

AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JUNE 5, 2020 AT 1:00
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

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

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Holt called the meeting to Order at 1:00 p.m.; asked for a moment of silence and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD (3-Minute Limit)

Due to COVID-19 and the efforts of the 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@gadsdencountyfl.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.

Commissioner Taylor arrived at 1:03 p.m.

An email was received from Perry Koussiafes and Dr. Grant read it aloud.

“hello

I believe the curfew is currently 12pm to 5am. It would be helpful for me to end the curfew at 4am. I like early morning walks for exercise and there is no one out at this hour, at least not in my neighborhood.

Thank you for your time.”

Commissioner Taylor said she had heartburn telling people no but she could not support it at this time and felt it opened Pandora’s Box.

Vice Chair Holt said she was in favor of keeping it as it was currently in place.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. COVID-19 Resolution 2020-27 Update

Commissioner Holt asked Mr. Knowles to review the changes that were being made to the Resolution.

Mr. Knowles said there were some changes to reflect some of the changes the Governor put into the Executive Order issued by him. He said all retail and commercial businesses could operate at 50% of their permitted capacity. He said there were specific requirements for restaurants; the bar counters that were previously closed are now allowed to re-open provided there is adequate social and personal distancing. He stated this was for establishments that derived more than 50% of their revenue from sale of alcohol can now re-open at 50% capacity. He said Commissioner Taylor asked last week about re-opening County parks for camping and there were some specifics he would go over shortly. He said the major change they would see in this Resolution was the gathering restriction would be increased from 10 individuals to 50 individuals and was in-line with the Governor's Executive Order 139. He said nightclubs were to still remain closed pursuant to his order. He said the mask mandate and curfew was still proposed to be in place. He said regarding the parks, the proposed limit still kept the camping groups to 10 people; if they were using a tent, they were requiring to keep those groups to 10 people, if using an RV, as long as within a 15 foot radius in the immediate vicinity of the RV, there could be more than 10 as long as they were adequately social distancing with the mask requirements.

Commissioner Hinson said he had heartburn over the gym opening. He asked if they had to adopt this or could it be challenged. Mr. Knowles explained the new Executive Order did not explicitly allow County or municipal government to change what the Governor said by making it more restrictive; however, there was no prohibition against it. He said he did not think they would have a problem because there was no amusement parks, professional sports teams or churches being closed here. He added they could remove gyms and he did not think they would run afoul of the Governor's Executive Order.

Commissioner Holt asked about family gatherings and Mr. Knowles said it had been raised to 50, provided the Commissioners accepted the changes.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE NEW RESOLUTION WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CHANGING THE MASK MANDATE TO "STRONGLY RECOMMEND" AND MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION AS PRESENTED AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND WITH A QUESTION.

Commissioner Hinson said the riot was a huge thing all over the country and asked if 50 people were ok or should it stay at 10. Vice Chair Holt said according to Mr. Knowles and per the Governor, there could be gatherings up to 50 and they had to abide by what the Governor said. Commissioner Hinson asked if they could be stricter on that. Mr. Knowles stated they could be stricter if needed to, this was a proposed recommendation and not a requirement.

VICE CHAIR HOLT CALLED FOR THE ROLL CALL VOTE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON	YES
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR	YES
COMMISSIONER MORGAN	NO
VICE CHAIR HOLT	YES
MOTION PASSED 3-1	

Major Shawn Wood, Gadsden County Emergency Management, appeared remotely for questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Taylor said there were things not clear and she was trying to get a picture to get clarity as far as trying to implement the mask mandate.

Major Wood said he was the one that sent the information, this was the only County mandating the mask. He said there was still a major concern, there have been 4 fatalities in the County and around 300 cases. There were still people that had concerns as to why they had to do it.

Vice Chair Holt said of course there were concerns as to why it had to be done but all they had to do was save one life and they would have done an improvement. She said they did not have to have a true "hotspot" here if they were careful, they were not trying to dictate, simply were trying to save lives and help people.

Commissioner Hinson had a question and said he would bring this up until they caught on to it. He said he brought this up about for years ago and was serious now because there were a lot of students and parents now and he was talking about Broadband. He said they need to have a workshop and this was very serious. The kids need a way to do their work from home and they need to have this conversation soon as this was a state of emergency for the County.

Vice Chair Holt asked them to look at scheduling a workshop with the County, School system and Commissioner Hinson said he would like Mr. Freddie Figgers to be a part of that as well. Vice Chair Holt asked him to work with the Manager on that.

Commissioner Hinson said they also had to get EMS straight in Midway and needed to make sure those citizens were taken care of.

He said they also needed to have a conversation concerning mental health.

Vice Chair Holt asked him to talk with the Administrator on these items. She also said that the County had a Health Council and they should be contacted.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, VICE CHAIR HOLT DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1:27 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk