



**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES  
AGRITOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2024, 6:00 P.M.**

*Meeting audio available in Town Clerk's Office.*

**CALLED TO ORDER**

Chair Sluggett called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Geoff Sluggett, Vice Chair Manish Sood, Committee Member Joseph Chammas, Committee Liaison Jeff Kurtz, and Town Clerk Assistant Sammie Brown were present.

Committee Member Darren Swank and Committee Member Liza Holman were absent.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Sluggett introduced the agenda and called for a motion.

- **Motion:** Committee Member Sood moved to approve the agenda.
- **Second:** Committee Member Chamas seconded the motion.
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regarding the minutes from the Agritourism Committee Meeting on August 26, 2024, Chair Sluggett opened discussion on the minutes. Committee Member Sood noted, “I believe the minutes do not reflect our request for a report on prior complaints related to Agritourism operations. It’s important we include that for accountability.” Sluggett clarified, “The request is documented under the ‘Next Meeting Focus’ section on page six of the agenda packet.”

- **Motion:** Committee Member Chamas moved to approve the minutes.
- **Second:** Committee Member Sood seconded the motion.
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM 1**

Chair Sluggett outlined, “The focus of tonight’s discussion is traffic, parking, and noise. These have been identified as recurring concerns, particularly regarding code enforcement and operational challenges.”

Chair Sluggett shared insights from the Code Enforcement Department, “There have been very

few complaints directly tied to Agritourism businesses. Most issues stem from property development concerns, such as obtaining permits for FDA compliance. Traffic and noise complaints primarily involve one business, which we won't name for privacy reasons. These were resolved without findings of violation or magistrate action."

Committee Member Chamas detailed his experience hosting a farm-to-table event: "I had about 150 attendees and managed it smoothly by hiring parking attendants. One person directed cars at the bridge, and another guided them to a designated area with space for 100 vehicles. This eliminated traffic backups. My background in valet parking made this an easy task."

Chair Sluggett noted, "This underscores the importance of planning. Events like this succeed when internal traffic flow and parking are well organized. When people self-park without guidance, it creates traffic queuing issues."

Chair Sluggett suggested, "The Town's planners and engineers should recommend thresholds based on property size and event type. For example, a 10-acre property hosting 500 cars should submit a parking plan."

Jeff Kurtz added, "We've had success when business owners voluntarily approached the Town for guidance. For instance, Swank Farms resolved their traffic issues by hiring attendants and coordinating parking solutions."

Committee Member Sood proposed, "We should focus on off-site impacts like stacking and traffic flow. On-site management should remain the responsibility of the business owner unless it directly affects neighbors."

- **Motion:** Committee Member Sood moved to define off-site impact standards (e.g., stacking, traffic, and weight limits) and to avoid regulating on-site parking management unless off-site impacts occur.
- **Second:** Committee Member Chamas seconded the motion.
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Sluggett explained, "The Town's current noise ordinance limits sound to 55 decibels during the day and 50 decibels at night, measured at the property line. This is impractical and unenforceable for outdoor events, as even moderate rain exceeds these levels."

Committee Member Sood emphasized, "Continuous loud noise can disrupt the quality of life for neighbors. We need clear limits that balance business operations with community peace."

Committee Member Chamas shared, "Most Agritourism businesses, like Swank Farms, voluntarily shut off music by 9:30 or 10 PM. This practice works well and avoids complaints."

Proposals and Recommendations included setting consistent hours of operation. It is proposed that Loud music ends at **10 PM** on weekdays and **11 PM** on weekends. Cleanup activities are permitted until midnight.

Chair Sluggett suggested that special exceptions be provided. “Holiday events, such as New Year’s Eve, could qualify for extended hours through a special event permit.”

Committee Member Chamas explained, “Measuring decibels isn’t practical. A simpler approach is regulating hours of operation.”

**Motion on Noise Standards:**

- **Motion:** Committee Member Sood moved to direct staff to propose updated noise standards focusing on hours of operation and to explore exceptions for special events.
- **Second:** Committee Member Chamas seconded the motion.
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.

During the discussion regarding lighting, it was mentioned that current guidelines allow lighting to remain on for two hours post-event for cleanup purposes. Staff directed the alignment of lighting and noise standards for consistency. Discussion deferred. The committee acknowledged minimal complaints in these areas.

The Agritourism committee outlined future objectives for staff, which include researching decibel standards and practical enforcement methods, drafting a townwide traffic and parking impact standard for events, clarifying the definition of “loud music,” and proposing updated guidelines.

The next regular Agritourism Committee Meeting date was scheduled for Monday, November 18, 2024.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No comments from the public

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to Adjourn:**

- Motion by Committee Member Sood, seconded by Committee Member Chamas.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.
- Meeting adjourned: 7:50 PM.

**ATTEST:**

**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES,  
FLORIDA**

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Sammie T. Brown, FRA-RP, MEDP  
Town Clerk Assistant

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Geoff Sluggett  
Agritourism Committee Chairperson