

**AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR  
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON FRIDAY, MARCH 13,  
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 1**  
                      **Gene Morgan, District 3**  
                      **Sherrie Taylor, District 5**  
                      **Wesley Hall, Interim County Administrator**  
                      **Clayton Knowles, County Attorney**  
                      **Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk**

**1.     Welcome**

Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone to the Emergency Meeting and called the meeting to Order.

**2.     Adoption of Resolution 2020-012**

Mr. Hall introduced the above item and said it was for the adoption of Resolution 2020-012 declaring a State of Emergency for Gadsden County.

**COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MOTION.**

**3.     Discussion on Staffing and Essential Services Preparedness for any COVID-19 Emergency Crisis**

Mr. Hall introduced the above item.

Chair Viegbesie said this was for discussion for preparedness and this was to discuss to get staff in place if needed.

Commissioner Holt said from the news media and some people from the Chattahoochee area, she heard there was already one case in the area. Major Shawn Wood was in the audience and shook his head no.

**Dr. Adriane Cooksey, Gadsden County Health Department**, appeared before the Board and said there were no cases in Gadsden County at this point. Commissioner Holt said the information she was bringing was from that area and was from the hospital, but she was not saying there was a case. Since they were not testing everyone, they had no idea who may be positive. She asked if someone had symptoms, where could they go to get tested.

Dr. Cooksey said all residents were encouraged to go to their provider, if they have been close to someone and present with symptoms and have ruled out other symptoms, they will decide next steps.

Commissioner Holt said there was no way some would know if they have come in contact with some that have had symptoms and if they have come in contact, people here would not know.

Dr. Cooksey said with regards to the testing kits, she wanted to make sure people knew the kits were in labs-LabCorp and LabQuest and there were plenty of kits. If a person was asymptomatic, not expressing fever or shortness of breath, they most likely are doing well, probably have a good chance of going on with their life they doing what they do every day if will infect someone, that is not known.

Commissioner Holt asked if there were a place people could call and Dr. Cooksey said yes, the information was on the County's website and the number was 1-866-779-6121 and they could also call the Gadsden County Health Department at 850-875-7200 \*1.

Chair Viegbesie said the Health Department did not do the testing but collected specimens and Dr. Cooksey said that was correct.

Chair Viegbesie said they were doing the best they could to mitigate, no-one knew where this thing was going. Confusion as to where they were going with this disease was nationwide.

He said also discussed with the Administrator was the staff schedule and working with the school system in case there was a break-out and the need to quarantine and the need to feed them. Have been working and going to make sure have staff in place and location ready in case need to quarantine.

**Audrey Lewis** appeared before the Board. She said she has been talking with the Superintendent and they are ready and willing to assist with facility to quarantine and did know school will be out next week and may be out the next week. She said they want to work hand in hand with the County and was glad to work with them.

Commissioner Hinson spoke on behalf of parents and that should be a last resort. He said there was the space in the hospital and the other buildings in the County that could be used, not sure if the parents would like it; they have Havana Northside; the Neighborhood Health, along with others and did not need to burden the School Board.

**Pastor Charles Morris** appeared before the Board. He asked Dr. Cooksey because the Government imposed hand to mouth epidemic what was the difference between an epidemic and pandemic.

Dr. Cooksey said a pandemic is where you look at the number of cases in the world and see if there is a significant increase. They have not made the declaration in Florida and an epidemic would be an increase over an amount of time She said there had been no declaration in Florida or the United States that has put them at any of those levels.

Pastor Morris said their Church had already stopped hugs and started fist pumping and led the leadership team to develop basic standards and protocols for the Church, including stations for sanitation gels and wipes and felt since there were so many churches in the County, it would be good to start at that level. He added the NBA, NCAA already shut down, the Governor said no crowds over 500, now over 250 and if he kept lowering the standard, would be at zero and he

had concerns. He added it would always will hit the poorer people faster than the richer people. If schools close here, who would feed the homeless kids' breakfast and lunch. He said if there was any escalation at all, nothing may happen but we will be ready in case it does.

Commissioner Hinson said Gretna Elementary School could be an option.

**Jack McLean, Quincy City Manager**, appeared before Board and they just finished their meeting and they were doing what the County was doing. He explained what the City was doing to combat this. He said they have a whole hospital with space, have the Recreation Center. He asked what they would do if people needed food; they have a small amount of cash.

Commissioner Holt said some things have been discussed and wanted to make sure the County's webpage was updated, if not it was false information. She said there were a lot of people in the healthcare industry and they do not have an inventory of those people and they need that. She added If they have to triage, someone has to be there, make sure people were going to the right location.

Commissioner Hinson said this was a serious situation, it has been going on for 3 weeks, 3 months, and was his humble opinion they need to let staff and Major Wood get together and meet tomorrow or Sunday and come back with a plan. He said they need results now; this has been going on for a while. They need to make sure they have a plan of action. He said they have a bunch of geniuses here and can get together, and they need to do it now.

Commissioner Holt said many of these things could be put into place now.

Commissioner Hinson said the City Manager read from script what they had in place and we did not have anything in place.

Mr. Hall said they have an action plan in place, they were working on that now.

Commissioner Hinson said the School Board also has a Crisis Team, Ms. Lewis said they had Crisis Intervention. Commissioner Hinson said to figure out who that person was.

Commissioner Holt said he was correct; she and Manager has talked about it and somethings were automatic. She asked everything be sent to them automatically.

Dr. Cooksey wanted to run over things that was happening:

*Commissioner Holt stepped out at 7:24 p.m.*

- 1) Weekly Conference calls already set up by sector;
- 2) Call with schools;
- 3) Call with Medical Providers;
- 4) Meeting with Transportation on Tuesday morning and the Senior Citizen Centers;
- 5) Anticipate calls with Faith-based organizations and as Mr. McLean noted, the information was changing minute by minute.

She added they have been working well with Major Wood and Chief Maddox.

*Commissioner Holt returned at 7:26 p.m.*

She said their Preparedness Staff had worked with several organizations in the County.

She said she did agree with some of the comments and wanted to ask Mr. Hall if they could have some sort of workshop soon. At some point there will be a case and wanted to make sure they were prepared and on the same page.

Chair Viegbesie said he would make sure the Administrator organizes one no later than Monday. He volunteered Pastor Morris.

Mr. McLean said they put in the crowd limitation and it took place tonight and he asked the County to enforce that tonight. Chair Viegbesie said it ALSO had a limit of 250 people in the crowd of public spaces.

Pastor Morris said there was so much bad information and asked that correct information be put out. He suggested they make information he had generic like that, put out the symptoms of the virus that people knew to look for would be good start. He said CDC has great information and it was their job as leaders to put the information together.

Commissioner Hinson wanted to give credit to the Superintendent for reminding everyone every morning and afternoon about washing their hands.

Commissioner Holt said she would like to hear from Major Woods.

Chair Viegbesie asked to recognize Angela Sapp first.

**Angela Sapp, Quincy City Commissioner**, appeared. She said we took Hurricane Michael lightly and glad to know not taking this lightly and making strides. She said Commissioner Holt mentioned people in rural areas not having internet, cable and that could be a crisis. She added she was glad she came and glad they were having this meeting.

**Major Shawn Wood** appeared. He said Dr. Cooksey has been running a tight ship. He said things will escalate as this thing escalates. He said they were aware of a case in Chattahoochee and it turned out not to be the Corona virus. He said the best thing to do was stay on script and know what they were going to do.

Commissioner Hinson thanked everyone for showing up, said it was one of the best meetings they had had in a long time. He said there was no sense of rush, they just needed to get it done.

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners  
March 13, 2020-Emergency Meeting

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE  
DECLARED THE EMERGENCY MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:47 P.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

---

**ANTHONY VIEGBESIE, Chair  
Board of County Commissioners**

**ATTEST:**

---

**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**