

MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS
Tuesday, March 18, 2025
9:30 AM
600 S. Commerce Ave. Sebring, FL 33870

DISTRICTS LIST

AVON PARK ESTATES S. B. D.
ORANGE VILLA MOBILE HOME ESTATES S. B. D.
HIGHLANDS PARK ESTATES S. B. D.
PLACID LAKES S.B.D. HIGHWAY PARK S. B. D.
RED HILL FARMS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
LAKE HAVEN ESTATES S. B. D.
SEBRING ACRES S. B. D.
ORANGE BLOSSOM ESTATES S. B. D.
SEBRING COUNTRY ESTATES S. B. D.
ORANGE BLOSSOM UNIT 12 S. B. D.
SEBRING HILLS S. B. D.
COUNTYWIDE FIRE DISTRICT
THUNDERBIRD ROAD WASTEWATER S. B. D.
ISTOKPOGA MARSH WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
SUN 'N LAKES OF LAKE PLACID RECREATION DISTRICT
OAK MANOR AVENUE ROAD PAVING MUNICIPAL SERVICE BENEFIT DISTRICT

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

2. PRESENTATIONS:

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

4. CONSENT AGENDA

5. PUBLIC HEARING

6. ACTION AGENDA

- 6.A *Request direction to move forward with the S. Cole Avenue project, or deviate to the grassroot groups improvement suggestions within the Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District.*

Tanya Cannady, Business Services Director J.D. Langford, Assistant County Administrator Jonathan Harrison, Road and Bridge Director
Engineering expenses were \$19,000 and the road work is estimated at \$600,000.
This project will be paid from assessments generated from the Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District property owners., Fund 111.

7. ADJOURN

Any person who decides to appeal any decision made by the Board of Supervisors of any of the Special Districts of Highlands County, Florida, in a public hearing or quasi-judicial proceeding is hereby advised that he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record will include the testimony and evidence upon which such appeal is to be based.

The Board of Supervisors of the Special Districts in Highlands County, Florida, does not discriminate upon the basis of any individual's disability status. This non-discrimination policy involves every aspect of the Board's functions, including one's access to, participation, employment or treatment in its programs or activities. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation as provided for in the Americans With Disabilities Act or Section 286.26, Florida Statutes should contact the Highland County Human Resources Department, ADA Coordinator at: 863-402-6509 (voice), or via Florida Relay Service 711, or by e-mail: hrmanager@highlandsfl.gov. Requests for CART or interpreter services should be made as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours in advance of a public meeting to permit coordination of the service.

Please note our new website address: www.highlandsfl.gov

Any invocation that may be offered before the official start of the meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Special Districts of Highlands County shall be the voluntary offering of a private citizen. The views or beliefs expressed by the invocation speaker have not been previously reviewed or approved by Highlands County, nor is Highlands County allowed by law to endorse the religious beliefs or views of any speaker.

**HIGHLANDS COUNTY
COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

DATE OF ACTION REQUEST: March 18, 2025

PRESENTER: Tanya Cannady, Business Services Director J.D. Langford, Assistant County Administrator Jonathan Harrison, Road and Bridge Director

SUBJECT/TITLE: Request direction to move forward with the S. Cole Avenue project, or deviate to the grassroot groups improvement suggestions within the Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District.

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

RECOMMENDED ACTION

To bring forth at the next board meeting the budget amendment and construction agreement for the Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District, or initiate contact with a design consultant to start the grassroot group's suggested improvements.

FISCAL IMPACT

Engineering expenses were \$19,000 and the road work is estimated at \$600,000. This project will be paid from assessments generated from the Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District property owners., Fund 111.

Attachments: [APE Group Letter.pdf](#)

Attachments: [Phase 1 Cost Summary2-8-25.pdf](#)

Attachments: [Statement_of_issue_avon_park_estates_special_benefit_district.pdf](#)

Cool and Cobb Engineering Company

March 9, 2025

Mr. J.D. Langford PE, Asst. County Administrator
600 S. Commerce Avenue
Sebring, FL, 33870

Re: Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District

Dear Mr. Langford,

As mentioned in a prior email, Zach Lehman is now the chairman of the Special District Advisory Committee. Cool and Cobb Engineering Co. and I have been selected as proxies for the Advisory Committee (Committee).

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank you and Jonathan Harrison for meeting on Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 5, 2025. As requested, this letter is a follow-up to our meeting where I provided you and Jonathan with copies of the proposed road maintenance work.

As you know, the Benefit District Advisory Committee was formed at the suggestion of Commissioner Kevin Roberts. At the first committee meeting, copies of the road study report completed by Cool and Cobb were distributed and briefly reviewed, with directions given for the committee to take them home and fully review the report for the next meeting. At the second committee meeting and after discussion, I was asked to draft a work plan to start addressing vegetative overgrowth, drainage and road surface repairs. At the third committee meeting the attached road maintenance work plan was presented, discussed and approved unanimously.

It was explained to the committee that the maintenance roadwork should be addressed in phases for budgetary reasons, with the worst problems addressed first in each category. The committee agreed that the worst vegetative overgrowth was on the west side of Avon Park Estates Blvd. As mentioned in our meeting, clearing unit prices used in the cost estimate were obtained from Kyle Green who is now in that business and is the former Road & Bridge Director, and who is familiar with road conditions in the Estates.

Also mentioned, was that some vegetative clearing of existing drainage easements might be considered by staff and addressed with the vegetative clearing contract. The primary drainage for the district starts at Shula Road as a drainage swale and runs to the south district line at Sun-n-Lake where it is a 10'+/- deep canal. An example is at Shula Road where tree growth and sediment

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buildup have the 36" cross-culvert under Shula Road half full of sediment. Clearing vegetation for a few hundred feet on this existing drainage easement would allow equipment to clear the built-up sediment and reestablish the cross-culvert to flow as designed.

The culvert/drainage work starts at the lower end of the district's drainage, which generally drains from east to west, and flows to the primary drainage canal and/or wetlands. Prices for the corrugated smooth internal wall plastic pipe were obtained from Somers Irrigation. The County probably has discounted prices compared to the list price obtained from the vendor, that would lower the cost to the district. The installation/ gradall cost were supplied by Jonathan. Gradall cost (or some other equipment) will primarily pay for cleaning swales from the discharge end of the replacement culverts to provide unrestricted flow and minimal sediment buildup in the new pipes. Miscellaneous swale cleaning would include the previously mentioned swale from Shula Road, swales from replacement culverts between Gabriel Road, Griesse Road and then to the primary drainage canal, and other discharge swales from replacement culverts or as needed west of the Boulevard.

Additionally, a new cross-culvert is included for under Little Road to serve as an overflow pipe for the large stormwater pond at the south end of Avon Park Blvd. Committee members are aware of Little Road being badly damaged from this pond overflowing during Hurricanes Erma, Ian and Morton. This is a mitigation measure that will allow stormwater overflow to flow naturally towards the former much larger marl pit site that is also identified for stormwater use. Please note that this mitigation measure was not determined through any formal drainage analysis, but through observation and experience.

There is one difference in the attached culvert work estimate as compared to the list provided to you at our meeting. A 24" cross-culvert replacement on Hayes Road at Lilly Road has been added to the attached spreadsheet. It is pictured on page 14 of the Cool and Cobb report but was missed on the initial draft work sheet. This revision was reviewed with the advisory committee at the February 27th meeting and approved. The suggested culvert replacement work is based on field observations made in preparation from the Cool and Cobb Report and that no formal drainage study was completed by Cool and Cobb Engineering.

The proposed road surface work prices were provided by Jonathan. These roads were listed either as the result of complaints or as noted in the Cool and Cobb report. The miscellaneous road surface repairs funds are primarily for reestablishing the marl mix surface over replaced culverts along with grass seed or sod to reestablish a grass surface.

Also discussed at the first committee meeting were the County's proposed improvements to Cole Ave. and Reed Road. The committee discussed this improvement and determined that other maintenance work needs to be

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completed first before this paving project is considered. Committee discussion also included Landry Road being a better and more direct access to SR 64 than Cole Ave, as it goes straight back to approximately 75% of the district on the east side of the Boulevard, which is important for emergency services. However, this last detail was not included in the committee minutes and will be revisited at the next meeting so that the committee's position is noted in meeting minutes.

It is hoped that this letter provides sufficient detail and a better understanding of the attached proposed Phase 1 road maintenance work for Avon Park Estates district roads. Please contact me if more information or clarification is needed.

Thank you.

Respectively yours,



Ken Wheeler PE
Cool and Cobb Engineering Co.
Proxy for the Advisory Committee

Attachments

cc: Commissioner Kevin Roberts
Jonathan Harrison, Road and Bridge Director
Zach Lehman, Advisory Committee Chairman

Ken Wheeler PE
203 W. Main Street
Avon Park, FL 33825
Fla. License No. 60417
(863) 657-2323
Fax: (863) 657-2324
ken@coolandcobb.com

Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District

2-8-25 KFW

Phase 1 Road Work Cost Summary

Work Description	Est. Cost
ROW Vegetative Clearing Phase 1	\$260,000
Culvert /Drainage Work Phase 1	\$ 205,000
Road Surface Work- Phase 1	\$ 155,000
Est. Total	\$620,000

Statement Of Issue for Avon Park Estates Special Benefit District:

In March 2022, the County contracted with Cool & Cobb Engineering to provide engineering and design plans for the Avon Park Estates road project. The project was advertised in September 2024 and 3 bids were received in November 2024.

The project scope of work is to provide all materials, equipment, and labor to install additional shell rock base and asphalt overlay the existing two-lanes of S. Cole Ave, W. Snell Rd, and W. Reed Rd from S. Landry Rd to S. Cole Ave. The project also includes temporary traffic control, removal and replacement of traffic control devices, regrading of existing roadside swales, relocation of existing mailboxes, installation of drainage structures, and the installation of sod within the right-of-way.

Budget amendment 24-25-023 for \$150,000 related to this project was on the December 3, 2024 meeting of the districts' agenda. \$500,000 has already been budgeted and budget amendment 24-25-023 will finalize funding for this project. Prior to the board meeting, Administration was informed that a committee was formed by some of the property owners, so the budget amendment was tabled to allow time for discussion with Administration.

After this board meeting, Engineering & Road & Bridge staff met with Ken Wheeler. He was a representative of the grass roots group that was formed by residents of Avon Park Estates. He provided staff with a breakdown of what improvements that the group would want to initiate, instead of proceeding with the S. Cole Avenue project (letter from group attached herein). The group's proposed improvements include right of way vegetative cleaning, culvert/drainage work, & road surfacing. Mr. Wheeler provided a cost estimate for such activities (attached herein) of \$620,000. This figure should be considered for informational purposes only and not actual costs. These improvements will require additional monies for design too.

We are requesting to direction if we should move forward with the proposed project of S. Cole Avenue project as the contractor has graciously extended his bid/pricing to April 1, 2025. Or go in the direction of the grassroots group compiled of residents of Avon Park Estates.

As of September 2024, there are 2,135 straps within the district and only 121 of them are improved. Property owners pay a \$40 annual assessment.