

May 3, 2023

MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COLLIER LAND ACQUISITION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Naples, Florida, May 3, 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”, 3rd Floor, Collier County Government Complex Naples, Florida with the following members present:

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

ALSO PRESENT: Summer Araque, Conservation Collier Program Coordinator
Sally Ashkar, Assistant County Attorney
Melissa Hennig, Environmental Specialist I
Clif Maehr, Environmental Specialist I
Mitchell Barazowski, 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 6 Members present.

A. Approval of CCLAAC Members attending the meeting remotely

Ms. Patterson-Weber moved to allow Mr. Clark to participate in the meeting via Zoom due to an extraordinary circumstance. Second by Mr. Watkins. Carried unanimously 6 – 0.

Ms. Araque noted Mr. Clark will join the meeting in a few minutes.

2. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Patterson-Weber moved to approve the Agenda. Second by Ms. Allman. Carried unanimously 6 – 0.

3. Approval of April 5, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Patterson-Weber moved to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2023 meeting as presented. Second by Ms. Allman. Carried unanimously 6 – 0.

4. Old Business

A. Acquisition 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*

Ms. Araque provided the following updates:

Cycle 10: The “Cycle 10 AAL Approved by the Board of County Commissioners on January 25, 2023 – Updated April 25, 2023” was created for information purposes. The report will be updated monthly including which parcels the County has acquired to date, offers made by the County, pending acquisitions and those properties where the owner withdrew the application. To date, 20 properties totaling 120.74 acres have been acquired, offers have been accepted on 16 properties and 14 more Purchase and Sale Agreements have been forwarded to the Board of County Commissioner for approval.

Cycle 11A: All appraisals have been obtained (except 1 property which is subject to a second appraisal) for the properties slated for acquisition and Staff is working on developing offers for the parcels.

Cycle 11B: The BCC approved the Acquisition List on February 28, 2023 and Staff is working on obtaining and reviewing property appraisals.

Speaker

Rich Blonna, City of Marco Island expressed concern on the status of the WISC Investment, LLC parcel where a first appraisal yielded a value of \$419,000 followed by a second appraisal at \$429,000. The Board of County Commissioners rejected the Purchase Agreement with a price of \$429,000. He will be meeting with the owner to see whether they would sell to the County at \$419,000 if the City of Marco Island donated \$10,000 to the program to make up the difference in price. If Seller and City Council approve, he will look to get it in front of the Board ASAP. He will be inviting the BCC members on a site visit of island properties under consideration to ensure they have first-hand knowledge of the programs benefit to the residents of Marco Island.

Mr. Clark joined the meeting via Zoom at 1:06pm and a quorum of 7 was present.

Mr. Bromley arrived at 1:07pm and a quorum of 8 was obtained.

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

The Committee approved the Purchase and Sale Agreements listed below in one motion but were listed separately for recording purposes.

1. Red Maple Swamp Preserve multi-parcel project

a) Martinez

Ms. Hennig presented the “Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Program Project Design Report Martinez Property Date: April 2023” and related Purchase and Sales Agreement for the Abel Chavez Martinez property.

Mr. Watkins moved to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve the Purchase and Sales Agreement for the Abel Chavez Martinez property as presented by Staff. Second by Mr. Courtright. Carried unanimously 8 – 0.

2. Panther Walk Preserve multi-parcel project

a) Joyce

Ms. Hennig presented the “Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Program Project Design Report Joyce Property Date: April 2023” and related Purchase and Sales Agreement for the Martin and Elizabeth Joyce property.

Mr. Watkins moved to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve the Purchase and Sales Agreement for the Martin and Elizabeth Joyce property as presented by Staff. Second by Mr. Courtright. Carried unanimously 8 – 0.

3. Other purchase agreements ready before the meeting will be posted online here:

<https://www.colliercountyfl.gov/government/public-services/divisions/conservation-collier/agendas-minutes/2023-meeting-packets> and presented to the committee

C. Rosbough Enterprises Update

Ms. Hennig reported the residence and all parcels to the north and one to the south have been sold. She will update the screening reports to reflect the change in ownership.

5. New Business

A. Shell Island Preserve 5-year Land Management Plan update

Mr. Maehr presented the “Shell Island Preserve Addendum Land Management Plan April 2023 – 2028” for consideration. He noted the Preserve is under resource protection and not open to the public. Proposed management activities include vegetation surveys, invasive plant treatments prescribed burns, etc. The plan has a budget of \$20,000 and comments from the Lands Evaluation and Management Subcommittee and main Committee Members were incorporated into the document.

Mr. Courtright moved to recommend the Board of County Commissioners adopt the Shell Island Preserve Addendum Land Management Plan April 2023 – 2028” as presented by Staff. Second by Ms. Allman. Carried unanimously 8 – 0.

B. Otter Mound Preserve 10-year Land Management Plan Update

Mr. Barazowski presented the “*Otter Mound Preserve and Marco Island Project Area Land Management Plan Updated June 2019 and April 2023*” for consideration. He noted:

- The Preserve is small but experiences a high amount of visitation given its Marco Island location.
- The Plan is designed to incorporate more properties in the area as they are acquired under the Program.
- The goals include restoring the property to its premodern developed state, providing educational benefits, reducing human impacts on the site and protecting cultural resources.

During Committee discussion, the following was noted:

- Comments from Committee Members were incorporated into the plan.
- One aspect of the plan is a tree management program to deal with the Royal Poinciana trees on the northern side of the property which are being removed to prevent crowding out of important plant species.
- A public meeting on the plan was held in 2019 to garner input from residents.

Mr. Courtright moved to recommend the Board of County Commissioners adopt the *Otter Mound Preserve and Marco Island Project Area Land Management Plan Updated June 2019 and April 2023 as presented by Staff. Second by Ms. Allman. Carried unanimously 8 – 0.*

C. Cycle 12A Initial Screening Criteria

1. Matlalatl, LLC

Ms. Hennig presented the “*Initial Screening Criteria Form*” for the above referenced parcels. The 3 parcels are 8.3 acres and located at Horr’s Island (AKA Key Marco) - 1079, 1085, and 1091 on Blue Hill Creek Dr. The lands are in a private gated community governed by a homeowner’s association.

The property satisfies 4 Initial Screening Criteria.

Speaker

Brad Cornell, Audubon of the Western Everglades supports acquisition of the properties as they contain valuable Gopher Tortoise habitat. A survey of the species in the area is currently underway and the site could be a Gopher Tortoise relocation site. Currently the species is relocated to Glades County where they do not thrive as the environment is different than their native Collier County. Access is an issue, but the feasibility of daytime access should be investigated.

During Committee discussion, the following was noted:

- Mr. Cornell advised the Gopher Tortoise survey may be completed by the end of the year.
- The properties contain elevated habitat for the Gopher Tortoises. The species on site were not subject to the devastation from Hurricane Ian as compared to other areas in Collier and Lee County.
- The undeveloped lots surrounding the properties are comprised of wetland and mangrove vegetation with some scrub habitat.

Speaker

Rich Blonna, City of Marco Island agreed with Mr. Cornell and noted access to the properties is adequate, but restricted. There are historic monuments in the area and investigation is underway to

determine if some form of public access is required to the sites. It may be beneficial to contact Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve to determine if any partnerships are available.

Mr. Courtright moved for the application to move forward in the acquisition process and for Staff to prepare an Initial Criteria Screening Report. Second by Ms. Allman. Carried unanimously 8 – 0.

6. Subcommittee Reports

A. Lands Evaluation & Management – Chair, Ron Clark – Meeting held on April 12, 2023 and scheduled for September 21, 2023

Mr. Clark reported the Subcommittee reviewed land management plans 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:*

1. April 25 BCC meeting

- a. Annual Report and Public Access Report*
- b. FWC Funding Assistance*
- c. HHH Ranch Interim Management Plan*
- d. Purchase Agreements (2 items)*

2. May 9 BCC meeting

- a. Cycle 12 Target Mailing Areas - Ms. Araque noted the item was recently moved to the June 13th meeting.*
- b. Purchase Agreements*

B. Miscellaneous Items

Ms. Araque reported:

- Conservation Collier is now under the auspices of the Growth Management Division with supervision provided by Jamie Cooke - *Ms. Cooke addressed the Committee noting she has a background in wildlife management and biology and is looking forward to being involved with the Program.*
- Staff are working with the City of Marco Island to obtain the necessary approvals for the Program's property acquisitions on the island.
- Staff participated in Earth Day events at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida and Sugden Park.

9. Chair and Committee Member Comments

Mr. Watkins queried if landowners adjacent to properties where applications have been filed for acquisition by the program are contacted to determine any interest in selling their property – *Staff noted adjacent properties are not targeted until the acquisition of an approved property has been completed and they are added to the Target Protection Mailing Area list via Board Resolution. Properties may be nominated for acquisition by members of the public at any time.*

Chair Lenhard noted Subcommittee meetings are open to all Members of the CCLAAC and the gatherings are a beneficial forum where new concepts may be explored.

10. Public General Comments

Speaker

Brad Cornell, Audubon of the Western Everglades thanked Ms. Hennig for representation of the program at the “*Burrowing Buddies Day*” held on Marco Island on April 15th. Also, there will be a water science forum for the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) at Corkscrew Sanctuary on May 12th.

Ms. Ashkar noted if Members attend this or any other gathering, they should not discuss any items which have the potential to come before the CCLAAC.

11. Staff Comments

None

12. Next Meeting – June 7, 2023

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chair at 2:15P.M.

Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee

Michele Lenhard, Chair

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