



**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES  
TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY OPEN DISCUSSION WORKSHOP  
MEETING MINUTES  
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 155 F. Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470  
Tuesday, July 2, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Kane called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

Mayor Anita Kane, Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Councilmember Laura Danowski, Councilmember Phillis Maniglia, Councilmember Robert Shorr (Present via Zoom), Town Manager Francine Ramaglia, Town Attorney Glen Torcivia, Public Works Director Richard Gallant, Public Works Superintendent Craig Lower, Project Coordinator Jeff Kurtz, Town's Financial Consultant Chris Wallace (of Munilytics), Town's Planning Consultant Kaitlyn Forbes (of Complete Cities) and Town Clerk Valerie Oakes were present.

**OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Jane Harding mentioned the canal ditches between her home and the neighbor's home and asked whose responsibility it would be to repair her fence as the trees on her neighbor's yard, with the last rain and hard wind, have fallen into her yard and breaking her fence. Town Attorney Torcivia stated it would be a dispute between neighbors and that the town does not get involved in that kind of dispute. Mayor Kane asked if she had a good relationship with her neighbor. Ms. Harding stated she doesn't know them and mentioned when she lived in Delray and this issue would happen, if it was on their side and it fell over on my side, it was their problem and in other places if it fell in her yard, it was her problem and asked someone to shed some light. Town Attorney Torcivia stated that it is always a debate and that he could not give her legal advice but stated that usually if it's on your side you can trim it and if it is on their side, it is their problem. He continued stating she needs to talk to her neighbor about the tree. Ms. Harding stated she wanted to start someone where this is the third or fourth year of what to do. She then mentioned the RVs and how she understood other people's sides where it is bad for them and then lots of people say it isn't bad, but the right people are the ones showing up and doing the right things.

She asked that we start somewhere if Council wants three spots and that's what you agree on and you have the intention of using them. She said you cannot punish those that follow the rules and there must be middle ground. She asked everyone to make it easy, especially for those following the rules and help those being tortured by the ones who are not following the rules. This leaves her in limbo every year and she does not know what to do and she is a rule follower so therefore she ends up doing nothing because she did not know the rule properly and then it ends up hurting her. She stated she sees people that are doing things that are beyond her and having her lumped with them is just atrocious so start somewhere and somewhere simple. She mentioned we are nowhere, and we are in the third year doing this and she has celebrities that come to her farm, and they do not want to identify who they are.

Robert Austen reiterated what Ms. Harding stated he warned everyone about bringing the RVs here for year-round camping for six months to six months. He stated he mentioned this three years ago that it was not going to work and if it is going to be tailored for people like her, who are following the rules, he has no problem with it, but when there are people who are in RVs and move to a different spot every six months in Loxahatchee who do not live here, like on Collecting Canal Road, it is a problem. He stated they currently have about 30- 40 living in RVs right now. With the addition of two cars, it would be 60 to 80 cars running down Collection Canal Road and unfortunately, she gets lumped in with them who are not following the rules because Code Enforcement does not enforce anything. Mr. Austen mentioned a landscaping business where it seems to be single-family residential property and how they are moving in offices and have a double wide being put up. He mentioned Twisted Spurs, down Collecting Canal, has three travel trailers that they have placed skirting around which seems like they are not planning on going anywhere. He stated old crappy travel trailers are scurrying around because they put an 80s single wide in the back where they have painted it to match their barns. He mentioned a lady that spoke last week who spent \$1.4 million on her house and another down the street that spent \$1.2 million on their farm who is living next to the apartment building on top of the barn who he feels would not have been built in West Palm Beach or Royal Palm. He mentioned we are missing something with our legal team because the County or state should be able to do something regardless of homestead because you can see the 12-unit apartment building on top of the barn plus four travel trailers on his property and with traffic on Hyde Park, it is atrocious. Mr. Austen stated this guy is ignoring Council and this is the problem with the RV discussion because so many people ignore this town because they feel they can get away with it.

Councilmember Maniglia asked the Town Manager about the current RV Ordinance stating it must be roadworthy and tagged and is it enforceable now. Town Manager Ramaglia stated yes if they can see the RV from the street. She continued stating you must be able to see the RV, it must be visual from the street or there has to be a complaint about it, with pictures, and they are able to get onto the property and have someone to testify. She mentioned with regards to the RV ordinance and the reason it requires a registration is so people would voluntarily provide this information, but they are not.

Councilmember Maniglia stated it seems as though other towns are very strict in their rules to where you see something one day, it gets a violation, and it is gone. She mentioned she does not understand why we are not able to do that with several of the most egregious code offenders in our town. She mentioned that it seems nothing is happening, and it is frustrating for the Council and the residents that are living next to it. Town Manager Ramaglia stated it is very frustrating for the staff as well. She continued by stating that they have received a citation written by the Town Attorney's office which means we can go every day to give them a citation in the hope that when they get enough of them, they will come in and comply. Town Council discussion ensued. The Town Manager ended by stating a decision that needs to be made concerning the threshold, at which time they wish to do foreclosure, including that the Town does not have 30 employees, mentioned by Councilmember Maniglia, but only the two part-time code enforcement officers. Town Attorney Torcivia answered by stating Code Enforcement has lots of pros and cons and that people in the state of Florida have lots of rights. He mentioned you cannot go on their property without their permission or a warrant and taking pictures of the violation. He mentioned that the legislative took one tool away concerning anonymous complaints which means a person must put their name on the record stating they are complaining about their neighbor and the nature of the complaint. He reiterated the statement made by the Town Manager concerning staffing and how the cities that are more efficient in Code Enforcement have more staff. Mr. Torcivia stated that no matter how much you site people, all you are doing is fining them and the only time one would collect is the selling of their property, because a lien has been placed on the property or foreclosure as the Town Manager stated. He mentioned Council has the final decision to say yes foreclose on a property and at what amount is fining enough. Mayor Kane questioned where we stand on this topic, and can it be placed on the next agenda. She also asked for the most egregious individuals. Town Manager stated the document was handed out at the last meeting and will be available for the quarterly report. Town Attorney reminded the Council that they cannot foreclose on homestead properties due to Florida laws. The Council advised the Town Attorney to call around and find some tool available as every city has similar issues. Councilmember Danowski asked about the 20-year rule of a fine not dealt with it will go away. Town Attorney stated it is somewhat fiction; however, it is like a judgment and stated you can refile your judgement/lien in the 19<sup>th</sup> year so that it can continue to exist. The Town Manager stated in a previous career; they had an agreement with the Mortgage companies because the companies do not like the mortgage property to have such fines.

The Council agreed to learn more.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Mayor Kane adjourned the community meeting at 6:24 p.m.

**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES,  
FLORIDA**

ATTEST:

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Mayor Anita Kane, Seat 3

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Town Clerk

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Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Seat 5

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Councilmember Phillis Maniglia, Seat 1

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Councilmember Laura Danowski, Seat 2

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Councilmember Robert Shorr, Seat 4