

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JANUARY 21,
2020 AT 6:00 P.M., THE FOLLOWING
PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

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

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone to the meeting and called it to order at 6:04 p.m.
Commissioner Taylor gave the Invocation and led in Pledge of Allegiance.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH A SECOND BY
COMMISSIONER MORGAN. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

None were had.

CONSENT

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH A SECOND BY
COMMISSIONER HOLT.

Commissioner Morgan asked to pull Item 3 for a question.

THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, MINUS ITEM #3 FOR
DISCUSSION.

1. Ratification Memo
2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. December 3, 2019-Special Meeting
- ~~3. Appointment of District 1 Planning Commission Member Replacement~~
Pulled for Discussion
4. Approval and Signature(s) for Satisfaction of Special Assessment Lien
5. Approval and Signature for Special Assessment Liens with the State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHOP) and the Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

3. Appointment of District 1 Planning Commission Member Replacement

Commissioner Morgan asked if Mr. Diekman still lived in District 1 if he had been contacted and was willing to serve. Commissioner Hinson answered Yes.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE MR. DIEKMAN AS DISTRICT 1 PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER WITH A SECOND BY CHAIRMAN VIEGBESIE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Monica Smart-Ganious, 4620 Hosford Highway, Quincy, FL, appeared before the Board, agreeing with Mr. Palmer. She said about a month ago her daughter was ill and she took her to the emergency room, they could not find anything wrong. She kept going back for a month and had there been a hospital, she felt they would have found out what was wrong with her sooner. Also had a nephew that was 27 years old and, in the end had to have a pacemaker. Had there been a hospital, they may could have found the problems sooner. She asked them to please re-open a hospital here.

Sam Palmer, 1225 Berry Street, Quincy, FL, appeared before the Board as President of NAACP. The NAACP had a meeting last month and concerns came up regarding the hospital. He stated he knew years ago the hospital failed and felt it was because of management. He was in the military with his rank being Chief Master Sargent. He dealt in management and if there was something to be done, you find a way to do it. In reference to the ½ cent tax, he said when citizens voted for it, he heard several excuses why there could not be a hospital, he asked for a copy of the ballot sample that was sent to the citizens. It said it was put forth to open the hospital, among other things. He stated the Emergency Room that the County has was not what they expected, voted for or got. He said everyone he spoke with wanted a hospital and the beds that go with it. He asked the Commission to reconsider and work for the citizens. He stated the Commissioners should have two top priorities, one was safety and the other healthcare. He is on the Hospital Board and said the lease agreement needed to be looked at again and felt it was one-sided. He had not heard one person that thought a 15-20-year agreement was a good idea and felt a short-term contract was much better. He was told by some of the people at a meeting that some of the equipment was not working and stated the County needed to keep things operational and working. He further stated some say a Hospital cannot be here was because of the distance and that was not true. He recommended the Commissioners should work with citizens and their wishes should be honored and respect them, if the citizens want a hospital, to find way to do it. They should look at the tax base and see what could be done.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

6. Public Hearing-Adoption of Ordinance No. 2020-001, an Ordinance of the Board of County Commissioners of Gadsden County, Florida, adopting Chapter 58, Article VI of the Gadsden County Code of Ordinances, pertaining to the posting of human trafficking public awareness signs at certain establishments pursuant to Section 787.29, Florida Statutes; providing for a title, applicability, definitions, requirements, and enforcements; providing for repeal, severability,

inclusion in the Gadsden County Code of Ordinances, modifications that may arise from consideration at public hearing, and correction of scrivener's errors; and providing an effective date.

Mr. Hall introduced the above item and said it sought consideration of an ordinance adopting Chapter 58, Article VI of the Gadsden County Code of Ordinances, pertaining to the posting of human trafficking public awareness signs at certain establishments pursuant to section 787.29, Florida Statutes; providing for a title, applicability, definitions, requirements, and enforcement.

Chairman Viegbesie announced this was a public hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor or opposition.

Robin Hassler Thompson, Tallahassee, FL appeared before the Board. She is the Executive Director of Survive and Drive Advocacy Center, which is an anti-trafficking agency in the area that serves six counties including Gadsden County. She said they assist survivors of sex and labor trafficking and work hard to build public awareness. She spoke in favor of the Ordinance and said this was the perfect time to have this provision, being it was Human Trafficking Awareness Month. She stated she trained law enforcement and others to build awareness on human trafficking.

Commissioner Hinson said he saw the word "slavery" and it should be "enslaved".

Chairman Viegbesie asked if there was anyone else that wished to speak in opposition to or in favor of and there was no-one.

Commissioner Morgan asked if Mr. Weiss had a chance to review the Ordinance and Mr. Weiss said Yes.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

GENERAL BUSINESS

None

CLERK OF COURT

7. Updates

Clerk Thomas said he forwarded the information he was going over to the Commissioners. First, dealing with Housing, he wanted to confirm the amount of money on-hand currently of \$2,593,000; of that \$652,593 is in original SHIP Housing Fund and is approximately 2 years of funding in the original SHIP Housing Fund. They said they received \$201,500 of Disaster Award and \$201,500 was not spent. They also received \$1,739,000 of Hurricane Michael Recovery money in Fund 127. Clerk Thomas said those were in 3 different funds but was all SHIP Housing related money to run under the rules of the SHIP Housing. Total on-hand was \$2,593,094.53 and was still to be received in hurricane recovery money \$1,316,000 and that total will be \$3,909,000 available for housing.

Clerk Thomas also wanted to mention the ½ cent indigent tax. He stated when the tax first started in 2009, it collected approximately \$1.2 Million, the last 2-3 years it had increased significantly and in FY 19 the County collected and disbursed \$1,942,428.33. The break-down was as followed:

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Debt service	\$645,835.68
Gadsden County Health Department	\$437,517.06
Gadsden Health Council	\$ 81,120.00
CRMC	\$777,955.59

Commissioner Taylor said it sounded like an increase of almost \$600,000.

Clerk Thomas said since the inception in 2009. In 2019 the previous year's numbers were being worked with and had gone up about \$100,000 each of the last 3 years. As money goes up, the debt services were same amount, meaning the health department and CRMC were both getting more money. All money that came in was disbursed out.

Commissioner Taylor said with regards the to four figures given, were ones that did not change.

Clerk Thomas said there was two numbers that have been constant, the debt service, and the amount that has gone to the Health Council has been constant. As the revenue increased it meant the Health Department and CRMC received more money. He understood from discussion that this needed to be looked at again.

Commissioner Taylor said she thought there was a contractual agreement with CRMC with a set amount.

Clerk Thomas said no, the language, it said that it guaranteed CRMC a minimum of \$490,000 but they could get up to a maximum of up to 75% after debt service. There was less money coming in when capitalization was done. There was a formula set when the money was first distributed; 60% after debt service went to CRMC.

Commissioner Taylor stated that was information the BOCC needed to know with regards to the contractual agreement. When it came to numbers, the Clerk should have highlighted them because she did not realize it was set up that way. She thought there was a set amount. She agreed the percentage needed to be talked about.

Clerk Thomas stated that in the 2013 Agreement it stated there was a guarantee of a certain amount but only up to a maximum of 75%. At the time the contract was done it was bringing in less money and was written to get them the guaranteed amount but since then the money had increased significantly.

Commissioner Holt asked the Clerk if he had a total amount CRMC had received over the term of the contract.

Clerk Thomas said he would get the amount to them.

Commissioner Holt said she averaged the amount at \$500,000 and did one at \$600,000. \$600,000 at 30 years would have been \$18 Million for 30 years; \$500,000 would be \$15 Million for 30 years. She said was looking at it from side of taxpayer, not how it was disbursed. She further stated the County could build an Emergency room for that amount of money. She said she was meeting with a company tomorrow that managed hospitals. She further stated the numbers had to make sense. If the County decided to levy a 1 cent tax, what would make the citizens believe the BOCC would

do what they say when it was not done in 2008 when they said they were going to open the Hospital.

Clerk Thomas said he had not been privy to last conversations but at the last meeting with the Joint Hospital Board, they talked about taking some of the money going to CRMC and using it for a build out of the hospital.

Commissioner Holt stated that was something Mr. Glazer (County Attorney) suggested. It makes sense if they were going to build out but they had not agreed if the County built out, they would run it. They said they would equip it, not run it.

Commissioner Hinson said he had a New Year's Resolution to say as few words as possible in 2020. He wants to postpone Thursday's meeting for couple of months because of the new information to give them time to process it. The legal team should have given the BOCC more information so they would have had a better position and need to make sure they have all information. He stated he was fine with negotiating an Emergency Room. If a Hospital was going to be brought in, he was fine with CRMC, because they give good service at the Hospital, but this was an Emergency Room.

David Weiss said, for the record, he wanted to correct any misconception that his firm had not provided timely, accurate or complete information to the Board. There has been a lot of communication dating back to April 2018 regarding changes back and forth.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

8. Updates

Mr. Hall said February 28-March 4 is NACO conference in Washington and the Board was scheduled to have their meeting on March 3rd and he wanted them to keep that in mind and asked what action did the Board want to take in terms to the scheduled meeting.

Chairman Viegbesie said traditionally, he has gone, along with Commissioner Holt and Commissioner Hinson and thought they had opted to cancel that meeting. Commissioner Holt said she will not be going. Commissioner Hinson stated he would go.

Mr. Weiss said by the next meeting, people will know if they will be at the meeting in question and then the Board would know if the meeting will need to be cancelled.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO CANCEL THE BOCC MEETING ON MARCH 3RD, WITH A SECOND BY CHAIRMAN VIEGBESIE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO CANCEL SAID MEETING.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

9. Updates

Nothing

Commissioner Morgan handed in certified mail regarding a code enforcement issue he passed along to the County Administrator along with his \$100 contribution for United Way.

Commissioner Morgan stepped out 7:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

10. Report and Discussion of Public Issues

Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson said had campaign going on-trying to raise money for all high schools, middle schools and elementary schools in the area. He asked that they make a personal donation to a school of their choice.

He asked if they could make a commitment to one school to raise as much money as possible

Commissioner Hinson thanked the Emergency Management team for getting together yesterday while Governor was in town.

Commissioner Hinson asked if the dental chair was at the Havana Magnet school and Mr. Hall said he would check on it.

Commissioner Gene Morgan, District 3

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt stated she had a 4:00 meeting earlier on Building Inspection and hoped the BOCC could set up a committee like one had with contractors, citizens and the building department. They looked at issues with building inspections and with certification and they served as a liaison between them and the Board.

She said the Emergency Room was never on the Ballot and the County should not be charging what they were not providing. If the Board can fix that and they could keep the designation and still have a hospital she would be in favor of that.

She stated Human Trafficking was a tough item. She stated there were a couple incidents here that were a problem.

Commissioner Sherrie Taylor Vice-Chair, District 5

Commissioner Taylor asked the Administrator and Clerk if there was a plan for the \$2.5 Million in housing.

Mr. Hall said money would not sit around like has in the past. He said with new attorneys, they have expertise to help people with heir property situation and will move dollars.

Commissioner Taylor said she knew there were applications and she knows some had property and that makes those applications difficult to process. Commissioner Taylor said felt they needed to educate the public on heir property as well.

Commissioner Taylor said the BOCC web page was ugly. She stated the thing on the web page looked like some organ on the inside of a body. She thought it was supposed to be a tobacco leaf and it was not easy to maneuver.

Commissioner Taylor further stated the meeting with the Building inspector pleased her with the progress with regards to the relationships.

Mr. Hall said it was still a work in progress but it will get there.

Concerning the CBOR, Commissioner Taylor said it was funny how it keeps getting buried. All she wanted to do was address the housing portion of it and see if the County could get more housing here.

Commissioner Taylor ended with the meeting with CRMC. She stated the County needed to have it, but was it realistic. The problem was the specialists. Patients already have primaries elsewhere and they are going there. The County would have to float the Hospital until the market got turned around. (3-5 years) The County could not afford it.

Commissioner Hinson said what he had been saying the last few years, get all information together. He thanked Mr. Thomas for providing information to them. \$1.9 Million was needed to have a conversation about and may make sense of. He was willing to stick with CRMC but would like to have conversation before having that move.

Commissioner Holt said the Governor said yesterday in the meeting, he talked to individuals at HUD and there should be more money coming for housing. The reason to hurry up on the Grants person was people, and they will need more help in that department.

Commissioner Taylor stepped out at 7:24 p.m.

Concerning the CBOR, Commissioner Holt would like to see commercial also.

She stated the Building Committee did look at history of contractors. She felt as though this could be a key committee and it was important to set up that committee again.

Commissioner Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, Chair, District 2

Chairman Viegbesie said the Governor came but he was unable to make it because he was out of town. He needed to thank the Sheriff and Major Wood for establishing the relationship the County has with the Governor’s Office. The County needed to come up with the uniform priority list of items. The Administrator used to meet regularly with the municipalities and should be immediate to get representative from municipalities on CRTPA. Right now, the County was losing votes on that Board.

He stated the CRTPA was a body that worked with FDOT to make road projects a priority. Right now, getting ideas from citizens for 2045. He asked in order to address road, bike, freight, CRTPA currently was getting ideas and need to complete the survey.

Commissioner Holt said if they could meet a little earlier legislative since the session already started?

Receipt and File

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 23, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.-BOCC/CRMC/GHI Special Meeting

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners
January 21, 2020 Regular Meeting

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:31 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**ANTHONY O. VIEGBESIE, PH. D., Chairman
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk