

**Rural Concerns Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Date: March 19, 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, Micky McMillan, George Mells, John Nix, Juan Salva, Dr. Cindy Sanders, Amy Van Scoik

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Ken McMurry, Senior Planner, Growth Management
Ben Chumley, Principal Planner, Growth Management
Brian Kauffman, Assistant Director, Public Works

PUBLIC PRESENT:

None

Chair Clouser called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm. There were 6 members physically present at the start of the meeting, which was confirmed to satisfy the requirement for at least a quorum physically present under County Advisory Board Guidelines. He recognized that there were no members of the public present but that, if any arrived, public comment would be taken at the appropriate points on the agenda. He said that, per the County Advisory Board Guidelines, Mr. Salva as Alternate member and physically present can vote today.

Ms. Callaham joined the meeting at 4:08 pm, Ms. Van Scoik joined the meeting at 4:13 pm, and Mr. Nix joined the meeting at 4:18 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 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

Mr. Kauffman gave an update and answered questions on the Transportation Capital Improvement Program. Staff projected on the screen an online interactive map that showed road segments, bridges, and signals included in the TCIP; and maps of roads with weight restrictions and related signage. Mr. Kauffman passed out copies of a recent TCIP monthly status report from Public Works to the County Commission and said that he could get upcoming status reports to the Committee either through staff or an online link.

There were questions and discussion by Committee members regarding specific road segments in the TCIP, timing and prioritization of projects, the project bidding process, and ranking of road project priorities. There was additional discussion regarding funding and special improvement districts, dedication to and acceptance of roads by the County, gas taxes, County mobility fees paid by new development, and weight restrictions and enforcement on County roads.

3.2 Discussion of RCAC 2024 Meeting Schedule

Chair Clouser said the Committee generally meets 9 to 10 months of the year with breaks in the summer and November and December depending on the holidays. There was discussion by Committee members regarding school breaks and holidays. Motion was made by Mr. Nix to take breaks in June and December and to hold November as a potential break, seconded by Dr. Sanders.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously

Chair Clouser said the Committee generally tries to meet once a quarter on the east side of the County. There was discussion by Committee members regarding meeting locations at the Extension Office and on the east side of the County. Motion was made by Dr. Sanders to hold meetings in February, May, August, and November on the east side of the County at the County Health Dept. if available followed by Grace Knight Conference Room, seconded by Ms. Callahan.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously

4. Approval of minutes for 02-20-2024 meeting

Motion was made by Mr. Nix to approve the minutes for the 02-20-2024 meeting; seconded by Mr. Mells.

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 and he summarized the attendance requirement. He said the Attendance Report is always sent out with the meeting materials and that if members have any

questions, they should ask staff. Chair Clouser encouraged members to let the community know about the current vacancies on the Committee.

6. Chair Comments

Chair Clouser said he presented the RCAC annual workplan to the County Commission on Feb 27th. He said he also talked about information from the recent Census of Agriculture and about the loss of agricultural land in Alachua County. He said the Commissioners expressed interest in efforts related to agricultural lands preservation, determining criteria for choosing agricultural lands to protect, and the potential for collaboration between RCAC and the County Land Conservation Board. He said a member of the public complimented him at the meeting on the overall operation of the RCAC.

He asked the Committee for their input on requesting staff to talk with Andi Christman about RCAC involvement in efforts related to agricultural lands preservation and determining criteria to rank agricultural lands for protection. There were questions and discussion by Committee members regarding contacts at the University of Florida; the importance of supporting small and local farms, and long-term strategies; and development pressures on agricultural lands. Motion was made by Ms. Hearn that staff should talk with Andi Christman about the possibility of having a joint meeting with Rural Concerns Advisory Committee and the Land Conservation Board; seconded by Mr. Nix.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously

7. Committee Members Comments

Director, on Mr. Mells' question regarding the use of County waste collection facilities by outside residents. He said that according to information provided by Mr. Olmos, staff monitor for non-County residents as best they can; additionally, non-County residents have the option to purchase a permit to use County facilities. There were questions and discussion by Committee members regarding the potential and need for future monitoring for non-County residents at the facilities.

Ms. Callaham said there is an upcoming vote in Newberry on charter schools. There were questions and discussion by Committee members regarding related issues and impacts on rural areas.

8. Public Comments

There were no public present.

9. Next Meeting

April 16, 2024, at the Alachua County Extension Office, Newberry

10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Ms. Callaham to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Hearn.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously

Chair Clouser called the meeting to a close at 5:41 pm.

APPROVED 04-16-2024