

Rural Concerns Advisory Committee

Date: January 16, 2024
Time 4:00 pm
Alachua County UF/IFAS Extension Office
22716 W Newberry Rd., Newberry, FL

1. Call to Order

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Rodney Clouser (Chair), Jordan Callaham (Vice Chair), Janet Hearn, George Mells, John Nix, Juan Salva, Dr. Cindy Sanders, Amy Van Scoik

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Ken McMurry, Senior Planner, Growth Management
Regina Williams, Planning Assistant, Growth Management
Angeline Jacobs, Planner, Growth Management
Stacie Greco, Water Resource Manager, Environmental Services

PUBLIC PRESENT:

James Stephens

Chair Clouser called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. There were 6 members physically present, which was confirmed to satisfy the requirement for at least a quorum physically present under County Advisory Board Guidelines. Chair Clouser welcomed the member of the public.

Ms. Van Scoik joined the meeting at 4:10 pm and Mr. Nix joined the meeting at 4:40 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 Mr. Mells.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously

3. Old Business

3.1 Final Review of RCAC Suggestions and Questions on proposed amendments to the Alachua County Unified Land Development Code – Angeline Jacobs, Planner, Growth Management Dept. Angeline Jacobs gave a summary of her previous presentations to the Committee in September and October 2023. She said Committee comments have been taken into consideration by staff in the development of draft code language and that she had also shared their comments on the Community Engagement Process at a County Commission meeting. She said three of the amendment topics would go to the County Commission on Jan. 23rd for request to advertise a first public hearing in February, which would be followed by a second hearing. She said if the

Committee is ok with the summary list of their questions and suggestions to staff, she would attach it to that County Commission agenda item.

There were questions and discussion by Committee members regarding the 1,000 foot private easement road lengths, special improvement districts for funding maintenance of new public roads, and agritourism exemptions to the proposed temporary use permitting.

Ms. Callaham said the Committee had answers and opinions on the draft amendments that should be included. Dr. Sanders moved that the Committee put more specifics to 4 or 5 points and give to staff for submittal to the County Commission for the public hearing in February; seconded by Ms. Callaham. The motion was withdrawn. There was consensus that the Committee endorses the list of questions and comments drafted by staff and will give more specific opinions on 4 or 5 points. Chair Clouser asked staff to prepare and email to the members a draft of those opinions for review and any additional comments, and then include as backup for the County Commission public hearing in February.

4. New Business

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

Stacie Greco gave a presentation including distribution of septic tanks in Alachua County, traditional and enhanced nitrogen reducing systems, State requirements, system upgrades at County parks, enhanced systems in recent development, and rebate programs. There were questions and discussion by Committee members regarding septic system inspections, cost of enhanced systems, connection of existing septic systems to centralized sewer, and incentives to contractors. Chair Clouser said the Committee would be happy to give more input as needed and Ms. Greco said another potential topic for a future meeting is the County's climate vulnerability analysis and action planning.

4.2 Discussion of RCAC 2024 Meeting Scheduled

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

5. Approval of minutes for 10-17-2023 meeting

Motion was made by Mr. Nix to approve the minutes for the 10-16-2023 meeting; seconded by Ms. Callaham.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

6. Attendance Report

Mr. McMurry said the current Attendance Report showed all members in compliance with the attendance policy at this time. He said the Attendance Report is always sent out with the meeting materials and that if members have any questions, they should ask staff. Mr. McMurry said Committee member Richard Wilhelm resigned and there are now 4 vacancies. He said there is one application for one of the Actively Involved in Agriculture and/or Silviculture vacancies that staff will take to the Board on January 27th. He said vacancies are posted on the County website. Chair Clouser urged members to encourage potential members to apply.

7. Chair Comments

Chair Clouser said he will present the RCAC annual report to the County Commission at their February 27th meeting, and will talk about that at the next Committee meeting. He asked members for their input on topics to consider at upcoming meetings.

8. Committee Members Comments

Mr. Nix said County road conditions especially on the east side need attention. Chair Clouser asked staff to email Mr. Nix the Pavement Management Program information the Committee has received. Ms. Callahan and Ms. Hearn had questions about the Transportation Capital Improvement Program funding and schedule and asked for a future update.

9. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

10. Next Meeting: February 20, 2024, at the Alachua County Health Department.

11. Adjournment: Motion was made by Ms. Van Scoik to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Hearn.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Clouser called the meeting to a close at 5:40 pm.

Approved February 22, 2024