



Legislation Text

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Transferring Management of the Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) Boulware Springs Historic Water Works Facility to General Government (GG) (B)

****This item was presented to the UAB on 4/15/22.****

The Boulware Springs Historic Water Works facility, a pump house and spring, began supplying drinking water to the City of Gainesville in 1898. In 1905, Gainesville's plentiful water supply was used to entice the University of Florida to locate here. The spring was abandoned in 1948 upon completion of a water treatment plant. The building was added to the US National Register of Historic Places in 1985 and was last renovated in 1990. Boulware Springs, Gainesville's only artesian spring, produces approximately 194,000 gallons of water a day, which flows into Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park. The building was available to the public as an event rental space for many years, but has fallen into a state of disrepair and the boardwalk and building have been closed for public safety since 2020. The Boulware Springs Historic Water Works is located within Boulware Springs Nature Park at 3300 SE 15th Street, parcel ID 16244-000-000.

Wild Spaces & Public Places, a program funded by a half cent sales tax being collected from 2017 through 2024, received direction from the City Commission on March 4, 2021 to begin a renovation project encompassing both Boulware Springs Nature Park and the Boulware Springs Historic Water Works.

The City has agreed to take over the maintenance and operation of the Water Works building, spring and associated grounds. Upon completion of the renovation project, the City will provide public access to Boulware Springs Historic Water Works facility as a rentable space for meetings, retreats, weddings, etc. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been prepared and approved by GRU and GG that details the terms of the transfer.

Existing site improvements include a masonry spring house (the "Water Works" building) and a covered pavilion with picnic tables and parking lot. The improvements are located within the Boulware Springs Nature Park boundary and the real property is a General Government asset.

This is a no fee transfer from GRU to GG. GG will be requesting an increment in the amount of \$30,000 during the FY23 budget to allocate GG funds to operate and maintain the facilities starting October 1, 2022. The Wild Spaces & Public Places program will fund improvements at the site.

The City Commission approve the MOU which transfers the operation & maintenance of the Boulware Springs Historic Water Works facility structures and grounds in perpetuity from GRU to GG.

The UAB voted unanimously to advise the City Commission to approve the staff recommendation.