

Wild Spaces Public Places
Citizens Oversight Board
Annual Work Plan and Accomplishments Report: 2020

Chair: Carla Lewis-Miles

Board Liaison: Gina Peebles

Brief History of Board: The Citizens Oversight Board was established due to the passing of the Wild Spaces Public Places Infrastructure Surtax by Ordinance 16-06 on May 10, 2016 and Resolution 17-36 on March 28, 2017.

Responsibilities and Duties:

1. Assure citizens and elected officials that funds approved through the referendum are expended only to:
 - a. Acquire and improve environmentally sensitive lands to protect drinking water sources, water quality, and wildlife habitat, and,
 - b. Create, improve and maintain parks and recreational facilities as permitted by Florida Statutes, the referendum ballot language, and ordinances.
 - c. Notwithstanding the above, Alachua County may utilize a portion of its proceeds to establish a fund for the purpose of providing matching grants to the municipalities within the County for projects that meet the requirements of subsections (a) or (b), and which, in the sole discretion of Alachua County, have countywide significance.
2. Track overall expenditure of one-half percent sales tax revenues.
3. May perform a pre-expenditure review of proposed Wild Spaces Public Places expenditures and projects at the request of the municipalities or the County and advise them if they are surtax eligible.
4. Report annually, or as necessary, to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners and each City Commission on expenditure of funds.
5. If it is the opinion of the Advisory Committee that funds may have been misappropriated, they have the right to audit, immediately bring their findings to the municipality and the Board of County Commissioners and demand repayment with the approval of the Board of County Commissioners.

Board Accomplishments:

- Held regular meetings on Oct. 21, and Nov. 18 in 2019 and Jan. 21, Feb. 17, May 18, Jul. 20, Aug. 17, and Sept. 21 in 2020.
- Held subcommittee meeting on Oct. 7, 2019.
- Reviewed Oct. 1, 2018 – Sept. 30, 2019 financial reports from Alachua County, City of Alachua, City of Gainesville, City of Hawthorne, City of High Springs, Town of LaCrosse and City of Newberry
- Audited City of Gainesville's SW 40th Project.
- Developed revised Resolution for Commission approval to allow pre-expenditure reviews, upon request.
- Researched expenditure criteria of other Florida cities/counties for similar ballot initiatives.

FY 2020 Goals:

- Hold public meeting(s) to review Oct. 1, 2019 – Sept. 30, 2020 financial reports