

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JULY 7, 2020 AT 6:00 P.M., THE
FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HELD, VIZ:**

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

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Viegbesie called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., asked everyone to bow their heads in 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 pull item 8; add Item 16 (for numbering purposes will be Item 15a)-Approval of Lease Agreement with Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida and add Item 17(for numbering purposes will be Item 15b) Letter of Support for the Apalachee Regional Planning Council.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE WITH CHANGES AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

Chair Viegbesie pointed out there were errors in the Agenda as posted on the County Website and “Consent” was missing; it should be before the Ratification Memo and Items 2 – 7 were to be on the Consent Agenda.

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

- 1. Affordable Housing of Veterans**
Jim Brennan, CEO, Friends of Post 84, Inc., appeared before the Board; asked if they could work with the County Administrator to be partners in bringing a Shelter forward and explained the proposed Shelter.

Commissioner Holt said if the Board decided to work with them, she would like input to be gotten from each Commissioner.

Commissioner Taylor asked him to speak with Michael Jackson, Veterans Service Officer, she asked if he was aware of this program and he said yes. Commissioner Taylor said she wanted to speak with him because she has had several Veterans that have contacted her for assistance and she has sent them to see him.

Chair Viegbesie said he heard that he asked to be allowed to schedule a meeting with the Administrator and for the assistance of a grant writer.

CONSENT

Dr. Grant said the Consent Agenda was before them.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER TAYLOR HAD A QUESTION.

Commissioner Taylor asked what was Beard Equipment and Chair Viegbesie said the Agenda had been approved, motion made and asked the possibility of pulling an item for discussion.

Mr. Knowles said since they have a motion and second on the floor, they need to take the vote. She said she just wanted to know what Beard Equipment was for Item 5. Chair Viegbesie stated that was Item 6 and she said she showed it was Item 5. (There was confusion in the numbering of the items on the Commissioners' iPad apparently.)

Dr. Grant explained Beard Equipment was a vendor and this was for repairs made to Public Works' equipment.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR A ROLL CALL VOTE.

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

Item passed 4-1 Hinson opposed

- 2. Ratification Memo**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - **June 2, 2020-Regular Meeting**
 - **June 5, 2020-Emergency Meeting**
- 4. Approval for the CareerSource Region Board**
- 5. CR 159A Potter Woodberry Road Widening and Resurfacing**

6. **Ratification of Public Works Invoice-Beard Equipment**
7. **Ratification of Public Works Invoice-Tallahassee 2 Way**

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

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@gadsdencountyfl.gov and anticipate receiving a response within 48 hours.

Marion Lasley, 5 Dante Court, Quincy submitted an email and Chairman Viegbesie read the email aloud. (Will be attached following the final Minutes.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- ~~8. **Public Hearing Approval of Resolution 2020-035 for FY 2020**~~
Item pulled from Agenda

GENERAL BUSINESS

9. **Juniper Creek Road-Bid Award**
Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE OPTION 1 AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR A ROLL CALL VOTE.

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

MOTION Passed 5-0

10. **Cooks Landing Road SCOP CEI Selection**
Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR A ROLL CALL VOTE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON	YES
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR	YES

COMMISSIONER HOLT YES
COMMISSIONER MORGAN YES
CHAIR VIEGBESIE YES

MOTION PASSED 5-0

11. Convert USDA Lease from a Partial Lease to a Full Lease

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR A ROLL CALL VOTE.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

12. WA Woodham Building Fire Sprinkler Repairs

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

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

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

13. Gadsden County Emergency Services Education Agreement

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HOLT ASKED FOR AN EXPLANATION OF THE ITEM.

Dr. Grant explained it was a recruitment and retention proposal that if approved, would improve the Department's ability to recruit paramedics and would facilitate retention via a contractual obligation in return for education reimbursement.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR THE ROLL CALL VOTE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON YES
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR YES

COMMISSIONER HOLT	YES
COMMISSIONER MORGAN	YES
CHAIR VIEGBESIE	YES

MOTION PASSED 5-0

14. Approval of Revisions to the Personnel Policy, Section 4.20, to Add Language Provided by FEMA to Clarify Payroll during Declared Emergencies and Natural Disaster

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

Commissioner Morgan said he “hated to slow down the train” but did not understand the need to adopt this language. The policy did not cause an issue, the process did.

Dr. Grant explained they had a person joining from Synergy to explain.

Jason Stolfus with Synergy appeared remotely to explain the need for this item to the Commissioners. Because there was no policy in place prior to Hurricane Michael, the extra pay that was paid out to salaried employees was not reimbursed to the County by FEMA. Because of that, the County lost approximately \$100,000 they were not reimbursed for. He said the recommendation was to establish an explanation of how overtime pay for salaried employees would be handled after a disaster so the next time something of this magnitude occurs, FEMA reimbursement will be eligible for those costs. He said the value of extra pay the County paid out that was not reimbursable was close to \$100,000, if policy had been in place prior to the hurricane, the entire amount would have been eligible for reimbursement.

Commissioner Morgan said if the matter had been brought before the Board, they would not be in that position.

Chair Viegbesie said the Advisory Board they had was suggesting this. He asked if the County would be required to have a log of documentation of employees that work, times they work, days they work, all has to be logged and documented.

Mr. Stolfus said that was correct and in addition, FEMA policy says FEMA determines eligibility of overtime, etc., from pre-disaster written labor policy. In addition to tracking hours, FEMA required there was a policy established prior to a disaster that outlined how extra overtime pay would be calculated.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR APPROVAL AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND.

Commissioner Taylor said direction that was given weeks ago was not being followed because this item was voted down as far as salary for employees, this came before them previously, they decided it was procedure issue, not policy. She stated she was not in agreement with salaried employees being paid overtime, they discussed a bonus. They also talked about during an emergency, County employees with regards to the Administrator and those that work under the Administrator, does not have authority during an emergency; it now fell under the direction of Emergency Management. She said they did not need to tie themselves down with this now. She thought, when they approved the extra dollars, it was for Public Works

employees and salaried employees was all bungled into one form and one total amount. She agreed with having a policy or some language for the hourly wage employees so they could be reimbursed but did not agree with salaried employees because of statute, because of the terminology. She felt they need to stick with what they have in the policy already. She said when she came under such a situation that salaried employees are made aware of what the policy was so they could heed to the policy as opposed to going out and then wanting to be compensated. She added that she was not in support of salaried employees being compensated for overtime. That should be a discussion of the Board.

Commissioner Hinson said he echoed what Commissioner Taylor said. Like what he said last time, when this happens, the one in charge is the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners and the person in charge of the State of Emergency is Major Shawn Wood of Emergency Management. He asked why were they holding this conversation. He said he wanted a list of the County Employees that had been paid and they could then hold that conversation and the Clerk needed to be a part of that conversation also.

Commissioner Morgan said with the item before them, he did not disagree with the comments of Commissioner Taylor and Commissioner Hinson. The body that determines the rate of pay was the Board of County Commissioners and he was not in favor of this at this time.

Chair Viegbesie said that was the reason this item came back. The Board wanted a payment plan. He said this was an action item.

Commissioner Holt said they had to have a policy in place, it was hurricane season, if something happened tomorrow, they would not have a chance to vote on it. She said for them to remember that 75% of the CARES dollars are under Emergency Management.

Chair Viegbesie said he heard the concern of the Commissioners; Synergy was the responding agency they had in place and was told they needed the policy in place. He suggested if they could, approve this item contingent on the Board approving a payment plan for full-time employees in case of a disaster.

Commissioner Morgan said they have a current personnel policy in place that was reimbursable by FEMA and there were no salaried employees that go unpaid for hours they work. They were not unpaid from FEMA because of a policy not in place, rather they were not reimbursed because of a procedure that went through without approval from the Board for exempt employees. He stated he was not in favor and would not vote to approve this item.

**COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO NOT APPROVE THIS ITEM AND
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE THE SECOND.**

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

ITEM FAILED TO PASS-VOTE WAS 3-2 TO NOT APPROVE THE ITEM.

15. Approval of Gov-Easy Software CGA Proposal No. 20-3786 Agreement

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE THE SECOND.

Commissioner Taylor had a question. She asked if this was something that they will have to purchase every year or every other year and where would the funds be coming from.

Kembrew Jackson, Information Technology Operations Manager, appeared remotely, and informed the Commissioners this was an annual contract and there was a State requirement they come into compliance with adopting this software.

Commissioner Taylor said she did not read where this was mandated.

Dr. Grant said he had the Statute where it was required, §553.79(b), Fla. Stat.

Commissioner Holt pointed out customers could pull up permits online and businesses coming into the County could pull theirs up from anywhere to view.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR THE ROLL CALL VOTE.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

15a. Approval of Lease Agreement with Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

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

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

MOTION PASSED 4-1 WITH COMMISSIONER TAYLOR OPPOSING.

17. Letter of Support for the Apalachee Regional Planning Council

Dr. Grant introduced the above item

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND.

Commissioner Morgan had a question and said he had not seen this item and asked for clarity.

Dr. Grant explained.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR THE ROLL CALL VOTE.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

CLERK OF COURT

16. Updates

Mr. Thomas was present and stated he had nothing to report.

Commissioner Taylor asked about the payroll amount she stated earlier; was the amount for \$129,000 correct? Clerk Thomas stated yes.

Commissioner Holt asked if, when the Clerk makes a determination on spending by the Board, would he please provide the local Ordinance or Statute as to his determination so they would be aware of why.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

17. Updates

Dr. Grant reminded everyone the second budget workshop would be July 23rd starting at 4:00 p.m. and he should have a copy of notes from the meeting with the Police Chiefs.

Commissioner Taylor asked if the Board would have a chance to meet with the Chiefs or was that the extent of the meeting. Dr. Grant said from what he gathered, that was pretty much it. Commissioner Taylor said that had to be agendaed so Board could come together and look at some of suggestions so they could vet what was being said.

Chair Viegbesie said that would be addressed Friday when they meet to update the Emergency Resolution. He asked to add that to part of the discussion to the revisions to the current Resolution for Friday.

Commissioner Taylor asked to also have someone from EMS and Sheriff's Office online.

Chair Viegbesie said they were fortunate to have the Director of Emergency Management, the Major, in the Office of the Sheriff and he was one that pulled together to have monthly meetings. He asked Dr. Grant to have Major Woods and the EMS Director be a part of this conversation to address these items and concerns of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Taylor asked about Animal Control and said there was room for improvement. Several people have called and have had issues with effectiveness of that Department. She added she was unsure if more training needs to be held in that department or what the answer was.

She asked where they were with interviewing Administrators, she knew the Board had given direction that applications be made available to the Commissioners. Dr. Grant asked if they had received the applications and was told no. Chair Viegbesie stated he was having issues with his computer but had not received the applications.

Commissioner Morgan said he received an email from Mrs. Butler on June 12th that had the applications in a shared folder.

Chair Viegbesie asked Mrs. Butler, she said the applications were scanned and emailed in a shared drive as Commissioner Morgan stated. She also stated staff was trying to work out issues since they were not open to the public.

Commissioner Taylor asked for hard copies.

Summer Employment

Commissioner Taylor said she requested a list from the Administrator of employers who felt using young people for employment was something they did not want to entertain and when received the list, she also received a statement she did not remember hearing that stated there were some that did not want young people working at their agency and then some that were never contacted. She asked for a list of who was contacted and who denied having these young people come.

Public Information Officer

She asked if there was two or one and was told there was now one.

She asked the attorney to look up something for her, a personnel clause with term green in it that relaxes some of rules when comes to hiring people, and asked for an explanation on how that works.

CARES Project

She said she received an email from the Administrator asking for ideas. She liked the idea of distribution of masks and also said they should consider hiring people and liked the idea of doing that County-wide. She said she would like to see them get a massive number of masks, hire people to help distribute masks throughout County and if they could work with Talquin and other agencies to help with some of utility bills on hardship cases.

She asked the funding source for the software for Easy-GOV and Dr. Grant stated it was being reallocated from the Building Department.

Dr. Grant informed the Board that the agreement was signed today by DOM and they could expect an allocation from the CARES Act by the end of the month.

Commissioner Holt said when they are talking about volunteers and others that may be working for the County, they need disclaimers signed because of the virus.

She asked for information on permits and said she had a person contact her about clearing and permits and did not have money for both and it was from Hurricane Michael.

She asked if he had knowledge of any County employees filing complaints with the State of Florida and he said no.

She spoke with a couple of grant writing companies and will get with the Administrator, and added they can work on a percentage basis.

Regarding the budget, she stated they need a Budget Director, documentation was very important. They also need a Building Department Director and a Planning Director. She said Commissioner Hinson has been bringing up Broadband and she agreed with him.

CARES Act Money

If able to provide Broadband, she said they need a meeting ASAP with Synergy and need to get their projects in.

Commissioner Hinson thanked Commissioner Holt and Commissioner Taylor for their comments.

With Broadband, they should have something in place in two weeks and have something from a company. He said his big push was a homeless center.

He then said he wanted to address three concerns in District 1:

- 1) EMS being moved from Havana to Dogtown and was unaware and reached out to former Administrators;
- 2) EMS in Midway, he asked the Administrator if there was an update when service will be available to the citizens; and
- 3) Asked for an update and completion date for the bridge work on Brickyard Road.

Chair Viegbesie said he also heard rumors about EMS moving to Dogtown and asked where that was coming from? He asked if the Administrator could confirm it was a rumor. He added he was unaware of conversations going on with EMS, Fire and Paramedic services.

Dr. Grant said the first he heard about this was when Commissioner Morgan asked him, followed by Commissioner Hinson. He was told by the EMS Director that there had been discussion about Havana needing someplace to go because they could not continue to work in the facility that they were currently located in. They thought the fire station might serve as a temporary location being 5 miles from Havana until they could get better quarters. He added nothing has been planned, it was just conversation. As far as Midway, they were working on

an Interlocal Agreement and as soon as attorneys agree on language, they could proceed. He added that Midway did not want services to start until October 1st.

Commissioner Hinson said the comment did not come from Commissioners, he talked with the Mayor and other Commissioners and they said they did not make that recommendation. It came from the City Manager. He also said the October 1st date was not accurate. City Commissioners told him personally, on different days, that date was far-fetched, they wanted EMS there now.

Dr. Grant said he had not been in negotiations with the City Council and did not know their wishes, he had been talking with the City Manager. Commissioner Hinson said he just received a text from a Commissioner and they want EMS there ASAP.

Commissioner Hinson said they have an Emergency Meeting on Friday and they did not need to wait. They need to have a meeting next week if they sign this.

Commissioner Holt stepped out at 7:51 p.m.

Commissioner Taylor said they need to reach out to the City Administrator and get a formal letter. She added she was glad of the explanation of EMS moving to Dogtown.

Commissioner Holt returned at 7:53 p.m.

She added they had a very headstrong EMS services, they move 10 steps ahead without asking and they have to adjust themselves to what they are doing. She added she was unsure how he could reel that in or if he could reel that in, but felt they needed dialogue with EMS Services to make sure any directions, visions, ideas are brought to the Board before putting it in the community IF that was how the information got out to the community.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

18. Updates

Mr. Knowles said to answer Commissioner Taylor's question from Friday, if they do need to scale back their re-opening plan, they could, there was no preemption of the statute other than they could not go above what the Governor has said.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

19. Report and Discussion of Public Issues

Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Gene Morgan, District 3

Commissioner Morgan had no comments.

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4

Commissioner Sherrie Taylor Vice-Chair, District 5

Commissioner Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, Chair, District 2

Chair Viegbesie asked that everyone make sure they returned their census forms so the County would have access to more monies, funds in the Revenue Sharing to enable them to provide some of the services.

Receipt and File

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:00 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

Nicholas Thomas, Clerk