

The regular meeting of the WEST COAST INLAND NAVIGATION DISTRICT was held at the Court House, Bradenton, Florida, on August 11, 1958, at 2 p.m.

Present were:

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|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Ellsworth Simmons, Chairman | Hillsborough County |
| H. C. Slaughter, Treasurer  | Manatee County      |
| Wilson Pigott, Secretary    | Lee County          |
| James D. Neville            | Sarasota County     |
| Charles Fischer             | Pinellas County     |
|                             |                     |
| J. K. Merrin                | Engineer            |
| J. Hardin Peterson          | Special Attorney    |
| Bruce M. Cox                | Accountant          |

Absent were:

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Fred W. Ball    | Executive Secretary |
| James E. Miller | Charlotte County    |
| Dewey Dye, Jr.  | Attorney            |

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ellsworth Simmons.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as presented.

Mr. Simmons advised the Board that he had been informed that the I.I. Board felt Mr. Merrin, Engineer, should make a trip to discuss existing problems thoroughly. They are willing to meet with WCIND after some points of conflict are straightened out.

Mr. Peterson reported that the State has agreed to issue deeds to state owned right-of-way in Pinellas County. That while they have encountered some lack of agreement, that office

would make concessions and they would have no difficulty. He assured the Board that progress has been made in acquiring state land.

Mr. Slaughter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fisher that the Engineer and the Attorneys be authorized to pursue this matter to a conclusion before the next meeting of WCIND, and to advise the Board at anytime should a delay occur and to be prepared to give a full report to the Board at the next meeting. APPROVED.

Mr. Merrin, Engineer, advised the Board of his plan to go to Tallahassee this week. The Board instructed Mr. Merrin to work with the State and obtain the deeds as soon as possible.

Mr. George Edmondson, representing a group of people from Venice who are very interested in the waterway, came before the Board suggesting a new route for the canal which would go inland north of Venice, course along the Myakka River, and return to the Coast via Charlotte Harbor. He was of the opinion that the present route through Venice is a controversial one and may be for years. Mr. Edmondson left a map with the Board, for their further study of this new proposed route. The Board agreed to study the plan but in no way wanted the people of Venice to get the impression that the Board was considering the re-routing of the canal.

Mr. Simmons brought to the attention of the Board the fact that the present route has been approved by Congress and that it would take an act of Congress to change the route now.

Mr. Edmondson informed the Board that the new route would save WCIND money in maintenance, supplies, and dredging, possibly a saving of \$2,000,000.

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Mr. Neville suggested that the matter be looked into as it showed merit and might be advantageous to WCIND.

Mr. Pigott felt that since capable engineers had already looked into the route and it had been approved, the Board should go along with the present, approved, route.

Mr. Peterson felt that the map presented by Mr. Edmondson was worthy of study, and agreed with Mr. Simmons that WCIND did not want to give the impression that the present route was not satisfactory, but since there was a possibility of saving money, they should look into it further.

Mr. Simmons thanked Mr. Edmondson for the interest shown this project by the group he represented and stated that the Board would look into his suggestions.

Mr. Tod Swalm, Manager of the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. W. M. Harmon, Chamber Vice-President, came before the Board in formal protest of what Sarasota County felt was an excessive contribution required of Sarasota County. Mr. Swalm informed the Board that Sarasota County was 100% behind the waterways and has no objection to contributing to the project, but felt that Sarasota County was being penalized because of re-evaluation, which would raise that county's contribution a great deal. The Sarasota Chamber of Commerce had written a letter to Governor Leroy Collins asking for his help. Mr. Simmons pointed out that there was never any discussion about where the money is spent in comparison to

what County it comes from, but felt sincerely that most of the money has been or will be spent in Sarasota County. He said all contributions will benefit all the area.

Mr. Simmons advised Mr. Swalm and Mr. Harmon that to consider counties individually, his county, Hillsborough, would not have any dredging and there is no right-of-way required in that county, yet Hillsborough is completely in favor of having the whole area grow and prosper and has contributed over half a million dollars to the project. He stated that the Sarasota representative on the Board, Mr. Neville, had already discussed the levy at a previous meeting with the Board, but that since money for this project will be spent in Sarasota, the amount seemed like a fair one and there was no question of any county being penalized, that every county in the navigation district has been through re-evaluation while Sarasota has been contributing only a small portion in comparison.

Mr. Neville, in defense of Mr. Swalm's protest, suggested that perhaps the people in Sarasota County didn't understand the reason for the rate and thought that this should be made clear to the people of Sarasota County by the Board.

Mr. Fischer stated that Pinellas County had this same problem in 1950, when they had a complete re-evaluation; Pinellas County will contribute about \$100,000.00 this year to the project.

Mr. Neville said that Sarasota's contribution would jump from approximately \$9,000.00 to about \$40,000.00 this year and

that the people of that county were very conscious of this.

Mr. Fischer made a motion that Attorneys, Mr. Dye and Mr. Peterson, write a letter to the Governor giving him the pertinent facts, showing how much each county contributes and how the money is spent, and that copies of this letter be made available to the Board. Motion was seconded by Mr. Pigott; APPROVED.

Mr. Merrin, Engineer, reported that field work during this period consisted of re-establishing right-of-way line along the Palm Island Estates in Charlotte County. Due to dredging in this area, Mr. Dye felt it was advisable that this section be re-surveyed and new descriptions and maps have been prepared deleting these area from the proposed condemnation suit. New descriptions have been furnished Mr. Dye, attorney, and new maps prepared for the signature of Chairman and Secretary.

Mr. Slaughter, Treasurer, made his report and upon motion by Mr. Pigott, seconded by Mr. Fischer, was approved.

Bills were presented and approved for payment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

  
Secretary

  
Chairman