

AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN  
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON AUGUST 14, 2020 AT 10:00 A.M.,  
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

**Present:** Dr. Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, Chair, District 2  
Brenda Holt, Vice Chair, District 4 – appeared remotely then appeared in person  
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**

Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. 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.

**AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

**CONSENT**

**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@gadscencountyfl.gov](mailto:CitizensToBeHeard@gadscencountyfl.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.***

**Melody Potter**

“I HAVE LIVED IN Gadsden County my entire life. I love this county and the people. I would be lying if I said the past several months have been easy, because it hasn't. At times it's even been scary. But now I'm more concerned with these mandates. Why are we still under a curfew? Why are we limited to how many people can be in our home? Please stop the mandates. We want our voices to be heard. Thank you.”

**Charlotte Hill**

“My name is Charlotte Hill. I live in district 4 in Gadsden County. I am deeply concerned that you, our board of elected officials, continue to keep a curfew in place for the residents of Gadsden County. This is absolutely absurd and unacceptable. I understood and agreed with the curfew after Hurricane Michael as it was unsafe to travel the roads after dark due to downed trees and

power lines, but that is not our current circumstance. COVID-19 is not more contagious between the hours of 9:00 pm and 5:00 am. This is an absolute infringement on my rights as a citizen. I am also in disagreement with gatherings being kept to 10 people or less. This means that my family is forbidden to have seven or more people as guests in our home. Forbidden? Seriously? The Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners is quickly becoming a laughing stock to the people of Gadsden County...except those people who are ok with the government having complete control over their lives.

I understand that Covid-19 is real. My mother was hospitalized for it and I have a friend who recently passed away from it-though he was in his eighties and had many health issues. We need to be reasonable. I get that, but the curfew and ten person limit is not reasonable.

Please consider that these mandates are ridiculous and overreaching as you hold your emergency meeting on Friday, August 14.

Sincerely”

**Abby Hill**

“Attention county commissioners,

As a citizen of Gadsden County for more than twelve years, I am very concerned about the decisions our board of commissioners have made the past several weeks and even months. Are you a dictatorship or are you elected officials? It is very disturbing that you continue to keep the citizens of Gadsden county under a curfew and tell us how many people we can have in our homes.

We are asking you to stop these mandates. If this board continues to try to control the people of our county in the manner, further action will be taken. We want our voices to be heard.

A Concerned Citizen”

**Olivia Fulmer**

“Myself and many others I love and care for are finding it harder to deal with the restrictions that are where we go, how long we stay, and how many people we can even have in our homes. I understand that it is all for safety but taking away what few rights we have as to our personal beings and welfare is not beneficial to you are anyone in the county and state for that matter. Again, we all appreciate that you are trying to keep us safe, but we al feel as though you are taking it way to far and it’s overwhelming for many of us. Thank you for hearing me out on the subject. Please consider our point of view and our struggles as well. Have a great day!”

**8506613282**

“Grow up democrats. This should not happen nobody wants this I vote no no no. There is already a cure that’s being held back the democrats. Do your job and demand they release it.”

**Todd Hill**

“Allow me to start by thanking you for your service to our community. I try my best to lift you all in prayer and to support your leadership and decisions.

In light of recent events and the pandemic that has affected our county, I understand the complexity of the decisions you are making...But I must state that the appearance of these decisions reflects great insecurities in this board.

An understood principle of leadership is stated this way...The most insecure people at the table must control everything.

I understand the curfew application in times like Hurricane Michael and it’s aftermath and in times of Civil unrest, but this curfew and its enforcement are an overstep of your given authority.

A wise leader stated that authority comes from authority...Please remember that we elected you and your authority comes from us, the voters of Gadsden county.  
Please don't let fear and hyped numbers cause you to continue to make insecure decisions concerning our county.  
I will not create civil unrest for you and will not be an enemy to the leadership of this board, but I will speak up to this fact...  
When a government is allowed to keep taking, they never on their own accord return the taken goods...Please consider your actions and the way they make you appear to people who actually understand leadership.  
Allow people to be free and live in liberty.  
Thank you for your services and for taking time to read my opinions."

**Joshua Osmin**

"To whom it may concern:  
I've been a citizen of Gadsden County for over 20 years. While I understand that the curfew put in place may have had good intentions behind it, I feel that the commissioners have overstepped their bounds. We ask that you reverse this senseless mandate and restore at least some form of normalcy to our county.  
We pray for God to give you wisdom in all things during this time.  
Sincerely"

**Galina Cherubin**

"Good Afternoon,  
My name is Galina Cherubin and I am a citizen of Gadsden County, FL. I would like to ask our commissioners some questions about the restrictions related to Covid-19.  
1. How long is the curfew going to last?  
2. How long will the gatherings be minimized to a fewer people?  
3. How much longer will we be required to wear masks?  
As a citizen of the United States, part of the "We, the People" group, I would like to hear your responses.  
Respectfully"

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**1. Approval of COVID-19 Resolution 2020-043**

Mr. Knowles gave an update of the Resolution and the Eviction Moratorium that was imposed by the State and the curfew was still 9:00 pm – 5:00 am, gathering size restriction was still in place and everything else remained the same.

**COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND.**

<b>COMMISSIONER HINSON</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER TAYLOR</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER MORGAN</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>COMMISSIONER HOLT</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>CHAIR VIEGBESIE</b>	<b>YES</b>

## **MOTION PASSED 4-1 COMMISSIONER MORGAN OPPOSED**

Chair Viegbesie announced the Administrator scheduled the Motorola workshop for Monday at 2:00 before the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

He also suggested since there were no major changes coming from the Governor's office, they temporarily suspend the Friday Emergency meetings, and ratify the Resolution. Commissioner Morgan pointed out the Resolution has to be updated every seven days for the Emergency and they may want to refer that to the Attorney.

Mr. Knowles said when they first drafted the Resolution, there were powers for the Chair or his designee to execute a new Resolution every week, there was heartburn initially because things were influx, things were now a little slower, and they can do that and be well within their legal rights to do it, it was just if the Commission wanted to do it. He said there had been 23 meetings thus far and was costing the County in terms of legal fees, etc. and was something for them to think over.

Commissioner Morgan said he was all for not having meetings if they were not needed.

*Commissioner Holt arrived in person at 10:29 a.m.*

Chair Viegbesie pointed out they approved a spending distribution with Integrity and it included the 75% of CARES Act funding that they have not received yet, they have only received 25% of the money thus far and hopes they can make the Governor's Office understand they are a fiscally stressed County and do not have money to spend upfront to be reimbursed later.

Commissioner Holt said everyone should be suspended until they could see if they receive the other money. She added that even if they did have the 25%, one thing she found out and realized, they were still responsible for the pay-back of that money. All cities should have their invoices and should have already been turned in to the County. Dr. Grant said they would still have to submit a request and plan for the money. She asked if they had spoken with the School Board. Chair Viegbesie said he and the Administrator spoke with the Board and the issue they have is since it involves more than one Commissioner from a Board, it had to be advertised and a public meeting so the suggestion to the Interim Administrator was to look for a date and time as soon as possible that would work for both Boards.

Commissioner Holt asked about the people that wanted to use the Health Department in Chattahoochee to bring in health care workers and doctors. She asked why that was not sent out and Chair Viegbesie interjected.

Chair Viegbesie said the contract the owners signed with the County could only be used by not-for-profit entities. Commissioner Holt said she talked with Mr. Crenshaw with the Department of Health and he said that was the sublease the County would do after they have the documents signed. She said she was pretty upset it took so long to get to them, three to four weeks and it was a health care need and staff should be doing better. Chair Viegbesie said yesterday during the discussion was when he was made aware of it. He asked if the providers were a profit or non-profit because the extension to the lease by the State was that anyone using it for medical

services or senior citizen activities must be a non-profit. Commissioner Holt said she would get the people in touch with the Administrator.

Commissioner Taylor said she was unsure of the dialogue and did not want to get in the way of providing health care, but was this was a Board function and asked where they were now. She then asked about the part of CARES money they had received versus the amount they had not yet received. She said it was an entitlement and was **WHEN** they would receive it. They needed to begin with what would not cost them anything and put out an RFP because it was a time-consuming process that needed to be moved, the broadband and the hospital. She said with regard to the cities, she concurred that there might have been some fly-by-night numbers that was given to them to get some monies but Integrity has stated that clear and concise documentation needed to be put forth before any funds were disbursed. She said other than that, Integrity was liable because they could be authorizing the expenditures. She further stated that with regards to the grant money for the residents and businesses, they probably should start the process, get their names and information in the portal but inform them it may be a little longer before the money comes. She asked why the RFP was not out for the hospital. Dr. Grant said it had not been developed because they were checking to see if they had existing plans. She said they needed to let the ones know that has done work there that they are getting bids ready, time was not their friend. Dr. Grant said they tried to find an RFP from before when the work was done and there was no RFP; the Board gave the County Administrator the authority to negotiate with whoever it was to get the process started.

**Ronte Harris, City of Quincy Mayor**, spoke concerning the curfew. Was there anything that allowed restaurants and stores to operate past the 9:00 pm curfew?

Mr. Knowles responded that “Businesses that sell or offer gasoline, diesel or other fuels shall be exempted from the curfew requirements as provided herein. Except, such businesses shall not allow more than ten (10) individuals to congregate on their premises.”

He added that the restaurants were covered under Section D.

Chair Viegbesie said this was something the County has covered every Friday from the Governor’s Executive Orders and could not be more lenient or restrictive than what was allowed in the Executive Orders.

Commissioner Holt said on the issue of the hospital, Mr. Meeks walked in room and asked if he could speak. She said she asked if the Board could do a walk-thru and reason she asked for it was because the Board needed to know what to tell the citizens needed to know and be aware. On the issue with the hospital, they have decisions they need to make.

Commissioner Hinson said he dittoed everything that Commissioner Taylor and Commissioner Holt said. They need to control what was happening, they only have 3 months to use the funds.

He asked what was the delay for not sending out the RFP for broadband and was told it was out on the website and had been sent out.

Commissioner Holt asked what was on the RFP.

Dr. Grant said read aloud a portion of the RFP.

Commissioner Taylor said Commissioner Hinson brought up good point; they could have an emergency meeting to approve the RFP and asked they set a date before September to and select a person to move forward.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:21 A.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

---

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

**ATTEST:**

---

**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**