

**AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JUNE 20, 2022**

**ROLL CALL**

Jessie Bastos	P
Adrienne Kaltman	P (remote via Webex)
Cynthia Schaefer	P
Eric Swalley, Vice Chair	P
Jeremy Wehby, Chair	A

**STAFF PRESENT**

Richard J. Lemack, Town Administrator  
Phillip Holste, Assistant Town Administrator  
David Quigley, Planning & Zoning Manager  
Lise Bazinet, Planner III  
Lorraine Robinson, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Ms. Bastos was welcomed to the committee.

**1. ROLL CALL**

Roll was called and a quorum was established.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**2.1 April 7, 2022 meeting**

**Motion** made by Ms. Schaefer, seconded by Ms. Bastos, to approve the April 7, 2022 minutes. In a voice vote, unanimously. (4-0 with Mr. Wehby absent).

**2.2 May 16, 2022 meeting**

**Motion** made by Ms. Schaefer, seconded by Ms. Bastos, to approve the May 16, 2022 minutes. In a voice vote, unanimously. (4-0 with Mr. Wehby absent).

**3. PRESENTATION**

**3.1 Farming Discussion at Town Facilities**

Presentation by Richard J. Lemack, Town Administrator.

Mr. Lemack wanted to provide the committee with an update on farming on public sites. Town Council asked staff to review farming site options on Town owned property. He provided a history of (4) public farming sites; the former Batten's Farm property which currently ongoing as Marando Farms, Davie Wetlands Park, Ivanhoe FPL Easement and Robbins Park which is also ongoing.

Davie Wetlands Park, formerly Van Kirk, is approximately 115 acres and is not recommended by staff for consideration. The site will be used for wetlands and stormwater retention.

Ivanhoe FPL Easement site is not recommended by staff for consideration. It was originally donated for park purposes. However, a single access road was a major concern by neighboring communities. In addition, the Ivanhoe community had concerns about another large farming site in the area.

The former Batten's Farm property is now Marando Farms and is presently ongoing. The property is a 10-acre parcel. This site is also not recommended by staff for consideration as it has a long-term rental agreement with the Town.

Council requested Robbins Park to be considered as a potential site. However, this site is not recommended by staff. The park consists of 160 acres. All existing acreage in areas 1, 2, and 3 (as shown on the power point presentation) are used for raising cattle. 3 acres per cow is needed for grazing. Any changes of use would require legal and Council action to terminate the existing agreement. In addition to the cattle, a portion is designated for the Davie Police Mounted Unit future site and for use by horses for the Hurricane Release Program.

Access to the park is restricted with only one entrance off Hiatus Road. All existing acreage is needed to sustain the existing cattle on the (3) designated areas. Robbins Park is highly trafficked with annual averages of 66,000 users, 290 lodge and patio rentals, and 65 shelter rentals plus drop-in users.

Council requested Governor Leroy Collins Park which is a 53-acre site to be considered as a potential site. There are approximately 20 acres designated for stormwater retention and wetlands. The remaining acreage is approximately 30 acres which includes a grazing area and the future Farm Park. Mr. Lemack presented the Farm Park site plan.

The opportunities would be approximately 10 acres for farming on the Farm Park Extension only, which would be grant capable with a component for ongoing educational programs. The challenges are the wetlands and stormwater have not yet been finalized and unsure how it will affect the 10 acres. It may impact FPL energy opportunities. The timing would be 18 months – 2 years. It would also require approval by neighboring communities for any changes to the site.

The Governor Leroy Collins Park expansion piece is approximately 21 acres and funded through a Town of Davie Bond. This parcel is separate from the Davie Farm Park. The current use is vacant however there are future commitments for Blackstone Creek with them maintaining a portion for stormwater retention and cul-de-sac easement. The opportunities are approximately 10 acres along the I-75 corridor and would require an RFP (request for proposal), the timeline could start within 6 months, and it's possible that funds could be reallocated by Council to clear the lands with an approximate cost of \$250,000. The challenges are that there is no access to this parcel, the public participation requirements, and review the bond covenants for compliance and neighborhood setbacks. Timing, cost, geographics and location is a consideration. Mr. Lemack indicated if the committee concurs with the staff recommendation that a motion be put forth for Council. He outlined the procurement and vendor requirements. The Town would clear the land. The soil preparation would fall on whomever farms the land. There would be no subleasing or sales on the premises.

Ms. Schaefer asked for confirmation that there are educational programs being held at the locations presented. Mr. Lemack responded there was.

Ms. Schaefer expressed concerns that clearing the land was not good for the environment and destroys the soil which is in opposition to regenerative agriculture. Mr. Lemack understood

her concerns and stated that the site currently has invasives and Blackstone development debris which would have to be removed.

Mr. Swalley asked if drainage would be part of the Towns plan. Mr. Lemack said that drainage and access would be worked out after funding approval.

Ms. Bastos was appreciative of the presentation, and it cleared up many of her questions. She said current farmers don't use irrigation and asked if that would reduce the \$250,000 estimated cost. Mr. Lemack said this is not being planned for any specific farmer or crop.

Ms. Bastos asked if the County had any lands outside of Davie. Mr. Lemack was unaware. He said that land values have skyrocketed. Broward County has sites but are currently used.

Mr. Swalley commented that rainwater runoff could possibly be used for irrigation.

Ms. Schaefer asked if a specific type of farming could be designated for the site. Mr. Lemack responded that the RFP could be crafted to target this. The committee could make recommendations.

**Motion** made by Ms. Schaefer, seconded by Ms. Bastos, recommending Council the exploration and due diligence on the administration recommended 10-acre site of the Governor Leroy Farm Park Expansion to be used for farming.

In a voice vote, unanimously. (4-0 with Mr. Wehby absent).

#### **4. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **4.1 Electric Lawn Equipment Pilot Program Update**

Ms. Bazinet provided an email update from Chad Pezoldt, Assistant Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts (PRCA) Director concerning their testing of Ryobi electric lawn equipment. PRCA Department uses for regular operations is the backpack blower. He stated when they field tested the blower, they found that it did not have enough power to be as effective as the current blowers in inventory. Ryobi has a new model of backpack blowers with increased power that will be coming out in the late summer, that they are interested in testing. The Ryobi sales representative will contact me when these are available, and PRCA will demo the equipment at that time.

##### **4.2 Cool Roofs**

Ms. Schaeffer said that there is no code requirement for types of roofs and is up to the individual. She wondered if specific materials could be mandated by Code.

Ms. Bastos said the information provided to the committee was helpful. The rebate programs listed only had two in the State of Florida and were generally offered through utility companies. FPL had offered rebates in the past.

Ms. Kaltman was in favor of any motion the committee would like to propose. Ms. Schaefer responded that they weren't sure how to proceed and would need to be discussed further.

Vice Chair Swalley said that mastic material added to roofs is cost efficient and very effective in keeping the houses cooler.

##### **4.3 Sustainable Sunday Update**

Ms. Bazinet provided an email from Sussette Rodriguez, Public Relations Coordinator, an update on responses to Sustainable Sunday posts.

Ms. Bastos asked if the program will be evaluated for a specific period and if it will continue if responses are low. Ms. Bazinet stated that can be addressed at a future meeting when more data is collected.

Ms. Schaeffer stated she would provide the September list of topics.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **5.1 AEAC Goals Review (Ms. Jessie Bastos)**

Ms. Bastos provided a PowerPoint presentation on goals for the Agricultural and Environmental Committee (AEAC). She introduced herself as the newly appointed member of the committee stating she did a lot of work in educating herself on the committee. This committee has an opportunity to help preserve the agricultural and environmental heritage.

Ms. Bastos informed that she had done the following:

- Read all AEAC Minutes since 2013
- Met with David Quigley to understand agricultural zoning
- Read the Davie Farm Guide
- Met with Linda Greck, Davie Area Land Trust
- Read Old Davie School, Kim Weismantle's 2021 book Images of America: Davie
- Became member of Old Davie School, given tour of archives
- Attended several Council and Planning & Zoning Meetings
- Read articles from UNEP, EPA, UF-IFAS, USDA
- Recently toured the community of Arden, Florida's first 1<sup>st</sup> Agrihood, located in Wellington. It is a master planned community. In the middle of the community have a 5-acre working farm.

Ms. Bastos stated that Mr. Lemack provided a lot of answers to questions she had on how existing programs have been funded. She commented on development issues as well as various open space and agricultural land preservation techniques and how the Committee might consider making recommendations to the Town Council.

Ms. Bastos reviewed the topics discussed by the committee through the years. Key successes of the committee were discussed which included the creation of the Sustainability Awards (2016), implementation of the Robbins Park Davie Community Garden (2019), and social media post for Sustainable Sundays (2022).

Ms. Bastos went on to discuss areas of opportunity with agriculture and the environment. Ways to increase the committee's effectiveness include preserving Davie landmarks, active participants with Davie Area Land Trust and Planning & Zoning Board meetings.

Being an advocate for agriculture, she would like the committee to work on educating residents, create a blueprint for community gardens and provide a directory of local resources like the Farm Guide. She felt sad to lose properties like Spykes Grove.

Ms. Bastos wanted to see more of a presence with Homeowners Associations with social media pages, educational opportunities and attend their meetings.

Concerning the environment, she would like the committee to decide on solutions that Davie can embrace. Focus needs to be on where Davie stands on being leaders with innovative solutions. Suggestions would be using Sustainable Sundays messaging, providing classes at Robbins Park, creating guides that help educate such as solar energy and native landscape.

Ms. Bastos stated that AEAC topics should include solutions to maximize time and effectiveness:

- Provide breakdown of Pros & Cons
- Invite Experts to Present when possible
- Engage Councilmembers, administration in process (have early buy-in from those who appointed us, or awareness at minimum)
- Show evidence of where solutions have been effective and adopted successfully
- Increase meeting frequency. She would like to increase the numbers to (6) per year.
- Create a vision for the committee outline goals and objectives.

Ms. Bastos concluded the presentation by quoting Mayor Judy Paul's message which is included in the Davie Farm Guide.

Ms. Schaeffer agreed with the proposed next steps with being more effective and would like to ask Council. Ms. Bastos want the committee to select a topic, do the homework in presenting the pros and cons before recommending to Council.

Ms. Bastos asked what it would take to increase the number of meetings. Mr. Quigley stated that the Town has several board and committee meetings. A request can be presented but staffing and funding must be considered.

**Motion** made by Ms. Bastos, seconded by Ms. Schaefer, to make a recommendation to Council to increase meetings from (4) to (6) per year.

In a voice vote, unanimously. (4-0 with Mr. Wehby absent).

## **6. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

There was a discussion on goals for the committee.

Ms. Bastos would like to investigate increasing recycling.

Ms. Schaefer wants to discuss runoff and regenerative agriculture.

Ms. Kaltman would like to discuss climate change impact on agriculture.

Ms. Bazinet stated that June 30, 2022, is the deadline for the Sustainability Awards submittals. Presently she only has (1) recommendation. Ms. Bastos will have (2) additional. Ms. Schaefer asked the committee to explore opportunities for the sustainability awards.

The following was requested to be included on the October 2022 agenda as new business:

1. Recycling (Ms. Bastos)
2. Regenerative Agriculture (Ms. Schaefer)
3. Climate Change Impacts (Ms. Kaltman)
4. Horses and Fireworks (Mr. Swalley)

## **7. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS**

Ms. Schaefer would like Davie to have a Garden Matters Day.

Ms. Schaefer was grateful to have Jessie on the committee. Vice Chair Swalley appreciated all the hard work.

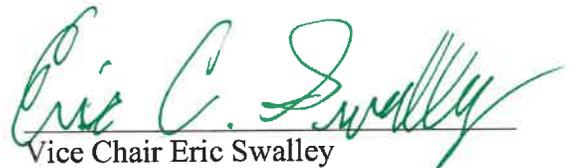
## **8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Jack Vessey, Coconut Creek volunteer, advocate and member of Solar United spoke regarding a new solar co-op being set up the beginning next month. He recommended that Davie residents be made aware of this opportunity. The RFP allows a very competitive pricing and guarantees handling the volume of participants. He asked if this could be mentioned in Sustainable Sundays. He also had experience with getting things done as a committee setting in Coconut Creek. He said that his community disbanded boards and committees due to the constraints of Sunshine Law and created a Sustainability Ambassadors Group instead. He said that the League of Cities is very involved concerning recycling. He started listening to their meetings which he found very informative.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Date Approved: 10/6/22

  
Vice Chair Eric Swalley