

**Wellington
Equestrian Preserve Committee Meeting
February 3, 2021
Village Hall
12300 Forest Hill Boulevard**

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. Jane Cleveland, Carlos Arellano, Glen Fleischer, Annabelle Garrett, Dr. Kristy Lund, and Haakon Gangnes were present. Dr. Rachel Eidelman arrived late.

Staff present: Michael O'Dell and D.J. Helkowski.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Remarks by Committee Chair

There were no remarks by the Committee Chair.

IV. Additions/Deletions/Reordering of Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

V. Approval of Minutes

The January EPC minutes were requested to be revised, and thus were not approved.

VI. New Business

Manure Discussion

Michael O'Dell introduced Chip Coulter, Vice President and General Manager of HiPoint Agro Bedding, to give an update on their waste recycling project. Mr. Coulter informed the committee that he and the CEO of the company brought their technology to recycle the wood shaving to Florida in 2013. He said that the company should submit for their building permits by February 15 to build their recycling plant, which is scheduled to begin operation by December 31, 2021. The plant will be a 50,000 square foot full-enclosed building that will be located at 900 Benoist Farms Road. Mr. Coulter stated that the process would recapture the steam to make electricity, along with the methane gas. The main business will be to sell the recycled wood shaving as bedding material.

Annabelle Garrett asked if the electricity produced at the plant is then sold. Mr. Coulter responded that the company is mandated to do so by Florida Power & Light. Ms. Garrett then asked whom would HiPoint be selling the methane gas to. Mr. Coulter responded that they sell it to Florida Power & Light as well as other companies, including Next Energy. Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Coulter if their plant will be powered by the electricity it generates. Mr. Coulter responded that the plant will run off solar power, and it will be

completely clean. He said that they can recycle the bedding/wood shaving 17 times before it breaks down to a dust, which then becomes part of their fuel source. Chair Cleveland asked what percentage of the wood shaving product is HiPoint able to recycle. Mr. Coulter said that 92% of bedding is wood-fiber shavings, while only 8% is manure and urine. Much of the manure is either turned into methane gas or composted on-site.

Mr. Coulter's quality control assistant, Corry Smallegange, began handing out bedding samples along with brochures to the committee. Dr. Kristy Lund asked about the odor coming from the plant. Mr. Coulter said that the complete enclosure of the facility along with HEPA filters designed to deter the odor, all of which were required in the permit process. He said when a truck comes into the facility to dump the manure, they close the doors, and there is no scent from the facility. Dr. Lund said that she read in a news article about the facility, that HiPoint will price each load based on the quality of the manure. Mr. Coulter responded that they test every load, and if it's too wet they will put it through composting. He said that they want the best of the best bedding. Their plant is able to process 60,000 tons of manure annually. Ms. Garrett asked how much they sell the bags of bedding for. Mr. Coulter responded that it will be competitive in the market, and he estimated it to be about \$7.25 per bag. Dr. Lund asked how many loads Mr. Coulter thinks he will be able to handle per day. He responded that they will be running two shifts of 10 hours each during the equestrian season, and only one shift during the off-season. He reiterated that the total amount of manure they can take per year is 60,000 tons. Chair Cleveland asked if HiPoint Bedding will be selective about which waste disposal companies that they use. Mr. Coulter responded that they feel they need to concentrate on larger barns as opposed to smaller ones, as they can't handle all of the waste that is out there. Ms. Garrett asked, assuming this operation is a success, is there extra land at this site that you can expand the operation, or are there additional sites that you could expand operations to. Mr. Coulter responded that they would need to acquire another 5 acres to expand operations. He said they are leasing this site from the Solid Waste Authority. He said there are three 5-acre parcels adjacent to HiPoint site that they could expand to. Haakon Gangnes asked Mr. Coulter what HiPoint's ability to scale up is. Mr. Coulter reiterated that they would have to purchase one of the three 5-acre sites adjacent to their property, but there are opportunities to scale up. Chair Cleveland asked how they are able to recycle the more dusty shavings. Mr. Coulter responded there is an air flow that goes through the dryer which draws heat through it. In addition to that, it draws the dust down, which becomes fuel.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Coulter if a load is turned away, where will it be sent. Mr. Coulter responded wherever they want to go. They can go to the Solid Waste Authority, or any other legal site. Dr. Lund asked out of the volume of manure that is currently produced in Wellington, what percentage the HiPoint plant will be able to handle. Mr. Coulter responded that they can do 60,000 tons out of 350,000 tons that are produced in Wellington (note: Wellington has documented an annual volume of 90,000 tons). Glen Fleischer asked for Mr. Coulter's estimate of how long trucks would sit before he would evaluate them. Mr. Coulter responded that they would come in immediately and the door would shut behind them. They would drive onto a scale so they can weigh the truck, which is how they charge the tipping fee. He said that the manure from the truck is immediately tested, and the testing process takes 5-6 minutes. Then they dump the manure from the truck, and the next truck enters the facility. Mr. Fleischer asked how much wait time a trucker could expect. Mr. Coulter responded that they will try to schedule as much as

they can so that not everyone arrives at once. Mr. Fleischer asked how many trucks can sit in HiPoint's staging area at a time. Mr. Coulter replied that he wasn't sure exactly. He said that a road is being built that will give them plenty of staging area. Mr. Fleischer asked what their source of funding is, to which Mr. Coulter responded that it is all private dollars. He said there a couple of local investors as well as one large Canadian investor. Mr. Coulter responded that they haven't been able to find any grants through public/private partnerships. So all of their funding has had to come from private investors.

Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. Coulter what are the biggest challenges he foresees. Mr. Coulter responded that the biggest challenge will be to actually sell 1 million bags. He said they know they can process all that they can get. He said that while selling the bags will be a challenge, he's confident that they will be successful since it's such a top-tier product. Dr. Lund asked if HiPoint will be selling bags directly from their plant, or instead go to the local feed store to have them sold there. Mr. Coulter replied that they would be sold at feed stores. He said that they still won't discount the opportunity to sell to the bigger corporations directly. Mr. Fleischer asked if the process is patented. Mr. Coulter said you cannot patent the process or the product. The equipment itself is also not patented. Dr. Rachel Eidelman asked if HiPoint will have a system in which somebody buys their product and then have trucks take that product from the big barns and remove it to take it right back to where it started. Mr. Coulter responded that they could do that, but the problem with that is that the trucks are dirty, and they wouldn't want to place the bags right back in them. Dr. Lund asked Mr. Coulter if their bags are recyclable. Mr. Coulter said that they are biodegradable. Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. Coulter if there is any support that the Village could give to his company. Mr. Coulter replied that they really haven't asked for it, and they've gone the private route. Carlos Arellano asked if they will be charging the trucks, to which Mr. Coulter responded yes, there is a tipping fee. He said that they don't ship the material in bulk, it's only sold by the bag. Chair Cleveland asked what the size of the bag is. Mr. Coulter replied that its 3.1 cubic feet.

Dr. Kristy Lund asked how much the volume of the product per bag can expand. Corry Smallegange stated that the expansion volume will be somewhere between 8 and 10 cubic feet. She said that they're pricing will be based on all of the other product that is currently on the market. She said it will be competitively priced and slightly lower than the current market at the introduction, and then based on the growth of the company, the price may increase over time. Mr. Arellano asked Ms. Smallegange what the average humidity of the dirty manure going into and coming out of the plant. Neither Ms. Smallegange nor Mr. Coulter knew the exact percentage. Mr. Arellano asked if HiPoint thinks that they will be successful, wouldn't it be appropriate to obtain the adjacent 5-acre site now. Mr. Coulter responded that he wants to get the plant up and going before he buy's the adjacent property. Ms. Smallegange then said that she text messaged the CEO of the company, and to answer Mr. Arellano's previous question regarding humidity, the dirty manure comes in with 35-45% humidity, and then it is reduced to 10% through the process.

Chair Cleveland asked Michael O'Dell about the status of the U.S. Sugar deadline for no longer taking in manure from the Village of Wellington. Mr. O'Dell said that he spoke to the farm manager at U.S. Sugar, and he said that the deadline of February 12, 2021 still holds.

Mr. O'Dell introduced Justin Hickey, the owner of J&H Hauling and Services. Mr. Hickey said that he is in charge of receiving and land applying the bedding material from Wellington on U.S. Sugar's farmlands. He said he has numerous pieces of equipment to handle the bedding as it comes in. This includes loaders, spreaders, tractors, etc. He stressed that his company is environmentally friendly and works hard to do the right thing. He said what they are doing with the waste helps with crop growth by using less fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides, and at the same time helping Wellington farm owners properly dispose the manure. He said with the signature of the Governor, Senate bill 712 - approved in 2020 legislative sessions - procedures were established regarding how to handle horse manure that complies with Florida laws, The Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services, and specifically the Office of Agricultural Water Policy. He said that these requirements were universally supported by groups across the political spectrum, including agriculture, and were built upon other requirements, regarding record-keeping and implementation verification that were originally established in 2016 legislative sessions. He said that this is what J&H Hauling has been doing for years now without any violation of state rules. The water has been analyzed for nutrients as required by South Florida Water Management District, and there have been no water violations. He stated that horse manure has 14 pounds of nitrogen and 4 pounds of phosphorous per ton, which is less than .007% of nutritional value per ton in the bedding. He stated that this is a relatively insignificant amount, and within 2 years or less, the crops absorb all of the materials. He said the Village and other local politicians have known since 2016 that what we are doing is legal and inexpensive. He said he's not sure why somebody has decided to end this practice, but it is bad for everybody involved. He said there will be higher prices, longer trips, waiting at the dump, and more illegal dumping. He said the Village has not helped or done anything to try to save the relationship with U.S. Sugar. (note that the Village has actively communicated with US Sugar.) He plans on working with Mr. Oswaldo De Armas, who is the owner of the first farm that was permitted to receive the manure on 1800 acres and is here at this meeting. He said that they would continue to try to solve Wellington's manure problem with Mr. De Armas' farm, but that the U.S. Sugar property provided a lot more land, which made it easier to deal with the waste. Dr. Lund asked if the letter sent to the Village of Wellington from U.S. Sugar stated why they were going to discontinue taking in manure. Mr. O'Dell said that he didn't have the letter with him, but that he could provide it to the committee members. O'Dell said that he did not recall the letter stating specifically why US Sugar was ceasing the operation. Dr. Lund asked Mr. Hickey if U.S. Sugar ever came to him and explained why they were discontinuing taking in manure. Mr. Hickey responded that he has never seen the letter. He knew of it, and was hoping that the Village would make some calls and try to solve the problem, but nobody has. He said he is trying to get an extension on the deadline until the end of the equestrian season. Annabelle Garrett asked if this decision had to do with the Army Corps of Engineers wanting water to flow north to south from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades, rather than flowing east-west to U.S. Sugar lands. Mr. Hickey said that he wasn't sure. Chair Cleveland asked Mr. Hickey if U.S. Sugar ever talked to him directly about this. Mr. Hickey responded that right now, he can't get in touch with his contact for U.S. Sugar because he is on vacation. He said he has known about this for a while but always hoped that the Village would step in and try to help. Dr. Lund asked if U.S. Sugar has ever given him a reason for it, and Mr. Hickey replied that they hadn't. They just told him it came from high above, and as far as he knows, it was politically motivated. Mr. Hickey then said that from all of the research done, there isn't enough phosphorous in the manure for them to even

care, because in the fields, the crops suck up all of the phosphorous and it doesn't leach out into the water.

Mr. Hickey introduced Oswaldo De Armas. Mr. De Armas said that he has worked with Mr. Hickey in the manure spreading business for a while. He said that Senate bill 712, signed in 2020, reinforced a law that was promoted in 2016, which seeks to address manure. It established certain rules regarding how manure is required to be used. These rules address how manure is to be applied on the soil, how deep it can be applied, and record-keeping regarding how many trucks you get per day as well as the weight of said trucks. He said that they cannot put manure or bedding anywhere within 50 feet of any canal. The material has to be incorporated as soon as possible into the soil, diminishing the amount of phosphorous that can be leached into water. Mr. De Armas stated that bill 712 was meant to make the law a little stricter to control the pollution of water coming into Lake Okeechobee. Ms. Garrett read an email she received from December 22, 2020. The email described how the federal omnibus spending package, which included the Water Resources Development Act, effects the Everglades and Lake Okeechobee. She said that she has a feeling that the Water Resources Development Act and Florida Senate bill 712 might be linked. Haakon Gangnes stated that environmental enforcement has been one of Governor DeSantis' top priorities since he came into office. He stated that the Governor increase penalties regarding pollution. He has also allocated \$318 million dollars towards Everglades Restoration. \$50 million of that goes towards Lake Okeechobee Watershed restoration; \$50 million more goes toward spring restoration, and on. Ms. Garrett said that she knows for a fact that U.S. Sugar had been lobbying against it, to continue having water flow east-west. Mr. Gangnes said that it isn't just a manure problem; it is land application of all bio solids. Mr. De Armas said that under the Clean Water Act, they have to take samples every 28 days to assess how manure dumping is affecting water quality. Ms. Garrett asked where the water sample is coming from. Mr. De Armas responded that it comes from their main canal that discharging into South Florida Water Management District. He said that as far as he knows, since the Best Management Practices were enacted in 2015, his farm has had no violations. He said that, the BMP plan, calls for phosphorous levels to be reduced by 64% over a 25-year period. They are looking for the sources of phosphorous in the water, but can't pinpoint exactly who the culprits are. He said that he guarantees that the water samples from U.S. Sugar are cleaner than what is expected, because the minute they have a violation, everybody knows about it.

Carlos Arellano asked Mr. De Armas if his crop yield went up after spreading horse manure on his land. Mr. De Armas responded that he is probably the only one who gets 4 life spans out of his sugar cane; most people only get 3-3.25 life spans. So they produce about 50 tons per acre with an average of 3 life spans, while he himself is average 45 tons per acre with an average of 4 life spans. Dr. Lund asked if he has to add extra fertilizer or if he is using less. Mr. De Armas responded that he has to add some additional fertilizer. Dr. Lund asked Mr. Hickey how many acres he is using at U.S. Sugar on average, and how many acres has he found as an alternative. Mr. Hickey responded that Mr. De Armas has 1800 acres. At U.S. Sugar, they had access to 126,000 acres. Most seasons, J&H Hauling used approximately 400-500 of those acres to handle Wellington's manure. Mr. Hickey said that he took in about 85% of Wellington's manure between all the haulers. He said that he didn't take manure from the showgrounds. Chair Cleveland asked if he did hauled manure from anywhere beyond Wellington. Mr. Hickey responded that he hauls from all

over, but Wellington 95% of his business. Ms. Garrett asked Mr. De Armas if he is not allowed to use manure, what is the breakdown of the fertilizer he would end up using. Mr. De Armas responded that it is 40 pounds of phosphorous per acre, 80-120 pounds of potassium per acre, and 0 pounds of nitrogen per acre. It is based on soil needs from analysis. Ms. Garrett then asked what the breakdown would look like if it was just horse manure. Mr. De Armas said that for potassium it wouldn't make a difference, and for phosphorous, it would be 30-45 pounds per acre. Dr. Lund asked Mr. Hickey without U.S. sugar, how many tons of manure he will be able to handle. Mr. Hickey responded that it depends on the farm and how they handle it. Chair Cleveland asked how much manure he handles now. Mr. Hickey responded that in season with U.S. Sugar at his disposal, he takes in around 1000 loads per month. When asked how many tons that is, he said each truck contains about 8 tons, so 8000 tons per month total.

Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. Hickey if U.S. Sugar actually wants this product. Mr. Hickey said that everybody he knows out there does. He said that because their land is sandy, it helps retain water. He said that after they spread manure on their fields, their yield per acre goes up. Chair Cleveland asked about Florida Crystals and other private growers demand for manure spreading. Mr. Hickey said that they have never wanted it. He said that they have always been afraid of the stigma and bad publicity that comes along with it. Mr. De Armas added that the word "dumping" is associated with bad publicity. He said that they tried for a while to create a campaign to educate people about the benefits of manure spreading. Mr. Gangnes said that he heard the farms didn't want the manure anyway because its a hassle. Mr. Hickey responded that in the beginning it was because they all used to dump there and it was free. Then, they had to bring in bulldozers and other equipment to level it all out, and the bill was very expensive. So Mr. Hickey asked for them to give him the land, and he would use his own equipment to spread the manure. Mr. Hickey said by doing this, he solved the farm's problem, and in turn he had to start charging all of his competitors to dump there as well so he could fund the equipment and spreading process. Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Hickey if he will still have that land after the deadline of February 12. He responded "supposedly, no". He said that he's trying to see if he can get an extension but he doesn't know if he will be able to. Mr. Gangnes stated that there is probably a correlation between when the heavy rains come and when the nutrients from the manure run off.

Chair Cleveland asked Mr. De Armas if there are many private growers out west that are not U.S. Sugar or Florida Crystals. He responded that there are not that many. He said you find more farms in the 5,000-10,000 acre range. Chair Cleveland then asked Mr. De Armas how many farms are his size or even larger that could be used for dumping and spreading that aren't owned by U.S. Sugar or Florida Crystals. Mr. De Armas responded that there are probably none. Dr. Lund asked how far away Mr. De Armas' farm is away from Wellington compared to U.S. Sugar. Mr. Hickey responded that it's about the same distance. He then said that the problem now is with Mr. De Armas' farm, he won't be able to take manure from everybody. Dr. Lund said that she heard there is a place in Clewiston to dump manure, and asked Mr. Hickey if that is true. He responded that he has heard that too, but he doesn't know that it is true. Mr. O'Dell added that nobody has informed him that they have been disposing of the waste in Clewiston, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't happen. Dr. Lund added that in Clewiston the water would be running south just like with U.S. Sugar, so it still doesn't solve the problem that the state is seeking to solve. Dr. Lund asked Mr. Hickey to confirm that the Solid Waste Authority is another place to go to dump manure. Mr. Hickey said yes, but

they charge by the ton. So if the manure is wet, it will be very expensive. Mr. O'Dell said that the Solid Waste Authority can take up to about 100,000 tons of manure per year based on their permit allowing them to take in 10% of the livestock waste associated with the garbage that they actually burn. He said they are capped at a maximum of 30,000 tons per month, and they have never gotten close to that volume, so far. Dr. Lund said that she was told the problem with the Solid Waste Authority is that you have to wait in line with the rest of the trucks that dump other waste. Mr. Hickey said that each truck that goes to SWA needs to be weighed going in, and then be weighed leaving. Dr. Lund said that the problem is that if going to the Solid Waste Authority takes haulers twice as long, how we are going to get all of the manure in Wellington out on a daily basis. Mr. Arellano said that he can't believe that the Village hasn't talked directly to U.S. Sugar about this issue, when manure disposal is discussed at the EPC meetings every month. Mr. Hickey added that he was told some phone calls would be made to resolve this issue, but they never were. He added that with this dilemma, each load will likely be more expensive and that will have to be passed down to the customers. Dr. Lund asked what will happen if her manure hauler can't get to her property to haul her manure and other haulers won't take new clients. Will she be fined because she has manure sitting on her property that she can't get rid of? Mr. Arellano said that the committee will reach out to U.S. Sugar this week to try and solve this issue somehow.

Dr. Lund asked Mr. Hickey if he knows what Ocala does with their manure. He responded that he heard they put it in a hole, and then have a system that turns it into pellets. Mr. Coulter approached the podium and said that the Ocala market right now does about 500,000 tons of manure, and there is a \$500 million facility there that he recently toured which is privately funded that takes their material and makes pellets out of it for burning. The plant is not working very well, and they've also been putting the pellets in stalls which also isn't working very well. So they are about to have a problem that may be even bigger than the problem here. Dr. Lund asked if the 500,000 ton number is for all of Ocala. Mr. Coulter responded that it is for Marion and Alachua counties. Dr. Lund asked what the private people do with their manure up there, to which Mr. Coulter responded that he has no idea. He said that U.S. Sugar stated 7 years ago that they didn't want to take the material anymore. He then said that he had gotten confirmation from them that if and when HiPoint Bedding built their plant, they would stop using it and would recommend that HiPoint were the ones that people could go to because they were environmentally friendly. Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. Coulter if he had knowledge about land applications and if it's good or bad. He responded that he has heard multiple things about it. A ton of material is 92% bedding, 8% manure. So out of 350,000 tons of material out here, there's only 28,000 tons of manure, which is miniscule compared to the amount of bedding itself. The bedding doesn't break down like mulch. He said that the only negative thing he has heard about it is that it didn't break down fast enough. The positive is that it keeps the water on the property and provides nutrients to the soil.

Chair Cleveland said that the question is who the decision maker is and how to influence that decision maker. Mr. Hickey said that U.S. Sugar's lobbyist lives close and he was told to contact him. He then said if we can get an extension on the deadline with U.S. Sugar, we have time to work with Ms. De Armas' farm as well as others to try and solve the problem in the meantime. But right now, without U.S. Sugar, it could pose problems. Mr. Gangnes asked if it is easier to go to the Solid Waste Authority right now and see what they could increase their manure intake to. Mr. Hickey responded that they aren't allowed to increase

because they are capped under their permit. Dr. Lund asked who issued their permit, to which Mr. O'Dell responded the Environmental Protection Agency. Mr. Gangnes said that faced with an environmental problem, they might try to accommodate that. Regarding who to contact about this issue, Mr. De Armas suggested contacting the University of Florida Experimental Station. He said that they have shown some interest in looking into the usage of materials in the Everglades. He said that this could also help with the issue of stigmatization surrounding manure spreading and dumping.

Chair Cleveland asked Mr. O'Dell if there is a word to come from Wellington, what the mechanics/process are. Mr. O'Dell replied that the message has been provided to our upper management. He also said that while Mr. Hickey said that there weren't phone calls made about this issue, there in fact were phone calls made. He said that the village was told that they are going to stick with their directive. Ms. Garrett asked if orange growers would have any interest in the product. Mr. Hickey responded that he isn't sure if it would be beneficial to an orange tree. If it is and they could truck it out towards Okeechobee, that would at least be an alternative for now. Mr. Gangnes said that it offsets though because of the distance to truck it. At Solid Waste Authority, even though they charge more because they charge by tonnage, it isn't as far a distance. Mr. Hickey said that for example, he can haul 5-6 loads a day now because he can go to U.S. Sugar and not wait in line to get weighed, but if he were to go to Solid Waste Authority he could only do 3-4 loads a day. He would still be behind and never be able to keep up. He said that he could buy more trucks and equipment, but that isn't going to work either because he doesn't need them in the Summer. Mr. Gangnes asked if the Village could assist in making those accounts and maybe grant \$10,000 to allow haulers to go through the fast-pass line. Mr. Hickey responded that his problem isn't Solid Waste Authority, but rather the weight, because he charges by the truckload, not by the ton. Ms. Garrett mentioned that is an incentive to have a covered manure bin. Mr. Hickey said that he agreed. He said most farms do now, but older farms with 3-5 horses that stay year round always have wet and heavy manure. Mr. Gangnes suggested that the market may solve this. If hauling in Wellington becomes based on weight rather than load, people will largely decide to dry their manure. Mr. Hickey said that they do put air systems on dump trucks now that tell you how much weight you are holding. Mr. Gangnes asked how much a retrofit like that would cost per truck. Mr. Hickey responded that he believes it's \$700-\$1000 per truck. Mr. Gangnes asked if it is automated. Mr. Hickey replied that you would have to weigh the truck at every farm and weigh them accordingly. At Solid Waste Authority, they weigh trucks on the way in and then again on the way out to charge you for how much you dumped. Ms. Garrett suggested that it is beneficial all around to retrofit the truck because they know exactly what they will be charged, and there is an incentive to cover the manure. Mr. Gangnes asked if retrofitting their trucks is something that haulers would be willing to do. Mr. Hickey responded that he himself has always been against it because it is a lot more work to keep track of the weight for billing. Mr. Gangnes asked didn't he already have to keep track of it for the Village of Wellington. Mr. Hickey responded no, he just needs to keep track of how many loads per month or year he hauls. Mr. Gangnes asked if weighing the load is part of the billing process already. He said that haulers could show up with a truck that's half full and charge for a full load if it isn't being weighed and billed accordingly. Mr. Hickey said that he wouldn't do that, to which Mr. Gangnes has responded that he's heard stories about other haulers doing this. Mr. Gangnes said that he heard that the retrofitted trucks weigh the manure in an automated fashion and the haulers wouldn't have to weigh

it themselves manually. Mr. Hickey said that he would take a look to see if he could find that program, and that if that was the case, he wouldn't mind doing that.

Dr. Lund asked if the U.S. Sugar's response to the Village's attempts to reverse the decision not to take in any more manure came with reasoning. Mr. O'Dell responded not that he is aware a specific reason be stated. Chair Cleveland said that she isn't hearing any solutions. Mr. Hickey said that he is worried about other hauler, but also customers, because they are likely to be charged a lot more money per load in the future. Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. Hickey if he saw the lack of a transfer station as a problem. Mr. Hickey responded that when he ran a transfer station in Wellington, it helped tremendously all of the haulers. It cut down on the time they all had to work. However, because he was the one running the transfer station, he said that he lost, because the haulers were loading up the trucks with more manure than they could hold. Mr. Gangnes asked if he took a loss on running the transfer station, to which Mr. Hickey said that he did. Ms. Garrett clarified that Mr. De Armas' farm had 1800 acres for Wellington to dump manure at until March, and so Wellington needs 500 more acres of land to dump at. So Wellington has a bit of leeway until the end of the equestrian season. She asked if land is available out near Mr. De Armas' farm. Mr. Hickey said that he could purchase 160 acres, but would need \$1.9 million. He said the going rate for productive farmland is about \$12,000 per acre. Mr. De Armas added that it is so expensive because it is very productive land. Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Hickey if he were to purchase this land, what kind of output and revenue could you have there when you aren't taking in manure. He responded that he would probably compost it, and then blend it and spread it for farmers for free and make money on the back end when they harvest.

Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. O'Dell who the people are who would take this as fertilizer. He responded that there are different composting operations around Florida, but none of them are setting anything up in Palm Beach County because the land is too expensive. So the material would have to be trucked outside of Palm Beach County some way. Mr. De Armas said the problem with doing this is that anything sold in the United States labeled as fertilizer, you have to do a guarantee analysis. Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. Hickey if they could load their trailers onto a train and have them ship off to composting organizations outside of the county. He responded that he knows the outfit in Apopka is looking into that, but they would need a close place by the rail yards.

Chair Cleveland thanked the two gentlemen for their time, and asked if they would come back again to discuss further. They both responded yes. Dr. Lund asked Mr. O'Dell if the Village has had any conversation about what will happen if a farm owner can't get rid of their manure. He responded that you can't let it go outside of the manure bin or pollute the surrounding water or lands. He said that you would be in violation of the Best Management Practices and the Village would go through their code case process. He added that the Village understands the problem, and a farm owner should strive to work within the BMP's. Mr. Gangnes asked if farm owners would be able to land application. Mr. O'Dell responded if you follow the permit process, then yes. Mr. Gangnes asked if the property is Ag Exempt, why they would have to get a permit for it. Mr. O'Dell responded that Ag Exempt properties still need to comply with the Village's water quality and quantity standards. Dr. Lund asked if a scenario occurs where there are many farms with overflowing manure bins in a few weeks because they can't get the manure hauled out, will the Village fine everyone. Mr. O'Dell responded that while the Village's policy to have farm owners work

within the BMP's, if there's a major issue like that, they will react to it appropriately. Mr. Gangnes asked what the mechanics of a deadline date on behalf of the Village for not reaching a solution for the manure problem look like. Mr. O'Dell responded that the committee could seek to mandate that the Village of Wellington develop a solution, but first, does the Village have the capital or the political will to force a solution. Second, what is the solution and where would it be placed. O'Dell added that the Village of Wellington has a limited amount of land within the community. We do not own any public land beyond a park within the Equestrian Preserve Area; all of the rest of the land is privately owned. He said that the Village has done a study and the properties they have identified as suitable are privately owned. He then stated that this whole problem is much larger than just Wellington. Ms. Garrett asked the way that Wellington's charter is written, are the funds allowed to be spent outside of the Village boundaries if it is to solve a Wellington problem. Mr. O'Dell replied no. Ms. Garrett then asked what if it is a grant to a Wellington-based business. Mr. O'Dell said that there's no plan for that, but he would have to look at the charter to see if it specifically delineated as being not allowed. Mr. Gangnes asked if there any lands to be annexed. Mr. O'Dell responded that there are lands that the Village has mapped out as part of the Comprehensive Plan, but it has to be approved by both the landowner and Palm Beach County. Ms. Garrett asked how Loxahatchee Groves has looked at trying to solve this manure issue. Mr. O'Dell responded that he isn't sure. He added that they have an ordinance that prohibits manure from coming into their community.

Equestrian Element of the Comprehensive Plan

Michael O'Dell said that there have been a few other projects that have taken precedent for the Planning, Zoning, and Adjustment Board. So the Equestrian Element will not be presented to PZAB until March. With this delay, staff has decided to bring the Equestrian Element of the Comprehensive Plan back to the Equestrian Preserve Committee to show the revisions that have been proposed. He said that this is a combination of taking what the committee has asked for in part, as well as staff's revisions.

Mr. O'Dell began a presentation recapping what has been agreed upon so far as well as showing revisions made to the Equestrian Element since last meeting.

The first item Mr. O'Dell brought up was the introduction, having to do with the discussion over the word "exurban" at previous meetings. He said that all of the introductions from all of the elements will be merged into one introduction for the whole Comprehensive Plan. He added that they will be informational, but will not become a part of the adopted Goals, Policies, and Objectives. In other words, the introduction will serve no regulatory purpose. Chair Cleveland asked why the introduction is necessary. Mr. O'Dell said that it will detail the history of the Village of Wellington, as well as state the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan itself. He then said that as discussed at the previous EPC meeting, staff has revised the definition of the word "exurban". Dr. Lund said that the sentence "the character of the EPA is more exurban" means nothing to her if we are trying to describe who and what we are. She said that she had to look up the word exurban to see what it means. She said that you could use a word so much more informative than the word "exurban", and she still doesn't like it as a representation of Wellington. Mr. Gangnes added that it's not effective communication. Chair Cleveland asked why Village staff won't let the word go. Mr. O'Dell reiterated that the introduction is strictly informational, and that

the committee's recommendation on the word is well documented. Chair Cleveland responded that the committee clearly said that they are not only going to recommend, but that they are going to disapprove this language. Ms. Garrett added that the committee previously decided not to push their version forward, and instead decided that it would be better to vote against it completely, because that way the committee's comments aren't buried.

Mr. O'Dell stated that the other item discussed was Goal #3, which was modified to read "to support the equestrian industry, particularly the competitive component, as integral to the equestrian economic sector of Wellington". He noted that this modification was agreed upon at the January 6th meeting and it hasn't been changed.

The next item Mr. O'Dell recapped was the combining of items #3 and #4 under policy 1.1.1, which had been agreed upon at the January 6 meeting. The new item, #3, reads "provide for the limited commercial, civic, and institutional uses, which support the equestrian industry, including primary and secondary schools". Mr. O'Dell said that while this language was accepted, the committee had some discussions on what qualifies as limited commercial uses. He then displayed the proposed Future Land Use map in order to show where the commercial properties are located in the EPA. Most of them are classified as "Equestrian Commercial", but there is one "Commercial" property at the corner of Lake Worth Road and South Shore Boulevard. He said that the Equestrian Commercial properties are primarily the venues, with the exception of the one property at the corner of 50th Street and South Road which is located within the Country Place PUD. Mr. O'Dell then displayed the commercial use matrix, and pointed out to the committee where the permitted or conditional uses that would be allowed on commercial sites in the EPA are. Ms. Garrett asked what "Agricultural Retail/Service" is. Mr. O'Dell responded that it would include feed stores. Ms. Garrett then asked what "Bonafied Ag" is. Mr. O'Dell responded that it is by state definition a property that is agricultural and produces a product for human consumption or human use. Ms. Garrett asked if any of these equestrian/agricultural sub-categories constitute waste transfer. Mr. O'Dell said that he doesn't see anything saying that in the use matrix. He said out of everything Nursery, Wholesale, and Retail would probably be the best use for it to fall under. Mr. Gangnes asked how these charts can be changed. Mr. O'Dell responded that they would need to be modified through a council directive. Chair Cleveland noted that this is a zoning code and the committee had worked on this previously, and that any change to the zoning code would have to go through council. Mr. O'Dell added that it would also go through PZAB and changes would take a majority vote to pass through. Dr. Rachel Eidelman asked if Winding Trails is now in the EPA, to which Mr. O'Dell responded yes.

The next item Mr. O'Dell recapped, which was agreed upon at the January 6th meeting, regarded incident and emergency management. This was policy 1.1.3 which reads "coordinate with State and County emergency managers to provide support to the equestrian community within the EPA if impacted by area-wide events".

Mr. O'Dell then reviewed policy 1.2.2 which was slightly modified to read "coordinate with state and federal agencies to assess and address water quality standards in the EPA and identify policies or programs to support water quality improvement, which may be jointly implemented".

The next item was policy 2.2.2 regarding widening Lake Worth Road and South Shore Boulevard. This policy had previously been agreed upon and recommended in the Equestrian Plan of Action, but had been modified due to the committee's change of heart at the last meeting to read "Continue to develop Lake Worth Road and South Shore Boulevard as major collector roadways that support the equestrian venues and serve the Village by expanding high-volume sections of these roadways within the EPA from two lanes to four, as may be warranted. The expansion of these roadways should occur concurrently or after the intersection improvements at Lake Worth Road/South Shore and South Shore/Pierson.

Mr. O'Dell presented an excerpt from the Equestrian Plan of Action, to show the committee that in December 2017, they had reviewed the recommendations made, which had largely been driven by interviews of the venue operators. The Lake Worth Road and South Shore Boulevard improvements as delineated in the Plan of Action came directly from the committee and was included at the time in large part to assist the equestrian venues. Mr. Gangnes asked the Chair Cleveland if this was something that they had worked on as a past committee, to which she replied yes. Mr. Gangnes asked if at that time, they saw Wellington being used as a cut-through. Chair Cleveland and Dr. Lund, who were both on the committee at that time, agreed that they had discussed that. Dr. Eidelman stated that she would be very weary of making South Shore Boulevard into a 4-lane road. Chair Cleveland noted that it already is up until Pierson Road. Dr. Eidelman replied that widening it beyond that point would increase traffic. Mr. Gangnes suggested the idea of changing the speed limit based on time. Times when more people are riding horses, the speed limit could be lowered, almost like a school zone. Ms. Garrett responded that the problem with this idea is that for example on 50th Street, on one side you just have a canal, and on the other side you have polo barns so there are a lot of horse trailers turning. And so the idea of increasing the speed at any time no matter how many people are riding doesn't make sense. Mr. Arellano added that the hours that people are out riding horses are also the peak hours of vehicle traffic. Mr. Gangnes added that if you add a zone where speeds have to decrease, it may be less appealing for people to use that roadway as a cut-through altogether. Mr. O'Dell stated for the record that the speed limit on 50th Street is 35 miles per hour.

The last item Mr. O'Dell recapped was policy 3.2.2. regarding equestrian venues. This had already been agreed upon, but staff added a final line to say "addressing impacts" just to clarify the purpose of the application and permitting process.

Mr. O'Dell concluded the presentation and asked for the committee's recommendations. Chair Cleveland noted that the committee has already disapproved the element. So by default that is the committee's position. Chair Cleveland said that it will be going to the Planning, Zoning, and Adjustment Board and then to Council, and somebody from the committee will need to go with it to explain the committee's thinking. Mr. O'Dell said that the committee would need to identify that person to represent the committee if that is what you want to do. He said you are all free to go as residents on their own to give your public comment. Mr. Gangnes asked if the thinking is that everyone could go on their own and the committee could send one person as a designee as well, to which Chair Cleveland responded yes. Mr. O'Dell clarified that the meeting of the PZAB will be March 10th at 7 PM. Mr. Gangnes suggested voting at the end of the next EPC meeting (March 3rd) on who will represent the committee at the PZAB meeting the following week.

Chair Cleveland asked if there was any further discussion on the Comprehensive Plan. Dr. Lund stated that she isn't satisfied with staff's reason for leaving the word exurban in the introduction.

Chair Cleveland said that there is no further motion on the Comprehensive Plan this meeting, so the committee is sticking with their vote to disapprove it at the January 6 meeting. Mr. Gangnes asked Mr. O'Dell if the Equestrian Element only applied to equestrian-zoned areas, to which he responded yes. Mr. Gangnes then asked if it can't apply to anything outside of the Equestrian Overlay Zoning District, to which Mr. O'Dell replied that is correct. Mr. O'Dell added that this element is an optional item for a Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Gangnes then asked even if it was an equestrian support activity, but outside of the EOZD, could this plan address it. Mr. O'Dell responded no. Mr. Gangnes asked given all of that, why equestrian support activities are required to be in the EOZD. Mr. O'Dell responded that they are the feed stores, tack stores and others that service the industry. Mr. Gangnes asked if this plan says that a transfer station would have to be in the EOZD. Mr. O'Dell responded that it does not say that. Mr. Gangnes said that the plan pertains only to the EOZD, and one of the goals is to reduce hauling demands, then in theory it has to be inside this zone. Mr. O'Dell responded that it could also be outside of the Village of Wellington. Mr. O'Dell clarified that if it goes outside of Wellington, the Village can't invest in it. Ms. Garrett said that she understands Mr. Gangnes' issue, but it would be better that we don't approve the plan and go to PZAB to say in person rather than pass it and send through our own version. Mr. O'Dell stated that this committee is a recommending body to the PZAB, so staff will move this element forward with or without their recommendations. He added that there are only one or two items at this point that staff and the committee disagree on. Recommendations should follow, but if not, then staff is going to present the information that the committee has given over the past several meetings and move this document forward. Mr. Gangnes said that what he's hearing is that there are two copies going to PZAB: a staff report, and the document that the committee has drafted up. Mr. O'Dell said that there is always a staff report and the document that comes from the recommending body. Chair Cleveland asked Mr. O'Dell which version of the document he will be taking to PZAB. He responded that he will be taking both. Chair Cleveland said that the document that staff had provided them still states that South Shore Boulevard could be widened to 4 lanes, and they clearly said at the end of last meeting that they didn't want that. Mr. O'Dell said that was to show that the committee, utilizing the documentation that they produced from the Equestrian Plan of Action, was supportive of that at the time. He said the committee also made a commitment to the equestrian venues that they would support that. Now all of a sudden the committee has changed their mind. Chair Cleveland said that is correct, but mechanically, the committee voted last meeting to keep South Shore Boulevard at two lanes, so why is it still written to indicate that it can be widened to four? Mr. O'Dell said that if the committee's recommendation is that they want it at two lanes, then that is their recommendation. Ms. Garrett suggested that this dispute is all the more reason why every committee member should go to the PZAB meeting in March. She said that each member should stand behind Chair Cleveland as she speaks on the committee's behalf. Chair Cleveland asked Mr. O'Dell if the PZAB meeting start at 7 PM in Council Chambers, to which he responded yes. Mr. Arellano suggested having members of the equestrian community back them up at that PZAB meeting. Ms. Garrett said that the time for equestrian community involvement has already passed during the EPC meeting open to the public input. Dr. Lund stated that Chair Cleveland will only get 3 minutes to talk at the PZAB meeting. Chair Cleveland said that she can use her 3 minutes as the representative of the committee and then each

member can go up and speak for 3 minutes on their own. Mr. Gangnes suggested that at the next EPC meeting the committee discuss what their message is going to be to the PZAB the following week. Ms. Garrett said we should spend the next meeting strictly discussing our talking points.

Chair Cleveland asked if manure should be a discussion item on the next agenda. Dr. Lund said yes. Chair Cleveland said that the committee will be meeting again in a month to discuss manure again as well as procedures to go to PZAB and perhaps Council regarding the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. O'Dell asked if the committee is taking any action regarding who will be their official representative to speak on their behalf at the March PZAB meeting. Chair Cleveland replied no, we will decide that next month.

VII. Staff Comments

There were no staff comments.

VIII. Board Comments

There were no board comments

IX. Public Comments

There were no public comments

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Jane Cleveland, Chair

D.J. Helkowski, Recording Secretary