

**NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION (NRAC) AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2017, REGULAR MEETING**

<p>Meeting Place: Bert J. Harris, Jr. Agricultural Center, Conference Room 3, 4505 George Blvd. Sebring, Fl. 33875 Meeting Time: 4:00 p.m.</p>
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- I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – OPENING PROTOCOL AND INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND GUESTS**
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- III. MINUTES: Minutes from November 30.**
- IV. DISCUSSION:**
 - A. Membership Update – Election of new Chair and Co-chair. Open Agricultural Slot.
 - B. Presentation of two properties for NRAC’s consideration
 - C. Comments/suggestion from the land acquisition application form.
- REPORTS**
 - D. Chairperson’s report
- V. UPDATES:**
 - A. Conservation Trust Fund – Included in agenda packet.
- VI. CITIZENS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
- VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE: March 29.**
- IX. ADJOURN**

All interested persons are invited to attend. Any person who might wish to appeal any decision made by the Natural Resources Advisory Commission of Highlands County, Florida, in public hearing or meeting is hereby advised that he or she will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which will include testimony and evidence upon which such appeal is to be based. The Board of County Commissioners of Highlands County, Florida, and its agencies do not discriminate upon the basis of any individual’s disability status. This non-discriminatory policy involves every aspect of the Board’s functions, including one’s access to, participation, employment, or treatment in its programs or activities. Requests for CART or interpreter services should be made at least 24 hours in advance to permit coordination of the service. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation as provided for in the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 386.26 Florida Statutes should contact Tasha Morgan, ADA Coordinator at: 863-402-6842 (Voice), or via Florida Relay Service 711, or by e-mail: tmorgan@hcbcc.org. Requests for CART or interpreter services should be made at least 24 hours in advance to permit coordination of the service. One or more County Commissioners may be present at the meeting.

PLEASE NOTE THE COUNTY’S WEB SITE ADDRESS: For more information on the meeting, see the County Commission page online: www.hcbcc.net

**NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION (NRAC)
November 30, 2016 REGULAR MEETING**

Meeting Place: Bert J. Harris Agri-Civic Center, Auditorium
4509 George Blvd., Sebring, FL 33875

Meeting Time: 4:00 PM

ATTENDANCE:

Members

Erin McCarta
Hilary Swain
Kevin Main
Benjamin Butler
Dale McQuillen (exc absent)
Tim Hurner (exc absent)
Christine Senne
Joe Barber

County Staff

Mike McMillian
Rebecca Cable

Guests:

Ray Royce
Gary Pinnell

- I. Meeting was called to order by **Erin McCarta** at 4:04pm. **Ms. McCarta** read the public notice. Introductions were made.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Approval of the September 28, 2016 minutes – **Motion:** Mr. Butler motioned to accept the minutes, **Second:** Ms. Senne. Unanimous approval.
- IV. **A. Membership Update.** **Mr. McMillian** stated that NRAC has one open agriculture slot and that position had been advertised for just over one month with no applications. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please ask that they reply. **Dr. Swain** suggested the Mr. Royce put the ad in his newsletter.
B. Lake Grassy Property. **Mr. McMillian** stated that a property on Lake Grassy in Lake Placid was under consideration by County staff for future sand skink mitigation potential. This 55-acre property was first discussed as a means of sand skink mitigation for Phase III of the Sebring Parkway where 25 acres of mitigation land was required. The County opted to purchase mitigation credits rather than purchase this property; one of two being considered at the time. Subsequently the owner of the property has begun a dialog with the County administrator concerning the possible purchase of this property. **Mr. McMillian** mentioned this to NRAC for their opinions on the property and because funds to purchase the property would come from the Conservation Trust Fund. **Mr. Royce** stated that in talks with county staff there are two options being discussed, 1) the county purchases the land outright and receives all the future sand skink mitigation credits, and 2) the owner receives grants which essentially pay off the property and the county would manage the property as a preserve/park. **Mr. Royce** believes that any money taken out of the CTF would eventually be returned. At one point the county told the owner they would purchase the property and later changed their position. The property also has lake frontage on the largest lake in Lake Placid without public access. **Dr. Swain** asked Mr. Royce if mitigation credits would be used solely for the county or sold as well however Mr. Royce was not sure. Dr. Swain also mentioned that she thought she remembered a conservation easement on the property. **Ms. Cable** responded that there were three conservation easements on the property, re-zoned in 1996 or 1997. **Dr. Swain** mentioned that the owner had approached Archbold a couple of times to take this property as a donation to manage in perpetuity however Archbold could never reconcile the liability issues with this site. The property needs burning but burning would extremely difficult because US27 to the west and subdivisions to the north, south and east. **Ms. McCarta** asked if the feds or state would be interested in this property. **Mr. McMillian** stated that they were not interested because it was not connected to another conservation area. **Dr. Swain** wondered if this might be a potential Community Trust Fund application because of the wonderful combination of upland and lakefront. You could even have county purchase a portion and use the CTF monies to purchase the rest (i.e. lakefront). **Mr. Royce** stated that originally there was talk about purchasing the entire property and selling the lakefront portion to someone else. **Dr. Swain** stated that the owner of the property had contacted them about taking it over as conservation land. **Ms. McCarta** stated that NRAC is interested in learning more about this property and what plans the county might have for it if they did purchase it.

C. Land Acquisition Flow Chart – **Ms. McCarta** presented what work she had one towards the application that goes with the flow chart. The applications need to be simple enough for everyone to understand but contain the important information. **Ms. McCarta** also began working on the narrative and stated it needs to match our flow chart however we should work on the application first. Request a clean version be sent to NRAC members so they can edit/comment.

V. REPORTS:

A. Chairperson’s Report: None.

VI. UPDATES:

A. **Conservation Trust Fund** –**Mr. McMillian** presented the most current report from the Conservation Trust Fund.

VII. CITIZENS NOT ON THE AGENDA – None.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS –

IX. NEXT MEETING – January 25, 2017.

X. ADJOURN – meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Agenda Item: VI

Conservation Trust Fund

Approximate Balance as of:	Feb '17	1,157,510.06
(includes interest \$465.27 and mitigation \$8,190.00)		
Ear marked for APAFR grants		- 500,000.00
Short term loan to BCC (repaid)		
Balance		657,510.06
Preserve Balance		- 70,432.73
Current Balance		587,077.33

Conservation Trust Fund History of Mitigation Fees Paid into fund by Year

1995	\$81,116.67
1996	\$71,650.00
1997	\$62,650.00
1998	\$60,662.50
1999	\$55,700.00
2000	\$53,400.00
2001	\$56,050.00
2002	\$52,100.00
2003	\$68,300.00
2004	\$96,150.00
2005	\$109,781.00
2006	\$128,350.00
2007	\$112,100.00
2008	\$25,400.00
2009	\$13,350.00
2010	\$10,450.00
2011	\$6,450.00
2012	\$7,345.00
2013	\$6,630.00
2014	\$12,610.00
2015	\$14,235.00
2016	\$14,365.00
2017	\$8,190.00