

**NASSAU COUNTY
CONSERVATION LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT
July 15, 2021, 5:00 P.M.
COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS,
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL COMPLEX
YULEE, FLORIDA**

A Conservation Land Acquisition and Management (CLAM) Committee meeting was held this 15th day of July 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, James S. Page Governmental Complex, Yulee, Florida.

Present committee members were Brandy Carvalho, Bill Watson, Bill Korn, Chris Hill, and Leonard Wood. Also present were Michael S. Mullin, County Attorney; Taco Pope, County Manager (appeared “via zoom”); Thad Crowe, Planning Director; Holly Coyle, Assistant Planning Director; and Peggy Snyder and Tina Barnett, Deputy Clerks.

Mr. Pope called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

Ms. Coyle came forward to introduce herself and Mr. Crowe as the staff working directly with this Committee; Mr. Mullin as the legal representation for the Committee and asked each Committee member to provide a brief background of their professional expertise.

Mr. Korn is a resident of Fernandina Beach. He explained that he has 40 years of experience in Forestry, 35 of those years in Florida Forestry, and 20 years representing the state agency; however, he retired three years ago. Mr. Korn described his involvement in forestry consulting, public land management, policy, and assessment.

Mr. Hill is a resident of Fernandina Beach. He has worked in real estate development appraisals for 15 years with experience in land planning, acquisition, and environmental protection. He described his employment background, working with Clay, Duval, and St. John’s County staff regarding entitlements and public hearings for rezoning and Planned Unit Developments (PUD) cases.

Ms. Carvalho grew up in Yulee and is a resident of Fernandina Beach. She is currently employed with White Oak Conservation. She explained her involvement with several community organizations such as Nassau Education Foundation, Baptist Medical Center, Keep Nassau Beautiful, and Nassau Racial Equality Coalition. Ms. Carvalho described her educational background in Public Relations and Wildlife Conservation and her Master's Degree in Public Administration and Natural Resources.

Mr. Watson has been a resident of Nassau County for over 30 years. He explained his employment with Rayonier, highlighting his involvement with their real estate sector since its inception. Mr. Watson described his knowledge of conservation land management, selling and trading.

Mr. Wood was born and raised in Macon, GA. He attended Florida State University; however, he received a Forestry Degree from the University of Florida. He explained that after college, he worked as a District Research Forester with Rayonier. Mr. Wood also stated he is a state certified real estate appraisal with a focus on timber.

Ms. Coyle directed the Committee to appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair.

It was moved by Mr. Hill and seconded by Mr. Wood to nominate Brandy Carvalho as Chair and Bill Watson as Vice-Chair; the vote carried unanimously. Ms. Carvalho accepted the nomination as Chair, and Mr. Watson accepted the nomination of Vice-Chair.

Mr. Mullin distributed orientation packets outlining the basic legal requirements applicable to the Committee. The packets included information regarding the Sunshine Law, Public Records, Ethics, and Conflict of Interest, and Financial Disclosure Laws, emphasizing communication among board members, unauthorized compensation, and disclosure of classified information. He explained the penalties associated with violations of the Sunshine Law, stressing the significance of communication on matters outside the Commission Chambers. Mr. Mullin described the legal definition of a public record for clarification and the procedures associated with handling public records. He advised the committee members to contact him with any questions.

Ms. Coyle provided a PowerPoint presentation defining a conservation plan as a tool, document, or resource that assists an entity in applying conservation missions to the land, whether it's the acquisition of conservation lands, habitat restoration, farmland, and any other goals. Realizing the specific goals established in the Comprehensive Plan, Vision 2032 Plan, and the Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Plan, the Board of County Commissioners directed staff to establish a plan to acquire and manage conservation lands. She stated that the County retained the North Florida Land Trust to develop a plan by identifying, ranking, and assessing lands for acquisition and management. As a result, the CLAM Ranking Map was developed to analyze parcels based on geographical information, also known as data layers. The map displays eighteen different layers, with each layer representing a potential resource for conserving land related to the four common considerations for acquiring land. She provided a brief overview of the four considerations:

- **Water Issues** - reviews storm surge, flooding, and sea level rise adaption.
- **Working Lands** – concentrates on sustainable forestry, timberland productivity, and ways to protect existing farms and ranches.
- **Species and Habitat Protection** – considers land that is suitable for gopher tortoise habitats and wildlife corridors.
- **Outdoor Recreation/Quality of Life** – focuses on underserved areas for parks and lands adjacent to existing parks and trails.

Ms. Coyle explained that all of these data layers were placed on the parcel map to formulate the CLAM Ranking Map found on the County's website. She briefly illustrated how to operate the map, and she reviewed the CLAM Program schedule. Ms. Coyle stated the CLAM was adopted on January 25, 2021, appointments to the Committee were made in May 2021, and the first Committee meeting was held on July 15, 2021. She explained that nominations for property acquisition would remain open from July 24, 2021 through December 31, 2021, with a final list of properties being presented to the Board of County Commissioners in May of 2022. Ms. Coyle briefly discussed the responsibilities of the CLAM Committee, the application process, and factors to be considered when ranking properties, such as landowner participation, bargain sales and match funding, legal and physical access, significant liabilities. Ms. Coyle discussed the Nomination and Approval process in detail by explaining how the nominated properties are scored.

Ms. Coyle stated that the Committee could appoint up to three non-voting members, noting that the additional members should have some expertise in forestry or conservation issues. Ms. Coyle

recommended appointing the North Florida Land Trust (NFLT) as a non-voting representative on the Committee.

It was moved by Mr. Hill and seconded by Mr. Korn to nominate North Florida Land Trust as a non-voting member; the vote carried unanimously.

Ms. Coyle stated that the Committee needed to set the meeting schedule and suggested meeting every other month.

It was moved by Mr. Watson and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve regularly scheduled meetings on the third Thursday of every other month at 5:00 p.m. starting in September; the vote carried unanimously.

The Committee briefly discussed the appropriate communication methods, advertising mechanisms for informing the public, and the other land acquisition agencies that can assist the Committee when necessary. Mr. Crowe came forward and suggested including the option for public input on the agenda for future meetings. Margaret Kirkland with the Amelia Island Tree Conservancy and Elizabeth Guthrie with NFLT came forward to express support for the CLAM Committee.

It was moved by Mr. Hill and seconded by Ms. Carvalho to adjourn the meeting; the vote carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.