

AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JUNE 26, 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 – appeared remotely
Sherrie Taylor, District 5
Dr. Henry Grant, Interim County Administrator
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

THERE IS NO VIDEO FOR THIS RECORDING

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Viegbesie called the meeting to Order at 1:01 p.m., asked everyone to bow their heads for 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@gadscountycl.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.

Shelia Shellman sent an email that read “The Bill of Rights expressly limits the power of local governments from such actions where Elected officials grant themselves the power to restrict private personal choices and lawful public behavior in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Please don’t misunderstand me. I recognize the scientific value of personal efforts to control contagion. But under the Constitution, these social-distancing, wear-your-mask, shut-your-business, stay-at-home edicts constitute mere recommendations that should induce rational voluntary compliance, because the government in America is without lawful power to compel compliance.

Suffice it to say citizens have not be heard as you our elected officials continue to disregard our rights with yet more failed CDC numbers and models and wrong prediction after wrong prediction yet continued infringements and policies we will much less accept the acquiescing more of our constitutional liberties away ~ More restrictions on our freedoms”

Karen Stansberry, "Sharing my email to Governor DeSantis as you need this information too. You've built yourselves a little kingdom and your 'power' over the people is tiring. Lift the mandate, this is NOT what the face of America looks like!

(The rest of the email will follow the final Minutes)

Jessica Sykes, "We the citizens have asked for equality from the Commissioners of Gadsden County regarding the mural, We were reassured by Commissioner Taylor that she would make sure this was on the agenda and she was behind us 100% that was NOT the case, Commissioner Brenda Holt reminded us that it would not be fair in her opinion for this to be made equal for at least 135 years and Commissioner Gene Morgan was not much help with knowing the fact he gives the impression he was opposed to the entire idea as well as the process. Dr. V and other commissioners were notified of the agenda we were presenting. The meaning of Equality – the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities. **Thank you and have a great day**"

Commissioner Holt appeared remotely

Ashley Rogers "Good Morning! I am writing to you today to make you aware of some issues that we are facing in the outer areas of the county. The community of Sycamore, between Greensboro and Chattahoochee, are facing an issue with road conditions. Specifically, Rowan road and Aspalaga Road. There are pot holes in these roads that will ruin an alignment in a vehicle as well as possibly damage tires and rims. Having to swerve off the road to avoid holes in the road is unacceptable and dangerous. The holes are filled in and within 3 days they are opened back up again and deeper. The potholes are not the only issues either. The sides of the road are breaking off and the asphalt that was put there to "help" is also gone now. The road has not been paved in over 30 years. Part of Aspalaga road, going down to the river and toward Liberty county was paved, but the remainder of the road is still falling apart. The top layer of the road is gone and now we drive on essentially what is rocks.

As citizens of this county who pay taxes, we have an expectation to be able to drive down the roads that we live on without fear of ruining our car or having to dangerously maneuver into the ditch to avoid holes in the road. The county has installed a round-about while our road continues to deteriorate. I hope that this email will encourage you to take a ride out to the outer areas of the county to see what is happening outside of Quincy, Midway and Havana as these areas are often neglected and ignored due to the lower populations.

Commissioner Morgan, I hope that you will read this and understand the frustration of the citizens in your district. We are fed up with the holes being filled in over and over again. We are ready for a change and hope that you can speak for your voters and make something happen."

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. COVID-19 Resolution 2020-28 Update

1:13 PM Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

Chair Viegbesie said there were some developments that were occurring in the community currently and asked the Attorney for an update.

Mr. Knowles said Secretary Beshears, DBPR, just issued a requirement that bars were no longer allowed to serve alcoholic beverages and that was incorporated at the last minute into this Mandate; it came via tweet but he had not seen an Executive Order from the Governor. Also, the Governor was not going to pre-empt local government at this time from issuing mask mandates and also will not be moving into phase 3 anytime soon. He said they were also required to have their meetings remotely and they could not re-open the meetings to the public until August. He said the dates changed, the masks remained, and the curfew was the same.

Commissioner Holt asked to make a motion for approval and Chair Viegbesie asked her to hold off for a second for comments.

Commissioner Taylor asked the validity of the tweet. She said there were challenges out there today and asked if there had been anything formally written from the Governor's office in the event they were challenged so they could say they were directed from the Governor's Office and they were following protocol.

Mr. Knowles agreed and stated if up to him, he would wait until they had something official, but did not want ABT coming into a business in the County and the citizens not knowing and get into trouble. He said his legal opinion was it would be better for them as a Commission and as a County to have it in and if they get challenged, they would have to take that bullet. He further stated if they had businesses that were getting shut down and getting licenses suspended because they did not know and we did not give them the information. Legally we may be doing them a bit of a dis-service. He added he would prefer to have an Executive Order or some sort of official guidance but it was within their purview if that was what they wanted to do.

Commissioner Taylor asked if they were putting the cart before the horse but wanted to save the public, but should the County move forward with a "tweet".

Mr. Knowles said in his professional opinion, the tweet was not an official order of the State Government and if that was her concern, they should take it out. Commissioner Taylor said she was trying to balance both, people needed to know but did not want to put it in such a manner that they were mandating because they did not have the authority to do that based on a tweet. Mr. Knowles said to balance, the best thing they could do, they could take it out, they could adopt the Resolution and Chair Viegbesie said they could add it and could edit to add "to be advised..."

Commissioner Holt asked what the tweet stated. Mr. Knowles said DBPR was suspending on-premises consumption of alcohol at bars state-wide.

Commissioner Hinson said he was looking at the Twitter page and it was the official Twitter page of Secretary Beshears but they should still take the advice of the attorney.

Chair Viegbesie said he wanted to share on Sunday when he entered the Family Dollar in Havana next to Harvey's, he observed where he was, there was about 8 people including 2 clerks and manager and none had on masks. He questioned and was told by the Manager that the Police Chief told them they did not have to wear masks. He called the Havana Mayor when he got home and was told the City policy was in accordance with the County. He asked why the Chief

was defying the policy of the County. He said he did not know how they wanted to handle that matter as a Commission.

Commissioner Holt said if there was a traffic light on red and people decide to run the light, would law enforcement enforce that? She said they need to call the Sheriff and have him look at this.

Commissioner Morgan asked if he reached out to the Chief to see if that was what was said and Chair Viegbesie said no. Commissioner Morgan said before throwing anyone under the bus, he should reach out to him first.

Commissioner Holt said she agreed with Commissioner Morgan but why wait for another concern to come up, why not arrange a meeting with all the police chiefs, Sheriff and BOCC.

Commissioner Morgan said if they were going to meet, ask how they will be tasked with enforcing the mask mandate.

Dr. Grant said when Staff was requesting to do this before, they did not show up.

Commissioner Holt said if the Sheriff showed, at least someone would show.

Commissioner Taylor said to go through the Sheriff to organize. She felt the Sheriff should designate someone to organize the meeting.

Commissioner Hinson said during a State of Emergency, Major Wood was usually here and they should put this in his lap.

Chair Viegbesie said the Sheriff's Office has gone under reorganization and Cpl. Collins was in charge of logistics. Cpl. Collins and Major Woods should be a part of this conversation.

Commissioner Hinson said the BOCC hired Major Woods as the Emergency Management Director, he should always be included.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO CHANGE THE WORD "MANDATE" TO "STRONGLY RECOMMEND" AND MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AS AMENDED AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR A ROLL CALL VOTE.

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

MOTION PASSED 4-1

2. Approval of the CARES Act Agreement

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CARES ACT AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND WITH A QUESTION.

Commissioner Hinson said he has worked closely with the homeless population and had questions on how the money would be allocated.

Chair Viegbesie said they had a Motion and second and they were going to carry the vote.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

Commissioner Hinson asked about the CARES Act, have they decided how the money will be spent and could they have a workshop on how the funds will be distributed?

Chair Viegbesie asked the Administrator to schedule a workshop regarding this matter as soon as possible.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VEIGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1:49 P.M.

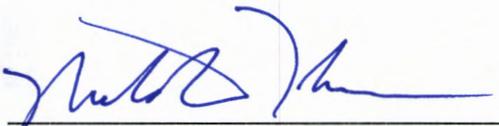
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA





ANTHONY VIEGBESIE, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:



NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk