

DRAFT
Rural Concerns Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2025

4:00 pm

Community Support Services, Conference Room A

218 SE 24th St., Gainesville, FL 32641

1. Call to Order

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

In person: Dr. Rodney Clouser (Chair), Jacobi Bedenfield, Lyman Conover, Janet Hearn, John Nix, Missy Norman, Dr. Cindy Sanders, Amy Van Scoik, Brent Weisman, Kelsey Waters

Virtual: Tyrone Johnson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Micky McMillan (Vice Chair)

STAFF PRESENT:

Ken McMurry, Senior Planner, Growth Management

Ben Chumley, Principal Planner, Growth Management

Bailey McClellan, Agricultural Economic Development Coordinator, Tourism & Economic Development

OTHERS PRESENT:

Deputy Cary Gallop, Crime Prevention Unit, Alachua County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Darin Patterson, Crime Prevention Unit, Alachua County Sheriff's Office

Sgt. Jeffrey Fricker, Patrol Support Division/Traffic Unit, Alachua County Sheriff's Office

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Tyler David

Chair Clouser called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. There were 9 members present in person and one present virtually, which was confirmed to satisfy the requirement for at least a quorum under County Advisory Board Guidelines. He said that members of the public present would have a chance to participate at appropriate points on the agenda. He welcomed Bailey McClellan, the County's new Agricultural Economic Development Coordinator.

2. Approval of the Agenda

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

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

3. Welcome New Member

Chair Clouser welcomed new member Kelsey Waters, who introduced herself and described her agricultural experience and background. At Chair Clouser's request, the other Committee members introduced themselves to her.

4. New Business

4.1 Rural Law Enforcement Issues – Deputy Cary Gallop and Deputy Darin Patterson, Crime Prevention Unit; Sgt. Jeffrey Fricker, Patrol Support Division/Traffic Unit, Alachua County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Gallop gave an overview of the Sheriff's Crime Prevention Unit operations and neighborhood watch programs. He discussed and demonstrated the City Protect crime report data website, which Mr. McMurry shared on the monitor. Sgt. Jeffrey Fricker discussed traffic speeding issues.

Ms. Norman joined the meeting at 4:20 pm.

There were questions and discussion from Committee members regarding the City Protect website, the data displayed and refresh rates, types of incident calls included, definitions of terms displayed such as "proactive policing", and current crime trends. There were also questions and discussion regarding State and County roads and enforcement of "no truck" signs; traffic speeding, dangerous driving, and illegal passing; use of flashing traffic signals; and use of technology such as speed trailers and cameras for enforcement. Other questions and discussion regarded use of burglar alarms and false alarms, "no trespassing" signs and regulations, jurisdictional issues between local and state agencies, Sheriff's substations, staffing issues, security check requests, and "extra-duty" requests for officers at events.

5. Approval of minutes for 04-15-2025 meeting

Motion was made by Ms. Norman to approve the minutes for the 04-15-2025 meeting; seconded by Mr. Conover.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

6. 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.

Chair Clouser said that Mr. Johnson is attending virtually today due to a request he made to the County Equal Opportunity Office for a disability accommodation, which was approved. He said that the Committee is not typically offering a virtual option but requests for a disability accommodation could be made to the County EO office.

7. Chair Comments

Chair Clouser said that the Committee will not meet in June, September, and December unless there is an emergent need. He asked staff for updates on upcoming County topics of interest to the Committee.

8. Staff Updates

Mr. McMurry gave out revised copies of information that had been included in the agenda packet on proposed changes to the County land development regulations related to agritourism substantial offsite impacts. He said that due to increased interest in the proposed changes, the schedule of public hearings has been adjusted to allow more time for review by the public and by RCAC. He said there will be time for RCAC to receive a presentation and discuss the proposal at their July meeting and asked if there

were any questions today. There were questions and discussion from Committee members regarding clarifying existing and proposed language, especially on limits to hours of offsite impacts, definitions of “peak hour trips” and “adequate space for on-site parking”, and for restaurants the amount or proportion of “agricultural products grown and processed onsite” that must be utilized. Chair Clouser urged the members to review the information before their July meeting and said at that time they’ll have the option to vote to send a letter to the County Commission with any input and comments. Mr. McMurry said public hearings are tentatively scheduled for August 12th and September 9th.

Mr. McMurry said that there is a County Commission special meeting scheduled for June 3rd to include discussion of the issue of chickens for personal use in residential zoning districts. He said that could be another topic for the RCAC July meeting depending on how the Commission discussion goes.

He asked Ms. McClellan for information on the County’s Food Hub initiative and ways that RCAC members could participate. She said there would be a focus group, a survey, and an interview. She said due to Sunshine law requirements, staff recommend that RCAC appoint one member to participate in the focus group in contrast to the interview and survey, which can be individual participation, and that focus group participation dates are still to be determined but tentatively may begin in June or July. She asked for members to think about recommendations for potential physical locations of about 20,000 square feet for a food hub facility in the County.

Ms. Norman left the meeting at 5:30 pm.

Chair Clouser said that at the April meeting there were several members interested in participating in the focus group and based on the timeline that the Committee should recommend a member today. He said that Mr. Nix was currently involved with the project, Ms. Van Scoik and Mr. Bedenfield had previously expressed interest, and he asked if anyone else had interest. There were questions and discussion from Committee members regarding the budget and timeline for completion of the feasibility study, and participation, type of participants, time commitment, and the option of primary and alternate appointees from RCAC. Ms. McClellan said she could send updates as that information is available.

Motion was made by Dr. Sanders that Ms. Van Scoik, Mr. Bedenfield, and Mr. Nix be the RCAC’s representatives on the Food Hub initiative focus group and staff will coordinate with them on their availability so that one will be in attendance; seconded by Mr. Conover. There were questions and discussion regarding the possibility of Committee members communicating their priorities between meetings to staff who would send a summary to the member attending the focus group. Mr. McMurry said he thought that per Sunshine laws such communication must occur in a publicly noticed meeting but that he would confirm with the County Attorney’s Office.

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously (10-0)

Ms. Van Scoik left the meeting at 5:50 pm.

Mr. McMurry said that he had emailed members information that the new Alachua County Land Conservation Board is open for applications until June 13th if any members are interested. Chair Clouser encouraged any interested members to apply. Mr. McMurry gave updates on Committee members’ questions regarding placement of a horse crossing sign on CR 234 and establishing a trail for horses and ATVs along CR 235, the County’s Forward Focus initiative, and the Agricultural Land Conservation Senior

Planner position. Mr. Johnson had additional questions about the trail for CR 235 and Mr. McMurry said he would try to follow up with more information.

9. Committee Members Comments

There were no Committee members comments.

10. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

11. Next Meeting

Next Meeting – July 15th @ Extension Office.

12. Adjournment

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

ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Clouser called the meeting to a close at 6:02 pm.