to make any changes to the bylaws, and a supermajority of members was present. Dean Woehrle made a motion to accept the proposed amendments, as amended. Barbara Yarbrough seconded the motion. The amendments were adopted, as amended.

Budget Subcommittee

Chairman Campbell explained the history behind the budget request. Melinda Granlund, committee secretary and St. Johns River Water Management District intergovernmental coordinator, explained that the “meat” of the request could be found in the “proposals” section of the document.

Section A

Vickie Samus mentioned that there was no budget amount assigned to the proposal in Section A. Tommy Tillman expressed concern that the committee might be turning control of the river over to a state agency. Chairman Campbell explained the “river setbacks” option involved fee-simple acquisitions with willing/voluntary sellers.

Samus said there is a difference between a “buffer” and a “setback.” She said the third paragraph is problematic and does not fit under Section A.

There was discussion about how committee members felt about condemnation and public land acquisition.

Bob Rowland, Nassau County, suggested that members not get bogged down in amending the description segments of the document and instead focus on the “proposal” sections.

Rick Walsh suggested deleting the reference to “200-foot buffers” and instead just use the term “buffer.” Dean Woehrle proposed a motion to change the title from “river setbacks” to “river conservation,” and to remove any references to 200 feet regarding a buffer. Samus seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Section B

Steve Nance said this section could generate conversation among the county commissioners about the possibility of losing taxable property due to the designation of easements. Samus said that Nassau County — in the past — has been supportive of The Trust for Public Lands. Winifred Stephenson said public land (easements) along the river will become invaluable and that the commissioners will recognize that. Samus said this document is a recommendation of the committee, and if the commissioners disagree with it, then the committee could work on that issue at a later date. Chairman Campbell said this recommendation is a part of the river management plan, which was approved by the four counties, so it should be acceptable to the counties. Tommy Tillman said he had a problem helping groups remove land from the tax rolls.

Samus motioned to accept section B, without any changes. Donny Rominger seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Section C

There was discussion about how the proposed funding would be used. Samus proposed amending the last sentence to specify whom the committee would be coordinating with to find funding. Samus made a motion to accept Section C, as amended. Steve Nance seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Section D

There was discussion about what types of data would be collected and how the data would be shared once collected. Comments were made about how important an "Outstanding Florida Waters" designation would be in protecting the river and in encouraging the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to become more active in the river's protection. Yarbrough made a motion to accept Section D and Stephenson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

MISCELLANEOUS

Barbara Yarbrough and Jason Griffis, both of Baker County, invited the committee to hold its May meeting at the St. Marys Shoals in Baker County. The committee accepted the invitation and agreed to the change in location. The meeting will begin at 6:00 pm.

Trish Gramajo said The Nature Conservancy would be hosting a forestry/land management conference on April 14 at the Nassau County Building in Callahan. The conference will last all day and will include presentations from various land management agencies. Gramajo will send out an e-mail with more details.

Teresa Monson, SJRWMD, asked members to take pictures at the upcoming river cleanup. The pictures may be included in the next issue of the *POSM* newsletter.

Mitchell Crawford, Charlton County Commissioner, inquired about what to do with tires found in the river during the cleanup. Woehrle said they cannot be placed in dumpsters. Woehrle said last year he had to collect them and take them to the dump and put them in a special repository. Woehrle asked members to stack any tires they find during the cleanup and tell him where they are located; he will try to pick them up and dispose of them.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.