



March 7, 2017

A Report on the Activities of Alachua County Government

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## Stepping Up Initiative Seminar with Judge Steven Leifman and Leon Evans

The public is invited to a free seminar by Judge Steven Leifman and Leon Evans on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, at 6 p.m. at the Bob Graham Center (Pugh Hall, Ocora, 296 Buckman Drive, UF Campus). They will discuss cutting-edge community programs developed as part of the national "Stepping Up" initiative. These programs are aimed at reducing incarceration rates among those with mental illness. The event is co-sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Stepping Up Alachua, and the Bob Graham Center for Public Service.

This seminar is part of a series tailored specifically to this community's professionals including law enforcement officials, attorneys, court staff, and health providers aiming to inform on the issue of high numbers of incarceration and the development of alternatives for people with mental illness.

The Honorable Judge Steve Leifman of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida is the recipient of the William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence. He received the award for his groundbreaking work helping people with mental illnesses. He is the Chair of the Task Force on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Issues in the Supreme Court of Florida.

Mr. Leon Evans is the Chief Executive Officer of the Center for Health Care Services in Bexar County, Texas. He developed an award-winning jail diversion program and has become a national leader in improving mental health care through multi-stakeholder collaboration.



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## Stepping Up Initiative Seminar *continued*

Alachua County is part of the national [Stepping Up Initiative](#), whose focus is to reduce the number of people with mental illness in the jails. In June 2016, one-third of the Alachua County Jail inmates were receiving psychiatric treatment; nationwide, more individuals with mental illnesses are in jails than psychiatric hospitals. Florida ranks 50th among states in per capita expenditure for mental health treatment.

The seminar will be streamed live at the [Bob Graham Center website](#).

[View/download the seminar flyer.](#)

For more information, contact Latoya Gainey in the Alachua County Commission Office at 352-264-6920 or [lgainey@alachuacounty.us](mailto:lgainey@alachuacounty.us).

## Public Defender's Office Building Ribbon Cutting



This edition of Alachua County's "Take 5" highlights the recently opened Alachua County Public Defender's Office Building. The new building is located at 151 SW 2nd Avenue in Gainesville, FL.

Public Defender Stacy Scott said, "Moving into this modern facility allows us to better serve the public. My staff and I are thrilled to see the project successfully completed."

The Office of the Public Defender, 8th Judicial Circuit, represents adults and children charged with criminal offenses

and clients held in civil commitment under the "Baker Act" and the "Sexually Violent Predator Act." The 8th Circuit is comprised of Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Union counties. In FY 2014-15, circuit-wide the Public Defender's Office represented a total of 13,985 clients in a total of 16,541 cases. In Alachua County, the office represented 8,835 clients with 10,387 cases. The office employs 68 people, with 50 of those employees working in the Alachua County headquarters.

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## Annual Springs Celebration and Chili Cook-Off

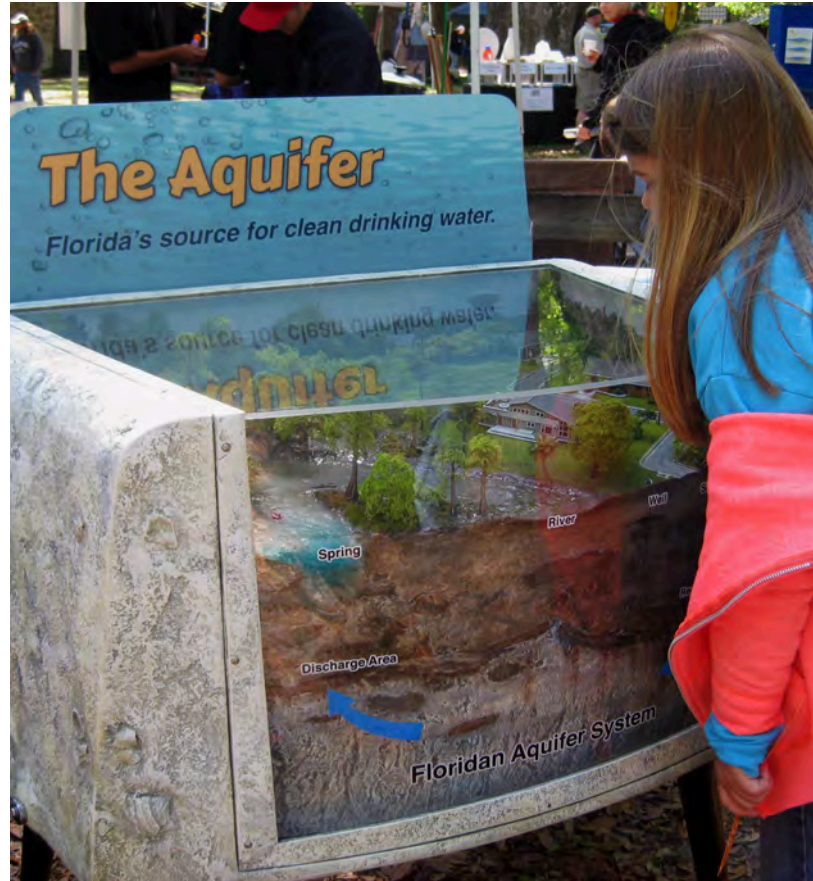
The Alachua County Environmental Protection Department, Florida State Parks, and The Friends of O'Leno invite citizens to the O'Leno Ole' Chili Cook-Off (from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and Springs Celebration (from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.). The event is on Saturday, April 1, 2017, at O'Leno State Park (410 S.E. O'Leno Park Road). Admission to the park is free with the donation of one can of food (per person) to benefit a local food bank.

The event includes a chili cook-off, live music from the Weeds of Eden, a guided walk along the River Trail, children's activities, and environmental and art exhibits. Chili tasting kits will be on sale for \$5. All proceeds assist the Friends of O'Leno non-profit organization with their mission of supporting the park.

"The Springs Celebration is a great event for kicking off Water Conservation Month this April," said Alachua County Environmental Protection Water Conservation Coordinator Stacie Greco. She continued, "When we over-water our crops and yards we may be harming the springs of the Santa Fe River by reducing the amount of water available to recharge these valuable resources. Come to the event to learn how to be part of the springs protection solution."

View the [event flyer](#) and the [Facebook event](#).

For more information, contact Stacie Greco at 352-264-6829.



## Animal Services Seeks Pet-ographers

Alachua County Animal Services is looking for volunteer "pet-ographers" to photograph adoptable animals at the shelter (3400 N.E. 53rd Avenue, Gainesville). High-resolution photos will be used for the launch of the department's refreshed website.

Alachua County Animal Services Director Ed Williams said, "Photos that highlight the individual personality of each adoptable dog and cat help adopters find their next pet, and the need for these photos is ongoing."

[Visit the Alachua County Animal Services Volunteering website.](#)

For more information, contact Alachua County Animal Services Director Ed Williams at 352-264-6890 or [ewilliams@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ewilliams@alachuacounty.us).



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## Alachua County Rural Concerns Advisory Committee Vacancies

Alachua County is seeking applicants to fill openings on the Rural Concerns Advisory Committee. The County Commission established the Committee in 2003 to provide guidance and advice to the Board regarding rural concerns and issues in Alachua County. They meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. at the Alachua County Extension Office (2800 N.E. 39th Avenue, Gainesville).

The responsibilities of the Committee include establishing the importance of our rural, unincorporated agricultural and historic settlements. The Committee also assists in the development and evaluation of policies and programs affecting the rural areas of the County, represents the rural areas in the County's various community planning processes and hearings, and assists in the recognition and determination of the needs of the County's rural residents and advises the Board accordingly.

Vacancies are currently available for one member chosen at large, two people actively involved in agriculture or silviculture, three residents of the unincorporated area of the County ([shown in white on the attached map](#)) outside the Urban Cluster designated

in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, one member of the Alachua County Farm Bureau, and one member of UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).

[Interested applicants may apply online](#) (scroll down to the Rural Concerns Advisory Committee).

For more information, contact Alachua County Principal Planner Ken Zeichner at 352-374-5249 or [ksz@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ksz@alachuacounty.us).



## County Launches Alachua County Connects: A Mobile Citizen Reporting Platform

Alachua County now allows residents to report quality-of-life issues through an online and mobile interface called "Alachua County Connects." Alachua County Connects is powered by SeeClickFix. This place-based reporting platform allows residents to document neighborhood concerns and improvements ranging from litter and flooding to damaged sidewalks and malfunctioning traffic signals.

Alachua County Connects allows residents to report community issues, as well as view, and comment on issues submitted by their neighbors. Citizens can also create their "watch areas" to receive notifications about all issues reported in their community, enabling them to follow the progress of all service requests (not just the ones they report).

Residents can report concerns through service request categories via the Alachua County website, mobile applications ([download for iPhone](#), [download for Android](#)), and [SeeClickFix.com](http://SeeClickFix.com).

When submitting issues via the Alachua County Connects App, users can provide locational, descriptive, and photographic information as they see the issue in real time. Once the resident submits an issue, the reporter, Alachua County, and anyone 'watching' the area will receive an alert. The County can then acknowledge the service request, route it to the proper department, and update the request (and residents following the issue) once it's been resolved.

For more information, contact Alachua County Project Leader Joel Laguerre at 352-338-3259 or [jlaguerre@alachuacounty.us](mailto:jlaguerre@alachuacounty.us).



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## City of Gainesville Election Information

Early Voting for the March 14, 2017 City of Gainesville Election will be available starting Monday, March 6, 2017, through Saturday, March 11, 2017.

Early Voting will be available Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on Tuesday and Thursday when it will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

There are three early voting locations for this election:

Millhopper Branch Library  
3145 NW 43rd Street, Gainesville

Cone Park Library  
2801 E. University Avenue, Gainesville

Supervisor of Elections Office  
Josiah T. Walls Building  
515 N. Main Street, Suite 300, Gainesville

Florida Law requires voters to present current and valid picture and signature ID or vote a provisional ballot.

All registered voters living within the Gainesville city limits are eligible to vote in the At-Large Seat 2 race. Only eligible City of Gainesville voters living in District 2 may vote in the District 2 race and only voters living in District 3 may vote in the District 3 race.

Voters may make their request online at [VoteAlachua.com](http://VoteAlachua.com) or call the Supervisor of Elections Office at 352-374-5252. Voters will need to make sure their address and signature on file with the Supervisor of Elections are current. Your mail ballot may not count if the signature does not match the signature on your voter record. You may update your signature by filling out a voter registration application form in person or online at [VoteAlachua.com](http://VoteAlachua.com). All signature updates for use in verifying vote-by-mail ballots and provisional ballots must be received in the Elections Office prior to the start of the canvassing of vote-by-mail ballots by the Canvassing Board.

If a voter realizes they have returned their vote-by-mail ballot without including their signature, they may submit an affidavit to our office no later than 5 p.m. the day before the election to cure the unsigned ballot.

To request a ballot for another voter, you must be directly instructed by the voter and be a member of the voter's immediate family, or the voter's legal guardian. Immediate family means the voter's spouse or the parent, child, grandparent or sibling of either the voter or of the voter's spouse.

Requests can be made online, in person, by mail, by telephone or by fax. All requests must include the voter's name, residence address, and date of birth. The request must also include the requestor's name, residence address, relationship to the voter and driver's license number if available. Mail or fax request must also include the requestor's signature.

The last day to request your ballot be mailed is Wednesday, March 8, 2017 by 5 p.m.



A voter may designate in writing another person to pick up an absentee ballot starting Thursday, March 9, 2017. The designee must have a note signed by the voter, a picture identification of the designee and must complete an affidavit. The affidavit is available for download at [VoteAlachua.com](http://VoteAlachua.com). The designee may not pick up more than two absentee ballots per election, not including the designee's own ballot and ballots for members of his or her immediate family. Per F.S. 101.62 (4)(c)4

The Supervisor of Elections may not provide a vote-by-mail ballot to a voter or a voter's immediate family member on the day of the election unless there is an emergency, to the extent that the elector will be unable to go to his or her assigned polling place. In order to provide a vote-by-mail ballot on Election Day, an affidavit is required which is available for download at [VoteAlachua.com](http://VoteAlachua.com).

All vote-by-mail ballots must be received in the Supervisor of Elections Office by 7 p.m. Election Day.

All eligible city voters may vote in the precinct of their residence between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, March 14th. Florida law requires voters to present current and valid picture and signature ID or vote a provisional ballot. If you need to locate your precinct, go to [VoteAlachua.com](http://VoteAlachua.com).

For additional information, please contact the Supervisor of Elections Office at 352-374-5252.

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# March Extension Programs

## Environmental & Community Horticulture Programs

These programs are being offered by Dr. Denise DeBusk, Environmental & Community Horticulture Agent, at the UF/IFAS Extension Alachua County Office (2800 N.E. 39 Avenue, Gainesville) unless otherwise indicated.

### Vegetable Gardening 101 – March 11, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This workshop is for the beginner gardener that wants to create a productive vegetable garden. Topics include setting up your garden space, fertilization, micro-irrigation, and pest and disease control. Lunch and snacks will be provided.

Registration is \$35.00 for class or \$50 per couple. Participants can [register online](#) (for an additional fee). There are no refunds for registration costs. Space is limited to 25 participants.

### Irrigating Your Edible Garden – March 14, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

This workshop teaches about the different water needs of vegetables and fruit and how to calculate their water output. Participants will also learn about micro-irrigation and take home a plan for watering their garden. Water Regional Specialized Agent, Charles Barrett, will lead the workshop.

Registration is \$5.00 for class. Participants can [register online](#) (for an additional fee). There are no refunds for registration costs. Space is limited to 30 participants.

### Propagating Camellias by Air Layering and Pruning Camellias – March 15, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., Kanapaha Botanical Gardens (4700 SW 58 Drive, Gainesville).

The workshop will cover why and how to propagate camellias by air layering, and how to prune camellias to shape them and reduce pests and disease. The workshop will include a demonstration of air layering and pruning in the Camellia/Azalea Garden. The workshop will be led by Master Gardener and member of the Gainesville Camellia Society, Irma Velez.

Participants can [register online](#) (without a fee). The workshop is free, but participants must pay the Kanapaha Botanical Gardens entrance fee (\$8) at the door (no cost for members).

### Self-Watering Container Gardening – March 23, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

This workshop teaches how to build self-watering tomato containers with supplies that can easily be found locally. Additional information on how to use the containers and what grows in them will be presented. A self-watering container is provided as well as a tomato transplant with everything needed to grow healthy, tasty tomatoes.

Registration is \$20.00 for class and container; \$5.00 for class only. Participants can [register online](#) (for an additional fee). There are no refunds for registration costs. The workshop is limited to 25 participants.

### FFL Series: Water Efficiently – March 30, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

This workshop provides information on how to water yards efficiently and use irrigation systems properly. It will include hands-on training on calibrating irrigation systems and micro-irrigation. Participants should bring their water bills and will receive handbooks, materials, and snacks.

Registration is \$15.00 for class or \$20 per couple. Participants can [register online](#) (for an additional fee). There are no refunds for registration costs. This workshop is limited to 30 participants.

## Family and Consumer Sciences Programs

These programs are being offered by Brenda C. Williams, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, at the UF/IFAS Extension Alachua County Office (2800 N.E. 39 Avenue, Gainesville).

### Food Safety and Quality Program (ServSafe®) – March 13, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

This program provides training which enables food managers and staff to offer Florida consumer's food that is prepared in a clean and safe environment. For more information and to register, call toll-free at 1-888-232-8723 or visit the program's [registration website](#).

### First Time Home Buyers Education Program – March 13, 20, and 27, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

This three part series offers resources that can help with buying, maintaining and keeping a home. Upon completion of this program, participants will receive a certificate of attendance.

Session 1 – Monday, March 13

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## March Extension Programs *continued*

Information on getting budgets and credit worthiness in line, determining how much house can be afforded, and understanding the responsibilities and costs of being a responsible homeowner will be covered.

Session 2 – Monday, March 20

Understanding the sales contract, home inspections, and mortgage process, selecting homeowners' insurance, warranties and the closing process will be covered.

Session 3 – Monday, March 27

This session is a time for questions and answers and an opportunity to get valuable tips from those involved in the process of buying a home.

The cost for the entire series is \$10.00 per individual or couple.

[View the series flyer.](#)

Register by March 7 by calling 352-337-6209 (voice mail). This program is subject to cancellation if less than 6 people are registered.

### Commercial Horticulture Programs

These programs are being offered by Dr. Tatiana Sanchez, Commercial Horticulture Agent at the UF/IFAS Extension Alachua County Office (2800 N.E. 39 Avenue, Gainesville).

**Private Applicator/Row Crop Review & Examinations** – March 16, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Topics of this workshop include pesticide safety and principles of pest control, understanding the label, review on pesticide arithmetic. Applicator CEUs will be offered for applicators that already have their licenses. Those taking an exam at this workshop will need to call the UF/IFAS Extension Alachua County Office at 352-955-2402, in advance so the instructor knows which type of exam are needed.

[View the workshop flyer.](#)

Registration is \$18.00. Late registration after March 13 or at the door is \$20.00. Participants can [register online](#) (for an additional fee). There are no refunds for registration costs.

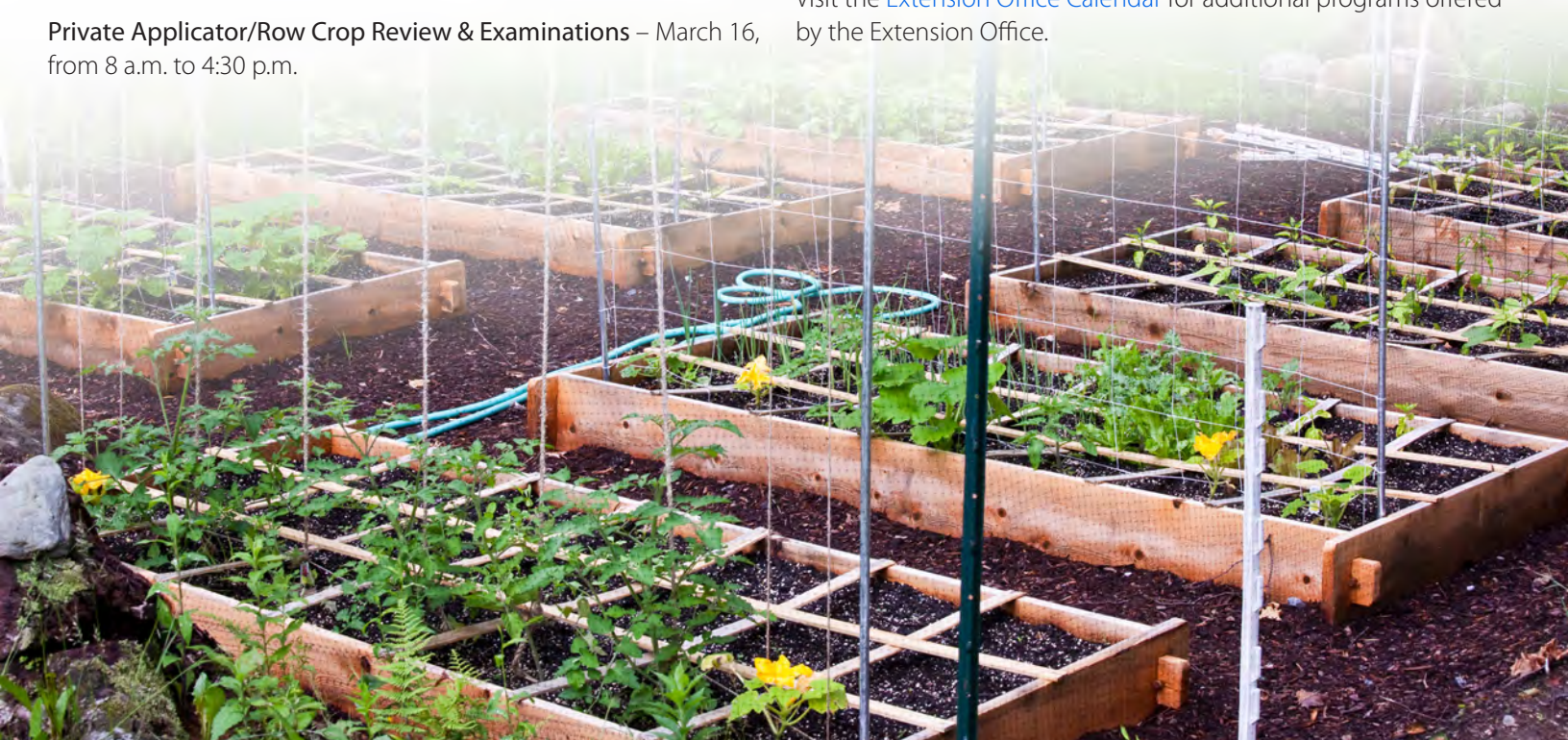
**Growing for Profit – Spring Series** – March 25 and April 1, from 8:50 a.m. to noon

Small farmers or those considering starting a new farm business are encouraged to attend. Invited speakers from UF/IFAS Extension, SBDC, Florida Department of Agriculture, Water District, Farm Credit and more will help set the basis for a successful business.

[View the series flyer.](#)

Registration cost is \$15 per class. Participants can [register online](#) (for an additional fee). There are no refunds for registration costs.

For more information about these programs call 352-955-2402. Visit the [Extension Office Calendar](#) for additional programs offered by the Extension Office.





# Commission Highlights

## February 28, 2017 Board Meeting



Commissioner Mike Byerly  
 Commissioner Charles S. "Chuck" Chestnut, IV  
 Commission Chair Ken Cornell  
 Commission Vice Chair Lee Pinkoson  
 Commissioner Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson

Video:  Regular Meeting  
 morning session

 Public Hearing  
 evening session

### Presentations, Proclamations, and Recognitions

#### Strike Out Hunger Food Drive and Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway

The Board listened to the Strike Out Hunger Food Drive and Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway presentation and chose to support and co-sponsor the 2017 event in November.

[Item Summary Report](#)  
[Solicitation Approval Letter](#)  
[Proposal](#)  
[IRS Determination Letter](#)  
[Brochure](#)  
[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

#### City of Gainesville Annexation of Finley Woods

Concerning the City of Gainesville annexation of Finley Woods Area, the Board chose to appeal the annexation and move forward with the conflict resolution process.

[Item Summary Report](#)  
[Resolution for Chapter 164 Conflict Resolution Process](#)  
[County Follow-Up Letter to City\\_January 26, 2017](#)  
[Notice from City\\_January 3, 2017](#)  
[City Urban Services Report\\_November 2016](#)  
[County Letter to City\\_September 7 2016](#)  
[Staff Presentation\\_February 28 2017](#)

#### Evinston Rural Cluster

The Board conducted a Public Hearing and approved the Proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment to delineate the Evinston Rural Cluster on the Future Land Use Map (CPA 08-16)

[Item Summary Report](#)  
[Staff Report - Evinston Rural Cluster CPA 08-16](#)  
[Staff Presentation - Evinston Rural Cluster CPA 08-16](#)