

**AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND
FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FL. ON AUGUST 7,
2020 AT 10:00 A.M., THE FOLLOWING
PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: Dr. Anthony Viegbesie, Chair, District 2
Brenda Holt, Vice-Chair, District 4
Gene Morgan, District 3 – Appeared remotely
Sherrie Taylor, District 5- Arrived late
Eric Hinson, District 1- Appeared remotely, late
Dr. Henry Grant, Interim County Administrator
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Beth Bruner, Deputy Clerk

Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

At 10:03 a.m. Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone to the meeting, asked all to bow their heads in silent prayer, he then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to The U.S. Flag.

Commissioner Taylor arrived 10:05

Amendments and Approval of Agenda

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

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

MOTION PASSED 4-0

Consent

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

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

MOTION PASSED 4-0

- 1. Approval of 2021 Small County Consolidated Waste Grant Application with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
(Henry G. Grant, Ph.D., Interim County Administrator)**

August 7, 2020 Emergency Meeting

2. **Approval of Signatures for Special Assessment Liens and Rehabilitation Contract-Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP)**
(Henry G. Grant, Ph.D., Interim County Administrator/Sonya D. Burns, Housing Program Coordinator)

3. **Approval and Signature for Special Assessment Liens- State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP) (Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program)**
(Henry G. Grant, Ph.D., Interim County Administrator/Sonya D. Burns, Housing Program Coordinator)

Citizens Requesting to be Heard on Non-Agenda Items (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.

Paul Mazzotta, Chattahoochee

Read into record by Chair Viegbesie

Commissioner Morgan asked if it was a requirement to read the disclaimer regarding the Citizens to be Heard and Attorney Knowles answered yes, to be safe, it should be read.

Chair Viegbesie read the disclaimer into record

General Business

4. **SHIP HHRP Housing Rehabilitation- Bid Recommendation and Award**
(Henry G. Grant, Ph.D., Interim County Administrator/Sonya D. Burns, Housing Program Coordinator)

Dr. Grant introduced the above item.

Commissioner Morgan said he did not see this item online and he needed a breakdown.

Attorney Knowles gave a breakdown of the above item and asked Ms. Steele to pull the item up on the screens.

Chair Viegbesie asked for a minute for the Commissioners to read the above item attachment.

Commissioner Hinson arrived by phone at 10:13 a.m.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE WITH A SECOND BY CHAIR VIEGBESIE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

**5. District 5 Striping Project
(Henry G. Grant, Ph.D., Interim County Administrator/Lisa Robinson, Public Works Director)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE WITH A SECOND BY CHAIR VIEGBESIE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

**6. Approval of COVID-19 Resolution 2020-042
(Henry G. Grant, Ph.D., Interim County Administrator)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item

Attorney Knowles said the citation form was added but did not print well and would be fixed. He stated he worked with Col. Collins to make the citation. He stated a few tweaks were made, and listed them. He said Internet Cafés were illegal and recognized as such in the Resolution and detail was added on how fines would be collected. Attorney Knowles stated the Clerk and Law Enforcement had questions on how fines were collected. He said if a fine was levied in an unincorporated area, those funds would go to the County, via the Clerk. If the violation occurred within a municipality the payment would go to that municipality. He stated he gave all Commissioners bullet points, via email, on the Resolution. He further stated Citation Books would be printed and given to each law enforcement agency in the County.

Chair Viegbesie said the Sheriff represented the citation form and it would be in triplicate. Chair Viegbesie spoke with the Clerk on how the citation should be set up and made enforceable.

Commissioner Morgan said he had reviewed the Resolution and was opposed to the citation and mask mandate. He stated the neighboring counties were having trouble trying to implement such mandates. He thought the BOCC was complicating law enforcements job by having them focus on things other than what was causing most of the issues in the community. He stated he had not seen an issue with the wearing of masks, for the most part, and thought the community was very compliant. He thought there would be better compliance if there was a strong recommendation rather than a mandate, which was causing more harm. He further recommended wearing a mask

without a mandate to do so and stated the curfew proposal of 5:00 a.m., he had no problem with but would like it to start at midnight instead of 9 p.m.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MOVED APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION AS STATED WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR WITH A QUESTION.

Commissioner Taylor said if the Board was closing the Internet Cafés, other business needed direction as well. She gave examples: 24 hr. stores that stayed open was inviting people to be upset. She stated some other businesses questioned why could some stores be open with a curfew in place. Commissioner Taylor asked if businesses selling gas had a legal right to stay open longer. She stated something needed to be imposed to meet the BOCC standards with regards to curfew and limiting access to all others, besides essential items. She further stated she was in favor of the 10 p.m. curfew and said she tried for the 5:00 a.m. curfew. She further asked citizens to call the County office to get her best email address, because she tries to respond to the community when they had reached out to her.

Chair Viegbesie stated the attorney had a case management on the face mask lawsuit at 12:00 p.m. and time was pressing for this meeting.

Chair Viegbesie suggested to accommodate those who got up early and asked the attorney if it would be appropriate for the BOCC to add to the Resolution that law enforcement should have discretion in regards to understanding there were people who exercised or went to and from work that law enforcement should recognize and not ticket or harass those and stated it was just a suggestion.

Attorney Knowles said 9pm-5am was curfew and as far as gasoline was concerned, there was an exemption for those businesses selling gasoline, and they could stay open. (Section F). He further stated the Internet Café was not a decision made by the BOCC, it was made by the Legislature, and they said the Internet Café's had to close. The State Government made the Internet Café's illegal and law enforcement could take the prize winnings pursuant to State Statute. Barber shops were not mentioned in the Resolution and Mr. Knowles stated he would look into it and get back to the Commissioners.

Chair Viegbesie said gatherings was the problem in the parking lots. He stated there was still a 10-person restriction and thought maybe a citation would break the gatherings up.

Commissioner Hinson stated in regards to the fine, he had heartburn about it and said he needed more information. He also said he had a problem with the 9:00 p.m. curfew and suggested it be 10:00 p.m. He said he understood why, just not how the citation would be given and stated he would not approve the Resolution with the fine.

Chair Viegbesie told Commissioner Hinson he could look at how the fine was to be imposed in the Resolution.

Commissioner Holt asked attorney to explain how, in the draft, the fines would be imposed.

Attorney Knowles stated fines were set up as follows; 1st - \$25.00, 2nd - \$50.00, 3rd and more \$100.00, and the amounts were suggested by law enforcement. Attorney Knowles stated the amounts could be changed if the Board wanted that. He stated law

enforcement could issue a citation or give a mask to the person to comply. The citation would be issued with one copy to the individual, one copy to Law Enforcement and one copy to the Clerk. He stated the BOCC needed to deal with how long citizens had to pay the fine and other provisions to remove or reduce the fine.

Chair Viegbesie stated a question the Clerk asked was how long they had to pay.

Commissioner Holt said the Board had discussed how long they had to pay before the amounts were put in the Resolution. She stated the Board had decided, because the officer said warnings would be given, but Col. Collins was on the line and could say what he thought. Commissioner Holt asked Col. Collins how it was going with the enforcement of masks and gatherings.

Col. Collins assured the Board the 9:00 p.m. curfew aided with keeping large gatherings and house party's down. He said before the fine was implemented, law enforcement was not ok with it being a misdemeanor/criminal violation and issuing a citation instead helped that. He suggested the time limit to pay the citation 30-days with an extension allowed.

Commissioner Holt said she thought this process worked and would continue to work as the numbers slowed down. She said 2 weeks were needed to see results. She further stated the BOCC needed a marketing campaign of "Save A Life, Wear A Mask". She further stated law enforcement was not bothering workers, they were stopping the gatherings at store parking lots. She said she was ready to vote.

Commissioner Hinson said he believed in not making an impulse decision. He said he had just received the paperwork and needed time to ponder before making a decision.

COMMISSIONER HOLT AMENDED HER MOTION TO ADD 30-DAYS TO PAY FINE AND OR 30-DAY EXTENSION WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR. THE BOARD VOTED 3-2 BY ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE.

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

MOTION PASSED 3-2

Commissioner Taylor stated she had some things for Mr. Grant and stated Broadband expediting talk, should also be done with the hospital and put it out for bid and have it back on the agenda Monday, August 17. She said during the Integrity Workshop, she recommended the County Administrator's office get \$750,000 to take care of PPE, technology, legal fees, kiosk and everything under his Administration obligation. She asked for a line item budget before Monday, to make sure there was enough. She stated there needed to be a meeting with the Chief and City Managers to talk about the pandemic and Resolutions. She stated she was tired of emails with insulting comments about the towers and she asked for clarity on the \$444,000 to know what it was for. She further stated someone stood in front of the Board and said it was a fence for 3 towers.

To the Chair she said he had a meeting with the School Board, Sheriff Department and other people and asked where his direction was coming from.

Chair Viegbesie said there was not a meeting with them in regards to policy, it was to come up with priority, and he wanted to go to each commissioner to come up with legislative priorities for development for packaging before COVID-19 came. He said it was ground work to come together with one voice to meet with the Mayor, City Managers and the County Administrator and the Chair would come back to each legislative body to see what the legislative agenda would be. He then stated Monday was a COVID meeting.

Commissioner Taylor asked Chair Viegbesie in regards to the School Board, to see how much money they had, find out the percentage of kids going back to school versus those staying home. She also wanted to know what their plans were with the \$2.3 Million and could they share in the broadband cost. She also asked when the final meeting with Integrity was.

Dr. Grant answered the final meeting should be this Tuesday but he was not given a time.

Chair Viegbesie said that final meeting was open to the Manager to schedule. Chair Viegbesie stated anytime Tuesday, Aug 11. would work, he thought it was 2 p.m. He also stated he received 3 packets form Integrity via email with what the Board had proposed and adjusted with a zero balance. Commissioner Taylor said she did not receive that and asked Dr. Grant to make sure she received a copy.

Commissioner Holt stated the County needed a marketing for "Wear A Mask, Save A Life.", and stated it needed to be wide spread. Dr. Grant stated it was coming.

Commissioner Holt said citizens comments were welcome. She would love for them to be positive comments but welcomed all comments. She stated the PPP loans were still out there and businesses could call Prime Meridian Bank 850-907-2301. FAM U Credit Union also could handle the application.

Commissioner Hinson asked Dr. Grant when citizens could apply for the CARES Act funding. He said he thought it was approved and there was another meeting to finalize the plan.

Dr. Grant stated the next meeting with Integrity was Tuesday.

Commissioner Hinson said small business were hurting. He asked the Board to think about expanding the \$1.2 million to a little more. He had a question about the bridge being open between Midway and Quincy. He stated it was open now and asked if it was a secret.

Chair Viegbesie stated it was not a secret and it was responded to by the Director of Public Works.

Commissioner Hinson asked if the director responded to the Chair or the Board.

Dr. Grant said Ms. Robinson responded to Commissioner Hinson.

Commissioner Hinson said she called Tuesday telling him it would open Wednesday. Regarding the next meeting, Commissioner Hinson said Tuesday would be a bad day for him.

Dr. Grant stated the meeting could be scheduled for Wednesday at 2 p.m.

Commissioner Holt told Dr. Grant to look at the RFP and pull up the old data on the hospital. She told him also to speak to Ms. Butler about things she knew from the hospital build-out.

Motion to Adjourn

At 11:03 am Chair Viegbesie called the meeting adjourned.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

ANTHONY O. VIEGBESIE, PH. D, Chairman

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk