



Legislation Text

File #: 170321., **Version:** 3

Consider participation in Alachua County Landscape Irrigation Design and Maintenance Standards Ordinance (B)

Hear a follow-up presentation regarding the Alachua County Landscape Irrigation Design and Maintenance Standards Ordinance.

On November 9, 2017, the General Policy Committee heard a staff presentation on the Irrigation Ordinance adopted and implemented by Alachua County in the unincorporated area. The presentation provided a summary of the issue, background information and options for consideration.

The General Policy Committee directed staff to:

- bring back the cost of regulating irrigation in the City of Gainesville,
- reach out to a diverse group of stakeholders, and
- gather data on water savings in the unincorporated area since the implementation of the Irrigation Ordinance.

On January 3, 2018, City of Gainesville and Alachua County staff met and discussed county water conservation programs. The County's Irrigation Ordinance is currently administered by 1.5 full time employees. County staff indicated that opting-in the County Ordinance would be cost-neutral at this time. City staff estimates that an irrigation program could be administered at a similar staffing level with an approximate cost of \$140,000.

On February 14, 2018, the City of Gainesville hosted a publicly noticed Urban Irrigation Design Thinking Charrette. Approximately 20 stakeholders participated, including landscape architects, landscapers, nursery owners, developers, engineers, planners and environmental experts. Representatives from Alachua County, Gainesville Regional Utilities, the University of Florida and the St. Johns Water Management District attended.

At this time, data on the impacts of Alachua County's Irrigation Ordinance on water use is not available; however, Pierce Jones, from the University of Florida, will share plans for analyzing water use data from Alachua County's program. More time is needed to measure the effects of implementation.

Policy may have fiscal impacts depending upon the recommendations of the General Policy Committee. Additional fiscal impacts will be assessed as a follow up to policy recommendations and brought back in accordance with the budget process.

The General Policy Committee: 1) hear a presentation; 2) direct staff to work with stakeholders to: draft a City Ordinance for water conservation, develop an outreach, education and implementation program, and establish metrics to analyze the effectiveness of the Ordinance and it's implementation; and 3) remove Legislative Item 170321 from the GPC Referral List.