

AT A PRE-MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON OCTOBER 5, 2021 AT 4:30 P.M.,
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

****COMMISSIONERS SAT IN AUDIENCE AND MADE IT HARD TO HEAR ON OCCASION****

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

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Dixon called the workshop to order at 4:35 p.m.; asked for a moment of silence and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Holt arrived at 4:35 p.m.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD (3-Minute Limit)

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@gadsdencountyfl.gov until 11:00 a.m. October 5, 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.

Mr. Dixon read aloud the above statement.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Mr. Dixon stated for this workshop they will discuss future plans regarding Gadsden County American Rescue Plan and Item two would be review and discussion of the October 5 meeting agenda.

1. Discuss Future Plans Regarding the Gadsden County American Rescue Plan

Mr. Dixon explained there was a hand-out that showed an update of the American Rescue Program. They have tried to elucidate in the hand out of what fundings they have gone through.

Small Businesses Assistance Program

This program has funded 46 small businesses and has a balance of \$4000, but that program is now out of money due to not being able to process a full funding award to a Small Business Owner.

Resident Assistance Food Card Program

This program had a funding award totaling \$250,000, funded 1666 food cart applications and has a remaining balance of \$100.

Churches/Religious Organizations Assistance Funding Award

Mr. Dixon said \$700,000 was put into that funding but have only paid to date a total of \$180,000 and has a balance of \$520,000.

Nonprofit Organization (NPO) Assistance Funding Award

This program was funded with \$190,000 but was only able to expend about \$80,000, and has a remaining balance of \$110,000.

Nonprofit Health Care Organization Assistance Funding Award

Mr. Dixon said they were able to spend even less with this program; this program was funded with \$165,000. He said they did everything possible trying to get people to apply for these funds and those that came, did. He said it was the same with churches. While Mr. Dixon did not state, the hand-out he provided showed three nonprofit healthcare organizations were approved for funding; two applications were paid totaling \$16,000; one remained to be processed totaling \$12,000; and the balance remaining in the program is \$137,000.

Direct Funding Awards

Mr. Dixon said the following directed funding had been processed for payment:

- Gadsden County Sheriff's Office \$500,000
- Second Harvest of Big Bend \$25,000
- Farm Share \$25,000
- We Care Network \$20,000
- Gadsden County Administration and County Workforce \$320,400
- Gadsden County Health Council \$75,000.

The total amount paid out was \$965,400 and to be processed for payment was the its Gadsden County Judge Courtroom improvements of \$75,000. The remaining balance is \$75,000.

The total balance remaining in all programs is \$771,100.

Recommendations for the Balance Remaining

Reimburse \$9000 to the Gadsden County Sheriff's Office for security detail at GCARP Residence Assistance Food Card event held August 9, 2021 thru August 13, 2021.

Purchase an Emergency Medical Services ALS ambulance in the amount of \$250,000 as the fleet is in desperate need of another unit.

Shift a portion of the \$512,000 ARP Small Businesses Assistance Program for applications currently in the portal and under GCARP Team review.

Commissioner Viegbesie commented this was very detailed information. He said his two priorities were the purchase of ambulances and Small Businesses. He said this money was specifically for those that have had difficulties since the pandemic.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the cost to purchase an ambulance and Mr. Dixon acknowledged it was \$250,000. Commissioner NeSmith then asked how many ambulances the County currently has. Mr. Dixon said they have about seven, one was totaled and needs to be replaced. There are three with upwards of 300,000 miles and they were talking about the reliability risk, the ability to get up and down the road without breaking down and they need to roll the ambulances. With them making trips from Chattahoochee to Tallahassee, that was 100 miles a trip. He said they had been buying them by happenstance they needed to get away from that and create a replacement program that would continuously feed the best units they could put on the street.

Commissioner NeSmith mentioned an incident that took place in Chattahoochee where the ambulance was not able to respond timely. Mr. Dixon stated there is an ambulance that is stationed in Chattahoochee at all times and is available **UNLESS** it is transporting someplace else, and was what probably happened. When there is a limited number of ambulances, you hope to continually move them so when one goes out of place, you're able to put another one in place to mitigate the time frame.

Mr. Dixon said they were going to reach out and renew old relationships, such as USDA. He added he believed this legislative session would be more successful than ever. He said they got \$400,000 for a mobile health unit and he failed to tell the Board, the Health Council received another \$273,000 last week.

Mr. Dixon said at this time, there were citizens that wished to speak.

Dyronea Bradwell, Triple T Hauling, LLC

She appeared before Board and said she applied for funding in June. She said her application was in review and now funding has run out. She said she appreciated what the County has done thus far but they need the funding.

Fredericka Hamilton of The Integrity Group spoke from the audience regarding the review process.

There was discussion amongst the Commissioners mentioning to review and restructure assistance among small businesses that may be a lower amount than what was decided on to assist as many businesses as possible. It was also mentioned the need for additional ambulances and asked if there were other "pots" available to help.

Commissioner Viegbesie hoped they could find a balance in the two.

Samuel Stevens, 45 Imani Circle, Midway, FL.

Appeared before the Board and said he was the owner of Stewalk Group, LLC, the trucking/ construction/ farming business. During the pandemic, they took care of the people that worked for them undocumented. He personally brought in the information early for it to be lost.

Lakesha Clark, 260 Imani Circle, Midway, FL

Ms. Clark appeared before the Board and is a realtor. She attended Zoom meetings and gathered knowledge about the program, printed out an application and hand delivered it. On July 1, 2021 she received an email that the application was received and was improper. On July

29th she received an email requesting documents but it did not specify what documents were needed so she called Ms. Hamilton and was told it was a preliminary email and assured her documents were in place. The week of September 13th she heard from people in the County that they received their money but she had not. On September 17th, she stopped by and was informed the application was in second review and no timeframe was given as to when a decision was to be made. She called today and found out she did not qualify because the brokerage firm she works under was located in Tallahassee. She is an independent contractor and is a sole proprietor and she business is located at 260 Imani Circle, Midway and has been since 2017. She found it very disheartening there was no follow-up call or email made to discuss her business or email sent to let her know she was denied. She said now to hear about re-allocating funds was a slap in the face to small businesses and hoped it was reconsidered.

2. Review and Discuss the October 5, 2021 Regular BOCC Meeting Agenda

Mr. Wilbert Butler appeared before the Board regarding Item 10 on the 6:00 p.m. agenda. He is representing Havana Community Development Corporation, Inc. He said he would wait and present his item at the regular meeting.

Fredericka Hamilton with The Integrity Group said everything said tonight would be taken into consideration.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, THE WORKSHOP WAS DECLARED ADJOURNED AT 5:50 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

RONTERIOUS GREEN, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk