

AT A WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON NOVEMBER 2, 2021 AT 4:30
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

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, Deputy Clerk
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Brenda Holt called the workshop to order at 4:32 PM.

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 workshop and will be asked to follow the Gadsden County Public Meetings Citizens Access Guidelines. Also, Public comment for Commission workshops can be submitted via email to CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov until 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. Comments submitted after the deadline but prior to the workshop 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 workshop.

County Attorney Clayton Knowles read the above.

PUBLIC HEARING:

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Discussion Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners

Assistant County Administrator, Mrs. Daniels, came before the board. She introduced the two items on the agenda, first being the discussion for the Rules and Procedures of the Board of County Commissioners and the second being answering any questions regarding any agenda items for the meeting following the workshop.

Commissioner Green entered the workshop at 4:34PM.

Mr. Knowles asks for guidance on whether the changes to the Rules and Procedures are what the Board of County Commissioners is asking for. He begins at item 6, whether the Vice Chair can start the meeting if the Chair is not able to. The Commissioners say yes. Chair Holt says she thinks the wording of "most senior commissioner" should stay in the paragraph. She says she would hope the Chair and Vice Chair are not out at the same time but if they are, then someone else

would need to be listed to begin the meetings. She says if the senior three commissioners are out then there's not a quorum and a meeting cannot be held anyway.

Vice Chair Viegbesie says he believes the wording regarding a senior commissioner starting a meeting should be left in to avoid any confusion.

Commissioner Green says he thinks both wordings are good but thinks keeping "seniority" in the paragraph would be best so commissioners would know how to proceed if one of the two, the Chair and Vice Chair, aren't here to start meetings. He says he likes the terminology as it gives direction to the Board if one of the two Chairpersons are out.

Commissioner NeSmith asks Mr. Knowles how the section would read if "seniority" wasn't included. Mr. Knowles responds that it would just have a simple definition of who would go next based on being sworn in. Commissioner Green says the Board should keep the wording in for future reference.

Vice Chair Viegbesie suggests the Board keep it as it is for future and to make sure there are no obstructions to the process. He says this document isn't a document for this Board but for in case anyone comes. He says these Rules and Procedures are something in place that is in operation for the future as well.

Mr. Knowles asks for clarity on "emergency meetings" on page three of their document. He says this does not impair discretionary limit. He asks what items can and cannot be brought to emergency meetings. He also asks if items worth more than \$10,000 should or should not be brought to emergency meetings unless there is a disaster. Mr. Dixon says the idea is to be clear about what an emergency is. He says "things that can wait, should wait."

Chair Brenda said if an item requires fiscal impact, she can see putting a dollar amount there. She clarifies that the administrator is not bringing budget items to any emergency meetings. Mr. Dixon responded no.

Vice Chair Viegbesie wants to add wording to clarify that only the items on the agenda will be discussed and nothing else. He says since the County Administrator has a discretionary limit, he doesn't see why the specific amount should be in if it can't impede an emergency situation.

Commissioner Green agrees with Vice Chair Viegbesie. He also asks what is the additional amount to charge attorney for special meetings. He also says he wants to make sure to stick to the agenda for costs.

Mr. Knowles responds to Commissioner Green's question regarding attorney fees, he says the charges are dependent on whatever the hours his office spends putting things together, whether that's ten minutes or five hours. He explains the section in question is designed to keep items to emergencies. He says the Board may need to define an emergency.

Commissioner Hinson entered the workshop at 4:54pm.

Mr. Knowles moves on to page six of the Rules and Procedures, whether commissioners shall have a limit to a maximum of 6 minutes per item- three minutes for discussion, two for rebuttal, and one minute for closing.

Vice Chair Viegbesie says the time limit isn't new and he doesn't think breaking down the minutes is necessary. He suggests giving six minutes, when those are up, it's up. Commissioners should be conscious of time as well.

Commissioner Green references time keeping. He is in agreement that there needs to be some structure or guidance but maybe not break it down too much.

Chair Holt says six minutes is fine but it's easier to look at intervals for the timekeeper. She says there needs to be a process in place.

Commissioner NeSmith clarifies if the Board means six minutes per agenda item. Mr. Knowles says yes, they just need to decide who is the timekeeper. Commissioner NeSmith says Brenda shouldn't as she's part of meeting as well.

Commissioner Green says the next Chair may not want that obligation of timekeeping so the Board needs to find a structure system.

Mr. Knowles said to try the process they have and see what works. He said to leave the language and amend it later.

Vice Chair Viegbesie said Commissioners should be conscious of time and be disciplined enough to respect other's time.

Mr. Knowles says the Board will want to remove item 11 on page 9. The item was in regards to the \$10,000 that the Commissioners agreed earlier was not needed within the Rules and Procedures document itself.

Mr. Dixon wants to mandate that all meetings are to start at 6 o'clock. He also mentions the need for the wording "unless otherwise stated by the Board". He wants this to also include special meetings. Commissioner NeSmith asks if meetings are required by statute to start at 6pm. Mr. Knowles says no just public hearings and regular meetings are at 6 per the Board's procedures.

Commissioner Green's issue with trying to change the meeting start time is starting before 6 pm, commissioners who have other jobs may not be able to make the meetings. Vice Chair Viegbesie agrees with Commissioner Green.

Mr. Knowles says the one thing that is not in the Rules and Procedures document but is in the code is "meetings end at 11PM". He asks the Board if they want to keep this wording in. Chair Holt says yes. She says if the meeting doesn't end at 11PM then the Board can vote to extend the meeting and conclude all business.

Commissioner NeSmith asks that language is where? Mr. Knowles explains it is in the adjournment in the County Code not in the Procedures document. He explains both documents need to align.

Vice Chair Viegbesie says these are rules for administration of the Board and meetings. Mr. Knowles says correct, this is for the administration of the Board not the County Administrator.

Commissioner NeSmith asks what then next step is. Mr. Knowles says the Board will need to advertise the to change the Rules and Procedures, will need to host public hearings, then host a first reading, then advertise it again, have a second reading, and finally adopt the ordinance.

2. Answer Questions on Selected Agenda Items Regarding the November 2, 2021 BOCC Agenda

Commissioner NeSmith stepped out at 5:26pm.

Vice Chair Viegbesie stepped out at 5:27pm.

Commissioner NeSmith returned at 5:28pm.

Mr. Dixon discusses the Greensboro fire department. He says the town is actively recruiting members for a new group of volunteer firefighters and they wish to continue the relationship with the town of Greensboro. Mr. Dixon says he met with the mayor and the city manager as well as those in opposition. He says he has explained to both sides that Greensboro is a city and even if the County gave the volunteer firefighters an agreement, it does not give them authority to provide fire protection in Greensboro. Only an agreement with Greensboro would grant that.

Mr. Dixon discusses the Chattahoochee fire department. He says the city plans to run their own truck and the county will not be providing them with one, however, his office is recommending an increase of funds for the fire department for running their own truck. He says the department responds to fires on the county's behalf.

Chair Holt asks what would be done with the fire truck that the county usually provides. Mr. Dixon says that truck has already been given to a volunteer fire department. Chair Holt clarifies that it has been taken care of. Mr. Dixon says yes.

Vice Chair Viegbesie returned at 5:37pm.

Mr. Dixon wants to table item 16, day FCI Broadband Service Agreement, to discuss with FCI and others more.

Mr. Dixon asked for a second ambulance to offset those that are being worked on or used within the county.

Commissioner Green moves to item 18. He suggests the Board look at all formats of how to use the funds and do a workshop on it rather than voting on it tonight. He asks to pull the item and workshop it instead. Commissioner NeSmith agrees.

Mr. Knowles added an item regarding opioid lawsuit. He says the county was asked by the Attorney General to join this lawsuit with other Florida counties. He asks for the ability to have the Chair "sign on" in agreement. It is not binding. Vice Chair Viegbesie appreciates Mr. Knowles for bringing the request from the Attorney General to their attention. He says the county has nothing to lose.

Chair Holt says she spoke with the Sheriff and Mr. Barkley, and says those in jail have problems and concerns. She says inmates are in need of some help. She suggests having a drug work program and re-entry program as well. Mr. Dixon agrees with Chair Holt.

Chair Holt brings up the rampant drug addiction among inmates as well as the housing issue.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HOLT DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 5:45 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk