

Alachua County Advisory Boards  
**Annual Workplan: FY2019-2020**  
**Accomplishments Report: FY2018-2019**  
*(Approved 10/15/2019)*

Board/Committee Name: Rural Concerns Advisory Committee

Chairman: Ward Scott

Staff Support: Ken McMurry, Regina Williams, and other departments as requested for presentations.

Board Liaison: Ken Zeichner

**Brief History of Committee:** The Committee was established by Resolution 03-34 on April 8, 2003 to provide guidance and advice to the Board regarding rural concerns and issues within Alachua County. The Committee has been extended by the BoCC five times, the most recent of which occurred on June 25, 2019, where Resolution 19-66 granted the Committee a six year extension to December 31, 2025.

**Mission Statement:** The Advisory Committee shall establish the importance of our rural, unincorporated agricultural and historic settlements; assist in the development and evaluation of policies and programs affecting the rural areas of the County; represent the rural areas in the County's various community planning processes and hearings; and assist in the recognition and determination of the needs of the County's rural residents and advising the Board accordingly.

**Major Accomplishments in FY2018-2019**

**Established a Work Plan in September 2018 consisting of the following topics:**

- Continued education efforts for the County Commission and citizens of Alachua County on agricultural issues and other issues affecting the rural area including support of local markets, local farmers and tours
- Made recommendations to BOCC on any Agricultural Issues and other issues affecting the rural area that arise and as requested
- Monitored Evaluation & Appraisal and Update of the Comprehensive Plan as well as implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code on rural lands and relating to agriculture and local food production
- Continued discussion of energy conservation methods that may impact the agriculture community and/or the rural area
- Continued to promote and coordinate education of Best Management Practices for agriculture producers, governmental organizations and citizens of Alachua County
- Continued to review and comment on management of Alachua County Forever properties, including development and implementation of business plans for timber harvesting, cattle grazing and hunting leases
- Reviewed law enforcement services relating to the rural area
- Worked with City and County officials to develop a plan for the existing fairground site
- Provided oversight for the following:
  - County water supply issues
  - Stormwater issues
  - Fire services issues
  - Fairgrounds development project
  - Invasive species control programs conducted by the County
  - Feral hog management
  - Integration of emergency response systems for the rural area
  - Effective means of enforcing rules and rights relating to private roads and easements in the rural area

## **Major Accomplishments in FY 2018-2019 (continued):**

### **Held nine meetings through September 18, 2019**

- **Received presentations and provided input on:**
  - Presentation on Santa Fe River Basin Management Action Plan Update – Shane Williams Stormwater Engineer and Anthony Dennis, Environmental Health Director, ACHD
  - Update on Status of Countywide Radio System, Acting Assistant Chief James Clifford; follow-up presentation regarding Committee Questions on Countywide Radio System by Interim Chief Harold Theus, Alachua County Fire Rescue
  - Discussion of Future Land Use Element (FLUE) Clustered Rural Residential Subdivision Policies, Local Food Policies, and Comprehensive Plan Update and County Commission Motions and Meetings
  - Discussion on Local Food Procurement Standards by Sean McLendon, Strategic Initiatives Manager
  - Presentation on USDA Rural Development in Florida by Philip Leary, AICP, State Director
  - Discussion of Sunset Date (12/31/2019) for Rural Concerns Advisory Committee per Resolution #17-21; Board of County Commissioners Approval of Extension of Rural Concerns Advisory Committee Sunset Date to December 31, 2025 per Resolution #19-66
  - Follow-up Presentation on Vegetative Fire Mitigation, Russell Anderson, MSDP Natural Resource Specialist, Climate Scientist
  - Presentation on Hemp, by Jerry Fankhauser, Lead Oversight Manager, UF/IFAS Hemp Pilot Project
- **Submitted comments to the County Commission on the following items:**
  - Extension of Sunset Date of Rural Concerns Advisory Committee
  - Local Foods Procurement Standards
  - Countywide Radio System
  - Draft proposed Truth and Reconciliation for Alachua County's History of Racial Injustice

## **Goals & Objectives for FY2019-2020**

- Continue education efforts for the County Commission and citizens of Alachua County on agricultural issues and other issues affecting the rural area including support of local markets, local farmers and tours
- Make recommendations to BOCC on any Agricultural Issues and other issues affecting the rural area and emerging issues in the rural area and at the rural-urban fringe
- Monitor Evaluation & Appraisal and Update of the Comprehensive Plan as well as implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code on rural lands and relating to agriculture and local food production
- Continue discussion of energy conservation methods that may impact the agriculture community and/or the rural area
- Continue to promote and coordinate education of Best Management Practices for agriculture producers, governmental organizations and citizens of Alachua County
- Continue to review and comment on management of Alachua County Forever properties, including development and implementation of business plans for timber harvesting, cattle grazing and hunting leases
- Review law enforcement services relating to the rural area
- Work with City of Newberry and County officials in further development of the Alachua County Equestrian Center and UF/IFAS Extension site
- Provide input where appropriate on the following, including but not limited to:
  - County water supply issues
  - Septic systems
  - Stormwater issues
  - Fire services issues
  - Fairgrounds development project
  - Invasive species control programs conducted by the County
  - Feral hog management
  - Integration of emergency response systems for the rural area
  - Effective means of enforcing rules and rights relating to private roads and easements in the rural area
  - Rural transportation systems
  - Internet broadband in rural areas