



ALACHUA COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION BOARD

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Mission Statement

To acquire, improve, and manage environmentally significant lands that protect water resources, wildlife habitats and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation.

Brian Block

Chair

Amy Schwarzer

Vice-Chair

Kristen Young

Secretary

BJ Bukata

Bruce A. Blackwell

Dewayne Baines

Edward Hunter

Jennifer Rocca, Dr.

Lee Cook

Paul Lyrene, Dr.

Tom Mirti

Alternate

Catherine (Kate) Lee

Meeting Minutes

August 22nd, 2024, 5:30 P.M.

Grace Knight Conference Room

12 SE 1st Street, Second Floor,

Alachua County Administration Building

In-Person Meeting

LCB attendance: *Dewayne Baines (arrived 5:47), Bruce Blackwell, Brian Block, BJ Bukata (virtual), Lee Cook, Kate Lee, Paul Lyrene, Tom Mirti, Jennifer Rocca, Amy Schwarzer (arrived 5:45), Kristen Young*

County Staff: *Michael Bird, Andi Christman, Mike Nelson, Milo Neelands, Emily Uhlmann, Cory Gillis, Kevin Ratkus*

Members of the Public: *Kai Sucsy (Putnam Land Conservancy), Willy the Losen (Putnam Land Conservancy), Randy Hunziker (virtual; Eichhorn property representative), Jason Teisinger (virtual)*

1) **Call to Order**

Chair Brian Block called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM

Board member BJ Bukata requested to be able to participate remotely due to illness.

Kristen Young moved to allow LCB member BJ Bukata to participate as a voting member remotely through Zoom for tonight's meeting due to illness. Bruce Blackwell second the motion.

Action: BJ Bukata was permitted to participate remotely in tonight's meeting as a voting member by a vote of 8-0.

Alternate Member, Kate Lee, will be voting due to absence of one regular LCB member.

2) **Agenda**

a) **Approval of Agenda**

Motion was made by Bruce Blackwell to approve the agenda.

Paul Lyrene second the motion. Action: Agenda for the August 22, 2024 meeting of the LCB approved by a vote of 9-0.

3) Approval of Minutes from June 27th, 2024

Motion was made by Tom Mirti to approve the meeting minutes from the June 27, 2024 meeting. Kate Lee seconded the motion.

Action: Minutes from the June 27, 2024 meeting of the LCB were approved by a vote of 9-0.

4) Property Evaluations – Staff Presentations

Board Members Amy Schwarzer (5:45) and Dewanye Baines (5:47) now in attendance.

a) **Watermelon Pond – Eichhorn – presented by Mike Nelson**

Nominated by owner as a fee simple acquisition

Representative for the property, Realtor Randy Hunziker, attended the meeting virtually and spoke about the legal access to the property provided by the adjacent Johnson property. Said owner is a third-generation owner and is happy to contribute to the conservation land in Alachua County.

Motion: Bruce Blackwell moved to place property in the eligibility pool Lee Cook seconded the motion.

Action: Watermelon Pond- Eichhorn property was placed I the eligibility pool by a vote of 11-0.

Motion: Paul Lyrene moved to place property in the priority pool. Kate Lee seconded the motion.

Action: Watermelon Pond- Eichhorn property was placed in the priority pool by a vote of 11-0.

b) **Watermelon Pond – Hawkins – presented by Milo Neelands**

Nominated by owner as a fee simple acquisition.

Motion: Tom Mirti moved to place property in the eligibility pool. Amy Schwarzer seconded the motion.

Action: Watermelon Pond- Hawkins property was placed in the eligibility pool by a vote of 11-0.

Motion: Amy Schwarzer moved to place property in the priority pool. Tom Mirti seconded the motion.

Action: Watermelon Pond- Hawkins property was placed in the priority pool by a vote of 11-0

Public comment: Member of the public, Jason Teisinger, asked a clarifying question about the meaning of strategic ecosystem in the evaluation of properties. He expressed support for the Rayonier properties later in the agenda (4d) and shared about the current development of Rayonier properties elsewhere in the state.

c) **Lochloosa Creek Flatwoods – Little Orange Development LLC – presented by Cory Gillis**

Nominated by Putnam Land Conservancy (PLC)

Two members of the PLC were present at the meeting. They showed a map of the Ocala-Osceola (O2O) Wildlife Corridor and the potential connection of this property to the

O2O. The PLC submitted this project along with others as a proposed Florida Forever project area.

Motion: Dwayne Baines moved to place property in the eligibility pool. Kristen Young seconded the motion.

Action: Lochloosa Creek Flatwoods – Little Orange Lake Investors, LLC property was placed in the eligibility pool by a vote of 10-1, with Tom Mirti in dissent.

Motion: Dwayne Baines moved to place the property in the priority pool. Motion failed for lack of a second.

LCB members requested that staff bring the property back to the LCB when either the Lakes Hawthorne LLC property is nominated for ACF acquisition, or the Florida Forever application is approved. Putnam Land Conservancy will update staff on the Florida Forever application.

- d) **Alachua County – Rayonier – presented by Andi Christman**
North Florida Land Trust nominated properties as fee simple acquisitions or conservation easements.

Motion was made by Kristen Young to place the (1.) NE Flatwoods/Buck Bay Flatwoods – Rayonier: Connector, (2.) Lake Santa Fe Rayonier: Saluda Swamp, (3.) Northeast Flatwoods/Santa Fe River Rayonier – CR225/River, and (4.) Austin Cary Flatwoods – Rayonier: Little Hatchet Creek properties in the eligibility pool. Lee Cook second the motion.

Action: (1.) NE Flatwoods/Buck Bay Flatwoods – Rayonier: Connector, (2.) Lake Santa Fe Rayonier: Saluda Swamp, (3.) Northeast Flatwoods/Santa Fe River Rayonier – CR225/River, and (4.) Austin Cary Flatwoods – Rayonier: Little Hatchet Creek properties were placed in the eligibility pool by a vote of 11-0.

Motion was made by Amy Schwarzer to place the (1.) NE Flatwoods/Buck Bay Flatwoods – Rayonier: Connector, (2.) Lake Santa Fe Rayonier: Saluda Swamp, (3.) Northeast Flatwoods/Santa Fe River Rayonier – CR225/River, and (4.) Austin Cary Flatwoods – Rayonier: Little Hatchet Creek properties in the priority pool. Tom Mirti second the motion.

Action: (1.) NE Flatwoods/Buck Bay Flatwoods – Rayonier: Connector, (2.) Lake Santa Fe Rayonier: Saluda Swamp, (3.) Northeast Flatwoods/Santa Fe River Rayonier – CR225/River, and (4.) Austin Cary Flatwoods – Rayonier: little Hatchet Creek properties were placed in the priority pool by a vote of 11-0.

5) **Old Business**

- a) **Agricultural Land Protection Strategy Update (if time permits)**

Public engagement period is closing

On September 10th, the BOCC will be hearing an update at their policy meeting,

6) New Business

7) Staff Updates

a) Acquisition Updates – Presented by Michael Bird

Lake Santa Fe – Winchester: Closed last Friday

Lochloosa Forest Connector – Rimes: Scheduled to close next Friday

Watermelon Pond - Elliott CE: will be closing in a couple weeks

Watermelon Pond – Howell CE: in due diligence period

Lochloosa Slough Flatwoods - Jackson Heirs” still under contract and in inspection period

Santa Fe River - Block Family Partners: under contract, in due diligence and inspection period

Watermelon Pond – Biro: LOI accepted

Lake Forest Creek - K Squared Holdings: under negotiations

Buck Bay Flatwoods – Burnsed: still in negotiation

8) Public Comment

None

9) Other Business

a) Next meeting date – September 26th, 2024

10) Adjourn

Meeting adjourned by Chair Brian Block at 8:10 PM.

A public speaker who meets the definition of “lobbyist” per Alachua County Code Section 68.02 shall disclose that he or she is a registered lobbyist when addressing the Board.