

Minutes

Agricultural & Natural Resources Advisory Committee
Thursday, November 20, 2008 – 9:00 A.M
Charlotte County Administrative Center
18500 Murdock Circle, Room #119
Port Charlotte, FL 33948-1094

MEMBERS PRESENT

Alton Cheatham, Chairman
Mike Jones, Vice-Chairman
William Federer, Secretary
Andy Dodd

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Chris Hencher
Arnie Sarlo
Dan Ryals
Orrin Webb
Matthew Sullivan, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT

Commissioner Richard Loftus
Inga Williams, Principal Planner
Jie Shao, Planner III
Derek Rooney, Asst. Attorney
Ralph Mitchell, County Extension Director
Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

GUESTS

Ron Hamel, Gulf Citrus Growers
Rick Joyce, Kitson Babcock, LLC
Bill Hammond, Kitson Babcock, LLC

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**
The **November 20, 2008** meeting of the **Agricultural and Natural Resources Advisory Committee** was called to order at 9:08am by **Chair Alton Cheatham** noting a quorum was not present.
- II. **ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA**
Chair Cheatham made known that any official action will need to be tabled for the next meeting.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
The approval of the September 18, 2008 minutes was deferred due to a lack of quorum.
- IV. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**
Derek Rooney provided members with a summary of the letter received from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services regarding excavations and advised of the options available to the County. A discussion ensued. **Chair Cheatham** thanked Mr. Rooney and asked to be kept informed as negotiations evolve.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

Babcock Ranch Corridor Study Committee Update

Chair Cheatham offered a brief update and introduced **Rick Joyce** and **Bill Hammond**. **Mr. Joyce** provided additional information regarding the Steering Committee, adding all meetings are open to the public and they would welcome the Committee's input. Mention was made of the Collier County Panther Protection Plan and **Mr. Hammond** spoke further on the Sierra Settlement and Florida Panther activities. **Mr. Joyce** offered to provide access information for the GIS website to review data on wildlife and natural systems.

Members Terms Expiring 12/31/08

Chair Cheatham instructed members whose terms are expiring to advise of their intentions to remain on the Committee for another term. **Al Cheatham, Chris Hencher, and Michael Jones** would like to be reappointed. **Bill Federer** announced he will be retiring and will step down at the end of his term. The Recording Secretary will contact Matt Sullivan and advise accordingly of his decision.

Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program

Chair Cheatham presented information regarding future reservoirs in the Peace River Basin and stated a sub-committee has developed a plan to put together a public workshop in February or March.

VI. **OLD BUSINESS**

US 17 Update

Chair Cheatham announced the DVD presentation originally scheduled will be tabled for another meeting.

Jie Shao reported on the US 17 Corridor Planning Study and the meetings held to date. It was confirmed that staff is working with the Consultants to draft a Vision Plan for the study area based on the comments and input received. A Traffic Impact Statement will be done to address the potential impacts and mitigation opportunities based on the Vision and a draft plan is anticipated to be ready for public comments in February of 2009. **Ms. Shao** advised that all meeting notes and presentations are posted on the county website and stated comments and participation by the Committee would be welcome.

(Jie Shao left the meeting at 9:42am)

Smart Charlotte 2050 Update

Inga Williams confirmed that members have received a copy of the Vision and provided directions to view the Public Meeting presentation and video on the County website. She stated Consultants will refine the Vision further based on the comments they received and it will then be presented to the Board in December. Following a Vote of Confidence by the Board, the Consultant will go forward with the Goals, Objectives, and Policies to support the Vision and this

will be adopted into the Comprehensive Plan. Comments were made by **Ron Hamel** regarding the participation of RWA in Hendry County and **Ms. Williams** discussed information presented at the Babcock Steering Committee. A discussion ensued.

(Commissioner Loftus left the meeting at 9:51am)

Ms. Williams responded to an inquiry by **Ron Hamel** regarding upcoming Stakeholders Meetings and agreed to add the contract to the county website.

East County Plan Update

Nothing further was reported.

Excavation Issues Comments on EIA Handout -None

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

VIII. STAFF COMMENTS

Ralph Mitchell provided updates on the Best Management Practices Training as well as a Palm Disease Workshop held in November. He provided members with information about the disease and a map of areas where the disease has been located. **Mr. Mitchell** also spoke on the Rain Barrel Program and costs that could be saved by collecting rain water. **Rick Joyce** added that he has taken the class on Fertilizer Management and felt this was a valuable tool for the community.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ron Hamel spoke on Citrus Greening and confirmed a major spray program is scheduled to begin in December. Discussion continued regard ways to focus and deal with this issue. **Mr. Hamel** also addressed concerns over the evaluation process of Agriculture properties for ad valorem tax purposes.

X. MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Cheatham commented on the current challenges with meeting a quorum and stated he plans to speak with Commissioner Loftus and the County Administrator to request the Committee review matters which will improve and increase member participation and attendance. Meeting every-other-month has not helped attendance and more input is needed on ways to improve.

XI. FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Chair Cheatham suggested the December meeting be cancelled and stated the Election of Officers will be held in January along with other ongoing agenda items.

XII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for **January 15, 2008** at 9:00 a.m. in Room #119.

Rick Joyce led a discussion regarding the Lee County's approval for the purchase of the Argo Ranch and stated it is a significant piece with regard to its connection to Babcock Ranch.

Inga Williams commented further on the Large Scale deadlines and stated one Large Scale has been received for a new Excavation. Additional information was also provided regarding Smart Charlotte 2050 and additions to the interactive website.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:12a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Starr

Jane Starr
Recording Secretary