

\*minutes were approved SMRMC on August 1, 2016

## **St. Marys River Management Committee**

68 Kingsland Dr., Suite B ATTN: SMRMC  
Folkston, GA 31537-2872

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**July 11, 2016**

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its noticed meeting on July 11, 2016, at the Callahan Volunteer Fire Department conference center in Callahan, Florida.

Committee members in attendance by County:

**Baker** – Chris Gazes (Co-chair), Commissioner James Croft, Ed Barber

**Camden** – John Myers (Co-Chair)

**Charleston** – Chip Campbell, Merrill Varn

**Nassau** – Dean Woehrle, Cory Black

**Non-voting Members** –

**Others Present** - Rick Frey, St. Marys Riverkeeper; Shelley Beville Committee Admin.

A quorum was present.

#### **Call to Order and Housekeeping**

The discussions began at 7:35 PM. The agenda for July was reviewed and approved. The minutes from May 2, 2016 were reviewed and approved.

The bank statements were reviewed: Currently there is \$7,011.13 in account. Chip Campbell mentioned that the Hap Harrigan funds were moved to the main account.

#### **Old Business**

Chip moved that the committee donate \$510.00 in honor of Hap Harrigan to the educational programs being implemented by the St. Marys Riverkeeper. It was suggested that Nassau County Board of Commissioners be informed of the donation since Harrigan was a long-time volunteer and resident of the county. There was also discussion of the origin and deposit history of the recently dissolved separate account known the Hap Harrigan Fund. Chip will check the historical box stored in Charlton County.

St. Marys Riverkeeper encouraged the committee to ask the Camden County Board of Commissioners to apply for a 319 grant to continue the fecal coliform remediation work in the Horsepen/Temple Creek watersheds that was started by the University of Georgia several years ago. Rick felt that because there was a now a fulltime grant writer for Camden County that they might be more agreeable to applying for a grant. Chip made a motion that the committee ask the Camden County Board of Commissioners to find/assign the appropriate office of the county to apply for a 319 grant to continue funding septic tank repair and replacement in the

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Horsepen Creek area. Both the St. Marys Riverkeeper and the committee agreed to support the 60/40 match with volunteer time. The St. Marys Riverkeeper also said that they have a boat and vehicle.

### **New Business**

Greg Nelms has resigned as treasurer to the Committee. Merrill Varn has volunteered to finish out the year as Secretary and Treasurer.

Discussion of the River Clean-up was brought up in regards to the committee transferring much of the organization and administration of the event to the St. Marys Riverkeeper. Dean will remain in his role.

James Croft informed the committee that Baker County is currently workshopping issues and will be revising the mining ordinance in September/October of this year. An outbreak of southern pine beetle at St. Marys River Shoals Park has resulted in emergency cutting of trees to attempt to contain the beetle.

### **Subcommittee Updates**

- **Government/River Issues:** Chip Campbell presented information regarding the publicity and issues with the Chesser Island Landfill in Charlton County. Recently, vanadium was reported as having a “statistically significant” increase at the landfill by the EPD. Several newspapers have reported a 12.5% increase at one test well near Harris Creek. There are many questions that need to be answered and this is becoming a concern in the Okefenokee area. The committee identified several questions:
  - 1) Where is the test well within the property and is it the only one with increased heavy metals?
  - 2) What is the response protocol?
  - 3) Are there surface water tests in the protocol?
  - 4) Is there an increase in the frequency of testing planned?
  - 5) What other heavy metals are being tested and what are the results?
  - 6) Is there a baseline?
  - 7) When will the results of testing be made public?
  - 8) What is in coal ash?
  - 9) Is this an increase since 2010 or just from the previous sampling session?
  - 10) What are the WQ standards for surface water?

Chip made a motion to ask Georgia EPD to provide information about their response protocol in regards to this finding, and its relation to the health of the St. Marys River on behalf of all four counties, and to advise the county commissioners that we are asking for this information. The motion was seconded and approved.

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Merrill informed the committee that Charlton County Committee members continue to work with the Board of Commissioners to remediate the fecal coliform impairment of Spanish Creek. She reported that the second set of "Pump your septic tank" posters were distributed on July 1. Ryne Nimmo of the South Georgia Regional Commission will present a brief history of the impairment and grant opportunities to remediate it to the Board of Commissioners on August 4. Ryne will meet with committee members from Charlton County at the Charlton County Office Building on Kingsland Drive in Room 117 at 9:00am on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Shelley will notice the meeting on the website.

- **Outreach and Education:** none.

### **Public Comments**

There were no comments from the public.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for August 1, 2016\*\*