



Alachua County Environmental Protection Advisory Committee

*Jay Rosenbek, Chair
Christopher Stoney, Vice-Chair
Summer Waters, Staff Liaison*

EPAC JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

Prepared by George Papadi

January 7th, 2025 - 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Environmental Protection Department Building, NE 1st Street, Gainesville, FL 32601
Conference Room A

Board members attending in person: Jay Rosenbek, Christopher Stoney, Bettina Moser, Heshan Illangkoon, Jan Frentzen, George Papadi

Staff attending in person: Summer Waters

Guests attending in person: Leslie Straub, Bill Frankenberger

1. Call to Order

Chair Jay Rosenbek called to order at 6:00pm

2. Approval of the Agenda

Chair Jay called for a motion to approve the agenda. Jan made the motion, George seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved with 3 modifications.

4. The ECO-LOOP

Gus Olmos gave a brief background history, explaining that it was meant to further zero waste initiatives but had met with some hurdles getting tenants so needed a new approach. He also conveyed the BOCC's request for EPAC to submit recommendations for the best activities on the property. Additionally, he mentioned the following:

- The Hazardous Waste Facility relocation is moving along.
- Florida Express Environment is back in the game.

- A Bulk Storage Facility would be acceptable.
- Food waste would not be acceptable.

Gus added that the land is very attractive due to its industrial zoning & its proximity to the Transfer Station. But he also reminded us that the Materials Environmental Recovery Facility (MERF) is old and that is another factor to consider. Jay read aloud a list of possibilities for the ECO-LOOP which he sent to Summer for distribution to EPAC (attached).

5. Turkey Creek Residential Subdivision

Leslie Straub described a new development near Turkey Creek that citizens are concerned about the proposed wetland impacts of a development site which is in between Staghorn and Turkey Creek residential subdivisions but much closer to Staghorn, which Leslie indicated has experienced flooding problems. Since the development is inside the City of Alachua, no motion was made at this time. The development is currently in the rezoning phase.

6. Old Business

1) Microplastics Discussion

During December's EPAC meeting the Work Plan was modified to broaden the scope from micro and nano plastics to micro and nano particulates. The report will therefore cover both plastic and non-plastic particulates.

Heshan briefly discussed tire issues and reminded us that the State of Florida will soon be using road building substrates that include low grade radioactive materials with the implication that they could pose a public health risk. Summer will share George's abstract and presentation with EPAC so that Heshan and George can coordinate the presentation while complying with Sunshine law.

2) Spring Intern/Volunteer

Chair Jay Rosenbek reported that he had an in-depth conversation with Campbell Al-Khafaji and was very impressed. He felt she should handle her assignment very well.

Jay recommended Campbell Al-Khafaji as our next student-intern for her to continue the previous intern's work on the survey to assist with the implementation of EPAC's Community Conversation.

A motion to approve Jay's recommendation was made by Chris Stoney and seconded by Jay Frentzen. The vote to approve was unanimous.

7. Public Comment

There was no additional public comment

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8 pm.

ATTACHMENT A

ECO-LOOP Planning From Jay Rosenbek

I have listed ideas separately without consideration of what is legal, what might have been considered and rejected in the past, and what additional actions such as finding markets for products might be involved. County/City, government/private, and government/UF and or Santa Fe cooperative or partnership efforts might facilitate some of the suggestions. Ideas could be combined, of course.

1. Continue present effort and request proposals for another round. Some I talked to strongly support businesses producing biochar where we have University experts including Andrew Zimmerman, Dept of Geological Sciences (if my search is valid).
2. Continue present effort and revisit some of the second-place finishers which included one that promised to produce biochar if my memory serves.
3. Renegotiate with airport authority on the acceptability of a composting company.
4. Pause any development but retain the acreage and try again in the future according to criteria to be worked out.
5. Convert to another county use such as for the new hazardous waste center discussed at 6-11-24 BoCC meeting and/or offer to work with city to site one of their environmental facilities-if any.
6. Grow hemp or some other environmentally useful crop.
7. Develop a Resource Recovery Park and require source separation of all loads for reuse, recycling and composting before tipping on the floor. As you know such parks have been successful in several places including Boulder, Colorado and El Cerrito, California.
8. Develop partnership with UF and/or Santa Fe's environment departments to create experimental facilities to develop products from waste such as the Design Declassified effort in Michigan where plastic is turned into 100% recycled sheet material useful in counter tops and etc.
9. Develop entrepreneurial relationships to produce products from waste such as the Tampa business that creates counter tops from recycled glass.

10. Develop an incubator for non-profits devoted to environmental issues.

11. Sell property as site for an environmentally sound project.

Number 11 is, in my view, unacceptable until all other strategies, including but not limited to what is outlined above, and time, have been exhausted. The County does not, in my view, want to be identified with new projects that are incompatible with the new Climate Action Plan and existing and to be improved policies.

12. Sell or lease property without regard for kind of use.