

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON FEBRUARY 4, 2014 AT 6:00 P.M.,
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: Eric Hinson, Chair, District 1
Brenda Holt, Vice-Chair, District 4
Gene Morgan, District 3
Sherrie Taylor, District 5
Nicholas Thomas, Clerk of Court
Robert Presnell, County Administrator
Michael J. Glazer, Assistant County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

Absent: Doug Croley, District 2

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

Chair Hinson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and asked everyone to please stand for a silent prayer and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag. A silent roll call was done by Marcella Blocker.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS WRITTEN.

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

1. Presentation From The American Red Cross Capital Area Chapter

Sharon Tyler, CEO for Area Chapter of American Red Cross, appeared before the Board and said she was real proud of what Red Cross does when a disaster occurs. She shared some of the things they had been able to accomplish for the benefit of the residents of Gadsden County that had suffered a disaster.

Commissioner Taylor said she had also come in contact with families that had suffered disasters and house fires and asked how they calculated their funding and if more assistance could be given, such as more than two days in a motel/hotel, etc.

Ms. Tyler said they help with the immediate needs of food, clothing and shelter and was limited in what they were able to do. She went on to explain the average for lodging was 1-3 days depending on their circumstances, food and clothing for the families; they evaluate what the needs are.

Jacar McCloud, 1115 Easterwood Drive, Tallahassee, FL, appeared before the board and said there was a standard they use; once a case worker interviews them, determines their need and would then evaluate the situation.

Ms. Tyler said one thing they do across the country is work with their partner agencies and three days is standard, but there are extenuating circumstances every once in a while where the stay may be extended.

Commissioner Taylor said her intent was to share facts with them and she appreciated what they do.

CLERK OF COURTS

2. County Finance and County Clerk Issues

a. Tax Deed Applications – 2013

Clerk Thomas said he wanted to take a few minutes to bring attention to the tax deed application process and explained it was an important part of the ad valorem tax system that funds the local government. He said that 2013 was a record year for tax deed applications and there were as many tax deed applications in that year as there were in the two previous years combined. With that, he said, they would process the applications, advertise them and hold the sales. He added that most of the properties were redeemed and those that were not redeemed were sold at public auction. He said the problem was, when no-one bought them, they go on the list of lands available for taxes and anyone could walk in off the street for up to three years and buy those properties off the list of lands available for taxes. He further added if no-one bought those properties, the Clerk would then do a tax deed giving title to The Board of County Commissioners and the problem then is that the property was off the tax roll. He informed the Board that some of the properties were homestead, occupied dwellings, and there was a real possibility that the Clerk's Office may end up deeding to the Board properties that are occupied dwellings. He told the Board this was an important process and thought they should be aware of the situation.

Commissioner Morgan thanked the Clerk for bringing this to their attention and asked if this had been an issue to this extent in the past.

Clerk Thomas said there had never been as many tax deed applications as they were currently processing and generally there were 3-4 properties that were estreated to the County. He said sometimes a neighbor is interested in purchasing the property and he would bring it to their attention and receive their permission to conduct a direct sale if the property was valued at less than \$15,000.

Commissioner Morgan asked if any of the properties in the past had ever been occupied and Clerk Thomas replied not to his knowledge. Commissioner Morgan asked if there was anything the Board needed to be considering at this point.

Clerk Thomas said the County had acquired a good bit of properties, some were buildings, parks, landfills and right-of-ways, etc., but there were properties that had been received through the tax deed process that, in his opinion, needed to go back on the tax roll.

Commissioner Morgan said it was his opinion that was a topic worth discussion on how they should direct the Administrator to move forward with the matter and if the Attorney had any input regarding that to help minimize the impact, especially for the homesteaded properties.

Commissioner Holt stated the reason for some of problems now was the lack of jobs and lack of income and if the economics were not there, they would not be able to pay. She said the property owners may be willing to set up payment plans to pay the taxes and redeem the property because the County did not want to become property owners, especially with the liabilities that could come with it.

CONSENT

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR, THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS WRITTEN.

- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. September 3, 2013, Regular Meeting
 - b. November 5, 2013, Regular Meeting
- 4. Ratification of Approval to Pay County Bills**
- 5. Write-Off of EMS Accounts & Approval of Resolution 2014-004**
- 6. Approval and Signature(s) for Satisfaction of Special Assessment Lien(s) State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) Program/Gadsden County Emergency Repairs (ER) Program**
- 7. Approval of Signatures for Special Assessment Liens and Rehabilitation Contract – State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) Program or Gadsden County Emergency Repair (ER) Program**

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no citizens that requested to speak.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

GENERAL BUSINESS

8. Appointment of Board Members of Gadsden Hospital, Inc.

Mr. Presnell deferred this item to Mr. Glazer, Assistant County Attorney. Mr. Glazer stated that due to the fact that the level of activity had diminished significantly, the GHI Board does not meet regularly and presently have no specific tasks. He said the Board recently held their annual meeting, looked at their membership, currently there were seven members and the By-laws allow between 7-11 members. He further stated that one member, who was the physician member, Dr. Charles Kent, had recently resigned. At the Board meeting, he stated, they voted that the GHI Board voted to recommend that the County Commission add two more Board members to bring them to a total of nine. The GHI Board had made recommendations for the following appointments be made for the following terms:

CLASS ONE:

Term to expire 12/31/2015

Shelia Atkins

Fred Dudley
Herb Sheheane

CLASS TWO:
Term to expire 12/31/2017

James Suber
Scott Whitehead
Shaia Rene' Simmons

CLASS THREE:
Term to expire 12/31/2019

Craig McMillan
New Member
New Member

Commissioner Morgan asked if a physician needed to be appointed.

Mr. Glazer stated the By-laws provided a preference to a physician, but that was only required if the county operated the hospital, but the county does not license the hospital and therefore that provision did not apply.

Commissioner Holt asked how the By-laws could be re-written because the roll-over provision bothered her and her concern was progress of the hospital, getting beds in the hospital, etc.

Mr. Glazer said with the By-laws, it was a two-step process, the GHI Board makes recommendations, but ultimately the Commission determines if they want to make a change, that it would be a couple of steps, but was not hard to do.

Commissioner Taylor agreed more needed to be done as far as putting in beds and said maybe ask local physicians if they were interested in serving on the board and they needed flexibility with the GHI board members in the event someone wanted to retire or did not want to be rolled over.

Mr. Glazer said the appointments could be made tonight and be changed at the next meeting if they wished to do so.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE OPTION ONE AND DIRECT THE ADMINISTRATOR TO BRING BACK NOMINEES TO FILL THE OTHER POSITIONS AND WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR. BEFORE VOTE WAS TAKEN, COMMISSIONER HOLT CALLED FOR DISCUSSION.

Commissioner Holt said she wanted to see the program moving.

CHAIR HINSON CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 3-1 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE. COMMISSIONER HOLT OPPOSED.

Mr. Glazer gave a quick update of the status of the different specialists coming to the hospital and said they had recently finished a complete renovation for physician office space and there was a new entrance and approximately 1200 square feet of new office space. He added that CRMC was bringing over different specialists on a temporary basis to begin to provide specialist

services in the County.

Commissioner Holt asked if there were plans to open any beds and about the match money coming back to Gadsden County.

Mr. Glazer said they (the Hospital) was aware of the issue, but the short answer was no.

Commissioner Holt asked about the match money coming in and Mr. Glazer said it was coming through and reminded the Commissioners it was never a possibility of it coming back “here”, but it was being used to underwrite services being provided at the Quincy facility, but the money could not legally come to Gadsden County.

Commissioner Taylor said since there were specialists coming over, they needed to have a conversation with GHI or whomever to open the four beds and directed Mr. Glazer to arrange a meeting as soon as possible and have it placed on the agenda.

9. Approval to Apply for Matching Grant from Florida Department of Health for Cardiac Monitors

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and stated this was to ask approval to apply for a match grant from Florida Department of Health for cardiac monitors.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN, THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE ITEM.

County Administrator

10. Update on Board Requests

Mr. Presnell said they closed on the two new fire trucks today that had been obtained with USDA grant funding and there will be a program scheduled in Robertsville in the near future and hoped to see everyone there.

He added that the Veterans’ van was expected this week.

He reminded everyone of the February 18th workshop (road workshop) scheduled for 5:00 P.M.

Mr. Presnell said there had been an inquiry about naming the by-pass and if it were named, the State had to have a Resolution from the Board and asked the Board for direction.

Commissioner Holt said there had previously been a recommendation from the Chamber and other individuals to name the eastern end for Julia Woodward and there was a petition to name the southern end for Willie Ruth Williams.

Commissioner Morgan asked if the entire County had been given a chance for input regarding other citizens to name the by-pass after and wanted to make sure they had input from everyone.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR, THE BOARD VOTED 3-1 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE NAMING EASTERN END OF BY-PASS FOR JULIA WOODWARD AND SOUTHERN END FOR WILLIE RUTH WILLIAMS. COMMISSIONER

MORGAN OPPOSED.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

11. Update on Various Legal Issues

Mr. Glazer said he had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

12. Report and Discussion on Public Issues and Concerns Pertaining to Commission Districts and Gadsden County

Commissioner Taylor, District 5

Commissioner Taylor said she wanted to ask Mr. Presnell the status of the RFP's.

Mr. Presnell said they were all completed; the first one would be for legal services and the RFP's would be staggered.

Arthur Lawson appeared before the Board and said the first RFP for legal would go out within the next two weeks and they would like to have time to receive the bids back in, evaluate it and then get recommendations to the Board and then send RFP's out for auditors, because they wanted to give the auditors a chance to finish the audit. After that, they would send out RFP's for engineering services.

Commissioner Taylor said they had discussed streamlining business development and there has yet to be a workshop scheduled.

Mr. Presnell said over the last year there had been several initiatives, some have passed and some did not regarding the Land Development Code and regarding the Comprehensive Plan, there had been proposed changes, but the Board had refused to entertain them and it required a super majority vote, although they had been successful in making language changes in the Land Development Code. He added they were currently working on Tower Placement in the County. He said they had also been working on the EAR amendments, bringing the data current and hopes to have that before the Board in March. He also added that until such time the majority of this Board agrees on sections of the Plan to improve or the requirement for the super majority vote goes away, they won't make a lot of progress. He also mentioned he was watching a bill that was currently before the Senate that would do away with the "super majority vote" and would keep the Board apprised of that. He also stated they had contacted other counties in the state and there was only one that had adopted the Citizens Bill of Rights and they only adopted it when it pertained to wetlands and had an environmental impact.

She said she made the paper regarding the jail locks, so she talked with the jailer, Major Barkley, and found out the County was paying almost a half Million dollars to have nine doors repaired. She added that the doors had to be retrofitted and also found out there would be electrical issues because the doors would have to match the wiring there. She said Major Barkley added there was recently an inspection and there were fifty two findings, all structural. She also had a conversation with Cook Brothers and was told when the jail was built; it was done so with the intent of building a third pod. She reminded the Board they were the owners of the Jail and

made a motion to look at the jail in the future and to have a presentation to look at the build-out of the Jail. Mr. Presnell said he had met with the Sheriff, Major Barkley and Hayes Woodward last week and talked about adding capacity with a pod and that it was do-able. He also corrected Commissioner Taylor on the jail report and said ten of the items were on the County, but most of the problems, they already had in their budget to handle, ie, hot water, lighting, chain link fence.

Mr. Presnell said he planned to bring this before the Board in near future and they would have the report within the next week. He said he pulled the reports that were done in 2010 and 2011 (one was not done in 2012) and the same issues were on all reports, it has been going on for a while. He said it was not a fair statement that the building was falling down, not safe and antiquated, while there were things that needed to be addressed and they were working on them. He stated the pod was do-able and he had also been assured they were fine on the wiring and there were more doors that were fixed than what she had mentioned.

Commissioner Taylor added it would be a good idea to have information on the costs to build out the pod and a funding source for it.

She also stated that the Jail has a road crew, and said there was more opportunity there than they knew that they needed to tap into as far as the Board being able to explore having the inmates take care of roads in the district where privatization was discussed. She also wanted them to take a look at canteen money and doing things internal with the inmates with it.

Mr. Thomas said there was a period of time when the County did not receive the money, but understands they are receiving the money now.

Commissioner Morgan, District 3

Commissioner Morgan said he would like to respond to couple of things brought up earlier in this meeting. He said he was not aware of any negative impact regarding the Citizens' Bill of Rights because it was primarily set up to insure proper communication and public notice and had received an award from the State for implementing that.

He then said the second thing he wanted to touch base on was the Jail and the first thing they needed to do was make the necessary repairs. He said the Jail was made for approximately 160 inmates and they are currently running 200+ consistently and once a pod is added, there would be an increase in inmates. He added that he thought what needed to be included in jail discussions, when the Board would get serious enough to look at a proper facility to generate additional revenues and he tried several times to get a discussion going with no serious interest shown. He further stated that at the right time, it was a great suggestion by Commissioner Taylor to have the parties come to the table for a serious discussion.

Commissioner Croley, District 2

Commissioner Holt, Vice-Chairman, District 4

Commissioner Holt brought to the attention of the Board the fact that on the 18th of this month, former President Jimmy Carter would be speaking at Bainbridge Junior College and asked if there was any interest in moving the next Board meeting to February 17th in order for those that chose to attend would be able to.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR, THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO MOVE THE NEXT MEETING TO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH AT 6:00 P.M. AND THE WORKSHOP AT 5:00 P.M.

She pointed out that they needed to be careful on the homesteaded properties acquired by the County, that they needed to follow the law, but also be sensitive,

She said she attended a school board meeting today and there were concerns regarding high school students finishing the corrections program training at the Law Enforcement Academy and problems that were arising between the School Board and the cadet program. She said there was currently a bill that would restrict some parts of dual enrollment. She added that there was 100% graduation from the program and students going from poverty to making an income and thought the Board should support the program.

Commissioner Taylor asked what the position of the School Board was.

Commissioner Holt said they wanted TCC representatives to meet with the School Board and said TCC did not want to continue paying for the instructors and Gadsden Vo-Tech was saying they had certified teachers and could offer the classes at the Vo-Tech and the students would only have to go to the Academy for firearms, etc., since firearms were not allowed on campus.

UPON MOTION OF COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR, THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO SEND RESOLUTION TO TCC AND SCHOOL BOARD IN SUPPORT OF PROGRAM AND FOR THE CHAIR TO SIGN.

Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this junction of meeting.

GHI By-laws

She said they had to have people on the Boards, not just this Board, but all boards that were progressive in that area and would like the by-laws to be brought back so they could look at them.

Commissioner Morgan returned at this juncture.

Mr. Glazer offered to email the by-laws to the Commissioners.

Code Enforcement

She received a call from an 86 year old regarding a dilapidated home she owns and could not afford to have it removed from the property and asked Commissioner Holt if it could be torn down by inmates or if the fire department could use it for training.

Mr. Presnell asked her to send him her information.

She asked if the Board could take trip to Escambia County Jail to see what they do to generate money. She added that they have fish ponds on the compound; raise cows, horticulture, had a welding shop, a portable saw mill, culinary arts at the facility and had trailers set up for apartments. She asked that they form a committee to look into them becoming self-sufficient.

Mr. Presnell said the work program they created with the probation department is working very well, they are providing service.

Citizens' Bill of Rights

She said people were saying it is too tough to come in. She said there had to be meetings, they had to put the time in, if not, no-one will come.

Commissioner Hinson, Chairman, District 1

Chair Hinson had nothing to report.

RECEIPT AND FILE

13.

- A. Resolution 2014-003 Recognizing the Dedicated Service of Mrs. Linda Jones**
(Presented at the January 21, 2014 Board Meeting)
- B. Certificate of Appreciation for Dr. Greg Winter, DVM (Winter Animal Hospital-Havana, FL)**
- C. January 10, 2014 Order from Chief Judge Francis (Alternate Canvassing Board Member Appointment)**
- D. January 14, 2014 Letter from Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (Florida CDBG Program DRI Contract No.: 12DB-P5-02-30-01-k 65 (DREF) Modification Number 1**
- E. Clerks of Court Operations Corporation SFY1213 Report**

FEBRUARY MEETING(S):

-February 18, 2014, Regular Meeting @ 6:00 p.m.

MARCH MEETING(S):

-March 4, 2014, Regular Meeting @ 6:00 p.m.

-March 18, 2014, Regular Meeting @ 6:00 p.m.

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners
February 4, 2014 – Regular Public Meeting

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HINSON DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:55 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**ERIC F. HINSON, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk