

DAVIE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD
JULY 13, 2011

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. Board members present were Chair Jason Hurley, Vice-Chair Dave Parrish, Julie Aitken, Sam Scott and Scott Weinstein. Also present was Board Secretary Jenevia Campbell recording the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 11, 2011

Mr. Weinstein made a motion, seconded by Ms. Aitken, to approve the minutes of May 11, 2011. In a voice vote, all voted in favor. **(Motion carried 5-0)**

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Follow-Up on Urban Farming Initiative Task Force Quarterly Meeting

Chair Hurley commented that the task force was going in the direction that this Board feared that it would, and have started to drift. He believed that at no point had anyone gauged the interest for community gardens or where they should be placed, and thought that it would be a shame to put out any resources from the Town if there was no interest. Chair Hurley commented that it was suggested by a member on the task force that the Town should set-up a voicemail and an email to gauge the interest and to find out who were interested in the community garden and the locations; however, this was met with resistance from staff indicating that there were no funds available. Ms. Aitken indicated that she could not see that it would cost that much money to set up an email address. Chair Hurley indicated that with those issues in mind, he had prepared a draft letter that would be forwarded to the other advisory boards for their review.

Dr. Scott agreed with Chair Hurley's comments, and indicated that there was a lack of understanding by individuals who attended the meetings. He commented that there was a nonsensical approach to issues such as the community gardens from individuals who felt that if there was a rigid structure of doing things, it would be accomplished. Dr. Scott indicated that nothing could be accomplished in this manner, but rather it should be opened to individuals who had the resources and the time. He indicated that the North South Institute would be willing to respond and there was a telephone number available where individuals could call; the list would then be turned over to Parks and Recreation Director Dennis Andresky. Once that was accomplished, the question would be what the Urban Task Force and Parks and Recreation would do with the information.

Dr. Scott highlighted plans for a community garden at the Batten's property, indicating that the information for the community garden would be provided to three churches as well as two other individuals who were interested in gardening. He spoke of individuals who were interested in hydroponics, field and soil gardening.

Dr. Scott also commented that the Town should advertise that there was a program for community garden with identified sites, have it listed as special project and list Special Projects Director Bonnie Stafiej as the contact. He indicated that when there are complaints about the farmers market Ms. Stafiej was the person that residents contacted. Dr. Scott added that if promotion was done with the Town Special Project's number was the one to use, and as a backup, provide the names of other individuals to contact.

Chair Hurley suggested that a number should be "set up" at Town Hall to direct callers to a voicemail, and volunteers could retrieve the messages weekly and contact the individuals to find out their interest. There was a brief discussion concerning volunteers with Boardmembers presenting conflicting arguments on the issues related to volunteers having access to Town computers and telephones. Mr. Weinstein did not believe that the use of Town equipment was a concern because he had received a volunteer form by email. He felt that the volunteer forms would not have been distributed if the use of Town equipment was a concern.

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Mr. Weinstein suggested changes to the language in Chair Hurley's letter to the task force members, and indicated that he and Dr. Scott were willing to volunteer to handle telephone calls relating to the community gardens issue, and more specifically to get the word out to the public that the number exists via a public service announcement, and the number could also be placed in the Davie Update and on the Town's website.

Dr. Scott spoke of the City of New York green project to promote new farmers in east New Jersey and Pennsylvania. He explained that the city placed two articles in the newspaper and after the newspaper articles appeared, within 12 hours 600 telephone calls were received. Dr. Scott commented that if the Town were to execute a press release advertisement asking for individuals interested in a community garden he believed that the response would be outstanding. Questions of cost surfaced and Dr. Scott responded that there was no charge if this was done as a press release. Dr. Scott suggested that the Town have Chair Hurley interviewed by a reporter from the Sun-Sentinel and have an article placed in the newspaper based on the interview.

Chair Hurley explained that he would like to make some revisions to the proposed recommendation and have it forwarded to the other boards involved with the urban task force initiative to make a presentation to the Town Council as a joint effort. Mr. Weinstein questioned if this letter would be forwarded to the other boardmembers to coincide with the next quarterly meeting. Chair Hurley responded that the letter could be forwarded before the next quarterly meeting and although it was not necessary to get the other boards input, but it was a good gesture.

Chair Hurley commented that it was important to find out who were interested in a community garden before any work began on the tasks that were assigned to this Board. The Board discussed the list of sites under consideration for community gardens with the question arising regarding east Davie shortage of sites compared to west Davie. Additionally, there was discussion regarding the request for proposal process used by the Town to acquire property, with Boardmembers commenting that this process should apply to everyone.

Regarding the Farm Park, Dr. Scott commented that there were a number of individuals who had worked on the acquisition of the park who felt that they have been left out of the process. Dr. Scott indicated that the groups that were now involved would not have paid to go to Tallahassee or attend meetings to assist in the acquisition of the farm park.

Boardmembers continued to review the map of community garden sites and discuss possibilities. The question arose regarding a previous community garden in east Davie with Mr. Weinstein commenting that it did not survive due to lack of supervision both at the Town level and the volunteer level. Dr. Scott commented that supervision was key, because a program without dedicated individuals to supervise would become a nightmare. Mr. Weinstein likened the volunteer system to an inventory system. Dr. Scott made reference to someone that he could recommend whenever a supervisor was needed for a community garden and added that this individual was seeking some property to do organic farming.

Further discussion centered around advertising, with Vice-Chair Parrish inquiring whether anyone from the television media had been to the Batten's Farmers Market, with Dr. Scott responding in the affirmative. Dr. Scott advised of the strong role played by the City of Hollywood in a press advertising, and added that he had received a fair amount of advertising at the beginning of the farmer's market exercise. Dr. Scott indicated that he was pursuing a promotional program but if the Town was doing an advertisement it would be welcome.

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Ms. Aitken asked if a recommendation should be made on all the issues and an attempt be made to get the other boards that were part of the urban task force to support the recommendation. She could not recall this board's assignment at the quarterly meeting. Chair Hurley indicated that this board was assigned composting and rain barreling. Mr. Weinstein did not see how composting was supposed to fit into the farming park programs. Dr. Scott questioned if the composting consisted of food waste. Mr. Weinstein responded that his composting consisted solely of farm clippings.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the recommendations with Boardmembers presenting different ideas. Dr. Scott suggested that the recommendation should be sent directly to the Town Council and copied to the other boards, and it should be stated that there were three volunteers from this board who were willing to use their telephone numbers for individuals expressing interest in the community garden. All the information collected would be turned over to Special Projects and Parks and Recreation Department. Dr. Scott commented that he would use the cluster approach for the community garden as was used for small farmers, and subject matter specialists used for the small farmers could be brought in to perform workshops and demonstrations. He indicated that if there were members of the other committees who were interested, they could also participate.

There was discussion regarding the email address with Mr. Weinstein indicating that he would set up the email address, all that was required was a name. Dr. Scott suggested a name and volunteered to use a telephone line from the North South Institute. Ms. Aitken suggested that it would be simpler to leave the Town's name out of the email address since the Board was assigning this task to itself. She added that all that was needed by the Town was to place the information on the website. Chair Hurley suggested the information could be advertised on the Town's website, Davie Television, and the Davie Update. He added that the recommendation would be circulated among boardmembers by the Board Secretary, and if there was no objection, it would be forwarded to the Town Council before the next meeting which was a month away. Dr. Scott

Following a lengthy discussion on the site plan issue, Chair Hurley recalled that there had been a request for the site plan at the quarterly meeting. Mr. Weinstein indicated that due to conflict with another boardmember he had contacted Mayor Judy Paul. He explained that he was now aware that a matching site plan was needed and this was being prepared by Deputy Planning and Zoning Manager David Abramson; however there was a delay on the Town's part. Mr. Weinstein commented that the Mayor's office had contacted the Planning and Zoning Division and has "lit the fire". He added the Mayor Paul was very supportive of this Board's willingness to see things move forward.

Dr. Scott inquired if a plot for research and demonstration could be established at the farm park site that would have corporate partners and a university. He explained the work of the corporate partners and added that he could bring in at least three universities from the State of Florida. Mr. Weinstein responded in the affirmative regarding the establishment of the research and demonstration; however, careful thought to be given to what the Town could commit to allowing them to do since bond funds was used to acquire the park. He added that he had three corporate individuals who were willing to make donations without any return if they could see a site plan. Mr. Weinstein commented that the Board need to make a recommendation to the Town Council to find out why there was no draft copy of the site plan.

Mr. Weinstein made a motion, seconded by Ms. Aitken, that this board recommends that the Town Council contact David Abramson at Planning and Zoning to find out the status of the site plan as it exists for Governor Leroy Collins Park, and to share with the respective boards involved with the joint

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meetings, all the documentation that they have so far in whatever form that they may exist. In a voice vote, all voted in favor. **(Motion carried 5-0)**

Mr. Weinstein referred to individuals interested in community gardening at the Battens property; and was aware that this could not be done in the ground due to the arsenic issue. Dr. Scott responded in the affirmative and added that based on the North-South Institute recommendation the gardening could be done in cultivated containers. He explained another process that would establish a buffer on the existing soil and build on top of that with a barrier between that soil. Dr. Scott explained that the greenhouse for Batten Farms had been approved and was being financed. In response to Mr. Weinstein's inquiry as to whether the greenhouse would be containerized, Dr. Scott responded in the negative and explained that it would be "buffered down" with 12 inches of compost and soil. Mr. Weinstein commented that he would provide the compost if it was needed, and invited Dr. Scott to visit his business to "check out" the various grades of compost that he had available.

A brief discussion ensued regarding a pilot program where the existing soil could be brought below BDL detectable limits for the County. Mr. Weinstein spoke of remediating by utilizing a proven method that had never been done in Broward County. Dr. Scott spoke of excavation on a portion of the Battens property; however he did not have a machine for the task. Mr. Weinstein indicated that he had a machine available that Dr. Scott could use.

3.2 Urban Farming Initiative

This item was discussed under Item 3.1.

3.3 Brainstorming Session (Areas of Task Force)

This item was discussed under Item 3.1.

4. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed.

5. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business discussed.

Dr. Scott indicated that he was hosting a farm luncheon at 1:00 p.m. on July 28th and the Minister of Trade and Industry from Jamaica would be attending. He indicated that this would be held at the site where the farmers were or if there was rain it would be held at Batten's. He extended an invitation to the Boardmembers as this was an agriculture issue and encouraged boardmembers to RSVP. (Field on Orange Drive)

6. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

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

- o Invite the Chair of the Friends of the Farm Park to the meeting

7. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS

There were no comments and/or suggestion.

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8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no objections and no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Date Approved

Chair/Board Member