

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON NOVEMBER 17, 2020 AT 6:00 P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

**Present:** Eric Hinson, District 1  
Kimblin NeSmith, District 3  
Ronterious "Ron" Green, District 5  
Dr. Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie, Vice-Chair, District 2  
Brenda Holt, Chair, District 4  
Henry G. Grant, Interim County Administrator  
Nicholas Thomas, Clerk of Court  
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney  
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

**Reorganization of the Board**

Chair Viegbesie called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**Election of Chairman and Vice-Chair**

Dr., Grant said the first thing on the Agenda was the Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Commissioner Green, said on behalf of the citizens, thanked Chair Viegbesie for his service to the community as Chair.

**COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER HOLT AS CHAIR AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND.**

**CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

Chair Holt thanked Commissioner Viegbesie and then asked for nominations for vice chair.

**COMMISSIONER NESMITH NOMINATED COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE AS VICE CHAIR.**

Chair Holt explained there did not need to be a second for the nominations and asked if there were any other nominations and there were none.

**CHAIR HOLT CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

**INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Holt asked for 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 add 3 items: as 13a-FDOT Maintenance Agreement, 13b-Approval to Adopt a Resolution Supporting the Goal of Affordable and Reliable High-Speed Internet throughout Florida and 13c- Approval of the Contract Supplement with Rudd's Pest Control, Inc. (In Minutes as Items 14a, 14b, and 14c)

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

**AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES**

**Briefing on the CRTPA Regional Mobility Plan 2045**

**Diane Quigley, Growth Management Director**, appeared before the Board and said she was presenting the item on behalf of the Board because Chair Holt wanted to be updated on the plans.

*Commissioner Hinson left the meeting at 6:10 p.m. and later re-joined the meeting by ZOOM.*

Commissioner Green asked if she knew when they planned to put the County on their plan for more bicycle trails. She explained three trails were already on there and if they wanted more, the document was changeable.

Commissioner Viegbesie said to Commissioner Green he was the County Representative for CRTPA and was the immediate past chair. He added they were working on two bike trails, one from Havana to Leon County. He said it would have to come through CRTPA, FDOT would not accept anything through the County without support from CRTPA.

Chair Holt asked if there was any co-sponsoring of funding for mobile transportation/bus transportation, etc. Ms. Quigley said there was federal dollars for that and Gadsden Express was often incorporated in their general operating funds.

Chair Holt said that the City of Tallahassee also applies for half of that grant.

**CONSENT**

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

- 1. Ratification Memo**
- 2. Approval of the 2021 Holiday Schedule**
- 3. Approval of Library Annual Plan of Service 2020-2021**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
  - June 18, 2020
  - June 19, 2020
  - June 26, 2020
  - July 21, 2020
  - July 21, 2020
  - July 31, 2020
  - August 17, 2020
  - September 15, 2020
  - September 16, 2020

- September 17, 2020

### **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](mailto:CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov) and anticipate receiving a response within 48 hours.**

**Rev. Willie C. Green, 296 Bradwell Road, Quincy, FL** appeared before the Board. He stated he was happy for new composition of the BOCC. He said he was here to remind them that the citizens were very excited about the election. The County has been at or near the bottom in some categories and at the top in others. He encouraged them to work collaboratively to do the best to improve life in Gadsden County. He further added that the number one challenge was to improve employment in the County.

**Marshall Williams, 211 Horseshoe Drive, Havana** appeared before the Board. He stated he had a residential subdivision request that was denied. He asked the Board if there was any remedy.

Chair Holt said he could discuss this with the Administrator. There was discussion between the attorney and the citizen.

Commissioner Hinson said he had an opportunity to speak with Mr. Williams. He asked if this was a county issue or state issue. He said there should be a rule in place for extenuating circumstances.

Chair Holt said this needed to be agendaed to be discussed. Commissioner Hinson asked if it was the policy of the Board to put in place or if it was something the State did and if it was the Board, it could be changed.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- 5. PUBLIC HEARING (Legislative) Consideration of Adoption of Ordinance 2020-005 to repeal Section 7001.1, 'Citizens Growth Management and Planning Bill of Rights' and to add Subsection 1306, Community Meetings to Chapters 1, Administration and Enforcement of the Land Development Code, (LDR 2020-02)**

Item Pulled

- 6. Public Hearing-Approval of Resolution 2020-065 Budget Amendments for FY2020**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and stated it was for approval of Resolution 2020-065 and for authorization for the County Administrator, Finance Director and Sr. Management and Budget Analyst to complete and execute all budget amendments necessary to maintain a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2020 BOCC budget.

**Jeff Price, Sr. Management & Budget Analyst**, appeared before Board. He said every year they go through this process to balance the budget and they had 60 days from the end of the fiscal year to clean everything up. He said Clerk Thomas had been very helpful this year.

He explained the first two dealt with EMS; they were over budget and had to move money to bring it within a positive balance. He further stated the reason they were over-budget was some salary increases and the main reason was some EMS vehicles. They ended up leasing and was a different way to handle that accounting wise. They moved money from General Fund balance to EMS balance.

On the next two was the Supervisor of Elections. The virus took care of that little bit. There was an increase in overtime and was extra training. When there was overtime issues, there was also an increase in benefits and had to move approximately \$60,000 into that one.

The third was Landfill-Mosquito control. He said they have never had this issue before but was short a mosquito control person for a couple of months and they decided to hire a commercial contractor to come in and do some work.

The fourth was Building Inspection is its own fund and they did really good on collecting fees. He said there was a little bit of negative so they recognized some of the revenue to offset that.

Chair Holt said it showed a shortfall but had no amount there. Mr. Price stated the amount was \$6,441 and was for revenue they used to recognize to come back to zero to balance that out. He said they had to increase the revenue to offset that. Chair Holt asked where the money was pulled from and he stated the Building/Revenue source.

Chair Holt asked when he brings items, to give the definition of each one so when there is a negative balance and moved from General Fund, the why is there.

Commissioner Green asked in the General Fund, did that include money that came from CARES ACT or if some of the expenditures with EMS come from CARES Act as opposed to coming from General Fund. Mr. Price explained the CARES Act money would be in this fiscal year.

Mr. Thomas said there were some things that have been submitted and will mention in his report about getting reimbursement for EMS from CARES Act, but that did not need to be mixed up with what Mr. Price was reporting now. Mr. Thomas went on to explain they were seeking reimbursement for CARES Act funding for EMS, but was a separate issue from what Mr. Price was doing. Commissioner Green said the reason he asked that question was they were talking about moving \$370,000 if his numbers were right from General Funding and if they had money that was available in the GACRS Act, maybe that money could have been used for some that needed to be moved.

Commissioner NeSmith asked about the second item on Page 4. Was EMS also-have to have 2 separate budget amendments, one for General Fund and one for EMS fund.

Holt asked for explanation on what happened with EMS. He said the second item recognized transferring \$120,000 from General Fund to cover the negative line and asked what that was

for. Mr. Price said it was for EMS, they had negative expenses with salaries and vehicles. In order to cover, they moved money from General Fund and transferred to EMS.

Commissioner Viegbesie said his understanding was they moved \$120,000 from General Fund to EMS.

Commissioner Viegbesie said his only comment dealt with presentation; he understood what was being done. Commissioners do not know what is going on in the head of the financial manager. The presentation should be a presentation for dummies to make it easy for anyone that comes off the street would know what was going on.

Chair Holt cautioned the new commissioners if they had any questions, to get with the Administrator.

**COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE OPTION 1 AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

**7. Approval of Signatures for Special Assessment Liens and Rehabilitation Contract-State Housing (Referred to as Item 6 by Administrator)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said it was for approval of the Special Assessment Lien and Rehabilitation Contract that was agreed upon by the Homeowner, contractor and SHIP Housing Rehabilitation Program for the rehabilitation of their home.

Commissioner Green asked the process and procedure for anyone that wanted to apply for the funding for their house to be rehabbed.

**Sonya Burns, Housing Coordinator**, appeared remotely

*Commissioner Viegbesie stepped out at 6:55 p.m.*

Ms. Burns said she had put together a welcome packet and information on the housing program to help give Commissioner Green and Commissioner NeSmith a better understanding on how the State Housing Initiative Partnership works.

Chair Holt asked the will of the Board.

**COMMISSIONER NESMITH SAID SO MOVED AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

**8. St. Hebron Walk and Bike for Trail Amendment (Referred to as Item 7 by Administrator)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said it was for approval of amendment 3 for the Recreational Trails Program. He said this third amendment was to revise the scope of work.

*Commissioner Viegbesie returned at 6:57 p.m.*

Dr. Grant said the amendment allowed for a portion of the planning expenses to be recovered and extended the project expiration date by one calendar year. He added it was competitively bid and awarded to Peavy and Sons for \$364,693.75.

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

**9. Volunteer Fire Department Annual Payment Discussion (CLERK'S OFFICE HAD NO DOCUMENTATION FOR ITEM PRESENTED AND WAS REFERRED TO BY ADMINISTRATOR AS ITEM 8)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said it was for discussion only regarding the annual payment to each volunteer fire department that they receive for providing fire and rescue services to the unincorporated areas of Gadsden County.

Chair Holt said they did not need to look at this until they had proof of calls.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if the fund, upon approval, would go directly to the volunteer fire station or when disbursed go to the municipality. Dr. Grant said fire stations in unincorporated areas go to fire station, the ones in the municipalities go to municipalities.

Commissioner Green said he also had a question on how they come up with the numbers and did they look at expenses in each facility and what it would take to operate that facility.

Dr. Grant said that was the problem, they did not know how the figures were determined and why staff had presented options 1, 2, and 3 of the methods they may go about financing the departments in the future. He said another option was the County retain the money and the fire departments submit invoices to the County for whatever they need billings for.

Chair Holt said what they have done before was have the different departments come in and explain what they were doing and the amount of calls they receive.

Dr. Grant asked if they wanted this done in the form of a workshop and was told yes

Commissioner Nesmith asked with the fire departments in the unincorporated areas, did the County acquire the equipment or did they. Dr. Grant said they pay out of the money that is budgeted to them.

**10. Cooks Landing Road SCOP (Referred to as Item 9 by Administrator)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said it was for signature of the Professional Services Agreement for construction, engineering and Inspection services for Cook Landing Road project. He added the CEI services would have a cost of \$253,710.50 and would be funded by the FDOT and would have no fiscal impact to the County.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER NESMITH, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

**11. CR159 Dover/Scotland Road LAP-Supplement Agreement (Referred to as Item 10 by Administrator)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said it was for approval to execute a Supplemental Agreement and the associated Resolution with FDOT to reduce the construction agreement by \$152,707.00. The revised agreement will be \$503,749.00.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE AND SECOND BY COMMISSIOENR GREEN, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**12. CR153 Iron Bridge Road LAP – Supplemental Agreement (Referred to as Item 11 by Administrator)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item to execute a Supplemental Agreement and the associated Resolution with FDOT to reduce the construction agreement by \$440,796.00. The revised agreement amount will be \$366,336.00.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HINSON AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**13. Willacoochee Creek Bridge Repair (Bridge #500040) SCOP Agreement (Administrator addressed as Item 12)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said was for approval and signature of the FDOT SCOP bridge repairs for Willacoochee Creek Bridge. He added this project would have no fiscal impact on the County.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HINSON, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

**14. Broadband Contract (Administrator addressed as Item 13)**

Dr. Grant started to introduce this item and Commissioner Viegbesie stated the item was not in the book and the Deputy Clerk said it was not on the website.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE.**

Chair Holt said it was added on in an email. Deputy Clerk stated she did not receive the email. Ms. Steele stated it was on the website.

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

Commissioner Viegbesie said did not believe the procedure was appropriate and did not think it was fair to the new commissioners as they did not know the entire story. He said he was a supporter for broadband for everyone. The School board was providing broadband to students of the County. The First Lady of Florida has proposed a plan to provide broadband to every part of the State with T-Mobile. He said there was also an item on the Agenda that was added that was to provide broadband to all rural counties.

The other concern was, in approving this item, was in total violation of the Code of Federal Regulation 200.38 and was the Code regarding federal grants. Though the CARES Act money,

the plan was on spending \$900,000 but the request is \$1.765 Million difference and was a violation of the cost analysis of the Federal regulation for funding. He added if he recalled from the last meeting, the packet that was submitted by the vendor was incomplete. The Proposal did not address how the device would be returned, it did not state who was responsible for overage cost beyond the December 30<sup>th</sup> date associated with the device rental, and did not specify and/or provide an impact analysis, engineering plans or results of service testing in remote areas to ensure the effectiveness and proper bandwidth (inaudible). All three were required by whomever submitted their proposal for service. So, this particular bid was lacking those and during discussion on approval of the bid to Figgers Communication, Commissioner Viegbesie expressed his concerns of the plan as a violation of the Federal regulation and if the Board approves; the first question was to the attorney, if the proposal submitted is lacking and not complete, how did they get to where they were now to approve the contract. In the conversation of the last meeting, Chair Holt said she was looking for the contracts and asked the attorney to make sure that all of the concerns, being the lack of information that was requested, be provided. His question was, have the three items that were not provided been provided when the service contract was drawn up?

Mr. Knowles said he received a contract from FCI three weeks ago. It was insufficient, he made substantial changes and sent to the representatives of FCI last Tuesday and around 9:00 this morning received another contract with additional changes and modifications, most of which he did not agree with. What he did to try to address the first concern with regard to the devices, the contract he proposed effectively provided the device, once the County procures it and the device became the property of the resident, the County would pay FCI on a pro-rata procurement basis. After that 30 days period was up; the service for the device would be the responsibility of the individual who received the device and the County would not be on the hook beyond December 30<sup>th</sup>. What FCI proposed, which he did not agree with, was the devices would be procured except in the case of a breach of contract or termination without cause by the County at which FCI would retain the devices and if County terminated without cause, the County would have to pay them \$600,000 for damages and he did not agree with that. Also, the first 50 GB of service was provided by FCI, for every additional 50 GB above that, the owner of the device would pay \$50/per 50 GB per device. He said that would be costly and he did not agree with that change either but was committed to bring those to the Board. He said the best way they could address the devices was that they bought them, they own them, they keep them; we being the citizenry of the County. The County was only providing service for whatever amount being allotted in terms of the data usage, that was what the County was buying. He said he would not advice the Board get into a scenario where they did not know. He said what he understood from IT, it was 500 MB to a GB for every hour streaming and one thing Commissioner Hinson said that he wanted to use this for was for tele-work and was for school. Mr. Knowles said someone was doing back and forth like on Zoom and tele-work and using a gigabyte every hour, a person would run out pretty fast and the County could be charged a significant amount of money moving forward. He said they wanted to be fiscally responsible. The Clerk sent an email and they needed to make sure they were fiscally responsible. He said there is a contract that dealt with that and was what has been provided. He added if they entered into that, it should address a majority of the concerns.

Commissioner Viegbesie said all his concerns have been registered. He said before and will again, he may be wrong but he may be right. If the Board approves the contract, he will personally file a complaint with the Federal government with regards to how they were using



the grant money in violation of their requirement unless the Treasury Department told him he was wrong. He said he would not support this item. Has said before and will again, when FBI comes knocking, he has done nothing for them to knock on his door because he was not going to vote for it and would not support it. If the Board approves this today, within 24 hours, he will file a complaint with US Department of Treasury and let them prove him wrong that his concern was wasteful. He said he would rather be wrong and be cautious.

Commissioner Green said although he was not a part of the original conversation, he followed it. What was the deadline this must be approved? Could they see dialogue between the attorney and their representative and he would love for the representative come to answer questions?

Mr. Knowles said they have until December 30<sup>th</sup> to expend the funds. He told Commissioner Green that he would be happy to forward to all the Commissioners the conversations that have been had and could send all contracts. He reminded them time was of the essence.

Commissioner Hinson said broadband was something he had been proposing the past five to six years. There were questions that concerned him. He said he thought a lot of the dogmatic conversation that someone relayed earlier, was said they started at \$900,000 and was illegal if they went up to \$1.7 Million. He said if he could recall, the Board agreed to not spend \$1 Million on the hospital and other things. How could it be illegal if the Board agreed to it. They were sending mixed signals to the community. If the Board agreed to something, it was legal, especially if everyone was there. Now it was being said it was time sensitive and they were right. The Board voted to move forward with this before school started. Also, it was offensive and insulting to him, with all the degrees he's gotten from Moorhouse and University of Miami, he has seen these guys on Zoom, they read and studied this and to now insult them that they don't know the history, was insulting to him. How come there's been dialogue, why haven't they seen the conversation with the attorney and their representative. If the County Administrator, Chair and attorney knew this was time sensitive, it should have moved forward. Something did not smell right to him and it was insulting. He said it was insulting and when people start talking with sweat on their head, it was a sad day in Gadsden County. He said if the attorney had information to share, let the Board know what was going on so they could make a decision and asked how often he and Commissioner Viegbesie had talked about this, it was not fair to the Board. He said he hated to postpone, but they never get anything. When one commissioner says when School Board has 5G stuff, where was it because students were telling him they have nothing. He said for them to make sure they had all their facts together before bringing to the Board.

Chair Holt asked if he was withdrawing his motion and he said no, he was waiting to get factual information. He said something was going on and "they" were making it personal and was a personal attack. They keep postponing but the Attorney never sends them anything and it was embarrassing.

Commissioner NeSmith asked, based on the timeframe, was that the timeframe they were aware of to expend money. Dr. Grant said the timeframe to submit was December 3<sup>rd</sup> and the deadline to expend was December 30<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner NeSmith said he read over and it was a very extensive document. He did speak to Mr. Knowles regarding this and asked for additional time to study the agreement.

Commissioner Green concurred with Commissioner Hinson on having factual information; he heard there were other resources and numbers were not adding up as to the number of hotspots that would be needed. He asked who was taking a true analysis on the numbers so they would know the amount they should allocate for and was not happy in going back and forth and asked for better information so he could look at this.

Commissioner Hinson said he would withdraw his motion only if they could address this Thursday and invite the company in to discuss. Chair Holt withdrew her second.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he was going to reserve his comments with regard to what he was expecting of the Board. He said again he had nothing personal about anyone. He said he saw Commissioner Green wiping sweat from his head and that did not mean a thing. If anyone says anything, preachers preach and (inaudible) if someone wanted to make comments, make the comments direct, if going to refer to someone, call them by name.

Chair Holt asked to wrap this up. She said she asked for a meeting and it fell apart. This company was the only one that submitted a bid. Then the attorney suggested it be bid again. He was again the only one that bid. FBI has been here two-three times, that was nothing new. Chair Holt asked for a special meeting next week on Monday to give the new commissioners a chance to look over the item. She told both the Attorney and the Administrator to contact the contractor and have a special meeting on Monday at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Hinson asked if the contractor knew what the concerns and issues were or was it something they should know.

Chair Holt said the attorney would send documentation to each Commissioner.

**14a FDOT Maintenance Agreement (Administrator addressed this as 13a)**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and stated it was for Board approval of the FDOT Maintenance Agreement. FDOT has agreed to design, construct new pavement markings and update signage within several school zones throughout the County.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GREEN, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**14b Approval to Adopt a Resolution Supporting the Goal of Affordable and Reliable High-Speed Internet Throughout Florida**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said it was for Board approval to adopt a resolution supporting the goal of affordable and high-speed internet throughout Florida.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HINSON AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**14c Approval of the Contract Supplement with Rudd's Pest Control**

Dr. Grant introduced the above item and said it was for approval of the supplemental agreement with Rudd's Pest Control to provide service and maintenance to the County buildings.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HINSON,  
THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

**15. Bond Measure**

Item Pulled

**16. County Administrator's Contract**

Item Pulled

**CLERK OF COURT**

**17. Updates**

Mr. Thomas was present and said he forwarded to the Commissioners a brief update of the CARES Act spending. They now have received monies from phase 1 and 2 for a total of \$3.5 Million of the \$7.9 Million reward and there were a number of deadlines. Dr. Grant mentioned one, a November 16<sup>th</sup> deadline that they were supposed to have spent all of Phase II money to qualify for Phase III. He said they were qualified for Phase III due to Dr. Grant working with Integrity and the Finance Director. They submitted payrolls for law enforcement and EMS to fulfill that requirement showing expenditures for November so they were still in the game. He said they have spent approximately \$2.3 Million and time was running short to accomplish everything. The money that was submitted for payroll would go into Phase III and they would have that money for the spending plan. He further stated they had work to do in terms of clarifying the spending plan and executing it in short period of time.

Chair Holt asked the Administrator if the Health Council had received their money. He said he did not know yet, they have to submit documentation.

Chair Holt said they need to get them back in here and needed to hurry up. They have to get that money moving because the holidays would mess them up.

Mr. Thomas said one area they could emphasize to the public and that was the Residents Assistance Program dealing with utilities, mortgage assistance and rental assistance, etc., they have not spent very much and had quite a bit allocated for that. Chair Holt said they were looking at the remaining balance and on the Spreadsheet for the Residents Assistance Program there was \$142,307 and they had \$1.2 Million allocated for Housing and have spent \$115,516. Her suggestion was to do like Leon County had done and revitalize their program because they were losing money.

The Clerk said they have done well with the Small Business Assistance Program, \$608,000 had been spent and had \$287,000 left and \$305,000 for Phase III.

Chair Holt said the reason she asked about the Health Council, they may need to look at that and a couple of other non-profits to help them out. She said they knew the people and may need to help move the money and if Integrity did not move the money, they would lose money. She asked if they could see what Leon County or other counties did differently to get their money out the door.

Dr. Grant said they had to realize they put it on Integrity that if the money was not spent correctly, they were held responsible. Chair Holt said she was sure Leon County put it on someone to be held responsible also to do it correctly. They need to find out what they did. Dr. Grant said documentation was the key to everything.

**Frederica Hamilton with Integrity appeared remotely before the Board.** She said the balance that remained in Phase II funding was \$2,141,867 and that amount did not include the \$400,000 for the municipal pass-through as well based on the numbers as of this morning, with the Residents Assistance Program, they have received 564 applications and of those, it was not the issue of getting the word out, the problem was having applicants that qualified and was eligible for the assistance, provide the required support documentation. She added that of the 564 applications they had in-house, 331 of those were missing support documentation. She said some have provided the necessary documentation, it was a matter of getting them to provide same.

Chair Holt said she did not have a problem with what she was saying, but if they were going to provide an organization with funding and some of those applicants did not know how to get information, to help them get it.

Commissioner Green asked how many people were there working in that department and Ms. Hamilton stated there were three in the building and five remotely.

Commissioner Green asked how many applications were being processed on a daily basis and Ms. Hamilton said it was a number of things. It entails meeting the applicants, them walking up requesting information on the application, turning in supporting documentation that might have been missing from the application, landlords walking up, calls to applicants requesting missing support documentation and said there was quite a bit that goes into it, not just one thing. Commissioner Green pointed out that he was sure they were aware there may be people that did not have the accessibility or a way to get the supporting documents and wanted to make sure they were communicating to the best of their ability on all levels to ensure the money moved as quickly as possible.

Chair Holt said she was getting the same calls about being contacted and wanting to know what needed to be done to advance the process and they needed help and needed a meeting ASAP.

Commissioner Hinson said he was receiving complaints regarding the application process too. He talked with staff and they were working well. Constituents were telling him they were still having issues. He said he has asked for a workshop with Integrity so there could be a common language to share with the constituents and did not want to prolong this matter.

Chair Holt asked for Ms. Hamilton to get with other members of Integrity and see if they were available for Monday at 6:00.

Commissioner Viegbesie said to help Integrity, they needed to consider GCDC as an agent to work with small businesses to work in collaboration with Integrity.

Chair Holt thanked the Clerk for the information.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

**18. Updates**

Dr. Grant reminded everyone of the special meeting scheduled for November 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 for the CDBG Disaster Relief Application public hearing.

He said there were two department heads, Curtis Young was back at Public Works and the Extension head is Marcus Boston.

He said they needed direction from the Commission on how staff needed to pursue the Administrator position.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if it was appropriate to re-advertise the position and whomever wished to apply, could apply. He added he did not think it was fair to the two new incoming commissioners and suggested it be re-advertised, sent through the process and let everyone decide who they want in that position. He also said there could be a motion from the body to make the Interim permanent if that was the direction they want to go. He said his input into the conversation was for them to advertise and go through the search process and the ones that desire to apply can do so, whether local or outside of this jurisdiction.

Commissioner Green said in respect to the vice chair, what was the longevity of the process if they took that direction and selecting an administrator because he knew there were a lot of issues that needed to be taken care of as soon as possible. He said he had mixed emotions in the direction they were heading in relation to the County Administrator. He said he wanted to make sure they were doing things in the right way and has the person that was previously selected been properly notified that the contract was denied.

Mr. Knowles said he did speak with Mr. Elias and he was curious as to why the item was pulled. He stated he was aware of the Board's action of October 20<sup>th</sup> and was aware that their counter-offer to his offer was still at \$105,000 and his response was he would not accept \$105,000 but was still willing to negotiate. Mr. Knowles said the caveat was, according to the HR Director, this Board, as was constituted here today because of the new commissioners, would not necessarily be able to take action on the prior vote from the prior Board. He said he was not an employment law expert and was trusting her judgment. He said Mr. Elias was aware and was still willing to negotiate, he just needed guidance on how the Board wanted to proceed. He said, as Commissioner Viegbesie stated, they may need to re-advertise.

Chair Holt passed the gavel to Vice Chair Viegbesie.

**CHAIR HOLT (after passing gavel) MADE A MOTION FOR FORMER COMMISSIONER EDWARD J. DIXON TO BE OFFERED THE SAME CONTRACT THAT WAS OFFERED TO MR. ELIAS AT \$105,000 FOR 5 YEARS.**

She said she made this motion because he had more experience than anyone else in County Government. Also, when he was chairman of the Association, he wrote the legislation for SCOP, SCRAP, etc., he has a keen eye for government, and they needed help. There was not an

assistant administrator or someone to step in. She said it was not required that it be advertised.

**VICE CHAIR VIEGBESIE SAID MOTION WAS DENIED FOR LACK OF SECOND AND CHAIR HOLT SAID A SECOND HAD NOT BEEN ASKED FOR.**

Commissioner Green said he agreed with Chair Holt in reference to the qualifications that Mr. Dixon holds, however, he would like to have the opportunity to see what was out there and would love for him to apply and for them to follow the process. He said he felt he could be a great asset to the Board but wanted him to apply. He also felt whomever was selected should hire the assistant.

**VICE CHAIR VIEGBESIE THANKED COMMISSIONER GREEN FOR HIS COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCED CHAIR HOLT'S MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.**

He stated he had confidence in Mr. Dixon's skill and he had worked with Mr. Dixon tremendously with CRTPA and his skill was unquestionable. He said he wanted them to go through the process of hiring, he was local, knew people, knew the history, and let him apply. If the position is re-advertised and he applies, he would have all the credentials needed, he has the degree and everything the requirement called for. He said if he went through the process of applying, he would have his vote but he had to go through the process.  
(Passed gavel back)

Commissioner Hinson said fair was fair. Personally, he did not have a dog in this fight and he did not know Derrick Elias too much.

*Commissioner Viegbesie stepped out at 8:27 p.m.*

Commissioner Hinson continued and said he heard Mr. Elias withdrew his application and now heard he may be willing to negotiate. He added if she had two people with her that was ready to vote for the person of her choice, in all fairness, the Vice Chair was the main one that said something about the process and if he had a person of his choice, he would throw the process out the window. He said they needed to do what was right for the citizens of Gadsden County. He was ready to move on, they could vote tonight.

Chair Holt said if she remembered correctly, they have not selected one person off the advertised list since 2008.

*Commissioner Viegbesie returned at 8:30 p.m.*

Commissioner Green said Commissioner Hinson suggested he was ready to move on but in defense to the statement, there was no second. He said Commissioner Hinson made another good point, on the motion made, the individual was without a doubt qualified.

Commissioner Hinson said if there was someone that applied for the job, have three commissioners that committed, why go through the motion because there were three votes tonight, to move on.

Commissioner Viegbesie said the item died for lack of second. Why were they still continuing the conversation on that motion if it was dead and were they discussing a motion that was dead or were they having a discussion to give staff direction on what to do to fill that position?

Mr. Knowles said what he was hearing was they wanted new process with a new RFP/RFQ, for whomever to apply, based on metrics that the Board selected and have a process. He said what he was hearing was they were discussing board direction to staff as to how to proceed on the County Administrator contract.

Commissioner Viegbesie said why is there resuscitation for a second motion that will be a motion that has already been killed. He said a motion made died with having a conversation and now there was resuscitation for the same motion to be made. He said they had the process before and was of great concern and he did research. When a motion made died and then someone else made the same motion after conversation and then the second, was discussed and was approved. He said that bothered him when he was the Chair and he read up on that specifically and was about to happen again.

Mr. Knowles said he did not believe so.

Chair Holt said that motion died for lack of a second. But if that motion changed, you could still make a motion. She said what they were saying was the motion could not be changed, they could debate back and forth as much as they wanted on anything. She said his opportunity was given to him and now was time for another commissioner.

Commissioner NeSmith said he would like for there to be a new process, he knew Mr. Dixon was qualified but wanted for him to be part of the process so they could go through, for him to submit his application to have on record.

Chair Holt said he was qualified, had applied at least three times and every time he applied a motion was made and someone else was chosen, whether they applied or not. She said that was what frustrated people with the County. She asked what the Board wanted to do, put out for a bid and stop discussing.

Commissioner Green suggested that the they come to an agreement that they would not make any motions without deliberating and not make a motion at the end of the last process.

Chair Holt said for them to listen to the attorney and they would try to get this out of the way.

Mr. Knowles suggested if they could have an action workshop on this matter where they sit, discuss and Chair Holt said to add on to the Thursday. Meeting.

Chair Holt said to start it at 4:00.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he would not be available at 4:00; he had the Canvassing Board at 1:30. He said for clarification, Chair Holt stated Mr. Dixon had applied before and it must have been before his time.

**19. Updates**

Mr. Knowles said they had the Resolution that was out with regard to the mask mandate, no curfew, gathering size and he needed to know how to best address that with the new Commission and Board members. He said it would expire on Friday and asked for guidance on how they wanted to do that. Was it something the Chairwoman would sign again as she had been doing historically or did they need to have another emergency meeting? Chair Holt asked if Commissioner Hinson wanted to change anything on the Resolution. Commissioner Hinson said he would love to hear the Board's comments because he had some heartburn on some things, especially as related to the curfew.

Commissioner Viegbesie said on that Resolution, suggested they have an Emergency Meeting where the items on the Resolution were discussed so the new commissioners were involved and if there were new items they wanted to add.

Commissioner Green said he could do it Friday at 10:00; Commissioner NeSmith said he would be at work, he could do any time after 4:00.

Commissioner Viegbesie said since they were coming into the holidays, he felt the Board needed to meet and come up with a Resolution before going into the holidays.

Chair Holt asked if there was anything new from the Governor. Mr. Knowles said not that he had seen.

Dr. Grant said the Thursday meeting was advertised as an Emergency Meeting and it could be added to it.

The Emergency Meeting was changed to Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS**

**20. Report and Discussion of Public Issues**

**Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1**

Commissioner Hinson thanked his constituents for a chance to serve for another four years in District 1 and he congratulated the two new commissioners. He told them to remain positive. He knew they had the Assistant Administrator position open and felt they should put a freeze on all positions until they filled the top-level position.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO PUT FREEZE ON HIRING ALL POSITIONS UNTIL HAVE A NEW COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR AND CHAIR HOLT MADE THE SECOND FOR DISCUSSION.**

Chair Holt asked Dr. Grant if he was hiring an Assistant Administrator and he said yes, because he needed help.

Hair Holt said she did not think he should hire the Assistant, that should come from who they hire for the Administrator position.



Commissioner Viegbesie said given the direction the Board was going; would Commissioner Hinson consider amending his motion to not freezing all positions but freezing management level positions until a permanent Administrator was hired. Commissioner Hinson said he could agree with that. Commissioner Hinson said the reason being, the Board never gets into the hiring and firing but he was also trying to keep down lawsuits.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON STATED THE ALTERED MOTION WOULD ONLY AFFECT LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT LEVEL POSITIONS AND CHAIR HOLT MADE THE SECOND.**

Commissioner NeSmith asked if they were clear on what positions made up management and leadership positions.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked about the management positions that were needed like yesterday.

**CHAIR HOLT CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

**Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, District 3**

Commissioner NeSmith thanked Commissioner Hinson for his words of support and thanked everyone for the years he had worked with them outside of the Commission.

**Commissioner Ronterious “Ron”, District 5**

Commissioner Green thanked everyone for the job they had done thus far and thanked the constituents of District 5 for the opportunity. He assured them they had a Commissioner and a leader that was approachable that they could talk to at any time. He said he did not expect the meeting to go so long due to some personal issues. He said he knew there was a lot of work cut out for them and there were things he would be tackling in the next few weeks.

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

Commissioner Viegbesie read the below aloud:

**“Progress in Gadsden County.**

Commissioners, borrowing the words of Martin Luther King Jr, “we have before us the glorious opportunity to inject a new dimension of collaborative love and honest dedication into the veins of our county's growth and prosperity”. Commissioners, we don't have to agree on all things as long as we agree that we all love Gadsden County.

If everyone agrees on everything, then someone is unnecessary". It's okay to respectfully agree to disagree agreeably. "There is never a wrong time to do what is right".

Progress should not be compelled by where a person was born; their family; or a person's race and ethnicity.

We must not let the politics of fear and sense of divisiveness stand in our path of progress and prosperity and integrity for Gadsden County.

Commissioners, I truly hope and pray that our Modus operandi forward must be a "unity of purpose". We must not see ourselves as a district Commissioner. Rather, we must see ourselves as Gadsden County Commissioners if we are going to make Gadsden County a better place for all of its residents.

Remember that the mission of the GCBOCC is "To build a better community by offering efficient, sustainable services, encouraging economic development and providing safety to improve the quality of life".

In closing, my question to us is "Can a Community progress, grow and prosper if its people insist on continuing with a culture of self-cannibalism due to individual narcissistic personalities and idiosyncrasies?" I declare not. In this position, as a Commissioner, I do not have a permanent friend nor a permanent enemy. I, however, have a permanent purpose of making Gadsden County better for all to live in.

So now Commissioners, let's go to work for the good of Gadsden County.

Thank you and God bless Gadsden County.”

**Commissioner Brenda Holt, Chair, District 4**

Chair Holt asked if CareerSource called today and Dr. Grant said yes.

She said they needed to get a paving lists for all the Commissioners and needed to look at Board appointments.

She said they must look at the Comprehensive Plan.

She also mentioned that FAC was doing training for the new commissioners.

She asked for a Proclamation for Maggie S. King.

**COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE THE MOTION FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR MAGGIE S. KING AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

Commissioner Viegbesie said his comment was a congratulatory comment for the new commissioners and was looking forward to working with them.

**Receipt and File**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners  
November 17, 2020 – Regular Meeting

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HOLT DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:16 P.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**BRENDA A. HOLT, Chair**  
**Board of County Commissioners**

**ATTEST:**

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**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**