

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA, ON JANUARY 18, 2011 AT 9:00 A.M, THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDINGS WERE HAD, VIZ:**

**Present:**       **Sherrie Taylor, District 5, Chairperson**  
                  **Gene Morgan, District 3, Vice-Chairman**  
                  **Eugene Lamb, District 1**  
                  **Doug Croley, District 2**  
                  **Brenda Holt, District 4**  
                  **Nicholas Thomas, Clerk**  
                  **Debra Minnis, County Attorney**  
                  **Johnny Williams, County Administrator**

**INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. She then led in a prayer and in pledging allegiance to the U.S. flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Deputy Clerk Muriel Straughn called the roll with all commissioners present.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Taylor announced to the public that if they wished to speak to the Commission to complete speaker form and give it to the clerk.

She then asked that all cell phones and pagers be silenced for the duration of the meeting.

**AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

No amendments were made to the agenda.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LAMB AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTE 5 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.**

**AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES**

- 1. Department of Corrections – State Probation Statistics for Gadsden County**  
May Andrews, Correctional Probation Senior Supervisor and John Walkup, Circuit Administrator

**Mr. John Walkup**, head of the Second Circuit for State Probation, Florida Department of Corrections, addressed the board. He gave the following statistics:

- The Gadsden County Office has 19 on staff with two supervisors, 4 clerical, 13 Probation and Parole Officers (2 for sex offenders. 3 handle community control cases, 3 handle drug offenders and the other five handle regular probation caseload).
- There are currently 900 active probationers that are being actively supervised. 500 of them were actually sentenced in Gadsden County.
- The Gadsden County office also supervises approximately 150 Liberty County cases.
- The remaining caseload of 250 stem from arrests made in other parts of the region including Jackson County and other parts of the state.
- Approximately 600 inmates are released each year to Gadsden County. 150 – 160 of the 600 are classified as violent offenders meaning they have been convicted of a violent offenses.
- The caseloads change daily, but they are currently supervising many high risk caseloads - 48 sex offenders; 54 on house arrest; and 80 drug offenders The remainder are regular probation/parole supervision.
- They do have some conditional release cases that they monitor and others that do non-reporting probation.
- Their work is geared toward re-entry and public safety. The re-entry process starts while the inmates are still sentenced to prison. He described the various ways that they work with the inmates and the probationers.

Commissioner Croley made several remarks then asked what the community could do to help prevent such a high rate of recidivism (probationers returning to prison.) He asked specifically, “What is it that you are doing and what you see that we can do as a commission and as a community in our support of law enforcement to try and help this problem?”

Ms. Pleasinger replied, “There are lots of factors that go into re-entry and we do need the support of people in the community. If an inmate comes back to your community, even if they have had substance abuse, even if they have had job skills training, and there are no resources in the community, they are more likely to recidivate. If an inmate doesn’t want to change – you know, the biggest burden falls on the inmate or the offender themselves. If they are not willing or interested in changing, then that is a problem. What we try to do is work with communities. We have built some re-entry centers in the state, but we don’t have one in Gadsden County yet, but that is something we move to where we work very closely with the communities.

When an inmate is released, instead of just coming back to the community, they go through a re-entry center so the inmate can say, “I need food stamps , I need this” and they are given those resources. It is also important to let law enforcement to let them know when an inmate comes back to the community just so they can see that “We’re keeping an eye on you.” That does make a difference. But, we do , Commissioner Croley, we have more work to do.

We’ve done a lot with re-entry. I would love to be able to tell you that every inmate that comes into our system leaves with a GED. That doesn’t happen. We have some inmates that come in with a second grade reading level. So, we’ve got to work very hard to get that inmate even at a 9<sup>th</sup> grade level to get a vocational certificate so there are a lot of challenges like that.

Croley:

One follow up question related to – we had a discussion recently about gangs. Apparently there is some question about whether or not gangs are a problem. I don't know if they are or not. What do you see?

Ms. Pleasinger:

Well, I know in the prison system and among some of our offenders, yes, it is a problem. Most of the time when they come into our prison system with a gang, we have a gang task force unit that is very good. They, I am sure, would be very willing to come in do a presentation about gangs, just in general. They do it for our staff – what to look for gangs. But, I am sure your Sheriff's Department has a lot of that information as well.

Lamb:

Thank you all for coming over this morning. My first question is after you all release the inmates back into society, do you all help them look for a job or help them get a job when you release them?

Pleasinger:

It depends on whether or not the inmate is sentenced to probation. When an inmate is released from prison, if they don't have probation to follow, the department has nothing more to do with that inmate. By law, we can't once they are out of our custody. Usually, they don't want to have anything more to do with us. But if that inmate is sentenced to probation, then probation officers do assess that inmate's needs and try to help them as they can.

Lamb:

We are having – there is a situation over here in Gadsden County, I know it is happening over in my district and probably all over the county, that there is a lot of break-ins and so forth here in Gadsden County and we are very concerned about it. I want to know what you all can recommend or what you all can do to help our Sheriff's Department to counter these break-ins here in Gadsden County. It is all over the county.

Pleasinger:

What does your Sheriff's Department need? What sort of help are they looking for?

Lamb:

They probably need more deputies to help patrol this county. They don't have enough deputies. That is something that I feel that a recommendation should be coming from your department plus we should look at this very hard as a commission. We should look at this and see what we can do to assist the Sheriff's Department in putting more deputies out there on patrol.

Pleasinger:

Right. We are, our department is funded by the State lawmakers and our budget is very specific. We have probation officers, correction officers and all of our funding comes from State lawmakers.

Lamb:

I am getting a lot of questions from the citizens saying that they just don't, that they are not

visible in the districts and communities. We are going to have to be proactive in getting more deputies out there in the districts.

Now, the only way you can do that is hire more deputies. The Sheriff's Department needs more funds to those deputies out there. We just don't have enough to patrol Gadsden County. You've got one deputy in District 1 and that is not going to ever work. You've got the whole of Midway and Havana and all the development that has taken place in those two areas. There are break-ins almost every day. We need some support from the State to help our Sheriff's Department to patrol these areas.

Pleasinger:

I wish we had extra money to give you as far as the Department of Corrections. I think that is something that would be better addressed by the State Legislature, your lawmakers and you are local lawmakers here.

Lamb:

Thank you.

Taylor:

Commissioner Holt?

Holt:

Good morning. I think that this falls back on us as commissioners. We fund the Sheriff's Department. I understand what you are saying, Commissioner Lamb, but what we have to do is – I was just looking at my schedule of meetings. The first thing I put on there was workshops. I am the one that always asks for workshops. I must be an old school teacher. What has happened is – we have to budget better and we have to attract businesses. There is no way that somebody is going to get out of jail and stay hungry because we don't have a job for him. They are not going to do it. They are going to take from those that have. I tell people this all the time. It is going to happen. You can say whatever you want, but when it is time to eat, they are going to eat just like we eat. If they need shelter, they are going to find shelter just like we do. So, we are back to the point of this commission sitting down and looking at a budget. My concern with your department and not necessarily with your whole department because I don't know your whole department, but I get these strange stories about people saying, "I had to get off from work to go pay my probation or go to court and I got fired because I am off work." That is another person on the street.

I need them – if we need to do their court thing in the evening so they can go to work, we need them working. We don't need them losing a job or a piece of a job out there trying to go and do something. That is something that I think we need to work together on. If they are working, we need to make sure that they continue working. "I went to report and when I got back and the boss said, "you can't be here because you are on probation. I hired you as a favor and now you can't be here because you've got to go to court all the time. I need my product out there, I don't need to be bothered with this stuff." Those are the problems that I see here and the lack of jobs. We need to come up with more jobs. We cannot do that unless we sit down and come up with a good plan. WE have to have a plan, commissioners. But I would appreciate some help on that

side. I was in the courtroom the other day.

Pleasinger:

Absolutely. Sure. When offenders violate their court orders, we let the judges know. It is called violation of probation – VOP. If the judge signs the warrant, then they do go out and pick up the offender. They spend time in jail and they often do lose their jobs or if they have to go to court during the day. It is something that we work with and a lot of times when we notify the courts (we work very hard to let them know exactly what it is) and probation makes a recommendation so that the courts can make appropriate recommendation whether or not to pull this offender off the street or to let them remain on the street so they can work.

Holt:

I can understand if they are still on the street and they didn't go and report. But when they are on the job, we need them working. I understand what you are saying. You've got to make a choice – how does that person logically make a choice when you don't have a lot of job choices out there. You only have a few because you have a record and they've got to have a job. I would rather they stayed on that job, but I don't know how the court system can do to try and help out with that. But we need them working. We don't need them to be on the street.

Walkup:

As far as our – well, she addressed the ones that on violation status, but as far as the folks that are under regular supervision and are in good standing with us, most of them only have to come in once a month and it is usually for 10 – 15 minutes, once a month. We tell them ahead of time to make arrangements with your employer. Most employers understand that these folks do have to come see us once a month because we correspond with the employers. They know the people are on probation.

Holt:

Can they come on a weekend? They are working five days a week. Can they come on a weekend.

Walkup:

We make arrangements.

Andrews:

May I say just one thing? Our office, on Mondays, all of our community control offenders report and our office is open until 7:00 p.m. every Monday. The offenders are required to report by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. Our office is normally open until 7:00 p.m. So, we make ourselves available because we don't want them to lose their jobs.

Holt:

Thank you. That is what I wanted to hear. Great! Thanks a lot.

Thank you, Madam, Chairman.

Taylor:

Commissioner Morgan?

Morgan:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Walkup and ladies, we appreciate you all coming and informing us. This has been some good conversation. I do have just a few quick questions.

First of all, I will say my personal opinion about these issues that we are discussing basically stem back to the breakdown of our family units and discipline and responsibility. So until those types of things are effectively addressed, we are going to continue to have these issues.

Mr. Walkup, you are the circuit advisor, it says here.

Walkup:

Circuit Administrator.

Morgan:

O.K. What other counties do you administer?

Walkup:

Jefferson, Wakulla, Franklin, Liberty, Gadsden, and Leon.

Morgan:

Within that area, where is our closest re-entry center?

Walkup:

I think Baker CI right now would be our closest.

Morgan:

Baker County, O.K.

Pleasinger:

Those are for inmates that are going back to Duval County only. Right now, we have four re-entry centers and Baker is the closest. We are looking at Palm Beach. We just opened one in Palm Beach and we are getting ready to open one in Polk County as well. We would love to have one eventually in every area, but we are just not there yet.

Morgan:

It sounds like, based on the statistics that we have heard and read about that a regional re-entry center here in the panhandle might be effective. It might be helpful. The State Legislature and their priorities, obviously, we have heard talk about DOC, how is that going to affect what you guys are doing?

Pleasinger:

We are not sure yet. We are in transition mode. Secretary McNeil will step down probably the

latter half of February. We have a new Secretary, Secretary Buss, who ran the prison and probation system in Indiana. He is very well known and Secretary McNeil said that he is a great guy. He is very knowledgeable and he believes in re-entry as well and thinks it needs to be an important part of what we do. So, I don't see that changing.

Morgan:

O.K. You know, we have a lot of DOC employees not only in Gadsden, but in our neighboring counties. Maybe with some of the changes that I anticipate happening, a re-entry center might be something to put on the table to discuss if there is not going to be a local DOC prison in the area for some reason. That may be something where we could put folks back to work if we needed to.

You also mentioned and I learned something – we are providing services to Liberty County through Gadsden County. Is that correct?

Walkup:

Yes, sir.

Morgan:

From our probation office. Are they contributing, Johnny, to our budget revenues that we receive annually?

Williams:

Not that I am aware of.

Morgan:

Why not?

Thomas:

This is the State of Florida. It is State Probation.

Morgan:

But, we are providing the employees to do this services. Is that right or not?

Thomas:

It is State.

Morgan:

None of those are our employees at all?

Thomas:

No.

Morgan:

O.K. that was my next question. Good. Thank you.

I think that was all my question. Thank you very much. I appreciate you all coming.

Taylor:

We certainly appreciate all the information. It has been very informative. It would be good, however, if some of that which you shared with us was given to our county administrator so that we can have it for record and information so that we can reference back to it in the future.

So, Thank you for that presentation. It was very, very wonderful.

Walkup:

Just one quick thing before we go. I talked to Commissioner Croley about this. In Leon County, we have what we call a Public Safety Coordinating Council, which is a group of us who meet once a month. It consists of all the law enforcement agencies, correctional agencies, clerk of courts, state attorney, public defender and anybody involved in the criminal justice system. We meet once a month at the courthouse in Leon County to discuss any issues relative to public safety in Leon County. It is not just us, but it is across the board. I had suggested to Commissioner Croley that Akin Akineyemi, who is the commissioner in Leon County that runs our group. You might consider possibly speaking to him and it might be something that you would want to consider for Gadsden County.

Taylor:

Thank you. I is certainly something that we should consider given the information that you have shared with us today. So, Commissioner Croley, that is something that we will ask you to lead us on, since this is your brain child. We will certainly support whatever efforts you put before us.

Croley:

I appreciate that, Madam Chairman. The main thing is this – apparently whatever we are doing or not doing isn't working when you've got that kind of recidivism rate. Whether it is a re-entry center that I believe the Law Enforcement Academy had discussed and brought up the possibility of building such a facility there. The need for jobs that Commissioner Holt has referenced to the fact that it is more of a regional multi county effort to do what you just said about the need to look for some coordinated effort here. So whatever we can do, we will try to do.

Taylor:

I appreciate that. Thank you. Thank you very much.

## **CLERK OF COURT'S AGENDA**

### **2. Ratification of Approval to Pay County Bills**

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LAMB AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO RATIFY THE APPROVAL AND PAYMENT OF THE COUNTY BILLS AS REFLECTED IN THE WARRANT VOUCHES DATED AS FOLLOWS:**

Accounts Payables Dated

December 30, 2010



Payroll Dated: January 7, 2010  
January 13, 2011

**Presentation of County Finance and County Clerk Issues**

Clerk Thomas stated that he had no specific issue to raise with the board regarding finances, but he offered to answer any questions they might have.

Morgan:

Clerk Thomas, thanks for coming to the meeting this morning. I see that we've got something before us this morning regarding the fiscally constrained dollars, the additional dollars, that will we will be receiving. I know that later in our meeting we have an item to discuss. I don't know if you will be here for the entire meeting, so I want to get your feedback regarding that. We are looking at approximately \$190,000 of funds that we did not budget that we are receiving through the fiscally constrained dollars. I was just wondering what your thoughts are. As well as we have done financially here in the county, should we budget those dollars in a certain area or should we leave those unbudgeted to go back to fund balance due to the fact that we have several things coming up here with the economic environment that are potentially negative?

Thomas:

These are just my thoughts. This money is budgeted in general fund. There are a number of revenue sources in the general fund. Generally, I would not recommend amending the revenue upward. However, this money has been identified. You have been notified that it is coming. If you have a specific project or a one-time expenditure that you want to use it for, that would be fine. But generally speaking, during the course of the fiscal year, you don't want to amend the general revenue sources. Like I said, this is a little bit different scenario, so if you have identified what you want to spend it on, I don't have a problem with it.

Taylor:

Thank you.

Lamb:

I have a question for him. It is not really a specific question, but once they allocate these funds to different counties for fiscally constrained counties, if there are areas that they (the county) needs these funds for, aren't those funds there for the counties to spend toward those areas? It is not necessarily that they are giving us this money to put in a pot just to hold it there. Am I correct?

Thomas:

That is correct.

Lamb:

I mean if you, I mean, I don't see why they would give to us just to hide it somewhere.

Thomas:

You are free to spend it.

Lamb:  
Yeah.

Morgan:  
I am not asking about hiding the money.

Lamb:  
I am through.

Morgan:  
I certainly have not eluded to hiding any money. What I am saying is putting it fund balance because the fiscally constrained program has not been around but just a few years. It is a very real possibility that this program will not be in place next year. That is my point.

Thomas:  
I take both your points. When you don't amend the budget, basically when you get additional revenue, it will end up going to fund balance. If you don't amend your budget upward to spend it. If all the other revenue sources come in pretty much as you predicted. That is normally the case that it just goes into fund balance. However, there is no problem in this case. You have been notified that there is going to be additional money. You have identified a specific project. I just don't recommend spending it on general operations, that's all. You've got a onetime increase in money that has been identified. If you choose to spend it, that is fine. I don't have a problem with that is what I am saying.

Holt:  
Madam Chairman, I guess we are discussing this item now. I just wanted to say one thing. I help work on getting this money along with several other commissioners in the state. We were told after one county moved the money over to Road and Bridge to do some work, there was a problem with the State. They had to go back and they said to define that fiscally constrained money. Not only do you have to go in and say what you are going to do with it, you have to make sure that it is spent as you said you were going to do. Also, if you just bank it - one county put it up then down and they didn't use it. The state Legislature had a little problem with that saying, "We sent you money to use for something that we were taking out of your budget for." They wanted to make sure that money was not banked, it was used for something that you said it was going to be used for. So, these are two things. They want you to justify what you are doing, but they want to make sure that it is something that you need. If you are going to just bankroll it, we are going to have a problem with the State. That is what we were told when we were over there.

Thomas:  
In line with what you are saying, Commissioner Morgan's biggest concern is whether or not you continue to get the money in the future. This is something that the Legislature, out of the goodness of their hearts, did for small counties. They have been really good to small counties over the years. This is another one of those examples. The question is - as money tightens up, whether or not they will continue to do it.

Holt:

Well, as I was going to say right quick, in that Amendment I, in the fight during that time, Amendment I gave a big tax break and it killed off 36 of our counties. I was chair of the 36 counties. It killed our budgets because we don't get enough millage. It cost us the same thing to pave a road and a mile of dirt as it does for big counties and they have millions of dollars. We didn't have that. So, they supplemented this in order to get that tax break for those large companies. So, once they got the tax break, they left us broke, then turned around and said they were going to give us money.

Now, they may cut it off and I am pretty sure that eventually they will. But Amendment I is still sitting there and it is going to grind us down to nothing. So, this is not that you are going to use it this time, you are going to have the same problem next time and you are going to be broke again. It is going to grind down again and again. In this, you have to have a specific project and make sure that we can explain it. If you want to budget some back, let's just be sure that we are doing it right. That is all I wanted to say. We don't want a problem with it and say, "You didn't need the money anyway, you put it back and saved it." That is how we got the new courthouse. We did it the first time, saved the money, next time got some more money. We did it like that and kept putting it together. Let's just be sure that we look at it right. That is why I told you that I love workshops. I will get that out then.

Taylor:

Thank you, Commissioner, well received.

Does that conclude your presentation?

Thomas:

Yes.

Taylor:

Thank you, sir.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LAMB AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN, THE BOARD VOTED 5 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA (ITEMS 3 – 5.)**

- 3.** Approval of Minutes – December 7, 2010 – Regular Meeting
- 4.** Approval and Execution of County Deed to Henry and Gwendolyn McGill
- 5.** Acceptance of Public Official Bonds for Re-elected Commissioners Doug Croley and Brenda Holt

### **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION**

No consent agenda items were pulled for discussion.

**CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON AGENDA ITEMS**

- **Jim Ivey** – voiced concern regarding the extension of the deadline the board approved for C.W. Roberts Construction Company to leave the his location on SR 267 near Lake Talquin
- **Brian Bess**, Gretna Police Chief, - requested assistance of the BOCC to get the word out into the community about the need to donate blood, particularly the blood drive on January 21. The county administrator was instructed to meet with Chief Bess and coordinate such effort. It was suggested that perhaps another location could be used as well. It was also suggested that the Sheriff's Emergency call system could be used to notify people of the need for blood.
- **Michelle Ostenberg**, Chattahoochee Resident – spoke to the issue of human dignity and the need to protect the vulnerable citizens from the cold weather.

**GENERAL BUSINESS AGENDA**

**6. Approval of 2011 County Commission Meeting Calendar**

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER CROLEY AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN, THE BOARD VOTED 5 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO APPROVE THE MEETING CALENDAR.**

**7. Renewal of Contract for State Lobbying Services with Doolin & Associates**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE CONTRACT WITH DOOLIN & ASSOCIATES.**

Discussion followed.

Croley:

Was there any effort made to or any commitments received from the municipalities regarding a shared expense especially question regarding the City of Chattahoochee?

Morgan:

No.

Croley:

No effort made or no commitments received?

Morgan:

No commitments received.

Taylor:

Well, there was a manager's commitment received from the City of Quincy.

Croley:

But nothing formal?

Taylor:

Nothing formal. I did mention it at our last meeting and it should have been followed up by the administrator to the City of Quincy.

Morgan:

Madam Chair, I think it will be wonderful if they will agree to participate. But obviously with different public meetings schedules and getting things before each of those commissions, I think it will be impossible to get it on their agenda and back to us at this point in time. I hope we will work toward that. That would be great.

Croley:

But has a letter been written to these municipalities and to the adjoining counties asking for a cost share since the primary effort, if I understood this endeavor, was to promote the interest of the state run Florida State Hospital facility. It stands to reason, just on common sense, if there are so many other stake holders in this endeavor, why would you not want to do that?

Taylor:

Again, I commend your comment, Commissioner Croley and I agree with you wholeheartedly. As a matter of fact, this is not the first time this discussion has come up – inviting other municipalities to participate. That is day to day and I am going to have to lay that on the shoulders of our administrator. He should have gotten in touch with surrounding counties and should even though we go forward this morning, he still should make that effort to see if there are any of the municipalities that may want to buy into this effort.

Lamb:

Madam Chair, this is an item that we have discussed before. We have gone into deep depth on this particular item here and this is something that I am in favor of going forward on, but this is something that we are going to be looking at very closely this year. But, I think we need to go ahead and move forward on this and be done with this item. We have talked to our delegation and they have agreed that it could do us some good. I am willing to try. We need to move forward on this.

Taylor:

Are there any other comments?

There being none, all in favor of approving to renew this contract, please let it be known by saying, "Aye."

Lamb: Aye.

Holt: Aye.

Morgan: Aye.

Taylor:

Opposed?

Taylor: No.

Croley: No.

Taylor:

Make that 3 – 2 in favor of the motion to approve the renewal of this contract for lobbying services, Ms. Muriel.

**8. Approval to Renew the Microsoft Enterprise Licensing Agreement and Authorize the Chairperson to Execute (Charles Chapman, Public Works Director)**

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER CROLEY AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN, THE BOARD VOTE 5 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO APPROVE THE ABOVE STATED CONTRACT RENEWAL.**

**9. Approval to Award Bid Number 10-28 for Engineering Services to Preble Rish for the CDBG Disaster Recovery Grant and Authorize the Chairperson to Execute the Contract (Clyde Collins, Building Official and Phyllis Moore, SHIP Administrator)**

Gadsden County received a grant for \$241,866 from the FL Department of Community Affairs to mitigate flooding problems on Crawfish Island in Chattahoochee, FL. The project will include re-enforcing the banks of Mosquito Creek, which is adjacent to the island community. The project location is at the west end of Branch Street in Chattahoochee. The project should be completed within 6 months once the work begins.

The board solicited bids for engineering services for the project. Once bids were received the bid committee recommended awarding it to Preble Rish.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO AWARD BID 10-28 to PREBLE RISH ENGINEERING.**

**10. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S AGENDA**

**Fiscally Constrained Funds Discussion**

Following a discussion among the board members about how best to use the additionally fiscally constrained dollars which will be forthcoming, there was a consensus to agenda it in March, but to schedule a workshop before then to discuss how it is to be spent. Until then, when the funds are received, it should be placed into unbudgeted general fund balance.

**Florida State Hospital – Lobbying Service Expense**

There was a consensus to direct the county administrator to write an appropriate letter to all stake holders identified with the movement to privatize the Florida State Hospital and ask them to consider sharing in the cost to hire lobbying services to help defeat the effort.

**COUNTY ATTORNEY'S AGENDA**

**11. Presentation on Required Re-districting of County Commission District**

Minnis:

This is going to be an ongoing process, the required redistricting. It is required under the Constitution Florida that after the decennial census that all the states, counties, municipalities – if they have the need to – redistrict, look at their lines. It is usually based on the census population data that comes down from the federal government. That is a benchmark that people generally use. It must be done in odd number years. So, since the census was completed last year, this is the odd number year.

Now, based on the information that I have received, they are not always completed in that odd number year, but you have to start the process.

The other thing that you have to do is when you get the census data, look at it. You may not need to change the lines and you are not required to change the lines if your populations are nearly equal. But you do have to go through the exercise of looking at them. Once you look at the lines, you have to put on your minutes the actual legal description of the boundaries. So, it can't just be a map of District 5. You have to have the actual legal description in your minutes and those have to be certified and they have to be sent up to the Department of State at some point.

You also have to publish the minutes of your new boundaries for at least two weeks. You have to publish at least once a week for two weeks before you actually finalize it.

Now, the census data has not actually gotten to the states yet. The states are probably not going to get it until February or March. Somewhere in March, April to June, that kind of time frame – the federal government will be putting together a website where the data can be more easily accessed by the counties and by the states. They have this whole software program that they are working on to make it easier for the states and the local Supervisor of Elections to go in and get the information. What several of the Supervisors of Elections are doing is that they are actually hiring a consulting firm or experts to come in once they get the census data to work with all the computer programs and software programs and basically put together recommendations for redistricting if they are needed.

My recommendation to the commission is to consider doing something like that. Strongly consider hiring an expert or consulting firm to help you look at your district lines. That adds an additional layer of objectivity that will go well in the event that some challenges are filed, which generally happens. Challenges can include equal protection challenges, voting right act challenges, sometimes you get some gerrymandering challenges. If you have an independent body to look at your land, it can be considered that you've got an extra layer of independent judgment to protect your (inaudible)

But, that is where we are right now. I did attend a full day seminar in Wesleyan chapel last week on re-districting. The whole day was nothing but re-districting. Every Supervisor of Elections in the State was at this conference. It was pretty well hashed out event. It is going to be a little bit of a lengthy process, but it is something that we are required to look into.

Holt:

Are there any penalties for not re-districting in 2011 and doing it in 2013?

Minnis:

I did not see anything that required that issued a penalty if you didn't get it done in 2011. In fact, the timeline that they gave us for the state to be able to redo it's congressional districts, - they are not going to be able to get that completed until right before qualifying on June 2012. So, it is not something that can really be done in one year. It just says, "In odd number year."

Holt:

So, if it was 2013 –

Minnis:

In fact, under the Census website, some of the data from the census, for example the congressional district summary file isn't even going to be issued until January of 2013. So, there is some information that is not going to get done until 2013. But everybody tries to go ahead and start the process. If you do get some challenges, you need time to work through those. There are some exceptions about sitting elected officials. When you re-draw the lines, it does not affect their term. It is a very lengthy process and there is a lot involved in doing this.

Croley:

Ms. Minnis, that was a good report. A couple of things. As far as delaying, I think there is enough citizens who will aggressively oppose any delay any effort legally.

Sidebar conversations can be seen violations of the Sunshine Law, I understand, among commissioners. So, I would ask my fellow commissioners to refrain from that.

Taylor:

I will take care of it, Commissioner.

Croley:

The other point is as Ms. Minnis has pointed out very accurately, there is going to be a need for outside consultant to maintain the objectivity for the welfare and benefit of everyone. On that basis, it would be strongly recommended that we take action now to put out an RFP or ask the staff to put out an RFP for these services so that we can be in the forefront of securing the services of a qualified consultants because there is going to be a lot of demand in the 67 counties, not counting the other states that may, or at least just in Florida. That might be something that you find that you need some of this revenue that is coming in from fiscally constrained to pay for that. That is something that you might want to look at, Mr. Administrator.

Now, Ms. Minnis, is that a reasonable course of action, given what you have heard?

Minnis:

Yes.

Taylor:



Let me say this. Based on your summary, it sounds as if this is something that needs to come from the Supervisor of Elections that she will orchestrate or see where she would need, once she gets the data, to get a consultant in. That might be something she be able to get out of her budget or not.

Minnis:

I certainly don't have a problem touching base with her. I do know that I did talk to Ms. Knight. She was at the conference. I also talked to Mr. Sanchez. He was also at the conference. I do know that counties have done it differently. I know that the last time there was re-districting in Gadsden County, it was coordinated by Supervisor of Elections Shirley Knight. She coordinated with both the Commission and the School Board and that you had your districts drawn the same way. I do know that the Supervisor of Elections did work with the School Board, but the county opted to do its own.

Taylor:

I think your first opinion is something that maybe we should consider. That is bringing Ms. Knight in. Maybe the administrator meets with her first. Let's see where we are. Obviously, we are a little ahead of the game, which is always a positive. I can appreciate the attitude of being proactive. But, let's have a meeting with the administrator and Ms. Knight and let them derive what they need from this board. Yes, we will work and those dollars might very well be used. But let's make sure that we have exhausted all means before we get to that point.

Now, we are not going to hammer on this one.

You have a question?

Croley:

I just wanted to say that I think your perspective is exactly correct. I definitely think that Ms. Knight needs to help spear head the coordination of this, although the Statutes place the responsibility on the Board of County Commissioners.

Taylor:

Absolutely. (inaudible) So, go ahead onto your next one. I think we have exhausted this one. Mr. Administrator, the direction here is to let her know, the Supervisor of Elections, as soon as you get that information. You need to coordinate between the two so we can be in the forefront of this re-districting. Thank you.

#### **Update on Extension of Time for C.W. Roberts**

Minnis:

My second item, as I indicated, it is not a discussion, it is just an update. Basically, as you recall, Mr. Roberts did come to the board a few meetings back and indicated that he would need some additional time and he was given a timeframe for that additional time. I was tasked to putting a limit on what that additional time would be and it was not a very long period of time. I have sent to his counsel the limit that was discussed, which was three months, no further than the end of October, he will need to have all that shut down and penalties will be incurred if he doesn't meet

that deadline. At this point, that is where it is – at his counsel’s office. I put a phone call in last week to his counsel . I have not gotten a return call yet, but it was to impose the limit.

Taylor:

Thank you. I think that may have addressed some of the concerns voiced about Lake Talquin especially with the Friends of Lake Talquin - and it seems to be repetitive. But one comment made earlier by Mr. Ivy, a resident out there, was that the previous board did not address and request for additional time. As a matter of fact, they let time move on without addressing the request. But, this board is in front of it and is a bit proactive toward it. We are giving him the time that he needs because we do want to give the appearance of a business friendly county. We have to be mindful of that.

Now, Commissioners, we all have had different opinions about this. People have come up with different opinions about it. Where it sits now is near our aquifer and it sits near our water streams and it is very dangerous. We have unnatural weather now and that concerns me tremendously where it is now. So, we are going to move forward with this. I don’t think there is going to be a problem with him complying. And, Mr. Administrator, I think Commissioner Croley said this, and I am going to echo it back to you. You need to keep an eye on the progression on movement out of there and make reports. He mentioned that. I don’t know if it is something that has been put into place, but it needs to be done and it needs to be monitored regularly.

I am going to move on this item.

**Bond Ordinance**

The ordinance will be brought for a public hearing on February 1, 2011.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS**

**12a. Commissioner Lamb, District 1**

**Public Safety – Home Invasions In District 1**

Lamb:

I don’t have but one item that I would like to mention to you and that is about public safety. We have got to do something. This board is going to have to act in District 1, I know and probably other areas, too. We are having just too many break-ins. I am getting too many complaints. We only having one officer patrolling the area. That is not enough officers in District 1. Now, if everybody else is o.k. with their districts and they are not getting any complaints on break-ins during the daytime when people are at work, that is fine. But, I am looking forward to doing something toward this. It is in our hands. Now, we need to talk to the Sheriff’s Department to see what we can do to help the situation because we are getting break-ins almost every day in District 1. We only have 1 deputy patrolling District 1.

Taylor:

Mr. Administrator.

And I concur, sir, and District 1 is not the only one out there getting a rash of break-ins and problems. It is happening countywide. So, what I am going to ask is the administrator – I am echoing the concerns of Commissioner Lamb, would you please have the Sheriff's Department or a representative come before us at a very near future meeting, maybe not the next one, but give us a report on the rise of this particular crime. As well some suggestions to ratify or whatever this board can do to help it. If we do nothing, then obviously, it continues. I echo you, sir, yes, there is a rash of crimes on the rise throughout this county.

Lamb:  
That's it.

**12b. Commissioner Croley, District 2**  
**Public Safety Committee**

- The administrator was asked to contact Leon County Public Safety Committee and get a copy of what they are doing with their committee and bring back a report and place it on the agenda for consideration. The board can decide at that point whether it would like to move forward with forming a similar committee in Gadsden County.

**Report from CRTPA Meeting**

- A meeting was held on January 10, 2011. Gadsden County is benefiting from the regional effort . Projects approved include significant amount of work planned for bridge work on I-10 and resurfacing work; some widening of some of Gadsden County roads and beautification along some roadways, particularly in Havana; sidewalks; further work on the Quincy By-Pass; Apalachicola Northern Railroad Depot in Greensboro; assistance with the Quincy Municipal Airport; Shuttle – Big Bend Transit. There is an addition 2,075 jobs that is expected to come out of the projects in Gadsden County alone.

**Future Opportunities**

- Rail resources in Gadsden County give an additional transportation strength. There could be opportunities regionally to work with the St. Joe Port . He stated that it would offer a great deal of opportunity to take part in the growing a global economy and help the region by starting with some of the agricultural products that are locally grown. He asked that the board consider having them come and make a presentation.
- There is an effort going on to try and get the Amtrak Service re-established. A stop in Midway to serve the Tallahassee area could be a possibility.

**County Vision**

Commissioner Croley then took a moment of personal privilege to publicly thank County Administrator Johnny Williams, Attorney Debra Minnis, all county employees and constitutional officers and their employees for doing a good job to make Gadsden County a better place. He then read a statement which highlighted the accomplishments of the board over the last several months. (copy attached.)

**Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4**

Holt:

Commissioners, the Medicaid withdrawal that we were looking at on the last meeting to use those funds. I need and I think we are going to need a report on that Medicaid Medicare, well, I am just going to say Medicaid because I am not sure exactly how much Medicare is depending on that, depending on what plan is used by the majority of people in Gadsden County. But, those Medicaid dollars, that \$50,000 that was taken out. Now, my understanding when I did some research because I thought it was kind of odd when I looked at that sheet, if you remember, I wouldn't vote for that item. The reason that I didn't is because the State Association, I was on that committee and the State and Federal government sends the Medicaid dollars to the county. We have been budgeting \$600,000. If I am not mistaken, in 2007, we almost ran out of money. I think a few thousand was left in that account and that was in November. O.K. The states are verifying their own accounts now. That means that if Mr. Williams go to Key West and he has a Medicaid card and he uses that card, we send that money to where that card was used. If I am not mistaken, we have not been paying into that account. Am I not right, Mr. Williams? Have we been budgeting \$600,000 in that Medicaid account every year?

Williams:

Approximately, yes.

Holt:

O.K. From what I looked at, we were a little bit low because if they are verifying and they haven't sent us a bill, in two or three years we will be in trouble. If they verify those and they are say that we have to pay it, if \$600,000 wasn't quite enough in 2007, and the last three or four years, they are going to send us a bill. If \$600,000 wasn't enough, we should have been budgeting higher because of the people who are out of work and they get more public assistance, that means that that budget for that account could be in trouble. Then we took out \$50,000 the other day. So, I am really, that kind of blew a light with me. So, what happens when we get the bill? So, can you tell us what is in that account now?

Williams:

I don't have those figures with me, but I will be glad to check on it.

Holt:

Can we get someone to check that right quick, maybe one of the employees?

Williams:

Jeff, are you in the back? I need you.

Holt:

If they could just check and see because that is quite scary because if that is what it was in 2007 – and you always pay for the year before. So, in 2008, you paid for 2007 after it was verified. If you just look at \$600,000 times 3 years, from 2007 to 2010, that will be what? \$1.8 million. We need to be able to pay that bill. If it is not enough, then we need to see about budgeting and make sure that we have enough in there. I get really worried when people are out of work and they get that assistance. You are going to have to pay that bill.

Thomas:

You budgeted \$500,000. This is one of those things where you are going to have to pay when the state bills you. So, that is certainly something that is going to have to be monitored.

Holt:

And you see, that is for three years. So, if \$600,000 wasn't enough in 2007 to pay the 2006 bill, then, we have a problem. That really needs to be looked at. That is the reason that I said that I couldn't vote for that. I kept saying that we need to workshop that. This is one of those things because the state is going to – when we send our money out to the state and the state sends that money to the federal government, the federal government sends back a dollar for every dollar. You get a dollar for a dollar when it comes back through. Then they send you your money. Once you get your money, wherever your citizens go and they have a Gadsden County address and they use that card, we have to pay that bill and especially if they are in long term care. We were trying to negotiate during that time to give us some back end days instead of the front end days. When someone goes into a hospital, their bill is really high because you are doing all those tests and all of that. We were getting some of the front end days associated with those accounts and you don't want that because you have the bigger bill. So, we kept saying, "Let us pay for some of the back end bills so the bill won't be so high and let the state revenue pick up the other."

Thomas:

So far, you have spent \$110,000 there, but it is something that will need to be monitored.

Holt:

Yeah. I can't stress this enough. Commissioners, you could kill your budget with this one. You could wipe your budget out. We need something back on this as soon as possible. You could have \$1.5 or \$1.2 million. We have it in there. We need to know what is in there and we know what we need to do to make sure of that and we need to budget earlier this year.

When I looked at the calendar, it wasn't on there. We need to budget earlier simply because you are going to have to see about moving that money.

Taylor:

There are budget workshops.

Holt:

No, I am saying earlier in the year. We need to start earlier. We didn't start last year until July or August, something like that. We need to look at it earlier like in the Spring because we need a report on what is going on with Medicaid, we need to see where the state is on verifying those bills. We need to sit down and if you are going to have another workshop day, that workshop day, we could tag this issue onto it with the other item.

That was one issue. The other is – this is one that I really think you need television for.

**Black History Parade and Use of Courthouse Grounds**

Mr. Manager, I received reports and other people did that for the Black History Parade, you told the sponsors of that parade that they would not be able to use the courthouse grounds. They told me about it and I said, "That can't be because we have been having that parade and been using those grounds for 29 years." I had two or three people who came and told me about it. So, I asked around. Now, I want to know what happened.

Williams:  
It was approved.

Holt:  
It was what?

Williams:  
It was approved.

Holt:  
It was approved, I know, but the City is the one that asked for the approval. I think that the county should be a sponsor of that event because we are the county.

Williams:  
No, I don't have a problem with that. It didn't come in as the county sponsoring it. If the county would like to sponsor it, that would be great.

Holt:  
No, no, that is not what I am saying. The event was and it has been for 29 years – they come and fill out the paper work, they make sure that they have what they need to have and they use the grounds. It wasn't that a city had to come and do it for us. This is something that causes so many bad feeling within the community. There were people talking about coming up here today and I told them to just wait. They are totally upset about this. They are saying, "Wait a minute. We are county residents and we can't use the grounds for Black History Month." Now, they are totally upset in that you told them that it was the opinion of the attorney. It was said that (let me look at my notes) It was said that it was under her recommendation that you said that they could not use the grounds. Yesterday I had people cussing because they were so upset.

Williams:  
Ms. Chairperson, it was approved.

(The administrator left the chambers briefly at this juncture explaining to Commissioner Croley that he was going to the restroom.)

Holt:  
No, that is not what I was saying.

Taylor:  
O.K. Hold on. Alright.

Holt:

Because if we can get some clarification, maybe they won't be so upset.

Taylor:

Commissioner, I have heard some of the same concerns and it has been approved. Maybe the same process didn't go forward as it has been in the past. Maybe because the county administrator was new to this. I don't know, but I do concur with your issues and your concerns and I am pleased to know that it is going forward. And, that is where we are right now. We won't haggle on it, but in the future, it probably won't go through as many steps as it did in the past. Because this year, it may have been new and I am going to say that to justify it. But, we need to move on.

Holt:

Commissioner Taylor, thank you. I am going to say this. I am not concerned about whether it moves forward, I am concerned that another local government had to come and request it and we represent this county, too. Now, that is what I am upset about. That you can say off the top of your head and the manager can say if off the top of his, "No, we are not going to do it," and you don't get back with the individuals that are requesting it. Then they become upset and then they get other people in the community upset. I would be surprised (inaudible) that if this goes on, that any one up here will get re-elected. They are really upset about it. My concern is this – how we handle business. What about front end saying to the public and we need to make sure that it is not something that causes this rift between people. That is what I am upset about and I am totally upset about it. I am going right back to where I was a few weeks ago.

**I move that we replace the manager. That is my motion.** Now, you cannot second it and not approve it, but that is my motion.

Taylor:

There is a motion on the floor to remove the manager. Is there a second?

(There was no response.)

Holt:

O.K. Let's move on. I am going to be putting it in probably every two weeks until something happens. Let me say this, let me move on to the next item.

When an employee about a three day suspension because she came to the microphone – that is another rift. You don't do that. You tell the people, you know, you tell them what they need to be told or you follow your policy and procedure. You don't suspend somebody for three days for coming to the microphone unless there is a policy in place. That is another thing. That is the reason I keep saying these things keep piling on. We are setting ourselves up for law suits that we don't need and they are going to be coming.

I would like to thank you, Madam Chair, for the visioning kick-off the other day. Great idea and I am hoping that we will have another one. I was a little cold over there, but it was good because it started.

Also, I survived a fall the other day. It was too funny. Even I was laughing. Thank God it was just his high off the ground at the race track.

(The county administrator returned to the chambers at this juncture)

As I told the people in Gretna, whether we approve or not of gambling, the horse track is coming and there will be several jobs. I am hoping and I talked to the commissioners out there and the staff out there that we have enough people in place that are pushing for local contractors. So, if you know of people who can provide a service in building that facility – it is a \$12 million facility – we need to send as many people, local contractors, to the staff out there at the City of Gretna in order to look at a choice. We want any electricians, any of those people – plumbers, whatever – to keep that money in the county. We don't want that money to come out. They come in and build a facility then the money is gone and nobody has any jobs. Those are temporary, but at least they are jobs.

I would like to thank everyone for coming out. This was a great activity. The City of Gretna Commissioners and the staff are going up to Atmore this morning to look at their facility there. I hope that you will be supportive of it because it will bring income into the county.

Thank you, Commissioners.

**Commissioner Morgan, Vice-Chair, District 3**

Morgan:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me first just say that day to day operations and personnel actions are inappropriate to discuss at these meetings. That is Florida State Statutes. We need to keep that in mind.

(Commissioner Holt left the chambers at this juncture.)

**Crawfish Island Project**

Secondly, we had another issue that we approved on our agenda and that was regarding Engineering Services and a Disaster Recovery Grant, which we authorized for those funds. Just for the Crawfish Island over in Chattahoochee. We are making great strides in that project and it is going to come to fruition and that is a great success for this county and the folks in that neighborhood. I am glad to highlight that for us this morning.

**Lighting at I-10 Exchanges**

The other item that I had regarding some of the economic development opportunities that we heard about this past week. As we are looking for potential growth at the I-10 exchange – we have two exchanges where we have no lighting. I would really appreciate the board formally approaching Florida Department of Transportation and I have talked with them and swapped emails and I think Governor Croley may have as well. – that is what I call him, Governor Croley.



(huge laughter)

Croley:

I can't repeat what I call you.

(laughter)

Morgan:

I think he has, as well, but we just need to, if we can at all, approach them about those funds, I think it will be a worthwhile effort. I do know that we need to mention to them this subject as it relates to safety. I say this again, we have around the clock, three shifts coming out of there that are working coming out of DOC and also Florida State Hospital. We do have folks coming and going from different counties to those exchanges. For some reason, along that stretch of I-10, those are the only two – the Greensboro/Gretna Exchange and the Chattahoochee Exchange. I hope we can ask the administrator or someone put forth a formal request of the DOT to support that if the board so chooses.

Croley:

May I say something to that?

Morgan:

Certainly.

Croley:

Commissioner, Chair Taylor, if this board will make a formal request through that CRTPA process, it will go into these work plans. That is the proper avenue now for the four counties. So, if you will bear that in mind.

Thank you.

Williams:

Are you going to carry it to CRTPA?

Croley:

If you write it and if she signs it.

Taylor:

What we will do and thank you, I am glad you are astute enough to make sure that we are familiar with what we need to do to put it in the right place regarding CRTPA, so I am asking that a formal letter to CRTPA be presented through our administrator to our representative on behalf of this body on this issue. I think Commissioner Morgan has brought it up twice now. We certainly need to get something moving on that.

Croley:

If you will sign it, I will

Taylor:  
With board approval, I will.

Croley:  
Well, that is what I mean.

Taylor:  
Let's get with the attorney and put together a formal request so that we have all the ingredients in there.

Williams:  
Can we (inaudible)

Taylor:  
Well, let's not put too much on her because the clock starts ticking when she picks up her pen.

(Commissioner Holt returned to the chambers at this juncture.)

Williams:  
I was just trying to clarify who was going -

Taylor:  
You orchestrate the letter, then have her to sign off on it. I think that will help to get it completed.

Morgan:  
That will be great, thank you.

#### **Cold Weather Shelter**

Just another couple of quick items here. Michelle Ostenberg mentioned about the cold weather shelters. I know there was a meeting held at the Sheriff's office on the 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 to discuss temporary cold weather shelter and how we want to move forward with that. I think there is a lot of movement in that regard, so I am encouraged by that, but we just need to get a little bit of structure around that and how we notify everyone in the county.

Commissioner Holt had a good idea regarding 911 calling system. I don't know, but I imagine there are some uses where we are limited in what we can share. Maybe you can correct me on that, but that may be a way to share with the citizens and communicate the locations, the times and things of that nature if we can do it through there.

#### **Visioning Meeting**

Madam Chair, I really appreciate your efforts there. I think there was some good that we accomplished there. I did review the comments and feedback that we got from our employees who were there. I would encourage the board to do that. There were a couple of good suggestions - some that I thought were noteworthy.

#### **EMS Facilities**

Finally, I just wanted to mention about the EMS facilities where we currently house EMS. Have we – I know there was brief discussion about relocating them maybe to a better facility. I don't know that we have ever followed through on that. You know, in my opinion, that building either needs some attention or we need to look for a strategic place to house those folks. I think space might be one issue, but also just the general condition of the facility. I just think that is something we need to help with there.

Williams:

We have a meeting set up, a separate meeting, set up at the hospital. It has already been set up. That is one of the items that I think we are going to discuss. By Florida Statutes, that would be my decision to make, but certainly, I take guidance from you as well as the hospital board and everybody else.

Morgan:

Well, I am anxious to see what your thoughts are on that.

Williams:

That is one of the discussions at that meeting. Mr. Glazer will be there.

Morgan:

O.K. I will just get with you and see what your thoughts are on that.

That is all I had, Madam Chair, thank you

**Commissioner Taylor, Chair, District 5**

I am going to move expeditiously. Just for notification to the audience. We will recess briefly after my comments to go into a special session with our attorney then we will reconvene our board meeting then adjourn it. So after we recess, there will be no other discussions publicly. So, you may leave at that time. Again, we will reconvene after protocol and proper procedure and end the regular board meeting. I just wanted to share that with you.

**Visioning Retreat**

I want to thank everyone for the visioning. I concur with some of the comments that we need to read and take notice of and move forward. It was a heartfelt event when you saw so many people that came out and supported this from all walks of our county and to see all five of our commissioners standing there. This is something that our President talked about of the incident in Tucson, Arizona. It is about us standing together as one and moving our county forward no matter where we are, but that we stand together strongly. We have evidence of that at that visioning. All five of us were there and no, we did not expend for each commissioner to have response because we felt that it would have been time consuming. But, in an effort to make sure that your sentiments are given to the employees, certainly what you did today was noteworthy. That you made your own public comments. As well, each commissioner is recommended to do so either through email or letter to the administrator that he can share with the other employees. So, this was a vision that I was nerve-wrecked over, but we followed through. Through your appreciation, the staff, Mr. Administrator and all who had a hand in this, there were over 200 and something people who came through those doors that we were able to reach

out to.

Commissioner Lamb talked about some issues and concerns with robbery, burglary and this all came out because of the issues that the Sheriff's Department is having. When we had that one incident when someone was stabbed and it took an entire day to find that particular personal weapon, you and I watched it from our television. But the sheriff lived \$16,000 worth and now he's got to find it in his coffers. That is why he has to shake and move his budget. You take \$16,000 unexpected off from that and you've got a hurt deputy somewhere, that is how it happens.

We have gotten pertinent information from the tax collector and property appraiser about what is coming down the road. People who were there will inform others about information they did not know.

The Superintendent got up there with facts that we could put our fingers on. So, when he talks about whatever is coming down his tube, then we could understand why. So, I thought this was a great kick-off. By the way, in April, make note of this, the Sheriff is going to host the next one. In April. Then in August, the Superintendent will do the presentation. So, it is going to continue to roll on. We will be back in January, this board will – that is my hope.

Mr. Administrator, I have asked you about the television. We would like to see it on our next agenda. Can you tell me real quickly what it is that we are doing? Do we have it up for bid or what?

Williams:

Yes, Arthur is going to put it out for RFP.

Taylor:

Will we be able to know or be able to discuss this on our next agenda?

Williams:

Arthur, where are we in the process?

Taylor:

Will you please come forward real quick for us so we can get this nailed down?

Lawson:

Madam Chairman and members of the board, I have put it out for an RFP, but it won't be back or rather we won't have the results by the next meeting. Probably the meeting after, we will be able to bring a recommendation back to the board.

Taylor:

So, we are looking at March because it will have to be a public hearing?

Lawson:

No, it doesn't have to be a public hearing – not from my prospective.

Taylor:

It doesn't have to be a public hearing, so the end of February.

Lawson:

If you are going to have to move some money around from the budget prospective, but I will bring it to you at the last meeting in February.

Taylor:

There will have to be a budget amendment because there is not a line item, so it will have to be a public hearing.

Lawson:

But, that is dealing with the budget side. But, I will bring it to you with our recommendation sooner. But if we have to tie it all in with a public hearing, we can only do that at a night meeting.

Taylor:

So, that is the first meeting in March.

Lawson:

Right.

Taylor:

That is what we are going to shoot for.

Thank you.

Croley:

Mr. Lawson, are you including the offer made by Clerk Thomas's staff about additional cameras on their part if they are still interested?

Thomas:

May I just say something? I know this came up several times when I wasn't here. I just want to be on the record saying this. What we have done on the internet was not meant in any way to influence what you are deciding about. It was to create a record and to be there. If it serves a purpose, that is great, but that certainly was not our motive to in any way influence what you are debating.

Taylor:

Thank you. It certainly should be considered – his comments. Thank you.

Moving on. Talquin Ave. and Joe Knight Road – Will that be on our next agenda, Mr. Administrator?

Williams:

I think that is something that we may discuss because it may be done in conjunction with the

constrained money. When we discuss it. The board wanted a plan.

Taylor:

I think that there are still some dollars in our own coffers without having to touch that. There are still some dollars in that safety enhancement roads.

Williams:

If that is the wishes of the board, we will certainly do that.

Taylor:

But, it has already been approved.

Williams:

Talquin was approved several months ago.

Taylor:

Talquin was approved, so Joe Knight has to be put on the agenda before we can approve anything because it does have to do with dollars. So, that is why I am asking that it be placed on the agenda.

Let me say this and then I am done and we can move to recess.

This has come up before and I share this with a lot of people who come to me. I had rather be a very strong one-year commissioner than a very weak two-year one. I don't waiver because of public opinion. I waiver on what is right. If you sit down in a room with 10 people, 10 of them will have different opinions about one item. So, we need to move forward with what is right and what improves our county.

There was a situation around the board tonight that was not, in my opinion, professionally done. When a commissioner is speaking, especially to an administrator, one or two things. The administrator should not get up and leave. That was disrespectful. When a commissioner is speaking, no commissioner should override or supersede what the other is thinking. That is not professional protocol. This is why incidents often occur – because of the concern among us that we would learn to be professional and courteous toward one another. Then we can put that into the community and that comes back to us. Let's be mindful of how we react to one another as we do the business of the county.

I thank you again. Again, we are going to recess this meeting. Do I have a motion to recess?

Lamb:

So moved.

Taylor:

Motion to recess. We are recessed.

Following the recess to go into a confidential meeting to discuss litigation strategy regarding a

pending lawsuit with Farnita Saunders, the board reconvened and promptly adjourned the public meeting.

**RECEIPT AND FILE**

15.

- a. For the Record: Letter from the Clerk's Office Regarding Cash-In-Bank Summary Report
- b. For the Record: Letter from Waste Pro Regarding Franchise Agreement with the County

**February Meeting(s)**

- February 1, 2011, Regular Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

- February 15, 2011, Regular Meeting, 9:00 a.m.

**Adjournment**

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD, THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING  
ADJOURNED.

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Sherrie Taylor, Chair, District 5

ATTEST:

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Muriel Straughn, Deputy Clerk