



# Litter Task Force Final Report

July 2022

Task Force Members

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## 1.0 Project Overview

On July 6, 2021, Environmental Services – Solid Waste Division presented to the Board of County Commissioners (“Board”) a new approach to litter. The presentation included an opportunity to form and develop a Litter Task Force. The Board directed staff to move forward with creating the supporting documents to develop the Litter Task Force.

On September 14, 2021, the Board approved Resolution No. 21-R-444 (reference Exhibit A), which established the Marion County Litter Control Task Force. The Resolution included specific guidelines to include:

- The Marion County Litter Control Task Force (“Task Force”) shall consist of seven (7) voting members and additional non-voting members entities, appointed in accordance with the terms in the Resolution.
- Each Commissioners shall individually appoint one (1) voting member to the Task Force. The Board shall ratify the Commissioner-appointed Task Force members. Each such member shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing Commissioner.
- The Marion County Sheriff shall appoint one (1) voting member of the Task Force, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Sheriff.
- The Marion County School Board Superintendent on behalf of the School Board shall appoint one (1) voting member of the Task Force, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Superintendent.
- The Task Force may appoint and remove non-voting member entities for the purpose of ensuring sufficient participation of community stakeholders in developing litter control strategies. Such non-voting entities, at a minimum, shall include each of the following, which may designate representatives to participate in the meetings of the Task Force:
  - Ocala Metro Chamber & Economic Partnership
  - City of Ocala
  - City of Dunnellon
  - City of Belleview
  - Florida Department of Transportation
  - Florida Forest Service
  - Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
  - Office of the State Attorney for the Fifth Judicial Circuit of Florida
  - Waste Pro of Florida, Inc.
  - Waste Management Inc. of Florida
  - Florida Express Environmental, LLC
  - Realty World, LLC

- All Task Force members shall serve without compensation.
- The Task Force shall be provided adequate staff and support services by the County.
- The District 1 Commissioner shall serve as a liaison to the Task Force.

**Reference Exhibit B for a list of Task Force Members.**

Furthermore, the Resolution provided duties and responsibilities of the Task Force, to include:

- The Task Force shall primarily be advisory to the Board of County Commissioners, the Marion County Sheriff, and the Marion County School Board and shall formulate recommendations to advance litter control.
- The Task Force shall research and make recommendations regarding strategies for the reduction of litter and illegal dumping.

First organizational meeting of the task force took place in September 27, 2021 and in accordance with the Resolution, the Task Force had 180-days from the initial meeting to provide a final written and verbal report to the Board. The Task Force provided a verbal report to the Board on May 24, 2022. It was noted that the Task Force requested a 90-day time extension on April 13, 2022 to assure them time to complete the activities associated with the report.

**1.1 Mission of the Task Force**

The Task Force developed the following Mission Statement:

*Enlist the entire community in an effort to eradicate litter and illegal dumping. Change the mindset and behavior of those that live, work and play within Marion County emphasizing that littering will not be tolerated. Improve the quality of life for all citizens. Provide an effective and fiscally efficient litter program focusing on prevention. Protect the County’s natural resources. Project a clean and viable community to visitors.*

**1.2 Goals**

The Task Force developed the following Goals:



## 1.3 Committees

The Litter Task Force organized into four (4) Committees.

- Community Outreach & Education
- Ordinances & Enforcement
- Fiscal
- Marketing

Each Committee assumed the responsibility to conduct the required research and to develop the supporting recommendations, under their assigned committee, on how reach the goals established by the Task Force.

## 1.4 Committee Input

### 1.4.1 Community Outreach & Education Committee

- **Speaking Engagements & Speaker's Bureau (General Overview)**
  - Community and civic organizations.
  - Faith-based.
  - HOAs
  - Builders Association.
  - Student organizations
- **A General Speakers List Identified.**
  - Elected officials (current and prior).
  - Litter task force members.
  - Celebrities.
  - Community influencers.
  - Students.
  - Business owners.
- **Talking Points.**
  - Mission
  - Highlights from each committee.
  - What is Litter?

- Impact of litter on our community.
- Why is there so much litter?
- Actions our community can take.
- Litter Free Pledge.
- **Community Outreach**
  - “Litter awareness week” countywide efforts with adopt-a-road clean-ups.
  - Continue to build partnerships with local businesses.
  - Presence at community events promoting litter task force.
  - Children’s books, decorated trashcans, and other high visible locations.
  - Litter hero award (individual or organizational).
  - Flyers with recycling and trash disposal information.
- **Student Engagement**
  - Dedicated litter awareness week in schools (coincide with community wide campaign)
    - Proclamation.
    - Messaging to parents.
    - Banners in highly visible locations.
    - Poster if messaging contest in schools tied into existing curriculum/standards in Science or Social studies.
    - Share information on crime prevention.
    - Create a youth ambassador litter prevention program.
    - Media festival with a video contest.

## **1.4.2 Ordinance & Enforcement Committee**

- **Defined Tasks**
  - Committee evaluated current county ordinances and enforcement codes.
  - Committee researched ordinances and enforcement codes in other municipalities.
  - Committee provided recommendations to the Task Force on suggested changes or additions to county ordinance.

- **Survey Results – Enforcement**
  - Over 75% of those surveyed felt that existing penalties for littering were appropriate.
  - Those that did not think penalties were sufficient responded as follows:
    - Fines should be much higher.
    - Community service in the form of picking up trash should be required.
    - Repeat offenders need harsher punishment.
    - Need increased enforcement by police.
    - When asked why they don't litter, respondents ranked "Potential Fines/Jail Time" as the least important reason
- **Defined Common Types of Litter**
  - Illegal commercial/personal dumping e.g. tires, construction debris, furniture, etc.
  - People throwing trash from their vehicles onto the roadways and medians.
  - Litter blowing out of vehicles/trucks, particularly near landfill and recycling centers
- **Defined who has authority to enforce litter law in Marion County.**
  - Marion County Sheriff's Office.
  - Ocala Police Department.
  - Belleview Police Department.
  - Dunnellon Police Department.
  - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.
  - Florida Highway Patrol.
  - Marion County Solid Waste.
  - Marion County Growth Services.
- **Marion County Law Enforcement** - "The Marion County Law Enforcement Community is committed to the mission of the Litter Task Force. Working with our partners, we will use all available tools to enforce the litter laws, showcasing Marion County's beauty, and improving the lives of our citizens."





- Creates presumption that if litter is found with your address or identifying information on it, then you are legally responsible for the violation.
- **Ordinance Recommendations**
  - Ordinance needs to be overhauled.
  - \$50 Penalty for first violation should be increased significantly.
  - Felony language in ordinance should be removed.
  - Ordinance needs clarification between 1st and 2nd degree misdemeanor.
  - Consider adopting “streams and lakes” definition from F.S. 403.
  - Consider adopting “Litter” definition from F.S. 403.
  - Consider making it mandatory that violators pick up litter.
  - Consider a portion of the ordinance violation fine be directed to Marion County Solid Waste.
  - Utilize surveillance cameras as an additional means for enforcement.
  - “Operation Bug Tamer” Quarterly meetings between enforcement officials to discuss hot spots, trends or cases and share available resources.
  - Landscaping medians on heavily travelled roads
  - Increase the use of inmates (Department of Corrections and County) for cleanup.
  - Increase items accepted at landfill – anecdotal evidence suggests dumping increased after the landfill limited the types of items accepted.
  - Limit/eliminate buyout provision for community service hours in criminal cases.
  - F.S. 403 ALLOWS THE COUNTY TO “DESIGNATE EMPLOYEES OF COUNTIES OR MUNICIPALITIES WHOSE DUTY IT IS TO ENSURE CODE COMPLIANCE OR TO ENFORCE CODES AND ORDINANCES...” TO ENFORCE THE STATE LITTER LAW STATUTE. ((Consider Designating Eligible County Employees, Which Should Result In---
    - An inexpensive force multiplier.
    - Improved awareness and burden sharing between county departments.
    - Deterrent effect due to higher visibility.

- **Enforcement Goals**
  - Increase law enforcement “buy-in” by creating improved ordinance with tougher sanctions.
  - Consider creating Phone app that allows for instant reporting of violators or newly observed dump sites.
  - Educate the public about enforcement efforts/penalties through specific examples using social media.
  - Re-institute the fine/penalty for failing to cover trailer/truck loads brought to the landfill.
  - Educate/incentivize law enforcement regarding need for enforcement through countywide enforcement campaigns.
  - Consider creating a shared database with information about prior violators that is available to city/county and state enforcement officials.
  - Step up Adopt a Road efforts.
  - Consider adding one additional code enforcement officer so there is one for each quadrant in Marion County.
- **1.4.3 Fiscal Committee**
  - **Baseline Analysis**
    - Analyzed historical data to establish a baseline of current and projected expenses to create a budget with achievable financial goals to reduce and control litter prevention and collection cost.
    - Analyzing current Marion County Drop Sites for efficiency and improvement. Making sure assets are utilized to fullest potential to prevent illegal dumping/litter control (staffing, equipment, hours of operation, etc.).
    - Analyzing cost of developing a new drop site within the county where Litter and illegal dumping seems to be highest, i.e.: Marion Oaks is an area identified south of 484 as a potential new site.
    - Encourage individuals/businesses to actively participate in the Adopt-A-Road Program to supplement litter control costs. Current records indicate 62 Adopt-A-Roads (approx.124 miles of roadway is currently adopted yielding only 4% of county roadway) to date.
      - Creates a friendly competition among businesses and potentially incentivize top performers. Push for others to join in the program.

- Possibility of a percentage fines issued for littering and illegal dumping to be returned to county helping fund the plan of the Litter Task Force to Prevent and COLLECT Litter annually.
- Worked with marketing to create a branding similar to “Horse Fever” that places aluminum trash containers within our Brand of “Marion and Rubbish.”
  - These can be designed and auctioned to raise money for collection, making it easier for people to throw trash away and lower collection costs.
- The goal is to continue working to finalize the budget for the added cost to roll out a plan that targets and achieves; prevention, reduction, and management of litter violators in our county. (This will come at an added unknown cost currently to include; Marketing, signage, radio, TV, social media, billboards, law enforcement, collection, etc.).
- Increase the penalties associated with violators, and shame them for violations similar to “mugshots”
- Uniform efforts and collaborate with all municipalities to have the most efficient labor/contracts/methods for prevention and collection countywide.

○ **Developed Baseline Measurable**

Measurable	Marion County	City of Ocala	State/Federal Roads
Miles of Roadway	3086 miles	358 miles	249.1 miles (maintained)
Annual Tons of Litter	639 tons	112 tons	1,142.88 tons
Pounds per Mile (Annual)	435 pounds	626 pounds	9,179 pounds
Pounds per Mile (Weekly)	8.4 pounds	12 pounds	176 pounds
Pounds per Week	24,574 pounds	4,308 pounds	43,956 pounds
Tons per Week	12.2 tons	2.2 tons	22 tons
Pounds per Day (5-day work week estimate)	4,914 pounds (2.5 tons )	862 pounds (0.43 tons)	8,791 pounds (4.4 tons)

**\*\*Marion County- Does not include Reddick, Belleview, or Dunnellon- data was not available\*\***

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Total Litter Control Cost (Annual)	\$933,616	\$1,216,903	\$149,708.81
Total Cost per Mile (Annual)	\$302.53	\$3,399.17	\$600.99

- **Next Steps/Goal Setting**

- Finalize a plan to: prevent, reduce, and sustainably manage the reduction of litter in Marion County.
- Change the culture associated with littering and the mentality that we will not accept it in Marion County.
- Set goals against our baseline numbers we as a task force will accept as a positive change. (Numbers never lie).
- Make incremental changes and be prepared to have a kickoff of the program in January of 2023.
  - At that time, we can update the “baseline numbers” for FY 2022 and have 2021 and 2022 to benchmark future goals from. Current baseline is based on fy 2021, with no major efforts to prevent litter occurrence.

- **1.4.4 Marketing Committee**

- **Defined Tasks**

- Research successful litter campaigns in other municipalities.
- Create campaign slogan.
- Create a measurable and achievable Litter Control Campaign with specific goals and objectives.

- **Litter Campaigns Reviewed**



**Don't Mess with Texas**

<https://www.dontmesswithtexas.org/>

**Who:** Texas Department of Transportation

**Where:** Texas, USA

This far-reaching campaign was designed to address a host of related issues – including litter prevention. Decades after its launch in 1985, it has become genuinely iconic – partly thanks to endorsements from Kelly Clarkson, Eva Longoria, Meat Loaf and others



**KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL**

**HTTPS://KAB.ORG/**

**WHO: KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL**

**WHERE: NATION –WIDE (LOCAL AFFILIATE KEEP MARION BEAUTIFUL)**

- **Campaign Slogan and Mascots**
  - **Slogan:** No Horsin’ Around.
  - **Mascots:** A horse named Marion and his side kick Rubbish the Raccoon.



- **Committee Recommendations**
  - Work closely with the outreach and education committee to develop branding opportunities.
- **Litter Control Campaign**
  - The Marketing Committee developed a draft scope of services which was provided to the Marion County Public Relations staff to help create a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a marketing firm.
  - Neptune Advertising was selected as the marketing firm. They developed branding identities to support the litter control campaign.
  - Reference Exhibit “B” for the Neptune Advertising presentation to include graphic style full body horse element.

## 1.5 Results

The Litter Task Force presented their report to the Board on May 24, 2022 and the following action items were discussed with required follow-up by staff:

- Finalize the Litter Task Force Report and present to the Board for Notation for Record.
- Incorporate additional budget line items into the FY22/23 Budget, to include:
  - \$150,000 for Litter Campaign.
  - Add an additional Code Enforcement Officer position in the Solid Waste Budget to include all required equipment.

- Update Litter related Ordinance(s).
- Final selection of Branding Logo.

**Exhibit A**  
**Resolution No. 21-R-444**



**Exhibit B**  
**Task Force Member Roster**

# **Exhibit C**

## **Neptune Advertising Presentation**