

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD
SEPTEMBER 25, 2007

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. Board members present were Chair Jason Hurley, Vice-Chair Jacque Daniels and Greg Hoover. Also present was Board Secretary Jenevia Edwards recording the meeting. Julie Aitken and Councilmember Starkey were absent.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Light Containment Issue

Chair Hurley asked if the letter that was written by Ms. Aitken, and approved, had been forwarded to the appropriate department with Ms. Edwards responding in the affirmative. He commented that the Board would now have to wait for a response from Development Services Director Mark Kutney.

2.2 Review Livestock-at-Large Ordinance

Chair Hurley made reference to the discussion of the ordinance at a previous meeting and the definition of "impound," as well as the contractor issue. Vice-Chair Daniels explained that she had made a number of telephone calls in an attempt to find out if there were shelters available in other areas. She explained that she went through a number of channels and found that there were no shelters anywhere. Vice-Chair Daniels stated that she made contact with Linda Cosner who was in the charge of the large animal rescue department for Southwest Ranches Fire Department. Ms. Cosner had explained that between 2006 and 2007, Southwest Ranches attempted to obtain a grant from the State to purchase a small piece of property for containing animals that were found at large. Mr. Hoover asked if they had been successful. Vice-Chair Daniels responded in the negative. She advised that Ms. Cosner explained that the governor refused to sign the request citing information he had received that there were only a few hundred horses left in Broward County.

A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the number of horses that were in the County, with Mr. Hoover referring to Sergeant Themis's comment about the number of reports received in 2006 and 2007 by the Police Department concerning animals at large. Chair Hurley expressed his discouragement at not receiving feedback from the Police Department because the department did not believe that the incidents were taking place. Vice-Chair Daniels commented that many incidents were not reported and because the Police Department was not aware of the incidents, it was believed that they never happened. Chair Hurley and Vice-Chair Daniels referred to several incidents when they were called to offer assistance when animals were loose. Vice-Chair Daniels commented that if there was no feedback from the Police Department, all the information she gathered was for nothing. She commented that Ms. Cosner had indicated that she would like to attend a Board meeting in an attempt to "figure" out all the areas that were horse communities and try to work together in the future. Vice-Chair Daniels suggested tabling this item until there was some feedback from the Police Department.

A brief discussion continued regarding the horse population with Vice-Chair Daniels referring to information she had gathered from different sources that identified the number of horses in the County. Mr. Hoover commented that the problem would not be corrected unless it could be proven to the Police Department that there was a problem. Vice-Chair Daniels stated that everyone who was involved with the livestock at large issue agreed that there was a problem. She indicated that Officer Laverne Jones had expressed to her that the Police Department needed help with this issue.

The Board concluded that in spite of the hours of research completed on the issue, it was difficult to help someone who did not want help. Vice-Chair Daniels reiterated that it was pointless pursuing the issue if the Police Department was not interested in the Board's help.

Chair Hurley suggested amending the ordinance with a recommendation to Council to adopt the changes. He indicated that if Council chose not to hire a contractor to transport loose animals, there were a list of volunteers who were willing to assist. Chair Hurley saw this as a way of moving forward with the animal at large issue.

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2.3 Request for Proposal - Batten Farm Property

Chair Hurley commented on the request for proposal, explaining that he understood that the information would be available; however, there was more involved than was first thought. A brief discussion ensued concerning Batten's Farm with Mr. Hoover inquiring about the layout of the property, what was proposed for the location, whether or not there was a house on the property or any new structure that was built within the last three years. Vice-Chair Daniels commented that she was familiar with the property and that no structure was built on the property. Mr. Hoover believed that a house was recently built on the property. Chair Hurley suggested that on a short term basis, the property should be leased and a produce market operation be continued there. Vice-Chair Daniels questioned how the property could be used for an equestrian trail and a recreational trail as was discussed at the August 28th meeting. Chair Hurley explained how this could be accomplished, adding that he believed it was the Town's policy that if they had a piece of public property, the public trails were for multiple use. Mr. Hoover questioned whether the Town was interested in deriving any revenue from the store. Vice-Chair Daniels believed that a certain amount of funds was allotted for a passive park. She commented that in order to have proper discussion regarding Batten's Farm, Councilmember Starkey's input was needed because the Board did not have enough information.

Mr. Hoover suggested that the item be tabled until the next meeting when further discussion could be held. Chair Hurley hoped that Councilmember Starkey would attend the next meeting to discuss the issue.

3. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Hurley advised that he received an email from Judy Paul informing him that the Friends of the Farm Park had been incorporated and were trying to get their 501(C)(3) non-profit status to enable them to partner with the Town in managing the Farm Park.

5. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Following a brief discussion, the following items were suggested for the March meeting:

- Light Containment Issue
- Review Livestock-at-Large Ordinance
- Request for Proposal - Batten Farm Property

6. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS

There were no comments or suggestions.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no objections and no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Date Approved

Chair/Board Member