

CAPT I ON I NG
JUNE 29, 2009
CONE RANCH ENVI RONMENTAL ADVI SORY PANEL

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>>EDITH STEWART: GOOD MORNING, AND WELCOME TO THE
ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION OF THE CONE RANCH ENVIRONMENTAL
ADVISORY PANEL.

HTV IS BROADCASTING LIVE TODAY, AND ALSO WE ARE LIVE
STREAMING ON HTV, AND THERE IS A BUTTON ON THE HOME PAGE
FOR ANYONE WHO WISHES TO WATCH IT THAT WAY.

ADDITIONALLY, OUR WEB PAGE IS LIVE TODAY, AND ALL OF THE
DOCUMENTS THAT ARE WITH YOU TODAY ARE POSTED ON THE WEB
SITE, SO THOSE ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC.

I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY INTRODUCING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, KEN HAGAN.

>>KEN HAGAN: THANK YOU, EDITH.

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE.

I WANT TO START OUT BY SAYING THAT I'M NOT ACCUSTOMED TO
BEING ON THIS SIDE OF THE TABLE.

[LAUGHTER]

SO I WANT TO APOLOGIZE IN ADVANCE IF I COME ACROSS A LITTLE
NERVOUS.

NOW I KNOW WHAT THE SPEAKERS -- HOW THEY FEEL DURING THE
PUBLIC COMMENT SECTION, SO -- BUT I DID WANT TO TAKE JUST A
MOMENT TO SPEAK WITH YOU THIS MORNING.

AS THE COMMISSIONER WHO BROUGHT THIS ISSUE FORWARD AND
RECOMMENDED CREATING THIS ADVISORY PANEL, I WANTED TO,
FIRST OF ALL, THANK EACH ONE OF YOU FOR SERVING ON THIS
CRITICALLY IMPORTANT PANEL.

I'M SURE THAT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT THINGS THAT YOU
COULD BE DOING WITH YOUR TIME, AND I WANTED TO THANK YOU
FOR AGREEING TO SERVE ON THIS PANEL AND FOR YOUR COMMITMENT
TO THIS ISSUE.

AS I'M SURE YOU ALL RECOGNIZE, THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT
MATTER IN OUR COMMUNITY.

I LOOK AROUND AT THE PANEL.

SOME OF YOU I KNOW, OTHERS I DO NOT; HOWEVER, I HAVE HAD AN
OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW YOUR RESUMES.

YOU'RE ALL EXTREMELY BRIGHT AND COMMITTED, AND I'M
CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL ASK THE TOUGH QUESTIONS, CONSIDER
THE RESPONSES, AND THOROUGHLY VET THE FCEG CONCEPT AS WELL
AS HONOR THE BEST INTEREST OF THE LAND AND HILLSBOROUGH
COUNTY.

I ALSO WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT AND THANK MY APPOINTEE, DEE
LAYNE FOR SERVING ON THIS COMMITTEE.

I HAVE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF RESPECT FOR DEE.

WE DO NOT AGREE ON ALL OF THE ISSUES.

HECK, SHE EVEN RAN AGAINST ME A FEW YEARS AGO FOR COUNTY
COMMISSION; HOWEVER, SHE IS AN UNABASHED ENVIRONMENTAL
LEADER, AND WHEN I WAS THINKING OF WHO WOULD BE A GOOD
PERSON FOR THIS COMMITTEE, I KNEW THAT SHE WOULD ATTACK
THIS PANEL WITH THE SAME PASSION AND FERVOR THAT SHE IS
KNOWN FOR, SO SHE IS CERTAINLY NO WALLFLOWER, SO DEE, THANK
YOU FOR AGREEING TO SERVE ON THIS PANEL.

I'M GOING TO ASK THE PANEL THE SAME THING ESSENTIALLY THAT

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I ASKED DEE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO WHEN WE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET, AND THAT WAS TO PLEASE ASK THE TOUGH QUESTIONS BUT AT THE SAME TIME, PLEASE KEEP AN OPEN MIND DURING THIS PROCESS.

TO THE COUNTY STAFF, I LOOK AROUND HERE, WE HAVE SOME OF THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST HERE IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.

I WOULD PUT OUR STAFF UP AGAINST ANY COUNTY IN THE STATE, AND I SAY, PANEL, YOU ARE IN EXTREMELY GOOD HANDS WITH EDITH STEWART AS THE POINT PERSON FOR THIS COMMITTEE.

STAFF, MY CHARGE TO YOU ESSENTIALLY THE SAME IS JUST TO REMAIN OPEN-MINDED TO THE POSSIBILITIES AND TO PLEASE HELP THIS PANEL FIND CONSENSUS AMONG ITS MEMBERS AND CITIZENS. PERHAPS THIS WILL ULTIMATELY BECOME A CASE STUDY FOR THE STERLING AWARD THAT COMMISSIONER SHARPE HAS BEEN PUSHING US SO HARD FOR.

TO FCEG AND THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, I'LL ASK YOU TO PLEASE WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR STAFF.

YOU WILL HAVE ACCESS AND COOPERATION FROM EACH OF THEM.

I'M CONFIDENT YOU WILL FIND THEM AS OPEN AND AS HELPFUL AS I DO.

OFFER YOUR SUGGESTIONS, YOUR INFORMATION, AND ADVOCATE YOUR IDEAS, BUT PLEASE KNOW -- AND I'M SURE YOU -- THAT FCEG REALIZES THIS -- THIS IS ABOUT DOING WHAT IS BEST FOR CONE RANCH AND HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, IT IS NOT ABOUT RUBBERSTAMPING FCEG'S IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES, AND TO THE CITIZENS AND ACTIVISTS, I KNOW I'VE ALREADY RECEIVED A NUMBER OF E-MAILS THAT I'VE FORWARDED ON TO STAFF AND TO DEE, PLEASE CONTINUE TO ASK THE HARD QUESTIONS, DEMAND RESULTS, AND CONTINUE TO RATTLE CAGES.

I KNOW AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL I WELCOME THAT.

AT MY DIRECTION -- AND EDITH TOUCHED ON A LITTLE BIT OF THIS ALREADY -- THIS PANEL IS TO BE AN EXTREMELY PUBLIC AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS.

ALL THE MEETINGS WILL BE BROADCAST AND TELEVISED ON HTV.

I WANT THE PUBLIC TO HAVE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROCESS.

THERE WILL BE A PAGE ON OUR -- ON OUR WEB SITE THAT THE PUBLIC WILL BE ABLE TO DOWNLOAD INFORMATION THAT IS DISCUSSED HERE, AND OF COURSE, THERE WILL BE PUBLIC COMMENT TAKEN DURING EACH PANEL MEETING.

LASTLY, BECAUSE I THINK THERE'S BEEN SOME MISINFORMATION DISSEMINATED IN THE MEDIA AND WITH SOME OF THE BLOGGERS THAT I WANT TO AGAIN REITERATE MY INTENTION IN SHEPHERDING THIS ISSUE THROUGH THE BOARD AND TO THIS PANEL.

CONE RANCH IS AN INVALUABLE SWATH OF LAND THROUGH OUR COUNTY, AND I THINK A DECISION OR DISCUSSION ABOUT ITS FUTURE IS A CRITICALLY IMPORTANT ONE TO HAVE, BUT AGAIN -- I'VE STATED IT DURING A COUPLE BOARD MEETINGS, BUT I WANT TO BE PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT MY MAIN INTEREST IS IN PERMANENTLY -- AND I WANT TO EMPHASIZE PERMANENTLY PROTECTING, PRESERVING, AND RESTORING THIS LAND BECAUSE THIS IS SIMPLY NOT TAKING PLACE RIGHT NOW.

I DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TOUR CONE RANCH, BUT I HAVE ON A COUPLE OF OCCASIONS.

WHILE SOME OF THIS LAND IS PRISTINE, MUCH OF IT IS IN POOR CONDITION.

THIS ARE OVER 600 WETLANDS THAT ARE IN -- THAT DESPERATELY NEED RESTORATION.

NOW, I WANT TO SAY THAT I DO NOT KNOW YET WHAT THE BEST METHOD IS TO PERMANENTLY PRESERVE AND PROTECT THIS LAND.

FRANKLY, THIS PANEL HERE WILL BE INVALUABLE IN MAKING THAT DETERMINATION.

ALTHOUGH A PARKS ADVISORY BOARD HAD PREVIOUSLY RECOMMENDED

NOT USING ELAPP DOLLARS TO PRESERVE CONE RANCH, PERHAPS ELAPP IS THE BEST METHOD TO PROTECT THIS LAND. THE VOTERS APPROVED AND THE COUNTY IS MOVING FORWARD WITH AN ELAPP BOND ISSUE THIS FALL, AND I WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORT ELAPP AND EXPANDING THIS PROGRAM.

I WANT TO PROTECT AS MUCH ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LAND AS POSSIBLE.

MIKE MERRILL HAS -- AND MIKE'S HERE THIS MORNING -- HAS SHARED WITH THE BOARD THAT WE'RE GOING TO BE MOVING FORWARD WITH A BOND ISSUE THIS FALL, PROBABLY IN THE \$60- TO \$70-MILLION RANGE.

ONE OF THE QUESTIONS I HAVE AND I'M SURE THIS BOARD WILL DISCUSS IS DOES IT MAKE SENSE TO USE UP MOST OF THAT MONEY FOR ONE LAND ACQUISITION, BEING CONE RANCH, WHEN THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF OTHER PARCELS THAT HAVE BEEN APPROVED AND ARE WAITING TO BE PURCHASED.

AGAIN, I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT, BUT THAT WILL BE A TASK FOR THIS PANEL TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION ON.

THE FCEG CONCEPT IS VERY INTERESTING TO ME, AND FRANKLY, I DO WANT TO CREDIT AND THANK THEM FOR BEING THE IMPETUS TO THIS BROADER DISCUSSION ON PRESERVING AND PROTECTING CONE RANCH; HOWEVER, I WANT TO AGAIN BE CRYSTAL CLEAR THAT I'M WELCOME AND OPEN TO ANY AND ALL IDEAS IN ACCOMPLISHING OUR GOAL, ANYWHERE FROM THE STATUS QUO TO PERHAPS A HYBRID OPTION OF WHAT FCEG IS OFFERING, BUT I WANT TO SAY THAT I HAVE GREAT CONFIDENCE IN THIS GROUP OF PROFESSIONALS. YOU'RE GOING TO FIND THAT THIS IS A VERY COMPLEX ISSUE WITH WATER USES, BOND COVENANTS, VARIOUS PARTNERSHIPS, LEGAL DOCUMENTS.

I JUST SIMPLY ASK YOU TO ANALYZE ALL THE COMPONENTS IN GREAT DETAIL, THOROUGHLY VET THE FCEG PROPOSAL AS YOU CONSIDER THE BEST WAY TO AGAIN PROTECT, PRESERVE, AND RESTORE THIS LAND AND ULTIMATELY COME UP WITH A RECOMMENDATION ON THE BEST WAY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL. FINALLY, THIS WILL BE THE FIRST AND LAST TIME THAT YOU WILL HEAR FROM ME.

I TELL YOU, I DO LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING BACK FROM YOU. I CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND YOUR TIME AND YOUR SERVICE ON THIS VERY, VERY IMPORTANT PANEL.

I KNOW SPEAKING AS THE CHAIR, I CAN TELL YOU THAT THE ENTIRE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS GREATLY APPRECIATES YOUR SERVICE.

SO ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR SERVING ON THIS PANEL AND LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU SOMETIME DOWN THE ROAD.

THANK YOU.

>>EDITH STEWART: THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN.

AND NOW I WILL BEGIN BY INTRODUCING THE PANEL, AND IF YOU'LL JUST GIVE US A LITTLE WAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHO YOU ARE.

APPOINTED BY COMMISSIONER ROSE FERLITA IS ROSANNE CLEMENTI.

APPOINTED BY COMMISSIONER KEN HAGAN IS DENISE LAYNE.

APPOINTED BY COMMISSIONER KEVIN WHITE IS VIVIENNE HARDY.

APPOINTED BY COMMISSIONER AL HIGGINBOTHAM IS DR. FELIX HAYNES.

APPOINTED BY COMMISSIONER JIM NORMAN IS HEIDI McCREE.

APPOINTED BY COMMISSIONER KEVIN BECKNER IS PAMELA JO HATLEY.

AND APPOINTED BY COMMISSIONER MARK SHARPE IS HUGH GRAMLING.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU.

AND NOW YOUR SUPPORT TEAM I WILL INTRODUCE AS WE GO AROUND THE TABLE.

WE HAVE JOHN SHEAHEN FROM WATER RESOURCES' PAUL

VANDERPLOOG, THE DIRECTOR OF WATER RESOURCES; JIM ROBERTS, WATER RESOURCES; MARK ADAMS, OUR BOND COUNSEL; MIKE MERRILL, COMMERCE UTILITIES -- NO, I GOT IT WRONG. UTILITIES ARE FIRST, OF COURSE, AND COMMERCE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR; MIKE KELLY, REAL ESTATE; SUSAN FERNANDEZ, COUNTY ATTORNEY; ED HELVENSTON, COUNTY ATTORNEY; TIM SIMON, DEBT MANAGEMENT, AND ON THIS SIDE WE HAVE STEVE BALSCHKA FROM -- NO, SORRY.

>>ANDREW ZODROW: ANDREW ZODROW.

I'M WITH EPC LEGAL OFFICE, LEGAL DEPARTMENT.

>>EDITH STEWART: ANDREW, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE COMING. WELCOME.

>>ANDREW ZODROW: I CAME ON BEHALF OF TONY D'AQUILA --

>>EDITH STEWART: THANK YOU.

>>ANDREW ZODROW: -- WHO IS RETIRING AT THE END OF THE WEEK.

>>EDITH STEWART: AND BOB STETLER FROM EPC; WILL BISSETT REPRESENTING THE ELAPP COMMITTEE; JACK BERLIN WHO REPRESENTS THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT; PETE FOWLER FROM PARKS, RECREATION, AND CONSERVATION; AND I'M EDITH STEWART, PUBLIC AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATOR.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO INTRODUCE MARY HELEN FARRIS WHO WILL GIVE YOU A TALK ON THE SUNSHINE LAW.

>>MARY HELEN FARRIS: GOOD MORNING, EVERYBODY.

MARY HELEN FARRIS WITH THE COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE.

I WAS ASKED TO COME AND GIVE A BRIEF PRESENTATION ON THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FLORIDA SUNSHINE LAW.

AS YOU MIGHT KNOW, IT APPLIES TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, BUT IT'S A VERY, VERY BROAD LAW AND WOULD APPLY TO THIS GROUP BECAUSE THIS GROUP WAS FORMED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF HELPING IT MAKE A DECISION, AND THEREFORE, THE SUNSHINE LAW DOES REACH DOWN TO THIS GROUP.

I'M GOING TO BRIEFLY -- BASICALLY WHAT THE LAW SAYS IS IT DECLARES ANY MEETINGS OF A BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSION OF A STATE, COUNTY, OR CITY TO BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, AND NO ACTION IS BINDING UNLESS IT'S TAKEN AT SUCH A PUBLIC MEETING, AND REASONABLE NOTICE MUST BE GIVEN OF THE MEETING.

I'M GOING TO BREAK IT DOWN INTO A COUPLE OF DIFFERENT PARTS AND KIND OF EXPAND ON THAT.

FIRST OF ALL, WHAT IS A MEETING?

OBVIOUSLY A FORMAL GROUP LIKE THIS THAT'S ALL TOGETHER IS A MEETING, BUT THE LAW SAYS THAT ANY TIME ANY TWO MEMBERS OF THE SAME BOARD OR COMMISSION TALK TO EACH OTHER ABOUT AN ISSUE THAT MIGHT FORESEEABLY COME BACK TO THEIR BOARD FOR ACTION IS A VIOLATION OF THE SUNSHINE LAW, AND A MEETING IS NOT ONLY A CONVERSATION, IT COULD BE THE USE OF E-MAILS, BLOGS, TWITTER, ALL THE THINGS NOW THAT WE HAVE, ANY WAY OF COMMUNICATION OF AN ISSUE THAT MIGHT COME BACK BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE.

THIS COMMITTEE HAS A FAIRLY NARROW FOCUS ON WHAT IT IS -- IT'S CHARGED WITH DOING, BUT BE MINDFUL THAT YOU CAN'T HAVE ANY KIND OF CONVERSATION AMONGST YOURSELVES UNLESS IT'S DONE AT A NOTICED MEETING.

IT ALSO WOULD APPLY TO A SUBCOMMITTEE, SO IF THIS COMMITTEE WANTS TO FORM A SUBCOMMITTEE TO TAKE ON A CERTAIN TASK, THAT MUST ALSO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SUNSHINE LAW.

THE NOTICE REQUIREMENT, YOU'VE GOT AN EXCELLENT GROUP OF COUNTY STAFF TO ASSIST YOU.

EDITH'S DEPARTMENT, I'M SURE, WILL TAKE CARE OF PROVIDING NOTICE, AND IT JUST HAS TO GENERALLY BE THE DATE, THE

PLACE, THE TIME, AND THE GENERAL SUBJECT MATTER.
YOU'RE NOT -- YOU DON'T HAVE TO POST AN AGENDA.
IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE THAT SPECIFIC.
BUT NOTICE MUST BE GIVEN, AND THE STANDARD IS REASONABLE.
THAT DEPENDS ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES.
WE USE -- WE USE THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT TO SEND OUT
NOTICES.
SOME MISCONCEPTIONS IS THAT THE NOTICES HAVE TO BE IN THE
NEWSPAPER.
THERE ARE SOME TYPES OF MEETINGS WHERE THAT IS TRUE BY
OTHER STATUTES BUT NOT UNDER THE SUNSHINE LAW, IT JUST
NEEDS TO BE A REASONABLE NOTICE.
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT ALL TIMES.
THIS REQUIREMENT MEANS THAT THE PLACE OF THE MEETING SHOULD
BE IN A PLACE THAT IS EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY THE GENERAL
PUBLIC.
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE DISCOURAGES LUNCHEON MEETINGS
WHERE BUSINESS IS GOING TO BE DISCUSSED AND THINGS OF THAT
NATURE.
ONE THING THAT MIGHT COME UP BEFORE THIS GROUP IS A -- FOR
INSTANCE, GOING ON A TOUR OF CONE RANCH.
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S IN THE WORKS.
YEARS AGO THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DID THIS QUITE OFTEN.
THEY WOULD GO TOUR THE WATER RESOURCE FACILITY OR A
DIFFERENT TYPE OF FACILITY, AND TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF
THE SUNSHINE LAW WE HAD TO MAKE NOTICE OF THAT AND MAKE
REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS IF THE PUBLIC WANTED TO COME, AND
THEN, OF COURSE, MINUTES HAD TO BE TAKEN, SO IF SOMETHING
LIKE THAT COMES UP AND THAT'S THE DIRECTION YOU WANT TO GO,
I'D BE HAPPY TO ASSIST TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYTHING IS
FOLLOWED.
THE REQUIREMENT FOR WRITTEN MINUTES IS IN THE -- IS IN THE
LAW.
A LOT OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES TAPE RECORD THEIR MEETINGS,
WHICH IS FINE, BUT THE LAW ACTUALLY REQUIRES THAT WRITTEN
MINUTES BE TAKEN, SO IF YOU USE A TAPE RECORDER JUST TO
ASSIST IN PREPARING THE MINUTES, THAT'S FINE, BUT THEN THE
MINUTES BECOME A PUBLIC RECORD.
AND I WOULD ASSUME, YOU KNOW, THE STAFF HERE AGAIN IS GOING
TO TAKE CARE OF THAT REQUIREMENT FOR THE PUBLIC RECORDS.
I'M GOING TO TOUCH VERY BRIEFLY ON THE ETHICS CODE.
THERE'S A FORM, I BELIEVE, THAT -- THAT -- IT'S A
DISCLOSURE FORM THAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO COMPLETE, AND IT
BASICALLY JUST ASKS FOR THE NATURE OF YOUR EMPLOYMENT,
BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS, A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DUTIES
AND RESPONSIBILITIES THAT YOU HAVE WITH YOUR EMPLOYMENT,
AND TO DISCLOSE THE OWNERSHIP INTERESTS YOU HAVE IN CAPITAL
STOCK OR OTHER, AND THAT'S JUST IF -- MORE THAN 5%.
AND THAT IS FOR FULL DISCLOSURE AND TRANSPARENCY SO THAT
EVERYBODY KNOWS THE -- KIND OF WHERE EVERYBODY'S COMING
FROM, AND THE ONE THING THAT I WILL POINT OUT ON THE ETHICS
CODE IS VOTING CONFLICTS SO THAT YOU CANNOT VOTE ANY MATTER
THAT MIGHT INURE TO YOUR SPECIAL PRIVATE GAIN THAT'S A
FINANCIAL GAIN, AND AS YOU MOVE FORWARD AND START GETTING
INTO THAT PROCESS, I'D BE HAPPY TO ADDRESS ANY SPECIFIC
QUESTIONS THAT YOU HAVE.
THE ETHICS CODE IS VERY, VERY FACT SPECIFIC DEPENDING ON
EXACTLY WHAT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES ARE, SO I JUST WANTED TO
POINT THAT OUT, AND AS YOU MOVE FORWARD, I'M ALWAYS
AVAILABLE SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.
AND WITH THAT, IF ANYBODY HAS ANY QUESTIONS, I'D BE HAPPY
TO ANSWER IT, AND AS DEE KNOWS, I'M ALWAYS AVAILABLE IF
SOMETHING COMES UP.

>> MARY HELEN, I KNOW IN THE PAST YOU HAVE SAID AS LONG AS -- IF WE GET AN E-MAIL AND IT GOES TO THE WHOLE ENTIRE COMMITTEE, IF WE ANSWER THAT E-MAIL, IT MUST GO TO THE WHOLE ENTIRE COMMITTEE SO THAT THERE'S NOTHING, BUT YOU WOULD PREFER US NOT EVEN ANSWERING IT?

>>MARY HELEN FARRIS: RIGHT.

THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT, IF IT'S -- FOR INSTANCE, SOMEBODY ON THE COMMITTEE WANTS TO PUT SOMETHING ON THE AGENDA, THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT IS TO GO THROUGH STAFF.

NOW, THERE'S NO VIOLATION AND NO PROBLEM IF STAFF SENDS OUT AN E-MAIL OUT TO EVERYBODY AND TECHNICALLY EVEN IF ONE MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE DID.

THE ISSUE COMES BACK WHEN ANOTHER PERSON ON THE COMMITTEE RESPONDS TO THE E-MAIL, AND THAT'S WHERE YOU HAVE THE INTERCHANGE, SO -- BUT THAT'S A VERY GOOD QUESTION, AND MY SUGGESTION WOULD BE IF YOU'VE GOT AN IDEA THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO -- LIKE PUT ON THE AGENDA AND YOU DON'T HAVE TIME, YOU CAN'T WAIT TILL THE NEXT MEETING TO BRING IT UP, JUST GO THROUGH STAFF AND MAKE THAT REQUEST.

OKAY?

THANK YOU.

>>EDITH STEWART: THANK YOU, MARY HELEN.

AS I INTRODUCED THE ENVIRONMENTAL PANEL, I SKIPPED OVER AN INTRODUCTION OF KEN JONES FROM THE FLORIDA CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP, AND IT IS HIS PROPOSAL THAT BROUGHT THIS GROUP TOGETHER, AND HE IS BRIEFLY GOING TO ADDRESS THE PANEL.

>> GOOD MORNING.

THANK YOU, EDITH.

THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME HERE.

I WAS WORRIED THERE WHEN I GOT SKIPPED OVER FOR A MINUTE, AND THEN EDITH LEANED OVER FOR A MINUTE AND SAID, YOU WILL BE BRIEF, CORRECT, AND I SAID, YES, I WILL BE BELIEVE.

I APPRECIATE YOU ALLOWING ME TO BE HERE THIS MORNING, AND COMMISSIONER HAGAN'S ALREADY LEFT THE ROOM, BUT I WANTED TO THANK HIM FOR SPEARHEADING THE PROPOSAL, AT LEAST FROM THE ORGANIZATIONAL SIDE OF THIS GROUP.

AS EDITH MENTIONED, MY NAME IS KEN JONES.

I'M A PRINCIPAL IN THE FLORIDA CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP.

WITH ME HERE TODAY IS JOHN WILSON, SECOND ROW; BETH LEYTHAM, WHO'S HANDLING OUR PUBLIC AFFAIRS; AND BARBARA WILHITE, WHO'S SPENT MANY YEARS IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN ONE OF OUR ADJOINING COUNTIES, WILL BE HELPING US ON THE LEGAL SIDE FROM STEARNS WEAVER.

BOTH FCEG AND TNC RESPECT THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS LAND, AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT CONE RANCH IS AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.

WE VERY MUCH APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS PROCESS.

VERY SIMPLY, OUR IDEA IS TO PRESERVE PERMANENTLY CONE RANCH, WHICH MEANS NO RESIDENTIAL AND NO COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT EVER.

CONTRARY TO WHAT YOU MAY HAVE READ OUT THERE, OUR PROPOSAL IS NOT TO DEVELOP CONE RANCH FROM A COMMERCIAL PERSPECTIVE OR ANY OTHER PERSPECTIVE.

THE IDEA IS TO PRESERVE THE LAND.

WE BELIEVE THAT OUR APPROACH WILL PROTECT THE LAND AND ALSO GENERATE MUCH-NEEDED REVENUE FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.

WE DO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS SOMEWHAT OF A UNIQUE CONCEPT.

IT IS ROUGHLY THE MIRROR IMAGE OF WHAT IS NORMALLY DONE

WITH A CONSERVATION EASEMENT WHEREBY THE GOVERNMENT ACTUALLY PAYS THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO PUT A CONSERVATION

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EASEMENT ON A PIECE OF LAND THAT THEY DON'T WANT DEVELOPED; HOWEVER, THIS IS THE REVERSE OF THAT, AND TNC AND FCEG FULLY RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS UNIQUE.

IT IS UNCHARTED TERRITORY.

IT HAS NOT BEEN DONE BEFORE.

AND WE ARE WILLING TO WORK WITH THE COUNTY AND THE STAFF SIFTING THROUGH ALL THE DETAILS, RESEARCHING AND FINDING ANSWERS TO THE TOUGH QUESTIONS FROM THIS PANEL AND MAKING SURE THAT WE ADDRESS THEM ADEQUATELY.

WE CERTAINLY WANT TO GET TO YES, BUT WE COULD NOT AGREE MORE WITH COMMISSIONER HAGAN.

WE DO WANT TO COOPERATE WITH THE PANEL, WE WANT YOU TO ASK TOUGH QUESTIONS, WE WANT THIS PROPOSAL TO BE VETTED.

THE LAST THING THAT WE WOULD WANT TO DO IS PUT THE COUNTY OR YOURSELVES IN THE UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION OF ADOPTING A PLAN THAT DID NOT MAKE ANY SENSE.

THAT'S NOT OUR GOAL.

WE BELIEVE THAT THESE TWO CONCEPTS OF PRESERVING LAND AND WORKING WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY CAN ACTUALLY BE A GOOD THING.

JUST BECAUSE IT'S A BUSINESS COMMUNITY IDEA DOESN'T MEAN THAT IT CAN'T WORK WITH THE ENVIRONMENT, AND WE AGREE WHEN I BELIEVE COMMISSIONER FERLITA STATED AT THE LAST MEETING, THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY CAN WORK WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT CAN WORK WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, AND WE'RE COMMITTED TO DOING THAT.

WE BELIEVE THAT WE CAN DEVELOP AND IRONCLAD CONSERVATION EASEMENT TO PLACE ON CONE RANCH IN PERPETUITY THAT WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME BY DEVELOPERS, BY THE COURTS, AND BY EVEN POSSIBLY FUTURE COMMISSIONERS WHO MIGHT NOT BE SO ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS.

THIS TYPE OF EASEMENT IS A SPECIALTY OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, WHO WE'VE TEAMED WITH ON THIS PROJECT.

WE SOUGHT THEM OUT NEARLY TWO YEARS AGO.

THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF BEHIND-THE-SCENES WORK WITH THEM TO GET TO THIS POINT.

THEY'VE SPENT THE LAST 60 YEARS DOING PROJECTS JUST LIKE THIS, PRESERVING ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS AROUND THIS STATE AND AROUND THE UNITED STATES.

AND PLEASE KNOW THAT WE HAVE NOT COME TO THIS PUBLIC ARENA WITH THIS VERY BIG IDEA WITHOUT GIVING IT SOME THOUGHT.

WE KNEW GOING IN WE HAD A LOT TO PROVE TO A LOT OF FOLKS, AND WE ARE WELL AWARE THAT THIS PLAN WILL CAUSE A HEALTHY DEBATE AND THERE WILL BE SOME CONTROVERSY.

IN FACT, FROM WHAT WE'VE SEEN SO FAR, THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

I THINK THERE'S BEEN QUITE A BIT OF CONTROVERSY SO FAR, BUT WE PLAN ON ADDRESSING ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT HAVE COME UP IN A FAIR, HONEST, AND OPEN FORUM.

THAT SAID, I DO BELIEVE IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE TO BE OPEN AND DIRECT IN OUR ADVOCACY AND HAVE STRAIGHTFORWARD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PUBLIC, THE POLICYMAKERS, AS WELL AS THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY.

IF ANY OF THIS PANEL OR THE INTERESTED PUBLIC WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH US, OBVIOUSLY IN RESPECT OF THE SUNSHINE LAW, WE'D BE HAPPY TO DO THAT.

ANY TIME, ANY PLACE YOU'D LIKE TO MEET, WE'LL BE HAPPY TO SIT DOWN WITH YOU.

AGAIN, I APPRECIATE YOU BEING HERE THIS MORNING.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK, YOUR SERVICE TO THE COUNTY, AND I HOPE THAT WE CAN WORK WITH YOU TO PROTECT CONE RANCH. THANK YOU.

>>MIKE MERRILL: GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME IS MIKE MERRILL.

I'M THE UTILITIES AND COMMERCE ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE COUNTY.

IN A MOMENT I'M GOING TO HAVE PAUL VANDERPLOOG AND MARK ADAMS COME UP AND SPEAK WITH YOU, BUT WE FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GIVE YOU AN ORIENTATION TO GIVE YOU SOME OF THE FACTS THAT YOU'LL NEED TO KNOW AS YOU GO FORWARD WITH YOUR MISSION.

I THINK THE PRIMARY PIECE OF THIS ORIENTATION IS TO LET YOU KNOW THAT -- THAT I STAND HERE WITH A DIFFERENT HAT ON AS DOES KEN HAGAN IF HE WERE, IN FACT, HERE STANDING WITH ME.

MR. JONES TALKED ABOUT THE FACT THAT THIS IS A -- AN ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT. IN FACT, IT'S AN ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN TWO BUSINESSES.

THE OWNER OF CONE RANCH IS A BUSINESS.

IT IS THE WATER RESOURCE SERVICE ENTERPRISE.

IT'S A BUSINESS -- AS MUCH A BUSINESS AS AN INVESTOR-OWNED UTILITY LIKE TECO, FLORIDA POWER.

AS A BUSINESS, WE HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS TO OUR BONDHOLDERS, OUR INVESTORS, AND TO THE RATE PAYERS.

IT'S AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION THAT I NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND AND KEEP IN MIND BECAUSE CONE RANCH IS NOT OWNED BY THE TAXPAYERS.

CONE RANCH IS OWNED BY A BUSINESS.

IT'S AN OVER \$2-BILLION BUSINESS WITH OVER \$100 MILLION IN REVENUE.

ANY BUSINESS, AS YOU KNOW, HAS AS ITS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY TO MAXIMIZE THE VALUE OF ITS ASSETS FOR ITS INVESTORS AND FOR ITS RATE PAYERS, AND IN THAT RESPECT, BOTH MANAGEMENT, BOTH MYSELF, PAUL VANDERPLOOG, AS WELL AS THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SITTING AS THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A BUSINESS HAS TO LOOK AT ITS ASSETS LIKE THE CONE RANCH LIKE A BUSINESS AND MAXIMIZE THE VALUE OF ITS ASSETS.

IN FACT, WE MUST DO THAT, AND IN FACT, THAT RESPONSIBILITY TRUMPS THE FUNCTION OF THE BOARD REPRESENTING THE GOVERNMENT AND TAXPAYERS.

BOTH PAUL AND MARK WILL BE TALKING TO YOU ABOUT THE VARIOUS BOND COVENANTS, THE VARIOUS REGULATIONS, THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THIS THAT HAVE TO BE KEPT IN MIND AS YOU GO FORWARD.

FROM THE BUSINESS POINT OF VIEW, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ANY BUSINESS TAKES INTO ACCOUNT IN TERMS OF FACTORS WHEN WE LOOK AT RETURN ON INVESTMENT BECAUSE THAT'S, IN FACT, WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE.

THE FIRST THING IS TIME, TIME VALUE OF MONEY.

TIME IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE.

TIME IS MONEY, IN FACT.

THAT GOES TO THE QUESTION OF THE DISPOSITION OF THE SALE OF THE PROPERTY.

BUSINESS, THE WATER RESOURCE SERVICES BUSINESS, CANNOT BE COMPELLED TO DISPOSE OF ITS ASSETS.

LIKE ANY BUSINESS, YOU'D WANT TO DISPOSE OF YOUR ASSETS WHEN YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN GET THE BEST DEAL.

SECOND FACTOR THAT ANY BUSINESS TAKES INTO ACCOUNT IS ITS CARRYING COSTS.

GOVERNMENTS, AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, HAVE THE BENEFIT OF ISSUING TAX EXEMPT DEBT UNLIKE PRIVATE BUSINESSES.

TAX EXEMPT DEBT IS A VERY CHEAP FORM OF BORROWING.

THE INTEREST COST ON TAX EXEMPT DEBT IS VERY LOW.

SO OUR BUSINESS -- OUR CARRYING COSTS FOR THIS BUSINESS OF CONE RANCH OF OWNING THE PROPERTY AND CARRYING IT IS EXTREMELY LOW.

WHEN I SAY LOW, IT'S IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 4% TO 4.5% INTEREST RATE, WHICH AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION ON AN AVERAGE BASIS IS PROBABLY A 2% INTEREST RATE.

SO WE'RE NOT IN A POSITION OF HAVING TO DISPOSE OF AN ASSET BECAUSE OUR CARRYING COSTS, OUR COSTS TO MAINTAIN THE ASSET IS EXTREMELY HIGH.

THE OTHER FINAL FACTOR THAT ANY BUSINESS LOOKS AT IS WHAT'S THE HIGHEST AND BEST USE, WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO EXTRACT VALUE FROM THAT ASSET.

SO AS I SAID, PAUL AND MARK WILL COME UP AND TAKE YOU THROUGH SOME OF THE DETAILS, GIVE YOU SOME OF THE HISTORY OF CONE RANCH.

MARK ADAMS IS OUR BOND LAWYER, REPRESENTS THE UTILITY SYSTEM, AND WITH THAT FRAMEWORK, ONCE WE HAVE AN ORIENTATION, EVERYONE KNOWS KIND OF WHERE YOU'RE -- WHERE YOU ARE IN THIS WHOLE SITUATION, THEN YOU CAN MOVE BEYOND THE BUSINESS ASPECTS OF THIS DEAL AND LOOK AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS BECAUSE THAT'S REALLY SECONDARY FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, AND SO AT THIS POINT I'LL ASK PAUL VANDERPLOOG, WHO'S THE DIRECTOR OF THE WATER RESOURCES ENTERPRISE, TO COME UP AND GIVE YOU A LITTLE BIT OF BACKGROUND ON [INAUDIBLE]

>>PAUL VANDERPLOOG: I WOULD TRUST YOU CAN SEE THE SLIDES. IF NOT, YOU HAVE A PAPER COPY OF THE PRESENTATION, AND I MIGHT ALSO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION PERHAPS TO THE HANDOUTS. I BELIEVE IT'S BEEN PROVIDED, A INFORMATION PACKET. IT'S ENTITLED "FACTORS AFFECTING THE USE AND DISPOSAL OF CONE RANCH."

THERE'S AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF A PAGE AND THEN ABOUT SEVEN PAGES BEHIND THAT WITH SOME DETAILS.

I SAY THAT BECAUSE IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO TALK ALL THE DETAILS ATTENDANT TO MANY OF THE ISSUES IN A FEW MINUTES HERE TO START AN ORIENTATION PROCESS, BUT I ASSURE YOU THERE IS ADEQUATE INFORMATION PROVIDED FOR YOUR REFERENCE IN THE DOCUMENTS CITED, AND I DON'T THINK I NEED TO DWELL ON IT. I WOULD HAVE, BUT PLEASE UNDERSTAND THIS IS FROM THE WATER RESOURCE SERVICES STANDPOINT.

WE ARE A COUNTY DEPARTMENT, BUT THIS IS WITH THE OTHER SHOE, AND I WILL SPEAK FOR THE UTILITY THIS MORNING.

HISTORICALLY -- YOU HAVE THAT DETAIL THERE -- THE RANCH GOES BACK TO FEBRUARY '88, AND YOU CAN SEE THERE WITH THE AGREEMENT WITH WEST COAST REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY THE RANCH CAME TO THE COUNTY -- EXCUSE ME -- AND THEN IN MARCH OF '88 CLOSING THE RANCH, YOU CAN SEE THAT, PROPERTY OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY GENERAL FUND AT THAT TIME, NOT THE ENTERPRISE, PLEASE KNOW, AND A WATER DEVELOPMENT EASEMENT TO WEST COAST.

'91 THE RANCH WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE ENTERPRISE FUND, AND IN 1995 A SIGNIFICANT PIECE HERE BECAUSE EVERYBODY WILL DISAGREE ON THE TOTAL ACREAGE ATTENDANT TO CONE RANCH, BUT PLEASE NOTE THIS, AN AGREEMENT WITH CF INDUSTRIES, CFI, WAS CONCLUDED IN 1995, AND YOU CAN SEE THIS ON THAT CHART WE NETTED OUT A GAIN OF 380 ACRES.

SO WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE AERIAL DEPICTION OF THE RANCH SHOWN ON THE NEXT GRAPHIC, IT REPRESENTS TO OUR CALCULATIONS ABOUT 12,880 ACRES, AND IF YOU CAN SEE, TO ORIENT YOU, NORTH IS CLEARLY NORTH, AND THE RED LINE UP THERE AT THE TOP REPRESENTS THE HILLSBOROUGH/PASCO COUNTY LINES.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE OR THE EAST SIDE OF THE RENDERING, THAT RED LINE NORTH TO SOUTH REPRESENTS THE POLK COUNTY LINE. ACTUALLY, YOU CAN SEE WHERE THE RANCH BOUNDARY COMES DOWN, AND IT'S JUST CUT OFF AT THE COUNTY LINE.

IT ACTUALLY EXTENDS A BIT INTO POLK COUNTY.

ACROSS THE SOUTH YOU CAN SEE KNIGHTS GRIFFIN ROAD, AND THEN GOING UP THE EAST SIDE, THAT'S HIGHWAY 39 PARALLELING THE RANCH BOUNDARY AND AS -- WHILE I HAVE THE MAP UP HERE, YOU'LL HEAR OF SOME RAIL EASEMENTS TOO.

THE RAIL EASEMENT THAT'S OF INTEREST TO YOU IS ALONG AND PARALLELS ROUTE 39 UP THE EAST SIDE OF THE RANCH.

YOU CAN SEE HERE THERE ARE -- ABOUT A THIRD OF THE RANCH IS WETLAND.

YOU CAN SEE ON THIS GRAPHIC THOSE ARE SURVEYED WETLANDS, AND THEY WERE REFERENCED EARLIER ON I BELIEVE BY COMMISSIONER HAGAN, AND I THINK THAT'S A KEY POINT.

IT'S NOT IN ANY ONE AREA OF THE RANCH.

THE WETLANDS ARE PERVASIVE AND PRETTY WELL COVER THE ACREAGE OF THE RANCH.

AT THE TOP NORTHEAST -- OR NORTHWEST CORNER, EXCUSE ME, THAT IS CF INDUSTRIES, AND THAT LAND SWAP THAT ACTUALLY WAS TRANSPIRED GAVE THAT BUFFER, IF YOU WILL, ADJACENT TO THE CFI PLANT FACILITY THERE, AND THE SWATH INCURRED DOWN WHERE THE KEY IS AND THE MIDDLE OF THE RANCH ON THE EAST, THE LANDS ATTENDANT TO THE SWAP WERE IN THAT GENERAL AREA.

CLEARLY AROUND TWO-THIRDS OF THE RANCH IS FOR PASTURE AND GRAZING AS YOU CAN SEE.

OF THAT 62%, APPROXIMATELY 89% OF THE GRAZING/PASTURELAND IS UNDER LEASE TODAY.

AND FINALLY, THE 3%, THE UPLAND FOREST -- I DO HIGHLIGHT THE SIGN IN THAT GRAPHIC -- THAT'S AFFECTIONATELY BEEN KNOWN FOR YEARS AS THE ROTARY CLUB FOREST.

THERE ARE OVER A MILLION TREES THAT WERE PLANTED BY THE ROTARY CLUB.

THERE ARE NO RIGHTS ATTENDANT TO THAT FOREST BY THE ROTARY CLUB TODAY.

THEIR AGREEMENT'S WITH -- OFFICIALLY WITH THE COUNTY EXPIRED IN 1995, SO FROM THAT DATE FORWARD THERE ARE NO ENCUMBRANCES ON THAT LAND OTHER THAN IT STILL GETS MUCH NOTORIETY, AND THERE'S A LOT OF PRIDE IN THE WORK THAT WAS DONE THERE.

WE TALKED ABOUT THE -- WE SHOULD TALK A LITTLE BIT -- AND YOU'LL WANT TO LOOK AT YOUR PAPER THAT I CITED FOR MORE DETAIL.

I CAN'T POSSIBLY DO IT ALL, BUT IT'S IMPORTANT TO REALIZE THERE ARE SOME TERMINABLE RIGHTS, AND AS YOU CAN SEE IN THAT LIST THERE, THE RANCH IS SURELY AND THE GRAZING IS SURELY -- COVERS THE PREPONDERANCE OF THE RANCH; HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THERE YOU SHOULD NOTE WITH RESPECT TO THE GOPHER TORTOISES.

THAT -- THAT IS ADJACENT -- THE AREA AFFECTED ON THE RANCH IS JUST TO THE EAST OF THE CFI BUFFER ON THE CONE RANCH PROPERTY WHERE THE TORTOISES ARE LOCATED.

THE STATE OF FLORIDA IS IN THERE, AS YOU CAN SEE, AND SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT.

NONTERMINABLE RIGHTS, AGAIN, THERE'S QUITE A LISTING HERE, AND I WON'T BELABOR THE POINT, BUT YOU CAN SEE OTHER UTILITIES THAT HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE RANCH FOR THE THINGS CITED, AND THEY COME FROM FAR AND NEAR.

THE STATE STILL HAS THE RIGHTS FOR OIL AND MINERAL RESERVATIONS, AND THERE ARE SOME DRAINAGE DITCHES OBVIOUSLY ALONG THE RIGHTS-OF-WAY FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES.

PLANT CITY HAS THE SAME RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THEIR AREAS OF INTEREST.

TAMPA BAY WATER, I THINK THIS IS ONE YOU'LL GET INTO AS TIME GOES ON.

THIS IS OBVIOUSLY -- THEIR EASEMENT IS ACROSS THE RANCH PROPERTY, IT'S PERVASIVE, AND IT'S THERE FOR THE PURPOSE

SHOWN ON THE GRAPHIC.
THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A WELLFIELD DEVELOPED.
THERE ARE SOME WELLS THAT HAVE BEEN SUNK ON THE PROPERTY,
MONITORING WELLS THAT SWFWMD HAS AS WELL AS SOME MONITORING
WELLS FROM TAMPA BAY WATER, BUT WAY BACK WHEN WE STARTED
THIS JOURNEY WITH CONE RANCH, THIS WAS AN EXPECTATION OF
WELLFIELD DEVELOPMENT.
THAT HAS NEVER OCCURRED.
AND YOU CAN SEE THE LAST TWO ARE SMALL ONES.
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY HAS RIGHTS, AGAIN, UP IN THE AREA
WHERE THE GOPHER TORTOISES ARE, JUST FOR A SMALL AREA IN
TWO SECTIONS OR HALF SECTIONS THAT ARE UP TO THE EAST OF
THE CFI BUFFER.
AND THEN ONE FAMILY DOWN IN THE SOUTHWEST CORNER HAS RIGHTS
FOR INGRESS/EGRESS AND UTILITIES AS STATED.
I SHOW YOU THIS ONLY TO GO INTO IT.
THERE'S A NUMBER OF THINGS.
THIS IS AFFECTIONATELY BRIDGE 4.
IT IS LOCATED JUST NORTH OF KNIGHTS GRIFFIN ROAD IN THE
SOUTHERN EXTREMITY OF THE RANCH.
THIS BRIDGE IS -- THE BRIDGES THERE HAVE NOT BEEN FOR
CIVILIAN TRAFFIC, BUT WE HAVE ELECTED TO ENSURE
INGRESS/EGRESS FOR FIREFIGHTING AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
FORESTRY.
THIS BRIDGE REQUIRED REPLACEMENT.
THAT'S ONGOING.
IT'S IN ITS DESIGN STAGE NOW, AND WE WILL REPLACE THAT
BRIDGE AT A COST OF ABOUT \$450,000 BY THE FALL OF '10, AND
I ONLY NOTE THAT BECAUSE THAT COST IS BEING ABSORBED BY THE
ENTERPRISE.
SOME OF THE BASICS -- I DON'T WANT TO BELABOR THE POINT,
BUT AS MR. MERRILL POINTED OUT AND I'VE TRIED TO REITERATE,
THIS IS STRICTLY AS A BUSINESS, AND THE VIEWS AND THE
THINGS THAT WE WILL DISCUSS REFLECT THAT SIDE OF -- OF THE
COUNTY, AND I SURELY DON'T SPEAK FOR THE COUNTY IN AN
AGGREGATE SENSE.
SECOND BULLET, I THINK THERE'S A COUPLE OF KEY THINGS
THERE.
FINANCED AND OPERATED IN A MANNER SIMILAR TO PRIVATE
BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, AND THAT JUST TRACKS RIGHT BY GASB OR
THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING STANDARDS BOARD WITH RESPECT TO
ENTERPRISE FUNDS.
AND THEN THE LAST BULLET HIGHLIGHTS DISPOSAL BEING SUBJECT
TO THE CONDITION OF THE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM'S OUTSTANDING
UTILITY REVENUE BONDS, AND THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.
THE BOND COVENANTS WILL LOOM LARGE WHEN YOU LOOK TO THE
FUTURE AND SOME THINGS TO BE CONSIDERED IN LOOKING AT THE
RANCH, AND MARK WILL TALK TO YOU THOSE IN DETAIL.
BUSINESS PRINCIPLES, IN '95 HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FELT IT WAS
APPROPRIATE TO ESTABLISH BUSINESS PRINCIPLES FOR -- IN
CONJUNCTION FOR -- IN CONJUNCTION WITH AND FOR THE UTILITY.
HERE IS A QUICK SYNOPSIS, IF YOU WILL, BUT YOU CAN SEE OUR
PRINCIPLE CHART, THAT FIRST BULLET, KIND OF SAYS IT ALL,
AND THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT.
A LOT OF FOLKS, YOU HEARD THEM MENTION THIS MORNING, BOY,
THIS WOULD BE GREAT IF YOU COULD MOVE THE RANCH.
THERE'S LOTS OF MONEY, AND THAT'LL HELP YOU OUT.
BEING IN THE UTILITY BUSINESS TODAY IS NOT A GREAT THING TO
DO.
LET ME SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE.
IT'S TOUGH GOING LIKE IT IS FOR EVERYONE ELSE IN THE
ECONOMY, AND WE'RE NOT AN EXCEPTION.
WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE ECONOMIC BACKDROP, THE ABSENCE OF ANY

DEVELOPMENT TO SPEAK OF TODAY, AND THEN ABOUT THREE YEARS OF DROUGHT WHERE WATER CONSERVATION HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED, WHICH DRIVES, OBVIOUSLY, CONSUMPTION OF WATER DOWN, OUR REVENUE STREAM HAS BEEN IMPACTED, AND SO THE SOLUTION IS IF YOU DO SOMETHING WITH CONE RANCH, YOU'LL HAVE THIS MONEY, AND THAT WILL HELP.

NO, IT WON'T, AND YOU'LL HEAR THAT MORE AS THEY TALK ABOUT COVENANTS AND THINGS.

ACTUALLY, THE MONEY FROM ANY SALE OF THE RANCH WOULD HAVE TO GO TO OUR R & R ACCOUNT FOR RENEWAL AND REPLACEMENT BASED ON THE EXISTING GUIDELINES, THOUGH IT WOULDN'T BE SOMETHING I CAN GO OUT AND PAY OUR ELECTRIC BILL OR -- WITH, IT WILL GO BACK INTO R & R.

SECOND BULLET, I THINK THAT'S TRUE.

WE'VE HAD FLAT-RATE STRUCTURE IN THE UTILITY FOR TEN YEARS. JUST OF RECENT, BECAUSE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO IMPLEMENT INDEXING, WHICH DOES NOT IN AND OF ITSELF REPRESENT A PERMANENT RATE INCREASE.

IT DOES PUT IT IN -- WHEN OUR -- OUR FINANCIAL RATIOS ARE BELOW A LEVEL, IT BECOMES A TRIGGER TO IMPLEMENT THE INDEXING, AND WHEN WE ACHIEVE AN ACCEPTABLE RATIO AGAIN, THE PROVISION IS THERE FOR THE INDEXING TO BE TURNED OFF. FINALLY, WE HAVE THAT RESPONSIBILITY, AND I DON'T THINK THAT NEEDS MUCH DISCUSSION, AND IT'S ONE THAT WE TAKE SERIOUSLY.

OUR POSITION, I THINK I HAVE TO DO THIS FOR YOU, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED -- AND I JUST THINK YOU -- YOU CAN WELL UNDERSTAND WITH THE MARKETPLACE IN THE CONDITION THAT IT IS TODAY AND THE OVERALL CONCERNS WE HAVE, CONE RANCH IS NOT ACTIVELY BEING OFFERED FOR SALE BY THE ENTERPRISE.

I THINK THE SECOND BULLET GETS THERE.

I DON'T WANT TO BELABOR THE POINT, BUT IF WE WERE DOING ANYTHING, FAIR MARKET VALUE AT THE HIGHEST AND BEST USE THAT IS STATED BY MR. MERRILL BECOMES VERY PARAMOUNT IN OUR CONSIDERATIONS, AND OF COURSE, THE LAST ONE -- HE SPOKE TO THAT AS WELL -- WITH MAXIMIZED ASSET VALUE, AND WHEN YOU GET TO THAT LAST LITTLE DOT, DOT, DOT BULLET THAT FOLLOWS, MAXIMIZING VALUE OF NONPERFORMING ASSETS, IF THAT'S WHAT THE RANCH IS FOUND TO BE, CLEARLY IS NOT SUPPORTED BY MARKET CONDITIONS AT THIS TIME.

CONTINUING, I THINK WE'VE -- WE'VE TALKED ENOUGH ABOUT THE FIRST BULLET.

THE SECOND ONE, JUST SO THERE'S NO MISUNDERSTANDING AGAIN, THE -- WITH RESPECT TO COUNTY GENERAL FUNDS -- MANY FOLKS OFTTIMES WHEN THEY HAVE CONCERNS ALWAYS ASSOCIATE THE ENTERPRISE WITH TAX FUNDING.

THAT JUST SIMPLY ISN'T THE CASE, AS WAS POINTED OUT BY MR. MERRILL.

WE LIVE AND DIE BY OUR OWN BUSINESS.

YOU KNOW, WE TRY AND PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE IN POTABLE WASTE AND REUSED WATER.

THE REVENUES GENERATED ARE -- HAVE TO BE SUFFICIENT TO OPERATE THE BUSINESS, AND LIKE ALL OTHER BUSINESS, WE GO INTO THE MARKETPLACE TO BORROW FUNDING TO SUSTAIN OUR CAPITAL NEEDS AS WE CONTINUE TO SIZE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET THE COMMITTED DEMANDS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

THE THIRD BULLET, YOU'VE GOT A GREAT REPRESENTATIVE HERE THAT'S GOT VISIBILITY OF THE RANCH FOR SOMETIME.

MR. PETE FOWLER OVER HERE ON MY RIGHT WITH PARKS, RECREATION, AND CONSERVATION WAS ASSIGNED PROPERTY MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RANCH BACK IN 1988. CAN'T HAVE TWO COOKS STIRRING THE POT, SO THE MANAGEMENT

PIECE HAS RESTED WITH PARKS AND REC.
AND THEN JUST A LAST BULLET THERE, JUST FOR YOUR
INFORMATION, WE'VE HAD NO OFFERS OR ANYONE TRYING TO
PURCHASE THE RANCH IN MY TENURE, WHICH WOULD GO BACK TO
2004, BUT I THINK THAT GIVES YOU AN IDEA OF SOME OF THE
QUERIES WE'VE HAD WITH FOLKS THAT MAY HAVE EXPRESSED SOME
INTEREST OF ONE TYPE OR ANOTHER.
AND THE BOND COVENANTS, THEY REALLY BECOME THE BASIS FOR
WHAT WE CAN AND CAN'T DO, AND YOU'RE GOING TO GET A PRETTY
THOROUGH BASIC RUNDOWN OF THOSE COVENANTS BY MARK, BUT I
THINK THAT LAST BULLET SAYS IT ALL WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO
IT.
THE LAST PART OF THAT BULLET SAYS THE COVENANTS SHALL
CONTROL THE DISPOSITION OF ALL CURRENT AND FUTURE
ENTERPRISE SYSTEM ASSETS, INCLUDING THE COUNTY'S CONE RANCH
PROPERTY.
SO THAT -- IN A NUTSHELL, THAT'S JUST ONE OF OUR FRIENDS
OUT ON THE RANCH THERE, AND I WILL BE FOLLOWED BY MR. MARK
ADAMS, WHO WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO FAMILIARIZE YOU WITH
THE -- WITH THE BOND COVENANTS.
>> THANK YOU, PAUL.
GOOD MORNING.
MARK ADAMS FROM EDWARDS ANGELL PALMER & DODGE.
WE'RE BOND COUNSEL TO HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.
I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE BIT OF A HISTORY AND A BRIEF
OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCING AND THE BOND COVENANTS CURRENTLY
IN EXISTENCE.
I WANT TO START OUT WITH A BRIEF OVERVIEW.
THIS IS KIND OF ECHOING WHAT YOU'VE HEARD FROM MIKE MERRILL
AND THE UTILITIES DIRECTOR.
CONE RANCH IS AN ASSET OF THE COUNTY'S UTILITY SYSTEM.
ANY DISPOSITION OF CONE RANCH MUST BE FOR FAIR VALUE IN AN
ARM'S-LENGTH TRANSACTION.
THE COUNTY HAS AN OBLIGATION TO ITS BONDHOLDERS TO OBSERVE
THE COVENANTS OF ITS BOND DOCUMENTS.
I THINK THE LAST BULLET POINT IS PROBABLY THE MOST
IMPORTANT AND CAN'T BE OVEREMPHASIZED.
THE COUNTY IS A SIGNIFICANT PARTICIPANT IN THE MUNICIPAL
BOND MARKET, AND ITS ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS, INCLUDING THE
UTILITIES, HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO PROTECT THE CONTRACTUAL
RIGHTS OF ITS INVESTORS.
EARLY IN MY CAREER, IN 1988, THE COUNTY ISSUED BONDS TO
FINANCE THE ACQUISITION OF CONE RANCH.
THIS INITIAL SERIES OF BONDS WAS SECURED BY A COUNTY'S
COVENANT TO APPROPRIATE FROM ITS NON-AD VALOREM,
NONPROPERTY TAX REVENUES.
TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO PROPERTY TAXES WERE EVER USED IN THE
FINANCING OF CONE RANCH.
IN 1991 THE 1988 BONDS WERE REFINANCED WITH UTILITY BONDS,
AND AT THAT POINT CONE RANCH BECAME PART OF THE UTILITY
SYSTEM.
THE '91 BONDS WERE REFINANCED IN 2001 WITH A SERIES OF
REFUNDING BONDS, AND THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY \$96 MILLION IN
BONDS CURRENTLY OUTSTANDING.
THE 2001 BONDS WERE ISSUED PURSUANT TO COUNTY RESOLUTION
01-68, WHICH WAS AMENDED AND RESTATED IN 2003 BY 03-112,
THOUGH THAT DOCUMENT SETS FORTH THE BOND COVENANTS THAT
NEED TO BE OBSERVED.
BOND RESOLUTION IMPOSES CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS RELATIVE TO
THE DISPOSITION OF ASSETS OF THE UTILITY SYSTEM.
WITH RESPECT TO CONE RANCH, THE BOND RESOLUTION SETS FORTH
BASICALLY THE FOLLOWING TESTS.
I'VE KIND OF ABBREVIATED IT, BUT THESE ARE THE MOST

IMPORTANT PARTS.

WITH RESPECT TO PROPERTY WITH A FAIR MARKET VALUE IN EXCESS OF \$500,000 -- AND I DO BELIEVE THAT CONE RANCH WOULD FALL INTO THAT CATEGORY -- THE PROPERTY MAY NOT BE DISPOSED UNLESS THE UTILITIES DIRECTOR FINDS THAT SUCH PROPERTY IS NO LONGER NECESSARY, USEFUL, OR PROFITABLE, BASICALLY SURPLUS NOT NEEDED IN THE OPERATIONS OF THE SYSTEM. ALSO THERE HAS TO BE A DETERMINATION OF A -- I'M SORRY. CAN YOU HEAR?

SORRY.

THERE HAS TO BE A DETERMINATION OF A QUALIFIED INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT, WHICH I'LL DESCRIBE IN JUST THE NEXT SLIDE, WHICH FINDS IT'S IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COUNTY THAT THE PROPERTY BE SOLD.

FINALLY, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HAS TO CONCUR BY RESOLUTION AND AUTHORIZE THE SALE.

IN THE PRESENT CASE, WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT A QUALIFIED INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT WOULD PROBABLY BE A REAL ESTATE APPRAISER, AND WE WOULD SUGGEST UNLESS THAT REAL ESTATE APPRAISER HAS AN ENGINEERING BACKGROUND MAY WANT TO CONSULT WITH AN ENGINEER TO DETERMINE AND ASSESS THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF CONE RANCH TO THE UTILITY SYSTEM.

THE BOND RESOLUTION DOESN'T PROVIDE A SPECIFIC DEFINITION OF FAIR MARKET VALUE.

FLORIDA CASE LAW PROVIDES SOME GUIDANCE.

BASICALLY IT'S THE AMOUNT OF MONEY A PURCHASER IS WILLING BUT NOT OBLIGATED TO BUY THE PROPERTY TO PAY AN OWNER THAT IS WILLING BUT NOT OBLIGATED TO SELL, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION ALL USES TO WHICH THE PROPERTY IS ADAPTED AND MIGHT IN REASON BE APPLIED.

AS THE UTILITIES DIRECTOR INDICATED, THE COUNTY'S PRACTICE HAS BEEN TO SELL PROPERTY BASED ON HIGHEST AND BEST USE OF THE PARCEL.

THIS IS PART OF THE COUNTY'S BUSINESS PRINCIPLES.

OVERRIDING THIS AS AN ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION BECAUSE THESE WERE FINANCED WITH THE PROCEEDS OF TAX EXEMPT BONDS, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT ANY DISPOSITION OF THE CONE RANCH PROPERTY MEET CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS OF TREASURY REGULATIONS. AND IN THAT REGARD, IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE TAX EXEMPT STATUS OF THE BONDS, TREASURY REGULATIONS REQUIRE THAT LAND BE DISPOSED AT FAIR MARKET VALUE IN AN ARM'S-LENGTH -- AND THEY DO USE THE TERM ARM'S-LENGTH TRANSACTION.

IF CONE RANCH WERE TO BE SOLD, ANY PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THAT PROPERTY WOULD BE CONSIDERED THE RETURN OF TAX EXEMPT BOND PROCEEDS.

AS SUCH, TAX EXEMPT BOND PROCEEDS HAVE CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS AND ARE RESTRICTED AS FAR AS USE AND INVESTMENT.

THAT'S ALSO COVERED IN THIS SLIDE.

AND THE COUNTY IN THAT REGARD MAY HAVE TO TAKE REMEDIAL ACTION TO PROTECT THE TAX EXEMPT STATUS OF ITS OUTSTANDING BONDS, WHICH IS DISCUSSED IN THIS SLIDE AS WELL.

THE -- AS THE DIRECTOR INDICATED, ONCE THE COUNTY RECEIVES ANY PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF CONE RANCH, THE BOND COVENANTS ARE VERY SPECIFIC AS TO HOW THOSE MONIES MAY BE APPLIED.

THE MONIES ARE RESTRICTED.

THEY'RE RESTRICTED FOR FEDERAL TAX PURPOSES, BUT THEY'RE ALSO RESTRICTED UNDER THE BOND RESOLUTION, AND IN THIS CASE, SINCE WE WOULD ASSUME THAT CONE RANCH WOULD REPRESENT LESS THAN 10% OF THE ASSETS OF THE UTILITY SYSTEM -- I BELIEVE THE UTILITY SYSTEM HAS A FIXED ASSET VALUE OF ABOUT \$2 BILLION -- THOSE PROCEEDS WOULD HAVE TO BE DEPOSITED IN THE RENEWAL AND REPLACEMENT ACCOUNT.

MONIES IN THE RENEWAL AND REPLACEMENT FUND CAN ONLY BE USED FOR REPLACEMENT OF CAPITAL ASSETS, EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE OR REPAIRS, OR BOND REDEMPTION.

YOU CAN'T USE IT TO REDUCE RATES, YOU CAN'T USE IT FOR OPERATING EXPENSES, AS WAS DISCUSSED. YOU'RE VERY LIMITED.

THE LAST BULLET POINT ISN'T REALLY GOING TO BE APPLICABLE IN THIS CASE, BUT IF THE PROCEEDS WERE IN EXCESS OF 10% OF THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF THE ASSETS, YOU WOULD BE REQUIRED TO REDEEM BONDS.

THIS IS BASICALLY THE SUMMARY.

UNDER THE BOND RESOLUTION AND UNDER FEDERAL TAX LAW, DISPOSITION OF CONE RANCH HAS TO BE FOR FAIR MARKET VALUE IN AN ARM'S-LENGTH TRANSACTION.

AS I INDICATED, THE COUNTY IS AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT AND THIS UTILITY IS AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE BOND MARKET, AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO OBSERVE THE COVENANTS OF THE BOND DOCUMENTS TO MAINTAIN CREDIBILITY WITH THE INVESTORS.

SALES PROCEEDS ARE VERY LIMITED IN WHAT THEY CAN BE USED FOR.

UNDER THE BOND DOCUMENTS, THEY NEED TO GO INTO A RENEWAL AND REPLACEMENT FUND.

THEY CANNOT BE USED FOR ANYTHING BASICALLY OTHER THAN EXTRAORDINARY REPAIRS, CAPITAL REPLACEMENT, OR REDEMPTION OF BONDS.

ANY QUESTIONS?

>> I'VE GOT A BUNCH, BUT I DON'T -- MAYBE I'LL JUST PUT THEM ALL IN WRITING BECAUSE IT'S -- EVERY PAGE I'VE GOT A QUESTION.

WHEN DO THE BONDS EXPIRE, THE -- YOU RENEWED THE BONDS 2003, THAT'S ONE.

WHEN DOES THAT EXPIRE?

>> MIKE, WHAT WOULD BE OUTSTANDING?

>>MIKE MERRILL: THE EXISTING BONDS FOR THE UTILITY SYSTEM MATURE, I BELIEVE, IN 2015, BUT WE ARE PREPARING RIGHT NOW TO GO BACK TO MARKET IN THE FALL TO ISSUE ABOUT \$200 MILLION IN NEW DEBT, WHICH WILL AGAIN BE ISSUED UNDER THESE EXISTING BOND COVENANTS SO THAT ADDITIONAL DEBT RIGHT NOW IS NEEDED TO COMPLETE CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SYSTEMS.

>> OKAY.

AND I'LL JUST ASK ONE OTHER [INAUDIBLE]

THE UTILITIES RENEWAL AND REPLACEMENT ACCOUNT, WHAT -- I'M HEARING CAPITAL REPLACEMENTS, SO NO NEW CAPITAL VENTURES COULD BE USED FOR THE UTILITY DEPARTMENT WITH THAT FUND, A NEW WATER PROJECT, A NEW TREATMENT PROJECT, SOMETHING ALONG --

>> THE -- THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.

THE RENEWAL FUND IS SUPPOSED TO BE FOR CAPITAL REPAIRS, REPLACEMENT, THINGS OF THAT NATURE, AND IN EXCESS OF THAT A REDEMPTION OF BONDS.

I DON'T THINK IT CONTEMPLATES NEW PROJECTS PER SE.

>> ARE THEY PROHIBITED, OR IT JUST DOESN'T ADDRESS IT?

>> IT DOESN'T ADDRESS IT.

>> OKAY.

>> I HAVE QUESTIONS.

>> YEAH.

>> AND I WANT TO BACK UP.

JUST A FEW CLARIFICATIONS, AND ONE, MR. MERRILL, I BELIEVE IT WAS, MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THIS PROPERTY IS NOT OWNED BY THE TAXPAYERS --

>> THAT'S CORRECT.

>> -- BUT IT'S OWNED BY A BUSINESS.

BUT IN MR. VANDERPLOOG'S PRESENTATION, IT SAYS THAT WATER RESOURCE ENTERPRISE ASSETS ARE WHOLLY OWNED BY HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.

>> THAT'S CORRECT.

BY THE UTILITY ENTERPRISE, BY THE UTILITY SYSTEM.

>> SO THE UTILITY SYSTEM, WRE, OR THE ENTERPRISE IS A UTILITY BUSINESS OWNED BY HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY?

>> HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AND THE BONDHOLDER INVESTORS THAT FINANCED THE IMPROVEMENTS TO THAT UTILITY.

>> OKAY.

>> THEY HAVE THEIR INTEREST.

>> AND I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS A QUESTION FOR YOU, BUT IF WE BACK UP TO 1988 AND THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WHERE THIS PROPERTY WAS ACQUIRED FROM WEST COAST REGIONAL, IT WAS ACQUIRED BY HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY; RIGHT?

THAT'S WHAT --

>> I WASN'T PART OF THAT YET.

>> OKAY.

>> TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, I WASN'T PART OF THAT NEGOTIATION.

>> WELL, THE PRESENTATION, THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS, SO JUST READING FROM THE BULLET POINTS.

>>MIKE MERRILL: YES, THAT'S CORRECT.

>> SO IT WAS ACQUIRED BY HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, AND THEN IT WAS TRANSFERRED TO THIS UTILITY.

SO THERE WE HAD A TRANSFER OF COUNTY-OWNED LANDS TO THIS UTILITY; RIGHT?

>> THE TRANSFER WAS IN CONNECTION WITH THE 1991 FINANCING, WHICH WAS WITH UTILITY BONDS, SO IT WOULD BECOME AN ASSET OF THE UTILITY.

>> BUT THE UTILITY SOLD THE BONDS, AND WITH THAT REVENUE ACQUIRED THE PROPERTY?

>>MIKE MERRILL: YES, THAT'S CORRECT.

>> YES, BECAUSE THEY WOULD HAVE REFUNDED THE 1988 BONDS WITH THE 1991 -- THEY WOULD HAVE REFINANCED IT.

>> SO IS IT TRUE, THEN, THAT ORIGINALLY THE PROPERTY WAS OWNED BY THE COUNTY --

>> YES.

>> YES.

>> -- AND THEN IT WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE UTILITY?

>> YES.

>> YES, MA'AM.

>> THAT IS CORRECT.

>> OKAY.

AND -- LET'S SEE.

OKAY.

THAT'S PROBABLY ALL MY QUESTIONS RIGHT NOW.

THANK YOU.

>> YOU'RE WELCOME.

YES, MA'AM.

>> MAY I ASK A QUICK QUESTION?

WAS THIS INFORMATION PRESENTED TO THE BOCC RECENTLY BEFORE THIS PANEL WAS CREATED, THE INFORMATION YOU JUST PROVIDED?

>>MIKE MERRILL: THIS -- NO, THIS SPECIFIC -- THIS LEVEL OF SPECIFICITY WASN'T PRESENTED, BUT, YOU KNOW, THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER PRESENTATIONS IN THE PAST THAT --

>> OKAY.

AND SECONDLY, MR. VANDERPLOOG I THINK SAID THAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY OTHER FORMAL OFFER TO PURCHASE THE CONE RANCH PROPERTY, SO, THEREFORE, THE COUNTY HAS NOT GONE FORWARD IN A PROCESS OF DETERMINING FAIR MARKET VALUE OR ANY OF THE PROCESS THAT WOULD GO FORWARD WITH DEALING WITH THE TERMINABLE VERSUS NONTERMINABLE RIGHTS?

>> RIGHT.
IN 1999 THE THEN DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINED THAT IT WAS A NONPERFORMING ASSET, AND THAT WAS CONFIRMED BY THE -- THE BOND ENGINEER AT THAT TIME.
IT WENT TO THE BOARD, BUT THE BOARD DID NOT CONFIRM IT TO BE THE CASE.
>>PAUL VANDERPLOOG: IT TERMINATED THAT, AND I HAVE NOT TAKEN ANY OTHER ACTION.
>> THANK YOU.
>> I HAVE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS.
ROSANNE CLEMENTI.
DO WE HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT ON THE ENTIRE PROPERTY?
>> I'M NOT AWARE OF ONE.
>>MIKE MERRILL: HAVE YOU-ALL DONE ANYTHING LIKE THAT? WE HAVEN'T, THE UTILITY SYSTEM, NO.
>> WE HAVE A -- WE HAVE A MANAGEMENT PLAN THAT WAS DONE I THINK IN '88, BUT -- COMMISSIONED BY THE GREENWAYS -- HILLSBOROUGH RIVER GREENWAYS TASK FORCE.
>> THE OTHER QUESTION, AGAIN, COULD SOMEBODY REPEAT WHAT THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S RESPONSIBILITIES ARE ON THE PROPERTY AND HOW MUCH?
YOU MENTIONED IN --
>> THEY CURRENTLY HAVE A CONSERVATION EASEMENT OVER APPROXIMATELY 700 ACRES --
>> OKAY.
>> -- UP IN THE NORTHWEST QUADRANT, PRESERVATION THAT CORRESPONDS ALSO WITH THE LAND THAT'S RESERVED FOR GOPHER TORTOISE RELOCATION.
>> AND MY LAST QUESTION, HAS THE WATER UTILITY HAVE ANY VISION -- HAVE YOU HAD ANY VISION FOR THE FUTURE USE OF THIS PROPERTY?
ANY IN-HOUSE PLANNING OR --
>>MIKE MERRILL: NO, WE DO NOT.
>> OKAY.
>>PAUL VANDERPLOOG: [INAUDIBLE]
>> I WANT TO ASK ONE LAST QUESTION ABOUT THE RESTORATION AGREEMENT.
I UNDERSTAND IN THE LATE '90s THERE WAS ACTUALLY A RESTORATION PLAN FOR CONE RANCH.
I SAW SCOTT EMERY HAVE IT IN HIS HANDS ABOUT A MONTH AGO AT THE MEETING.
NUMBER ONE, I'D LIKE TO HAVE A COPY OF THAT RESTORATION PLAN IF ONE WAS DONE ON CONE RANCH BECAUSE WE DON'T NEED TO REINVENT THE WHEEL, AND BECAUSE YOU'RE A UTILITY -- MY QUESTION IS BECAUSE YOU'RE A UTILITY, YOU ARE NOT -- YOU CAN'T IMPLEMENT THAT PLAN AND START FILLING IN THE DITCHES THAT WERE DUG UP AND RESTORING THE WETLANDS BECAUSE IT WOULD ACTUALLY DEVALUE THE PROPERTY BY DOING SO, AND YOU CAN'T DO THAT TO ONE OF YOUR ASSETS, SO YOU LOOK AT RESTORING WETLANDS AND NATURE AS A DEVALUATION VERSUS A VALUATION, CORRECT, OF THE PROPERTY?
>> JOHN SHEAHEN, WATER RESOURCE SERVICES.
THE BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE UTILITY WOULD BE TO TAKE ALL ACTIONS APPROPRIATE TO SUPPORT THE BUSINESS, WHICH WOULDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION UNLESS THERE WAS SOME KIND OF CONTAMINATION.
FOR INSTANCE, IF ONE OF OUR DIESEL TANKS LEAKED AT A PLANT THAT'S THERE TO SUPPORT THE GENERATOR BACKUP, WE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE THE ACTIONS TO ENVIRONMENTALLY RESTORE ANY DAMAGE THAT MIGHT BE DONE.
>> SO THAT'S THE REASON THAT WE HAVEN'T SEEN ANY OF THE RESTORATION PLAN IS BECAUSE OF THAT UTILITY VERSUS THE

COUNTY OWNING IT?

I MEAN, THAT'S -- PEOPLE NEED TO UNDERSTAND.

>> CORRECT.

IT'S NOTHING THAT THE UTILITY WOULD EXPEND FUNDS FOR.

>> NOW, I SAW BACK YEARS AGO THERE WAS CONTAMINATION ON CONE RANCH.

HAS THAT BEEN CLEANED UP AND WHEN?

>> I HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE.

>> THERE WAS CONTAMINATION ON A PARCEL OF LAND ABOUT 200 ACRES THAT WEST COAST REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY HAD AN OPTION ON WHEN THEY PURCHASED THE ORIGINAL TRACT, BUT WE COULD NOT CONFIRM THAT THAT WAS EVER PURCHASED, THAT ADDITIONAL ACREAGE.

>> OKAY.

BECAUSE THE DOCUMENTS YOU PROVIDED US AND THE PLAT BOOKS AND PAGE ACTUALLY ADDRESS THE CONTAMINATION ON THE SITE AND RECOGNIZE THAT IT'S THERE, SO I'M JUST CURIOUS, WAS -- YOU KNOW, I HAVE TO GO BEYOND THIS DOCUMENT TO FIND OUT WAS ANYTHING EVER DONE TO CLEAN UP -- AND WHAT TYPE -- ALL I SEE IS CONTAMINATION.

IT DOESN'T SAY EXACTLY WHAT TYPE OF CONTAMINATION.

DO YOU HAVE THIS?

I'D BE HAPPY --

>>MIKE MERRILL: I THINK IF WE DON'T HAVE THE INFORMATION, WE CAN GET IT FOR YOU.

>> THAT'S WHAT I'M JUST SAYING.

I'M FILLING IN THE BLANKS HERE.

I SEE THE WORD "CONTAMINATION" ON THE SITE AND IT'S PART OF THE RECORD AND PLAT BOOKS, SO OBVIOUSLY IT WAS SUBSTANTIAL ENOUGH --

>>MIKE MERRILL: RIGHT.

>> -- TO BE IN THE LEGAL DOCUMENT.

>>MIKE MERRILL: YOU RAISE A COUPLE OF REALLY GOOD POINTS THAT -- YOU KNOW, THE REASON WHY THIS WAS PURCHASED BY THE UTILITY SYSTEM IS BECAUSE WEST COAST REGIONAL NOW TAMPA BAY WATER HAS WATER RIGHTS, AND SO, YOU KNOW, AT THAT TIME THERE WAS SOME CONSIDERATION THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME VALUE AS A UTILITY ASSET, SO IT WASN'T JUST THAT, YOU KNOW, THE COUNTY'S GENERAL FUND WANTED TO UNLOAD THE LAND AND WE JUST SAID, FINE, WE'LL BUY IT.

IT WAS IN CONNECTION WITH, YOU KNOW, A POTENTIAL UTILITY USE.

THE OTHER THING THAT YOU MENTIONED, WHICH IS IMPORTANT, IS IT GOES TO THE HEART OF HIGHEST AND BEST USE.

NO BUSINESS WOULD DO ANYTHING PURPOSELY TO DEVALUE ITS ASSETS, AND SO LIKEWISE, YOU KNOW, WE WOULD NOT TAKE ANY ACTION OR ALLOW ANY ACTION TO BE TAKEN, WHETHER IT'S, YOU KNOW, ESTABLISHING SOME SORT OF EASEMENT OR ANY OTHER ACTION THAT WOULD DEVALUE THE ASSET ITSELF SO THAT -- YOU KNOW, CLEARLY THAT WOULDN'T BE IN OUR INTEREST.

>> I DON'T KNOW WHO I'M -- MAY I MAKE A COMMENT.

I THINK THAT THIS -- FOR -- TO ESTABLISH A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD -- AND I NEED THIS INFORMATION AS WELL -- THERE -- AND I APPRECIATE YOUR -- YOUR PRESENTATIONS THIS MORNING BECAUSE MANY OF US MAY COME FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND WE MAY KNOW SOME OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE PROPERTY BUT WE MAY NOT TRULY UNDERSTAND OR KNOW THE FINANCIAL RAMIFICATIONS, AND SO YOUR PRESENTATIONS THIS MORNING HAVE BEEN GREAT.

I THINK WE GOING FORWARD NEED TO HAVE -- AND MAYBE YOU CAN ADDRESS IT TODAY, I DON'T KNOW, BUT I THINK WE PROBABLY NEED SOME COPIES IN ADVANCE TO LOOK OVER.

THERE'S A HISTORY OUT THERE FROM THE PURCHASE OF THE

PROPERTY AND THEN THE CONNECTED, IF YOU WILL, RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL SIDE OF IT AND THE MANAGEMENT PLANS, AND I FOR ONE -- AND MAYBE JUST SOMEONE CAN GET BACK TO ME INDIVIDUALLY, BUT I'D APPRECIATE HEARING WHAT HAS GONE ON SINCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THOSE MANAGEMENT PLANS AND WHY OR WHY NOT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN HAS OR HASN'T OCCURRED, VARIOUS ASPECTS OF IT, AND I'M HEARING IN LARGE PART IT'S BECAUSE OF A VALUATION ISSUE.

WE JUST NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT AND WE NEED TO KNOW THAT BECAUSE I THINK TO EVALUATE ANY PROPOSAL THAT COMES FORWARD, BE IT FROM FECG OR ELAPP POTENTIALLY GETTING ITSELF INVOLVED OR ANY OTHER POTENTIAL PURCHASER, WE NEED TO HAVE A REALLY GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THAT PROPERTY OUT THERE IF WE'RE SEEKING PERMANENT PROTECTION OF IT.

SO IF WE COULD -- I THINK, PETE, YOU MENTIONED THERE WAS AN INITIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN.

MY UNDERSTANDING, THERE WAS AN UPDATED ONE, BUT AGAIN, PROBABLY A DECADE AGO OR SO AND GET A PRESENTATION FROM SOME OF YOU AS TO WHAT'S HAPPENED WITH THE ELEMENTS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN, WHY, AND WHERE MIGHT WE ASSESS THAT PLAN RELATIVE TO WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE BECAUSE I'M ASSUMING IF SOMETHING DOES HAPPEN TO THE PROPERTY GOING FORWARD, IN ORDER TO CLOSE A DEAL WE'RE ALL GOING TO WANT TO LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE OF HOW WHAT HAPPENS OUT THERE GOING FORWARD IS AFFECTED BY THE HISTORY OF THIS PROPERTY, SO DO WE HAVE THAT INFORMATION?

>>EDITH STEWART: WELL, I'D LIKE TO MOVE AHEAD WITH SOME HOUSEKEEPING PLANS.

I THINK IN YOUR DOCUMENTS YOU HAVE A PROPOSED TIMELINE. I BLOCKED OUT SOME MONDAYS IN A EVERY TWO-WEEK CYCLE FOR YOU TO DISCUSS, BUT BEFORE WE DO THAT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO ELECT YOUR CHAIRMAN SO THAT THAT DISCUSSION CAN TAKE PLACE AS WE MOVE FORWARD, AND YOU CAN BLOCK OUT THOSE ISSUES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PLACE. IT'S ONE SHEET OF PAPER, AND IT'S CLOSER TO THE TOP THAN TO THE BOTTOM.

AND SO IF YOU WOULD ALLOW ME TO SERVE AS YOUR PARLIAMENTARIAN, I WOULD TAKE NOMINATIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN. MR. GRAMLING.

>> EDITH, I'D LIKE TO NOMINATE HEIDI McCREE.

>>EDITH STEWART: ALL RIGHT. ARE THERE FURTHER NOMINATIONS?

>> DO I HAVE TO ACCEPT?

[LAUGHTER]

>> I MOVE THE NOMINATIONS CLOSE AND HEIDI BE ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION.

>> SECOND.

>>EDITH STEWART: ALL RIGHT.

ALL IN FAVOR.

[CHORUS OF AYES]

ALL RIGHT.

>> THIS MEANS I HAVE TO KEEP MY MOUTH QUIET AND LET EVERYBODY ELSE SPEAK?

>>EDITH STEWART: [INDISCERNIBLE CROSS TALK] AND THE NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS WOULD BE THE DISCUSSION OF YOUR TIMELINE AND THEN THE DISCUSSION ITEMS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE THIS STAFF TO BRING FORWARD TO YOU, AND IF WE NEED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, WE WILL ALSO OBTAIN THOSE FOR YOU.

>> ALL RIGHT.

WELL, IT'S NICE TO --

>> BE SUCKED IN.

>> EDITH, WAS THAT -- YOU JUST WANT ME TO KIND OF GO

FORWARD HERE, IS THAT --
>>EDITH STEWART: YES.
FIRST OF ALL, PERHAPS WE COULD ADDRESS THE TIME FRAME.
I HAVE SET THE MONDAYS BECAUSE THIS ROOM IS AVAILABLE.
WE CAN DO HILLSBOROUGH TELEVISION LIVE ON THOSE DATES, BUT
WE CERTAINLY CAN DO WHATEVER WORKS FOR YOU ALL WITHIN THE
ABILITY THAT WE HAVE TO PRODUCE THE LIVE OR REPRODUCED
PROGRAMMING.
>> OKAY.
WELL, PARDON ME FOR A MOMENT WHILE I COLLECT MY THOUGHTS.
>> MADAM CHAIRMAN.
>> THANK YOU.
ROSANNE.
>> WHAT IS OUR DEADLINE TO GET BACK TO THE BOARD?
>>EDITH STEWART: THE BOARD HAS ASKED FOR YOU TO GIVE THEM
AN INTERIM REPORT BY JULY 15th, WHICH IS THEIR NEXT
MEETING, AS TO YOUR COURSE OF ACTION, BUT NO SPECIFICITY IS
REQUIRED OTHER THAN WHAT YOUR WORK PLAN IS.
>> OKAY.
SO IT DOES LOOK LIKE THERE ARE MEETING DATES SCHEDULED FOR
US THE NEXT -- THROUGH THE MONTH OF JULY.
MIGHT WE JUST ADDRESS THAT RIGHT AWAY AND DETERMINE, THEN,
HOW WE'LL PROCEED IN TERMS OF -- WITH SUBSTANCE OF THOSE
MEETINGS.
ARE FOLKS AVAILABLE TO MEET ON JULY 13th AND JULY 27th?
>> I'M NOT.
I WILL NOT BE HERE ON THE 13th, BUT I AM THE 27th.
>> I'M JUST THE OPPOSITE.
13th IS OKAY, 27th IS NOT.
>> OKAY.
>> I CAN DO BOTH.
>> I CAN DO BOTH.
>> ONE THOUGHT THAT'S COMING TO MIND, I ACTUALLY HAVE A
CONFLICT ON THE 13th, WHICH I MAY BE ABLE TO CHANGE, BUT
HAVE WE ADDRESSED THE CONCEPT OF A VICE CHAIR OR A PERSON
WHO MIGHT SERVE IN THE ABSENCE OF THE CHAIR?
AND I WONDER IF THERE'S SOMEONE -- I JUST BRING THAT UP.
I DON'T KNOW IF THE STAFF HAS DISCUSSED THAT --
>>EDITH STEWART: CERTAINLY.
>> -- OR WHAT THE COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE --
>>EDITH STEWART: AT YOUR PLEASURE.
>> -- BUT IN THE EVENT OF MY ABSENCE, IF WE COULD HAVE
SOMEONE SERVE MAYBE AS A VICE CHAIR.
WHAT DOES THE COMMITTEE FEEL --
>> THAT'S FINE.
>> SO HOPEFULLY I WON'T BE ABSENT, BUT IF I AM, I WOULD
TAKE NOMINATIONS FOR A VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE AT THIS
POINT IF THERE ARE ANY VOLUNTEERS.
>> I'D BE GLAD TO VOLUNTEER.
>> OKAY, ROSANNE.
GREAT.
DOES ANYONE ELSE -- ALL RIGHT.
WELL, BY ACCLAMATION, COMMITTEE CONSENSUS, ALL IN FAVOR OF
ROSANNE CLEMENTI SERVING AS THE VICE CHAIR, PLEASE SAY AYE.
[CHORUS OF AYES]
ANY OPPOSED?
ALL RIGHT.
THANK YOU, ROSANNE.
APPRECIATE THAT, JUST IN THE EVENT OF SCHEDULING CONFLICTS.
WELL, IT SOUNDS LIKE WE ARE LIKE ANY GOOD COMMITTEE NEVER
GOING TO, YOU KNOW, GET EVERYONE HERE AT THE SAME TIME.
SHOULD WE JUST PROCEED WITH THE SCHEDULE --
>> IT LOOKS LIKE THERE WERE CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF

CONFLICTS ON THE 13th.
MAYBE WE OUGHT TO RESCHEDULE THAT AT SOME OTHER TIME.
THERE WERE SEVERAL PEOPLE, AND I ACTUALLY HAVE ONE, BUT I
CAN BREAK IT IF I NEED TO, BUT I'D RATHER NOT.
>> OKAY.
WHAT WOULD BE -- WHAT WOULD -- NOT TO PUT IT OFF FOR A
WHOLE MONTH, JULY 27th BEING THE NEXT SCHEDULED MONDAY,
WOULD WE WANT TO CONSIDER A DATE BETWEEN NOW AND THE 27th,
RECOGNIZING THE BOCC'S SUGGESTED INTERIM DEADLINE?
>>EDITH STEWART: I THINK CONDUCTING YOUR BUSINESS TODAY
WILL TAKE CARE OF THE 15th DEADLINE, BUT YOU COULD SET A
DATE TODAY IF YOU CHOSE TO DO THAT IN LIEU OF THE 13th OR
STAY WITH THE 13th.
WE SET THE TWO WEEKS THINKING THAT THAT WAS A REASONABLE
ACCOMMODATION, BUT YOU COULD HAVE IT EVERY WEEK IF YOU
CHOSE TO.
LET ME GET MY CALENDAR.
>> ARE MONDAYS THE BEST DAY FOR STAFF IN THIS ROOM?
IS THAT --
>> I'M HEARING THAT MONDAY'S THE BEST DAY AT THIS POINT FOR
THE COMMUNICATIONS OF THIS GROUP TO MEET.
>>EDITH STEWART: CORRECT AND FOR STAFF BECAUSE SO MANY OF
US STAFF OTHER BOARD COMMITTEES AND ACTIVITIES AS WELL, SO
IN ORDER TO -- THIS IS THE BEST TIME TO HAVE THIS GROUP
TOGETHER.
>> COULD THAT BE ANY TIME ON A MONDAY?
>>MIKE MERRILL: I THINK THE TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE IS
STILL MEETING IN THE AFTERNOONS ON MONDAY ONCE A MONTH, SO
OTHER THAN THAT CONFLICT ON MONDAY --
>> WELL, LET ME JUST -- RECOGNIZING THE 4th OF JULY IS
SATURDAY, HOW ABOUT THE 6th?
IS THAT HIGH RISK?
>> [INAUDIBLE]
>> HOW ABOUT THE 20th?
>> OR LATER IN THE DAY ON THE 13th FOR THOSE WHO HAD A
CONFLICT ON THE 13th, OR IS THAT NOT WORKABLE?
>> I COULD DO IT AFTER LUNCH.
>>EDITH STEWART: LET US CHECK AND SEE IF THE
TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE IS ON THE 13th.
>> HOW ABOUT --
>> THE 20th.
>> AND THERE'S NO OTHER DAY, LIKE IF WE JUST -- OKAY.
THE 20th.
LET'S THROW THE 20th OUT.
>> FRIDAYS ARE OUT, EDITH?
>>EDITH STEWART: NOT NECESSARILY; HOWEVER, THE -- WE HAD
ANOTHER TASK FORCE MEETING.
>> HERE'S WHAT I'LL SUGGEST.
WHY DON'T WE KEEP MONDAY THE 27th ON THE CALENDAR AND THEN
BUILD A CALENDAR FROM THERE EVERY TWO WEEKS ON MONDAYS FROM
9:00 TO 11:00 A.M. SO THAT WE CAN UTILIZE THIS ROOM, AND
HOPEFULLY WE WON'T NEED TO MEET TOO MANY MORE MONDAYS, BUT
-- YOU KNOW, SO WE HAVE A CALENDAR BUILT.
SINCE THIS IS OUR FIRST MEETING AND ASK EDITH OR WHOEVER
THE APPROPRIATE STAFFPERSON, IF YOU COULD IDENTIFY MAYBE A
DATE AND A TIME BETWEEN NOW AND THE 27th, AND PER THE
SUNSHINE LAWS, IF WE COULD E-MAIL EACH OTHER WHETHER OR NOT
THERE WOULD BE A DATE THAT PEOPLE COULD MEET.
I MEAN, WE MIGHT SPEND THE NEXT HOUR TRYING TO FIGURE OUT
EACH OTHER'S SCHEDULES.
>>EDITH STEWART: WE'LL SEND OUT A COUPLE OF DATES AND YOU
CAN RESPOND.
>> THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

I DON'T WANT TO DELAY OUR MEETING A WHOLE 'NOTHER MONTH, BUT I THINK IN TERMS OF EFFICIENCY MOVING ON HERE TODAY, MAYBE THAT WOULD BE A PROCESS WE COULD PURSUE.

ALL RIGHT.

LET'S -- IF -- I SEE WE HAVE PUBLIC COMMENT, AND I THINK THAT'S REALLY CRITICAL AND IMPORTANT.

BEFORE WE ADJOURN TODAY, THOUGH, WOULD IT BEHOVE US TO TALK AMONGST OURSELVES OR TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT -- THE PLEASURE OF THE COMMITTEE -- BUT ALSO PUT TOGETHER SOME QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION TO HELP BUILD THE NEXT AGENDA.

DEE.

>> MADAM CHAIR, I WOULD LIKE TO -- BEFORE WE START ACTUAL DISCUSSIONS AS A PANEL -- I MEAN, QUESTIONS ARE GREAT, BUT THERE'S AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF INFORMATION.

I'VE BEEN SITTING ON COMMITTEES SINCE 1998 FOR CONE RANCH, AND THAT HISTORY'S CRITICAL, KNOWING WHY I WAS SITTING ON THAT.

I MEAN, JOHNNIE BYRD PUT ME ON THAT COMMITTEE TO PROTECT THE WATER ON CONE RANCH FROM TAMPA BAY WATER.

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WAS GOING ON, SO THERE'S A HISTORY THERE WITH THAT LITTLE BATTLE THAT PROBABLY NEEDS TO BE DONE.

WE NEED TO BE EDUCATED AND I THINK THE PUBLIC NEEDS TO BE EDUCATED BEFORE WE START HAVING ANY MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE. FOR ONE, I WOULD LIKE THE LEGAL ASPECT OF CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AT SOME POINT, AND AGAIN, WE CAN ALL DISCUSS IN WHAT ORDER WE WANT THIS, BUT I'M JUST THROWING OUT SOME BASIC GENERAL IDEAS I THINK WE ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO BE EDUCATED ON.

SO MAYBE AN EXAMPLE OF A CONSERVATION EASEMENT.

OBVIOUSLY -- I'M LOSING TRACK.

WHO'S SITTING AT THE TABLE?

NATURE'S CONSERVANCY, THEY'VE DONE THIS BEFORE.

MAYBE WE CAN SEE ONE OF THEIR CONSERVATION EASEMENTS JUST TO SEE WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT AND GET THE LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS OF WHAT'S GOING ON, SO WE NEED THE LEGAL END. HISTORY OF CONE RANCH, ABSOLUTELY THE RESTORATION MANAGEMENT PLAN IF IT'S OUT THERE -- I THINK IT IS -- WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE.

I'VE GOT A HYDROLOGY REPORT OF CONE RANCH THAT WAS DONE IN '98 OR '99, BUT I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING WITH WILDLIFE OR -- BECAUSE I KNOW WILDLIFE CORRIDOR IS A MAIN ISSUE.

I'D LIKE NATURE'S CONSERVANCY TO TELL US HOW THIS WORKS WITH OTHERS BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND THEY HAVE NOT DONE THIS EXACT TYPE OF THING BEFORE.

IT'S USUALLY WITH GOVERNMENT, NOT WITH PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

MAYBE HAVING A MANAGEMENT COMPANY COME AND TALK TO US, LAND MANAGEMENT, BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT NECESSARILY THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PROPERTY OR THE RESTORATION SPLIT INTO SIX PARCELS OR EVEN ONE.

WE WANT IT TO BE UNIFORMLY DONE, SO WHO IS GOING TO ACTUALLY MONITOR THAT AND MAKE SURE THAT MANAGEMENT PLAN COMES ALIVE.

BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME PRIVATE ENTERPRISES OUT THERE, NONPROFITS, THAT DO THAT, AS WELL AS THE NATURE'S CONSERVANCY, BUT WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS OUT THERE EVEN LOCALLY.

THERE WAS ONE OTHER THING I KNOW WHEN WE'RE DOING THIS.

>> WHILE YOU'RE THINKING, SHOULD WE TAKE --

>> ELAPP STUFF.

>> THE ELAPP, OKAY.

>> THE ELAPP, TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT -- I MEAN, IF WE'RE

GOING TO THROW EVERYTHING ON THE TABLE -- OF COURSE, WE WANT A IN-DEPTH PRESENTATION FROM FCEG ON WHAT EXACTLY -- I READ THEIR PROPOSAL AND IT SOUNDS GOOD, BUT HOW ARE YOU GOING TO EFFECTUATE THAT?

SO AT SOME POINT WE NEED TO KNOW SPECIFICALLY WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT BUT MAYBE NOT RIGHT IN THE FIRST -- NEXT MEETING, YOU KNOW, [INAUDIBLE]

AND THEN ELAPP, WHAT ARE THEIR CAPABILITIES, WHAT IS ON THEIR LIST, WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL, AND WHAT -- IS THERE ANYTHING OUT THERE BESIDES THESE TWO ENTITIES?

>> OKAY.

GOOD --

>> I'D LIKE TO HAVE A LITTLE BIT MORE ON COUNTY LAW. DOES THE COUNTY -- DO WE -- DOES THE COUNTY HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO TAKE ONE PROPOSAL AND SAY, YES, OR IS THERE A REQUIREMENT FOR A BID PROCESS, LOOK AT THE HIGHEST BIDDER, ET CETERA, ET CETERA, ET CETERA?

IT SEEMS TO ME WE NEED TO KNOW THAT.

>> GOOD POINT.

THANK YOU.

ROSANNE.

>> I WOULD LIKE A COPY OF THIS HYDROLOGIC REPORT THAT WAS DONE BY SWFWMD, AND I THINK WE NEED ANY OTHER REPORT THAT HAS BEEN GENERATED ON THE PROPERTY.

THE OTHER THING IS WE ALSO NEED A PLANNER HERE.

I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW -- I'D LIKE TO SEE A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AND A ZONING MAP FOR THE PROPERTY, AND MY QUESTION -- ONE OF MY QUESTIONS, YOU SAID THAT THE ITEMS THAT WE WERE LOOKING AT, THE SLIDES ARE ON THE WEB?

SO WE CAN GET ACCESS TO THE COLOR RENDERINGS OF THESE AERIALS; CORRECT?

>>EDITH STEWART: YES.

THOSE THAT WERE IN MR. VANDERPLOOG'S PRESENTATION WILL BE POSTED TODAY.

THEY ARE NOT THERE PRESENTLY.

>> OKAY.

BUT WE WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE COLOR?

OKAY.

>> MADAM CHAIR.

>> HUGH.

>> I JUST HAD A BRIEFING ON THE HYDROLOGY FROM STAFF, AND IF THE COMMITTEE WISHES IT, I'M SURE WE CAN MAKE SURE THAT OCCURS.

>> OKAY.

THAT'S GREAT.

>> PARTICULARLY ANY CHANGES THAT HAVE OCCURRED SINCE THESE [INAUDIBLE]

>> EVERYTHING'S A DECADE OLD RIGHT NOW.

>> VIVIENNE.

>> REGARDING THE FCG -- FCEG PRESENTATION, THE ONLY THING I HAVE IS THE TRANSCRIPT FROM THEIR PRESENTATION TO THE BOCC, AND AT THAT POINT IT SEEMS TO ME I REMEMBER ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS ASKING FOR A FORMAL PROPOSAL.

WAS THAT EVER PREPARED AND SUBMITTED, AND IF NOT, WHEN WILL IT BE, AND WHEN WILL WE HEAR DIRECTLY FROM FCEG REGARDING A SIMILAR PRESENTATION SO THAT WE CAN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK IF THERE'S -- I HAVE LOADS OF QUESTIONS BASED ON THAT PRESENTATION, BUT BASED ON THE TRANSCRIPT.

>>EDITH STEWART: MS. HANDY, THERE WAS -- THAT WAS TRANSMITTED TO YOU ELECTRONICALLY WITH THE AGENDA, AND IT'S A BRIEF PRESENTATION.

IT'S TWO PAGES THAT'S ALSO IN YOUR PACKET TODAY, AND OBVIOUSLY WE WILL SCHEDULE THEM WHEN THE PANEL DECIDES.

ALSO, MS. McCREE, WE HAVE ASCERTAINED THAT THE 20th IS FREE IN THE MORNING, THE TASK FORCE MEETS IN THE AFTERNOON, IF THAT'S A DATE YOU CARE TO CONSIDER.

>> OKAY.

SO THE AFTERNOON OF THE 20th IS --

>>EDITH STEWART: THE MORNING OF THE 20th IS AVAILABLE.

>> OKAY.

>> THAT WOULD WORK.

>> THAT'S GOOD.

>> OKAY.

IT LOOKS LIKE A MAJORITY, SO INSTEAD OF THE 13th, WE'LL DO THE MORNING OF JULY 20th.

GREAT.

THANK YOU.

>> SO WE'RE NOT OBLIGATED TO GET SOME SORT OF REPORT TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BY JULY 15th?

>>EDITH STEWART: YOU ARE NOT.

>> OKAY.

>>EDITH STEWART: A WORK PLAN IS ADEQUATE.

>> WHAT I'M HEARING, AND I THINK THIS MAKES SENSE, IS WE NEED MORE BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND HISTORY TO LEVEL OUR PLAYING FIELD SO WE CAN THEN GO FORWARD.

AT SOME POINT WE SHOULD ALSO HEAR THE ACTUAL PROPOSAL THAT FECG -- AND I MAY BE GETTING THAT INCORRECT -- AND ANY OTHER PROPOSALS, BUT I THINK THE REASON WE WERE CREATED AS THE IMPETUS IS THEN THAT THEY'VE COME FORWARD TO THE BOCC WITH THIS PROPOSAL, SO TO HELP US REFLECT PROPERLY UPON THE INFORMATION THAT'S COMING TO US FROM THE STAFF OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AND TO THEN APPLY IT PROPERLY TO ASSESS THIS PROPOSAL, AND IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING FROM THE BOCC -- AND I WASN'T AT THE JUNE 3rd MEETING -- I THINK IT WAS JUNE 3rd WHEN THIS PANEL WAS CREATED, BUT IT WASN'T JUST TO DISCUSS THE SPECIFIC MERITS OF THAT PROPOSAL, AND WE MAY -- WE WILL DISCUSS THAT, BUT IT WAS ALSO TO TALK ABOUT CONE RANCH IN GENERAL AND WHAT THIS COMMITTEE WOULD RECOMMEND FOR THE FUTURE OF THAT RANCH, SO I'M ASSUMING SOMEBODY'S TAKING SOME DETAILED NOTES ON THE STAFF LEVEL --

>>EDITH STEWART: YES, WE ARE.

>> -- SO CAN GET WHAT THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT JUST ASKED FOR AND BUILD AN AGENDA.

YES.

>> JUST FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD SIDE --

>> USE YOUR MIKE.

>>EDITH STEWART: USE YOUR MIKE.

>> ON THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE OF THE DATES, IT WOULD BE -- IN THE DEFERENCE OF TIME IN ANY OF THESE MEETINGS AND FOR PREPARATION, I THINK WE SHOULD SET -- YOU KNOW, A LOT OF THINGS HAVE COME UP, BUT I THINK WE OUGHT TO PICK THE FEW YOU WANT TO DO ON THE 20th AND THE FEW YOU WANT TO DO ON THE 27th AND TRY TO GET SOME IDEA OF THE AGENDA GOING FORWARD SO THAT THE GOOD PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM CAN BE PREPARED, BRING THAT TO YOU AT THOSE MEETINGS, AND IF YOU TRY TO TACKLE ALL THE THINGS YOU JUST BROUGHT UP, WE'RE GOING TO BE HERE UNTIL THE 23rd OR 24th, SO I THINK WE OUGHT TO JUST TRY TO MAYBE NARROW THE AGENDA DOWN AND PICK THE -- IF YOU WANT THEIR PRESENTATION, THAT MAY TAKE THE BETTER PART OF AN HOUR AND A HALF WITH QUESTIONS, BUT IF YOU WANT TO DO THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OR SOME OF THE PLANS THAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR, SOME OF THE BACKGROUND SO MAYBE IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO JUST KIND OF KNOW WHAT WE'RE EARMARKING FOR THE 20th, EARMARKING FOR THE 27th, AND SO ON, AND THEN WE CAN BE PREPARED AND KEEP THIS THING UNDER TWO, 2.5 HOURS.

>> GOOD POINTS, BUT IT MAKES SENSE TO GET THE HISTORY AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL BACKGROUND -- WE'VE GOT THE FINANCIAL BACKGROUND, IF YOU WILL -- AND GET THAT SO THAT WE HAVE A HISTORY OF THE RANCH, THE PROPERTY ITSELF.
YES.

>> I THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO GET THE PROPOSAL EARLY BECAUSE WE'RE KIND OF FLYING BLIND.
WE'RE LEARNING ALL ABOUT THIS PROPERTY, BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE CONSIDERING YET.

>> OKAY.

>> I'M NOT SURE THE PROPOSAL -- WHEN I THINK ABOUT STEPS, I HAVE A LOT OF OTHER QUESTIONS.

I THINK WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DETERMINE CRITERIA FOR SALE, WHETHER OR NOT WE THINK IT SHOULD BE SOLD, WHAT THE PURPOSE OF THE PROPERTY SHOULD BE.

IT MIGHT BE PREMATURE FOR US TO LOOK AT THE PROPOSAL EARLY ON.

>> I AGREE.

I'D RATHER KNOW THE HISTORY AND THE CURRENT CONDITIONS OF THE PROPERTY RIGHT NOW SO WE CAN THEN PUT TOGETHER OUR THOUGHTS.

>> WELL, LET'S DO THAT, BUT LET'S ALSO HEAR THE PROPOSAL SOONER THAN LATER.

LET'S GET THE HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE AND ANSWER SOME OF THESE OTHER QUESTIONS.

SPECIFICALLY I THINK SOME OF THE QUESTIONS WERE THE LEGAL PROCESS THAT THE COUNTY WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH IF WE DECIDED TO PURSUE A PROPOSAL AND WHAT WOULD BE THE -- YOUR QUESTION, THE BID PROCESS, AND OTHER LEGAL ASPECTS.

I MEAN, THERE'S NONTERMINABLE RIGHTS AND TERMINABLE RIGHTS, AND HOW WOULD YOU GO THROUGH THAT PROCESS, SO --

>> THE COUNTY HAS TO BID THIS.

I QUESTION LOOKING AT THE PROPOSAL AT ALL.

>> USE THE MIKE.

>> SOME --

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> I'M SORRY.

IF THE COUNTY HAS TO BID THIS, I WOULD QUESTION SHOULD WE LOOK AT THE FCEG PROPOSAL?

THAT WAS THE BASIS OF MY PREMATURE QUESTION.

>> THE OTHER ISSUE THAT WAS RAISED, I THINK, IS -- AND WE COULD ROLL THIS IN AFTER THE PROPOSAL, BUT I THINK -- AND MAYBE -- THE POINT BEING, HAS THIS BEEN DONE ELSEWHERE?

IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING IT HASN'T BEEN DONE HERE IN THE COUNTY.

HAS IT BEEN DONE IN THE REGION, IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA, IN THE NATION?

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE OTHER CREATIVE FINANCING CONCEPTS THAT ARE OUT THERE FOR CONSERVATION THAT WE MAY NEED TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AS WE REFLECT MOVING FORWARD TOO, SO WE -- THAT CAN BE SOMETHING ELSE THAT IS ROLLED INTO AN AGENDA.
DEE.

>> THAT JUST REMINDED ME, THERE WAS A LAW PASSED THIS SESSION GIVING TAX BREAKS TO PRIVATE ENTITIES THAT GET INVOLVED WITH CONSERVATION EASEMENTS.

CAN WE PLEASE HEAR ABOUT THAT FROM THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT AS WELL, WHAT THAT TAX BREAK WOULD DO?

I MEAN, OBVIOUSLY THERE WOULDN'T BE A TAX BREAK IF THE COUNTY BOUGHT IT OR ELAPP, BUT IF A PRIVATE ENTERPRISE DOES, WHAT DOES THAT ACTUALLY MEAN VERSUS THE GREENBELT THAT WE'VE GOT ON THERE?

AND I'D LIKE TO JUST MAKE A PERSONAL REQUEST, IF POSSIBLE, AND MADAM CHAIR, I GUESS IT'S UP TO YOU AND THE REST OF THE

COMMITTEE.

THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT ARE GOING TO BE SITTING AND WATCHING THIS IN THE AUDIENCE THAT HAVE GOT A LOT OF GOOD IDEAS AND QUESTIONS, AND RATHER THAN WAIT UNTIL -- IF WE'RE GOING TO HAVE ALL THIS INFORMATION COME OUT, I WOULD LIKE -- IF THERE'S SOME WAY THAT THEY COULD COME UP IN AN ORDERLY WAY IF SOMEBODY'S PRESENTING AND THEY CLOSE THEIR PRESENTATION AND SAY, DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, TO ALLOW THEM TO MAYBE STAND AT THE PODIUM, ASK A QUESTION, NO GRANDSTANDING, NO THREE MINUTES.

I MEAN, THEY GET THAT AT THE END, BUT TO BE ABLE TO ASK A PERTINENT QUESTION WHEN SOMEBODY'S GIVING US AN EDUCATION THAT WE MIGHT NOT THINK OF.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ALL HEADS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

>> ALL RIGHT.

WELL, WE CAN CONSIDER THAT, I THINK, AND LET'S USE THAT AS A NICE TRANSITION FOR THE COMMITTEE, UNLESS THE COMMITTEE -- I'M LOOKING AT THE CLOCK AND REALIZING THAT WE WERE SCHEDULED UNTIL 11:00, AND WE CAN ALWAYS AS A GROUP DECIDE HOW TO PROCEED ACCORDINGLY, BUT WE DO HAVE A STACK OF COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC, FOLKS HERE IN THE AUDIENCE, AND IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING FOR TODAY'S PURPOSES WE'D LIKE TO ENABLE THEM OR ALLOW THEM THREE MINUTES TO SPEAK, AND THEN THE COMMITTEE CAN DISCUSS THAT ISSUE.

WHAT I WOULD SUGGEST IS WE ALLOW ALL THESE FOLKS TO HAVE THEIR THREE MINUTES, AND THEN WE CAN COME BACK TOGETHER AS A COMMITTEE BEFORE WE ADJOURN TODAY AND TAKE ANY OTHER COMMENT FOR TODAY'S PURPOSES IF THAT'S ALL RIGHT WITH EVERYONE.

ALL RIGHT.

THE FIRST SPEAKER I HAVE IS WESLEY BAILEY.

MR. BAILEY.

>> THANK YOU.

I AM WESLEY BAILEY, AND I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS A FEW THOUGHTS.

FIRST OFF, I'VE GOT TO SPEAK TO ONE THING.

WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT CONE RANCH IS OWNED BY AN ENTERPRISE, THAT ENTERPRISE IS OWNED BY HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, SO THIS IS A TAXPAYER ISSUE, THAT IS TAXPAYER PROPERTY, AND BELIEVE ME, THE TAXPAYERS ARE VERY MUCH CONCERNED WHAT GOES ON WITH CONE RANCH.

HIGHEST AND BEST USE, I'M NOT SURE YOU CAN ALWAYS PUT A DOLLAR VALUE ON THAT.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO AUCTION OFF THE LIBERTY BELL TO RAISE FUNDS TO PAY OFF DEBTS.

THERE IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE THAT IS EVERY BIT AS VALUABLE TO A COMMUNITY AS ITS HISTORICAL HERITAGE, AND WE NEED TO RESPECT THAT WHEN WE CONSIDER PROPERTIES OF THE SCALE, MASSIVE SCALE -- IT'S AS BIG AS PLANT CITY, AND IT'S UNIQUE.

THERE'S NOTHING ELSE LIKE IT LEFT IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, AND I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THERE WOULD BE A GREAT DEAL OF PUBLIC SUPPORT IF FCEG WANTED TO GO TO TWO RIVERS RANCH AND BUY THAT AND ASK FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENTS, AND I BELIEVE THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY WOULD BE ALL FOR GIVING THEM ALL MANNER OF SUPPORT, YOU KNOW, TAX MONEY, TAX RELIEF, WHATEVER, BUT CONE RANCH WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT IN A DIFFERENT WAY.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY IS UNIQUE IN WHERE WE GET OUR WATER. WE GET 2.5 TIMES AS MUCH OF OUR WATER FROM THE SURFACE AS WE DO FROM THE GROUNDWATER.

THIS IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY OTHER COUNTIES IN HILLSBOROUGH AND IN FLORIDA OPERATE.

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CONE RANCH RECEIVES 17 BILLION GALLONS OF WATER IN THE FORM OF RAINFALL EVERY YEAR THIS ADDITION TO THE RAIN -- RUNOFF THAT DRAINS UP FROM PLANT CITY, WHICH ARE THOSE DITCHES THAT ARE IN THE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS THERE.

THAT IS TWO BILLION GALLONS MORE THAN YOUR RESERVOIR WILL HOLD IF YOUR RESERVOIR EVER ACTUALLY DOES HOLD WATER.

I'M SURE IT WILL.

BUT THAT RESERVOIR COSTS \$150 MILLION TO BUILD, AND WE'RE LOOKING AT \$125 MILLION TO FIX IT.

THE CONE RANCH WATER COULD BE AS MUCH AS 48 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY.

THAT'S TWO MILLION GALLONS OF WATER.

THAT'S RAINFALL.

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO CAPTURE ALL THAT, BUT YOU'VE GOT THAT TIGER CREEK CANAL AND THAT EAST CANAL.

YOU CAN ONLY RESTORE THOSE WETLANDS IF YOU TREAT THIS PROPERTY AS A SINGLE UNIT.

YOU CANNOT BREAK IT INTO SIX OR SEVEN PARTS AND PUT TOGETHER ANY KIND OF PLAN THAT'S GOING TO MAXIMIZE THE INCREASE IN VALUE OF WATER ADDED.

PUT A VALUE ON THAT WATER THAT YOU CAN POTENTIALLY GAIN WHEN YOU'RE EVALUATING THIS DEAL, THINK ABOUT THAT WATER IN TERMS OF 2009 COSTS, THINK ABOUT THAT WATER IN TERMS OF FUTURE COST.

THAT WATER IS GOING TO REPLACE YOUR MOST EXPENSIVE WATER, YOUR DESAL WATER, WHICH IS -- IT -- IT CAN'T JUST BE LET GO FOR WHAT IT IS NOW.

TALK -- SOME OF YOU-ALL -- THERE ARE PEOPLE HERE THAT KNOW A LOT MORE ABOUT WETLANDS THAN I DO.

YOU UNDERSTAND HOW THE WETLANDS PURIFY THE WATER THAT WOULD BE DRAINING OUT NORTHWARD FROM THE PLANT CITY AREA, YOU UNDERSTAND HOW THOSE WETLANDS WILL RECHARGE OUR AQUIFER.

WE'RE SENDING ABOUT 80 MILLION GALLONS A DAY OR MORE TO PINELLAS COUNTY BECAUSE THEIR AQUIFER WENT DOWN SO FAR, THEY CAN'T PUMP ANY WELL WATER OUT OF THERE ANYMORE.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COULD BE THE SAME WAY IF WE WERE TO START PUMPING AND PUMPING AND PUMPING.

THAT'S HOW -- WE HAVE TO AT SOME POINT PUMP MORE WATER OUT WHEN WE GET TO THE -- IN THESE DROUGHTS.

FIVE OUT OF THE LAST TEN YEARS WE'VE HAD DROUGHTS.

FOLKS, AT SOME POINT THERE'S A NEW NORMAL.

WE'VE GOT TO GET MUCH BETTER AT THINKING ABOUT OUR WATER RESOURCES IN THIS COUNTY, AND PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, BEFORE YOU MAKE A DECISION ON CONE RANCH, THOROUGHLY STUDY OUT HOW MUCH WATER YOU COULD GAIN AND ADD TO THE HILLSBOROUGH RIVER THE NATURAL WAY.

JUST PUT IT BACK THE WAY GOD MADE IT.

THAT'S ALL WE NEED TO DO.

IT'S JUST THAT SIMPLE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

>> THANK YOU, MR. BAILEY.

APPRECIATE YOUR BEING HERE.

AND MR. BAILEY'S COMMENTS REMINDED ME THAT I DIDN'T ASK, AM I SUPPOSED TO KEEP THE TIME OR IS SOMEONE ELSE KEEPING THE TIME?

>> EDITH STEWART: I'M WATCHING.

>> THANK YOU, EDITH.

I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE I DIDN'T DISRESPECT THE TIMING SITUATION.

MS. JOYCE NEWMAN, PLEASE.

>> GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME IS JOYCE NEWMAN, AND I AM VERY CONCERNED ABOUT A LOT OF ISSUES, AND I'LL JUST GET DIRECTLY TO THE POINT.

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I WISH FOR THIS CONE RANCH TWELVE THOUSAND EIGHT -- OVER 800 ACRES TO BE SOLD TO ELAPP AND NOT FC&EG. THEIR -- I SPOKE ON JUNE 3rd TO THE BOCC ABOUT THE TIMBERING THAT IS BEING DONE ON KNIGHTS GRIFFIN ROAD. THAT COMMENCED IN MAY, AND THE RESPONSE THAT I GOT WHY THEY'RE TAKING THE TREES NOW, I JUST -- I FOUND IT VERY SUSPICIOUS THAT IT'S HAPPENING NOW WITH THE PENDING SALE TO FC&EG.

THE RESPONSE I GOT FROM COMMISSIONER HIGGINBOTHAM WAS THESE ARE DISEASED TREES.

WELL, I WENT OUT THERE MYSELF AND I GOT PHOTOS, AND YOU CAN GO TO FACEBOOK, PROTECT CONE RANCH, AND LOOK AT THE PHOTOS. THESE ARE NOT DISEASED TREES.

SOME OF THEM PROBABLY ARE.

WELL, THEN IT DOES FALL UNDER GOOD FORESTRY MANAGEMENT, AND THAT'S WHAT IT -- IT TURNED OUT TO BE.

NONETHELESS, A LOT OF WILDLIFE ARE LOSING THEIR HOMES AND RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES LITERALLY, AND SOME OF THE NEIGHBORS IN THE AREA ARE HAVING TO WAKE UP TO CHAINSAWS AND HUGE TRUCKS TO THE TUNE OF ABOUT 20 HUGE TRUCKS A DAY LEAVING WITH FAIRLY HEALTHY TREES GOING OUT OF THE FOREST, AND IN THE CONTRACT BETWEEN DOF, THE WATER DEPARTMENT, AND -- AND SOUTH FLORIDA TIMBER, THESE TREES ARE VALUED AT \$8.10 A TON.

THOSE ARE PRETTY CHEAP TREES, I WOULD SAY, BUT I'M JUST -- I'M NOT ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT THAT, I'M ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE WATER.

WE DO HAVE A DROUGHT SITUATION, HAVE HAD FOR MANY YEARS, AND IT JUST MAKES ALL THE SENSE IN THE WORLD THAT -- THAT WE NEED TO PRESERVE AS MUCH OF THE WETLANDS AS WE POSSIBLY CAN.

APPROXIMATELY 47 MILLION GALLONS FALL ON CONE RANCH A DAY OF RAINFALL BASED ON OUR RAINFALL AVERAGES, SO I URGE YOU TO PLEASE JUST KEEP IT FOR THE PEOPLE AND ELAPP AND NOT TO FC&EG.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

DENNIS CARLTON, AND FOLLOWING DENNIS WILL BE MARIELLA SMITH, JUST SO YOU-ALL --

>>EDITH STEWART: MADAM CHAIRMAN, IF I COULD JUST INTERJECT, IN THE PACKET TODAY IS A LETTER FROM CHARLES BRONSON, COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE, THAT DESCRIBES MORE FULLY THE OPERATION THAT'S TAKING PLACE AT CONE RANCH.

>> OH, OKAY.

GREAT.

THAT'S HELPFUL INFORMATION.

THANK YOU.

DENNIS.

>> THE ONE THING THAT WE HAVE NOT HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT TODAY -- AND I'M NOT GOING TO TALK ABOUT ANY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, BUT WHAT I'M GOING TO TALK ABOUT IS MARKET CONDITIONS.

THERE'S A TIME TO BUY THINGS AND THERE'S A TIME TO SELL THINGS.

IT'S VERY EVIDENT TO ME THAT THIS GROUP, MIKE MERRILL AND THE BONDING FOLKS, HAVE SOME REAL PROBLEMS HERE WITH PUTTING AN EASEMENT ON THE PROPERTY AND THEN DISPOSING OF IT.

I WOULD SUGGEST TO THE BOARD THE VERY FIRST THING THAT NEEDS TO BE LOOKED AT IS GET AN APPRAISAL BECAUSE WHEN YOU GET AN APPRAISAL, I THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE VERY SURPRISED AT THE VALUE.

I BASE THAT ON COMP SALES AND BEING IN THE INDUSTRY, AND

ONCE YOU GET THAT, IT'LL GIVE YOU AN IDEA DO WE WANT TO BUY OR DO WE WANT TO SELL, AND I JUST WANT TO SHARE THAT WITH YOU, AND IT MAY NOT BE BUY AND FEE, IT MAY BE PUT AN EASEMENT ON IT.

THE CITIZENS OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY HAVE BEEN ADAMANT EVEN IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES.

THE ELAPP PROPOSAL -- I DON'T REMEMBER EXACTLY THE NAME OF IT -- BUT, YOU KNOW, PASSED THE CITIZENS.

I THINK IT WAS ABOUT A 70% APPROVAL IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.

>> ALMOST 80.

>> ALMOST 80.

THAT SHOWS YOU WHAT THE PEOPLE OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FEEL LIKE.

AND THIS MIGHT BE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A PURCHASE INSTEAD OF MAKING A SALE, AND I JUST WANT TO SHARE THAT WITH YOU.

I THINK IN YOUR OWN MIND EVERYBODY HAS AN IDEA OF WHAT THE VALUE IS.

STEVE BALSCHKA AND MIKE KELLY WILL HAVE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT IDEA OF VALUE THAN MOST FOLKS BECAUSE OF WHERE THE MARKET IS TODAY, AND I JUST WANTED FOR YOU-ALL TO THINK ABOUT THAT.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

YES, MA'AM.

I APPRECIATE THE TIME.

>> I WAS JUST GOING TO THANK YOU AND THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE.

APPRECIATE IT.

MARIELLA SMITH.

>> HI.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE AND FOR WORKING ON THIS ON YOUR SPARE TIME.

I WOULD JUST ASK YOU TO CONSIDER FIRST THINGS FIRST AS YOU'RE SETTING YOUR AGENDA TODAY AND POSSIBLY MAKE A MOTION TO CONSIDER PLAN "A" BEFORE YOU CONSIDER PLAN "B," AND TO MY MIND, PLAN "A" WOULD BE PRESERVING THIS LAND PUBLICLY, TOTALLY IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP, AND ONLY AFTER YOU'VE EXHAUSTED ALL POSSIBLE AVENUES OF ACCOMPLISHING THAT, THEN TURN YOUR ATTENTION TO PLAN "B" OF SELLING THE LAND TO PRIVATE OWNERSHIP WITH A CONSERVATION EASEMENT.

BUT YOU HAVE A LOT OF STAFF RESOURCES, COUNTY RESOURCES DEDICATED AS WELL AS YOUR OWN VOLUNTEER TIME.

MONEY IS -- OUR TAXPAYER MONEY IS GOING TO BE PUT INTO THIS COMMITTEE, AND I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT SPENT ON INVESTIGATING THE FUNDING SOURCES FOR POSSIBLE PUBLIC ACQUISITION, FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL MONEY, THE REVENUES THAT COULD BE GENERATED IF THIS WERE MAINTAINED IN THE COUNTY SOMEHOW BY OUR OWN USE AS MITIGATION, THE VALUE AS WATER RESOURCE THAT KENT BAILEY REFERENCED, THE VALUE OF PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE 1300 -- THOUSAND ACRES AS OPPOSED TO 800 ACRES.

THESE THINGS -- THESE THINGS HAVE VALUE PUBLICLY, AND AS PAMELA JO HATLEY MENTIONED -- THANK YOU VERY MUCH -- THIS IS PUBLIC LAND.

THIS IS PUBLICLY OWNED LAND.

THE DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT TO SELL WILL GO TO OUR BOARD OF PUBLICLY ELECTED COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

SO BEFORE YOU GO TO PLAN "B," DON'T SABOTAGE PLAN "A" BY PUTTING SO MUCH TIME AND ENERGY AND INVESTMENT INTO RESEARCHING THE DETAILS OF HOW YOU COULD POSSIBLY MAKE PRIVATE OWNERSHIP WORK.

BY THE TIME YOU'VE DONE ALL THAT, IT WILL LEND A MOMENTUM, I'M AFRAID, TO THE PRIVATE DEAL IF YOU START INVESTING A LOT AND HEARING FROM A LOT OF DIFFERENT SOURCES ABOUT THE

BENEFITS OF THAT.

FIRST CONSIDER THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP AND MAKE THAT YOUR PRIORITY, AND I WOULD SUGGEST THAT YOU MAKE A MOTION ON THAT TODAY AS -- OR THE NEXT TIME YOU CONSIDER YOUR AGENDA ON HOW YOU'RE GOING TO MOVE FORWARD.

AS FAR AS THE PUBLIC OWNERSHIP -- AND AGAIN, I'M GLAD THAT THAT'S BEING ADDRESSED.

YES, THE TAXPAYER-FUNDED PARKS AND REC DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN MAINTAINING THAT.

THE COUNTY COMMISSION HAS TO DECIDE HOW TO DISPOSE OF IT, AND EVEN THOUGH -- EVEN THOUGH -- LOOK, I OWN MY HOUSE EVEN THOUGH THE BANK HOLDS THE MORTGAGE.

THE COUNTY OWNS THIS LAND EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE PUBLIC -- PRIVATE INVESTORS IN THE BONDS.

THEY HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED.

NOW, I UNDERSTAND THE POLICIES, THAT WE HAVE TO RESPECT ABOUT RESPECTING THE VALUE OF THIS, BUT AS KENT BAILEY SAID, THIS HAS VALUE TO US TAXPAYERS AND CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY BEYOND -- BEYOND THE BONDHOLDERS, SO I HOPE YOU WOULD CONSIDER PUBLIC OWNERSHIP BEFORE MOVING TO PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU, MARIELLA.

APPRECIATE THAT.

PAM -- I DON'T WANT TO SAY -- IS IT CLOUSTON?

>> CLOUSTON.

>> CLOUSTON.

I'M SORRY.

THANK YOU.

>> THAT'S OKAY.

FIRST OF ALL, THANK YOU ALL FOR VOLUNTEERING TO DO THIS.

I THINK WE'VE GOT A GREAT PANEL, AND WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE STAFF I THINK WILL MAKE THE VERY BEST DECISION FOR THE TAXPAYERS OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.

I THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE NOTICED FROM THE PACKET THAT SOME STRANGE TROUBLEMAKER SENT IN A HUGE LIST OF QUESTIONS.

I HOPE THAT YOU'RE GOING TO BE AS DETERMINED TO GET ANSWERS TO THOSE AS I WAS TO ASK THEM.

ALSO, I KEEP ADDING SOME QUESTIONS, AND I THINK SOME OF THEM THAT WE PROBABLY NEED TO -- WHAT IS THE AMOUNT OF FEES THAT WE WOULD BE PAYING TO FCEG?

DO -- WE DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY IDEA OF THAT.

ALSO THAT TWO-PAGE PRESENTATION THAT WAS PUT IN WASN'T MUCH MORE INFORMATION REALLY THAN WE GOT FROM THE BOCC.

I DIDN'T SEE SOMETHING LIKE A MAP OF THE PROPERTY DRAWN OUT OR THIS IS WHAT HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY WILL KEEP FOR A PARK AND THESE ARE THE SIX PARCELS AND WE'RE GOING TO DO THIS HERE AND WE'RE GOING TO DO THAT THERE.

IT REALLY WAS NOT VERY DETAILED AT ALL, SO I AGREE WITH DEE THAT WE DEFINITELY HAVE TO ASK SOME MORE QUESTIONS.

I ALSO WONDER, THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IS DOING SOMETHING WITH GOPHER TORTOISES ON THAT PROPERTY.

ARE WE PAYING THEM RIGHT NOW TO DO THAT, AND WHAT ARE WE PAYING THEM?

AND, YOU KNOW, WHAT IS THE AGREEMENT FOR THAT LAND MANAGEMENT RIGHT THERE?

DOES IT JUST INVOLVE THE GOPHER TORTOISES OR OTHER THINGS? AND CAN WE GET A BETTER MAP?

I KNOW THAT YOU SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE ONE ON-LINE, BUT IT WOULD BE REALLY GREAT TO HAVE A SPOT THAT SAYS, YOU KNOW, THE GUARD PERSON LIVES HERE AND ANOTHER GUARD PERSON LIVES HERE AND THIS IS WHERE THE POWER LINES ARE AND THIS IS WHERE OTHER EASEMENTS FOR OTHER THINGS ARE, LIKE REALLY

DETAILED SO THAT WE COULD TELL WHAT IS HAPPENING ON EACH LITTLE SECTION OF THAT PROPERTY RIGHT NOW. ALSO, ARE WE CONSIDERING POSSIBLY SELLING THIS FOR RENEWAL AND REPLACEMENT?

IS THAT SO THAT WE CAN REPLACE THE RESERVOIR THAT WE BUILT THAT ISN'T WORKING?

AND I GUESS THAT WAS ALL THAT I HAD TO SAY, AND THANKS AGAIN SO MUCH FOR VOLUNTEERING TO BE HERE.

WE'LL BE COUNTING -- THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY ARE COUNTING ON YOU TO DO THE VERY BEST THING, AND I AGREE WE SHOULD LOOK AT PLAN "A" BEFORE WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON PLAN "B."

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE AS WELL.

APPRECIATE YOUR QUESTIONS.

NEIL COSENTINO.

>> GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE, AND THANK AGAIN.

I REPEAT THANKING YOU ALL FOR THE TIME THAT YOU'LL PUT INTO THIS EFFORT.

I'M WITH THE PUBLIC INTEREST THINK TANK CALLED CAMELOT FLORIDA.

OUR VISION, MISSION, GOAL IS FLORIDA FIRST AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

EVERYTHING YOU'LL DO HERE EITHER TAKES AWAY FROM OUR QUALITY OF LIFE OR ADDS TO IT.

WE ARE A WIKIPEDIA TYPE FORMAT, AN OPEN FORMAT THINK TANK.

IF YOU KNOW WIKIPEDIA, I THINK YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHAT I MEAN.

IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM, COME TO US, AND WE'LL TRY TO HELP YOU SOLVE IT.

IN REGARD TO THE CONE RANCH, WE HAVE A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO DO IT RIGHT, AND IF IT'S DONE RIGHT, THE WHOLE COUNTRY WILL LOOK AT THIS BIG PIECE OF PROPERTY IN FLORIDA, AND I THINK WE'LL ALL BE VERY PROUD OF IT.

NOW, TO MAKE THAT WORK BEST WE THINK IS THAT YOU SHOULD LOOK OUT TO 2050.

THAT'S RIGHT, LOOK OUT TO 2050 AND DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT THAT LAND TO BE 40 YEARS FROM NOW.

2010, 2050.

NOW, ONCE YOU DECIDE ON THAT, YOU'RE TELLING OUR WHOLE COMMUNITY THAT THIS IS WHAT CONE RANCH WILL LOOK LIKE 2050, AND NOW BACK UP EVERYTHING YOU DO TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN.

ONCE YOU UNDERSTAND AND EVERYBODY AGREES WHAT THEY WANT THAT LAND TO BE AND HOW THEY WANT THAT LAND TO CONTRIBUTE, THAT WOULD BE THE BEST WAY, AND THEN EVERYTHING YOU DO MAKES SENSE TOWARDS THAT ONE GOAL.

IT REALLY IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO GET IT RIGHT, AND I WOULD SAY THAT IF YOU COUCH IT PROPERLY AND PUT IT OUT THERE IN A WHOLE COMMUNITY -- I'M NOT TALKING JUST ABOUT HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, I'M TALKING ABOUT THE STATE OF FLORIDA AND THE COUNTRY -- THAT WOULD BRING A LOT MORE INTEREST AND A LOT MORE IDEAS TO THE TABLE.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR ALL THE TIME.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SOME EXCITING TIMES AHEAD.

ALL RIGHT.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

ALL RIGHT.

THOSE ARE THE PUBLIC SPEAKERS.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER FOLKS IN THE AUDIENCE WHO WISH TO SPEAK TO THE PANEL?

ALL RIGHT.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS, WE HAVE SOME TIME LEFT ON OUR AGENDA.

ONE OF THE QUESTIONS BEFORE WE GET INTO FINAL DISCUSSION,
EDITH, ARE YOU THE STAFF CONTACT?

I MEAN, THERE MAY BE SOME QUESTIONS AND SOME NEED FOR
INFORMATION.

TO WHOM SHOULD WE DIRECT --

>>EDITH STEWART: TO ME?

I'M YOUR COORDINATOR.

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THEN YOU CAN --

>> THIS THAT LIGHT AND ON THAT NOTE, IS THIS A WEB SITE --
IS THERE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS THAT PEOPLE COULD HAVE SO THEY
COULD E-MAIL SOME QUESTIONS THAT MAYBE COME UP BETWEEN NOW
AND THE TIME THAT WE MEET AGAIN SO WE CAN HEAR WHAT OTHER
PEOPLE ARE THINKING ABOUT?

>>EDITH STEWART: THE PUBLIC CAN DO THAT AT THEIR PLEASURE.
THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY ON THE WEB SITE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT
AND QUESTIONS.

>> GREAT.

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> WOULD THAT ALSO APPLY TO PANEL MEMBERS AS WE THINK OF
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WE'D LIKE TO SEE COVERED?

>>EDITH STEWART: I WOULD PREFER THAT YOU E-MAIL THAT TO ME
DIRECTLY.

>> TO YOU DIRECTLY.

>> AGAIN, THE SUNSHINE LAW IS -- REALLY THAT TO BE TO
ENABLE US TO UPHOLD THE SUNSHINE LAW THERE, SO --

>>EDITH STEWART: AND I WILL TRY TO PUT TOGETHER A
TENTATIVE AGENDA AND CIRCULATE IT FOR YOUR REVIEW AND FOR
YOUR INPUT.

>> THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

LET'S TAKE SOME COMMITTEE COMMENT.

WHAT I'M HEARING, I THINK, IS FOR OUR NEXT MEETING, WHICH
WOULD BE -- I'M SORRY.

VIVIENNE, DID YOU WANT TO SAY SOME MORE?

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> NO, GO AHEAD.

GO AHEAD.

>> I WANTED TO FOLLOW UP A LITTLE BIT ON SOME OF THE PUBLIC
COMMENTS BECAUSE I REALLY THINK WE NEED SOME CLARIFICATION
FOR THE PANEL, AND CALL THIS WHAT YOU WILL, A MISSION
STATEMENT, A GOAL, BECAUSE MY UNDERSTANDING WAS THAT ALL OF
THE IMPETUS FOR THIS WAS THE FCEG PROPOSAL, SO -- OKAY.
SO DEE'S SAYING NOT TOTALLY.

SO THEREFORE, I THINK WE NEED SOME REAL GUIDANCE AND SOME
REAL CLARIFICATION HERE.

ARE WE TALKING ABOUT EVALUATING THIS PROPOSAL AND PROVIDING
A RECOMMENDATION OR ARE WE TALKING ABOUT LOOKING AT CONE
RANCH AND WHAT ARE THE BEST OPTIONS TO THE COUNTY?

AND I THINK THAT -- ARE WE TALKING PLAN "A" OR PLAN "B,"
AND WHAT IS OUR MISSION?

AND I THINK THAT IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT WE DEFINE
THAT A LITTLE BIT BETTER IN THE -- GETTING THE BACKGROUND
THAT HAS BEEN REQUESTED IS TERRIFIC SO THAT WE CAN MAKE
SOME GOOD DECISIONS, BUT WHERE DO WE GO FROM THERE?

>> OUR CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD HAS DEPARTED THE ROOM.
I'M GOING TO DEFER TO EDITH AS OUR STAFFPERSON TO RESPOND.

>>EDITH STEWART: YES.

IN YOUR PACKETS AND ON -- IN THE E-MAIL I SENT TO YOU,
THERE WERE CLOSED CAPTIONING FROM THE BOARD'S MEETINGS IN
MAY AND IN JUNE, WHICH VERY CAREFULLY DELINEATE THE FACT
THAT THEY ARE NOT CLOSED TO HAVING YOU EXAMINE ANY OPTIONS
THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE.

YOU COULD LEAVE IT AS IT IS, YOU CAN LISTEN TO ANY

PROPOSAL, OR YOU CAN RECOMMEND THAT THEY NOT PROCEED FURTHER, BUT THOSE CLOSED CAPTION MEMOS ARE GREAT IN DETAIL, AND I WAS ASKED BY THE AUDIENCE -- AND I'LL RESTATE -- THE PUBLIC SITE WHERE YOU CAN MAKE YOUR COMMENT IS ON HILLSBOROUGHCOUNTY.ORG HOME PAGE. THERE'S A BUTTON THERE THAT WILL TAKE YOU TO THE CONE RANCH WEB PAGE ON HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY'S HOME PAGE, AND THERE YOU WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENTER COMMENTS.

>> SO WE ARE CHARGED WITH -- I THINK TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, THE IMPETUS WAS THIS PROPOSAL THAT CAME TO THE BOCC, WHICH THEN THEY CREATED THIS COMMITTEE, BUT THE MISSION OF THIS COMMITTEE IS, AS EDITH STATED, BROADER THAN JUST EVALUATING UP OR DOWN THAT PROPOSAL.

WE ARE TO LOOK AT CONE RANCH.

NOW, TO THAT END, THAT'S WHY IT'S -- YOUR QUESTIONS ARE VERY VALID IN THAT WE PROBABLY NEED TO GET A REALLY GOOD SENSE OF THE HISTORY OF THAT PROPERTY IN THIS COUNTY FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE AS WELL.

NOT ONLY THAT, A HISTORY OF NOT ELAPP PER SE BUT ELAPP'S INVOLVEMENT ON THAT PROPERTY AND WHY OR WHY NOT ELAPP DOESN'T CURRENTLY HAVE CONTROL OVER CONE RANCH. AND THERE'S A RELATIONSHIP THERE THAT WE ALL NEED TO BETTER UNDERSTAND.

I'M SORRY.

SO WITH THAT SAID, TO BUILD THE NEXT AGENDA, WHAT I'M HEARING IS WE NEED A LITTLE MORE HISTORY.

THEN WE PROBABLY NEED TO MOVE FORWARD AND HEAR ABOUT THAT PROPOSAL, AND THEN WE NEED TO AS THE COMMITTEE SEES FIT MOVE FORWARD FROM THERE.

COMMENTS.

>> ONE MORE MEMBER RESPONSE.

I'D LIKE TO SEE US LOOK AT IT ALL.

I SAID BEFORE I WAS QUESTIONING WHETHER WE SHOULD LOOK AT FCEG FIRST, BUT I DO THINK -- AND I LISTENED TO SOME OF THE AUDIENCE COMMENTS TOO.

I THINK I'D LIKE TO SEE RESEARCH DONE ON ALL THE OPTIONS, ALL BENEFITS, LIABILITIES, COSTS OF SALE TO FCEG, BIDDING IT OUT FOR SALE, LOOKING AT IT FOR KEEPING IT IN PUBLIC USE IN PERPETUITY, PUBLICLY OWNED IN PERPETUITY, THE -- EVALUATING THE ELAPP PROPOSAL.

I THINK WE NEED TO LOOK AT ALL THOSE AT THE SAME TIME.

I DON'T WANT TO -- I DON'T WANT TO TAKE A BIAS POSITION AND SAY WE SHOULD LOOK AT ANY ONE FIRST.

I'D LIKE TO HEAR REPORTS ON ALL OF THEM, AND THEN OBVIOUSLY WE HAVE TO DISCUSS AND COME TO A DECISION.

>> OKAY.

OTHER COMMENTS?

DEE, ROSANNE.

DEE.

>> I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTOOD WHAT I WAS SAYING AS FAR AS ALLOWING PEOPLE TO QUESTION --

>> THE PUBLIC.

>> -- RIGHT AFTER A PRESENTATION, NOT WAITING UNTIL THE END WHEN THE PRESENTER'S GONE AND WE CAN'T ASK THE QUESTIONS, SO I MEAN, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE CUMBERSOME, AND AGAIN, NO GRANDSTANDING, BUT THERE'S SOME REALLY GOOD MINDS SITTING OUT THERE WATCHING US, AND I WOULD LIKE THE BENEFIT IF WE DON'T THINK OF THE QUESTION TO LET THEM --

>> ABSOLUTELY.

AND AGAIN, COMMITTEE DISCUSSION.

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR ALL OF THAT INPUT AND WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE IT, AND SOMETIMES THREE MINUTES BRINGS UP THREE MINUTES OF REALLY GREAT IDEAS, AND THEN WE NEED TO PURSUE

THOSE.

THERE WERE MANY THAT WERE PRESENTED JUST HERE TODAY IN THE
LAST HALF AN HOUR.

HOW WOULD YOU-ALL LIKE TO PROCEED WITH THAT?

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> OKAY.

WHAT I WAS GOING TO SUGGEST IS WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE
THE PUBLIC COMMENT, AND THERE MAY BE GREAT INTEREST AND
GREAT PUBLIC COMMENT, SO WE MIGHT WANT TO TAKE A FEW
QUESTIONS AS APPROPRIATE OR MAYBE SAY THAT'S A REALLY GOOD
POINT, WE NEED MORE INFORMATION ON THAT ISSUE AND MAKE SURE
THAT THAT ISSUE GETS ADDRESSED AND WE HAVE INFORMATION THAT
COMES BACK TO US.

WOULD THAT --

>> WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO IS JUST MAKE SURE EVERYBODY
PARTICIPATES THAT WANTS TO.

WE'RE GOING TO BE THE DECISION-MAKERS, ULTIMATELY THE
RECOMMENDATION, VOTE, BUT AGAIN, TO INCLUDE AND ALLOW
PEOPLE TO INTERACT, AGAIN, UNDER -- YOU KNOW, JUST TO KNOW
IF YOU'VE GOT A QUESTION, GO UP TO THE PODIUM, ASK THE
QUESTION, LET THE PRESENTER ANSWER IT OR AT LEAST LET US
HEAR WHAT IT IS, AND WE'LL FOLLOW IT FROM THERE, BUT IF YOU
JUST WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE MEETING, I SEE TOO OFTEN,
OH, GREAT IDEA, AND IT SOMEHOW GETS BURIED AND NEVER
BROUGHT UP AGAIN OR THE NEXT MEETING, SO --

>> OKAY.

>> MADAM CHAIR, I --

>> [INAUDIBLE] JUST TO GIVE THAT LATITUDE.

>> OKAY.

>> I WOULD HOPE WE WOULD SET A TIME LIMIT FOR THAT TYPE OF
FORMAT.

>> LESS THAN A MINUTE.

I MEAN, A QUESTION.

>> NO, I'M TALKING TOTAL TIME PERIOD, SAY TEN MINUTES OR
WHATEVER AFTER THE PRESENTATION SO THAT WE DON'T GET BOGGED
DOWN TOO MUCH AND BE --

>> THAT'S A GOOD POINT.

>> I AGREE.

>> GOOD IDEA.

OKAY.

ALL RIGHT.

LET'S DO THAT.

ALL RIGHT.

>> AND I THINK A LOT OF THIS HAS GOT TO BE AT THE CHAIR'S
DISCRETION TOO, SO --

>> YEAH.

I MEAN, IF IT'S TOO LOADED OF A MEETING AND -- WE'RE JUST
GOING TO HAVE TO PLAY IT BY EAR.

>> RIGHT.

NO, I AGREE.

>> ALLOWING THE PUBLIC TO INTERACT --

>> RIGHT.

>> -- AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE IS GOING TO HELP US ALL.

>> AND WITH YOUR INDULGENCE, WE CAN MOVE FORWARD AND MAKE
SURE THAT IF, YOU KNOW, WE REALLY WANT TO DELVE INTO AN
ISSUE BUT WE DON'T HAVE THE TIME, WE MAKE A POINT THAT
THAT'S AN ISSUE WE NEED TO GET BACK TO AND GET BACK TO IT
ACCORDINGLY.

OKAY.

ROSANNE.

SORRY.

>> NO.

>> ALL RIGHT.

I'M JUST WONDERING IF THERE'S SOME WAY WE CAN GET SOME INFORMATION ON THE 1991 TRANSFER WHEN CONE RANCH WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE UTILITY, SO I'M JUST -- MY QUESTION'S CONCERNED WITH, YOU KNOW, THE COUNTY ACQUIRING THIS LARGE PARCEL OF LAND AND THEN TRANSFERRING TO A PUBLICLY OWNED UTILITY.

IS THAT WHAT WE CALL IT, A PUBLICLY OWNED UTILITY? AND THEN FROM THERE, YOU KNOW, THE PROSPECT OF TRANSFERRING TO PRIVATE OWNERSHIP, THAT TRAIL, AND I JUST WANT TO SEE THAT TRANSACTION.
THAT'S IT.

>> ANY OTHER COMMENTS, COMMENTS FROM THE STAFF SITTING AROUND THE TABLE?

ANYBODY WANT TO MAKE A COMMENT?
YEAH.

>> WILL BISSETT.

I WOULD HAVE -- WOULD LIKE TO POSSIBLY HAVE IN YOUR AGENDA A REPORT ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE AVAILABILITY OF MITIGATION BANKS.

IT'S BEEN BROUGHT UP A COUPLE TIMES, BUT HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY DOESN'T HAVE SUCH A THING, AND THERE ARE OTHER COUNTIES IN THE STATE THAT DO, AND THIS MIGHT BE SOMETHING THAT REALLY OUGHT TO BE LOOKED AT ON A HARD BASIS BECAUSE YOU CAN GET MONEY -- IF THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS IS TO GET SOME MONEY OUT OF THIS LAND, WHICH IT SOUNDS LIKE IT IS, A MITIGATION BANK MAY BE YOUR BIGGEST BUCK.

PEOPLE MIGHT BE WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR A PIECE OF LAND THAT THEY CAN MITIGATE THAN IT WOULD A PIECE OF LAND THEY COULD USE AND IT STAYS IN THE PUBLIC OWNERSHIP AND SO FORTH.

BUT ANYWAY --

>> WILL, WHO WOULD YOU SUGGEST MAKE THAT PRESENTATION?

>> THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.

>> DOES ANYBODY ON THE COUNTY STAFF KNOW HOW TO MAKE A PRESENTATION ON A MITIGATION BANK?

>>MIKE KELLY: MIKE KELLY.

WE COULD DO SOME RESEARCH ON IT AND PROVIDE THAT INFORMATION TO YOU.

THERE'S ALSO THE ISSUE OF CARBON CREDITS, WHICH MIKE AND HIS GROUP NOW ARE WORKING ON AS FAR AS THE ELAPP BOND RESOLUTION.

>> AND IF IT'S APPROPRIATE, GOPHER TORTOISE, YOU KNOW, MITIGATION OR RELOCATION AS WELL.

WE ALREADY HAVE THAT STARTED THERE FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT. YOU KNOW, MIGHT WE UTILIZE PART OF THE PROPERTY FOR THAT AS WELL IN I UNDERSTAND THERE'S UPLANDS ON IT TOO.

>> THAT WOULD GO INTO THE MITIGATION BANK ISSUE.

THAT WOULD BE ALL ONE BALL.

>> RIGHT.

>> THIS IS -- IT'S INTERESTING YOU BRING THAT UP BECAUSE THAT WAS ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS THAT POPPED INTO MY MIND AS FAR AS A POSSIBLE USE FOR THE PROPERTY, AND WHEN I HAD SAID -- WHEN I HAD SAID EARLIER ABOUT WHAT'S OUR GOAL GOING TO BE, TO ME THAT'S JUST ONE OF THE MANY THINGS THAT WE CAN BE LOOKING AT FOR CONE RANCH, BUT THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENORMOUS.

>> OH, SURE.

>> AND MY CONCERN IS THAT IT'S SUCH A -- IT'S A HUGE GOAL THAT WE'RE EMBRACING HERE AS FAR AS WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH THIS PIECE OF PROPERTY, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE TYPE OF THING, AND MITIGATION BANKING AND THE GOPHER TORTOISE RELOCATION IS JUST ONE OF THOSE OPTIONS.

BUT ALONG THOSE LINES, I DID WANT TO REQUEST -- I'M NOT

SURE WHAT WE'RE GOING TO GET WITH ALL OF THIS MANAGEMENT PLAN INFORMATION, BUT ONE OF THE THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IS SOME BACKGROUND ON THAT GOPHER TORTOISE RECIPIENT SITE, WHAT WAS THE MOTIVATION BEHIND THAT, HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT, HOW DID THAT EVOLVE, AND WHY -- WHY WAS IT CONFINED TO JUST THE 700 ACRES OR WAS IT -- WAS IT LOOKED AT AS A MONEYMAKING OPPORTUNITY OR WAS IT -- YOU KNOW, JUST SOME INFORMATION ON -- SO WE CAN MAKE SOME DECISIONS ON WHETHER OR NOT THAT'S -- THAT'S ANOTHER VIABLE OPTION.

>> AND AGAIN, I THINK WHEN WE GET THE HISTORY OF WHAT'S GONE ON OUT THERE IN THE LAST TWO DECADES AND WHY OR WHY NOT ASPECTS OF VARIOUS PLANS HAVE OR HAVE NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED, WE CAN -- WE CAN EVALUATE WHETHER OR NOT WE WANT TO PURSUE THOSE NOW, WHICH IS ONE OF THE CHARGES OF THIS COMMITTEE.

DEE.

>> VIVIENNE, YOU BRING UP A GOOD POINT.

WHY WOULD MITIGATING LITTLE GOPHER TORTOISES ONTO THE PROPERTY BE OKAY BUT YOU-ALL WILL NOT RESTORE WETLANDS? I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE ENVIRONMENTAL DIFFERENCE.

OR WHY WOULD YOU LET THE PROPERTY BE USED FOR SOMETHING ENVIRONMENTAL LIKE THAT THAT WOULD HELP THE POPULATION AND HELP THE ENVIRONMENT BUT YET NOT ALLOW RESTORATION OF THE WETLANDS BACK ON -- IN -- THE DITCHES THAT WERE DUG YEARS AGO TO GET REHYDRATED?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE, SO IF SOMEBODY MAYBE LEGALLY CAN EXPLAIN HOW YOU-ALL CAN DO ONE TYPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL WORK.

IS IT THE ANIMALS OR THE PLANTS OR --

>> NO, I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY RESTRICTION AGAINST US DOING IT, BUT WE HADN'T BEEN APPROACHED FOR THAT PURPOSE. SOMEONE APPROACHED US FOR THE GOPHER TORTOISE PRESERVATION. IT'S NOT THAT WE'RE SAYING IT CAN'T BE DONE, WE'RE JUST HAVEN'T BEEN --

>> THE DEVALUATION ISSUES.

>> THAT'S NOT A DEVALUATION ISSUE, THAT LAND HAS PUT US -- BUT I THINK THAT'S BEING DONE FREE OF CHARGE. THAT'S NOT COSTING WATER RESOURCES TO DO THAT.

IT'S DIFFERENT THAN WATER RESOURCES HAVING TO SPEND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AND DO RESTORATION.

IT'S A VERY DIFFERENT TYPE OF THING.

I WANTED TO POINT OUT JUST ONE THING, AGAIN IN DEFERENCE AS YOUR TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP.

WE NEED TO REMEMBER -- AND ONE OF THE GENTLEMAN SAID IT IN PUBLIC COMMENT.

YOU NEED AN APPRAISAL ON THIS PROPERTY.

UNTIL THE WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT GETS A PRICE AND DECIDES WHETHER OR NOT IT'S SOMETHING OF INTEREST TO THEM, ALL THE REST OF THIS IS MOOT.

THE BOCC NEVER GETS TO SEE THIS, NO ONE GETS TO SEE THIS UNTIL THEY SAY THAT THIS IS OF INTEREST TO THEM AND THEIR BONDHOLDERS.

>> WELL -- AND THAT'S A QUESTION I WOULD LIKE TO ASK TOO, AND WE DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER IT NOW, BUT MAYBE YOU COME BACK AND SAY WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR THAT BECAUSE WHEN YOU'RE NEGOTIATING A LAND TRANSACTION --

>> USUALLY THERE'S A PROCESS.

>> -- THAT'S AN INTERESTING -- THERE IS A PROCESS, AND WE NEED TO MAYBE HEAR WHAT THAT PROCESS IS PER THE COUNTY GUIDELINES, SO --

>>MIKE MERRILL: YES.

I MEAN, AGAIN, JUST SO YOU-ALL UNDERSTAND, UP UNTIL THE FORMATION OF THIS TASK FORCE, UP UNTIL THIS ISSUE CAME UP,

THE UTILITY SYSTEM, THE UTILITY OPERATION WASN'T IN THE MARKET TO SELL CONE RANCH.
I MEAN, IT JUST -- IT WAS SOMETHING WE HADN'T CONSIDERED, AND SO IT'S NOT AS IF, YOU KNOW, WE CAN'T DO SOMETHING, BUT THAT'S THE REASON WHY WE HAVEN'T HAD AN APPRAISAL DONE, BUT CERTAINLY THAT'S SOMETHING WE CAN DO.
>> OKAY.
ROSANNE AND THEN MAYBE WE SHOULD START TO WRAP IT UP UNLESS THERE'S SOME OTHER BURNING AGENDA ITEMS.
>> SOME OTHER THINGS HAVE COME UP, REQUESTS OF TALK ABOUT MITIGATION BANKING, AND I SUGGEST THAT NOT BE AT OUR NEXT MEETING BECAUSE WE REALLY WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE HISTORY AND THE CURRENT CONDITION, SO IF WE'RE GOING TO GET INTO THE ALTERNATIVE USES, HOLD THAT FOR THE 27th OR A LATER MEETING.
>> THAT'S A GOOD POINT.
I THINK THAT WE HAVE A LOT TO -- TO GO THROUGH ON THE AGENDA, AND PERHAPS ROSANNE AND I CAN WORK WITH EDITH AS APPROPRIATE PER THE SUNSHINE LAWS TO STRUCTURE THE TIMING OF THE NEXT AGENDA IF WE'RE GOING TO TRY TO KEEP IT FROM 9:00 TO 11:00.
THAT'S TWO HOURS, AND WE COULD SPEND ALL DAY ON THIS ISSUE, SO WE'LL WORK ON THE TIMING AND THEN WE CAN PROCEED ACCORDINGLY.
DID YOU HAVE ANOTHER COMMENT?
ANY OTHER COMMENTS?
DEE.
>> A LEGAL QUESTION, JUST ONE OF THE LAWYERS.
I KNOW WE AS A COMMITTEE ARE SUNSHINE.
ARE WE ALSO UNDER SUNSHINE WITH THE TECHNICAL STAFF, SO I COULDN'T CALL YOU?
IF YOU GUYS ARE SITTING NAMED AS TECHNICAL STAFF TO THIS COMMITTEE, I CAN'T CALL?
I'M JUST AFRAID.
WHAT ARE OUR LINES?
>> A DIRECT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE AND A MEMBER OF THE TECHNICAL STAFF A ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATION WOULD NOT BE PROHIBITED UNDER THE SUNSHINE LAW BECAUSE IT'S --
>> OKAY.
>> [INAUDIBLE]
>> -- THE PROBLEM IS TWO COMMITTEE MEMBERS --
>> TWO OF US TALKING --
>> -- TALKING TO EACH OTHER.
YEAH.
>> ALL RIGHT.
WELL, UNLESS THERE ARE ANY OTHER COMMENTS, EDITH, DID YOU WANT TO WRAP UP?
>> EDITH STEWART: JUST TO REMIND EVERYONE THE NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED WILL BE JULY 20th, MONDAY, HERE IN THIS ROOM AT 9:00 A.M.
>> OKAY.
THAT SOUNDS GREAT.
AND HUGH, I OWE YOU ONE, AND I'VE ENJOYED MEETING THOSE OF YOU WHO I HAVEN'T MET BEFORE AND IT'S BEEN GREAT RECONNECTING WITH SOME FOLKS.
I THINK THIS IS GOING TO BE A GREAT WORKING COMMITTEE, AND I THINK AT THE END OF THE DAY WE'RE GOING TO MAKE A GREAT DECISION TO TAKE BACK TO THE BOCC FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTY.
YES.
>> MIKE MERRILL: I JUST WANT TO BE SURE IN TERMS OF THE FORMAL PRESENTATIONS AT THE NEXT MEETING, YOU DEFINITELY

WANT SOMEONE TO PRESENT THE HISTORY FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL POINT OF VIEW.

WERE THERE ANY OTHER FORMAL -- THERE'S OTHER INFORMATION WE NEED TO GATHER FOR YOU IN WRITING, BUT IN TERMS OF FORMAL PRESENTATION, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU'D LIKE?

>> WELL, I THINK THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO TALK TO EDITH ABOUT.

THERE'S A LONG LIST, BUT I THINK WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A HISTORY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SIDE NOW THAT WE'VE HEARD FROM THE -- YOU KNOW, IF YOU WILL, THE FINANCIAL SIDE OF THE EQUATION, GETTING A BETTER OVERVIEW OF ELAPP'S ROLE OVER TIME IN THIS PROPERTY SO THAT WE CAN ASSESS THE PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE ISSUE AND THEN MOVE FORWARD TO THE PROPOSAL ESSENTIALLY AND GO FROM THERE, SO AGAIN, IF ROSANNE AND I CAN WORK WITH EDITH ON THAT AND -- PERHAPS WHAT WE COULD DO IS SEND OUT AN AGENDA -- WELL, I'M SURE THE AGENDA WILL BE SENT OUT IN ADVANCE, AND IF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS HAVE ANY COMMENTS --

>>EDITH STEWART: AS I SAID, I'LL SEND YOU A DRAFT, AND I TOOK A CAREFUL LIST OF WHAT YOU RECOMMENDED.

I HOPE I'VE GOT IT RIGHT, AND YOU'LL LET ME KNOW.

>> THANKS VERY MUCH.

ALL RIGHT.

DO WE REQUIRE A MOTION TO ADJOURN OR --

>> SO MOVE.

>> SO MOVED.

MEETING ADJOURNED.

THANKS.