

**AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR  
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON APRIL 24, 2020 AT  
10:00 A.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD,  
VIZ:**

**Present:**       **Dr. Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, Chair, District 2**  
                  **Sherrie Taylor, Vice Chair, District 5**  
                  **Eric Hinson, District 1**  
                  **Gene Morgan, District 3**  
                  **Brenda Holt, District 4**  
                  **Wesley Hall, Interim County Administrator**  
                  **Clayton Knowles, County Attorney**  
                  **Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk**

**INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Viegbesie called the meeting to order at 10:02; asked everyone to bow their heads for a moment of silence and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

**Citizens Requesting to be Heard**

Due to COVID-19 and the efforts of Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners to continue the practice of social distancing, Commissioners want to continue to hear from citizens under the Citizens Requesting to be Heard section of the agenda.

If citizens have any questions, comments or concerns, please email [CitizensToBeHeard@gadscdencountyfl.gov](mailto:CitizensToBeHeard@gadscdencountyfl.gov) and anticipate receiving a response within 48 hours.

The Board of County Commissioners would like to thank everyone for their patience and flexibility during this time.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**1. Resolution Update**

Mr. Knowles stated there has been no new additional Executive Orders from the Governor. He said as was discussed Tuesday night, they can keep the mask mandate as is, revert back to Resolution 20-16 language or make clearer and make it less restrictive.

Chair Viegbesie said he thought where they were now and with no new Executive Orders from the Governor, all they would do was update the Resolution for another seven days and have been concerns of mandatory wearing of face masks, it has been suggested to make it voluntary. He asked the Commission if they wanted to recommend, they make it voluntary instead of mandatory. He also said as of today, there are 62 positive cases in Gadsden County.

Commissioner Morgan said the simplest way to do this was to strongly recommend in Section Q to replace the word “mandate” with the words “strongly recommend”.

**COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO CHANGE WORD IN SECTION Q FROM MANDATE TO STRONGLY RECOMMEND. MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.**

**COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AS PRESENTLY STATED AND COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE THE SECOND WITH A QUESTION.**

She said she did not think the Board should flip-flop; it was obvious the community was looking to them for guidance. She thought there was directions given to the attorney to come back with language so citizens could better understand the intent of the Board. She said she did not know if they needed to have a meeting to give him particular language. She added she did not want to take away the mandatory language but wanted citizens to understand better the importance.

Chair Viegbesie said he thought the request of the Board was to have some talking points that simplified the legal language on the Resolution so they could better convey to the citizens and thought the attorney was still working on that. He added he thought he was going to give them bullet points that they can be given to citizens so they may better understand the intent.

**CHAIR VIEGBESIE STATED THE MOTION WAS TO KEEP THE RESOLUTION THE SAME AND CALLED FOR THE VOTE. VOTE WAS TAKEN BY ROLL CALL.**

<b>COMMISSIONER HINSON</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER TAYLOR</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER HOLT</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER MORGAN</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>CHAIR VIEGBESIE</b>	<b>YES</b>

**MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

Chair Viegbesie wanted to update the Commission on a plan they were working on as a County. He stated they were working with CRMC to provide drive-thru testing to both symptomatic and asymptomatic as well as those that have doctor notices for residents of the County. He stated he had a letter drafted working with Dr. Cooksey from the Health Department and all interested partners and it will go to Secretary Chad Poppell, Secretary of Department of Children and Family, the Governor's Office, Senator Ramon Alexander, and the Assistant Secretary of Drug Abuse and Mental Health, who was the Secretary on the grounds in Gadsden County working with them. He said they were asking them for preliminary 1,500 test kits and a possible increase as they have the need for more and the primary operational period will be between May 1 – May 30 for three days a week for 4 hours a day.

Commissioner Morgan said he was in support and asked if the letter would be on behalf of the Board or from him. He said it would be from the Board. Commissioner Morgan asked if, in the future he was going to send something out on behalf of the entire Board, he would like the opportunity to review and have input before letters go out.

Chair Viegbesie said he understood, but in the state of emergency, what they needed to do...

Commissioner Morgan stated he could send out an email ahead of time and it was agreed.

Commissioner Hinson said he had questions from the community.

Could a base testing process be created to minimize the different groups at testing facilities at one time-like seniors at one time, first responders, essential workers on different days.

Could a command center be created in each community? He added he would love to add Midway to that group.

Chair Viegbesie said they were requesting drive-through or walk-up testing. He said initially they requested one in Chattahoochee and Havana and was told because the other places did not have the equipment to transfer the specimens, such as fax machines, etc. the only place available was the canopy at the hospital. He said also, in answer to his first question, any group that wanted to come in, first responders, County emergency personnel and did not think to specify a certain day for certain groups would be effective.

Commissioner Hinson said he valued what constituents asked and relayed the information back to the Board because he valued what they said. He said if they met as a Board, talked about it as a Board other than one person, they might could come up with better ideas.

He asked if at-risk groups, seniors, people with compromised immune systems, etc., be provided masks and gloves. He knew they purchased masks and was unsure how they would be distributed but they need to take care of the seniors.

Chair Viegbesie said when it came to distribution of masks, Commissioner Taylor had also brought that up. He asked Mr. Hall what plan he had in place with regards to the distribution.

Mr. Hall said 300 masks will go to each district/Commissioner for distribution to the citizens and the rest would be available thru Dr. Cooksey and at the Health Department for distribution.

Chair Viegbesie said 3,000 have been ordered; 300 to each Commissioner and 1,500 would be available at the Department of Health and understand municipalities have ordered their own in addition to the County.

Commissioner Hinson said also stores that were open for business needed to clean their carts after each use. Chair Viegbesie responded that was the CDC recommendation and the County has been wiping down doors, etc. on a regular basis.

Commissioner Taylor said with regards to the Resolution, she thought they were looking at things county-wide as opposed to just the Governmental office. She said whether Walmart, Winn-Dixie etc. was wiping down buggies on a routine basis. She said she knew when going into one of the local grocery stores, they were out of the sanitizer to do the buggies. She said she did not know if the Board had the whether all to place some language in place to various vendors that the items that were being commonly used by the customers are being sanitized in between use. She was told they were being sprayed down and was not sure how effective that was as opposed to the wipes that was in place initially. She wondered if they could put some language in place to strongly encourage vendors to do so.

Mr. Knowles asked if that was something that they did want to add. He said some grocery stores were doing this already.

Commissioner Taylor said commonly used areas, such as doors where soft drinks are housed, etc., should be wiped down often.

Mr. Knowles said he was a little confused as to **WHO** they were asking to do such. There may be a retail store with little foot traffic; there may be confusion or concern among citizens about a specific subset.

Commissioner Taylor said if someone had foot traffic in their door, it did not matter. They needed to have a way to wipe down after someone was there.

Chair Viegbesie said they may have to come back today to re-approve the Ordinance or Resolution.

Commissioner Holt said she thought they could give businesses the opportunity to do this without it being in a Resolution; they could strongly encourage them to get this done. She said she understood, this was private businesses and wanted to help them.

Commissioner Hinson said that concluded his questions.

Chair Viegbesie said he had heard directions he has sought in direction as Chair. During this state of Emergency, the BOCC empowered the Chair with the following powers and one was to take action on behalf of BOCC as long as it relates to the emergency the County was in. He said it was not something he made up or something he was doing because he was Chair, it was pursuant to Chapter 2, Article 2, Division 2, Section 2-42(f) of the Gadsden County Code of Ordinances. He stated they were acting in accordance with the Code they passed.

Commissioner Morgan said he appreciated his efforts he had put forth during this challenging time, but his simple point was, anything sent out on behalf of the Board, there was no reason why it could not come to them prior to it going out.

Commissioner Holt said she had been in his situation three different times and could understand both sides of the issue. She said he could send things out to them early, and then no-one could say they did not know. She said the reason she brought it up about the Health Council the other night, they were doing these things, you're doing those things, the Health Council is doing other things, Dr. Cooksey is doing things; that was why she said they needed to get together. She said Chair Viegbesie was doing what needed to be done.

Chair Viegbesie said everything has been sent out through the Administrator's office.

## **2. County Administrator Position**

Chair Viegbesie said they all know where they are with the current Administrator and his last day is May 4<sup>th</sup>. After that they will no longer have a "quarterback".

Chair Viegbesie announced the HR Manager has advertised the position and the search was on. He said with Commissioner Holt being the longest serving Commissioner and the one that has had the longest relationship with FAC, asked her to work with FAC to find a temporary interim.

Commissioner Holt said she called FAC and they contacted the Administrative Association, which was a subsidiary of FAC and they were negotiating then with Vince Long, the County Manager in Leon County, to come work with Gadsden temporarily. She has not talked with him herself.

Chair Viegbesie said other alternatives they could consider as long they do not step away from criteria needed to be in that position.

He asked if they wanted to explore what they have heard from FAC or wanted to begin to discuss different options on what path to take with regards to getting a temporary Interim.

Commissioner Holt said they all had ideas as to who they thought would make a good interim. Even if they advertise, she thought it would require more money for the salary.

Mr. Knowles said Ms. Butler had an update.

Ms. Butler said she spoke with the FAC representative directly this morning and received an email. She indicated in the email conversation there had been conversation made with Vince Long and no feedback back had been received; they were also reaching out to retired County Managers to see if anyone was interested in assisting on the interim basis. There has not been any feedback received on that either. They did indicate they would call this morning at 11:00 but had yet to hear back from her.

*Commissioner Holt stepped out at 10:56 p.m.*

Chair Viegbesie said they were aggressively exploring. He asked in the meanwhile, did they want to wait until FAC had their meeting today?

Ms. Butler also mentioned FAC has assisted in the past of a County Administrator and she has that booklet and was willing to share that with the Commissioners. She added there was a cost associated with the recruitment process and they would screen and report back to the Commission.

*Commissioner Taylor returned at 10:57 a.m.*

Chair Viegbesie asked the costs and she said it would be \$5,000.

Chair Viegbesie said for them to conclude the conversation on working with FAC.

Commissioner Hinson moved to approve Dr. Henry Grant as the Interim County Administrator.

Chair Viegbesie said before they throw out names, for them to first decide what they wanted to do with working with FAC.

Commissioner Morgan asked Ms. Butler from the previous services from FAC on the same issue, as a result of that process what came to fruition from that. Ms. Butler said they previously provided that service, provided updates, reviewed the applications, the County went through the interview phase of the applicants they recommended and was presented to the Board. Commissioner Morgan asked if that person was hired from the recommendation. Ms. Butler stated no-one was hired through that process. Commissioner Morgan said they paid \$5,000, went through the process and nothing resulted from that. Ms. Butler said that was correct; they went through the process, FAC did everything that was in the guidelines for the recruitment, completed the entire process, they provided the County with the recommended names of applicants to interview and the County did that. It was left up to the Board if they wanted to hire the top applicant and that did not happen. Commissioner Morgan said he saw the benefit of going through FAC and thought they would do a great job, but thought it would take a commitment from the Board if they did go through that process that they would let that play out and make a selection from those candidates, if they could all agree that the candidates fit the bill.

Commissioner Holt asked Ms. Butler the person they got from the Range Rider program, he worked until they got a permanent Administrator. She said they were able to get someone to fill in that gap but at that time they had an Assistant Administrator. They need time to find someone that wants a permanent job. She asked what length of time were they talking about with the Range Rider program. Ms. Butler said she thought the Range Rider program was offered through ICMA and not FAC. Commissioner Holt asked even if they did \$5,000, what were they looking at timewise?

Ms. Butler said according to the timeline sent to her, their recommendation was the position be advertised for 4-6 weeks. The position was currently being advertised for 4 weeks; once the position closes, it indicates the applications would be forwarded to them for review and screening and a recommendation would be sent back and was talking about an additional 4-6 weeks after the position closed. Commissioner Holt said they were talking about a permanent manager. Ms. Butler said yes. Commissioner Holt said she was talking about the Range Rider Program for the Interim, they were talking about two different programs. Ms. Butler said she did not have information on the Range Rider program.

Chair Viegbesie said now that they have found where they are, his personal take was, and may not be popular but felt what they, as a body, needed to consider and sometimes during the times of emergencies they need to do what they need to do. He further stated they had a County Administrator that hired the Interim County Administrator that everyone was regretting that was leaving and the individual was one that had actually been here, knew the Department and worked with staff. He added if they wanted someone to hit the ground running as their temporary Interim Administrator until they completed the search for a permanent Administrator, they should consider Dee Jackson if she had the time to be able to come in and do what she could do with them temporarily until they were able to get a permanent County Administrator. He said personally, they need to look at and did not know what the individual Commissioners thought of that, as long as they took their individual personalities and idiosyncrasies out of it and consider the smooth transition in the government, he thought that would be the path for them to follow.

Commissioner Taylor said she wanted to put things in point of order. She said two very significant issues were out there. The first concern was if they should do the agreement with FAC. She said her position was they have an HR Department that can do the job as far as advertising and they do not have to spend \$5,000. She said her position with regards to going through FAC to find a permanent Administrator was, she was not in support of that, HR could help with finding someone. She said prior to his motion he put on the floor; Commissioner Hinson also put a motion on the floor.

Chair Viegbesie said his was not a motion because the Chair cannot put motions on the floor according to Robert's Rules. Commissioner Taylor said she stood corrected and wanted things in order and not too many things out there; not that she disagreed with what he said.

Chair Viegbesie said the most pressing thing was to get a temporary interim to fill the gap.

Commissioner Morgan felt it might be better to decide on an Interim to fill the gap until they could go through the process of completing the advertising, interviews, selections, etc., and that person would not be one to fill the permanent position.

Commissioner Hinson said he felt Dr. Grant would be an excellent candidate for Interim and explained he worked with Gadsden County for 30+ years, was the brainchild behind the GCDC, was the brainchild behind refurbishing the Livestock Pavilion, even came back after his retirement and helped support that task, he has a strong relationship with the farmers and has a strong relationship with the community.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON STATED HIS NOMINATION WAS DR. HENRY GRANT AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE ASKED FOR A SECOND. COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER TAYLOR AND COMMISSIONER MORGAN HAD QUESTIONS.**

Commissioner Taylor asked if they could add a name to the list and was not in favor if they were Interim that they could not apply to be permanent and she wanted to add another name.

Chair Viegbesie said he was not an attorney but if the attorney thought that was a wrong procedure, then he could say so. He thought in every organization when it came to nominations for election or appointment to a position, there was always the chance for multiple names and each was voted on with a motion and second.

Commissioner Morgan said his point was if there was another name to consider, they could add that to the discussion before they voted on the motion on the floor.

Commissioner Taylor said it would probably knock a few people over but she concurred with the Chair given that they needed to find someone to hit the ground running.

Commissioner Morgan asked who and Commissioner Taylor said she had not put a name out there yet; she was agreeing with what Chair Viegbesie had said.

**COMMISSIONER TAYLOR SAID SHE WAS GOING TO PUT DEE JACKSON'S NAME OUT AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE SAID HE WOULD SECOND THAT.**

Mr. Knowles said the other motion was still on the floor and asked if they could deal with that and then the other.

Chair Viegbesie said for them to call the names and to vote on Dr. Grant and then vote on the other. If Dr. Grant got all the votes needed, then he becomes, if not then will go to the next. He said this was just a process. He added they had the motion and second for Dee Jackson and if they wanted to add another name, they could do that and vote on them. He then said he saw that the attorney looked uncomfortable.

Mr. Knowles said his concern was to take them orderly in voting because they had the motion and second of Commissioner Hinson, take it up or down and if that does not, however it went, then take Commissioner Taylor's recommendation. He said there were two motions and two seconds out there. Chair Viegbesie said they were going through nominations; they had a nomination of Dr. Grant and the nomination was not final.

Commissioner Morgan said he believed Commissioner Hinson had a motion and a second on the floor and he called the question.

Chair Viegbesie said he believed it was a nomination of Dr. Grant and Commissioner Morgan said he did not take it as that.

Chair Viegbesie asked the Deputy Clerk what the nomination was for, for appointment or...

The Deputy Clerk said "He said he nominated Dr. Henry Grant as his motion".

Chair Viegbesie said that was what he heard, that was his nomination. He then said the Deputy Clerk said, based on what her records said and she heard, was "a motion to nominate Dr. Grant as the person what we are looking for and the second came from Commissioner Holt. So that was a nomination and the second to the nomination. That's my understanding Commissioner Morgan".

Commissioner Morgan said Commissioner Hinson was there, for them to ask him.

Chair Viegbesie asked Commissioner Hinson his intent.

Commissioner Hinson said "My intent was to move, make Henry Grant the Interim County Administrator."

Chair Viegbesie said "So it was not a nomination."

Commissioner Morgan stated that was what he heard. Commissioner Hinson stated that was his intent.

Chair Viegbesie told the Deputy Clerk "I think that would be something you need to put down as what Commissioner Hinson's intents were, not what we were..."

Deputy Clerk stated "I've got that as his motion..."



Chair Viegbesie said that was his motion and asked Commissioner Holt what was her second. Commissioner Holt stated that was her second to his motion.

Chair Viegbesie asked what was his motion that she seconded, the nomination or the appointment.

Commissioner Holt asked why they were picking through this, they said this was his motion and she seconded his motion.

Chair Viegbesie said there was a motion and a second to appoint Dr. Grant as the temporary Interim. He said now before he carried the motion, did the conditions that Commissioner Morgan expressed that this person would not apply for this position, is that part of the consideration of this particular motion, or not.

Commissioner Taylor said it did not matter to her who applied, it should be open to anyone that wanted to apply.

Commissioner Taylor asked if anyone had asked Dr. Grant if he was interested in filling the position for the next three – six months or however long it would take. Commissioner Hinson said yes. Commissioner Taylor asked if it was in writing. Commissioner Hinson said he could have a response by the end of the day from him.

Chair Viegbesie asked for a friendly amendment to add contingent upon the acceptance of position and Commissioner Hinson said yes.

**CHAIR VIEGBESIE ASKED FOR A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

<b>COMMISSIONER HINSON</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER TAYLOR</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER HOLT</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER MORGAN</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>CHAIR VIEGBESIE</b>	<b>YES</b>

**MOTION PASSED 4-1 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR OPPOSED DR. GRANT WAS APPROVED AS TEMPORARY INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE DURATION OF THE SEARCH FOR THE PERMANENT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR.**

Mr. Knowles asked if they needed to readdress the retail language. Commissioner Taylor said he could bring back language at one of the next meetings and he said he would work with her next week to develop the language. Chair Viegbesie said that would not be a part of this Resolution and stated the Resolution had to be adopted today by law, every seven days it had to be adopted by County Government and that language will be something they need to consider for the new Resolution.

Commissioner Hinson had a question. Was there a survey that employees could use to evaluate the County Administrator? Chair Viegbesie said to recall during the retreat during the development of the Mission Statement for the County, one of the things they discussed that the County Administrator's performance evaluation and never had a follow-up meeting to develop a

performance evaluation because they serve at the will of the Board. Commissioner Hinson then said he was asking if there was a form for employees to evaluate. Chair Viegbesie said constitutionally, that was not possible. They could give feedback and comments.

Commissioner Taylor said motion to adjourn.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:31 A.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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

**ATTEST:**

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**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**