

Natural Resources Programs

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PARKS & NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION

POLK COUNTY LAKES ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Polk County Lakes Access Advisory Committee (LAAC) convened Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. at the Polk County Parks and Natural Resources, 4177 Ben Durrance Road, Bartow, the meeting was conducted via Zoom.

Members Present: Tom Palmer, Rachele Coleman Selser, Chad Allison, Paul Thomas, Arlene Ledbetter, David Anderson, Larry Johnson

Members Absent: Gregg Watts (without notice), Ronald Schelfo (with notice)

Guest: N.A.

Parks and Natural Resources: Mike Callender, Tracy Mullins, Brandy Gray

Brandy Gray explained how to use Zoom (mute / unmute, recorded, state name when making motion). Brandy took the roll call, verifying the members in attendance. Brandy turned the Zoom meeting over to Rachele Coleman Selser

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Rachele Coleman Selser called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

WELCOMING OF THE COMMITTEE

Rachele Coleman welcomed the Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Approve January 14, 2020 minutes as amended (Rochelle to Rachele)

Mover: David Anderson

Seconder: Paul Thomas

Result: Approved unanimously (7-0)

APPROVAL OF 2021 SCHEDULED DATES

a. January 12, May 11, September 14th

b. Meeting Type (Zoom / In-person)

Group discussed that the dates were acceptable. In-person or via Zoom will be decided at a later date based on pandemic status.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER NOMINATIONS

Members that will be terming out on November 16, 2020 are Rachelle Coleman Selser, David Anderson, and Ronald Schelfo. The committee will also need fill the vacancy resulting from the death of Roger Goeckel.

County Commissioners will approve the new appointees.

Brandy encouraged the group to provide names of those interested in serving on the LAAC by October as the terms end on November 16, 2020 and must go before the Board.

Rachelle Coleman Selser, nominated Jean Reed as a candidate, she expressed that Jean has indicated that she would want to serve on the LAAC. Rachelle confirmed with Brandy that Jean's information was still on file with Brandy.

Mike also encouraged the group to nominate more than one person. Brandy explained that the nominees would need to provide resumes and a letter of interest.

Adam Bass was nominated.

David recommended that Brandy contact Ron Schelfo to see if he has nominations.

LAKE HANCOCK

Mike proudly explained that the boat ramp opened in mid-July. Mike announced that he observed the public utilizing the boat ramp and the public seemed to be pleased with the new ramp. Mike explained that we have new signage at the boat ramp with directions. DOT is in the process of providing signage from Highway 98 to the new boat ramp.

Members expressed that they had spoken with the public about the boat ramp and they were pleased and that it was a great addition to the County.

CROOKED LAKE

Mike explained that there was a property vacation on Crooked Lake for a Right of Way on Cody Cove Road that went to the lake. Properties on the north and south side of the ROW had been annexed into City of Frostproof. This particular strip of land was still in County jurisdiction. When the developer petitioned to vacate this ROW, Parks and Natural Resources Division voiced objection because although there is currently a privately owned public boat ramp (Bob's Landing) on the lake, if they were to shut down or deny public access in the future, the County could use the ROW to develop its own public access. Staff took this idea to the Commissioners; however, they decided to take no action either way. The developer went back to the City of Frostproof, at which time they annexed the ROW. The developer has now come back with a property on the north side; however, it is in the City's jurisdiction. We offered to purchase a larger piece of property within the development but the developer denied the County's request.

Tom Palmer asked if the City of Frostproof had any interest in pursuing a boat ramp at the property. Mike said Frostproof does not because of public objection.

Criteria for Lighting Boat Ramps

Rachelle asked that Mike give the group a refresher on the background concerning the criteria for boat ramp lighting. Mike advised that there were roughly six ramps with lighting in the County. He presented the challenges for lighting at the ramps, which include cost and the infrastructure to provide lighting to all the ramps whether it be for photocell, LED or solar lights. Getting power to some ramps would be impossible based on surrounding infrastructure. Mike will get more information such as the costs associated with lighting (both initial costs and reoccurring costs), which ramps already have appropriate infrastructure verses the number that do not, and the number of ramps that are currently lit. Clarification was made that staff are requesting the committee's assistance with either developing a flow chart to aid in determining if a boat ramp should be lit or for the committee's support of a policy that states we do not put lights at boat ramps. The policy would require Board approval to make an exception.

Chad Allison asked if there is data that shows which lakes / ramps are utilized at a higher volume than others.

LAND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The meeting with Land Development was canceled and a new meeting has been scheduled. After the ERC meeting, the item will go to the Planning Board then the Board of County Commissioners. Tom Palmer stated that the committee originally requested that developers receive open space credits for allowing public access through a development; however, the plan being presented is a notification overlay for developments along lakes without public access. When a development application is received, County staff will be notified and given the opportunity to negotiate with the developer to purchase a parcel for water access.

Mike questioned if the new approach is something that the committee still supports. Tom Palmer stated anything that allows for the possibility of more boat ramps, is worth a try.

PROJECT UPDATES

Received some Community Development Block Grant funding to purchase docks. Purchased multiple docks to receive a cost discount. Lake Conine floating dock has already been installed while the Lake Juliana and Saddle Creek docks are awaiting installation. We will be replacing the old fishing piers with floating docks at Saddle Creek.

The next large project will be to get the design and permitting done for Lake Buffum.

OTHER BUSINESS

Elections on new Chair and a Vice Chair Person. Current Chair is Rachelle Coleman Selser and Vice Chair is Paul Thomas.

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m