



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

December 5th, 2024, 5:30 P.M.

Grace Knight Conference Room

12 SE 1st Street, Second Floor,

Alachua County Administration Building

In-Person Meeting

LCB members present: *Brian Block, Kristen Young, Ed Hunter, BJ Bukata, Bruce Blackwell, Tom Mirti, Amy Schwarzer, Lee Cook, Kate Lee, Jennifer Rocca*

County staff present: *Andi Christman, Emily Uhlmann, Michael Bird, Mike Nelson, Kevin Ratkus, Matt Barker*

Members of the public present: *Chloe Wingenbach, Heather Obara, Willy The Losen, Joe Foy, Jim Konish, James Rocca; Tracy DeCubellis (online); Jess Martin (Online), Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) - Heather Obera, Chloe Winenbaun, Suly Lopez (ACT - all online)*

1) Call to Order

2) Agenda

a) Approval of Agenda

Meeting called to order by chair Brian Block at order at 5:35PM.

Alternate Kate Lee will be a voting member in the absence of other members.

3) Approval of Minutes from October 24th, 2024

Motion was by Kristen Young to approve the meeting agenda with the change of switching the order of 7A and 7B.

Ed Hunter seconded the motion.

Motion approved with a unanimous vote of 9-0.

4) Property Evaluations – Staff Presentations

a) Lochloosa Creek Flatwoods – Lakes of Hawthorne LLC

Presented by: Mike Nelson

Nominated by Putnam Land Conservancy as fee simple acquisition

Willy The Losen and Joe Foye from Putnam Land Conservancy spoke about the property: Property lies within the boundary of the new Florida Forever Project: Little Orange Creek Corridor. Large property to the east in Putnam County is being restored; new owners seeking an easement.

Nominated land in Alachua County contains portion of historic Micanopy to Palatka Road William Bartram traveled the road and stopped at Little Orange Lake after crossing Little Orange Creek and noted evidence of an indigenous settlement on the bluff of the lake.

LCB member Amy Schwarzer entered the room during the presentation (5:49 pm).

Motion was made by Tom Mirti to place only lot #19952-000-000 on the eligibility pool with an access easement. Motion fails for lack of a second.

Motion was made by Ed Hunter to place Lakes of Hawthorne LLC in the eligibility pool. Bruce Blackwell seconded the motion. Motion passed with a vote of 9-1 with Tom Mirti in dissent.

Motion was made by Bruce Blackwell to place Lakes of Hawthorne LLC in the priority pool. Lee Cook seconded the motion. Motion passed with a vote of 9-1 with Tom Mirti in dissent.

b) Watermelon Pond – DeCubellis

Presented by Emily Uhlmann

Nominated as a conservation easement by Chris DeCubellis

Chris DeCubellis spoke about the property He has lived on the property for 20 years and wants to preserve “Old Florida” character. Wants to continue grazing cattle on the majority of the property.

Ed Hunter left the meeting (6:30 pm)

Motion was made by Kristen Young to place Watermelon Pond – Decubellis in the eligibility pool as a conservation easement. Tom Mirti second the motion. Motion passed with a vote of 8-1, with Bruce Blackwell in dissent.

Motion was made by Kristen Young to place Watermelon Pond – Decubellis in the priority pool as a conservation easement. Tom Mirti second the motion. Motion passed with a vote of 8-1 with Bruce Blackwell in dissent.

c) Lochloosa Connector – Powell and Sandborn

Presented by Andi Christman

Nominated as a conservation easement

Motion was made by Amy Schwarzer to place Lochloosa Connector – Powell and Sandborn in the moved eligibility pool. Jennifer Rocca second the motion. Motion passed with a vote of 8-1 with Tom Mirti in dissent.

Bruce Blackwell moved to place Lochloosa Connector – Powell and Sandborn in the priority pool.

Lee Cook seconded the motion.

Motion passed with a vote of 8-1 with Tom Mirti in dissent.

5) Old Business

- a) Lochloosa Creek Flatwoods – Little Orange Development LLC

Motion was made by Tom Mirti to move this item to the next meeting agenda.

Amy Schwarzer seconded the motion.

Motion passed with a unanimous vote of 9-0.

6) New Business

- a) FY 2024 LCB Accomplishment Report

Draft report was presented. Final report will be presented in January.

Tom Mirti left meeting (~7:30 pm)

- b) Discuss changing LCB meeting time

Motion was by Amy Schwarzer to move the start of LCB meetings to 6pm beginning with the next meeting.

Kate Lee seconded.

Motion passed with a unanimous vote of 8-0.

7) Staff Updates *Moved Acquisition Updates before Stewardship Update*

- a) ~~Stewardship Update (Q3-Q4)~~ Acquisition Updates - Presented by Michael Bird

K Squared – executed contracting going to board

Watermelon Pond – Johnson Seller signed contract

Dumford and Palmer – close to coming to contract terms

Moore-Purcell- appraisals complete, negotiations starting

Eichhorn - appraisals complete, negotiations starting

Watermelon Pond Hawkins – agreed to terms, moving to contract

Lochloosa Creek Flatwoods – Weyerhaeuser LOCP – offer has been sent, moving to contract

Buck Bay Flatwoods – Bursed – in negotiations with property owner

Mill Creek – Kahle – property has been appraised, waiting on report

Lake Santa Fe – Wagner - property has been appraised, waiting on report

Lochloosa Slough Flatwoods – Tompkins – waiting to get appraised

Rayonier – Little Hatchett Creek – on hold until next year

Mill Creek – Williams – moving through donation review process

- b) ~~Acquisition Updates~~ Stewardship Update (Q3-Q4)

Andy Christman presented the preserve stewardship update.

8) Public Comment

Member of the public Jim Konish spoke about his properties near Poe Spring, his farming practices, state pre-emptions for local regulations, and ad valorem taxes. He has nominated some parcels for ACF but stated that he hasn't heard back from the county.

Member of the public, James Rocca, expressed appreciation for the people involved in and the process of land acquisition

9) Other Business

- a) Next meeting date – January 23rd, 2025
- b) FY25 Meeting Dates:
 - i) Thursday, January 23, 2025
 - ii) Thursday February 27, 2025
 - iii) Thursday March 27, 2025
 - iv) Thursday April 24, 2025
 - v) Thursday May 22, 2025
 - vi) Thursday June 26, 2025
 - vii) Thursday July 24, 2025
 - viii) Thursday August 28, 2025
 - ix) Thursday September 25, 2025
 - x) Thursday October 23, 2025
 - xi) Thursday, December 4, 2025

10) Adjourn

Chair Brian Block adjourned the meeting at 8:09PM

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.