

Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Meeting

July 24, 2023

[Video link.](#)

Members present: Athern, Weston and Ingalls were present. Warner, absent. C. Planson resigned as of July 19th. Minutes from the June meeting were approved.

A number of citizens spoke about potential grants, the opportunity to create a wildlife corridor, the impact from flooding and the need to clean out the Creek.

NSB Historical Museum Director, Greg Holbrook, discussed the history of the canal system and the opportunity to showcase that history in various ways on the acquired properties.

Greg suggested that this historical video be reviewed:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RH7T-oivGJo>

He also mentioned that Florida should have representation in the American Canal Society.

Assistant City Manager Ron Neibert clarified findings from the Flood Exposure Study, especially as it relates to the Turnbull Water System. The USID grant for \$1.6M will inspect to see how Ian affected these parts of the canal system. Approvals and permits need to come from DEP, SJRWMD and the Corps of Engineers so it will take months. Also, State archeologists will have to sign off on their exploration of the canal prior to the cleanout. A cost of \$3.6M has been proposed in the city budget to clean out north of SR 44 to Jungle Road. He also said that if that portion had been cleaned out prior to hurricane Ian, that area would not have flooded. City Staff is currently working with NSB Utilities to review the entire storm water infrastructure.

One appraisal has been received and staff is waiting for a second so they can proceed with the purchase of the highly ranked "Turnbull" property south of SR 44, behind Publix and intersecting Paige Ave.

There was more discussion about a publicity campaign to inform the citizens about the great progress that has been made thus far in purchasing and protecting Turnbull Creek. It was noted that a new observation tower will be constructed along the NSB Pedestrian Trail that will give a good overview of some of the protected property along the Creek and may be a good location for an educational center that could showcase Turnbull's economic model for growing and shipping sugar cane, hemp and indigo based on the construction of the Egyptian canal system.

There is interest in keeping bees on some of the acquired properties and if enough contiguous property is acquired, a kayak run and walking trail could be created.

Chairman Athern discussed the extensive research she had done on potential grants and programs for more land acquisition and property maintenance.

The Task Force has asked the Commission to assign a staff member to carry on its work when its term sunsets in August and will make other recommendations to the Commission in their final report. The City Clerk thanked the Task Force members for their participation.