

Cone Ranch Environmental Advisory Panel
Recap of Meeting on November 16, 2009 9:00 - 11:00 AM
26th Floor - County Center
Environmental Advisory Panel Members

Heidi McCree, Chair
Rosanne Clementi, Vice Chair
Hugh Gramling
Vivienne Handy

Pamela Jo Hatley
Dr. Felix T. Haynes
Denise Layne

Technical Resource Group

Mark Adams*
Jack Berlin
Will Bissett
Steven Blaschka*
Hank Ennis*
Susan Fernandez
Pete Fowler
Lucia Garsys*
Paula Harvey *

Ed Helvenston, Sr.
Mike Kelly
Renee Lee *
Mike Merrill*
Richard Miller *
Jim Roberts
John Sheahen
Tim Simon
Bob Stetler*

Edith Stewart
Eric Sutton*
Paul Vanderploog
Andrew Zodrow
Mark Barcelo*

* Not in attendance
** Late Arrival

The Chairman, Heidi McCree, called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM at County Center in 26 A & B. The Recap of October 23 meeting was approved, Gramling moving and Hatley seconding.

The Chairman reported on her appearance before the Board of County Commissioners to provide them with an update on the Panel's activities. She then began the discussion of the process for finalizing recommendations and the taking of public testimony at today's meeting. The Panel determined that they would like to have some dialogue about recommendations among themselves, perhaps placing a motion on the floor, and then hearing from those citizens who were present before finalizing their recommendations. It was further agreed that public comment would be limited to three minutes each because of time constraints.

Clementi moved and Gramling seconded the motion to recommend "permanent protection in public ownership". Layne made a substitute motion, seconded by Hatley, that "the county should retain ownership but ELAPP should have control". Layne asked that the motion be tabled while the Panel heard public comment.

Sixteen citizens addressed the Panel.

Layne restated her motion: "We, the Cone Ranch Advisory Committee, recommend the BOCC direct the Water Department to convey to ELAPP through a clear title, free of all encumbrances on the Cone Ranch Property." After discussion, the motion was amended to say "We, the Cone Ranch Advisory Committee, recommend to the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners to direct the Water Department to convey title to ELAPP of the entire Cone Ranch property. We believe this is the best way (and underline best) to protect, preserve, and restore Cone Ranch in perpetuity." Hatley seconded the amended motion as stated. The motion passed 5-2 with

Gramling and Haynes voting no - Haynes disclosing he only wants his subsidiary concerns addressed. Further discussion led to the agreement to add additional concerns to the main motion and then to adopt all of the recommendations as a package.

Haynes moved and Layne seconded the motion "to make sure all available legal mechanisms to protect the land permanently as possible from development are developed." The motion passed 7-0.

Haynes moved and Layne asked him to amend his motion and then seconded it to say "The BOCC should authorize ELAPP to update the existing December 1998 Final Draft Plan for the Use and Management of Cone Ranch and to pursue a wetlands mitigation bank, conservation bank and carbon credits." The motion passed 7-0.

Haynes moved and Layne seconded "the BOCC should use their authority to require ELAPP to make a timeline of three years for completing the updated plan and to carry it out." The motion passed 7-0.

Haynes moved and Layne seconded the motion "The BOCC should require ELAPP to create a mechanism to allow public access to a portion of the land for passive recreation consistent with protection of the land." The motion passed 7-0.

Haynes made a motion regarding disposition alternatives and competitive bids which was withdrawn after discussion.

Hatley recommended and Layne seconded the motion "time is of the essence and the BOCC needs to take immediate action to cause this transfer to go forward to ELAPP ; or if a decision is made in the interim to consolidate water utilities that this Cone Ranch property will not be a part of that transfer." The motion passed 6-1 with Gramling voting no.

Layne moved and Handy seconded the motion "the County should vigorously pursue vacation of the Tampa Bay Water claim to water development rights from the entity." The motion passed 7-0.

Gramling moved adjournment, but the motion died for lack of a second. Haynes discussed the earlier agreement to comprehensively adopt the entire set of recommendations in one vote.

Haynes moved and Layne seconded the motion "that we adopt in toto all the recommendations, all the motions, all the complete package that we have been voting on for the last half hour." The motion passed 6-1 with Gramling voting no.

Staff was directed to keep the Panel and the public informed about when the item would appear on the Board's agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.