

AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND
FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JULY 31,
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
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

At 1:04 p.m. Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone to the Emergency Meeting and called it to order. He asked everyone to bow their heads for a moment of silence and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

CONSENT

Dr. Grant asked to pull Item 3.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH ITEM 3 PULLED, WITH A SECOND FROM CHAIR VIEGBESIE.

Commissioner Hinson asked why Item 3 was being pulled.

Dr. Grant said there was change in the language from THE FDOT that did not get put into the documents.

THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

1. Midway Station Location

2. Approval of the Return to Work, Employee Safety, and Social Distancing Policy 20-01

3. Approval of the Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy and Plan

Item Pulled

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 aloud the COVID-19 statement.

Commissioner Taylor asked the Administrator, with regards of employees returning to work and their safety, was he indicating that he was looking to open the County back up or if Item 2 was for policy and procedure.

Dr. Grant said it was for employees that had tested positive and them returning to work.

Commissioner Hinson asked for clarification of Item 1.

Chair Viegbesie said the consent agenda had already been approved and asked the attorney if the Board could go back to an item that had already been approved.

Mr. Knowles said an explanation could be given.

Dr. Grant said it was an Interlocal Agreement between Midway and Gadsden County EMS for services to be relocated in Midway. He read the Statement of Issue, Background, Analysis, Fiscal Impact and Options of Item 1.

Chair Viegbesie said he had citizens to be heard comments but they were specific to an agenda item and he did not have any citizens to be heard on non-agenda items.

GENERAL BUSINESS

4. Approval of the CARES Act Plan for Agreement Number Y2292 with the State of Florida, Division of Emergency Management

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

Commissioner Morgan had questions regarding business support and development dollars. He said he saw on page 3, \$150,000 was allotted for that and it was the amount that was agreed on. He stated it looked like it was for just one organization, and he understood it would be for three different organizations at \$50,000 each. Commissioner Morgan said it needed to be clarified before the document would have his support.

Commissioner Morgan asked if the other two organizations would be added to this one, and Chair Viegbesie said yes.

Commissioner Morgan asked if funding amounts would be changed and Chair Viegbesie answered, yes.

Commissioner Morgan asked if they were just approving the submission of the plan and the figures meant nothing at this point and Chair Viegbesie said yes.

Commissioner Holt said she was not in favor of any of the three.

Commissioner Taylor said she was inclined to agree. She thought today, the Commissioners would come to a consensus. She wanted an opportunity to look at the numbers again and maybe revamp some of them and be prepared to vote. She wanted a chance to give input on some of the costs she saw.

Chair Viegbesie said the changes being made to the document were not concrete and could be changed as the Board moved forward. He said it was just a plan to work from in order to start getting the money in and the money could still be moved.

Commissioner Holt said this document needed to get approved it so it could be sent to the State of Florida. She said there could be an Emergency Meeting to go back through it but the County needed to get something to the State as soon as possible.

Commissioner Hinson said due to time restraints, he thought the Board needed to have a workshop on Thursday, but he thought it needed to get passed today.

Commissioner Taylor said there were items that needed adjustment. She was not asking for another workshop. She said the consulting firm may have a certain amount in the line and when it was sent to the State for approval, she asked if it made the County binding to what was sent or was it open ended.

Mr. Knowles said Integrity could not hold the County to a particular line but the State may try. He said the County was trying to get the other 75% released and get the plan agreement to the Governor's office as soon as possible. He thought the numbers should be finalized before it was sent because the County could be held to it if it was altered and the numbers did not add up. He suggested to finalize as many of the number's as possible.

Dr. Grant said the two items going somewhere were the letter and the plan that was before the Board. He said the chart that was being questioned was not going anywhere and it could be adjusted at any time and it was how the County planned to program the money.

Mr. Knowles said DEM could potentially ask for the chart as a corollary to the letter and he was not sure if the County would be held to the numbers.

COMMISSIONRR HOLT MADE MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT DOCUMENT WITH A SECOND BY CHAIR VIEGBESIE.

Commissioner Hinson said based on past experience, if the attorney said hold off, the Board needed to listen. He said he did not want to have to pay any money back.

Commissioner Morgan said his suggestion was to have someone from Integrity confirm the questions on the document. He said he thought the plan needed to be approved in order to move forward.

Mr. Knowles said he was not saying the Board could not approve the plan, but he would be remised if he did not explain there could be a chance the County could be held to something even though they did not submit the chart. He said he tried to look 3-5 moves ahead.

Gary Yates, from Integrity, appeared before the Board and said this was 100% consistent on what other Counties were doing and the details in the spreadsheet would never be attached to the plan, it was a working document to as to how to administer the \$7.9 Million. He further stated the Government would not micro-manage every single penny spent. He said, at some point, the Single Audit Act would require an audit of that and someone would look at where the money was spent, but that was further down the road. He said this plan was a general plan requesting the full allocation. He wanted to get the money moving and said Integrity would be working with the County to change and move numbers around trying to stay in the same category. He further stated the chart would never have to be provided to the State.

Commissioner Taylor said to the Commission and the attorney. She said the attorney first advised and then two-stepped. She thought the State would ask for supporting documents showing where the County would spend the \$7.9 Million. She said as Commissioner Holt would say, we are here, why not do the work. She said the numbers were way off. She thought more money needed to be added to broadband. She did not see where County would get any real help and thought there was a lot missing. She said the County needed to forego the regular bid process and start broadband tomorrow. She said a lot of people were waiting to see what kind of help this County was going to receive. She wanted to take time at this meeting to go over the numbers.

Commissioner Hinson said he thought a verbal agreement by the Board was a legal document. He stated the Board needed to talk about things before moving forward or word things differently so the County was not held accountable.

Chair Viegbesie said what he had heard from a couple of Commissioners was the Board could schedule a workshop on the spreadsheet for Tuesday, or any time that could be accommodated and that workshop would have the specifics of the amounts the Board wanted to move around and that would be the document used to operate the expenditures of the money in case of an audit. He said he did not see the item they were approving had to do with specific expenditures.

Commissioner Taylor asked for clarity on the motion and asked if it could say project list was not included in the approval of the plan.

Mr. Knowles said there was a motion and second on the floor. He said to carry the vote and he thought there was enough to specify the County was not sending the spreadsheet in, but he was against going back and changing things.

THE BOARD VOTED 3-2 BY ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON	N
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR	N
COMMISSIONER MORGAN	Y
COMMISSIONER HOLT	Y
CHAIR VIEGBESIE	Y

Chair Viegbesie asked Dr. Grant to look at the Commissioners calendars and schedule a workshop and take in to account this was election time and there were also Canvassing Board responsibilities.

Commissioner Taylor recommended not to have the workshop on Tuesday, but to have it on Wednesday or Thursday, and asked it to be a Workshop/Special Meeting, because time was not a friend and they needed to get a working document.

Commissioner Taylor said the Board had spent many hours on the projects and wondered why they did, if all that was needed was a plan to be approved and the same document was still before them.

Chair Viegbesie said the workshop would be a continuation until the Board was finished with the spreadsheet as to what would go where. He said the plan had been approved and could be sent

in. He understood Gadsden County was one of few Counties that had not submitted a plan. He asked the Administrator to be sure the workshop was a priority because there were time constraints.

Commissioner Holt said she listened to everything and the reason she pushed the vote was because the Board needed to take action if they wanted to make sure they got ahead. She said there were three items she wanted to debate over but the County could not be late turning this in.

Commissioner Taylor left the meeting at 1:50 p.m.

Commissioner Holt continued that the numbers were proposed and could change. She said there was a lot to do before the money was gone.

Dr. Grant said at the outset, he informed the Board the spreadsheet was a compilation of what the Department heads, Sheriff's department, and Constitutional officers submitted as projects and nothing had been decided. He said it was just a list of things submitted to Integrity and it was put in a spreadsheet.

Commissioner Holt said Dr. Grant did tell the Commissioners that.

Chair Viegbesie said if the spreadsheet was not with the plan, this would have been passed already and was the reason for the confusion.

5. Approval of COVID-19 Resolution 2020-041

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

Chair Viegbesie said he had received two emails that were identical and he would not read the same document twice. One document he said, was from Karen Stansberry and the other from Lindy Pennington and he read one of the two aloud for the record.

Chair Viegbesie asked the PIO if there was anyone that wished to speak and none were had.

Commissioner Morgan recommended changing the existing curfew back to Midnight until 5 a.m. and with regards to the mask mandate, he asked to change it to strongly recommend, to get better compliance.

Commissioner Holt asked if law enforcement was present and if there were any changes or comments from them.

Col. Collins appeared remotely. Commissioner Holt asked him if there were any concerns from Law Enforcement Officers within the County. Col. Collins said there were businesses open after the curfew that were not essential businesses and law enforcement wanted to keep the curfew as it stood at 9:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m. He said it helped stop some of the illegal activity in the County. Commissioner Holt asked if he had any comments on any of the changes in the Resolution draft and he said he was working with the attorney, other law enforcement and the Clerk of Court regarding the fines to figure out a way to collect the fines. Col. Collins said at this

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time, law enforcement was asking people to wear a mask and giving them one if they did not have one.

Chair Viegbesie said one of the requests from law enforcement was with regards on how to make the civil citation for violators of the Emergency Mandates. He said they were requesting a standard citation form. Chair Viegbesie said the County should develop that form and it should be added to the Tuesday regular meeting for approval. He stated the citation would be non-criminal.

Commissioner Hinson said he felt the Board needed to look at curfew being at least 10:00 p.m., and he felt 9:00 p.m. was just too early. He also said he was looking at the numbers from Emergency Management and there were 18 deaths in the County. He stated the issue was serious. He further stated he had received phone call regarding the Internet Café's and people were asking if they could remain open if they made people spread out.

Chair Viegbesie asked what the number of deaths were for today, and Attorney Knowles said it was 18, 109 hospitalizations, and Leon County had 14 deaths.

Chair Viegbesie said law enforcement suggested 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m., and Commissioner Morgan was suggesting Midnight until 5:00 a.m. and Commissioner Hinson requested 10:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m.

Col. Collins said he was ok with what the curfew was now. He said the law enforcement community was willing to go with 10:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m. but Midnight was causing a huge problem.

Commissioner Holt said she agreed with what the curfew was now and with how many deaths and hospitalizations, she was not thinking about jogging, she was thinking about people that recently died. She said if people wanted to jog, they would find a way. She was willing for a curfew of 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.

Chair Viegbesie asked Col. Collins to give leeway to people who were out jogging. He further stated Gadsden County was one of the top 10 in the nation for the spread of COVID-19 and that needed to be looked at for the safety of the community.

Commissioner Holt said the Board did not address if people with internet felt they had concerns, they could contact law enforcement and discuss the individual businesses.

Commissioner Hinson said this was a serious issue in the County. He said he had been to a few funerals and most people were complying with the mask mandate but he thought funerals should be talked about because there were so many people and he did not want to see families infecting each other.

Commissioner Morgan said just because someone had the opinion to not mandate a mask, it did not mean they did not care for the citizens. He thought there would be better compliance without a mandate.

Commissioner Holt made a motion to approve the draft with the curfew being changed to 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. with a second from Commissioner Hinson.

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Major Wood appeared remotely before the Board. He stated he did not want to see anything reduced after looking at COVID numbers. He said school would resume soon and he had great concern.

Commissioner Hinson said based on daily operations, he wanted to amend his motion for the second. Chair Viegbesie said they had to wait to see if Commissioner Holt wanted to amend her motion.

Commissioner Holt withdrew her motion.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT AS STATED WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HINSON.

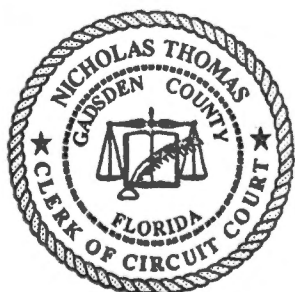
THE BOARD VOTED 3-1 BY ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON	Y
COMMISSIONER TAYLOR	ABSENT
COMMISSIONER MORGAN	N
COMMISSIONER HOLT	Y
CHAIR VIEGBESIE	Y

Commissioner Holt asked the attorney to look at the statements made today about Internet Cafes and legalities of any of the statements made in the meeting, the draft, and the questions the Commissioners had.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

At 2:26 p.m., with no other comments to be made, Chair Viegbesie adjourned the meeting.

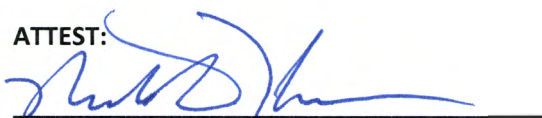


GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA



ANTHONY O. VIEGBESIE, PH.D., Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:



NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk