

Minutes

Agricultural & Natural Resources Advisory Committee

Thursday, November 9, 2023, at 9:00 am

E. Jay Carlson Building

Large Conference Room

18400 Murdock Circle

Port Charlotte, FL 33948-1094

MEMBERS PRESENT

Andy Dodd, Chairman

Nigel Morris, Vice-Chairman

Lindsay Harrington

Dan Ryals

Scott Schroeder

Joel Beverly

Steve Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT

David Kemeny

GUEST SPEAKERS

Brandon Moody, Water Quality Manager

Charlotte Miller, FPL External Affairs Mgr.

STAFF

Shaun Cullinan, Planning & Zoning Official

Marie Valeus, Administrative Assistant II

GUESTS

Amy Goodwin, Director Development FPL

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

The **November 9, 2023**, the meeting of the ***Agricultural and Natural Resources Advisory Committee*** was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by ***Chairman Dodd***.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Dodd called for a motion on the minutes from the March 9, 2023, ANRAC Meeting. Nigel Morris with a second to pass; with a slight change requested to verbiage; and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Amy Goodwin - FPL Presentation

Amy goes over a brief introduction about herself and the 13 counties she serves; pointing out that FPL only has about 6 counties that have solar projects going on.

Amy gives presentation (see attached)

Amy answers questions regarding nuclear technologies and other technologies that FPL seeks to use, stating that FPL must supply the customer with the most cost-effective energy technologies. Solar so far has been the most cost-effective option. The biggest cost has shown to be maintaining the lawn.

Steve Smith questions the maintenance cost analysis of solar and how long it is factored in. Amy says solar is factored in for about 30-35 years. Lindsay Harrington asks about the panels stacked that have been replaced in Desoto County and what they do with the panels? Amy says that the panels get repaired and replaced, they get sent to Georgia where they are broken down and recycled. The panels are primarily glass and metal. She says that if FPL has an agreement with the manufactures to take them back, then they take them back and they dispose of them appropriately.

Nigel Morris and Lindsay make comments about losing acres of land for citrus and animals to solar; and what FPL is doing to address that concern. Amy states she will go back to that and continues with the presentation.

Amy says that FPL tries to use local people for labor and local materials. They also use animal friendly fencing from locals.

Andy Dodd asks, where FPL bought land. Amy says, Chapman, in Desoto County, which is about 1,700 acres, Bermont/Glades County line is about 6,300 acres, Babcock about 875 acres. The Chapman property plus the Williams land is about 8,000 acres.

Amy goes back to the fencing and says that FPL installs the fences upside down to allow small wildlife animals to enter. They also do wildlife studies to see what animals are in the areas of the solar sites.

Andy asks Amy to address the tax requirement for FPL. Amy states FPL does pay about 20% of personal tax on the land and they pay real-estate taxes on the purchase price. FPL also pays over a million dollars for Babcock.

Amy points out that FPL has met with all the Charlotte County Commissioners and gone over all the land they own and the plans they have for the future. FPL wants to work with the county in a way that's as productive as possible.

Amy talks about what the plan is for Desoto County. In the past FPL has utilized sheep and again are looking at adding sheep or another cost-effective animal as a solution to maintain the grass. She also says that they are trying to lease back as much land as possible to locals. They are trying to combine solar and agriculture. Dan Ryals suggests they should grow asparagus. Dan says its slow going, takes about 7 years but once it's going its going.

Lindsay Harrington asks if it is possible for FPL to give AG people a notice for future projects. Agriculture needs to know things so it can be protected.

Scott Schroeder asks if there is any atmosphere heat transfer associated with a solar farm, like a heat curtain? Amy says, "no" there is not. Solar panels heat output is equivalent to your windshield. He also asked about a reflective heat curtain. Amy says to her knowledge there is not.

FPL ended their presentation about 10:16 a.m.

Old Business

- **Brandon Moody – Water Quality Update/Presentation**

Brandon gives a brief description about the areas where the water samples are being collected from. He uses an interactive map, stating the samples were picked because they represent waterways that have water discharging into to the Harbor or to the Bay. He is looking at the water right before it goes into the Harbor or water that is coming into the County.

Regarding water quality issues, Brandon says it is the same story every time, AG says residents are the problem, residents say it's AG, or both say it's Mosaic, and Mosaic says it's the residents...etc.

Brandon uses interactive map and explains the different areas and what the different things mean and what they are seeing in each area.

A question is asked about how they plan to remove nutrients from the water. Brandon says, they are still in the pilot phase of planning for different areas. One solution is to rethink swells, and planting eel grass may help. Brandon again uses interactive map.

Scott asks if the algae bloom is like red tide? Brandon says no, red tide is driven by a single species. The algae bloom is a "cocktail" and they are running test to see if its toxic.

Lindsay Harrington suggests connecting with The Florida Gulf Coast University and Brandon say he has been in touch with them already about testing.

Brandon addresses water impairment testing and once a water is deemed impaired.

Brandon says the state comes in and says, this, this, and this, needs to be fixed and gives a recommendation. It is on the states time, and they pay for it.

or

Stake holders/locals can take charge and do it ourselves. The state still must prove it, but it gives us the ability to determine the timing and the narrative. We get the samples and suggestions together; we submit it to the state they say ok, but we pay for it.

Brandon's plan is to present all this information to the Commissioners in December and get some indication from them; here are the pros and here are the cons. Hoping to do it ourselves.

Brandon addresses discharge this upcoming year from Lake Okeechobee and his concerns. He says that they are going to release large amounts of water but less frequently. He is nervous about the effect on us locally. He says they plan to put water quality monitoring sensors and a flow monitor to really narrow down what could be happening. Scott asked about reservoirs around the Caloosahatchee River. Brandon says they are in the middle of hiring new contractors, they're almost done. The reservoirs capture water, remove what it needs to, and sends it back out.

CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

STAFF COMMENTS

None

MEMBER COMMENTS

Andy addresses reappointment and vacancies.

Joel Beverly says he will not seek reappointment.

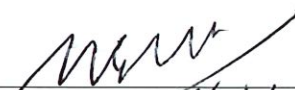
FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

NEXT MEETING

- ❖ January 11, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the E. Jay Carlson Building large conference room.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.


~~Andy Dodd,~~ *Nigel Merin*
V-Chairman

Minutes of the Agricultural & Natural Resources Advisory Committee
Approved this 14 day of Nov, 2024.