

**MINUTES**  
**VOLUSIA FOREVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, January 28, 2009**

3:30p.m. - 5:30p.m.  
THOMAS C. KELLY BLDG., TRAINING ROOMS 1 & 2  
123 W. INDIANA AVENUE, DELAND, FL 32720

Board Members in Attendance:

Dennis Bayer, Chair  
Anne Hallum, Vice-Chair  
Dwight Lewis  
Alan Long  
Phil Maroney  
Chris Schlageter  
Wanda Van Dam  
John E. Wagner

Also in Attendance:

Douglas M. Weaver  
Ed Isenhour  
Randall Sleister  
Stacey Manning  
Jeanette Munson  
Dana Fogle  
Homer McMillen  
Glenn Grimes

Charles Ziesel  
David Kerr  
Wilma Allen  
Sam Roth  
Owen Hughes  
Ronald Tucholski  
Judy Spencer  
Jason Searl

**Meeting Called to Order**

Dennis Bayer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:30p.m.

**Roll Call**

Dennis Bayer, Chair, instructed the Recording Secretary to record the roll of the Members in attendance, in which eight (8) Members were present after Member Chris Schlageter arrived late. Member Jason McGuirk was recorded as an Excused Absence.

Dennis Bayer, Chair, asked Dr. Anne Hallum to introduce her Environmental Politics students from Stetson University.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dennis Bayer, Chair, called for a motion to approve the September 17, 2008, Minutes. Member John Wagner made a motion to **approve** the September 17, 2008, Minutes, as written. Member Phil Maroney **seconded** the motion that **carried** by unanimous voice vote.

**Discussion and Determination of Eligibility for Submitted Applications**

Ed Isenhour explained that the Committee would be reviewing ten (10) properties that had been submitted for the 2nd Cycle of 2008 (July 1 thru December 31, 2008), and determining whether the properties are eligible for further consideration under the Volusia Forever Program. All properties that have been determined as eligible will be ranked on April 22, 2009, to determine their placement on either the Group "A" or "B" List. He reminded the Committee that Resolution 2004-80 states that a property should meet at least four (4) of the 13 Primary Criteria, and is required to have an affirmative vote of at least five (5) Members in order for it to be determined as eligible.

1. **RBD Limited Property** - Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
  - a. it is approximately 350 acres in size consisting of multiple parcels;
  - b. it is located on the north side of SR 44 off the St. Johns River in the western area of DeLand;
  - c. it primarily consists of wetlands;
  - d. it abuts the Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge;
  - e. it is within the State's Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Project area;
  - f. it was previously submitted during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle of 2003, determined eligible and ranked as a Group "B" List project, but was later removed;
  - g. and it meets four (4) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Member John Wagner noted that the map shows multiple smaller parcels, and asked if a portion of the property being considered was subdivided into small lots.

Ed Isenhour responded that a portion of this property is part of an antiquated subdivision.

Douglas Weaver added that the only access to this property is by water.

Sam Roth, representative for the property owners, was present to answer any questions and provide additional information. He provided a map depicting the parcels included in the Volusia Forever Application. He added that this property is contiguous to other conservation lands, and serves as a flooding buffer for the properties located to the east. He agreed that the only access to this property is via water. He stated that there is a subsurface mineral rights reservation on the property.

Member John Wager asked how the subsurface mineral rights reservation would be handed should the County acquire the proposed project.

Douglas Weaver explained that the Agreement for Purchase and Sale would include language that the acquisition would be subject to these subsurface mineral rights. Typically, the County would obtain a letter from the Division of State Lands' geologist indicating whether there is a substantial or minimal opportunity for petroleum on the subject property. Based on past subsurface mineral rights surveys, Volusia County's opportunities are minimal. He added that the acquisition of these subsurface mineral rights could greatly increase the value of a property with a lower per acre cost.

Sam Roth added that there is a canal allowing access to the St. Johns River via water.

Member Dwight Lewis asked for clarification on the previously submitted Volusia Forever Application that was eventually removed from the Group "A/B" List.

Douglas Weaver stated that the previous application was determined as eligible and placed on the Group "B" List, as there were no funding partners.

Ed Isenhour added that County staff had contacted the local staff of the Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge, who expressed an interest in potentially adding this property to the refuge. However, there was no funding available, and the federal acquisition process is quite lengthy.

Sam Roth added that the Governor has reinstated the funding for the State's Florida Forever Program.

Member Dwight Lewis expressed a concern that the same issues causing this project's removal from the Volusia Forever Program would again become an issue.

Member John Wagner asked who would become the manager of this property should it be acquired by the County and a funding partner.

Ed Isenhour stated that a previous acquisition within the refuge by the County and St. Johns River Water Management District was incorporated in the overall management of the Refuge. Therefore, the Refuge's staff could become the manager if past actions are repeated.

Discussions continued regarding potential funding partnerships and property management.

Member Wanda Van Dam referenced the map provided by County staff and asked if the developed area located to the south of this property on the St. Johns River was Crows Bluff Marina.

Ed Isenhour confirmed that the area in question was Crows Bluff Marina. He added that Ed Stone Park, a County owned park, is situated on the north side of SR 44 at the St. Johns River.

Member Phil Maroney acknowledged that this property has potential as it is a large area with connectivity to other conservation lands and is on the St. Johns River. He asked for County staff's input on how this property relates to the Program's criteria.

Douglas Weaver explained that the Volusia Forever Program is not a wetlands buying program. There are issues associated with the property (i.e., no public access, and lack of a funding partnership). He added that County staff could continue searching for a funding partner.

Member John Wagner made a motion to **accept** the **RBD Limited Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Dwight Lewis **seconded** the motion which **carried** by unanimous voice vote.

Douglas Weaver recognized Sam Roth as a "D Day" survivor.

**2. Taylor Shae/ Ormond Ranch Property** – Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:

- a. it is approximately 740 acres in size;
- b. it is located on the north side of SR 40, west of Rima Ridge in the Ormond Beach area;
- c. it extends north to the Volusia-Flagler County line;
- d. it is adjacent to the Anderson Property, a Volusia Forever Group "B" Project;
- e. the north west corner of the property touches the Volusia Conservation Corridor;
- f. it consists of a mixture of uplands and wetlands; and
- g. it meets six (6) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Ed Isenhour added that the property owners would retain an area on SR 40, which has a cellular tower. The property owners have also noted on a map additional potential out parcels along SR 40. These out parcels would become clearly defined should this property move forward into the acquisition process.

Member Anne Hallum requested clarification on the ranking of the Anderson Property as a Group "B" Property.

Ed Isenhour explained that the Anderson Property was placed on the Group "B" List in anticipation of receiving the Taylor Shae/ Ormond Ranch Property application, which would provide connectivity to other public lands and allow an opportunity to look at both in a holistic manner.

Member Alan Long asked about the ownership of the adjoining parcels to the west of this property.

Ed Isenhour stated that Plum Creek owns the parcels adjoining this property to the west.

Member Chris Schlageter recalled a potential access issue regarding the parcel located between this property and the Anderson Property. He asked if this property owner had been approached to determine their interest in participating in the Volusia Forever Program

as a willing seller.

Ed Isenhour explained that an agreement between these property owners allows Creek Haven Road to be used for access to these properties. However, there is still a potential access issue. At this time, County staff has not confirmed any type of legal or dedicated right-of-way.

Stacey Manning added that County staff could investigate this potential access issue should the Committee determine the Taylor Shae/Ormond Ranch Property as eligible for further consideration.

Discussion continued regarding this potential access issue and how it could be resolved through some type of easement.

Member Alan Long requested clarification regarding County staff's affirmative answers to questions two (2) and three (3) of the Primary Criteria, Water Resources, on the Initial Review Report.

Randall Sleister explained that this area was heavily impacted by the 1998 Wildfires, which created the degraded water bodies or wetlands. Therefore, County staff could provide an affirmative answer to both of these questions. He added that County staff would provide a more in depth report should the Committee determine this property as eligible for further consideration.

Owen Hughes, representative for the property owners, was present to answer any questions and provide additional information.

Chair Dennis Bayer asked what type of structure exists on the property that is located between the Anderson and Taylor Shae/Ormond Ranch properties.

Owen Hughes replied that the structures on this property include a mobile home without plumbing that is used as a tree stand for hunting purposes only.

Member John Wagner asked for confirmation that the map reflects the portion of this property that would not be included as part of the Volusia Forever Application.

Owen Hughes confirmed that the map reflects the cellular tower area that is not included as part of the Volusia Forever Application and another area along SR 40 that may not be included. He explained that the property owners wished to retain approximately 100 acres of this property for hunting purposes.

Chair Dennis Bayer asked if the property owners would consider a conservation easement, which could allow them to continue using the property for hunting purposes.

Owen Hughes stated that the property owners were willing to negotiate and would consider all options (fee simple or conservation easement).

Member Dwight Lewis commented that the Anderson Property was determined to be eligible by the Committee and the Taylor Shae/Ormond Ranch Property should fall under the same category.

Member Dwight Lewis made a motion to **accept** the **Taylor Shae/Ormond Ranch Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Phil Maroney **seconded** the motion which **carried** by unanimous voice vote.

Member John Wagner expressed a concern that a previously submitted application for property located on the south side of SR 40 very near these properties was not determined to be eligible for further consideration.

Discussion ensued regarding the property located on the south side of SR 40 with the Committee recalling that this property was approximately 47+/- acres in size and the surrounding area was heavily impacted by development.

Member Anne Hallum asked for clarification regarding the 100+/- acres being excluded from the application.

Owen Hughes explained that the property owners wished to retain a portion of the property for hunting. However, the exact location and acreage could be negotiated during the acquisition process. He added that the area depicted by the blue border on the map is for a cellular tower and not included in the application.

Ed Isenhour added that the map depicting the potential area to be retained by the property was provided for informational purposes. The exact location and acreage would be further defined during the acquisition process.

Member Phil Maroney commented that the maps provide enough information to determine that access should not become an issue.

**3. Hidden Oaks Property** – Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:

- a. it is approximately 36 acres in size consisting of two (2) parcels (33.61+/- and 2.50+/- acres) that are not contiguous to each other;
- b. a single-family dwelling is located on the larger of the two (2) parcels;
- c. it is located on US Hwy. 1 across the highway from the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge in the Oak Hill area;
- d. it is within the boundaries of the Indian River Lagoon Blueway Project area, a Florida Forever Group “A” List project;
- e. the property owners are proposing a conservation easement acquisition on the larger parcel and fee simple acquisition on the smaller undeveloped, free standing parcel; and
- f. it meets three (3) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Ed Isenhour added that the Hidden Oaks property is very close to another application that was previously submitted to the Committee. However, the Committee did not determine that the adjacent property was eligible for further consideration.

Member Wanda Van Dam asked if this area of the FEC Railroad tracks were actively being used by FEC or part of the rail to trails system.

Ed Isenhour replied that this area of the FEC Railroad tracks were actively being used and not part of the rail to trails system.

Member Phil Maroney asked for clarification on the “N/A” answers for the Management Criteria on the Initial Review Report.

Randall Sleister explained that a conservation easement acquisition does not require any management of the property by the County. The property owners would be the managers. Therefore, the Management Criteria was answered as “N/A.”

Member Alan Long asked if the adjoining property owners to the north, east and west sides of this property along with property between the areas identified as Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge had been identified.

Ed Isenhour replied that the properties located to the north and west sides of this property are part of an antiquated platted subdivision (Cape Atlantic Estates). The small parcel included in this application may be part of this subdivision. The property located between the areas identified as Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge is believed to be a single owner.

Member John Wagner asked if Cape Atlantic Estates was part of Miami Corporations land holdings.

Ed Isenhour stated that Miami Corporations land holdings were not part of Cape Atlantic Estates.

Randall Sleister added that the parcels within Cape Atlantic Estates are owned by a multitude of people that are potentially located all over the world.

Member Phil Maroney expressed several concerns regarding this property, which included; its lack of Primary Criteria, no connectivity to other public lands, being developed with a single-family dwelling, smaller size, and potential conservation easement acquisition.

Member John Wagner made a motion to **accept** the **Hidden Oaks Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Chris Schlageter **seconded** the motion which **failed** by a roll call vote of zero (0) to eight (8), as Resolution 2004-80 requires an affirmative vote of at least five (5) Members to pass.

4. **Sugar Bay Farm Property** – Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
- a. it is approximately 71 acres in size consisting of uplands and wetlands;
  - b. it is located on Old Bubbly Road with water frontage on Lake George in the Pierson area;
  - c. it provides connectivity to other public lands as it is adjacent to the Lake George State Forest; and
  - d. it meets six (6) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Member Wanda Van Dam asked how the properties were divided to the north of the Sugar Bay Farm Property and south of the Lake George Forest and Wildlife Management Area.

Randall Sleister explained that the properties lying between the Sugar Bay Farm Property and the Lake George Forest and Wildlife Management Area were divided into lots with multiple owners.

Ed Isenhour provided another map to depict the parcel pattern surrounding the Sugar Bay Farm Property.

Discussion ensued regarding the width and depth of the parcels running eastward of Lake George.

Glenn Grimes, representative for the property owners, was present to answer any questions and provide additional information. He stated that the application consists of four (4) parcels with approximately 2,500 feet of road frontage on Old Bubbly Road, and 650 feet of water frontage on Lake George. He provided additional photographs depicting the lake

frontage, interior canopy and access through the property via Mud Road to Lake George. He explained that Mud Road is a path and not a legal road. Tributaries of Lake George run through this property and it is adjacent to other public lands. Various types of wildlife (i.e., turkey, deer, owls, turtles, hogs and bear) have been seen on the property.

Discussion ensued regarding potential funding partners after Member Anne Hallum asked if the State of Florida's Division of Forestry (DOF) would be a likely funding partner since they owned the property located to the south.

Chair Dennis Bayer asked if any of the parcels lying to the north of this property were developed.

Randall Sleister replied that there could be minimal structures used as hunting camps on some of the parcels lying north of this property.

Member Dwight Lewis asked County staff for their opinion regarding the potential funding partnership with DOF.

Douglas Weaver explained that the County has successfully acquired property with DOF. One example was the Progress Energy Property. The County initially purchased the property without a funding partner, but later conveyed the property to DOF. Since that time, County staff has communicated with DOF's local staff regarding the potential funding partnership of the Severson Property. At this time, DOF does not have funds available for any acquisition even though they are very interested in the Severson Property. He added that the Sugar Bay Farm Property is small, and provides minimal resource value to Lake George State Forest. In addition, acquiring other parcels that would provide connectivity to the north toward the Lake George Forest and Wildlife Management Area could be problematic.

Ed Isenhour added that the Severson Property is an "in-holding" of Tiger Bay State Forest and its acquisition could resolve issues regarding the overall management of this area. Therefore, it would be more of a priority to acquire than the Sugar Bay Farm Property.

Member Dwight Lewis made a motion to **accept** the **Sugar Bay Farm Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Wanda Van Dam **seconded** the motion which **passed** by a roll call vote of six (6) to two (2), with Members Chris Schlageter and John Wagner opposed.

5. **McDonald Property** – Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
- a. it is approximately 420 acres in size;
  - b. it is located on the west side of SR 415 (Tomoka Farms Road) near Pioneer Trail in the Port Orange area;
  - c. the western portion of the property primarily consists of forested lands with the eastern portion being pasture;
  - d. the western boundary is adjacent to the portion of Longleaf Pine Preserve jointly owned by the County and City of Port Orange; and
  - e. it meets six (6) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Ed Isenhour added that the a long, narrow section of privately owned land separates the southern border of this property from other public lands (Krol Property) owned by the County and St. Johns River Water Management District.

Member Anne Hallum requested clarification relating to the developed area depicted on the aerial map.

Ed Isenhour clarified that the developed area as depicted on the aerial map is pasture area with frontage on SR 415 (Tomoka Farms Road).

Randall Sleister stated that the pasture area contains drainage swales. Ed Isenhour added that a large lot subdivision is located to the north of this property.

Douglas Weaver explained that the property owners are willing sellers of all or a portion of the overall 420 acres being submitted to Volusia Forever.

Member Alan Long asked for clarification on the “portion” of land being offered to Volusia Forever.

Douglas Weaver clarified that the “portion” of land being offered would be the western parcels that are adjacent to other public lands. He added that the District could be a funding partner as they collaborated with the County on the Krol Property’s acquisition.

Member Phil Maroney made a motion to **accept** the **McDonald Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Anne Hallum **seconded** the motion which **passed** by a roll call vote of seven (7) to one (1), with Member John Wagner opposed.

6. **Tucholski Property** - Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
- a. it is approximately 2 acres in size;
  - b. it has a single-family dwelling with other ancillary structures totaling an area of approximately 2,800 square feet;
  - c. it is located on US Hwy. 1 extending westward to Murray Creek in the New Smyrna Beach area;
  - d. it is adjacent to the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve (Preserve);
  - e. the southern border is adjacent to an apartment complex;
  - f. it potentially holds archeological and historical significance; and
  - g. it meets four (4) of the 13 Primary Ranking Criteria.

Ed Isenhour added that during the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of 2007, the Committee received an application for this property, which was submitted as the Nordman Grove Property. During this cycle’s review process, the Committee determined that the Nordman Grove Property was not eligible for further consideration. He also added that the Blanchette Property, which was purchased by Volusia Forever and is within the boundaries of the Preserve, lies south of the property, but is not adjacent.

Member Phil Maroney asked if this property was being submitted for consideration as a conservation easement.

Ed Isenhour replied that this property was being submitted for consideration as a fee simple proposal.

Ronald Tucholski, property owner, was present to answer any questions or provide additional information. He provided a handout that included Adams Cameron Realty’s real estate listing, boundary survey and excerpt from the Milwaukee Press, “Ferdinand Nordman’s Story.” He stated that the back 30% of the property is in a natural condition with large oak trees. The New Smyrna Beach Historical Society believes that this property contains archeological resources/artifacts. This property has a single-family dwelling with ancillary buildings (i.e., barn) and a well.

Chair Dennis Bayer asked when the single-family dwelling was constructed.

Ronald Tucholski replied that the single-family dwelling was built in 1920 and is wooden framed.

Member Phil Maroney asked if there was any type of barrier (i.e., wooden fence or wall) between the apartment complex and this property.

Ronald Tucholski stated that a wooden privacy fence running the length of the property provides a barrier from the apartment complex.

Member Alan Long asked if this property's western boundary is on Murray Creek.

Randall Sleister and Ed Isenhour confirmed that this property's western boundary is on Murray Creek.

Member John Wagner asked for clarification regarding the number of parcel(s) being included in this application (1 or 2).

Ed Isenhour clarified that only one (1) parcel was included in this application.

Member John Wagner made a motion to **accept** the **Tucholski Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Wanda Van Dam **seconded** the motion which **failed** by a roll call vote of zero (0) to eight (8), as Resolution 2004-80 requires an affirmative vote of at least five (5) Members to pass.

Member John Wagner explained that the Volusia Forever Program's primary goal is to acquire vacant, natural lands for preservation, and not property containing a single-family dwelling with other ancillary structures.

Ed Isenhour added that the Committee's operating resolution, Resolution 2004-80, discourages the acquisition of lands containing structures, including single-family dwellings.

Douglas Weaver explained that the County has acquired lands containing structures (i.e., mobile home, sheds). However, these structures did not negatively affect the natural resource of the property. He added that Resolution 2004-80 also provides for the acquisition of lands containing structures, but would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Member Chris Schlageter commented that the natural habitat was lost with the existence of the single-family dwelling and other ancillary structures on this small parcel. He suggested seeking assistance from the Volusia ECHO Program as this project might fit their criteria.

7. **McMillen Property** – Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
- a. it is approximately 41 acres in size consisting primarily of uplands;
  - b. it is located west of Grand Avenue off Lime Street in the community of Glenwood;
  - c. it has been impacted by development consisting of a single-family dwelling, mobile home and greenhouses;
  - d. it is not adjacent to any other conservation lands; and
  - e. it meets two (2) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Ed Isenhour added that the County's Spring to Spring Trail will be paralleling Grand Avenue in the area of this property.

Member John Wagner noted that this property consists of four (4) parcels and asked if the

property owners were willing to negotiate for a portion of the property in lieu of all four (4) parcels.

Ed Isenhour explained that County staff has not discussed the possibility of acquiring a portion of this property with the property owners. However, the application includes all four (4) parcels.

Wilma Allen, the President of the Glenwood Civic Association and a member of the public, was present to answer any questions or provide additional information. She stated that this property could be developed into a park with educational opportunities relating to agricultural and horticultural endeavors. It could also provide additional parking and/or bathroom facilities for the Spring to Spring Trail. The McMillen family has owned this property since the 1950s. Historically, the Glenwood community was part of a pineapple plantation.

David Kerr, a member of the Glenwood Civic Association and public, added that the Association supports enhancement of the community by developing a low impact park on the McMillen property. They also support the Spring to Spring Trail.

Member Anne Hallum suggested submitting an application to the Volusia ECHO Program as this project might fit that program's criteria.

Discussion ensued regarding the parking issues for users of the Spring to Spring Trail in this area.

Ed Isenhour stated that the parking issues could eventually be addressed with the acquisition of Group "A" List projects in this area.

Member Dwight Lewis stated that each year \$1 million of Volusia ECHO's grant monies are set aside for trails. He also suggested submitting an application to the Volusia ECHO Program.

Member Dwight Lewis made a motion to **accept** the **McMillen Property** Application as an eligible project. Member John Wagner **seconded** the motion which **failed** by a roll call vote of zero (0) to eight (8), as Resolution 2004-80 requires an affirmative vote of at least five (5) Members to pass.

- 8. Independent Farm Property** - Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
- a. it is approximately 12 acres in size consisting of uplands and wetlands;
  - b. it is located off SR 46;
  - c. it is part of an unrecorded subdivision that is partially developed;
  - d. its western border is contiguous to other public lands (Buck Lake Conservation Area);  
and
  - e. it meets six (6) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Discussion ensued after Member Phil Maroney asked if Freedom Road could provide appropriate access to this property.

Charles Ziesel, property owner, was present to answer any questions or provide additional information.

Member Alan Long noted that the application indicates that the property consists of

wetlands. He asked for clarification regarding the affirmative answer to the Environmentally Sensitive Lands criteria, “there is the potential for cost effective restoration of upland areas.”

Randall Sleister referenced the aerial map and stated the north eastern and southwestern corners of the property may consist of uplands.

Discussion ensued regarding the location of other public lands in this general area, including other counties.

Ed Isenhour explained that Buck Lake Conservation Area extends eastward into Brevard County. The other large landowner in the area is Miami Corporation.

Member Phil Maroney asked if County staff had concerns regarding the potential acquisition of this property, which is contiguous to other conservation lands.

Douglas Weaver explained that County staff was concerned about obtaining a funding partner and management of the property once it is in public ownership.

Member Dwight Lewis made a motion to **accept** the **Independent Farm Property** Application as an eligible project. Member John Wagner **seconded** the motion which **failed** by a roll call vote of zero (0) to eight (8), as Resolution 2004-80 requires an affirmative vote of at least five (5) Members to pass.

- 9. Doan Property** - Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
- a. it is approximately 4 acres in size consisting primarily of uplands with some frontage on Murray Creek;
  - b. it is located on US Hwy. 1 in the New Smyrna Beach area;
  - c. it is surrounded by conservation lands (i.e., Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve);
  - d. previously, this property contained several structures, which have subsequently been removed; and
  - e. it meets six (6) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Member John Wagner confirmed that all structures have been removed from this property.

Jim Strahan, representative for the property owners, was present to answer any questions or provide additional information. He confirmed that all structures have been removed from the property bringing it back to a more natural state. The property offers frontage on US Hwy. 1 and Murray Creek. The northwest corner of the property along US Hwy. 1 contains a billboard. This property consists of approximately 2 acres of wetlands.

Member Phil Maroney asked if there was a lease on the billboard and if it could be terminated.

Jim Strahan replied that there was a year-to-year lease on the billboard.

Stacey Manning asked if the year-to-year lease was at the option of the landowner.

Jim Strahan confirmed that the year-to-year lease was at the option of the landowner.

Member Dwight Lewis commented that it was appropriate to consider smaller parcels that provide resource protection opportunities and are strategically located.

Member Phil Maroney made a motion to **accept** the **Doan Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Dwight Lewis **seconded** the motion which **passed** by a roll call

vote of seven (7) to one (1), with Member Alan Long opposed.

- 10. Pacetta Preserve Property** - Ed Isenhour provided the following information about this property:
- a. it is approximately 8 acres in size consisting primarily of uplands;
  - b. it is located on Sailfish Drive extending westward to the Intercoastal Waterway in the Town of Ponce Inlet;
  - c. it is in close proximity to the lighthouse; and
  - d. it meets four (4) of the 13 Primary Criteria.

Discussion ensued regarding potential funding partnerships (i.e., St. Johns River Water Management District and Town of Ponce Inlet) given the property's uniqueness and location.

Member John Wagner added that this property has historical value (i.e., antiquated cottages, fishing and tackle shop). He deemed it important for the County to act quickly in acquiring waterfront property, especially during the lull in the real estate market.

Ed Isenhour added that there is a small single-family dwelling on the northeast portion of this property.

Discussion continued regarding potential funding partnerships and likelihood of acquiring the entire property.

Using the aerial map, Member John Wagner provided additional historic information of this area by noting that the first Post Office for the Town of Ponce Inlet was located on Beach Street near its intersection with Front Street. The Davis House, which is located next to the first Post Office, has recently been taken over by a Historical Society for restoration. A portion of the parking lot being used for the casino ships has been fenced off for protection of an old, historical graveyard. The old Pacetti Hotel is located south of this area. The Pacetti Cemetery, which is where the first settlers of Ponce Inlet are buried, is located to the east of the Pacetta Preserve Property.

Member Alan Long noted that the northern area of this property, near Front Street, may contain additional structures.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential development of the western portion of the property.

John Wagner replied that the northern area of the property has been disturbed due to the intended development of a Florida resort.

Member Chris Schlageter asked what type of habitat is on this property.

Randall Sleister stated that this property primarily would consist of coastal strand and contain aquatic species.

Member John Wagner added that this property contains large live oaks.

Member Chris Schlageter commented that this property might fit the criteria of Volusia ECHO rather than Volusia Forever because of the historic element.

Randall Sleister added that County staff would conduct an on-site visit to provide a more in depth report to the Committee, if it is determined to be eligible for further consideration

Discussion ensued regarding the potential funding partnership of Volusia Forever and Volusia ECHO.

Member John Wagner suggested approaching the Town of Ponce Inlet to determine their interest in potentially becoming a funding partner.

Discussion ensued regarding the need for consistency in determining the eligibility of properties with structures and/or historic value.

Chair Dennis Bayer expressed a concern regarding the potential difficulty in acquiring this property without funding partners.

Member Phil Maroney made a motion to **accept** the **Pacetta Preserve Property** Application as an eligible project. Member Dwight Lewis **seconded** the motion which **passed** by a roll call vote of five (5) to three (3), with Chair Dennis Bayer, and Members Anne Hallum and Alan Long opposed.

### **Volusia Conservation Corridor Property**

1. **Otter Slough Ranch Property** – Ed Isenhour stated that an application for this property was received during the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of 2008. However, County staff was providing this application to the Committee for information purposes and not requesting an eligibility determination as it is within the Volusia Conservation Corridor, a Group “A” List project. He provided the following information about this property:
  - a. it is approximately 270 acres in size;
  - b. it is located on the south side of Osteen Maytown Road in the Osteen area; and
  - c. the East Central Florida Rail Trail traverses the northerly portion of the property.

Douglas Weaver added that County staff has had substantial discussions with the St. Johns River Water Management District regarding the acquisition of the abutting 1,200 acre Summerlin Ranch Property. The primary interest is in acquiring the Summerlin Ranch Property. Although the Otter Slough Ranch Property is important, it is less attractive without the Summerlin Ranch Property.

### **Discussion and Approval of 2009 Work Plan**

Ed Isenhour explained that the Committee’s Work Plan typically does not change from year to year as Resolution 2007-79 outlines the purpose/goals of the Committee. However, County staff has made a minor change to Item #3 by indicating that the Committee’s goal would be to “*support*” rather than “*increase the acreage of*” small parcel acquisition of conservation lands through the Small Lot Acquisition Program.

Member Anne Hallum made a motion to **approve** the Committee’s 2009 Work Plan, as written. Member Wanda Van Dam **seconded** the motion that **carried** by unanimous voice vote.

Member Alan Long asked if County staff’s goals and objectives regarding the Volusia Forever Program have been met since its inception, November 2000.

Douglas Weaver stated that the Volusia Forever Program has been recognized for its conservation efforts locally by 1000 Friends of Florida, and nationally by NACo and the Trust for Public Lands. He added that County staff feels that the Program has been successful. However, changes need to be made to keep the Program on target and allow flexibility. County staff intends on presenting potential changes to Resolution 2004-80 that would allow the Program to remain flexible, but also become a little more selective.

## Staff Items

1. **Draft of Potential Changes to Property Evaluation Criteria** – Ed Isenhour explained that County staff provided a “draft” of the potential revisions to the evaluation criteria, as established in Resolution 2004-80, for discussion purposes. These revisions are being considered for purposes of clarification and providing for greater long-term selectivity of properties that may be acquired through the program. There are concerns that the State Legislature could suspend the funding of the Florida Forever Program. This suspension would significantly affect our principal funding partners (i.e., St. Johns River Water Management District), which could increase the County’s financial burden. Another concern is the potential decrease in the County’s over-all assessment/tax base. As the level of available funds collected from ad valorem taxes and funding partnerships diminish, County staff believes it has become necessary to appropriately revise the program’s criteria. County staff is requesting comments and/or suggestions from the Committee to assist with resolving these concerns while keeping the program flexible and open to any potential applicants. When reviewing the proposed revisions, the Committee should note that some criteria have been stricken from one section and added to another. County staff anticipates presenting a formal resolution with the revisions at the Committee’s April meeting. Once the County Council approves the resolution, the new criteria could be applied to the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of 2009 applications (July 1 thru December 31, 2009).

Member Phil Maroney asked for clarification regarding the use of the word “functionally” in item number 1 of the proposed Site Ranking Criteria: “Is this property functionally adjacent to existing conservation land (conservation easement or public ownership) or a Volusia Forever eligible property?”

Randall Sleister explained that County staff used the word “functionally” to provide a better or more defined definition of connections to other lands. In the past, connections could be established by using corners or roadways. With the use of “functionally,” the connection would serve a purpose, such as a wildlife corridor.

Member Anne Hallum expressed a concern regarding the proposed change to the minimum requirement of Primary Site Ranking Criteria to be met for an eligible determination.

County staff reminded the Committee that the word “should” continues to be used allowing the Committee to exercise their discretion for eligibility determinations.

Douglas Weaver explained that County staff tested the proposed minimum requirement on several eligible projects to address concerns that the threshold may be set too high. After conducting this test, County staff determined that the results did not change. He added that County staff felt that modest changes were appropriate and would allow flexibility. The proposed changes are inline with Florida Forever’s process, and provide the tools for managing the Group “A/B” List of eligible projects. Earlier today, the Governor vetoed the State Legislature’s proposed suspension for the funding of the Florida Forever program for the balance of the current fiscal year.

Member Dwight Lewis requested that County staff provide a financial report depicting the amount of monies that have been received via tax revenues, spent (including bond monies) and future proposals.

Chair Dennis Bayer suggested placing this item back on April’s meeting agenda as the first item for discussion.

Member Wanda VanDam requested that County staff provide background information on

projects that could potentially be removed from the Group “B” List as part of the upcoming agenda package.

2. **Recent Acquisitions** – Douglas Weaver stated that County staff updated the 2008 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Eligible Application Ranking list by removing the projects that are now in public ownership. These projects are:
  - a. **Smith Trust Property** - 337+/- acre Lake George State Forest in-holding located on the shore of Lake George, west of Old Bubby Road and south of Ninemile Point Road in the Pierson area. This was a conservation easement acquisition.
  - b. **David Strawn Properties** - 1,200+/- acre tract located in the DeLeon Springs area off Lake Winona Road and U.S. Hwy. 17. It is adjacent to the Heart Island Conservation Area that is owned by the St. Johns River Water Management District. The District was a funding partner for this fee simple acquisition. The property’s management will be incorporated into the overall management of the Heart Island Conservation Area.
  - c. **Ford (DLSCP) Property** - 68 +/- acre tract within the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve. This was a fee simple acquisition with the District being a funding partner.
  - d. **Duff Spring Garden Lake Property**- 9+/- acre tract located on Living Water Street in DeLeon Springs. It is adjacent to the County’s Chuck Lennon Park. This was a fee simple acquisition.
  - e. **Hicks Joint Trust Property**- 76+/- acre tract located south of McGregor Road at the intersection with Fatio Road in the DeLand area. It is adjacent to the Blue Springs State Park and the County’s Lake Beresford Park. This was a fee simple acquisition. In addition, the County has received \$80,000.00 as part of a mitigation agreement for restoration of scrub jay habitat.
  - f. **Holiday Haven Property** – 50+/- acre tract located off the tributaries of Hitchens Creek in the Lake George State Forest. This was a fee simple acquisition.

Douglas Weaver noted that during 2008, over 1,600 acres have been acquired for conservation purposes.

3. **Group “A” List** – Douglas Weaver provided the following updates:
  - a) **Stanaki Property** – this property is within the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve (DLSCP). The City of Port Orange (City) acquired approximately 225+/- acres of the overall 450+/- acres. The City filed an FCT application that was successful. They should receive funding from FCT. The County intends on being a funding partner.
  - b) **Ocklawaha Property** – this property is within the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve. At this time, there isn’t any progress in the acquisition process.
  - c) **Ponce Preserve Project** – this is a continuing project with the Town of Ponce Inlet. At this time, there isn’t any progress in the acquisition process.
  - d) **Double B Ranch Property**– County staff has been negotiating with the property owner of this 3,700 acre tract that is adjacent to the District’s Haw Creek Preserve without success. At this time, there isn’t any progress in the acquisition process.
  - e) **Hughes/Huntington Trust (Colony Park) Property**– this 42+/- acre tract owned by Huntington Trust is located off SR 44 in the New Smyrna Beach area. Negotiations with the property owner have begun.
  - f) **Thornby Property** – 38+/- acre tract located in the City of Deltona is under contract and moving toward closing. This would be a joint acquisition by the City of Deltona and the County.
  - g) **Hamlin-Dann Property** – this 1,172 acre tract located in the southeast section of the County near Lake Harney is on hold, as the property owners did not accept the previous offer for purchase of a conservation easement.
  - h) **Zimmer-Heideman Property** - this 215+/- acre tract of land located on Old New York Avenue in the DeLand area near the St. Johns River is on hold. It is not contiguous to

other public lands. The Trust for Public Lands (TPL) is also involved. At this time, there is no funding partner.

- i) **Lake Moore Project (Ford/Mikol Properties)** – an offer to purchase this 121+/- acre tract of undeveloped land located between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Beltway and Summit Avenue in the City of DeLand has been presented to the property owners. The City of DeLand and the County will be funding partners. At this time, there isn't any progress in the acquisition process.
- j) **Severson Property** – this 80+/- acre tract located north of US Hwy. 92 (International Speedway Boulevard) and west of LPGA Boulevard is contiguous to the Tiger Bay State Forest. The Florida Division of Forestry (DOF) has expressed interest in the potential acquisition of this property. At this time, there isn't any progress in the acquisition process.
- k) **Mazeika Property** - this 48+/- acre tract located on the west side of Peninsula Drive in the unincorporated community of Wilbur-by-the-Sea at the northern town limit of Ponce Inlet is on hold.
- l) **Glenwood Park Property** – this 219+/- acre tract located southwest of the intersection of Grand Avenue and Plymouth Avenue, west of Deland is in the beginning stages of the acquisition process.
- m) **Fatio Road Property** – an offer to purchase this 72+/- acre tract located at the intersection of Fatio and McGregor Roads in the southwest area of DeLand Deland has been presented to the property owners. It is contiguous to Blue Springs State Park, the County's Lake Beresford Park, and the Hicks Joint Trust Property.
- n) **Smith and Butts Properties** – this 200+/- acre undeveloped tract located north of SR 44 and east of Old Sawmill Road is adjacent to the County's Longleaf Pine Preserve. It is in the beginning stages of the acquisition process. This would be a joint acquisition by the St. Johns River Water Management District and the County.

### **Adjournment**

Member Wanda VanDam made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at **5:45p.m.** Member Phil Maroney **seconded** the motion that **carried** by unanimous voice vote.