

MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COLLIER LAND ACQUISITION  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Naples, Florida, April 5, 2023

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 1:00 P.M. in REGULAR SESSION at Administrative Building “F”, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Collier County Government Complex Naples, Florida with the following members present:

CHAIR: Michele Lenhard  
VICE CHAIR: Brittany Patterson-Weber  
Gary Bromley  
David Corban  
Karyn Allman (Excused)  
Ron Clark  
Rhys Watkins  
John Courtright  
Corey McCloskey (Excused)

ALSO PRESENT: Summer Araque, Conservation Collier Program Coordinator  
Sally Ashkar, Assistant County Attorney  
Melissa Hennig, Environmental Specialist I

**1. Roll Call**

**Chair Lenhard** called the meeting to order at 1:00P.M. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established with 7 Members present.

**A. Approval of CCLAAC Members attending the meeting remotely**  
*All Members in attendance were present in the Boardroom.*

**2. Approval of Agenda**

*Mr. Bromley moved to approve the Agenda. Second by Mr. Clark. Carried unanimously 7 – 0.*

**3. Approval of March 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

*Mr. Bromley moved to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2023 as presented. Second by Mr. Watkins. Carried unanimously 7 – 0.*

**4. Old Business**

**A. Acquisition Cycle 10 Updates** - *Current Acquisition Status report updated monthly in advance of CCLAAC meeting provided as part of meeting packet and under Acquisition News at [www.conservationcollier.com](http://www.conservationcollier.com)*

**Ms. Araque** provided the following updates:

Cycle 10: The “*Cycle 10 AAL Approved by the Board of County Commissioners on January 25, 2023 – Updated March 28, 2023*” was created for information purposes. The report will be updated monthly which includes which parcels the County has acquired to date, offers made by the County, pending acquisitions and those properties where the owner withdrew their application.

Cycle 11A: The BCC approved the Acquisition List on December 13, 2022 and 20 properties totaling 48 acres have been acquired to date. Staff continues to obtain appraisals and present offers to the owners of parcels under consideration for acquisition.

Cycle 11B: The BCC approved the Acquisition List on February 28, 2023 and Staff is working on acquiring appraisals for the properties which are anticipated to be available over the next 2 – 3 months.

**Speaker**

**Brad Cornell, Audubon of the Western Everglades** expressed appreciation for the new monthly reporting document but expressed concern some landowners may be withdrawing their applications due to the new purchasing policy. The County should ensure the new process is implemented carefully and not hinder the acquisition process causing landowners to lose interest in selling their parcels to the County.

**B. Purchase Agreement Update** – *Agreements previously reviewed by the CCLAAC have been updated to reflect revised offers.*

**Ms. Araque** provided the update noting the agreements as Staff contacted the owners with updated offers based on the new purchasing policy and the owners listed below accepted the new offers.

1. **Dr. Robert H. Gore III Preserve multi-parcel project**
  - a) Charles
  - b) Craparo
  - c) Fleming
  - d) Quevedo
2. **Panther Walk Preserve multi-parcel project**
  - a) Lopez
  - b) Salgado
3. **Red Maple Swamp Preserve mutli-parcel project**
  - a) Castillo
4. **Winchester Head Preserve multi-parcel project**
  - a) Fesser
  - b) Toro Trus
  - c) Trofatter

*Ms. Patterson-Weber moved to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the revised Purchase and Sales agreements for the owners referenced above. Second by Mr. Corban. Carried unanimously 7 – 0.*

**C. Cycle 12 Target Protection Mailing Areas (TPMAs)** *(items C.1 and C.2 were heard as companion items)*

1. **New target area – I-75 & Everglades (at Commissioner request)** *Note: Vote to be taken providing input and recommendation to the Board*

**Ms. Araque** presented the “*Conservation Collier Proposed I-75 and Everglades Blvd Cycle 12 Target Protection Area*” for consideration. She noted the Board of County Commissioners directed Staff to develop new Target Protection Mailing Area. She provided an overview of the area, noting the owners will be sent letters to determine any interest in selling their properties to the County.

**Multi Parcel Projects**

**Ms. Araque** reported the Board of County Commissioners approved the Robert H. Gore, III and Panther Walk Preserve Target Protection Areas as “*Multi Parcel Projects.*” The designation means those parcels identified will now be sent offers for purchase and automatically on the A-List for acquisition eliminating the application process. Funding is available for acquiring the properties however it is monitored on a regular basis.

2. **Report on TPMAs approved by CCLAAC February 1, 2023** *Note: Staff presenting revisions requested by CCLAAC on 2/1/23 which have been incorporated into the maps. No further revisions requested by staff.*

**Ms. Hennig** provided the “*Conservation Collier Proposed Cycle 12 Target Protection Area*” for information purposes. She noted the maps were revised based on the comments provided by the Committee and the BCC’s request for an I-75 & Everglades TPMA being created by Staff.

**Speakers**

**Brad Cornell, Audubon of the Western Everglades** supported the creation of the I-75 & Everglades TPMA as the areas should be protected. He noted the Committee should be aware,

although there may be transportation considerations for the area (an I-75 interchange), the area in question is subject an agreement from the 1970's whereby no I-75 access would be permitted between State Road 29 and the toll booth. Additionally, the area is subject to a ROMA (Regional Offsite Mitigation Area) however due to landowner objections the funds are currently dedicated to Picayune Strand Restoration Project.

**Meredith Budd** noted acquiring these lands will help facilitate developing wildlife crossings as both sides of a proposed crossing need to be protected areas before consideration is given to developing a crossing. She recommended consideration be given to establishing the area as a multi parcel project.

#### **I-75 & Everglades Target Protection Mailing Area**

The following motion was made after the Committee heard both items:

***Ms. Patterson-Weber moved to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve the I-75 & Everglades Cycle 12 Target Protection Mailing Areas as proposed by Staff. Second by Mr. Watkins. Carried unanimously 7 – 0.***

### **5. New Business**

#### **A. Conservation Collier 2022 Annual Report**

**Ms. Araque** presented the “*Conservation Collier 2022 Annual Report – April 5, 2023*” for consideration. She provided an overview of the Report which outlined the Program’s milestones, activity for Acquisition Cycles 10 – 12, Land Management endeavors, budgeting and funding considerations, Staff and Volunteer undertakings, 2023 objectives, etc.

***Ms. Patterson-Weber moved to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve the Conservation Collier 2022 Annual Report – April 5, 2023 as presented by Staff. Second Mr. Watkins. Carried unanimously 7 – 0.***

#### **B. Overview of Exceptional Benefits Ordinance**

**Ms. Araque** provided *Ordinance No: 2006-58* and the PowerPoint “*History of the Exceptional Benefits Ordinance 2006-58*” for informational purposes. She reported the Committee requested a review of the Ordinance and noted:

- The language in Section 1.02 specifies “*It is the intent of the Ordinance to recognize that while the public interest is best served when the Program Lands as defined in subsection 2.01, are allowed to remain as conservation lands in perpetuity, the public interest may also be served in certain circumstances where portions of Program Lands subject to existing grant restrictions or partnerships are dedicated to other public uses thereby providing necessary public infrastructure in addition to an exceptional benefit to the Program.*”
- The goal is to provide a County a mechanism to facilitate the building of infrastructure not unknown or unsure of at the time of acquisition of Conservation Collier lands.
- Since the Ordinance was adopted in 2006, it has only been utilized once, for the Freedom Park Stormwater Conveyance Ditch project where approximately 0.74 acres was transferred at a cost of reimbursement to the program of \$3,000.
- Staff does coordinate with other County Division at the time a property is proposed for acquisition to determine any conflicts for use of the land.

**Ms. Askar** noted:

- The only Program Lands impacted under the Ordinance are those where the need was not a certainty at the time of acquisition.

- The Program is compensated for the land at the per acre cost at the time of acquisition which is important as after they are placed in conservation, they lose value.
- The County's Long Range Transportation Plan identifies areas which may be considered for projects; however, the design of a roadway may not occur for several years with the final location uncertain at the time of a property acquired by the program.
- The County should move forward purchasing any lands for conservation as necessary as those parcels affected by the Plan may not be needed, and if not acquired Program, would be a loss for the County.

**Speaker**

**Brad Cornell, Audubon of the Western Everglades** agreed long term agency plans should not restrict the program from purchasing qualified lands as conceptual or proposed future improvements may not come to fruition.

**6. Subcommittee Reports**

**A. Lands Evaluation & Management** – Chair, Ron Clark - upcoming meetings April 12, 2023, and September 21, 2023

**Ms. Araque** noted Staff intends to present Land Management Plans for review at the meeting.

**B. Outreach** – Chair, Brittany Patterson-Weber –last meeting January 20, 2023

No recent update necessary.

**C. Ordinance Policy and Rules** – Chair, Michele Lenhard - last meeting June 1, 2022

No recent updates necessary.

**7. Coordinator Communications**

**A. BCC Items** - *Ms. Araque provided the update as listed below:*

- March 28 – Rattlesnake Hammock Final Land Management Plan
- March 28 – Conservation Collier Purchase Agreements
- April 25 - Annual Report and Public Access Report
- April 25 - Cycle 12 Target Mailing Areas
- April 25 – FWC Funding Assistance – *Ms. Hennig noted the importance of the partnership for the County's land management of preserves.*
- April 25 – HHH Ranch Interim Management Plan

**B. Miscellaneous Items**

None

**9. Chair and Committee Member Comments**

None

**10. Public General Comments**

**Meredith Budd** recommended County Staff contact the Cypress Cove Land keepers to determine any interest in having their lands around the Robert H. Gore, III Preserve deed restricted to uses consistent with the Conservation Collier program – *Staff noted they would research the feasibility of undertaking the suggestion.*

**11. Staff Comments**

None

**12. Next Meeting – May 3, 2023**

**There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chair at 2:43P.M.**

**Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Michele Lenhard, Chair**

These minutes approved by the Board/Committee on \_\_\_\_\_ as presented \_\_\_\_\_ or as amended \_\_\_\_\_.