



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 24-00123

Agenda Date: [Publish Date]

Agenda Item Name:

Recognize Unanticipated Revenue for Agricultural Land Transfer Negotiator Grant

Presenter:

Andi Christman, Land Conservation Program Manager, Environmental Protection Department, 352-264-6803

Description:

Request approval of a Budget Amendment in the amount of \$29,200, adoption of a Resolution to recognize unanticipated revenue from American Farmland Trust for an Agricultural Land Transfer Navigator grant, request an interfund loan if necessary, and authorize the County Manager to sign forms and reports necessary to administer the grant.

Recommended Action:

Approve and sign the grant documents and Resolution for Unanticipated Revenue, approve the attached Budget Amendment to recognize \$29,200 in unanticipated revenue in Fiscal Year 2024, and allow for an interfund loan, if necessary, in order for the department to begin this work in a timely manner, and authorize the County Manager to sign forms and reports necessary to administer the grant.

Prior Board Motions:

None

Fiscal Note:

The County will receive \$25,000 per year for four years (\$100,000 total) from the American Farmland Trust. In addition to the \$25,000 per year award, a total travel budget of \$4,200 is allotted to use during the four years of program participation for travel-related expenses.

Revenue: 167.41.4149.366.0000

Expense: 167.41.4149.537.31.00

The County must provide an in-kind match totaling \$52,000 over the course of the 4 years of the grant/agreement period; current staffing levels and program activity will meet this requirement without any additional general fund resources.

Strategic Guide:

Environment

Background:

Alachua County has been awarded a Land Transfer Navigator grant from American Farmland Trust to

assist agricultural landowners with planning for the succession and transfer of their working lands to the next generation of farmers (Exhibit 3). Alachua County will contract Alachua Conservation Trust to implement the grant deliverables (Exhibit 4). The grant from American Farmland Trust provides for \$25,000 per year for four (4) years of training and work with our agricultural landowners, as well as \$4,200 of travel reimbursement funding.

Through the Alachua County Forever Program, Alachua County currently holds 15 conservation easements. As a part of developing strategies to further include agricultural land protection (through acquisition of conservation easements) in the County's land conservation efforts, and also reviewing the easements currently held by the County, it is clear that planning for a current landowners eventual retirement and transfer or sale of their farm to the next generation of farmers has a strong impact on our long term success in acquisition and management of the County's conservation easement portfolio.

The USDA, one of the largest easement-holding entities in the nation, has identified the need to assist farmers with this next-step planning for their farms/easements, and has engaged American Farmland Trust to help bridge this gap for both landowners and easement holders. The Land Transfer Navigator program (Exhibit 5) provides tools and training to participants to help communicate effectively with agricultural landowners about the long-term goals of keeping their land in productive agricultural condition while connecting current landowners with future farmers that are excited to own lands with easements in place.