

**AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JULY 27, 2021 AT
10:00 A.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD,
VIZ:**

Present: Brenda A. Holt, Chair, District 4
Dr. Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, Vice Chair, District 2 - Absent
Eric Hinson, District 1-Absent
Kimblin NeSmith, District 3
Ronterious “Ron” Green, District 5
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Holt called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m., led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag and then asked for a moment of silence.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no amendments to the Agenda.

UPON MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA BY COMMISSIONER GREEN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER NESMITH, THE BOARD VOTED 3-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Awards, Presentations and Appearances

None

CONSENT

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD

Anyone wishing to speak on agenda items or non-agenda items should schedule or notify the County Administrator’s Office before attending the meeting and will be asked to follow the Gadsden County Public Meetings Citizens Access Guidelines. Also, public comment for Commission meetings can be submitted via email to CitizensToBeHeard@gadscencountyfl.gov until noon on Monday, July 26, 2021. Comments submitted after the deadline, but prior to the meeting will be added to the official record, but the County cannot guarantee that Commissioners and staff will have adequate time to review comments prior to the meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS

It appeared that Commissioner Hinson had joined the meeting by Zoom, but no-one was able to hear him in the Chambers.

1. **Approval of the application submission of the State-Funded Small County Emergency Operations Center Design Initiative Grant F0073**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated it was for Board approval of the application submission of the State-Funded Small County Emergency Operations Center Design Initiative Grant. He said the amount of the award of this grant was \$200,000 and was a cost reimbursement agreement.

Commissioner NeSmith asked about the cost reimbursement agreement. Mr. Dixon explained the County must spend the money first and get reimbursed, up to \$200,000.

Commissioner Green asked about the project design. Mr. Dixon stated they would hire an architect firm to design it. They already had the plans from Wakulla County and another county that has already gone through this and may be a minimal situation.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if they had to do an RFP for the engineering firm or design firm or bid it out?

Chair Holt asked if they were using a design that was used by someone else, was there a need for a bid? Mr. Dixon said he was unsure at how that would work, but would find out. He said they were not looking at a single building but co-locating buildings of like uses and perhaps could co-locate an EOC, EMS and a COVID Shelter into a single multi-use facility. They were looking at all the options.

Tashonda Whaley, Emergency Management Gadsden County Sheriff's Office, appeared before the Board. She said other counties have already started this process. The grant actually came down in 2019 but COVID happened and it stalled in a lot of counties.

Commissioner Green asked if this was just for the design plan or in talking about location or places to put the center, could it possibly be at the old Stevens School? She said in speaking with FDEM Bureau Chief and other counties that were already doing it, they felt initially they would retro-fit a building already standing. However, now they felt they were moving toward a new facility and as the Administrator stated, could use as multi-purpose and was what lot of counties were doing to cohabitate for EMS, Sheriff's Office, EOC as long as it did not interfere with the everyday operations of Emergency Management and activation of the EOC, they were fine with it.

Chair Holt asked for them to try to contact Commissioner Hinson, because it showed he was on and she did not want him to not be able to comment if he wished to do so. She asked they text him to ask that he call in.

Commissioner NeSmith asked Ms. Whaley if she was familiar with the operations center in Tallahassee? She said yes. Was the County planning to have a multi-purpose operations center? Mr. Dixon said was why they talked about a co-location and there was a minimum standard of who had to be in the room. The unit they currently have was too small, too old and was why they really needed this grant. They will be building a new facility and will be designed to hold all those people in-house. Mr. Dixon said they were planning to build new facility that was 300,000 square feet, it might come to Quincy, or at least to Midway and did not think it was off the table, the County just may be low on the list. It had to be centrally located to Tallahassee with easy

access and would have to get big trucks in with the staging equipment. He said it was not just a building, they were talking the staging to go with it.

Ms. Whaley said even though this was just for the architectural design, the reason the State was doing this was so when monies come down to actually build, the counties that have done this will have the opportunity to get funds also.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE OPTION 1 AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 3-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HOLT DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:19 A.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk