

SAVE OUR LAKES



AUGUST 2021 Volume 21, Issue 8

A Governing Board Meeting Unlike Any Ever Before!

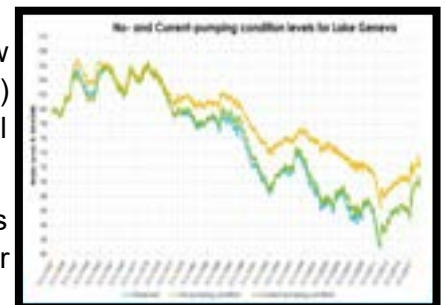
The July 13, 2021 Meeting of the Governing Board of the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) was like none that had ever come before. It was a “love fest” with groups, who for decades had been diametrically opposed to each other, now appearing to be of a single mind and purpose as they sang the praises of the Black Creek Water Resource Project and for each other. With the Utilities’ approval of their financial participation in the project and their withdrawal of legal challenges against the District, a major hurdle to the project was overcome. A video of the meeting can be found on the District’s website: www.sjrwmd.com/governingboard/ Click on “Board meetings dates and agendas” Click on the “Video” for the July 13, 2021 Meeting. It is set up to allow you to click on an agenda item (in this case #6) and the video will start at that point in the meeting.



Speakers at the Governing Board July 13, 2021 Photos taken from screen shots of the meeting video. Clockwise from top left: Dr. Ann Shortelle, Exec. Dir SJRWMD; Lynn Rutkowski, City Manager, Keystone Heights; Vivian Katz James, Pres. Save Our Lakes Organization (SOLO); Doug Bournique, Governing Board member; Douglas Burnett, Governing Board Chairman; Rob Bradley, Governing Board Vice Chairman; Wayne Young, Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA); Celeste Goldberg, Clay County Utility Authority (CCUA); Rick Hutton, Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU); Scott Kornegay, Lake Region Development Corporation (LRDC)

So much happened at the July 13 Governing Board meeting to describe in this short space but even more had to happen before this to bring us to this day. Some of these things are:

1. Vivian took over the leadership of SOLO and set the tone for how SOLO interacted with the District (and others). She relentlessly championed the cause of getting water back in the lakes. There were red shirts at every Governing Board meeting.
2. Dr. Ann Shortelle became the Executive Director of the District and brought a new era of professionalism and leadership to the District.
3. For years, Dr. Pat Welsh called for the District water modelers to follow US Geological Survey Standards and develop a transient (time based) 3-D model of the Keystone area. It was at last heeded. The new model was used for the new MFL revision for Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva.
4. After decades of our being told, “It’s only rainfall,” the Keystone Heights transient model demonstrated that regional pumping is responsible for significant drawdown of both the Floridan Aquifer and the lakes.



SAVE OUR LAKES ORGANIZATION, INC.

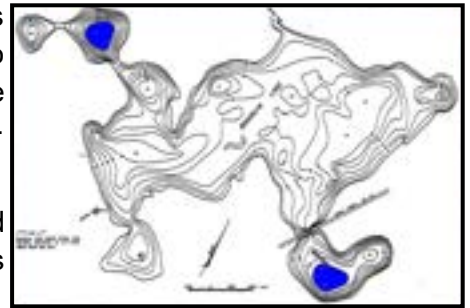
P.O. BOX 185, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS, FL 32656

EMAIL: save-our-lakes@comcast.net - **WEBPAGE:** www.saveourlakes.org

President: Vivian James — **Vice President:** Chandler Rozear — **Secretary/Treasurer:** Susan Welsh

Board Members: Webb Farber, Glenda Harper, Scott Slater, Dr. Pat Welsh

5. Retired General Douglas Burnett was appointed to the Governing Board and ultimately became its Chairman. With him came an era of straight talk and a "Pull the chocks and fly the mission" attitude.
6. Vivian Katz James and Scott Kornegay put together the Water Summit that met at the Keystone Heights City Hall. There, then State Senator Rob Bradley saw the possibility that something could be done for the lakes.
7. Senator Bradley, along with Rep. Cunnings and Rep. Payne, were able to convince the Legislature to appropriate over \$40 Million to rural NE Florida for the Black Creek Water Resource Project.
8. Now term limited out of office, Senator Bradley is appointed to the Governing Board of the SJRWMD by the Governor. He expects to see that the Legislatures' appropriations are expeditiously spent.
9. A statutory requirement was put in place stating that if the adopted MFLs were not being met or were projected to not be met in the future, a Recovery Plan was required. After decades of inaction on Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva, doing nothing is no longer an option for the District.
10. For decades the utilities pressed the District to set the MFLs as low as they could. Even so low as to say that Lake Brooklyn reduced to two disconnected ponds in an otherwise dry lake bed was both acceptable and normal. Webb Farber's graphic helped to stop that from happening.
11. The EPA required that Lake Brooklyn remain a clear water lake and not be made a dark water lake by the water from Black Creek. Thanks to all who worked so hard to find and implement a clear water solution.
12. There are a couple of hurdles left for the Black Creek Project. Permits are required from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE). These should be completed this Fall.
13. Construction on the pipeline is expected to begin this Winter and the pump station and treatment facility to begin in the Spring. Construction is expected to take two years.
14. It will take more time to fill the lakes back up to their optimum Aquifer Recharge levels. The District's Transient Keystone Heights Model could be tasked with calculating how long this would take given an average of 7.5 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) of water coming from Black Creek.
15. It is time to prepare Lake Brooklyn and Lake Geneva for a return to full pool status. Alligator Creek needs to be prepared for the additional water flow.
16. We all wish that all of the parties had the science, the good will, the current vision of doing the best for the lakes and had reached this accord before the first MFLs for the lakes were adopted in 1996.



We patiently look forward to these blue lines being the normal shorelines of our lakes!



BLACK CREEK WATER RESOURCE PROJECT SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS

1. July 2021 - The FDEP (Fla. Dept. of Environmental Protection) issued the Draft NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Permit. The District published the Notice for the Draft Permit and the 30-day public comment period has begun.
2. September, 2021 - FDEP issues Notice of Intent (NOI) for NPDES Permit (14-day petition period). NPDES and ERP Permit Issuance.
3. October 2021 - US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) 404 Permit issuance.
4. November 2021 - Construction Bid (Phase 1 - Pipeline)
5. January 2022 - Award Construction Contract Phase 1 (Governing Board Approval) Begin Construction.
6. February 2022 - Construction Bid (Phase 2- Intake/Pump Station/Treatment/Recharge).
7. April 2022 - Award Construction Contract Phase 2 (Governing Board Approval) Begin Phase 2 Construction.
8. April 2024 - Completion of Construction

SJRWMD GOVERNING BOARD Mtg. 9:30am Tues., 8/10/2021 at the Palatka HDQTRS.
***Verify* on website: www.sjrwmd.com/governingboard/ (Live Streaming is available)**



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION and RENEWAL FORM

Cut, copy or send the whole page!

(Please Circle One) RENEWAL OR NEW MEMBER?

NAME _____

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PLEASE CIRCLE ONE:
SEND MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
BY

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PLEASE SEND THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR ANNUAL DUES CHECK FOR \$25.00 PAYABLE TO: SAVE OUR LAKES ORG., P.O. BOX 185, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS, FL32656. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU WHEN MEETINGS RESUME IN JULY AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF K.H. (Hwy. 100, just east of Hwy. 21), 7PM, ON THE SECOND TUESDAY-EVERY OTHER MONTH!

SOLO WEBSITE www.saveourlakes.org

You can get information as well as communicate with us through our website: www.saveourlakes.org or our email: save-our-lakes@comcast.net . Our newsletter comes out once a month by email and US Mail (usually the first week of the month). ***Please feel free to check us out!***

Save Our Lakes Organization, Inc.
P.O. Box 185
Keystone Heights, FL 32656



Logo by: *Graham E. Kestner*

Our next meeting: 7PM, September 14 at the First Baptist Church. Updates on the Black Creek Project and More! Look for meeting signs around Keystone Heights. Get your shot. Live to see the lakes full again!

NEWSLETTER PRINTING BY FABCO-AIR. THANK YOU, FABCO-AIR!

FABCO-AIR
A member of Festo Group

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By getting vaccinated you protect yourself and those who may not be able to be vaccinated. We are meeting again in September. Haven't been fully vaccinated? Kindly wear a mask to protect yourself, your unvaccinated friends and your loved ones while we are together. Vaccinated? We look forward to seeing your smiling faces again!

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