

## Councilperson El-Ramey's Comments Regarding Agricultural Classification:

"I've had several agricultural property owners approach me with concerns about the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser removing their AG classifications—even when they are clearly following best management practices. The county often responds that the agricultural use is not 'intense enough,' or in some cases, they've claimed that certain animals like pigs or sheep aren't considered grazing animals.

We've even had issues with equestrian properties, where property appraiser staff have stated that horses aren't grazing animals—which is questionable, to say the least. So I'd like for the Council to support drafting a formal letter stating our position as a Town—emphasizing our rural character, support for agriculture, and our residents' right to fair and consistent AG classification.

The letter should go to the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser, and perhaps also be copied to the Board of County Commissioners and Keith Alexander, who I've met and spoken with before. Francine might have input on who else to include.

The key message is this: we, as a Town, stand firmly with our agricultural residents. Many of them are feeling penalized despite doing everything right. Some are suddenly losing their classification for a whole year, resulting in significantly higher tax bills—like \$18,000 more in some cases. That's not a small matter. The process is inconsistent, and residents are having to fight to regain what should never have been taken away in the first place.

Do I have support for drafting and sending this letter? [Council indicates support] Great—thank you."