

**AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JUNE 19, 2020 AT 1:00 P.M., THE
FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

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

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone to the meeting and called it to order at 1:03 p.m.; asked everyone to bow their heads for a moment of silence and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

Amendments and Approval of Agenda

Dr. Grant asked to add Item 7 Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion for State of Florida.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Chair Viegbesie announced Commissioner Morgan was unable to join the meeting today due to unforeseen circumstances.

CONSENT

Dr. Grant said the Consent Agenda was before them.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

1. Cr 268 Adams Street sidewalk LAP Agreement
2. CR 159 Dover/Scotland Road Guardrail LAP Agreement
3. CR 153 Iron Bridge Road LAP Agreement

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.

Chair Viegbesie read the COVID-19 statement aloud.

Perry Koussiafes, Havana, FL (email attached at end of final Minutes) concerning the curfew.

Jackson Sumpton, Honolulu, HI (email attached at end of final Minutes) concerning the Confederate Statue

Jessica Sykes (email at attached at end of final Minutes) concerning the mural

Commissioner Taylor responded to Ms. Sykes, heard her concerns; at the beginning and also was interested in the mural becoming multi-cultural. She explained they had reached out to some of the physicians that would have made it diverse and it was in the Minutes that she was vocal about that; however, the reason it was not brought up that night was some of those physicians that were being considered had not been spoken with by the time of the Commission meeting and timing was an issue at the time. She added that she was not in favor of removing the mural in its entirety but she was in favor of making it more diverse and thought that would be a step to help the community come together, grow together and be together. However, she did not have any confirmation at the time from any of the physicians so she did not speak out at that time.

GENERAL BUSINESS

4. COVID-19 Resolution 2020-29 Update

Dr Grant introduced the above item.

Mr. Knowles explained the changes in the above Resolution, and said there were no changes other than the curfew being changed to 12:00 am to 4:00 am to facilitate walks.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AS IS AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND FOR DISCUSSION.

Commissioner Taylor said she had no problem with the curfew changing to 4:00 a.m.

Commissioner Hinson concurred with Commissioner Taylor on changing the curfew.

Commissioner Holt said currently the curfew was keeping the elements at hand, if people were staying home, they were better off.

Chair Viegbesie said in looking at the trend going on in the Country, Florida alone had 3,200 and Gadsden County had 319, 57 hospitalized and 6 deaths. He did not think this was the time to be relaxing the requirements.

Commissioner Taylor said in listening to him, a few weeks ago he was ready to get rid of the masks altogether. She added there were other extenuating circumstances that has caused the increase in numbers other than someone taking advantage of walking at 4:00 a.m. She added

that this vote looked like it would be a 2-2 and asked that it come back when they had a full body to discuss.

Chair Viegbesie said he was not a “narcissistic, pathological psychopath that does not understand that when you see things change, you need to change the way you think”.

Commissioner Holt said with the elements she was talking about, if people were staying home and that was what they wanted them to do, then they do not change and allow them to get back out there and that was what she was concerned about.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR THE VOTE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON	YES
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR	NO
COMMISSIONER MORGAN	ABSENT
COMMISSIONER HOLT	YES
CHAIR VIEGBESIE	YES

MOTION PASSED 3-1

5. Joint COVID-19 Mitigation Re-Opening and Returning to Work Plan

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and stated it was for approval to administer the Gadsden County, Chattahoochee, Greensboro, Gretna, Havana, Midway and Quincy Joint COVID-19 Mitigation, Re-Opening and Return to Work Plan.

Commissioner Taylor asked if what was in front of them altered what they have done thus far or confirmed it. Dr. Grant said it confirmed what they have done and allowed them to move forward or go back if necessary.

Commissioner Taylor asked if there was anything additional the public needed to know. Dr. Grant said this was a road-map to open up everything and how it should be done. Commissioner Taylor asked if this had to do with the Board room being opened up and he stated it had to do with opening any facility in the County. She asked if the next regular meeting would be open to the public and Dr. Grant stated should be and she asked what would hinder it and he stated with the spikes, he did not know what would come about.

Leslie Steele, the Public Information Officer, pointed out the room capacity in the plan.

Commissioner Taylor asked if this Plan would be made available to the public. Dr. Grant said it could be shared, but after it was approved.

Dr. Grant added not only were the cities’ names in there but they participated thoroughly in developing the document.

Commissioner Holt asked how they would handle the mask wearing when people were not following it. She wanted to make sure they could put “teeth” into the Ordinance in enforcing the mask ordinance.

Mr. Knowles said he was not sure if they received his message this morning, Monroe County implemented an Ordinance requiring mask usage until June, 2021. He stated this was done via an Ordinance so it has more “teeth” in it. What Gadsden County was passing is Resolutions and they have to be updated every week and was costing the County money, Staff time, etc...

Commissioner Holt said she wanted to make sure they had the opportunity to change it later if they wanted to update it.

Mr. Knowles explained they could update the plan, for her specific question regarding mask usage to have “more teeth”, they would need to enact an Ordinance for that purpose.

Chair Viegbesie asked if a Resolution was as strongly binding as an Ordinance and Mr. Knowles replied no.

Commissioner Holt said she did not want people to say that people were being allowed to come into businesses and they were not requiring masks and they should be available if they wanted customers to come in. Mr. Knowles said that might be legally difficult for them to achieve to “force” a business to purchase masks. Commissioner Holt stated they would not have to purchase them, she was saying if the person did not have one, (the rest was inaudible).

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND.

Commissioner Taylor said she would like to see this document put in the form of an Ordinance at some point soon.

Chair Viegbesie said his understanding was the aspect of what she wanted framed into an Ordinance would be the wearing of face covering or everything on the plan. Commissioner Taylor said to carry the motion on the floor and they could digest the plan a little more to see what needed to be taken out and put in form of an Ordinance. She said she had not had a chance to look at the plan yet.

Commissioner Hinson said with the spike rising, he did not want to send the wrong message to the community; he could not support this today.

Chair Viegbesie asked Commissioner Holt if she heard Commissioner Hinson’s comments.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR THE VOTE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON	NO
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR	YES
COMMISSIONER MORGAN	ABSENT
COMMISSIONER HOLT	YES
CHAIR VIEGBESIE	YES

MOTION PASSED 3-1

Chair Viegbesie said they should strongly consider cutting back on the frequency of the meetings they were having; if there were no drastic changes, he did not think they should meet outside of their regular Tuesday meetings. One of the things he talked about at the Budget workshop was the attorney's fees. He said the budget for the attorney was \$150,000 for his fees for the fiscal year and if they looked at what they have expended thus far, it was close to not having much left to carry them onto October 1st without having to dip into their Revenues. He added they should consider the frequency of their meetings because the attorney not only came to their meetings but was required to attend the advisory Board meetings as well.

Commissioner Holt asked for a spreadsheet to show what was being spent and the balance. Chair Viegbesie said that request was made yesterday for a spreadsheet.

6. 2020 Summer Youth Program

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said this was to suspend this program this summer and add funds allocated for the 2020 program to the funds allocated in the 20/21 fiscal budget.

Commissioner Holt asked if this could be done during a regular meeting.

Commissioner Hinson said he thought they needed to send a strong message to the community that the Board supported them.

Commissioner Hinson said he thought they should keep it at \$100,000 and if he was not mistaken, Mr. Price said he would add the \$150,000 to the other \$50,000 and he strongly recommended the Board follow Staff's recommendation. He further stated that way if they wanted to add another \$10,000-\$20,000, but for years they have been taking funds from the budget and for them to not play games with the kids again. He said for them to do what was right for the kids this time and keep the \$100,000, then go up or bring down \$10,000 as they need to do. He further stated he was hoping Staff could be creative so the kids could still work this year, but he supported the staff.

Chair Viegbesie said Staff also said the Sheriff was asking for additional \$1.6 Million and if they were going with the suggestion that was presented yesterday in the Budget workshop, the Sheriff will be getting an additional \$1.6 Million. That particular budget for Fiscal Year 2020/2021 was a work in progress. He said the item they were discussing now was regarding the \$50,000 for this fiscal year, which was what Staff was saying they should not spend but carry over and guarantee in addition to whatever was appropriated for the next fiscal year for that particular program. He said he felt they should stay within what the item on the Agenda was and they could continue the conversation during the budget workshop

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HINSON HAD A COMMENT.

Commissioner Hinson said he thought the Sheriff makes great judgments sometimes and if he thought there was a need, they needed to at least try to give to the Sheriff what he needed as well.

Chair Viegbesie called for a roll call vote.

COMMISSIONER HINSON YES

Commissioner Taylor asked if he understood the vote and stated he must not. Commissioner Hinson asked what the motion was. Chair Viegbesie stated the motion was for the recommendation of Staff to hold in reserve, guaranteed reserve, the \$50,000 from this year to add to whatever was appropriated next year, which was saying that the Summer Youth Program for this summer, this year should not be carried out.

COMMISSIONER HINSON CHANGED HIS ANSWER TO NO.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR NO
COMMISSIONER MORGAN ABSENT
COMMISSIONER HOLT YES
CHAIR VIEGBESIE YES

MOTION FAILED 2-2

7. Medicaid Expansion for Certain Qualified Adults under the Age of 65 in an Effort to Address the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND.

COMMISSIONER HINSON YES
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR YES
COMMISSIONER MORGAN ABSENT
COMMISSIONER HOLT YES
CHAIR VIEGBESIE YES

MOTION PASSED 4-0

Dr. Grant asked for direction for people that were calling for the Summer Youth Program for this year. Commissioner Holt said to let them know that due to the virus, there was no program this year and they will be looking at it during the budget session.

Commissioner Taylor said the item was approved for 2019/20 fiscal year; if time and opportunity permitted, they have to implement that line item because it was just voted down to move it; it has to be implemented if time permits now.

Chair Viegbesie asked what was the response of the business partners.

Lonyell Butler, HR Director, appeared remotely before the Board and said they made the effort to reach out to partners that have been utilized in the past. The majority of them were not in favor of participating this year, they were concentrating on insuring the safety and sanitation of their locations in order to bring their staff back and some were not even bringing their staff back and opening until the latter part of July and that was what helped Staff come to the recommendation of suspending plans for the Summer Employment until next year.

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Commissioner Holt said that was why she suggested to address this in the Budget workshop and to carry this over to the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Hinson said he wanted to point out there was still free Covid testing every Wednesday from 1-6 p.m. at the Health Department and people could call 850-329-0685 to make an appointment.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 2:06 P.M.

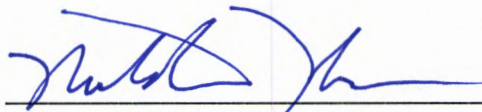
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA





ANTHONY VIEGBESIE, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:



NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk