

TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
155 F. ROAD, LOXAHATCHEE GROVES, FL 33470

AGRITOURISM COMMITTEE

AGENDA

NOVEMBER 18, 2024 – 6:00 PM



Geoff Sluggett (Seat 3) – Chair

Manish Sood (Seat 4) – Vice Chair

Joseph Chammas (Seat 1)

Darrin Swank (Seat 2)

Liza Holman (Seat 5)

Administration

Town Manager Francine L. Ramaglia

Town Clerk Valerie E. Oakes

Committee Staff Liaison: Jeff Kurtz, Project Coordinator

Civility: Being "civil" is not a restraint on the First Amendment right to speak out, but it is more than just being polite. Civility is stating your opinions and beliefs, without degrading someone else in the process. Civility requires a person to respect other people's opinions and beliefs even if he or she strongly disagrees. It is finding a common ground for dialogue with others. It is being patient, graceful, and having a strong character. That is why we say "Character Counts" in Town of Loxahatchee. Civility is practiced at all Town meetings.

Special Needs: In accordance with the provisions of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons in need of a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding shall within three business days prior to any proceeding, contact the Town Clerk's Office, 155 F Road, Loxahatchee Groves, Florida, (561) 793-2418.

Quasi-Judicial Hearings: Some of the matters on the agenda may be "quasi-judicial" in nature. Town Council Members are required to disclose all ex-parte communications regarding these items and are subject to voir dire (a preliminary examination of a witness or a juror by a judge or council) by any affected party regarding those communications. All witnesses testifying will be "sworn" prior to their testimony. However, the public is permitted to comment, without being sworn. Unsworn comment will be given its appropriate weight by the Town Council.

Appeal of Decision: If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Town Council with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, he or she will need a record of the proceeding, and for that purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes any testimony and evidence upon which the appeal will be based.

Consent Calendar: Those matters included under the Consent Calendar are typically self-explanatory, non controversial, and are not expected to require review or discussion. All items will be enacted by a single motion. If discussion on an item is desired, any Town Council Member, without a motion, may "pull" or remove the item to be considered separately. If any item is quasi-judicial, it may be removed from the Consent Calendar to be heard separately, by a Town Council Member, or by any member of the public desiring it to be heard, without a motion.

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1. 09/23/24 - Agritourism Committee Meeting Minutes for Approval

PUBLIC COMMENTS

A limited public audience can be accommodated in our Town Council chambers with mandatory facemasks and socially spaced seating. Public Comments for all meetings may be received by email, or in writing to the Town Clerk's Office until 12:00 p.m. (noon) day of the meeting. Comments received will be "received and filed" to be acknowledged as part of the official public record for the meeting. The meeting will be live-streamed and close-captioned for the general public via our website, instructions are posted there.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. Discussion and Review of Kodak Black Special Event Application

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATE

ADJOURNMENT



**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**

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

Geoff Sluggett
Agritourism Committee Chairperson



155 F Road Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470

AGENDA ITEM

TO: AGRITOURISM COMMITTEE

FROM: JEFF KURTZ, PROJECT COORDINATOR

DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2024

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL KODAK BLACK EVENT

Background:

On Saturday, November 9th, the Town received a request from a property owner to hold an event on an agritourism property that would potentially bring 4,500 people onto the 10-acre site. The event was to be held on November 11, 2024, less than 48 hours from the time of the request. The event was the Kodak Black Day, a charitable event sponsored by the well-known musician Kodak Black.

Although Town Hall was closed at the time the request was received and would remain closed through Veteran's Day, the day of the proposed event, the Town Manager brought staff in to review the proposed event as a special event. Initially, it was decided the event would be limited to no more than 1,000 people on site at a time, as it was represented to the Town that the agritourism property had held events of that magnitude on the site previously.

Numerous conditions were discussed including a requirement that attendees be shuttled onto the property from other parking areas in Town. This would have necessitated the event's promoter arrange contracts with churches to utilize their parking lots and provide shuttle service to the property.

Parking collection sites for the Kodak Black event could be in or out of town, either on the southern end or at one of the churches on Okeechobee. The event organizers required insurance naming the Town as an additional insured, a trolley contract, PBSO attendance, and Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) on all streets leading toward the event to prevent traffic buildup. Additionally, they required onsite Fire Rescue emergency presence, a site plan, and permits to be filled out, with inspections performed by the Chief Building Official (CBO) and Fire Marshal. They also needed to provide details about lighting and sound, and access for setup. No parking was allowed on streets.

The agritourism property owner was to contact their neighbors and inform them of the event and the anticipated noise that would be emanating from the property. The event was supposed to close down by 9 pm on Monday. Coordination with PBSO to provide traffic control and fire department



155 F Road Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470

to inspect the site and event, which was going to include amusement/carnival rides was also required. Ultimately, there was not enough time to get the required assistance and approval from the various agencies and parties and the event did not take place.

This potential event does demonstrate the need to differentiate a special event from normal agritourism activities. A special event is supposed to be supported by an application filed at least 30 days prior to the event. When the Town becomes aware of an event that has not timely filed for a special event permit, the Town staff does try and work with property owners and make accommodations, when possible, to approve or at least consider approving the event despite the application being submitted late.

What should the limitations on regular agritourism events be? In this case, the property owner was amenable to considering the event to be a special event and getting it permitted, albeit late. Some items to consider are:

1. Number of people – should there be a limitation on the number of people attending an event, perhaps on a per-acre basis or an overall maximum, above which the event on an agritourism property should have to get a special event permit? Based on staff's review of the situation and potential parking/traffic issues, 1,000 people on-site at one time or 100 people per acre was too great for the property to handle absent special arrangements being made. The Town has a permanent population of less than 4,000 people. If an event is anticipated to increase that population on a temporary basis by over 10%, should that trigger a special event permit?
2. Noise – should amplified music be permitted on an outdoor site that is intended to be heard by 1,000 people?
3. Traffic/Parking – 1,000 people means a minimum of 250-500 cars. At what level should an agritourism site have to demonstrate it has the capacity to accommodate cars? The average parking spot is 18 feet by 10 feet or 180 square feet plus a 20-foot drive aisle. To accommodate 100 cars, a property would probably have to dedicate at least a half-acre of land. Is it reasonable that if an event is anticipated to have more than 100 cars on-site at any one time, a parking and traffic circulation plan be submitted for approval?
4. Amusement/carnival rides – If, as a part of your event, you have amusement/carnival rides, is it reasonable that the property owner be requested to have them inspected and provide a traffic circulation plan for emergency vehicles? Once again, this needs to be associated with a minimum number of rides or people, so as not to require every child's birthday party to require a special event.



155 F Road Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470

These questions are put to the Committee so they can make recommendations as to what standards/limitations should be to distinguish between normal agritourism operations and special events.

The property owner and Town staff (Richard Gallant, Craig, and Jacek Tomasik) are required to attend, as well as Captain Michael Turner of PBSO and the Fire Marshal. The property owner will provide details of the event.

This memo serves as an outline of some, but not all, of the considerations and is solely intended to provide brief background for committee members to start thinking about the issue and to stimulate discussion at the meeting. The involved staff members include Jacek Tomasik (Building Official), Richard Gallant (Public Works Director), and Captain Michael Turner (PBSO).

Recommendation:

Committee review and discussion.