

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FL ON JANUARY 18, 2022 AT 6:00 P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

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

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone to the meeting, called it to order at 6:04 p.m.; asked Rev. Gregory to give the Invocation and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Dixon asked to pull Item 11.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GREEN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER NESMITH, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

CONSENT

Mr. Dixon asked that Commissioner Holt and Commissioner Hinson abstain from voting on the Consent agenda due to a conflict with item three.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GREEN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER NESMITH, THE BOARD VOTED 3-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

1. Ratification Memo
2. Approval of Minutes
 - November 16, 2021 Regular Meeting
3. Approval and Signature for Special Assessment Lien SHIP Housing Rehabilitation Program or Emergency (ER) Program

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

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 noon on January 18, 2022. 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.

Commissioner Green read aloud the above statement.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

GENERAL BUSINESS

4. Approval of Actuary Services for required OPEB Report Optional Post Employee Benefit

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated it was for Board approval to renew the agreement with McGriff Insurance Services, Inc. to provide actuarial services for the preparation of the required 2021 OPEB report.

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

5. Approval of the Agreement for Update to the Gadsden County Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element with the Apalachicola Regional Planning Council (ARPC)

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for a grant in the amount of \$50,000 to improve the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

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

6. Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County BOCC and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Gadsden Connector Bus Service from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2024

Mr. Dixon said items 6, 7, 8 and 9 were all interconnected as they were agreements with Big Bend Transit. He added this comes to the Board with a slight rate increase. He said there would be a rate increase going up to \$5,900 per month and was attributable to increases in salary, health and vehicle insurance, vehicle costs and fuel and will costs.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE WITH DISCUSSION AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND.

Commissioner Hinson stepped out at 6:16 p.m.

Chair Viegbesie said there was a request, especially from the seniors, as to signage as to where the bus stops were so people would know.

Commissioner Hinson returned at 6:17

Commissioner Holt asked the amount of the increase and was told \$1,000.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if it was known what caused the shortfall. Mr. Dixon said that was the increase they gave them. Commissioner NeSmith asked what caused the increase and Mr. Dixon said it was what he mentioned above.

Commissioner NeSmith then asked if they have a schedule of bus stops and times and was told yes.

Mr. Dixon said with the upgrade to the website, they will be able to highlight programs.

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

7. Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County BOCC and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Continuation of Gadsden Express Services from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it sought approval for Gadsden Express to provide express bus service to and from Gadsden County to the central bus terminal in Tallahassee with limited stops along the way. He said the county would fund the Gadsden Express beginning October 1, 2021 thru September 30, 2024. He added there is 50,000 allotted in the FY 21/22 budget for the Gadsden Express Service and the anticipated fares to be collected from riders is approximately \$13, 100.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they had reached out to the City of Quincy? Mr. Dixon stated that was the next item.

Chair Viegbesie asked where this was in the budget.

Ms. Daniels appeared before the board and said they get grant from City of Tallahassee through StarMetro. We have \$50,000 in the budget and they pay the other \$50,000.

Commissioner NeSmith questioned the last sentence in the outline of the Fiscal Impact where it stated the county pays Big Bend Transit the full amount monthly and bills StarMetro for one have the cost. Ms. Daniels explained the county paid the monthly amount of \$9,455.40 less fares collected first and then get reimbursed.

Commissioner Green said the Administrator made mention when he has a conversation with the City of Quincy, is there a possibility they will be able to help? Mr. Dixon said he could ask because this serves all the cities.

Commissioner Hinson felt they should ask the City to join in, they utilize every place in Quincy, they just stop in other cities.

Commissioner Green said in the conversation maybe all cities could be included, based on the amount of services.

Commissioner Holt said this was an agreement they had a long time ago with the City of Tallahassee. She said there was not infrastructure money coming down and she felt this was an

item they could work with including Apalachee Regional Planning Council on planning element for the Comprehensive Plan.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND WITH A QUESTION.

Commissioner Hinson felt they should meet with BBT every couple of months.

Commissioner NeSmith questioned why the contract started October 2021 and it was now January 2022. Mr. Dixon said they were working on contracts as fast as they could. They have still been providing services.

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

8. Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County BOCC and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Quincy Shuttle Bus Service from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2024

Mr. Dixon introduced above item and said it was for approval to renew the transportation agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to provide the Quincy Shuttle service in and around the City of Quincy.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HOLT HAD A COMMENT.

Commissioner Holt asked to be provided the number of ridership.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if they receive the numbers and was it required in the contract and Mr. Dixon said yes.

Chair Viegbesie asked to make it part of the quarterly report when they provide ridership data to make it available to the Board.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE ASKED FOR THE VOTE. Th THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

9. Approval of the Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Tallahassee (c/o StarMetro) and Gadsden County, FL

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for Board approval of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and the city of Tallahassee StarMetro to utilize the city of Tallahassee StarMetro grant funds from Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) to pay Big Bend Transit for the Gadsden Express Service from October 1, 2021 thru September 30, 2027 and authorize the chair to sign.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER NESMITH HAD A QUESTION.

Commissioner NeSmith said he was hearing Tallahassee, StarMetro, how was it different? Mr. Dixon said they were all different in that the transportation part was different and they appeal

to a different grant for funding. All of it was designed is to get people into and out of Tallahassee. He said each line required and a different line of funding.

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

10. Microsoft Enterprise Annual Renewal

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for Board approval to renew the agreement with Microsoft for a three-year term, beginning October 1, 2021 thru September 30, 2024, as required by the terms of the existing Microsoft Enterprise Agreement.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER NESMITH HAD A QUESTION.

Commissioner NeSmith asked about the contract starting October 2021 and this was now January 2022. Have they been providing services? Mr. Dixon said yes and explained this was a renewal of the contract.

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

11. ~~Motorola Project Maintenance Contract~~

Item pulled

12. Re-Approval of the Gadsden County CARES Act Residual Funds

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for Re-Approval of the CARES Act Residual Funding previously approved on June 15, 2021. He said it was workshopped earlier in the day and they were asking for the approval.

Chair Viegbesie said if he recalled correctly from the workshop there is \$140,000 that was not currently allocated. Mr. Dixon said that was correct. Chair Viegbesie said the discussion in the workshop was that \$20,000 of that would be put towards...Ms. Daniels appeared before the Board at the podium.

(Mr. Dixon asked her to take over for him as there was a disruption in the lobby and he stepped out.)

Chair Viegbesie said of the \$140,000, during the workshop they agreed to move \$20,000 of that to the American Rescue Plan to add to the \$260,000 to make it \$280,000.

Commissioner Hinson said in 2020 they were able to make a commitment to communities to use the money for homeless programs and use the rest of the funding for the Small Business and residential Program. He said they could make changes. The Havana Community Development has asked for help the past 10 years and they have been unable to help. He was in Gretna and was impressed and saw there were needs in Gretna as well. He wanted to award the City of Gretna \$250,000. He said they need to help those that need help in the County. He asked for \$600,000 and Commissioner Holt asked to add Gretna in. When he went there, he understood. He would like to share half with Gretna. He wanted to make a bold move and

hoped to have Commissioner Holt and the Chairman's support along with everyone else. He proposed \$250,000 for HCDC and \$250,000 to the City of Gretna.

Chair Viegbesie said that conversation was what the workshop was about. They have already approved spending \$255,000 of that on an ambulance, approved reimbursing the Sheriff's Office \$9,000 for detail during the Resident Assistance food card distribution. He added what they discussed and came up with during the workshop was \$280,000 should be allocated to help small businesses that need assistance. He said if they do that, the \$768,000 will go to zero. He asked which one was not a priority, the ambulance or the sheriff. He said all they really had was \$140,000.

Commissioner Hinson said this was a work in process and could change on a dime, nothing was in concrete. This money went into the general revenue. The Board voted to give \$100,000 to the homeless program.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked for the sake of time, for Commissioner Hinson to make a motion on how he wanted the money spent.

Commissioner Hinson said they could take the money out of the budget to redesign the Commission Chambers. He asked the Board to restore the money that was set aside for homelessness.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO ADD \$250,000 TO HELP CITY OF GRETNA; \$250,000 TO HELP HCDC AND \$100,000 TO ASSIST WITH THE HOMELESSNESS IN GADSDEN COUNTY. HE ALSO STATED THERE WAS MONEY IN THE GENERAL FUND TO PURCHASE AMBULANCES.

Commissioner Green said he thought they were calling numbers for Item 13 and not for Item 12.

Chair Viegbesie said the motion is for of the \$1.77 Million, that \$600,000 be spent on Commissioner Hinson's proposal.

MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.

Commissioner Holt asked if they were discussing the CARES Act and was told yes. She said they have to have shovel-ready projects and need to have programs in place. She wanted Havana and Gretna to have money but they have to have money to keep ambulances running. She said they just need to vote and move on.

Commissioner NeSmith said they have a responsibility to utilize the public's money carefully. \$600,000 was not enough money for what the building needs, they need an overall plan.

Commissioner Hinson asked to put the allocation of funds on the screen. He said the last budget they voted for, they voted to provide for these positions. They voted to add positions on the CARES dollars. He asked why they took the homelessness money out of the budget.

Commissioner Holt said there was a lot of false information being given out tonight. FEMA recommended these positions in 2019 and they did not follow the recommendations. They

have approximately \$140,000 to use. They could apply for grants to help Havana Northside. They need the positions and need to have shovel-ready projects.

Commissioner Green wanted to recognize the Mayor of Gretna and City Manager that was present. He added he would like to have the opportunity to sit with Havana and Gretna to see what plan they could come up with. He said he did not know the needs the homeless have, they need details.

Chair Viegbesie said if they were going to deal with homelessness, they need someone in the Housing program.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO RESERVE \$140,000 TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO AT A LATER DATE AND APPROVE THE ITEMS IN THE AGENDA FOR THAT ITEM. COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-1 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM. COMMISSIONER HINSON OPPOSED.

13. Re-Allocation of Funds for the Gadsden County American Rescue Plan (GCARP) Program

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for approval of the Re-Allocation of funds for the Gadsden County American Rescue plan program. He explained in the workshop held earlier, what was recommended of the \$776,100 remaining that \$280,000 go to GCARP Small Business Assistance Program to fund the 28 businesses that were already approved for funding; buy an ambulance for \$245,000; a second ambulance for \$242,00 and \$9,000 to reimburse the Sheriff's Office for the security detail provided at the GCARP Resident Assistance Food Cart event that was held from August 9 through August 13. He said that would zero out the remaining funds.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they were talking about 4 ambulances the County would purchase in a year? Mr. Dixon stated they bought them because they were needed. They have 2 backup ambulances that were now being run continuously and the new ambulances have over 300,000 miles on them. He said the wait for a new ambulance was over a year and they did not have the luxury of waiting that year.

Commissioner Hinson said that made sense. He added when he gives out information, he wanted to make sure it was accurate and if he was inaccurate, he apologized for it. He said there was over \$5,000,000 in the General Fund and if it was that big of an issue they can always use the money from the general fund. He said he recalled when they voted on the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan, none of them saw the budget. It was presented the same night and they voted on it without knowing what was in the budget. He said to Chair Viegbesie, if he said something that was not true to please let him know.

Chair Viegbesie said he did make a statement that was not true. He said when the American Rescue Plan was presented at the workshop, Brenda Holt was the chair, not himself. He said he has told his students that the quantity of words used does not determine the quality of the statement made.

Commissioner Hinson asked Chair Viegbesie if he voted on something that night he had not seen and the Chair responded no, because it was presented to them that evening.

Chair Viegbesie asked the will of the Board.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM WITH \$280,000 FOR SMALL BUSINESS; \$240,000 FOR THE AMBULANCE; \$242,000 FOR A SECOND AMBULANCE AND \$9,000 TO REIMBURSE THE SHERIFF AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

14. Economic Development Professional Services Contract with the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce Small Business Service Center

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for approval of the Economic Development Professional Services contract between the Gadsden County BOCC and Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce Small Business Service Center. He explained the contract was not due until September 30, 2023. He said this contract along with item 15 was brought to them for direction. The board asked for contracts to be brought to them so they could see the verbiage and direction that was in the contracts. He said they do not get much information when it comes to this contract and they need to provide for addition in the contract. When they do receive information, it is limited.

Commissioner Green said he wanted to make sure he understood clearly that the Board was possibly paying for services and getting no detail what they were getting for what they were giving funding for. Mr. Dixon said yes. Commissioner Green asked if the information has been asked for. Mr. Dixon said they did not want to ask until they had direction from the Board.

Commissioner NeSmith said Commissioner Green asked one of his questions but asked if they have at a current contract. Mr. Dixon said yes. Ms. Daniels explained this was a renewal of the contract.

Mr. Dixon said both of the contracts for Item 13 and 14 were up for renewal and but the items were workshop worthy. He said given the Board's recent understanding of some economic situations, these programs were hand in hand and if they were going to make some moves in the future and if they were going to be partners, they needed to be given real direction by the Board.

Chair Viegbesie stated they just heard from the administrator as to the policies that they, as the decision makers, should make.

Commissioner Holt said the Board spoke before that they wanted to have in-house economic development or contracted economic development services. She felt this needed to be workshopped desperately.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO TABLE ITEM 14 UNTIL THEY HAVE A WORKSHOP AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

****Board returned to Item 14****

Commissioner Holt stated she would make a motion to rescind but she was not present. Chair Viegbesie said that did not mean in person.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MOVED FOR RECONSIDERATION OF ITEM 14 AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO PAY THE CHAMBER THROUGH THE SECOND QUARTER AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

15. Economic Development Professional Services Contract-Gadsden County Development Council

Mr. Dixon recommended to table item 15 as well as it pertained to the same as item 14.

Antonio Jefferson, Chairman of Gadsden County Development Council, appeared before the Board. He asked they not table this because they were into the second quarter. They were not aware the contract expired. He added they do report to the Board at the request of the County Administrator. To workshop this item, they would have to close their doors until a decision is made. He asked they renew the contract.

Mr. Dixon said they were not recommending they be defunded, they were recommending to look at the contract. He said they have no intention of not paying them but need to talk about the contract in its entirety.

Chair Viegbesie asked if they have been paying GCDC, have they also been paying the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce as they were in the same situation. Mr. Dixon said he was not recommending either be defunded.

Commissioner Green asked how soon could it be workshopped so there would not be any issues.

Chair Viegbesie said the Attorney just brought some implications into the conversation. Mr. Knowles said if there was no contract with either, they would not be paid.

Chair Viegbesie said they had already tabled item 14.

Commissioner Holt said to recommend they continue for the next 60 days and they need to know what both were doing. If they were going to pay the Chamber, they need to report what they were doing and they could revisit that item when they finish this one.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO OFFER GCDC 60 DAYS OF PAYMENT UNTIL THEY MEET AND SEE WHAT THEIR PLANS WERE AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER NESMITH HAD A QUESTION.

Commissioner NeSmith said he was trying to understand the motion. They are paid quarterly and was the motion to pay them for 60 of the 90 days. Commissioner Holt said the reason she said 60 days, it would give them 30 more days to look at any problems. Commissioner NeSmith asked if would be prorated? Mr. Dixon said they would be paid through the second quarter.

COMMISSIONER HOLT AMENDED HER MOTION TO PAY GCDC THROUGH THE SECOND QUARTER AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND.

Commissioner Hinson said they were the Board and had to be careful, it was easy to make a motion and easy to take a vote. He said they dropped the ball to wait to the last minute and they were being punished. They have 30 days to terminate the contract. He said they need to move forward, they have other pressing things.

Commissioner NeSmith said he did not know the date of expiration. Mr. Jefferson said the date of the contract was not the issue for them in looking at it. They assumed when they were asked to come before the Board and they adopted the budget with GCDC included, they felt they would not have to negotiate a specific contract. They assumed they would be renewed. They felt the issue of the contract would be just a formality of what they would continue to do. Commissioner NeSmith said they have been having discussions all year concerning economic development. He said they need to have an overall discussion concerning this.

Chair Viegbesie said Commissioner Hinson said something they need to take to heart with this item. He said they were talking about \$60,000.

Commissioner Hinson said he agreed with Commissioner Nesmith in that they need in-house economic development. He said they will be moving in that direction.

Commissioner Green stepped out at 8:32 p.m.

Commissioner Holt asked when the second quarter ended and was told March 31st.

Commissioner Green returned at 8:38 p.m.

Commissioner Holt said they could meet in February and get a plan together.

Mr. Dixon said his recommendation was for a strategy session and not to put them out of business.

Commissioner NeSmith said the Administrator capsulated what he was going to say. The issue is they have to do something different. If they continue with the same, they will have the same outcome.

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

**** They then returned to Item 14****

CLERK OF COURT

16. Updates

The Deputy Clerk stated there was nothing to report.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

17. Updates

Mr. Dixon asked if they wanted to cancel the second meeting in February. He said they were looking at trying to have a meeting on February 18th for some special items. Chair Viegbesie said he knew three and maybe all five commissioners will be at the NACO conference and felt they needed to look at cancelling.

He said today is the Small County Coalition Day in Tallahassee; tomorrow is Legislative Day in Tallahassee. He said they will convene at 8:30 at the Marriott at Cascades Park.

In conversation with Dr. Cooksey, they are moving to daily vaccinations and testing from 8 to 5 PM at the hospital. They will be doing PCR and rapid testing and no appointment was necessary. He said there was also a new vendor looking to set up services Chattahoochee way to make sure that area of the County was well taken care. The school testing is for asymptomatic and was doing a rapid PCR test and that result come back in 20 minutes. They are testing for COVID, flu and RSV in order to try to keep the schools open. He said they were testing and finding 27-30% positivity of those that have been tested. He said there has been minimal hospitalization because of vaccinations. They were not aware of any deaths from Omicron. He said right now they did not have any of monoclonal antibody vaccinations in Gadsden County, they are exercising that at FSH to maintain a low infection rate. He said they were also vaccinating children 5 and older.

He said there was a Meet and Greet of the Gadsden County Interfaith Prayer Team, RSVP required on Saturday, January 22nd at the Havana Community Center from 9 – 11:00 a.m.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

18. Updates

Mr. Knowles asked for an Executive session in regard to a case that is right for settlement.

Chair Viegbesie stepped out at 8:55 p.m.

He will get with Ms. Bradley to schedule.

Commissioner Holt asked who the meeting was with. Mr. Knowles responded it was with Eric Krebs, outside council assigned by Florida Association of Counties for a pending lawsuit, Woodard v. Gadsden County, a sexual assault at the library.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

19. Report and Discussion of Public Issues

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt said they have an Ordinance of building and rebuilding on the replacement of homes and wanted it brought back because once a house or mobile home has been demolished, it has to be replaced within a 2-year period according to their Ordinance.

Also, she would like to look at a partnership with the City of Tallahassee on transportation to see how they could better use the infrastructure money once they receive it.

Chair Viegbesie returned at 8:59 p.m.

Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson said he talked to the County Commissioner about the issue dealing with Figgers Communication and their contract was set to expire February 1st. He asked for an emergency meeting to discuss and extend their time to at least a year to identify 25,000 hotspots. He said it would be challenging for them to give service for less than 25,000.

Mr. Knowles said since they had been in the meeting, he received an email from Mr. Bebe asking for a meeting next week.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT FOR ANOTHER YEAR. MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.

Commissioner Holt asked the Administrator if he had been working with FCI and asked if he had any suggestion on how to extend in order to work out what they need to work on. Mr. Dixon said they have been trying to work with FCI all along and had what they thought was a good idea, ran it down to the sources. They went back to their representative and gave them the idea, asked what they thought and heard nothing. He told them time was running out. They just received an email this afternoon. If they will not come to the table, he did not know what to do. Commissioner Holt asked if 30 more days would give enough time to do something. Mr. Dixon said it would be 30 more days. If they ask for at a meeting, they will have a meeting. Commissioner Holt said she did not see the email and asked it be sent to her. She said she would like to end this and hopefully could help some citizens in the community. Commissioner Holt wanted to know if they were interested in meeting. Mr. Dixon said they asked for a meeting and unless the Board said otherwise, he planned on meeting with them.

Mr. Knowles said they were meeting on February 1st, the day the contract expires and could discuss then.

Commissioner Hinson said he was looking at the email, it was sent out Friday and received Monday. He asked the Administrator for all emails between the Administrator and Figgers and said he was ready to bring this to closure.

Chair Viegbesie asked how many representatives with Figgers have worked with the County Administrator on this item.

Commissioner Hinson asked for a public records request of all communication between Figgers Communication and Ed Dixon so he could see for himself what has transpired.

He said he asked about the situation with the homelessness program and was told they had to have information. He said there were a lot of people that live in abandoned houses. He said there was also a major problem with mental health in the county.

Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, District 3

Commissioner NeSmith said Commissioner Holt brought two issues to his attention and he concurred with her on the recommendation on houses that were burnt or destroyed. Mr. Knowles explained the Ordinance.

Commissioner Holt clarified her comment and stated she wanted to give them an opportunity to beautify the property, to give them more time, like 5 years instead of 2.

Commissioner NeSmith asked in order to amend, what was required. Mr. Stiell said it was in Section 3 of the Land Development Code.

Commissioner NeSmith asked who initiated contact for the FCI meeting and Mr. Dixon explained an email just came in during the meeting today.

Mr. Knowles said they sent an email to FCI last week discussing the plan they had for the devices, asking their input and informed them of the timing of the nature of it and they responded today asking for a meeting next week.

Commissioner NeSmith asked Mr. Dixon if he had a chance to read it and he said he just glanced at the email. Commissioner NeSmith asked if he felt they could move forward and Mr. Dixon said he had no idea, he knew the county's intentions and had no idea their intentions. He said they have asked for a meeting and unless he was told different, he would meet with them and try to determine what their intentions were and would get back with the board.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, Vice Chair, District 5

Commissioner Green said he received a call from a constituent from the Lake Talquin area about a Neighborhood Watch program and he was going to reach out to Colonel Collins with the Sheriff's department. He also asked if the administrator to give him guidance if he th th knew anything about Neighborhood Watch programs.

He said he was glad to hear the County Health Department extending their hours/services regarding COVID. He then added that the public could order their own home test kit for COVID. He said to go to [COVIDhometest.com](https://www.covidhometest.com).

Commissioner Anthony O. Viegbesie, Chair, District 2

Chair Viegbesie said he would talk on one topic mentioned several times. During the Rural County Economic Summit in St. Augustine, they had a presentation/workshop on homelessness and affordable housing. He forwarded the presenter's information to the Administrator to schedule a meeting with him to explore possible assistance on aggressive pursuit of mitigating homelessness and enhancing affordable housing in the County. He said the meeting would involve the Administrator, Assistant Administrator and the SHIP department.

He said he had the opportunity to meet with some gentlemen and there is an ordinance they need to consider putting in place and was a property registration ordinance. He said this would help address the plight in the County. He gave the card to Mr. Dixon and asked him to explore.

Commissioner Hinson wanted to make sure before getting into it, they had all the information as he did not want to take people's property. Chair Viegbesie explained this was not taking people's property.

Chair Viegbesie said he has always, before making any recommendations to the County Administrator, suggested the county administrator invite them to come before the body so questions could be asked.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION WEEK AND COMMISSIONER HISNON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Chair Viegbesie said finally, his comment was something for them to think about. He went to a meeting today and what he was told did not make him happy.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION THAT THE GADSDEN COUNTY COMMISSION CREATE A GADSDEN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESTORATION AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Receipt and File

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:40 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk