

**Rural Concerns Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

March 18, 2025

4:00 pm

Extension Auditorium

22712 W Newberry Road, Newberry, FL 32669

1. Call to Order

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Rodney Clouser (Chair), Micky McMillan (Vice Chair), Lyman Conover, Janet Hearn, John Nix, Missy Norman, Dr. Cindy Sanders, Brent Weisman

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jacobi Bedenfield, Tyrone Johnson, Amy Van Scoik

STAFF PRESENT:

Ken McMurry, Senior Planner, Growth Management

Ben Chumley, Principal Planner, Growth Management

Gus Olmos, Director, Solid Waste and Resource Recovery

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Rae Baker

Mary Crenshaw

Chair Clouser called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm. There were 6 members present, which was confirmed to satisfy the requirement for at least a quorum under County Advisory Board Guidelines. Chair Clouser welcomed the members of the public, who introduced themselves, and said that public comment would be taken at appropriate points on the agenda.

Dr. Sanders joined the meeting at 4:12 pm; Ms. Norman joined the meeting at 4:15 pm.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Chair Clouser asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion was made by Ms. Hearn to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Nix.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

3.1 County Solid Waste Operations and Programs – Gus Olmos, Director, Alachua County Solid Waste and Resource Recovery

Mr. Olmos gave a presentation on the County's solid waste operations and programs including recycling and waste collection; the transfer station, materials recovery facility, and hazardous waste management; rural collection centers; Office of Waste Collection

& Alternatives; engineering and compliance monitoring of County-operated solid waste management facilities, including closed landfills; funding sources; and next steps of planning for the mandatory collection area and subscription customers.

There were questions and discussion from Committee members regarding collection capacity and vendors; the status of previous landfills and current construction debris landfills; mandatory collection area road access, service costs, and expansion issues; and acquisition and expansion of the Fairbanks Collection Center. There were additional questions and discussion regarding illegal dumping and enforcement issues; used tire collection; contamination of recycling streams and public education; hazardous waste collection events; and household composting.

4. Approval of minutes for 02-18-2025 meeting

Motion was made by Ms. Hearn to approve the minutes for the 02-18-2025 meeting; seconded by Ms. McMillan.

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. He said the Attendance Report is always sent out with the meeting materials and that if members have any questions about their status, they should ask staff. He said that there is one currently posted vacancy in the Member At Large position. Chair Clouser urged members to encourage anyone they may know who is interested to apply.

Chair Clouser asked for a review of the attendance requirement. Mr. McMurry said the requirement is that a member must attend at least half of the last 6 meetings or be automatically removed, with attendance defined as present for at least half of a meeting or one hour, whichever is less.

6. Chair Comments

Chair Clouser asked staff about their upcoming agenda item for April. Mr. McMurry said it would be on the update of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan currently underway. Chair Clouser said staff have been in contact with the Sheriff's Office about speaking to RCAC in May on issues the Committee has had regarding law enforcement in the rural area, such as traffic speeding violations, potential for use of technology, and calls data. He asked if there were any other issues the Committee has. Ms. McMillan said information is needed on law enforcement jurisdictional issues related to emergency response.

Chair Clouser asked Dr. Sanders for any update on the 2025 Alachua County Youth Fair & Livestock Show. She said it was very successful with over 400 4-H and FFA youth participating and one of the highest market-animal sales in a long time.

Chair Clouser said he would make the annual RCAC update presentation to the County Commission next Tuesday March 25th.

7. Committee Members Comments

Mr. Nix said conditions on County Road 234 continue to be hazardous due to heavy truck traffic and damage. Mr. McMurry said he received an update on CR 234 from Public Works staff that the segment from US 441 to State Road 20 is being reevaluated and recommended for “No Trucks” signs, and the contract approval for a \$6M major rehab project for the segment from US 441 north to the entrance to Paynes Prairie Maintenance Office is scheduled for the March 25th County Commission meeting, with construction to begin in April 2025. He also said there is a \$3M minor rehab project for the segment of CR 234 from the Marion County line to US 441 scheduled for 2028. There were questions and discussion from Committee members regarding enforcement of traffic issues such as “No Trucks” signs and speeding, use of technology, and availability of law enforcement resources.

There were additional questions and discussion from Committee members regarding the agricultural classification process as presented to the Committee by Property Appraisers staff at the January meeting, and regarding a potential music park near Melrose. Chair Clouser asked staff whether there has been a development application for a music park and whether there could be potential issues related to Committee discussion. Mr. McMurry said that there has not been an application, and while the Committee has previously considered County proposed legislative amendments, decisions on specific development applications are quasi-judicial and public discussion should be part of the permitting and public hearing process.

Dr. Sanders said candidates were interviewed last week for the new County Agricultural Economic Development Coordinator position. Mr. McMurry said staff may have draft language on agritourism safety issues for Committee review in the near future. Chair Clouser said the Committee needs to decide in April on which month to take its summer break.

8. Public Comments

Rae Baker said the small number of chickens allowed in some rural zoning districts in the unincorporated County should be increased. Mr. Chumley said there are zoning districts in the County’s Rural Clusters that allow fewer chickens than other agricultural zoning districts and that could be reviewed for potential changes to the land development code. He said the public can bring the issue to the County Commission through comments at their meetings or through emails.

Mary Crenshaw also said the number of chickens should be increased, and said there are enforcement issues with the “No Trucks” signs. She said she is interested in applying for the current RCAC vacant position.

9. Next Meeting

Next Meeting – April 15th @ Extension Office.

10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Nix to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Dr. Sanders.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Clouser called the meeting to a close at 5:52 pm.

APPROVED 04-15-2025