

**DAVIE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD**  
**NOVEMBER 10, 2010**

**1. ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. Board members present were Chair Jason Hurley, Vice-Chair Dave Parrish and Julie Aitken. Also present was Board Secretary Jenevia Campbell recording the meeting. Dr. Sam Scott and Jacque Daniels were absent.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** August 11, 2010

Ms. Aitken commented that she had a problem with the minutes and could not recall exactly what was said at the meeting. She suggested that the last paragraph on the first page and the first paragraph on page two should be eliminated.

Ms. Aitken made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Parrish, to approve the minutes of August 11, 2010 with corrections. In a voice vote, with Ms. Daniels and Dr. Scott being absent, all voted in favor. **(Motion carried 3-0)**

**3. DISCUSSION**

**3.1 Further Discussion Regarding Bio-Digester**

Ms. Aitken reported that she and Vice-Chair Parrish participated in the tour along with other members of the Urban Farming Task Force. She indicated that the presentation was made by J.C. Nadeau and was very lengthy. Discussion focused on the cost of the bio-digester, its operation, and whether the equipment would be donated to the Town. Ms. Aitken explained that Mr. Nadeau indicated that the cost for the bio-digester was \$350,000 and he did not plan to donate this equipment to the Town.

Chair Hurley questioned if the task force had any view of opinion about the bio-digester. Ms. Aitken responded that when Mr. Nadeau spoke of the giant version bio-digester running the entire Town sewage system, and the cost, the task force determined that this was outside the scope of what the Town could absorb. Ms. Aitken did not believe that task force boardmembers would be making any recommendation to Council regarding purchase of this equipment.

Vice-Chair Parrish believed that the use of the bio-digester would be a small scale venture to be self contained on a farm and he could not see the operation on a large scale.

**3.2 Discussion on Report from Task Force**

Vice-Chair Parrish reported that the Urban Farming Task Force voted on the proposal not to move forward on the recommendations made by Don Burgess. He added that it was a tie vote.

Chair Hurley commented that it appeared that alternate boardmembers of the task force were not being provided with information pertaining to past meetings. He questioned if there was a protocol in place. Ms. Aitken indicated that she was not prepared to vote on an issue that she did not agree with. Chair Hurley stated that he would be uncomfortable agreeing to a recommendation for the Town to hire a new employee. Vice-Chair Parrish commented that the Town had stated previously that it would not be hiring another employee now. He indicated that he would like to wait on the outcome of the Batten's proposal. Chair Hurley felt that the task force did not have enough information for its recommendation to proceed.

Ms. Aitken believed that there was something political going on based on the recommendations being made by the task force. Boardmembers expressed their feelings concerning the direction in which the task force appeared to be going. Ms. Aitken felt that the task force boardmembers did not appear to be working together.

Vice-Chair Parrish expressed the opinion that the Friends of the Farm Park appeared to want to take over a park, an action he believed would take years to accomplish. There was a brief discussion regarding property taxes with Boardmembers indicating that it would be costly to operate Batten's, and high property taxes might kill the deal.

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Vice-Chair Parrish highlighted the proposed operation and commented that based on his knowledge, the retail garden end of an operation of this nature would be a challenge. He indicated that he had attended the bid opening and there were only two applicants for the Batten's property, North South Institute and A-1 Farming. Vice-Chair Parrish stated that the proposed operation by both organizations were similar with the exception of some differences which he explained. He added that each organization had solid proposals with different achievement goals.

Ms. Aitken commented that the property taxes issue was being buried by recommendations and was not being addressed, as a result of this, she emailed Broward County Property Appraiser Lori Parrish who passed the information on to one of her attorneys. The attorney expressed the opinion that for the Batten's property, the agricultural classification could be applied, however; there was a concern about the farmers' market which would not be eligible for exemption.

Ms. Aitken felt that the urban task force was rushing to sunset without getting a legal opinion and making recommendations without knowing the legal ramifications. Chair Hurley felt that a recommendation should be made for the urban task force take a hiatus for some time until the issues get a chance to go forward. He felt that the board should not meet unless there was an issue that needed to be addressed which could be brought forward either by staff, one of the board's represented or one of the organizations that presented an RFP.

There was a brief discussion regarding recommendations from this Board, with the consensus that this board's recommendations were not highly regarded. The Board felt that the urban task force should take time to resolve the issues at hand. Ms. Aitken objected to the rush to get the issues of the hands of the urban task force and into the hands of the Friends of the Farm Park to circumvent the Sunshine Law.

A lengthy was dedicated to the issue of tax exemption on government properties with no real determination being made.

**3.3 Follow-Up Regarding Revision of Agricultural Definitions**

Ms. Aitken advised that she spoke with Mayor Paul who was not happy with the definition between plant nursery and garden center and wanted the original wording to be placed in the definitions. The revision passed on first reading. Chair Hurley commented that since the revision was going in the direction that the Board intended, there was no need to revisit the issue.

**3.4 Further Discussion on Request for Proposal regarding Batten's Farm**

This item was discussed under item 3.2.

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business discussed.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

Following a lengthy discussion regarding the Batten's property and recommendations by the Urban Task Force, Ms. Aitken suggested that this board consider taking on the issues that would be left unresolved when the Task Force sunsetted. The consensus was that there were too many unresolved issues by the Urban Task Force.

Vice-Chair Parrish questioned if there were any plans for the Batten's property when it was purchased. The Board responded in the negative. Following further questions by Vice-Chair Parrish if this Board had any plans for the property, Chair Hurley responded that the board declined to speak on the Batten's issue because it did not feel it was under this board's purview to do so. The Board felt that it was and Open Space Advisory Committee issue or a Parks and Recreation issue.

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Discussion continued on the Batten's issue with Ms. Aitken commenting that this Board had always created it's own agenda and highlighted some of the issues that were allowed to move forward due to its recommendations.

**6. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

Following a brief discussion the following items were suggested for the January 2011 meeting:

- Further Discussion on Report from Task Force
- Further Discussion on Request for Proposal Regarding Battens Farm

**7. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS**

Ms. Aitken suggested that the December meeting be skipped and the regular scheduled meeting be held in January. The Board agreed.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no objections and no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

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Date Approved

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Chair/Board Member