

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CHARLOTTE RANCHETTES STREET AND DRAINAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**March 22, 2007**  
**10:00 a.m.**

**Attendees:** Robert Schaffer, Michael Szuba, Nigel Morris, William Faris  
County - Dawn Harrison, Kim Raymond

**Absent:** Ruth Cudzilo, James Howarth

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

- Mr. Morris stated that the February 22, 2007, minutes referred to them as a Committee and not a Board, as the Ordinance reads. He stated they will consider themselves a Committee.
- Mr. Szuba requested that the minutes include Mr. Thomas O’Kane’s discussion advising the Committee about landlocked properties that may be seeking access through the Charlotte Ranchettes for commercial purposes.
- Mr. Szuba requested that the word “dry” on page two be changed to “drive.”
- Mr. Morris requested that the second bullet on page three be modified to indicate that he wants to have a good relationship with the Committee and the County to avoid a repeat of past issues with ditch and road maintenance on Strasse Boulevard.
- The sixth bullet should be changed to state that Mr. Morris would entertain a motion.
- Mr. Faris made a motion to approve the February 22, 2007, minutes with the noted changes. Mr. Schaffer seconded the motion. Mr. Morris requested that a signature line be added for the Chairman’s approval of the final minutes. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

**Discussion:**

- Mr. Morris requested that the meetings be tape recorded for accurate minutes. Ms. Harrison explained that the Committee would have to supply the equipment, and all recordings have to be available for any resident who requests a copy of the meetings. This gets very costly, and there is limited space to store the tapes for seven years. Mr. Szuba made a motion to have the equipment supplied to record the minutes at the next meeting. The motion was seconded. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.
- Ms. Harrison reiterated to the Committee that the South County Stormwater Unit planned years in advance for the maintenance of the main ditches in the Charlotte Ranchettes. Mr. Morris requested a presentation from the Unit, along with a copy of their plans. Ms. Harrison stated that the map identifies the main ditches but not necessarily the dedication of the property or whether access is available.

**Adoption of Rules of Procedure:**

- Mr. Schaffer inquired about the removal of a member who has missed three meetings, in accordance with Article 3. Ms. Harrison stated that, since members are appointed by the

Board of County Commissioners, the Committee can only recommend the member's removal. Mr. Faris stated that, if they miss three meetings without cause, they are forfeiting their spot on the committee. Mr. Morris suggested, in order to cover both statements, to have it rewritten to State guidelines, in accordance with Section 4-6883 Ordinance 2006.

- Mr. Schaffer stated that Article 7, Section, 5 needs to be changed to read that County staff may not be present at all meetings.
- Mr. Schaffer inquired about the procedure if he takes the meeting minutes. Ms. Harrison stated the minutes would be submitted to her, and she would submit them to the other Committee members. Once reviewed by the members, the minutes would be revised, as necessary, and sent back to the members.
- Mr. Faris made a motion to accept the Rules of Procedure, with the noted changes discussed today. The motion was seconded. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

#### **Report of Each Member's Area of Responsibility:**

- Mr. Morris expressed his thoughts that this process needs a broader margin and has developed a letter for residents, which will be posted on the website. This letter will explain the Committee's goals. Mr. Morris shared his idea that he is going to have the residents in his area meet with him, and he will explain that money is not available and discuss areas of concern. He will request input from the residents.
- Ms. Harrison stated that the Sign Shop needs to investigate the request to install dead-end signs on Acorn Boulevard.
- Mr. Morris stated that the roads, ditches, and Alligator Creek are owned by the residents—since they pay taxes to maintain them--and not the County.
- Mr. Faris agreed to mail the letter to the residents. He suggested establishing a date for a public forum. Mr. Morris explained that the Committee needs to do research before this process and then compare notes after a month. The results could possibly offer different views. Mr. Morris stated the members need to explain to the residents that money is not available this year or next.
- Ms. Harrison stated that the MSBU will have \$200,000 at the beginning of 2007/08. If the residents want the roads to be private, then the County will not maintain them. She stressed that the Committee be careful of what it is asking or looking for. Mr. Szuba stated that, if the County were to pursue a prescriptive easement then it would have to demonstrate continuous maintenance for four years.
- Mr. Morris stated that the residents cannot afford a tax increase. We need to take care of the problems next year but, during this time, the Committee needs to make priority lists and submit them to Public Works.
- Mr. Lindsay Harrington suggested the Committee learn from Ms. Harrison how the money is spent and relay the information to the residents.

- Mr. Morris stated this Committee needs to develop a plan and present the details to the residents.
- Mr. Morris reiterated the discussion from last meeting about appointing a resident from each street to talk to all the residents on that street to save member's time.
- Mr. Morris discussed future meetings after the Public Hearing in July. He stated the 2009 budget meeting needs to be scheduled in December.
- Mr. Morris stated we need to move forward, not dwell on past issues, and concentrate on setting priorities.
- Mr. Szuba asked if an increase can be presented at the Public Hearing in July. Ms. Harrison stated an increase can be presented, but the majority of the residents need to agree with the increase. Mr. Faris stated that residents need to be informed of a possible increase for 2008/09.
- Ms. Harrison discussed the MSBU system draft review that was presented to the Board of County Commissioners. The review recommends three MSBU's (South, Mid-County, and West).
- Ms. Harrison presented a map of the districts assigned to each member. Mr. Morris stated that the ditch in the center district is incorrect and requested an updated map for the Committee members.
- Mr. Morris suggested keeping notes and an inventory of what the Committee has and needs.
- Mr. Faris expressed his concern that the ditch on Strasse Boulevard has become a dumping ground. Ms. Harrison discussed the problems with illegal dumping and that Charlotte Sanitation could possibly help areas that are trying to clean up their community. Mr. Faris stated that residents will not pay to take their garbage to the dump, so they need a place that does not charge. Ms. Harrison stated that, unless a disposal site is convenient to the residents, the dumping will continue. She stated that Code Compliance needs to be called for reports of dumping. It was discussed about having a community day clean-up and having one location for the items to be taken to.
- Ms. Harrison informed the Committee that she met with the City of Punta Gorda and the consultant in reference to the force main. The sewer line is not for the residents to connect to, and the City has no plans to expand their service area to the Charlotte Ranchettes. There was discussion on the planned location of the force main that the City of Punta Gorda has chosen for its wastewater treatment station (Chandler, Progress Street to the Pelican). Mr. Morris stated they need easements from the citizens in the Ranchettes. Ms. Harrison stated the Committee and residents could suggest an alternative route. Mr. Szuba stated they would have to buy the easements and mentioned a document indicating a 40-foot easement increase. Mr. Morris stated that, if they have obtained easements from residents, they would not need any other approvals. If a minority would not grant easements, then presumably it could be obtained by eminent domain.

- No staff reports were submitted.
- No open floor discussion.
- Mr. Faris stated that more public input needs to be provided at these meetings. He suggested the meetings be held later in the day or in the evening.
- Mr. Morris stated the members have a lot of work to do before the next meeting. They will compare notes and then have a public forum one evening for resident comments.
- Ms. Harrison stated she will inform the members of the date for the Central Charlotte Drainage meeting.
- Mr. Lindsay Harrington stated that, as a citizen, he requests the Committee monitor the actual costs being assessed by Public Works.
- Mr. Morris stated this Committee needs to determine the most problematic areas and develop a plan.
- It was stated that a stop sign was knocked down and set up at an angle on Route 74 and Swiss Boulevard.

**Next Schedule Meeting:**

The next meeting will be held on May 24, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. at Public Works, 7000 Florida Street, Punta Gorda.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Harrison  
Municipal Services District Representative

DH:mb

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