



MINUTES – February 20, 2024

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, February 20, 2024

9 members/7 for quorum

1. Call to Order

Chair Peter O'Bryan called the February 20, 2024, meeting of the Environmental Land Acquisition Panel (ELAP) to order at 5:31 PM.

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

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Sammy McGee	District 1 Appointee
Janice Broda	District 2 Appointee
Daniel Bott	District 3 Appointee
Peter O'Bryan	District 4 Appointee
Jeff Beal	Natural Resources Representative
John Orcutt	Real Estate or Finance Representative
Roland DeBlois	Planning or Engineering Representative

Members Absent:

James Connaughton	District 5 Appointee
Heather Stapleton	Natural Resources Representative

Staff Present:

Joseph Earman	Commissioner, BCC Liaison
Wendy Swindell	Conservation Lands Manager
Beth Powell	Parks, Recreation & Conservation Director
Michael Zito	Deputy County Administrator
Andy Sobczak	Planning & Development Services Director
Susan Prado	Deputy County Attorney
Keith Jackman	Assistant County Attorney
Maura Stokes	BCC Recording Secretary

Minimum Quorum requirements were met.

3. Approval of Minutes:

ON MOTION made by John Orcutt and SECONDED by Janice Broda, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel approved the Minutes of the January 16, 2024, meeting as amended for clerical corrections.

Motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion Items:

Bond Consultant Update:

Wendy Swindell stated that the selection committee had met, reviewed, and ranked the bond consultant applicants. The outcome was the selection of Norstar to serve as the ELAP Bond Consultant. Wendy Swindell commented that Norstar is currently doing similar work in Sarasota County and staff in Sarasota are pleased with their performance. Of all the candidates who responded, Norstar was the only company that had previous experience with this specific type of work. They are a sizable company with a well put-together team. This item, the approval of the bond consultant, will go before the Board of County Commissioners at the next meeting with the recommendation to accept the draft agreement.

Commissioner Matters:

No updates at this time.

Master Plan Update:

Beth Powell, Parks, Recreation & Conservation Director provided the panel with an update on the Master Plan which is underway for Parks, Recreation and Conservation. Surveys were mailed and have been received back with feedback from a broad spectrum of the community. Ms. Powell mentioned that according to the survey results, hiking trails, walkability, natural areas, and stewardship of environmentally friendly lands were the top requests. Ms. Powell discussed the needs of the community, the overall master plan, possible future referendums, funding opportunities and joint efforts among departments to increase trails for public use.

Update and Preview of the GIS Dashboard for the Environmental Bond Process:

Paige Lester, GIS Analyst in the Information Technology Department was present and provided a demonstration of added features to the new online dashboard for the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel. Ms. Lester commented that this tool was developed to help assist the panel with looking at available land and to give the panel the ability to evaluate potential candidates with all the data in one location. Additional links were added to the dashboard for the ELAP partners, as well as the historic bond information.

Ms. Lester continued her presentation about the dashboard, map layers and answered questions from the panel, staff, and partner agencies that were present.

General conversation continued regarding different types of lands that could be nominated.

5. Application Window:

Chair Peter O'Bryan would like to have a formal recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners on the record for the opening of a six-month application window beginning on March 01, 2024, which was presented to the Board of County Commissioners at their February 20, 2024, meeting.

ON MOTION made by Daiel Bott and SECONDED by Samatha McGee, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel has approved the recommendation that the Board of County Commissioners approve the opening of a six-month application window beginning on March 01, 2024, wherein staff will begin accepting nominations for the purchase of environmentally sensitive properties.

Motion passed unanimously.

6. Next Meeting: The next meeting of ELAP will be held March 19, 2024

7. Adjournment: Chair Peter O'Bryan adjourned the meeting at 6:40 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.