

## Hooey, Docia A

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**From:** Pinellas County Clerk of Court <noreply@mypinellasclerk.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025 1:21 PM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Subject:** NEW BCC AGENDA COMMENT

**Categories:** DOWNLOADED

Topic	Extension services
BCC Agenda Date	10-18-2025
Agenda Item Number	
Citizen Name	Chris Mueller
Phone	
Email	cem.hmm_14@yahoo.com
Address	2042 Australia Way W Clearwater , FL 33763
Comments	Please keep funding the Extension service. Very important and valuable anywhere people live. Oppose defunding it.
Your Stand on the Issue	Support

## Hooey, Docia A

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**From:** Pinellas County Clerk of Court <noreply@mypinellasclerk.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025 12:25 PM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Subject:** NEW BCC AGENDA COMMENT

**Categories:** DOWNLOADED

Topic	Memorandum of Understanding between Pinellas County and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences
BCC Agenda Date	11-18-2025
Agenda Item Number	38
Citizen Name	Nancy Armitage
Phone	
Email	
Address	308 Lake Placid Ct Oldsmar, FL 34677
Comments	Please APPROVE the reaffirmation letter to continue the county's valuable partnership with UF. I and many people I know highly value the advisory and educational expertise made available to us through the Pinellas extension office. This service is much loved and much used in our county. To lose it would be to the detriment of our citizens and our environment.
Your Stand on the Issue	Support

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**From:** Pinellas County Clerk of Court <noreply@mypinellasclerk.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025 9:48 AM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Subject:** NEW BCC AGENDA COMMENT

**Categories:** DOWNLOADED

Topic	UF/IFAS Extension
BCC Agenda Date	11-18-2025
Agenda Item Number	25-1698A
Citizen Name	Sarah Luther
Phone	
Email	Sarahkluther@gmail.com
Address	

### Comments

Dear Commissioners, Agriculture is incredibly important to every county in the state of florida. As a major provider of jobs and participant in Florida's economy every County should consider the agricultural industry important to support. However, extension does more than support the ag industry. It provides education and information on food safety and health, information on home gardening and how to avoid over-application of fertilizer and pesticides on home gardens, it provides opportunities for youth involvement and leadership development. Removing it from your community would be a huge disservice to your constituents. I am writing to express my strong support for renewing the five-year Memorandum of Agreement with the USF/IFAS Extension office and for maintaining Pinellas County's 40% funding contribution. This partnership is not only an essential part of Pinellas County's agricultural foundation, but also a critical component of the environmental health and education of our community. I believe agriculture is the root to everything we are, the food on our table, the clothes we wear, the air we breathe. It is something we can't do without, especially the knowledge of how to keep it sustainable, it is something important to each and everyone of us. Pinellas County is different, we/I want it to be different then every other county. I am proud to be able to say, yes Pinellas county still has horse farms, trails and agriculture centers in the most densely populated county in the state. I have opened my farms doors to 4-H and homeschooling programs for kids to learn where their food comes from, why it is important to keep agriculture alive in their backyards. The only way to ensure our future is through the minds of the kids today, to enrich their touch with where all of us came from, farming. You might not

physically see the growth of backyard agriculture, but it is there and growing daily. The Pinellas County extension office is strictly an educational office benefiting county staff, residents, Swiftmud and EPA programs. It teaches our staff how to get certifications, provides CEU and is a liaison between State and County staff. The UF/IFS office does all the training for the Park Rangers for Pinellas county. Free of charge, it is part of the agreements. There is so much more to this than just 40% funding and office space. Pinellas County was built on agriculture. It is deeply woven into the history and identity of our county. Unfortunately, much of the visibility of that heritage has diminished over the years as agricultural and educational programs have been eliminated. The Extension office is one of the last remaining places where residents can receive hands-on, local specific education about landscaping, pesticide safety, natural resource protection, and environmentally responsible practices. Anyone can walk into the Extension office, call, or attend one of its many workshops and get an education. The staff provide guidance that is specific to our region—something online videos or generic resources simply cannot do. Residents living on bayous, on the peninsula, or near sensitive waterways often need personalized, one-on-one assistance. The Extension office is the only place providing that service and will liaison with staff. If the county discontinues its 40% share of funding, multiple vital programs will be eliminated. This includes positions responsible for commercial horticulture, grants and community engagement, natural resources, and Sea Grant. These roles cannot be replaced elsewhere in county government. There is no guarantee the university would pick up the 40% and this would discontinue the 4-H programs. This would wipe out educational programs that far surpass agriculture. They provide programs, scholarships, field trips and more to kids from sports, to writing, you name it, there is probably a 4-H group for it. UF also offers more I can't even start to cover in one email. All is done in partnership with Pinellas County, which sure makes the county look more amazing. On Saturday Pinellas Park held a small Ag Festival, it drew over 700 people in 3 hours. These are residents, living in the county wanting to learn more about their community. The Commercial Horticulturist, for example, not only works directly with residents but also provides CEU training for county Park Rangers and educates staff throughout the county on education to obtaining certifications, resolving environmental issues, and maintaining best practices. These classes are offered free of charge because of the shared funding structure between the county and the university. This position as well as the others work with county staff, residents and Swiftmud for education only they can provide. The Sea Grant / Ecosystems position is equally essential. This agent provides education and outreach related to water quality, marine ecosystems, and coastal conservation—topics that are particularly important in a coastal county like ours. They conduct education for both county staff and residents across all of Pinellas County. Without these positions, the community loses its only centralized source of practical, accessible, hands-on education regarding landscaping, pesticide safety, natural resource protection, and environmentally responsible practices. We also lose one of the only remaining places where residents can learn how to keep agriculture alive—even in one of the most urban counties in Florida. All of this goes hand in hand. It is also important to note that

Pinellas County has been recognized on the Florida Farm Map for its backyard farmers. People are returning to agriculture, even on small lots, their porches and garages. Pinellas County residents are wanting to keep agriculture, keep green and keep education alive. The loss of Extension funding would directly impact the programs that have supported youth and family agriculture in this county for over 100 years. The 4-H program and gardening program is at risk, since the positions we would lose, takes away all but two people to run all of the programs, while still offering help to the county staff as well as residents. This is the only program supporting 4-H and without it, you will be losing an educational program essential to our heritage. The Extension office serves all ages, all backgrounds, and all communities. There are no barriers—residents do not need a computer, a phone, or even transportation to participate. If they can make it into the office or attend a workshop, they will receive the education and support they need, tailored to them specifically. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to renew the MOA and continue the county's 40% funding commitment. The value this investment returns to our residents, environment, and heritage far exceeds its cost. Thank you for your time and for your dedication to serving the people of Pinellas County.

Your Stand on the Issue

Support

## Hooey, Docia A

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**From:** Pinellas County Clerk of Court <noreply@mypinellasclerk.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025 9:48 AM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Subject:** NEW BCC AGENDA COMMENT

**Categories:** DOWNLOADED

Topic	IFAS Extension office
BCC Agenda Date	
Agenda Item Number	
Citizen Name	Clenric Hancock
Phone	+17276748883
Email	clenricguy@icloud.com
Address	1270 Woodlawn St Clearwater, FL 33756
Comments	Please continue funding the cooperative extension office. It is short-sighted to cut this funding.
Your Stand on the Issue	

## Hooey, Docia A

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**From:** Pinellas County Clerk of Court <noreply@mypinellasclerk.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025 9:19 AM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Subject:** NEW BCC AGENDA COMMENT

**Categories:** DOWNLOADED

Topic Funding for UF/IFAS Pinellas County Extension

BCC Agenda Date 11-18-2025

Agenda Item Number 38

Citizen Name Megan Colby

Phone +19894006769

Email Megan.c.colby@gmail.com

Address 1269 royal oak dr  
Dunedin, FL 34698

Comments Please do not defund the UF/IFAS Pinellas County Extension. There are many programs within this extension that help our citizens learn to care for the health and beauty of our natural environment. I have personally taken several classes and attended events featuring the extension programs and they have been invaluable to my understanding of native Florida plants and invasive species. I frequently use the website to look these things up as well. Thank you.

Your Stand on the Issue Oppose

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**From:** Pinellas County Clerk of Court <noreply@mypinellasclerk.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025 9:02 AM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Subject:** NEW BCC AGENDA COMMENT

**Categories:** DOWNLOADED

Topic UF IFAS Extension Office for Pinellas County

BCC Agenda Date 11-18-2025

Agenda Item Number 38

Citizen Name Linsey Grove

Phone +117274341559

Email linsey.grove@gmail.com

Address 835 9th Ave. S.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Comments Please renew the MOU for the UF IFAS Extension Pinellas County. This office has been a major part of the community in its mission to educate citizens about horticulture, the environment, and nutrition. They also provide youth development programming via 4-H and other high quality programs and partner with a diverse group of community organizations and businesses.

Your Stand on the Issue Support

## Hooey, Docia A

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**From:** Lee Anne Burney <leeannewilliams@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 17, 2025 8:59 PM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Subject:** Please Support Funding for the UF/FAS Extension Office MOU  
**Attachments:** college essay.docx

**Categories:** DOWNLOADED

### This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

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I am writing to urge your support for funding the UF/FAS Extension Office MOU. This program has had a profound impact not only on my family but on our entire community.

My daughter began her journey in 4-H as a third grader and is now a senior in high school. The lessons she learned through 4-H shaped her college essay and inspired her to pursue a degree in agricultural engineering. Her dedication is reflected in the more than 9,000 volunteer hours she has given through her 4-H club's partnership with the Horses for Handicap Foundation (H4H).

Together, 4-H and H4H provide an invaluable service: a free therapeutic riding program for children and adults with disabilities. Volunteers from 4-H care for the horses, lead them on Saturdays, and accompany riders to the Special Olympics. Without the support of 4-H, this program—which has served our community for over 40 years—may not be able to continue.

To further illustrate the impact, I have attached Jaeci's college essay, recently submitted to UF, FSU, UCF, and USF. It shows just how deeply 4-H shaped her life and demonstrates the powerful influence this program can have on other children in our county.

The UF/FAS Extension Office makes these opportunities possible. It fosters youth development, community service, and agricultural education, while strengthening programs that directly improve lives. I respectfully ask that you vote in favor of funding the MOU so that these vital programs can continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to our community.

Sincerely,

Lee Anne Burney  
4961 104th Way N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33708