

\*Discussion was reviewed by SMRMC on November 5, 2018.

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

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

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**October 1, 2018**

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its noticed meeting on October 1, 2018, at the Callahan Volunteer Fire Department conference center in Callahan, Florida.

Committee members in attendance by county:

**Baker** –

**Camden** – Commissioner Ben Casey, John Myers, Chris Chauncey, Jim Wildes

**Charlton** – Commissioner James Everett, Chip Campbell, Merrill Vern

**Nassau** – Dean Woehrle

**Non-voting Members** – Geoff Sample, SJRWMD

**Others Present** – Tim Hiers, White Oak; Rick Frey, St. Marys River Keeper

A quorum was not present.

### **Presentation**

Tim Hiers, Director of Course Operations, White Oak Properties

Golf courses are managed like a crop and must consider soil, water and plants. Courses are most vulnerable when there is no grass which also increases erosion and turbidity. White Oak's is designed taking into consideration many factors including native areas, existing soils, local pests water and electricity use, and fertilizer distribution. Experts were consulted, regular testing of turf, water and soil and all decisions are based on science. Top golf courses take at least 5 years to learn micro-environments, pests, shade, etc. White Oak is concerned with run-off into the River and only use fertilizer based on soil analysis, monitoring the weather and type of technique to distribute fertilizer. Tim Hiers presentation is on the website.

Some questions were asked:

Grading is complete, now encouraging native plants to grow and planting grass. Currently the course is using Bahia grass, but using it to stabilize soil until other grass species will be used.

Rick Frey commended the effort White Oak is going to make a Role Model of Golf Courses.

### **Discussion**

Jim Wildes updated the Committee that there have been no updates to the St. Marys 319 Grant and a meeting is being scheduled.

Commissioner Casey updated the Committee on Spaceport – the Coast Guard public meeting was last Thursday seeking comment on closing the waterway to launch rockets into St. Andrews

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Sound, Todd's Creek Floyds cut from Cabin Bluff back. The closures are required as exclusion zones by the FAA. There were 400 people in attendance. The closures would be just during an active launch for 2-12 hours depending on the size of the rocket.

Rick Frey asked the Committee about the oyster lease closure in Georgia. The closure has been in place and is from June through September.

All inspections and replacements have been completed. There has been persistent and measurable decrease in the fecal coliform numbers in water quality testing. The second application to continue the septic tank inspections and replacement in Brownstown is in process and Merrill suggested adding continued water testing the next application.

Zoning ordinance in St. Marys, the major components are still up for review. Rick Frey informed the Committee that the Coty has contacted him to help with the Management Plan.

Spanish creek has a second meeting in October.

Geoff Sample updated committee that SJRWMD will not be managing the updates to the website after the new year. There are several options for updating including the Riverkeeper, Counties and NERC. Will discuss again with a full committee.

John Myers is going to Georgia Coastal Regional Commission to help develop the Regional Water Plan.

Rick Frey handed out the new brochure for the St. Marys Riverkeeper.

### **Subcommittee Updates**

- **Government/River Issues :**
- **Outreach and Education:**

### **Public Comments**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2018\*\*