

**TOWN OF DAVIE
AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JULY 2, 2015**

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Parrish, Chair	A
Adrienne Kaltman, Vice Chair	P
Eric Swalley	P
Cynthia Schaefer	A
Stephanie Munson	P
Scott Weinstein	P
Phil Busey	P
Ron Fore	P

STAFF AND GUESTS PRESENT

Lise Bazinet, Planner II
Judy Paul, Mayor

Acting Chair Kaltman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken, and it was noted there were six members present, therefore comprising a quorum.

Motion made by Mr. Swalley, seconded by Mr. Busey, to approve the agenda as distributed with the following revisions: move Mr. Swalley's presentation to the beginning and move the selection of Chair and Vice Chair to the last agenda item. In a voice vote, with David Parrish and Cynthia Schaefer absent, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Mayor Paul reported on her recent attendance at the U.S. Conference of Mayors in San Francisco. She asked the Committee to assist her in creating a resolution regarding GMOs that she could present at the Conference of Mayors in 2016.

3. SELECTION OF CHAIR (moved to later in the agenda)

4. SELECTION OF VICE CHAIR (moved to later in the agenda)

5. MOTION TO EXCUSE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Motion made by Mr. Busey, seconded by Mr. Swalley, to excuse David Parrish and Cynthia Schaefer from this meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6.1 April 2, 2015, Meeting

Motion made by Mr. Busey, seconded by Mr. Swalley, to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2015, meeting as amended. In a voice vote, with David Parrish and Cynthia Schaefer absent, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

The following correction was suggested:

- P. 3, paragraph 5, sentence 3: Mr. Busey clarified that he did not recall recommending that the Committee spend equal amounts of time between environment and agriculture. Although he did not disagree with that, he did not recall saying that and thought it would be difficult to enforce. He asked that sentence 3 begin a new paragraph.

7. OLD BUSINESS – deferred until later in the meeting

8. NEW BUSINESS – Items 8.1 and 8.2 deferred until later in the meeting

8.3 Hydrogen Energy Presentation by Eric Swalley

Mr. Swalley gave a PowerPoint presentation on the subject; he listed his “top ten” ideas pertaining to the advantages of a hydrogen economy in priority, with one being most significant:

- 1 Health
 - a. Clean energy, clean air and water
 - b. Energy from water goes back to water, replenishes ground water
- 2 No Solid Waste – no toxins produced
- 3 Many methods, one fuel
- 4 Current distributed power generation has outages – would not have them with hydrogen
 - a. Distributed power generation takes 3 units of energy: one unit of energy to produce the power; another unit of energy to transmit power to homes; one unit of energy in the home – much more efficient
- 5 Resiliency
 - a. Terrorists can take nuclear material from nuclear power plants
- 6 Climate change – hydrogen is zero carbon
- 7 Divert costs of exploration, fracking, cleanup, acid rain, ozone depletion
- 8 Economic solution to oil prices, sustainable economy, can retrofit buildings
 - a. Permanent jobs in hydrogen farming
- 9 Low tech, quiet hydrogen economy (windmills can be smaller) – no rush to feed the grid
- 10 Renewables are distributed and intermittent by nature

Mr. Swalley urged the Town Council to utilize and encourage the hydrogen industry. Perhaps there could be a lawn mower running on a fuel cell as a pilot project.

Mr. Swalley displayed his “Davie Windmill,” made from a flower pot. It features internal compression. The smaller they are, the faster they can turn and produce more energy. Mr. Swalley explained how the windmill works.

Mr. Swalley also showed a kit that he obtained, which decomposes water into hydrogen via wind energy; the item has a small fuel cell and runs a little fan.

Ms. Kaltman commented that hydrogen energy is important in the solution to the climate change problem, while offering an economic opportunity for local businesses to pursue green jobs.

Mr. Busey was curious how the generated hydrogen gets from a point of generation to a place of use. Mr. Swalley said the hydrogen is tanked and compressed (or chilled to a liquid) and then sent either through a pipeline or trucking. He added that the hydrogen is much more efficient than other types of fuel.

In response to a question by Ms. Munson, Mr. Swalley said the hydrogen energy could work in conjunction with solar panels on a house. Mr. Swalley discussed efforts by the utility companies to discourage people from using alternate energy sources.

There was discussion regarding selection of Chair and Vice Chair at this time, since not all the re-appointments are made.

3. SELECTION OF CHAIR (from earlier in the agenda)

Motion made by Mr. Busey, seconded by Mr. Swalley, to nominate Adrienne Kaltman as Chair. Hearing no other nominations, in a voice vote, with David Parrish and Cynthia Schaefer absent, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

4. SELECTION OF VICE CHAIR (from earlier in the agenda)

Motion made by Mr. Parrish, seconded by Chair Kaltman, to nominate Phil Busey as Vice Chair. Hearing no other nominations, in a voice vote, with David Parrish and Cynthia Schaefer absent, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

5. MOTION TO EXCUSE COMMITTEE MEMBERS (addressed earlier)

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (addressed earlier)

7. OLD BUSINESS – none

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 Hobby Farm Application

Mr. Quigley said that the Town Code allows agricultural uses in the residential one-acre areas; any type of crops and most animals can be raised. Setbacks for barns and similar structures need to be in compliance with the Code. If the property is designated by the statutory definition as a “farm,” the owner is not limited to the number of animals.

Mr. Quigley continued that the Town created an application in 2001 called "Farm Determination," which is for farms that have characteristics of a farm, but do not meet the statutory definition of a farm. There are about 30 properties that meet this determination in the Town of Davie.

The hobby farm was introduced in 2003, a type of non-commercial farm that has been in existence in a rural or semi-rural area for a long period of time. The intent of the Code was to grandfather that type of farm so that it would not be deemed a non-conforming use. The property is also protected from being declared a "nuisance."

Mr. Quigley referred to materials that were distributed.

In response to a question by Ms. Munson, Mr. Quigley explained that the Town determines zoning, and the Property Appraiser is tasked to evaluate property for tax purposes. The State determined that farms do not get taxed in the same way as non-farms.

Mr. Quigley continued that the Building Code is based on statute and is the Florida Building Code. All cities and counties have to follow it and cannot regulate on items such as agricultural science, agricultural fences, and agricultural farm buildings on farms as determined by the Property Appraiser.

Ms. Munson expressed concern that an owner might have to demolish a barn if he buys a property and no longer uses it as a farm. Mr. Quigley doubted that would happen in Davie, although Mr. Weinstein stated the owner would still have to conform to zoning setbacks.

Mr. Quigley elaborated that a Hobby Farm is a type of local agricultural designation (commercial or non-commercial) that has historically existed and is provided certain protections in order to survive neighborhood changes. He continued that the protections existed prior to the Florida Right to Farm Act, and the Town extended those protections.

Ms. Munson wondered if people who had submitted Hobby Farm applications were ever granted the classification. Mr. Quigley understood that in the past those individuals had received a letter stating the criteria, but the Town has not made such a determination in recent years.

Mr. Weinstein stated that someone who already has a bona fide agricultural operation as designated by the local County Tax Appraiser would not be required to also have the Town designation. He listed the three possible designations in the Town of Davie:

- Hobby Farm
- Administrative determination of a farm through the application process
- Florida Statute 193461 from the Tax Appraiser

Mr. Weinstein continued that the application refers to the Town Administrator or its designee, and he asked who the designee would be. Mr. Quigley replied it is the Code Compliance official. If there were a hearing, the Town would appoint an officer.

Ms. Munson wondered if animals, such as roosters, had to be onsite for a year with no complaints before granting a Hobby Farm status. It was noted that is a criterion in the Florida Right to Farm Act. Mr. Quigley advised that the Hobby Farm status is not something that someone applies for – if a person meets the definition of a Hobby Farm, the protection is automatically awarded of not being declared a nuisance. Mr. Quigley continued that the basic zoning regulations in Davie are very favorable towards agricultural use, noting that all designations are allowed to keep chickens, although the number kept might vary.

Ms. Munson suggested that people who have a Hobby Farm have a type of sign they could post to advertise that status. Mr. Weinstein suggested working on that possibility at a later meeting.

8.2 Farm Guide Update

Ms. Bazinet stated the Guide was last updated in July, 2013. There have been several legislative changes since then that need review before possible incorporation into the Farm Guide. Ms. Bazinet elaborated on the new legislation, stating they could be appended to the Guide. She added that the Florida Farm Bureau has some practical tips for farmers.

Ms. Munson suggested they add information about the Tropical Soda Apple, which is very invasive and problematic. The Giant African Snail was also mentioned.

Ms. Bazinet said she would help with the updating and bring a draft back to the Committee.

Vice Chair Busey thought they should focus first on the laws/regulations, and maybe have additional sections covering exotics and invasives.

Ms. Bazinet stated that agri-tourism is covered under the Farm Guide.

8.3 Hydrogen Energy Presentation by Eric Swalley (already addressed)

8.4 Committee Goal Setting and Priorities

Ms. Bazinet showed a PowerPoint presentation on Committee priorities. Highlights of her presentation follow:

- Internal initiatives
 - Town business operations and employees' involvement conserving electricity on our property
- External initiatives
 - Power to educate (TV channel, magazine)
- Synergies between the two committees
 - Environmentally safe agricultural practices
 - Protection of agricultural areas
 - Agri-tourism
 - Alternative energy in farms (solar, wind)

- What is already in place:
 - Trail system with equestrian and recreational uses
 - Wetland preservation
 - Landscaping regulations for protection of native spaces (Open Space)
 - Land development regulations
 - LEED certifications for buildings
 - Comprehensive Plan Updates
 - Master Plan that includes bicycle lanes, sidewalks
 - Recycling program
- Some things that could be done:
 - Facilitate alternative energy in agricultural sites and farms
 - Include water conservation programs at existing infrastructure
 - Sustainability Action Plan implementation (75% accomplished already)
 - Revisit and reset goals by 2016
 - Update Farm Guide bi-annually

Ms. Bazinet advised that the Town does have some incentives for being LEED certified, although there are no tax incentives at this time. She did not know of any LEED Gold certified buildings in Davie. The Public Works Department has been training staff on the subject. Discussion ensued on LEED certification and development in the Town; Ms. Bazinet said that some companies have adopted policies requiring LEED certification in their new buildings.

Mr. Swalley suggested that one of the Committee's goals should be to "go gold" on the certification. He also recommended a campaign to have more residents get green-certified yards.

Regarding the Sustainability Action Plan, Ms. Bazinet asked each member to review it and think of ways to improve it. She will provide a status report on each item.

Chair Kaltman recommended thinking of goals that may not be included in the Plan but are of interest, and then create specific action steps.

Vice Chair Busey questioned the relevance of a municipality (as opposed to an environmental group) dealing with GMOs. Chair Kaltman brought up that Davie is an agricultural community and GMO crops may have an impact. Ms. Munson suggested tying the GMO topic into agri-tourism via events of some sort (such as a GMO-free pumpkin patch or a children's garden using non-GMO seeds only, etc.). Discussion followed on the GMO controversy around the world.

Ms. Bazinet offered to bring sample resolutions to the next meeting.

9. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

The following items were suggested for the next agenda:

- Farm Guide Update
- GMO Resolution
- Committee Goal Setting and Priorities

Vice Chair Busey maintained that the Committee should focus on more localized subjects, such as reducing the Town of Davie's energy footprint and improving sustainability in the circumstances of climate change. He did not like the idea of getting involved in an international debate over GMOs.

10. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS - none

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

12. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Approved

Chair/Committee Member