

# **ALACHUA COUNTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RURAL CONCERNS**

## **MINUTES – April 18, 2023**

*Alachua County UF/IFAS Extension Office  
22716 W Newberry Rd., Newberry, FL*

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dr. Rodney Clouser (Chair), Larry Hall (Vice Chair), Dewayne Baines, Jennie Ford, Janet Hearn, George Mells, Juan Salva, Dr. Cindy Sanders, Sandra Werner

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Jordan Callahan

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Ken McMurry, Planner, Growth Management  
Regina Williams, Planning Assistant, Growth Management

### **PUBLIC:**

None

Chair Clouser started the meeting at 4:05 pm. Seven members were physically present, which was confirmed to satisfy the requirement for at least a quorum physically present under County Advisory Board Guidelines. Chair Clouser said that, per the County Advisory Board Guidelines, Mr. Salva as Alternate member and physically present can vote today. There were no members of the public present, but Chair Clouser said that any members of the public that attend would have an opportunity to participate.

Committee members Jennie Ford and Dewayne Baines joined in person at 4:23 and 4:25.

### **I. Approval of the Agenda**

Chair Clouser asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion was made by Dr. Cindy Sanders to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Mells.

**ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.**

### **II. Attendance Report**

Mr. McMurry said the current Attendance Report showed no members were in jeopardy of noncompliance with the attendance policy at this time and that if members have any questions, they should ask staff. He gave an update on the status of applications for the two currently vacant positions on the Committee and said that staff is planning to take those applications to the County Commission in May.

### **III. Approval of minutes for 3-20-2023 meeting**

Motion was made by Dr. Sanders to approve the minutes for the 3-20-2023 meeting; seconded by Ms. Hearn.

**ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.**

### **IV. New Business**

#### **a) Discussion of economic feasibility of operation of the proposed Meat Processing and Training Facility**

Chair Clouser said that during his presentation to the BoCC on March 14<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner Cornell had asked if RCAC could look at the economic feasibility of the operation of the proposed meat processing and training facility. He also gave an update on the April 4<sup>th</sup> BoCC meeting on the

proposed facility. There were suggestions and discussion by Committee members regarding the operation of the proposed meat processing and training facility including comparable facilities, market supply and demand and operating cost issues. Chair Clouser asked the Committee members if the following would be acceptable to them so that the focus group on operations of the proposed facility, staffed by Sean McLendon, could receive the Committee's comments prior to their next meeting: staff would send notes from today's discussion to all RCAC members who would review and send any additional comments to staff; staff would then send the final list of comments to Sean McLendon. Mr. McMurry said that would involve no communication between Committee members outside of a publicly noticed meeting in compliance with Florida Sunshine laws. Chair Clouser said that when the Committee meets in May, they could decide whether they want to vote on sending a related formal chair letter on the subject to the County Commission. There was general agreement among Committee members regarding the above.

**b) Discussion of RCAC upcoming meeting schedule and potential alternate locations**

Chair Clouser asked for any comments on alternate meeting locations. There were questions and discussion by Committee members regarding meeting in an alternate location closer to the eastern part of the County, parking issues, and number of times per year. Chair Clouser said the intent over the last year had been to meet downtown in the County Administration Building once per quarter but due to breaks during the summer and holidays there were only two meetings there in 2022. He asked if going forward the Committee could guarantee 4 meetings per year in the downtown area. He said the Committee could discuss any planned breaks at the next meeting.

Mr. McMurry gave an update on potential alternate meeting locations including rooms at the Health Department, the Sheriff's Office, and the Supervisor of Elections Office. He said the Health Department meeting room was available and staff were following up on the other two locations. He said Cone Park, Millhopper, and Tower Road Libraries also had available space.

Motion was made by Ms. Werner that the June meeting be held at the Health Department location on a trial basis and that one meeting per quarter be held at an alternate location in the downtown area regardless of meeting breaks or cancelations; seconded by Mr. Baines.

**ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.**

**V. Chair Comments**

Chair Clouser said he'd like to keep agendas focused on one main issue and end meetings by 5:30 pm at the latest.

**VI. Committee Members Comments**

Mr. Hall requested a report back on the 0.5 cent sales tax increase designated for roads, how it is being budgeted or spent, and whether it is currently being collected. Chair Clouser asked for that update for the May 16<sup>th</sup> agenda.

**VIII. General Public Comments**

There were no public present.

**IX. Next meeting:** May 16, 2023, at Alachua County UF/IFAS Extension Office

**X. Adjourn:** Motion was made by Mr. Hall to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Dr. Sanders.

**ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.**

Dr. Clouser called the meeting to a close at 5:25 pm.

**Approved 5-16-23.**