



MINUTES – October 17, 2023

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND ACQUISITION PANEL (ELAP)

Minutes of the
Environmental Land Acquisition Panel
Indian River County Administration Complex,
Building B, Conference Room B1-501
1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, FL
5:30 PM Tuesday, October 17, 2023

9 members/7 for quorum

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Roland DeBlois called the October 17, 2023, meeting of the Environmental Land Acquisition Panel (ELAP) to order at 5:30 PM.

A full recording of this meeting is available in the office of the Board of County Commissioners.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Janice Broda	District 2 Appointee
Jeff Beal	Natural Resources Representative
Heather Stapleton	Natural Resources Representative (arrived at 5:36 pm)
John Orcutt	Real Estate or Finance Representative
Roland DeBlois	Planning or Engineering Representative
Daniel Bott	District 3 Appointee
James Connaughton	District 5 Appointee

Members Absent:

Sammy McGee	District 1 Appointee
Peter O'Bryan	District 4 Appointee

Staff Present:

Joseph Earman	Commissioner, BCC Liaison
Wendy Swindell	Conservation Lands Manager
Beth Powell	Interim Assistant County Administrator, Parks & Rec Director
John Titkanich	County Administrator
Michael Zito	Deputy County Administrator
Andy Sobczak	Interim Community Development Director
Susan Prado	Deputy County Attorney
Maura Stokes	BCC Recording Secretary

Minimum Quorum requirements were met.

3. Approval of Minutes:

ON MOTION made by Daniel Bott and SECONDED by Janice Broda, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel approved the Minutes of the August 15, 2023, meeting as amended for clerical corrections.

ON MOTION made by Janice Broda and SECONDED by Heather Stapleton, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel approved the Minutes of the September 19, 2023, meeting as amended for clerical corrections.

4. Discussion Items

a. Proposed changes to the Environmental Lands Program Guide – Draft

CHAPTER I – PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Page 5 – Line 13 – Acquisition Consultant - Delete the word “advising”

CHAPTER IV – FUNDING - FINANCING

Page 16 – Lines 18 -20 - Add wording to summarize potential grant opportunities: *“The following is a summary of potential grant opportunities that may be utilized for environmentally sensitive lands acquired through this process. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive, and the intent of the process will be to pursue applicable funding based on the nature of each acquisition.*

Page 16 – Line 44 – Add wording: *“This grant applies to projects requesting less than \$250,000.00.*

Page 17 – Lines 1 – 6 – Add wording: *“FWS - NAWCA 2024 US Standard Grants: The U.S. Standard Grants Program is a competitive, matching grants program that supports public-private partnerships carrying out projects in the United States that further the goals of the NAWCA. These projects must involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds. As with the NAWCA Small Grant program, there is a 1:1 non-federal match required. Standard Grant projects may request up to \$3,000,000 in funding.*

CHAPTER V – LAND ACQUISITION PROCESSES – PROCEDURES

Page 34 – Lines 21 – 24 – Rewording: *“Project proposals approved by the Commission for inclusion into the Indian River County Parks, Recreation and Conservation system shall be forwarded to the Public Works Department and the Planning Division for input during the development of public access improvements and restoration for conservation area.”*

ON MOTION made by Heather Stapleton and SECONDED by Janice Broda, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel unanimously approved the recommended changes to Chapters I – V of the Environmental Lands Program Guide.

CHAPTER VI – LAND MANAGEMENT

Table 1 – Property Evaluation Matrix -

Roland DeBlois provided the Panel with the background of the evaluation matrix. Regarding the Qualitative Considerations and the Property Acquisitions Considerations, there were lengthy and extensive discussions regarding the evaluation factors for both sides of the matrix. The Panel reviewed the specific referendum wording.

ON MOTION made by John Orcutt, the following changes to the Qualitative Considerations evaluation factors were recommended:

<u>Qualitative Considerations</u>		<u>Original</u>	<u>New</u>
<i>1. Natural Community</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>2. Potential Habitat</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>3. Corridors & Greenways</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>4. Landscape (including water resources)</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>5. Recreational & Educational</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<u><i>08</i></u>	<u><i>08</i></u>
	<i>Sub Total:</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>58</i>
<u>Property Acquisitions Considerations</u>		<u>Original</u>	<u>New</u>
<i>6. Purchase Need v. Alternatives</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>7. Vulnerability</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>08</i>	<i>08</i>
<i>8. Land Management</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>9. Cooperative Acquisition Grant Potential</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>06</i>	<i>06</i>
<i>10. Favorable Market Conditions</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<u><i>06</i></u>	<u><i>06</i></u>
	<i>Sub Total:</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>42</i>
	<i>Matrix total:</i>	<u><i>100</i></u>	<u><i>100</i></u>

Discussion at length continued.

Hearing no Second, the MOTION FAILED.

ON MOTION made by Heather Stapleton, the following changes to the Qualitative Considerations evaluation factors were recommended:

<u>Qualitative Considerations</u>		<u>Original</u>	<u>New</u>
<i>1. Natural Community</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>2. Potential Habitat</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>3. Corridors & Greenways</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>4. Landscape (including water resources)</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>5. Recreational & Educational</i>	<i>Weighted Value:</i>	<u><i>08</i></u>	<u><i>08</i></u>
	<i>Total:</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>58</i>

<u>Property Acquisitions Considerations</u>		<u>Original</u>	<u>New</u>
6. Purchase Need v. Alternatives	Weighted Value:	12	12
7. Vulnerability	Weighted Value:	08	08
8. Land Management	Weighted Value:	10	10
9. Cooperative Acquisition Grant Potential	Weighted Value:	06	06
10. Favorable Market Conditions	Weighted Value:	06	06
	Total:	42	42
Matrix total:		100	100

Discussion at length continued.

Hearing no Second, the MOTION FAILED.

Discussion at length continued.

ON MOTION made by Daniel Bott and seconded by Jeff Beal, the following changes to the evaluation factors for both sides of the matrix were recommended:

<u>Qualitative Considerations</u>		<u>Original</u>	<u>New</u>
1. Natural Community	Weighted Value:	15	15
2. Potential Habitat	Weighted Value:	15	10
3. Corridors & Greenways	Weighted Value:	10	15
4. Landscape (including water resources)	Weighted Value:	10	10
5. Recreational & Educational	Weighted Value:	08	10
	Total:	58	60

<u>Property Acquisitions Considerations</u>		<u>Original</u>	<u>New</u>
6. Purchase Need v. Alternatives		12	08
7. Vulnerability		08	08
8. Land Management		10	10
9. Cooperative Acquisition Grant Potential		06	08
10. Favorable Market Conditions		06	06
		42	40
Matrix total:		100	100

The overall will be 60% qualitative and 40% acquisition considerations changed from the previous 58% qualitative and 42% acquisition considerations.

The motion passed with John Orcutt opposed.

d. Commissioner Matters

none.

e. Other Business

ON MOTION made by Heather Stapleton, seconded by Janice Broda the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel will cancel the November 21, 2023, and December 19, 2023, meetings in observance of the holidays. The next meeting of the ELAP will be held on January 16, 2024, at 5:30 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Next Meeting: The next meeting of ELAP will be held January 16, 2024. Vice Chair Roland DeBlois adjourned the meeting at 7:22 PM.

6. Adjournment: Vice Chair Roland DeBlois adjourned the meeting at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Maura Stokes

A copy of the full meeting recording is kept on file in the office of the Board of County Commissioners.