

W.C.I.N.D. Convened a Board Meeting on Friday, February 24, 1984, at 10:00 a.m. at W.C.I.N.D. Headquarters, 200 East Miami Avenue, Venice, Florida 33595

Commissioners Present: Joseph A. Tringali, Chairman Charlotte County
Porter Goss, Secretary Lee County
Kent Chetlain, Alternate Manatee County
Jerry L. Hente, Vice Chairman Sarasota County

Commissioners Absent: W. H. Fletcher, Treasurer Manatee County

Staff Present: J. M. Armstrong, Director
Dewey Dye, Counsel
Edna Hussmann, Secretary

Guests Present: Walter Jennings, Venice, Florida
Bob Schuette, Wharf Restaurant, Venice, Florida
Jim Hilton, Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville, Fla.
David Martin, Reporter, Sarasota Herald-Tribune
Linda Harrington, Reporter, Pelican Press
Anne Arden, Reporter, Gondolier
Dale Adams, Department of Natural Resources,
Tallahassee

ADMINISTRATION:

The Board Meeting convened at 10:05 a.m. and was called to order by Chairman Tringali.

The minutes of the January 13, 1984, Board Meeting were approved. The Treasurer's Report of December 31, 1983 was approved. The Treasurer's Report of January 31, 1984 was approved. Executive Director Armstrong explained that the checking account balance was not presently as high as it appeared on the bank statement, inasmuch as a considerable sum had been transferred to the Security Plus Fund with South East, N.A. Bank. Checking account interest was noted. The Treasurer's Reports were approved after motion made by Commissioner Hente and seconded by Commissioner Chetlain.

Motion made by Commissioner Hente to approve and pay current bills, seconded by Commissioner Goss. Motion carried. Commissioner Chetlain asked if the Board intended to keep the large balance on hand in the State Pool Fund. Director Armstrong explained that the balance was the result of the sale of real estate, and that it would be used very fast in case funds were required to fulfill spoil obligations or other commitments made by WCIND. Chairman Tringali explained that through the sale of real estate, funds obtained were sufficient to prevent the WCIND Taxing authority from increasing taxes in the member counties to support the efforts of WCIND.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

The Director introduced guests, who were welcomed by Chairman Tringali: Walter Jennings of the First National Bank of Venice, Bob Schuette, owner of the Wharf Restaurant, Jim Hilton of the Corps of Engineers in Jacksonville, David Martin of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune, Linda Harrington of the Pelican Press, Anne Arden of the Gondolier, and Dale Adams from the Department of Natural Resources in Tallahassee, and Mr. Dewey Dye from the

law firm of Dye, Scott and Deitrich, P.A. which represents the WCIND.

OPEN TO PUBLIC:

Chairman Tringali asked if there were any concerns of any of the guests and if they wished to speak before the Board of Directors. Mr. Jennings asked to be heard on the subject of what the WCIND Board of Directors might wish to do concerning the proposal to be presented on Monday, February 26th at the Sarasota County Natural Resources and Recreation meeting concerning a "no wake" zone that would span the fuel block at the Crow's Nest Marina and the Venice Jetty. Mr. Jennings wished to learn the feeling of the Board for this proposed action so that he could report back to the Monday night meeting. Chairman Tringali responded that inasmuch as the Board was totally unaware of any such request, had had no opportunity whatsoever to discuss or research such a proposal, the Board would be unable at this time to make any decision of any kind or any suggestion or recommendation concerning the matter of the proposed "no wake" zone. He further stated that in view of the total lack of awareness or information concerning this proposal, that any response to Mr. Jennings inquiry could not be made until a complete study of the issues and questions involved were studied, and inasmuch as no precise request had been made or was being made to make such a study, a response was not in the offing. Discussion followed concerning the proper channels to follow for "no wake" zoning requests, such as various state agencies which will act on the request first, then these agencies in turn will contact WCIND and other authorities.

Jim Hilton of the Corps of Engineers from Jacksonville was asked to make any presentation that he might wish at this time. Mr. Hilton then described in detail just how the Corps of Engineers works with each of the specific counties and WCIND. He stressed that the Corps does not lobby for any projects, but works only through acts of Congress to accomplish their tasks for whatever nature they may be. He stated that the probable time for completion of any Corps effort is in the realm of 6 months to 3 years after Congress has granted approval for a project. He described the length of IWW, and told of the "missing link" which is north of the Anclote, but which otherwise goes clear up to the State of Maine. He urged the Board to make a concerted search for possible spoil island sites for future long range planning before all the areas are bought up by developers. Commissioner Chetlain asked if the Corps had ever researched the possibility of utilizing curved jetties at the mouth of Long Boat Pass. Mr. Hilton responded that perhaps Commissioner Chetlain would write to his office and explain in depth the procedure which he had discussed. Commissioner Chetlain then asked about permeable groins, and suggested that Mr. Hilton investigate this possibility of saving beaches from erosion and cited the Colony Beach Club installation on Long Boat Key.

Chairman Tringali asked Mr. Hilton if the Corps would be in a position to recommend to the Board any suitable land which would be likely as an acquisition by the Board for future spoil sites purchases. Mr. Hilton suggested that the Board scrutinize the aerial photographs for such concerns.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES REPRESENTATIVE:

Mr. Dale Adams declined at this point to present any comments,

preferring to wait until later in the meeting. This courtesy was granted.

ACTIVITIES REPORT:

Director Armstrong introduced Mr. Bob Schuett who presented a request to the Board for the lease, or purchase, or some sort of land granting to him for the purpose of beautifying the property located adjacent to his Wharf Restaurant bordering the Intra Coastal Waterway and quite near the Hatchett Creek bridge. Such a beautification project would enhance the appearance of his restaurant. He indicated that he had been in contact with the Department of Transportation for the portion of the land that is under their jurisdiction and that they had no misgivings about granting their land to him for the purpose requested. The land in question is presently under lease for the next three years, and until that time there can be no decision made as to its disposition. Director Armstrong further described the land in question, and its potential value to the IWW. He further stated that the Corps of Engineers had given him no indication as to their concern regarding its disposition. Counsel Dye then went into detail concerning the history of this specific portion of land, and stated that before WCIND acted on any request for the disposition of the parcel in question, they should make direct request of the Corps of Engineers for permission to so act. Chairman Tringali stated that the Board would make no decision at this time concerning Mr. Schuett's request. Chairman Tringali further requested Director Armstrong to investigate the land in question to ascertain its need for cleaning up or to be made more presentable to the public if necessary.

A. Sarasota County - Midnight Pass Problems

1.) Director Armstrong explained in detail what the "Blue Ribbon Committee" is and what his appointment to that body entails. He discussed at length the criticisms being levied against WCIND by telephone, in the press and in person for not doing anything constructive about the maintenance of Midnight Pass. Commissioner Hente explained that he was the person responsible for Director Armstrong's appointment to the Blue Ribbon Committee, and that his reason for the appointment was to enable the committee to benefit from Director Armstrong's knowledge and background and expertise in waterway maintenance and management. He further stated that he did not intend that Director Armstrong's appointment was to be taken as a representative of WCIND, but simply as an individual who just happened to have that WCIND affiliation. He further stated that he felt there was insufficient knowledge and experience among those on the Blue Ribbon Committee and that Director Armstrong would enhance it by his membership. Chairman Tringali inquired if Director Armstrong was referred to in his membership capacity as a representative of WCIND, to which Director Armstrong stated emphatically that he had made it abundantly clear that he was there as an individual and not as a representative of WCIND. Chairman Tringali discussed at length an interview which he had undergone with a reporter in which his remarks were twisted about in the printed article. He further stated that he was concerned that some members of the Blue Ribbon Committee might in some way assume that Director Armstrong's appointment to their committee was as a representative of WCIND, and that his concern was that there had never been such an appointment, and that whatever capacity Director Armstrong assumed on the committee was without the sanction of the Board of Directors of WCIND. Commissioner Goss interrupted with

with the comment that it was his distinct feeling that Director Armstrong was serving on the committee at the request of the County of Sarasota as an expert authority and had no direct bearing on his affiliation with WCIND. He further concluded that until the County of Sarasota actually brought up the subject of Midnight Pass before the WCIND Board of Directors there was no need for the Board to become embroiled in the discussion of their problem at this time. Further, he did not believe that the Board should direct their Director to get involved with inlet problems at this time. In fact, if the opportunity continues to be present for Director Armstrong to be a part of committees on his own wherein he can lend his expertise to the problems of others as an individual, then that position only lends credibility to WCIND's employee in an ex-officio position. However, no action should be taken by the Board until so requested by any group with problems.

Commissioner Hente explained that the purpose of the "Blue Ribbon Committee" was to ultimately find a solution to the problem of Midnight Pass, and that he was not a member of that group. He stated that it was his belief that Director Armstrong was only on the committee as an observer. Director Armstrong related his observations of the efforts of the committee up to this point were confined to discussions of biological, hydrological and philosophical reasons the pass was a problem and who caused the problem not how to solve it. Other meeting criteria seemed to center around the legality of eminent domain proceedings, what was state land, etc, and the cost of taking the peoples' homes and property would cost as much as dredging, etc. He repeated his stand on the problem of the press's interpretation of the responsibility for the problem of Midnight Pass, and wherein he continues to repeat to those press inquiries that until the specific county comes directly to WCIND, WCIND cannot take any action whatsoever on the Midnight Pass problem. Commissioner Hente explained at length the real crux of the problem with the two property owners, and their enormous sums of money which they have expended to date to keep the pass open.

B. Charlotte County

1.) A copy of the SCL Contract was reviewed. Everyone has been mailed a copy of the final contract. Director Armstrong reviewed the present position of WCIND and SCL wherein the railroad is presently concerned with the loading of the bridge on the buyer's barge, and what ramifications of that specific operation might emerge. However, all seems to be in order at the present time. Mr. Dye was asked if the present contract was acceptable to WCIND in its present language condition. Mr. Dye confirmed Commissioner Goss's question, that it was indeed acceptable. Chairman Tringali inquired of Mr. Dye about our insurance coverage prior, during, and immediately after loading so that our liability is completely covered. Further, he stated that he wanted all systems clarified with everyone concerned on the day of the loading so that there would be no possible opportunity for criticism from any source for tying up the waterway. Commissioner Goss moved and Commissioner Chetlain seconded that the contract as presented be accepted. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Bill 295 was discussed upon the explanation of the contents by Director Armstrong. He further explained that the present embroilment of the FIND and WCIND with Tallahassee legislative committee, specifically Mr. Morgan, was primarily due to the committee's dissatisfaction with FIND. It appears that there is presently a current of unhappiness with certain practices of FIND and this condition may turn to WCIND as a matter of relationship. Therefore, it is imperative that WCIND present all facts of record that can unequivocally substantiate the worthiness of WCIND's projects, past, present and future. Mr. Dale Adams gave a lengthy dissertation on the entire situation and offered avenues of coneraction to this unpleasant situation. Director Armstrong requested that if the Board was in agreement with the concern of the situation of WCIND, that the Board would authorize representation at the hearing on Tuesday, March 6th in Tallahassee. Chairman Tringali asked if Mr. Morgan has actually introduced a bill to abolish the Inland Navigation Districts. Mr. Adams said that none had been actually introduced at this point. However, the committee was formed to study that very possibility. The meeting on the 6th of March is a Sub-Committee Meeting taking up HB 295 and a review of Florida Inland Navigation District. Chairman Tringali asked for a motion to the effect that a representation be authorized to go to this specific hearing on the 6th of March in Tallahassee. Mr. Dye was called upon to render his opinion of the situation. Mr. Dye fortified the feeling that a representative should be in attendance, specifically the Director of WCIND should be authorized to go, along with any other Board members who can make it. Commissioner Goss moved that authorization be given for the Director, the attorney, and any other Board Members who wish to attend the specified meeting. However, Commissioner Goss made it definite that he did not want WCIND attendance to be construed as an attempt for WCIND to lobby on its behalf. He further stated that there were a number of projects which WCIND could devote their time and efforts to the benefit of the general public. He stated that he did not want to send a delegation to Tallahassee to lobby in an effort to protect "their turf", but basically wants to send a delegation to Tallahassee that says. . ."Look, this is what we do, this what we intend to do, and we think it is good. . .and then report back to the Board." Commissioner Chetlain concurred with Commissioner Goss's remarks, and he seconded the motion. Motion carried. Commissioner Chetlain commented that erosion was a chronic problem on this coast line, and that it would be important that this group find its mission in life to help eradicate erosion to maintain the boating capability. He also brought up the topic of curved jetties, and stated that he would like at some future meeting to have the prime proponent of curved jetties at some Board Meeting to expound at some length on its merits.

Chairman Tringali related the number of projects of beach nourishment accomplished along the IWW in the counties involved, and how very important those projects were and are to the coast line. Commissioner Goss stated that he had several projects in mind which he was not willing at this point to bring up for discussion until an equitable formula for distribution of funds and projects was agreed upon within the four county board. All of the projects are related and WCIND is abiding by the legitimate rulings of the State Legislature with an equitable distribution of taxes for waterways usage, and WCIND in its own household has not set out exactly what it is that it should really

do and what formulas should be used to make that equally equitable for the member counties.

Director Armstrong presented his special flip chart and pictures depicting in detail the scope and purpose of the how, what, where, when and why of WCIND. Director Armstrong's presentation took approximately fifteen minutes, and was well received by all present. His presentation was an in depth one, going back into the very beginnings of the Inland Waterway, with all its ramifications of land acquisitions, public sentiment or acceptance, and the tremendous effort of purely physical output to finally accomplish the final waterway. Even the cost was staggering, but has benefitted so very, very many people through the years. Discussion turned to those counties which dropped from the original county membership of WCIND. It appears that their needs are still evident, and while not requiring funds from WCIND, nor are they contributing funds to WCIND, there are many hours spent by Director Armstrong in resolving or trying to resolve problems in those counties - specifically Pinellas County.

Chairman Tringali asked the question of who owns the spoil islands? Director Armstrong responded that the State of Florida owns most, WCIND owns some, and some were deeded to TTIFF (Trustees Internal Improvement Firm). Some spoil areas are the property of WCIND. The questions raised at the February 20, 1984, meeting in Tallahassee were read by Director Armstrong, and discussed briefly or in depth as their importance dictated. Chairman Tringali requested that the Director answer all the questions thoroughly prior to the 6th of March and see that the responses were in the hands of Mr. Wilhelm for his perusal. Commissioner Goss recommended that our answers be as open and candid as possible so that there would be absolutely no room for concern about what the actual day-to-day activities of WCIND are. There should be no attempt to gloss over any area of our activities, in effect, let the chips fall where they may, inasmuch as we have nothing to conceal.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Director will be in touch to confirm possible date.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

JMA:emh


Secretary W.C.I.N.D.


Chairman W.C.I.N.D.