

## Rural Concerns Advisory Committee

October 15, 2024

4:00 pm

Extension Auditorium

22712 W Newberry Road, Newberry, FL 32669

Pages

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Old Business
  - 3.1 Final review and approval of RCAC Annual Workplan and Accomplishments Report: FY2024-2025 1
4. New Business
  - 4.1 Discussion of potential agenda item topics for upcoming year
  - 4.2 Nominations and elections of officers (per RCAC Bylaws Article IV)
    - 4.2.1 Chair
    - 4.2.2 Vice-Chair
5. Approval of Minutes for 9-17-2024 meeting 6
6. Attendance Report 8
7. Chair Comments
8. Committee Member Comments
9. Public Comment
10. Next Meeting - November 19th @ Community Support Services
11. Adjournment

**Rural Concerns Advisory Committee**  
**Annual Workplan and Accomplishments Report: FY2024-2025**

**Chair:** Dr. Rodney Clouser

**Board Liaison:** Ken McMurry, Senior Planner, Growth Management

**Staff Support:** Ben Chumley, Regina Williams, and other departments as requested for presentations

**Brief History of Committee**

The Committee was established by Resolution 03-34 on April 8, 2003 to provide guidance and advice to the Board regarding rural concerns and issues within Alachua County. The Committee has been extended by the BoCC five times, the most recent of which occurred on June 25, 2019, where Resolution 19-66 granted the Committee a six-year extension to December 31, 2025.

**Mission Statement**

The responsibilities of the Advisory Committee shall be to:

- A. Establish the importance of our rural, unincorporated agricultural and historic settlements;
- B. Assist in the development and evaluation of policies and programs affecting the rural areas of the County;
- C. Represent the rural areas in the County's various community planning processes and hearings; and
- D. Assist in the recognition and determination of the needs of the County's rural residents and advising the Board accordingly.

**Prior Year Accomplishments *[to be reviewed & confirmed by RCAC]***

**Held 9 meetings/workshops through September 17, 2024**

• **Received presentations and provided input on:**

10/17/23 Review and discussion of proposed amendments to the Alachua County Unified Land Development Code – Angeline Jacobs, Planner, Growth Management Dept.

01/16/24 Final Review of RCAC Suggestions and Questions on proposed amendments to the Alachua County Unified Land Development Code – Angeline Jacobs, Planner, Growth Management Dept.

Reducing Pollution from Septic Systems in Alachua County – Stacie Greco, Water Resources Program Manager, Environmental Protection Dept.

- 02/20/24 Alachua County's Land Conservation Program: Protection of Water Resources, Wildlife Habitat, and Developing Agricultural Land Protection Strategy – Andi Christman, Environmental Program Manager, Environmental Protection Dept.
- 03/19/24 Update on Pavement Management Program, Transportation Capital Improvement Program (TCIP) FY 2023 FY 2032, and use of infrastructure surtax funds – Brian Kauffman, Asst. Director, Public Works
- 04/16/24 Impact of Climate on Alachua County's Agriculture and Rural Lands – Shane Williams, Storm Water Engineer, Environmental Protection
- 05/21/24 Update on Alachua County Agricultural Land Protection Strategy – Andi Christman, Environmental Program Manager, Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
- 07/16/24 Update and discussion of Alachua County Agricultural Land Protection Strategy
- 08/20/24 Update and discussion Alachua County Agricultural Land Protection Strategy: Update and RCAC Input & Concerns – Andi Christman  
Discussion of potential future agenda item on Agricultural Tax Classification Assessment issues
- **Discussed and took action on Committee Items:**
    - 10/17/23 Final review and approval of Annual Workplan and Accomplishments Report: FY2023-2024  
Nominations and elections of officers
    - 03/19/24 Discussion of RCAC 2024 Meeting Schedule
    - 09/17/24 Review and update of RCAC Annual Workplan and Accomplishments Report: FY2024-2025
  - **Made recommendation to BoCC:**
    - 09/17/24 Approved letter of support for proposed Agricultural Land Protection Strategy

## Goals & Objectives for Upcoming Year

The Rural Concerns Advisory Committee goals and objectives will be focused around three “pillars” of issues/concerns:

- I. Rural Health and Service Delivery,
- II. Rural Economic Development, and
- III. Rural Policy Concerns

The focus of the goals and objectives for FY2024-25 is to educate the advisory committee on potential topics of concern in rural areas of Alachua County in order to be prepared for emerging issues of importance if input is needed and to offer suggestions when appropriate.

### I. Rural Health and Other County Service Delivery

- A. Review and ~~solicit presentations on~~ monitor health and social services and delivery of those services ~~and grant opportunities~~ in Alachua County rural communities/cities/towns ~~(Alachua County Health Dept and UF Mobile Outreach Clinic).~~
- B. Explore Continue to partner with Alachua County government on broadband opportunities/partnerships and limitations in rural Alachua County, related to expansion of telemedicine to rural and underserved communities and opportunities for alternative financing including grants and guaranteed loans.
- C. Continued discussion of litter issues/concerns in Alachua County and right-of-way maintenance.
- D. Review of County solid waste program collection and providers.
- E. Review of issues concerning Alachua County Animal Services.

### II. Rural Economic Development

- A. Increase public awareness of the scope, size and importance of agriculture and ag related industry in Alachua County – land, labor, taxes, prevention of economic leakages and exports of County-related agricultural products, including procure or recommend completion of economic impact study.
- B. Advise BoCC on importance of additional funding on scope, size and importance of the County rural roads and bridge system for agriculture-related prosperity.
- C. Review and monitor local food systems and value-added food service infrastructure, ~~including the new interlocal agreement with the City of Gainesville.~~
- D. Review and monitor value added food service infrastructure and local foods, including potential new meat processing facility in the County.
- E. Continue conversation about small business grants and/or support in rural areas including those bringing services listed in ‘Rural Health & Service Delivery’ topic, and including the County’s Small-Producer Agriculture Capital Support (SMAACA) Grant program.

### III. Rural Policy Concerns

- A. Continue education efforts for the BoCC and citizens of Alachua County on agricultural issues and other issues affecting the rural area including support of local markets, local farmers and local food production including limited resource producers.
- B. Provide input where appropriate on the following, including but not limited to:
  - Feral hog management
  - Invasive species control programs conducted by the County
  - Effective means of enforcing rules and rights relating to private roads and easements in the rural area
- C. Continue to promote and coordinate education of Best Management Practices for agriculture producers, governmental organizations and citizens of Alachua County, including State guidelines.
- D. Stay abreast of law enforcement and EMS services relating and critical to the rural area.
- E. Request update from Alachua County Property Appraiser's office on Florida State Use Value Assessment Law and application in Alachua County.
- F. Investigate farmland preservation programs/areas in surrounding counties.
- G. Stay abreast of Alachua County Agricultural Land Protection Strategy adopted in 2024.
- H. Discuss a potential information gathering methodology to integrate rural concerns as included in the Committee Mission Statement, to "Assist in the recognition and determination of the needs of the County's rural residents and advising the Board accordingly."
- I. Make recommendations to BOCC on any Agricultural Issues and other issues affecting the rural area and emerging issues in the rural area and at the rural-urban fringe including review of options and funding sources for improving rural to urban transportation systems.
- J. Monitor the Comprehensive Plan as well as implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code on rural lands and relating to agriculture and local food production.
- K. Continue discussion of energy conservation and generation methods that may impact the agriculture community and/or quality of life in the rural area
- L. Provide input where appropriate on septic systems (update on new septic system regulations in rural area).
- M. Review and monitor Alachua County Climate Action Plan.
- N. Encourage intergovernmental coordination between Alachua County and municipalities to identify opportunities to conserve natural and agricultural resources.

**Other Potential Concerns include:**

- Continue to review and comment on management of Alachua County Forever properties, including development and implementation of business plans for timber harvesting, cattle grazing and hunting leases.
- Provide input where appropriate on the following, including but not limited to:
  - County water supply issues
  - Stormwater issues
  - Fire services issues
  - Integration of emergency response systems for the rural area

DRAFT

**DRAFT**  
**Rural Concerns Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**

September 17, 2024  
4:00 pm  
Extension Auditorium  
22712 W Newberry Road, Newberry, FL 32669

**1. Call to Order**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dr. Rodney Clouser (Chair), Leah Compton, Janet Hearn, Micky McMillan, John Nix, Missy Norman, Dr. Cindy Sanders, Amy Van Scoik, Brent Weisman

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Jordan Callahan, George Mells

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Ken McMurry, Senior Planner, Growth Management  
Regina Williams, Planning Assistant, Growth Management  
Ben Chumley, Principal Planner, Growth Management

**PUBLIC PRESENT:**

none

Chair Clouser called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm. There were 7 members present, which was confirmed to satisfy the requirement for at least a quorum under County Advisory Board Guidelines.

Mr. Nix joined the meeting at 4:05 pm; Ms. Norman joined the meeting at 4:06 pm.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

Chair Clouser asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion was made by Dr. Sanders to approve the agenda; seconded by Ms. Hearn.

**ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.**

**3. New Business**

**3.1 Review and update of Annual Workplan & Accomplishments Report FY2024-2025**

Chair Clouser gave a brief introduction to the Annual Workplan & Accomplishments Report. Mr. McMurry shared the document on the screen and gave an overview of the components. There was discussion by Committee members regarding goals and objectives in the draft Workplan including recommendations for modifications, additions, and deletions, which Mr. McMurry made to the document on screen. Chair Clouser asked that the item be resumed at the October meeting so that there would be time to discuss a topic from Ms. Van Scoik.

Motion was made by Ms. McMillan to resume and finish the Annual Workplan & Accomplishments Report at the October meeting; seconded by Ms. Van Scoik.

**ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.**

**4. Approval of minutes for 08-20-2024 meeting**

Motion was made by Ms. Norman to approve the minutes for the 08-20-2024 meeting; seconded by Mr. Nix.

**ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.**

**5. Attendance Report**

Mr. McMurry said the current Attendance Report showed all members in compliance with the attendance policy at this time. He said there are two positions currently advertised, the vacant Alternate position and the Farm Bureau position with current term ending September 30<sup>th</sup>. He said there are currently three applications on file and staff was waiting to see if there would be an additional vacancy before taking them to the Board. Chair Clouser asked how Farm Bureau applicants were typically identified. Dr. Sanders said any member of the Farm Bureau would qualify for the position but she typically informs the Farm Bureau board of an RCAC Farm Bureau position vacancy. She said that she can make an announcement about the current vacancy at the upcoming Farm Bureau annual meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**6. Chair Comments**

Chair Clouser said the Board recently adopted the Agricultural Land Protection Strategy, which includes a new advisory board to include a member from RCAC. He asked staff to talk with Andi Christman and get any details regarding that advisory board and Mr. McMurry said they would.

**7. Committee Members Comments**

Ms. Van Scoik said there was an issue with traffic safety on State Road 26 on the east side of the County. She said State Road 26 has become a commuter route into Alachua County and there are safety concerns related to drivers passing on double yellow lines and curves and there have been crashes. She asked if there is a formal way to request better enforcement of existing traffic laws or a schedule of current enforcement.

There was discussion regarding highway traffic safety in the County, the law enforcement agencies in the County, the County Sheriff's Office rural deputy program, and general rural questions for the Sheriff's Office. Chair Clouser said the Committee could request a Sheriff's deputy to visit RCAC at a future meeting after the November elections.

**8. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**9. Next Meeting**

October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Extension Office

**10. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned by consensus at 5:32 pm.



09/18/2024

## Attendance Report

### Rural Concerns Advisory Committee

Staff Liaison: Ken McMurry

Member Position	Term Start	Term End	03-19-24	04-16-24	05-21-24	07-16-24	08-20-24	09-17-24	Meetings Attended
<b>Callaham, Jordan</b> Member from the Farm Bureau	10-01-2021	9-30-2024	P	P	P	P	A	A	4 of 6
<b>Clouser, Rodney</b> Member from UF-IFAS	10-01-2022	9-30-2025	P	P	P	P	P	P	6 of 6
<b>Compton, Leah</b> Member Chosen At Large	06-11-2024	5-31-2027	--	--	--	P	A	P	2 of 3
<b>Hearn, Janet</b> Residing in Unincorporated Area Outside Urban Cluster...	10-01-2023	9-30-2026	P	P	P	P	A	P	5 of 6
<b>McMillan, Micky</b> Actively Involved in Agriculture and/or Silviculture	02-01-2024	9-30-2026	P	P	P	P	P	P	6 of 6
<b>Mells, George</b> Residing in Unincorporated Area Outside Urban Cluster...	10-01-2022	9-30-2025	P	P	P	P	P	A	5 of 6
<b>Nix, John</b> Actively Involved in Agriculture and/or Silviculture	10-01-2023	9-30-2026	P	P	P	P	P	P	6 of 6
<b>Norman, Missy</b> Actively Involved in Agriculture and/or Silviculture	05-14-2024	9-30-2026	--	--	P	A	P	P	3 of 4
<b>Sanders, Cindy</b> Member from County Extension Office	10-01-2023	9-30-2026	P	P	P	P	P	P	6 of 6
<b>Van Scoik, Amy</b> Actively Involved in Agriculture and/or Silviculture	06-01-2023	9-30-2025	P	P	A	A	P	P	4 of 6
<b>Weisman, Brent</b> Residing in Unincorporated Area Outside Urban Cluster...	06-25-2024	5-31-2027	--	--	--	P	P	P	3 of 3
<b>VACANT</b> Alternate Member Chosen At Large	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

P = Present

A = Absent

Attendance is defined as being physically present at the meeting for one hour or 50% of the length of the meeting, whichever is shorter. Any regular or alternate member whose attendance is less than 50% of the last 6 consecutive meetings shall automatically be removed from the advisory committee.