

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN  
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON OCTOBER 3, 2017 AT 6:00 P.M.,  
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

**Present:** Sherrie Taylor, Chair, District 5  
Eric Hinson, Vice Chair, District 1  
Dr. Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie, District 2  
Gene Morgan, District 3  
Brenda Holt, District 4  
Robert Presnell, County Administrator  
Nicholas Thomas, Clerk of Court  
David Weiss, County Attorney  
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

**INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Taylor called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., asked everyone to stand for the Invocation and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

Sheriff Morris Young asked also for a silent prayer for Las Vegas and the Chair said she would go one more and included Puerto Rico, Texas and Gadsden County and asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence.

**AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Presnell said there were no amendments to the Agenda.

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

Chair Taylor asked for "personal preference" and said as Chair she wanted to respect each colleague in their capacity and said she was simply the facilitator and sometimes in allowing or supporting such, they get off subject. She said she vowed to never to stifle anyone because she came under such scrutiny when she was not the Chair and did not want to pass that on but in allowing ones to have their moment, they tend to get off-subject and tend to discuss things that were not agendaed and it took them into areas they should not be in. She said they only should discuss agendaed items that were published. She added with that being said, going forward she would caution as they moved away from the item at hand and they could make the meetings effective and productive.

Commissioner Morgan asked if it was time to recognize the elected officials that were present this evening. Chair Taylor recognized Dale Summerford, Tax Collector; Reginald Cunningham, Property Appraiser and Sheriff Morris Young.

*Commissioner Hinson arrived at this juncture of the meeting.*

**AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES**

**1. Long Term Debt Analysis**

Mr. Presnell said Ryan Tucker was present.

**Mr. Ryan Tucker, Purvis, Gray and Associates**, appeared before the Board to give the Board a long term debt analysis.

Commissioner Holt apologized for missing the prior meeting as she was in the hospital. She suggested they workshop the bonds to figure out what to pay off early to go after a plan.

Commissioner Morgan thanked Mr. Tucker for coming to talk with them and agreed to the workshop at the appropriate time. He added he thought the reason he was asked to come was because he mentioned a “pay and pave” type program to get roads taken care of. He questioned where the Counties were ranked and said it was something to keep an eye on as they were fourth from the worst position to be in. He added with the historical debt, they did not want to assume additional debt unless there was an absolute need to do so as that could weaken the financial state.

Commissioner Viegbesie thanked him for coming and thought if there were a way they could refinance the maturity for the 2030 bonds so they could pay off a little earlier and they could save money and do what Commissioner Morgan mentioned and it would help reduce the irate they were going into debt and reduce the interest payment .

Chair Taylor said she saw some good information however some was 2-3 years old; she concurred with the Board with regards to a Workshop; she added that the numbers they would use for the Workshop needed to be more accurate. She said moth Commissioner Holt and Commissioner Morgan had hopes of paving dirt roads but the method of paying for it was one that they were unable to agree on.

Commissioner Holt said she would like to see research on if other counties were paying down their debt, how they were doing it and did not necessarily need to be Counties this size but to bring the data to the workshop.

Commissioner Hinson said he was in awe because he understood there were some inaccurate numbers and they were to get the correct numbers.

Mr. Tucker said the Schedule of Future Maturity did lay out anything that had to be paid on the bonds.

Chair Taylor said it would be good if they could do this prior to a budget meeting.

**CLERK OF COURT**

Mr. Thomas was not present and there was nothing to report.

**CONSENT**

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.**

## 2. Ratification Memo

### ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

#### CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

##### **Fountain May, 835 Attapulgus Hwy, Quincy, FL 32351-Dysfunctional Board**

Mr. Fount May appeared before the Board. He said he came two weeks ago in support of Mr. Presnell. He said he thought he was “beating a dead horse because I think y’all have already made up your mind you want to get rid of him.” He said he thought the County needed stability and Mr. Presnell brought that to the table and while he may not have the degree they were looking for but he had experience. He said that was not why he was really at the meeting; he was present to express his embarrassment as a Citizen of Gadsden County at the dysfunction, bickering, back-biting that went on for 2 hours and 15 minutes where nothing was accomplished. He said he loved the County like they did and wanted to see it move forward. He added if he were an outsider looking in and wanted to relocate a business here or if were a qualified applicant, because obviously they did not think Mr. Presnell was, and had submitted an application and came to a meeting, he would have a tough time making a decision to come to Gadsden County. He said this County needed stability and the Board was not bringing it to the table. He asked if he had permission to ask one of the Commissioners a question and the Chair said questions were to be directed to the Board. Mr. May said he would like to ask “Dr. V” one question. He said he supported him, he came by his office and they talked, he donated to him and supported him. He said they had a conversation right before the meeting two weeks ago and “Dr. V” said he felt Mr. May was threatening him and he same to meeting and stated he felt threatened. Mr. May asked in what way he threatened him. Chair Taylor said that could not be asked. Mr. May said he had one more and then asked if they understood how a democracy worked. Chair Taylor interrupted and Mr. May said the Sheriff was present and they could ask him to escort him out. Chair Taylor said he would be respectful to him and he would be respectful to the Commissioner and to please direct his questions to the Board. Mr. May commended Chair Taylor for being level handed at a very difficult meeting two weeks ago and he wanted to express his embarrassment at the Board.

##### **Dale Summerford, Gadsden County Tax Collector-County Administrator’s Position**

Mr. Dale Summerford appeared before the Board and said he was here to voice his concern regarding the County Administrator’s position. He said as serving as one of the five Constitutional Officers in the County, he knew in his heart it was something he had to do in the best interest of the people he had had the honor of serving for the last 29 years. He said while attending the last meeting for an unrelated reason and listening to the discussion regarding his contract and his position in general, it became apparent in a short period of time, this County government could soon come to standstill and was something the people of this County did not deserve. He added that they all knew that the Board’s recent effort to find new Administrator rendered unsuccessful results and two out of the three finalists withdrew from the process. He said the Board needed to put everything aside, take a step back, and look at what’s occurred and start the process over to find new Administrator. He said this would take time and the first step should be to extend his contract for twelve months, Mr. Presnell had done an excellent job making sure that the citizens that they all represented received the services that they deserved. He further stated it made no sense to extend to him a month to month contract or hire an Interim; that would not provide the stability that was needed for the citizens and the Board’s employees. He said by extending the contract would give the Board time needed to conduct the process to find the best qualified

applicant and would also provide for a smooth transition to a new Administrator and make sure they continued to move this County forward. He said it would also demonstrate that the Board was committed to proving leadership needed to conduct business of the County.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **3. Approval of Vendor Payment Over \$5,000**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said it was for approval for payment to AKCA, Inc. for additional striping on Sawdust Road.

Chair Taylor asked to address the two speakers and explained they had no leverage to discuss non-agendaed items and it was their Policy and Procedures and also their words did not fall on deaf ears.

Commissioner Hinson said he was looking at this item and the only heartburn he had, why did the engineer not pick this up prior to the bid because they pay him almost \$500,000 a year to do this type work. Chair Taylor said it was change orders.

Mr. Presnell said he asked the same question and when the strippers were here, Public Works reported to him that while they were there and had money left over and they decided to do the edge lines and said with the original bid they were worried about exceeding the \$200,000 and tried to keep the list down to ensure the bid was under \$200,000. He said the bid came in lot less.

Commissioner Viegbesie said this was the type of thing he had noticed with bids. He asked the County Administrator if any of the other bids included white lines on the roads.

Commissioner Morgan appreciated Public Works identifying this matter that needed to be addressed and said here they went again "dogging" a vender that was not present to defend themselves because they thought they were after extra money rather than understanding why Public Works said this was a need.

#### **COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE OPTION ONE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND WITH A QUESTION.**

Commissioner Hinson said he just trying to be consistent with the taxpayers' money and there was more money in the General Revenue than they ever had in the history of Gadsden County and wanted to continue to show they were transparent. He said \$10,000 may not be a lot of money but some people only make \$15,000 a year and to him it was not about the money but about principle and being fair and if Public Works was the expert, maybe they did not need the engineers at all and he could make that vote.

Commissioner Morgan asked if he suggested not having an engineering firm and that was a real smart decision.

Commissioner Hinson said that was his point exactly, he could make that vote because he was not going to cheat the citizens.

Commissioner Hinson said to Commissioner Morgan he was the one the gentleman was talking about earlier that was disruptive because he was always nice to every citizen and the only time he yelled and screamed was when they discuss senior citizens and children. He said again that Commissioner Morgan was the one the gentleman spoke of, that he would get irate and frustrated for no reason at all.

Chair Taylor interrupted and Mr. May spoke from the audience and said he was speaking about Commissioner Hinson.

Chair Taylor called for order and said this was getting out of hand, she had never asked anyone to leave and there would be no shouting out of order and she was Chair and if she felt there was a need to have someone removed, she would do so, Chair Taylor advised them to stay away from being critical of any one person, they were not going to do that, to say on point and move this item.

Commissioner Hinson said this was out of character for him and he apologized to everyone on the dais.

Commissioner Holt said this was not unusual and did not know why people thought Government was not controversial, it was a debating area and how they set laws and policies. She wanted to say the roads needed to be striped and it needed to be in the bids because of the safety issue.

**CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. SHE THEN ASKED FOR POINT OF CLARITY.**

Chair Taylor said this particular item as far as safety was never entered into the bid and later came because Road and Bridge saw it as an issue and needed striping and Mr. Presnell said yes. Chair Taylor asked if it were part of procedure where there were occasions where striping was not necessary and when they were and Mr. Presnell explained there were a number of reasons to determine why: reflectivity, etc.

Commissioner Hinson said he knew the County Administrator had heartburn about the \$5000 threshold and small things like this they did not need to entertain and they should go back to the old policy.

**CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**4. Post Approval for Payment to Ring Power Corporation for Emergency Replacement of New 911 Transfer Switch for Generator located at Woodham Building**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said it was for post approval for payment to Ring Power Corporation for the purchase and installation of a new 911 transfer switch for the generator at the W. A. Woodham Building and said that the old 911 transfer switch would no longer automatically perform the generator transfer in an emergency situation. He said it failed prior to the last storm and this was for post approval.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE FOR OPTION ONE AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**5. Approval of Contract with The Planning Collaborative to provide ongoing professional planning consulting services**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said it was for Board approval of a contract with The Planning Collaborative and for authorization for the Chair to sign the contract for planning consulting services for long term and current planning projects including the update and revision of the documents that comprise the County's land development regulations.

**COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE OPTION ONE AND COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND WITH A QUESTION.**

Commissioner Holt asked Mr. Presnell to explain about the company.

Mr. Presnell said the principal in the company was Allara Gutcher, the former Planning Director, and she was very familiar with the County's comp plan. He reminded them they had budgeted \$100,000 but her bid was a total of \$69,000. Commissioner Holt asked if all revisions were included because they never get approval on the first try with the State and he said yes, she would work with them and whatever was necessary, it would get done.

*Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.*

*Commissioner Morgan returned.*

Mr. Weiss said the Department of Economic Opportunity was now heading this up and they were much less strenuous than when they were Department of Community Affairs. He added that the way the contract was drafted was a total payment of \$69,000 split into 12 monthly payments; however if the work under the contract was not completed at that point and time, the Contractor would stay on to complete the work with no additional payment for up to eighteen (18) months. He added after that point, the Board would be able to make the decision if they wanted to cut it off or go to an hourly rate to finish.

Commissioner Holt said if they start the project, it could run over the next election, if they change Commissioners, the project could be kicked out and they would have to start over. He said if they do the contract, they would have to move quickly.

Commissioner Viegbesie said when he first read this item he was excited because of the principal party being Allara Gutcher.

*Commissioner Holt stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.*

He continued and stated she was aware of the County and as Commissioner Holt stated, he was glad to hear that the entity that now approved Comp Plans was not as stringent as the previous department. He added that Comprehensive plans were very viable to economic plans and asked how long it would take to be ready and hoped when it was sent to the State it was not sent back to be revised. He also said he was very excited about the skill set of the firm that was asking to be hired. He said If they could include all of the terms they had concerns with, he felt there would be no problem with moving forward.

Commissioner Hinson said since he spoke for the citizens, last year they had this Planning and Zoning position that was advertised. He said he brought this up 4-5 months ago that someone asked him about the job and what the qualification were.

*Commissioner Holt returned at this juncture of the meeting.*

When he inquired about it, he was told after consolidation it was decided not to fill that position. He asked how many years were they going to go with this, if it was a one-time thing and was told yes.

Commissioner Morgan said there was a motion and second on the floor and wanted to move the question as soon as possible. He did say that he did not see that the term of the agreement was not specified out to match the number of payments. Mr. Weiss said Paragraph 4 covered that and the contract could be modified.

Chair Taylor concurred Allara Gutcher did a yeoman's job as the Planning Director.

**CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**6. Appointment/Reappointment of Gadsden County's Representative on the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said it was for appointment/reappointment of the Gadsden County Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board and to select an alternate as well.

**COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION OR RETENTION OF COMMISSIONER HINSON AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**7. Amendment to the Paving Contract for Peck Betts Road**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said it was for an amendment to the contract for improvements for Peck Betts Road.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER IEGBESIE, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**8. Amendment to the Contract for the Resurfacing and Reconstruction of Brickyard Road Project**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said it was for approval of reducing the amount of the contract with FDOT from \$931,590.00 to \$910,636.00.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, COMMISSIONER HINSON HAD COMMENTS.**

Commissioner Hinson thanked the Staff and Board for making this project happen. He said they anticipated \$1 Million but it was a lot less.

**CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS**

**ITEM.**

Commissioner Taylor asked if money left over went back to the State and Mr. Presnell said on SCRAP, SCOP and CIGP money, it reverted back to FDOT.

**9. Bid Award for Joel Sampson Architect on the Continuing Service Contract**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said it was for approval to enter into a contractual agreement with Joel Sampson Architect as the Architect on the Continuing Service Contract.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, COMMISSIONER HOLT HAD A QUESTION.**

Commissioner Holt asked Mr. Presnell to explain the continuing contract. Mr. Presnell said with some of the grants they were working on, they required upfront architectural and engineering work to submit the grants. He said they had been working with FAMU but sometimes they needed something small and simple and an Architect could help and he was local. Commissioner Holt said she was looking for architectural designs and how they could make the County look better.

**Joel Sampson** appeared before the Board to address concerns and questions the Board had.

Commissioner Holt said she was looking for extra things, different things.

Chair Taylor said they needed to move with this contract tonight, but did see things that needed to be addressed.

Commissioner Morgan said they were approving to move forward to enter a contract and added that he was a local resident and was familiar with the rural character of the County and was very fortunate to have him to lead them in these efforts.

**CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**10. Emergency Management Response to Hurricane Irma**

Mr. Presnell introduced the above item and said this item was to give an update on the response of the Gadsden County Emergency Management (EM) to Hurricane Irma and the future direction of the Emergency Management functions.

Chair Taylor said she asked this to be placed on the Agenda after Hurricane Irma and wanted to have Board discussion on the outcome and what happened.

Commissioner Viegbesie commended Emergency Management Group for handling very difficult situation but what he saw in the options: 1) Direct staff to change or modify any current Emergency Management functions. He said he felt before they could do that, they as the Body along with Emergency Management participants, needed to workshop this for them to see if a revision of current Emergency Management functions. He said for what happened during Hurricane Irma, he thanked them for what they did and they were there clearing the roads and making sure the citizens were safe.



Commissioner Hinson thanked first responders and said people don't realize Public Works were first responders as well. He said he felt they needed to be more pro-active and not just clean ditches and culverts and not have to worry about flooding and needed to be proactive on.

Mr. Presnell said Commissioner Hinson was at the Shelter working, signing people in and added they were currently looking at Public Works about drainage issues with the pipes and will have a "point person" on preventative maintenance.

Commissioner Morgan felt Emergency Management did a great job responding and the rest of the State was affected much worse than we were and appreciated how Emergency Management had a game plan to respond. He said the only thing he would comment on the response, and did not go back to Emergency Management, they needed to do a better job communicating regarding power outages, who to contact, etc. He said they had folks in shelters in large numbers that were not just local people, who were from out of County and out of State.

Commissioner Hinson said he also sent out an email to the Emergency Management Director and would like to get the information back regarding food assistance so he could get it to the people that had concerns. He said a lot of people lost power for days and lost food. He said he felt anytime there was a hurricane they needed to have meetings so they could be briefed as a Board because the constituents were calling them.

**Sheriff Morris Young** appeared before the Board and said this topic had been on the Agenda quite a bit and a lot of Commissioners had questions about the role and function of EM. He invited them to come to the meetings when they met with FEMA. He said he did not run shelters and had no say-so about food, Red Cross was responsible. He told them if they did not like the "toys" they get, signs, tents, etc. and wanted to manage that, they would load it up and bring it to them. He said their constituents were his constituents as well and asked that they stop tossing this around.

Chair Taylor said EM was placed under the Sheriff's Department by the Board and Sheriff Young said just like the jail was and he was elected just as they were. She added that each of them had responsibilities as Constitutional Officers and when they bring questions, it was not to target him or them, because sometimes there were questions. She said he was invited to come earlier on and to bring this to a public meeting was not to bash, demean or take away anything that had happened but to improve.

Sheriff asked before this was agendaed again to let him pull in resources, use EOC to be the workshop to get folks there to make sure they could ask their questions and concerns. He said no-one had come to him with concerns about the shelters. He said he wanted to educate the Board about EM and their functions.

Commissioner Viegbesie said the point he made was the last statement he just made. When they workshop, they bring experts in to educate them regarding what the workshop was about and said confirmation of information was knowledge.

Commissioner Hinson said he thought he was the only one that got certified for EM and heard it all and felt sometimes an informed person could ask questions too. He felt it was great to do what he said and felt great to do it before a meeting; get with FAC let them come and educate the Board on duties and responsibilities. He also said he felt Public Works was first responders because if the

ditches were not kept clean, houses could flood. Sheriff Young said that was a daily function for Public Works. He also said Rick Scott made sure everybody knew the hurricane was coming a month before it came.

Commissioner Holt said she appreciated everything that happened during the hurricane and she received a few phone calls but it was about things other than the hurricane. She said when having workshops, they were not having workshops, people come and present at the podium and that was not a workshop.

*Commissioner Viegbesie stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.*

Sheriff Young said that was why he wanted to do a workshop with a presentation.

*Commissioner Viegbesie returned at this juncture of the meeting.*

Commissioner Holt said people knew the hurricane was there for days and knew to get certain foods in case of loss of power and food would spoil.

Sheriff Young said he went to the grocery stores and the people were prepared this time and bought the right foods. He commended all the managers, they attended the meetings, everyone was informed, prepared and County was prepared.

Commissioner Holt felt a sit-down workshop would work if it were taken seriously.

Commissioner Hinson said the reason he said they needed to bring FAC in was EM could write grants and write \$1 Million things, he went to the class and was in awe finding out what they could get.

Sheriff Young said he was confused about that, what he was speaking of was a recovery grant and said they had to do the right paperwork before the storm.

Commissioner Hinson said at times he was confused on different things because his mind was all over the place. He added when he put something out there, "you can stick it to it". He said at the next meeting he wanted to do a presentation or he could bring information for them to see. He said he spent two days there and if they put EM in Havana, they could get a grant to fix that place up and Sheriff Young said they had, it was already retro-fitted.

Chair Taylor asked to wrap this up and said she attended two of the meetings there during the time of the storm and in observation she saw who was part of team; EMS, Public Works, Health Department, School Board, City Managers and when a Declaration was declared that night, her question was: was there was a sister city somewhere that would help us and was told no. She said when this Board issued a Declaration, the Board was supposed to be involved with all activities from all aspects.

*Commissioner Holt stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.*

Sheriff Young said Mr. Presnell was there and Chair Taylor said he was not her designee, she was the Chair.

Chair Taylor said she found out from Facebook about the curfew and it should not have happened that way. She said the day before Irma someone wanted to go to Chattahoochee and train volunteers. She said hurricane season was not haphazard, they knew the season and preparation should have been made by the body, She added that during hurricane season was not the time to do that. She further stated they needed to know what to do from this day forward.

*Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.*

*Commissioner Holt returned at this juncture of the meeting.*

Chair Taylor said there were issues and concerns that could have been controlled a little better and could have been done better if they had been better prepared.

*Commissioner Morgan returned at this juncture of the meeting.*

Chair Taylor said he closed the shelters, people had no electricity, and shelters could have been used for few days longer because schools were still out. She said she hoped he would listen in a receptive way and take the walls down. Sheriff Young said the walls were not there, they had not visited his office and said they had issues. She said there were areas they could improve on. Chair Taylor asked him to let her finish what she had to say. She concurred with a full service workshop and with FAC coming in because they supported the County and she wanted to see it improved.

Sheriff Young said they had Animal Control, Public Works just said she wanted this for political reasons and she could have it.

Chair Taylor said sometimes people said what was in their hearts when things got heated but they had calmer heads there and she never had to do anything for political reasons, it was about serving the people with quality not quantity and they had to work together to improve.

Sheriff Young said if she had enough votes, to put it on the table.

Chair Taylor said as far as this item, they were going to hold it for the workshop and set tables and chairs around so at the end of the day they would come out with a plan that was workable.

Commissioner Holt said she did not want to end this adversarial and this was not about fighting amongst each other but getting everything done they needed to do. She felt they did a great job and Road and Bridge did a great job. She further said they would be in this County together when it was over and have to sit down in a workshop and go to work. She also said she wanted them to know their job was to set policies.

Commissioner Hinson said he had been asking for this workshop forever and hoped they could do it his way this time, asked they bring FAC first and then meet with the Sheriff and get a clear picture about how things worked and said they would be surprised about the situation and how much money was on the table right now. He said it was all about the people for him.

Commissioner Morgan said he had listened to the discussions and one thing they could learn as a Board and better understand, every public action taken needed to show leadership and provide

reassurance and that came through communication and execution. He further stated in order to communicate effectively; they needed to have conversations versus presentations and were things they needed to discuss privately and very candidly between different constitutional officers, without breaking the Sunshine Law. He said he and the Sheriff had held conversations many times. He said the bottom line was they all wanted the best for the County.

Chair Taylor said she agreed and as a public servant, their responsibility was to be informed and relay information in such a matter so they could make the citizens' quality of life better.

## **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

### **11. Update on Various Board Requests**

Mr. Presnell said the Local Delegation would be here on October 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. and they were working on the Legislative agenda, meeting with the cities on water projects next week. He said there would be money floating around this year in the Legislature for storm related mitigation projects State-wide and he recommended they ask for some of the money and may want to consider some type of permanent special needs shelter and the equipment necessary to have that.

He said he needed to get the Lobbyists' contracts back on the Agenda, was tabled earlier and the contracts have expired.

He informed the Economic Development retreat would be at the Anheuser Busch facility in Midway on Thursday November 2<sup>nd</sup> and the time would be determined..

Commissioner Viegbesie suggested when comes to Emergency Management, it looked like it was a very thick subject with lots of layers, they should schedule on a Saturday and could take as long as necessary because there was a lot to learn and they did not need to be rushed. He then asked with the workshop at the Anheuser Busch, what time frame they were looking at and was told the facility was secured from 4:00-8:00 p.m.

Mr. Presnell told them Truck and Treat was coming up at Wards' Lot on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if they or Talquin Electric was responsible for lights in front of the Tallavana School and Mr. Presnell said Talquin was, the County did not do lights.

Chair Taylor said they did need to review the County Administrator's contract and the last time it was on the agenda they did not have a full Board and a decision needed to be made on where to go and how to do it. She asked for it to go on the next agenda.

Commissioner Hinson said he felt personally he was man of his word, he remembered talking to Mr. Presnell 5 years ago, told him he had his word, had not asked for one favor since he had been here, two years later, he gave him two more years, then informed the public they may not have known, but Mr. Presnell had retired already, after giving him the two years, they said they should give him another year, he raised hand and said, after he had won his first election, he raised his hand and moved to give him one more year, that gave him an additional three years. He said nothing personal, but he made sure he got the two years so he would not lose his retirement. He said the same guy that made his dream come true, never challenged him, never said anything about him or to him that was degrading and now been ostracized and talked about and said for a

constitutional officer to tell him how to vote was farfetched. He said he never went to their office and told them what to do and had been his biggest supporter. He said again, he was retired, officially retired. He said they gave him an opportunity, it was nothing personal but other people had been waiting. He said his decision was to do what Eric Hinson wanted to do.

Chair Taylor said all they were doing was putting this on the agenda.

Commissioner Hinson said they never knew how he thought, everybody thought he was going to get rid of him last time and at the last second he voted for him and brought him back and everybody thought he was going to get rid of the attorney and at the last second he brought him back and it was his decision to do what he wanted to do. He said he did not think they needed to put it on the Agenda, if they wanted to bring it back, make a motion to bring it back.

Chair Taylor said they needed to make an official stand because he needed to know what to do.

Commissioner Hinson said to just do their best and run the race as hard as they could because he (Mr. Presnell) thought he was gone last year. He further said he did not need anyone to call him because whoever called him, he would vote against it.

Chair Taylor said they had to make some strong decisions, they could put it in the Agenda or if Commissioner Hinson wanted to make a motion to bring him back for a year because he always led them. Commissioner Hinson said they could put pressure on someone else.

Chair Taylor said to bring this back on the next agenda.

Commissioner Holt said she was not in favor for bringing this back for another meeting, she was ready to vote at this meeting and wanted to put in a motion tonight. She said no-one could come in and tell her what to do, she judged by performance. She said she was the one that put in the motion to get rid of Howard McKinnon and when Howard needed a reference, he called her. She said her job was to look at the need and fill the need and was not in favor of putting it on the next agenda.

Commissioner Morgan said this needed to be on the Agenda because if public wanted to come and discuss they should have the opportunity. He said he heard the discussion around the Board and it was not primarily about a commissioner and how they would vote, it not about Mr. Presnell, is was about the County taxpayers and the folks that reported to the County Administrator and what was best for the County Government and for the next County Administrator, who they could attract to come to the seat and have the opportunity to transition with the existing Administrator. He said they were "in the cockpit flying the plane sitting back in first class having a cocktail".

Chair Taylor said as one that sits with setting the Agenda with the Administrator, she concurred that they needed to give the citizens an opportunity to have an input, there were people, that allegiance has been made, people that had opinions, it had been voiced around the Board on the number of phone calls they had received. She continued and said one commissioner so eloquently put it, he made his mind up one second before the vote was cast. She added they had always done things in order and she was for putting it on the Agenda and voting on it that night to give him some direction.

Commissioner Hinson said the vote was 2-2 right now, depending on how Commissioner Viegbesie felt. He said the issue was not to bring him back, the issue was what direction they were going and when putting his name out there it looked like they were getting rid of him and they were not getting rid of him. He said they did not want to make the community think they were trying to divide the County. He said true story, Commissioner Holt, Chair Taylor and Commissioner Lamb were the ones that brought Robert in and they stood strong for him, and he had no dog in the fight for Robert, thought he was a great person, a super guy.

Chair Taylor said he made a good point and she did not want to give the impression there was a divide but they needed to let the public know they were organized, decent and in order. She further stated when they got ready to renew a contract or terminate one, a motion could be made to do it then or have it agendaed.

Commissioner Hinson said they were not terminating anyone's contract.

Mr. Weiss said the word "terminate" not a good term to use.

Chair Taylor said she was asking to agenda this item to move forward.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he started not to say anything until the term "terminate" came up. He said the contract had a renewal procedure and the question was, was the contract to be renewed or not renewed. He said with regards to his position on the process that had been made clear and solid since they started. He said they paid all that money, met twice at Creek Entertainment to establish a succession plan and that was what he was sticking by.

Chair Taylor said they did not have a majority of the board to put this on the Agenda and was going to respect the will of the Board. She said she was now looking at the attorney to come up with a direction for the Board that they needed to do legally to ensure they were not left without a leader and did not want anyone to have heartburn with that direction. She then turned to Mr. Presnell and apologized for using the term "terminate" out of context and Mr. Presnell said that would be fine.

Mr. Weiss said what would happen and what they needed to do, if no action was taken on the contract it was set to expire on October 30<sup>th</sup>. He added that currently there was an RFP that was outstanding where one candidate was left, if they were not going to offer them the position, they need to rebid the position. He said the Board did need to take some type of action, whether it be renewal, selection of new administrator, if not, at the next meeting the Assistant would step into the role until a selection was made.

Commissioner Holt said they could motion at any time for an Interim Manager.

Mr. Weiss said not in accordance with their procurement policy and as their attorney, he would advise them not to do that.

Commissioner Holt said at any time the Board could choose an Interim and if the contract ran out, it ran out. She said the gentleman that withdrew his name; she called and asked why he withdrew his name. He said it was because he was never notified first of all that the County received his application and the second was months went by. She said he was notified about the job still being

open and he made the final selection and what happened with that. He said he was called and did the interview on Skype and when he was notified they wanted to do a second interview, nothing was in the interview that said what he was to do differently and gave him the impression they had already selected someone. She said the other problem they may have with putting the advertisement out, once they applied and met the criterion that was put out and they did not select from that pool, that was usually when lawsuits started flying and it was not something to play with.

Chair Taylor said this was one where she was going to lend to what legal said to them, some type of decision needed to be made.

Commissioner Hinson said if no decision was made, the Assistant would take over or whoever they decided.

Chair Taylor said they were not being fair. She said he had the responsibility of leading this County and providing the services they hired him to provide and over the last few years, anything and everything they have asked for was provided through him. She stated this was just common courtesy being given and all she was asking them to do was to put this on the agenda to put it to rest.

Commissioner Hinson said it was already at rest and she asked how. He said the attorney just told them what they were doing now was still incorrect and Chair Taylor said he told them to agenda it. Commissioner Hinson said he did not say that and Chair Taylor said he told them they needed to do something but did not say they needed to put it on the agenda. Chair Taylor said he told them they needed to agenda it to take some kind of action. Commissioner Hinson said they could make those decisions easily because if push came to shove, they could have a special meeting before October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Taylor asked Mr. Presnell said since this discussion was about him, if he had anything he wanted to say. Mr. Presnell said this process had been going on entirely too long, been distracting to the County, this government, the organization, the employees and the public in general. He said whatever the will of the Board was, was what they had to accept. He said it seemed the will of the Board was to transition and his services were no longer needed and that was fine. He said they needed a plan because the applicants did not work out, did not think they would hire the remaining applicant to transition that way and led them back to the Assistant County Administrator or some other person within the organization or outside. He said the Board needed to say that, paperwork get done and move forward. He said he always had been more than willing to work for this government and work with them and in November would be 19 years in a couple of different capacities and was willing to work in any way to transition to their new Administrator and leadership for the County. He said they had gone through the whole process and now they were talking about letting run out without talking about it to the last day, but if that was the way they wanted to do it, that was fine.

Commissioner Hinson said one thing she could not do, and he was always positive and fair as well, everyone knows she was fighting for this and could slow down now, she fought a good fight, demonstrated she fought a good fight, everyone heard she fought a good fight and now was time to leave and move forward because what she was doing was not good. He said before they did anything crazy, to be positive. He said it was their choice to do what they needed to do and felt

personally if it were him, the first thing he would say was he wanted to thank the Board because they did not have to bring him here. He would have said "when I sued the County for all this time right here, right, and these guys dogged me out to a t, Commissioner Holt and Commissioner Taylor, you guys stood firm with me. and I'm gonna tell you something, that was the best decision you guys ever made and I really appreciate that from the bottom of my heart, and then I would have come on and said some other positive stuff that, that this is some of the reasons I give you the reason why you need to have me as County Administrator, if I want to play that part-these are some of the things I have done and I think I have some more energy and synergy that still, I've got some fire in me still." He said it was not about the people, it was all about the Board because they had no problem with Robert but he believed in the process and doing what was right. He said it was OK to agree to disagree and this was one of the best Boards.

Chair Taylor said she was going to get with the Administrator in the morning, talk with him in depth and will then move forward.

Commissioner Viegbesie said had comments regarding the Administrator. He said Item 9 was about Joel Sampson architect that would be retained as the in-house architect and asked if they also had a contract with another architectural firm, and Mr. Presnell said yes and they were also working on an agreement with FAMU as well. Commissioner Viegbesie asked who the other firm was and Mr. Presnell said it was DPB who was also one of the engineering firms. Commissioner Viegbesie asked if they had had Joel Sampson in-house before and Mr. Presnell said he had been used off and on for years for the smaller stuff and he was the architect of record for the Ag building and had done some things in the past and mainly had been on the applications. Commissioner Viegbesie said for transparency sake, the reason why he asked the question, there were some grants that have been made, especially for the St. Hebron Park, and when they needed an architectural design to present the package for funding, he did not know they had this architectural firm. Mr. Presnell said the park project was an engineering project, not architectural.

## **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

### **12. Update on Various Legal Issues**

Mr. Weiss said he had nothing to report.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS**

### **13. Report and Discussion of Public Issues**

#### **Commissioner Brenda A. Holt, District 4**

Commissioner Holt said she had nothing to report.

#### **Commissioner Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie, District 2**

Commissioner Viegbesie said at the CRPTA meeting, he raised an issue of some impediment of that the Four Star Freightliner was having with visibility from I-10 to the site. He was told that the right-of-way was the State right-of-way and arranged for a meeting between FDOT, CRPTA and GCDC so they could get some understanding on what the law was and permission to take down some trees so the company could get the visibility they needed from I-10. He said there was so much to know and if they did not have someone with the knowledge, no development would go on on the entire I-10 corridor and they would lose business. He asked if Mr. Presnell could call GCDC to give them a



little highlight of the kind of information that they needed to have to be shovel-ready.

*Commissioner Holt stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.*

Chair Taylor said she felt that would be best done as a presentation at the Economic Development retreat.

**Commissioner Eric Hinson, Vice Chair, District 1**

Commissioner Hinson thanked everyone and said this had been a very informative meeting.

*Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.*

Commissioner Hinson said he was not always the smartest man in the room all the time but he respected other people's decisions.

**Commissioner Gene Morgan, District 3**

Commissioner Morgan said he felt they needed to readdress their procurement policy as far as the level of approval and they had seen several examples as to why it was not working and hoped it could be agendaed.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN TO PUT PROCUREMENT POLICY ON THE NEXT AGENDA AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER HINSON, THE BOARD VOTED 3-1 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM. COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE OPPOSED.**

He said new lighting was being put in place at the I-10 exits.

He also mentioned the need to reagenda the County-Wide Communication system as soon as possible and to rectify that problem.

*Commissioner Holt returned at this juncture of the meeting.*

He said they elected at a prior meeting to hire a consultant and that would slow things down another 2-3 years and was a travesty and asked it be placed back on the agenda.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO PLACE THE COUNTY-WIDE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM ON THE NEXT AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION.**

**Commissioner Sherrie D. Taylor, Chair, District 5**

Chair Taylor said Mr. Presnell mentioned High Bridge Road earlier and Mr. Presnell said Old Federal would be first and he would get the dates.

*Commissioner Morgan returned at this juncture of the meeting.*

Commissioner Hinson said he had received a phone call from Midway asking why the EMS truck not there anymore. Mr. Presnell said they were trying to be in and out, there were some issues there and when they start, they get in the truck and leave and then they go back. He said he could have the EMS Director come to a meeting and then said he would discuss it with the Commissioner

later.

Chair Taylor said she wanted to compliment Everbridge and said it was a tele-communication system owned by the County to communicate with everybody and keep them informed.

She then said there were only ten items on the agenda and they should have been out by 8:00 p.m. instead of 9:50 but it had always been historic. She said when there was a short agenda; it seemed to be a longer meeting.

Commissioner Morgan thanked the Constitutional Officers for attending the meeting tonight along with the Volunteer firefighters.

**Receipt and File**

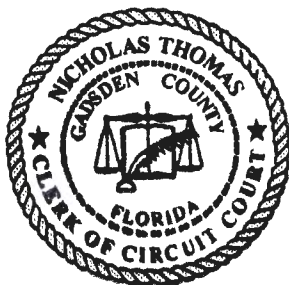
**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

October 17, 2017-Regular Meeting – 6:00 p.m.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR TAYLOR ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 9:47 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA



BRENDA HOLT, Chair  
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk