

Lake Ola MSTU Advisory Board Meeting
July 15, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.
Tangerine Improvement Society

Board Members Present: Thomas Hurlburt III (Chairman), David McDonald (Vice Chair), Henry Land II, Sharlee Hollingsworth, Kevin Harbin

Board Members Absent: None

Staff and Guests: Marissa Herron, Orange County Environmental Protection Division (EPD)

Attendees: Ned and Deb Bowers, Steve Mellich, Austin Hathaway, Nancy McDonald, Claire Nardone, Tucker Holmes, Zachary Delgado, Mark Beckner, Jeff Fritz, Jeff Casey, Kim Buchheit, and Lynn Bucklew

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Thomas Hurlburt III called the meeting of the Lake Ola Advisory Board (Advisory Board) to order at 6:33 p.m.

II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Henry Land II, seconded by Sharlee Hollingsworth, and carried with all present members voting AYE by voice vote, the Advisory Board approved the March 18, 2025 meeting minutes as submitted.

III. Public Comment

Thomas Hurlburt III opened the floor for public comment and received two requests. Mr. Ned Bowers presented the Advisory Board and EPD staff with a binder containing documents and photographs Mr. Bowers has gathered. Mr. Bowers detailed his concerns for current and future drainage into Lake Ola and Lake Apopka including potential illicit discharges originating from Jones Avenue and discussed the wetland delineation that is being performed by Orange County at 6506 Jones Ave. Mr. Bowers inquired if Orange County is conducting inspections of the subject property and if so, why the documentation was not on the Fast Track website. Ms. Herron confirmed that routine inspections are being conducted by Orange County's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program but stated she is not privy regarding the publication of the corresponding reports. Discussion ensued. Ms. Herron stated that the property owners of 6506 Jones Ave are working with the County's Attorney Office regarding an ongoing case and she could not discuss further details. The Advisory Board requested to be provided with a point of contact regarding this case. Ms. Herron shared the name and email for EPD's Environmental Policy Coordinator for the abovementioned case. Ms. Kim Buchheit shared she no longer holds a seat on the Orange Soil and Water Conservation District Board and proposed that an invitation should be sent to the two new board members. Ms. Buchheit echoed Mr. Bowers' concerns and proposed that a request is sent to what entity is conducting the revised Lake Apopka drainage basin study and request that they investigate the Lake Ola

area as well. Discussion ensued. Mr. Harbin inquired if the Advisory Board could utilize a contractor that was not an Orange County term contractor. Ms. Herron stated that to her knowledge if the service can be provided by an Orange County term contractor, then the Advisory Board would need to utilize one of these vendors, however she will discuss this request with the Procurement Division. Mr. Mellich expressed his opinion that the exotic aquatic plants are being managed effectively by Orange County and advised the Advisory Board against moving forward with a water quality study that was proposed due to the associated costs. Mr. McDonald stated the Advisory Board has not made a motion to move forward with any water quality studies. Discussion ensued. Thomas Hurlburt III stated further discussion will be held during the Non-Agenda Item and closed public comment.

IV. Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Report

Project Prioritization

Ms. Herron provided the 2025 Project Prioritization sheet to the Advisory Board members. A few minutes were taken for the Advisory Board to complete the exercise and return to Ms. Herron.

Chair Elections

Ms. Herron asked the Advisory Board if they would like to hold chair elections. Discussion ensued.

Upon a motion by David McDonald, seconded by Sharlee Hollingsworth, and carried with all present members voting AYE by voice vote; Thomas Hurlburt III was elected as Chair and David McDonald was elected as Vice Chair.

Aquatic Plant Management Update

The most recent aquatic plant management survey occurred on June 11, 2025. A continued increase in biodiversity in native plant species was seen, specifically southern naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*). Other species found included bacopa (*Bacopa caroliniana*), eelgrass (*Vallisneria americana*), and Illinois pondweed (*Potamogeton illinoensis*). The native species Nitella (*Nitella sp.*) was found in depths up to 15 feet deep. Four invasive species were noted, of hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*), limnophila (*Limnophila sessiliflora*), Cuban bulrush (*Cyperus blepharoleptos*), and water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*). Small plots of these three species were treated on July 1st.

Ms. Herron stated that 450 triploid grass carp were stocked on March 25, 2025. All fish were lively and 12 inches long. There are 100 grass carp remaining on Lake Ola's permit through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Currently, EPD intends to stock more grass carp in the fall and will seek an amendment from FWC to increase the number of grass carp on Lake Ola's permit.

Annual Budget Approval

The 5-year expenditure report was shared and discussed. The total account balance is \$515K with \$348K in reserves and \$165K that is unencumbered in the operating budget. This year's

anticipated revenue is \$104K. The cost for annual routine services contracted through Orange County contractors, Aquatic Weed Control, is \$3K for grass carp barrier maintenance and a \$7,500 placeholder for potential projects initiated by the Advisory Board. Ms. Herron asked the Advisory Board if they wish to approve the contracted services for the next fiscal year.

Upon a motion by David McDonald, seconded by Tom Hurlburt III, and carried with all present members voting AYE by voice vote; the fiscal year 2026 budget for contracted services was approved as submitted.

Discussion ensued surrounding the removal of the grass carp fence in preparation for tropical storms or hurricanes. The Advisory Board collectively supported removing the grass carp barrier during the County's major storm preparation efforts.

Lake Ola Watershed and Inflows Evaluation Proposal

Ms. Herron provided a summary of the items included in the watershed and inflow evaluation scope from Environmental Research and Design (ERD). Discussion ensued. The Advisory Board determined that they are not willing to spend money on this type of study currently.

Upon a motion by David McDonald, seconded by Tom Hurlburt III, and carried with all present members voting AYE by voice vote; the Advisory Board voted to not move forward with the scope provided by ERD.

Updates Requested by the Advisory Board

Ms. Herron provided the following updates based on inquiries from the Advisory Board during the January 16th meeting:

- The inspections performed by Orange County NPDES at Shelley's Septic are unannounced and approximately monthly. Shelley's is in communications with several departments within Orange County and outside agencies including the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the St. Johns River Water Management District. For additional information, Ms. Herron advised the attendees to contact the Orange County Attorney's Office at 407-836-7320.
- There are resources available regarding holding a company accountable for illicit discharges, but it would be incident specific and would need sufficient support documentation. For additional information on what Orange County's participation could be, a detailed report of the incident and all documentation would need to be shared with the County Attorney's Office.
- To learn more about future developments, the residents can view the Orange County Fast Track website where the associated documents, plans, and contact information for the reviewers are publicly accessible.

Ms. Herron queried the Advisory Board regarding the interest in installing an informative sign that demonstrates proper cleaning practices for boats and equipment to limit the spread of exotic plant species. Discussion ensued. The Advisory Board requested Ms. Herron to bring a quote for the creation and installation of one sign to the upcoming meeting.

V. Meeting Schedule

Mr. Hurlbut requested for the upcoming meeting to be rescheduled for December. After some discussion, the meeting was rescheduled for December 2, 2025, at 6:30 pm. Ms. Herron inquired if the Advisory Board would like to permanently move their third meeting each year to be in December.

Upon a motion by David McDonald, seconded by Tom Hurlbut III, and carried with all present members voting AYE by voice vote; the last meeting of the year was approved to permanently be held during the first week of December.

VI. Member Reports

David McDonald: No report

Henry Land II: No report

Sharlee Hollingsworth: Requested Ms. Herron research her concerns surrounding the work being conducted in the western cove on Lake Ola.

Kevin Harbin: Provided a packet of Chlorophyll a research and data from the Orange County Water Atlas. The data depicted an upward trend for Chlorophyll a concentrations within Lake Ola. The Advisory Board requested Ms. Herron to provide an update during the December meeting and to add the item to the upcoming agenda.

Tom Hurlbut III: No report

VII. Non-Agenda Items

Thomas Hurlbut III opened the floor as an extension of public comment. Hearing no requests, the Non-Agenda Item was closed.

VIII. Adjourn

Upon a motion by Henry Land II, seconded by Sharlee Hollingsworth, and carried with all present members voting AYE by voice vote; the Advisory Board approved to adjourn the meeting.

Thomas Hurlbut III adjourned the Lake Ola Advisory Board meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Thomas Hurlbut III, Chairman

Date

Minutes prepared by Marissa Herron

Date