

**AT A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON MARCH 1, 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 called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.; Pastor Jackson gave the Invocation and Chair Viegbesie then led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Dixon said he would like to pull Item 9 from the Consent Agenda and add it as 11a. (Deputy Clerk added it as Item 9 in Items Pulled for Discussion.)

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AS AMENDED AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

- 1. Proclamation Honoring the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC)**
The board presented a Proclamation to representatives of the National Association of Women in Construction and the Proclamation was read aloud.

Kerwyn Jones Wilson and Jackie Carrouth Wilson were present and received the Proclamation.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR A 10-MINUTE RECESS AT 6:17 P.M. AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Chair Viegbesie reconvened the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

- 2. Presentation Regarding Vacant Property Registration Ordinances**
Mr. Knowles introduced the above item.

Clifford Johnson, Break Point Law, LLC, appeared before the Board and gave a background as to what his firm does and how it could benefit the County. He said in 2008 a major boom of foreclosures and vacant properties and found that the mortgagees and entities or not taking care of the properties as they were supposed to. Because of such it left a lot of problems in

the municipalities. Ordinances started being implemented that required mortgagees to register foreclosed properties. He said that would create local contact in case there was a problem with a bank owned property so they can be contacted. He had they been able to do a very good job of getting compliance rates of the registrations and registration fees up to about 95% and it gives the county a really good tool of code enforcement. He said it helps to ensure the properties are being maintained and property values hold. He said the ordinance would only require banks to register and there was no requirement on the homeowner. He said the responsible party would pay a reasonable registration fee to cover cost of administration of the VPRO program and related code enforcement efforts. The fees are typically in the range of \$150 to \$300 semiannually or \$300 to \$500 annually.

Commissioner Holt said property has been repossessed and the company is not maintaining the property; his company would approach the mortgagee and asked what they would do. He said after the filing of the Lis Pendens, they would contact the individual, make sure they were aware there was an ordinance that required them to register and give them a time period to do so, if they do not then they would send letters on behalf of the county working with the county attorney, if they do not register and pay the fees and they would be taken to Code Enforcement hearings, present the evidence in front of the Magistrate and hold them accountable. He said that they would also make sure they were boarding up the properties and they did what they were supposed to under the code. She asked how they are paid and he said they would work strictly on contingency. If they do not collect then they are not paid.

Commissioner Green said this caught his attention with no costs to local government.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the closest local government to Gadsden they worked with and he believed it was Orange County.

Mr. Knowles said he looked at it and the only concern was the legislature has the new Business Impact Statement requirement that they are imposing on ordinances so before anything was implemented they needed to make sure they were in line with that and they have the appropriate staffing with Code Enforcement and other municipalities. He said it definitely was something needed and would keep blight out.

Commissioner Hinson said he was looking at this from the citizen's perspective, he was on the Value Adjustment Board and he expressed concerns about people being put out of their homes.

Chair Viegbesie asked Mr. Johnson how his firm would address the concerns of a commissioner with the expedition of the foreclosure process after it had been filed.

Mr. Johnson stated it was a valid concern and what they do is completely separate from the foreclosure laws. It does not affect the foreclosure laws that the banks have to adhere to. He added that nothing they do would have a financial impact on the borrower or residents of the county.

Commissioner Holt said if they were to adopt the policy, would they have to have clause in there that the occupant not been evicted.

Chair Viegbesie said the reason he took interest in this ordinance was a desire to find additional sources of revenue. He added this would be workshopped before adopting.

Commissioner Hinson felt the timing was wrong right now.

Commissioner Green said for the sake of clarity, this was not an agendaed item, it was just making them aware.

Commissioner NeSmith said he has listened to the comments and as the Vice-chair stated, they were not voting on anything. He would like to schedule a workshop so they could better understand.

Commissioner Hinson said on his behalf, he has been on the Value Adjustment Board forever and he was concerned that what they were talking about here might affect a lot of the citizens.

Chair Viegbesie said there was nothing in writing and the Ordinance had not been drawn up, this was just a presentation of a service.

Mr. Dixon said this was about whether or not the bank maintains the property, if the bank maintains the property, there is no problem. He said this was like Code Enforcement that they already have in place.

CONSENT

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

- 3. Ratification Memo**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
 - **January 4, 2022 Regular Meeting**
 - **January 18, 2022 Regular Meeting**
 - **February 1, 2022 Regular Meeting**
- 5. Ratification of Proclamation for Black History Month**
- 6. General Release-Case No. 01-2021-CA**
- 7. Approval of the E911 Spring Rural County Grant Application for E911 System and MapSAG Annual Support and Maintenance**
- 8. Approval of Resolution 2022-003 Grant Budget Amendments for FY 2022**
- 9. ~~Approval to Sell Surplus Equipment/Vehicles at Auction~~**
Item moved to 11a
- 10. Approval of the 2022 Small County Consolidated Waste Grant Application with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Amendment No. 1 to the SC208 Agreement**

11. Approval of the Lease Agreement with Quadiant, Inc.

11a. Approval to Sell Surplus Equipment/Vehicles at Auction

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

9. Approval to Sell Surplus Equipment/Vehicles at Auction

Mr. Dixon said the supplied list was incomplete; there are two tool boxes to be added to the list.

Commissioner Holt said on the trailer, that should be 48 feet not 48 inches and Mr. Dixon said yes. She said at one time they had auctions here, do they no longer do that?

Commissioner NeSmith asked where the auctions were held? Commissioner Holt responded at one time they were in Midway and used to be in Tallahassee.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

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 March 1, 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 Hinson read aloud the above statement.

Mimi Robinson (appeared via Zoom) and her concern was about dogs-was not available.

Commissioner Hinson said they needed to have a workshop on animal control because there had been a lot of concern regarding animal control.

Ms. Robinson (appeared by Zoom a little later) and said last year she was bitten by a dog and proper protocol was not followed by staff.

Rosetta Rolle Hylton-Anderson appeared before the Board. She passed out information regarding April being "Donate Life Month". They would like to be able to light up the Courthouse yard with the green and blue that represented Donate Life Month. She wanted to make sure everyone understood the importance of organ donation.

Commissioner Green thanked her for her hard work in the County.

Katrina Tuggerson of The Tuggerson Group, thanked them for their support and services, she had the opportunity to work with The Integrity Group with getting funding out with the CARES Act and ARP programs. She said there were a few hiccups with Integrity at the end and she would not go into that. She was present to let them know she was still able to work with

Gadsden County as the prime, not as the sub-contractor. She said the reason she was there was the Administrator reached out to her to make sure they had a minority contractor. She said if she had trouble as a sub-contractor, she thought about the smaller people that were not able and had the resources she had and was connected to.

Beth Cicchetti, Executive Director of Gadsden County Development Council (GCDC) appeared before the Board. She had several things she wanted to mention to the Board members:

- 1) The Ad Valorem tax exemption is due to expire this year and she encouraged them to bring forth an item to renew it as it helped them retain 320 jobs and add upwards of 40 jobs through Coastal Forestry Sources and with the absence of the qualified targeted industry tax refund at the State level, this program was what set them apart and made them more competitive in Florida. She said an email was provided on February 11th with all the items they could consider to bring this item forward as an item for the commission.
- 2) Also, the Gadsden County Strategic Plan has been completed and was included in the Agenda item for later this evening. She said she did notice that on-line, the strategies for the plan had been left off so she brought copies.
- 3) She invited them to come to the GCDC virtual meeting on March 22nd where Amazon will be the key note speaker.
- 4) She asked they reconsider the workshop they had said they would schedule at a previous meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

GENERAL BUSINESS

12. Approval of The Integrity Group, Inc. (TIG) Work Authorization 2022-004 to Facilitate Gadsden County in Implementing the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) Broadband Planning Toolkit Project and Completion of DEO Requested Toolkit Reports

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated it was presented to the Board for approval of the TIG work authorization to facilitate Gadsden County in implementing the DEO broadband planning toolkit project and to completion of the DEO requested toolkit reports.

Commissioner Holt asked if they could consider minority-based contractors within this contract. Mr. Dixon explained minority participation was something that is considered with every contract. As Ms. Tuggerson said, they reached out to her for that particular contract in an attempt to make sure that the communities are recognized. Commissioner Holt said she wanted to make sure that was looked at.

Commissioner Holt stated she wanted to make sure they looked at that before they closed out on the contract.

Commissioner Hinson said it was also imperative they bid out items to be fair to others.

Commissioner Green said he knew this item was time sensitive, was there time to do that being they were presented with dates?

Chair Viegbesie said what he was thinking, if this was very time sensitive, if they would consider those businesses and individuals that may be brought in as “sub partners”.

Commissioner Green said there was no disrespect with Integrity, but they were not the only company that does what they do. Maybe another company that put a bid in could provide services without having subcontractors.

Mr. Dixon said the concern did not fall on deaf ears. The reason for the reward of a master contract was for expedience. The money is out there right now but what level will be out there in three months? There is an appropriate time but believed Integrity was the best group for this at this time. The point right now is that they are on the main line with a few things that they were trying to not only keep pace with but to gain pace. His recommendation was to go with Integrity.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if they have in the past had similar consulting contracts with other groups?

Mr. Dixon stated he had not been in office but a short while, did not have that and perhaps it could be provided. He said they were looking at the number of all, the kind of people they were looking for, the kind of affirmation and the level it must be presented.

Commissioner Hinson said they were still a government and must follow their own ordinances and policies. He said there could be lawsuits from other people who wanted to do it. That was the purpose of the ordinance setting their policies and procedures and they must adhere by it. He pointed out anything over \$25,000 must be bid out and this contract was for \$200,000.

Chair Viegbesie said this was an item on the Agenda and asked if Mr. Dixon had a comment.

Mr. Dixon said they have master contracts with architecture, master contracts with engineering and do not bid those out. This has a federal component to it and if they were using ARP dollars, those folks have to be authorized to be certified. This is straight-forward and not that simple.

Commissioner Hinson said Mr. Dixon said some very smooth words; they have an ordinance and if they were not going to follow their ordinance, then they were a renegade county. When the architect has a project, he brings plans and explains.

Commissioner Holt said the part between the County and Federal Government, she felt Integrity was perfect; the part between the street and Integrity was what she was interested in. Getting the survey is what they need to do. Her concern was to make sure they have someone that can go after money within the timeline. Second, compile the data and get it to the State of Florida. The third thing was to get it in a timely manner.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if there was anything improper with the Agenda item. Mr. Knowles said he would side with the fact a procurement of services as pursuant to statutes are always best when they are bid out. He did not think there was anything improper, they do have a master agreement with Integrity that was signed before he and Commissioner Green joined the Board, this was a task order underneath that and was well within the rights of the

Board to do. However, if the is Board concerned with a lawsuit or heartburns, they could prepare an RFP and advertise it.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if there was anything improper about this agenda item and Mr. Knowles stated no, this was a work authorization for an existing contract.

Chair Viegbesie asked the will of the Board.

Commissioner Holt asked Mr. Knowles, Tuggerson has said they did not want to be a sub-contractor, could it be rectified as far as having someone gathering information, doing the surveys? Mr. Knowles said since they were dealing with federal dollars, it was already in Code of Federal Regulations that a) they should try to use minority contractors, and b) in the Integrity contract there is a carve-out for local. If they wanted to make the change, they could include something that would carve-out a certain percentage or certain deliverables. The Board would have to identify that that was so he could make the changes.

Chair Viegbesie said that comment was why his though process and why he interrupted the Administrator. Whoever makes the motion could be contingent in including a local minority firm as a partner to this process, not a sub-contractor.

Commissioner Holt wanted to know from the Administrator his opinion if they wanted to include a local minority contractor.

Mr. Dixon said it was easiest was to give him direction.

Commissioner Hinson said this was something to think about. He said Integrity would get a percentage regardless.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the Administrator if that was the way the contract was written? Mr. Dixon said no.

Commissioner Hinson said he was here before Mr. Dixon was and they did the contract. If not mistaken, there was no costs to the Board, their fee was included with the amount received.

Commissioner Green said it has been clearly stated that Integrity has a good relationship with the county as it relates with getting federal money. They may not be as good in the community and need that to be able to get as accurate information as possible, but feel like they were behind in paperwork. He wanted to see them move forward and adding a partner to the project but how do they advertise and make it available for a partner to come and if they decide to go with The Integrity Group. Mr. Dixon stated he thought they would direct the Manager.

Chair Viegbesie said what Commissioner Green said was what his thought process was. They do need local minority participation in this project. If they decide to go in that direction, the approval of this item should be contingent on the inclusion of a local minority business, not as a subcontractor, but as a partner and could be a minor partner to the major organization in this process.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if Commissioner Holt had a motion.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONTRACT CONTINGENT UPON A LOCAL MINORITY PARTNER BEING INCLUDED. MR. KNOWLES ASKED TO AMEND THE CONTRACT OR THE TASK ORDER. COMMISSIONER HOLT SAID TO AMEND THE TASK ORDER. MR. KNOWLES ASKED IF IT NEEDED TO COME BACK BEFORE THE BOARD AND SHE SAID IF CONTINGENT UPON IT BEING DONE, THEN NO.

Commissioner Green asked who responsible for paying that partner? He stated he did not want what happened before to happen again.

CHAIR VEIGBESIE SAID THERE WAS A MOTION ON THE FLOOR AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND.

Commissioner Green wanted to make sure proper payment was taken care of.

Chair Viegbesie said the process will be worked out with Integrity and subcontractor when they get there.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they could speak with Integrity.

A representative of Integrity appeared before the Board.

Commissioner Hinson asked the purpose of the \$200,000. He explained it went beyond a survey, that was only one small process. He said it was setting up and following the nine steps and going through the different procedures.

Commissioner Green stepped out at 8:04 p.m.

He said Ms. Keeler will be the project manager along with a minimum of two other people that would be assigned to work with her so they could get the information collected, gathered, assimilated, analyzed, corrected if need be and then create the report, submit it to the Board for review and approval, once approved, submit it to DEO. He said they would be glad to have minority representation. He said they would be glad to do that and open it up to anyone within the community to come in and partner. Commissioner Hinson asked if the \$200,000 would stop the process. The representative said they would bill by the hour, it could hit the \$200,000 mark or it may not.

Commissioner Green returned at 8:08 p.m.

COMMISSIONER HOLT CALLED THE QUESTION AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE SAID THE MOTION WAS TO CALL THE QUESTION AND ALL IN FAVOR TO CALL THE QUESTION AND STOP DISCUSSION AND THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE CALLED FOR THE VOTE ON THE MOTION. THE BOARD VOTED 4-1 BY VOICE VOTE. COMMISSIONER HINSON OPPOSED.

13. Approval of the Agreement with FDOT-Grant Applications

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated FDOT's SCRAP, SCOP, B-SCOP, and CIGP application cycle was currently open and would close March 4, 2022. The county has selected four roads and two bridges to apply for and must approve a resolution in support of the applications. He four roads and two bridges that have been selected are:

- Aspalaga Road-SCOP;
- Providence Road-SCOP;
- Mt. Pleasant Road-CIGP;
- Dogtown Road-SCRAP;
- Richlander Creek Bridge on Old Federal Road-B-SCOP; and
- Hurricane Creek Bridge on Shady Rest Road-B-SCOP.

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

14. Main Courtroom Upgrades at Old Gadsden County Courthouse

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was presented to the board to award bid 21-24 Main Courtroom Upgrades for COVID-19 social distancing for the Judge and staff in the Historical Courthouse.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

15. Approval of the Agreement with the Gadsden County Development Council

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it seeks Board approval of the Economic Development Professional Services Contract between the GC BOCC and Gadsden County Development Council for the period of October 1, 2021 thru March 31, 2022.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HOLT COMMENTED WHENEVER THEY WERE LOSING BUSINESSES, THEY NEEDED TO BE INFORMED. CHAIR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

16. Approval of the Agreement with the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated it seeks Board approval of the Economic Development Professional Services Contract between the GC BOCC and Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce Small Business Service Center.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HOLT SAID THEIR MAIN JOB WAS RETENTION AND THEY WERE LOSING BUSINESSES. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

17. Gadsden County Receipt of Settlement Proceeds from Endo Pharmaceuticals

Mr. Dixon introduced the above referenced item.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

18. Gadsden County Sheriff's Office Request for Advance Funding to Support the Delivery of Services for the Gadsden County Criminal Justice Diversionary Project; the Restoring Families Program; the Teen Success Academy; the SOAR Program and the Civil Citation Program

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was presented to the board from the Gadsden County Sheriff's Office to request an advance in the amount of \$210,235.98 to continue the delivery of services for the Gadsden County Criminal Justice Diversionary Projection, the Restoring Families program, the Teen Success Academy, the SOAR program and the Civil Citation Program.

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

Commissioner Hinson asked about the monthly amount in the Teen Success Academy and it was stated that was a typo showing \$70,078.66 and should be \$7,068.66.

Commissioner Holt asked about the money coming to the Board. He said it comes to the County to be transferred to the Sheriff's Office.

THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

19. Funding for the African American History Month Celebration

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated it was for board approval to allocate \$50,000 to the 2022 African American History Month Celebration.

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

Commissioner Hinson said there was a conversation regarding raising money and he was curious as to how much money was raised. Mr. Dixon said he knew they had raised money but was unsure of the amount. All the money that people that have promised to donate has not come in yet. Also, he was not kosher of their ability to fund raise and wanted to make sure it was done properly and therefore he was asking the Board for enough money to cover whatever situations they have in case he arrives at the conclusion that they have not "dotted our i's and crossed our t's". He said they have gotten a commitment from TDC and the City of Quincy. Commissioner Hinson asked how much TDC put in and Mr. Dixon said \$25,000. He said they will reduce it by what has been put in. He said it should say "up to" and knew they would not need most of the money.

Commissioner Green said the item did not state "up to" but knew they probably would not utilize the \$50,000 but at least it would be allocated.

COMMISSIONER HOLT AMENDED HER MOTION TO INCLUDE "UP TO \$50,000" AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH AMENDED HIS SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

20. Funding for Future Major Public Events for Gadsden County

Mr. Dixon said the turn-out was so enthusiastic and wanted to publicly thank Tracy Lockwood at KFC for providing 270 lunches for the Marching 100, Big Bend Transit for the transportation

and to all the Department heads and everyone else, all were in sync and in harmony. The \$100,000 is to be able to do it again for other events.

Commissioner Holt said on the previous event, you could not get a room at the hotel there was so much activity.

Chair Viegbesie said there was no doubt that there was a multiplier effect that comes from having events and thought they needed to consider having an annual Western jamboree. His question is where would the \$100,000 come from budgetarily? How would it affect the future budget? How do they know what the planning for future events will cost? Mr. Dixon said they don't, they expect it to come from general funds right now but it was an investment and wanted to send a signal to others that they were in it for the long haul, they come with an investment and the County is ready. He said "Cowboy Days" came to mind because (pointing to the Deputy Clerk) of the Deputy Clerk wearing boots every day. He said to take something like a big Billy Dean concert done right with the top investment and figure out how to involve the whole community and that would be a day for Gadsden County.

Commissioner Green said since they were talking about events, this was an event well worth investing in. The energy was impeccable and setting funds aside gives them something to work with.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION FOR OPTION 1 AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

21. Figgers Communication, Inc.

Mr. Dixon asked the attorney for an update.

Mr. Knowles said he received an email last Thursday from FCI's attorney, Levi Williams. They are requesting to have a working draft to the Board and him to review by March 3rd and believed they were trying to be on the agenda for the March 15th meeting. They were asking to present a new contract independent and separate from any prior contracts.

Mr. Dixon said Board direction to staff was to entertain the school district and the school district only and as the email shows they only received it on Thursday, February 24th and it speaks to a different number than they were directed to deal with from the board and so it was presented back to the board.

Chair Viegbesie said the direction was also to talk with the school district, did he and staff reach out to the School Board? Mr. Dixon responded yes, they did.

Commissioner Hinson said he asked for a public records request from the County Attorney and County Administrator and have not received that yet. Also, they had to be mindful that the County email was down for almost 3 weeks. He said there was a senior population here and they were looking at telemedicine. If they have a hotspot in the area, it could help the seniors out and they could call a doctor. He felt they should have a meeting in different areas and meet seniors in their communities so they could get hotspots.

Commissioner Green said Chair Viegbesie asked the Administrator about his conversation with the School Board and he wanted to know what their response was as it related to the hotspots. Mr. Dixon said they said their response was they would love to have between 3500 -4000 as long as they were not responsible for distribution and attestation; they only were receiving the hotspots. He said they never got with FCI to know what their abilities would have been to discuss that properly. He said he met with the School Superintendent and he was quite enthusiastic.

Commissioner Hinson said if you have 5400 students at the school and when he was there a few years ago, they gave each student a computer, each kid needs a hotspot. He said from Chattahoochee to the high school or Concord to the high school was almost an hour drive and that was two hours of time the children could do their homework.

Chair Viegbesie said there was nothing to vote on. His recollection was if there was no contract, then it was non-existent. The only request was to consider an extension for 30 days, which was this meeting.

Commissioner Hinson said they have to be fair about the situation, the County email was down for a long period of time and they did not know if people were trying to get in touch with them and they were being penalized because the County did not pay their bill.

Chair Viegbesie stepped out at 8:46 p.m.

Commissioner Hinson said they need to be fair.

Vice Chair Green said in all fairness, there was nothing in front of them to vote on.

Commissioner Hinson said they gave them until March 1st and after this date, the contract would be null and void. He asked why not extend for two weeks until everything was worked out.

Commissioner Holt said they need to decide one way or the other and move on. They could have communicated by phone or by certified mail. She said they need to move on.

Mr. Dixon said what they really requested was to have an opportunity to present a new contract separate from the old contract.

Vice Chair Green asked to hear from the attorney.

Mr. Knowles said they could vote to agenda this at the next meeting if there is a contract on the table and vote for it then.

Chair Viegbesie returned at 8:50 p.m.

He continued and said as Commissioner Holt has said, the contract has been extended and the old contract is done, he thought FCI and the Board acknowledges that. The question is whether or not the Board is inclined to give FCI the ability to present a new document to them on March 15th.

Commissioner Hinson said due to the situation, they should extend two weeks and however Board wanted to vote then, he would be good with it.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THIS FOR TWO WEEKS. MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.

Chair Viegbesie said if Commissioner Hinson wanted, he could bring up a different contract in the future. For now, that was the end of the contract.

CLERK OF COURT

22. Updates

The Deputy Clerk said there was nothing to report.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

23. Updates

Mr. Dixon said the Mask Ordinance was still in effect and seeing the CDC recommendations and if it was the will of the board, if they choose to relax the mask ordinance... Chair Viegbesie said the Governor preempted the county's ability to enforce the mask ordinance but it was an internal request of the Commission to encourage employees to wear masks in the building.

He said they were taking a hammering with the Legislature. Communities around the County were making out like bandits. He said they were still going to stay in the game and keep pushing and there were a couple more days but were on life support as it relates to the legislature. More was expected and it still may happen but hasn't yet.

He asked for advice on the green space where the old jail property is. He had a conversation with the Clerk because that is their Records Center. He did not think he has a problem with the building going away and them turning the whole lot into a potential green space provided they make room for the records and some place to keep them secure and dry. He said they have talked with the city of Quincy but not since the new administration regarding Public Works. The county's public works buildings are very old, very crowded, very small for what they were doing and in conversations with the City, they are looking to find a new place as well and come out of the land fill. They were talking to see if they could do a dual situation because there are so much cross connections. They buy our gas, they use our machinery on a regular basis that if there was one place, say 10 acres, them on one side and the county on the other and be a central maintenance facility, would be quite a savings.

He said they were moving ahead with the activation of the dirt road ordinance. Public Works has a look of a number of roads in each district, will be in touch about the roads and will be beginning to how public input/meetings in discussing what would be required in order to get into the program.

They also have been talking about fire rescue, they have just finished and opened the EMS facility in Havana and now the City of Havana has spoken with our Chief about coming back into Havana as part of their situation in terms of fire rescue.

Commissioner NeSmith stepped out at 9:00 p.m.

He said they will be talking to groups from Gretna and Havana regarding the schools and the projects before them.

This month they will have a meeting regarding economic development with the Chamber and GCDC.

Chair Viegbesie said he thought this body agreed to create a Department of Economic Development Restoration and Resiliency.

Commissioner NeSmith returned at 9:02 p.m.

Commissioner Green asked if that would be a combined workshop with the Chamber and GCDC and Mr. Dixon responded yes.

With Planning and Zoning, Mr. Stiell is reviewing some of the cases that have come to them and will be beginning the process of bringing some changes, not only in land development regulations but Comp Plan that will help. changes. Have been meeting with him and the Building Inspector about how to not only improve the process from request to approval or denial, but how to facilitate growth in the County. He said they have started moving pretty good and wanted to not only create a process for those coming but for those who were already here that wished to build a house on 4 acres and could not do it under the current rules and regulations.

Chair Viegbesie said he had a meeting with Housing and Code Enforcement and was a very productive and informative meeting. He suggested if they could in future meetings, create a spot where each director comes in and informs the Commission of their plans and updates.

Commissioner Green said in reference to workshops with the different departments, he has spoken with Ms. Burns and she promised there would be a workshop soon. He asked if they could expedite it because people were constantly calling about what was available in reference to home repairs and would love for it to be something on public record so it could be watched at a later date and asked it to be expedited.

Commissioner Holt said they need to have to look at the costs on these when doing workshops, if they could look at updates once every 2-3 months so they would not pay extra money out for the expense. They could give short reports during the meetings.

Chair Viegbesie said that was something in the attorney's area of specialization, before COVID, was planning on having a workshop for free, to help educate citizens about heir property and probate issues.

Chair Viegbesie asked what they were doing about working with the school system to establish an institution to enhance the County's K through eighth grade prep, were they working with them collaboratively? He understood that TCC just received millions of dollars to create a charter school and did not know where they were going to build it and he knew the Gadsden County school board had approximately 80 acres somewhere and he suggested that the school

board superintendent and the chair meet with the president of TCC to see how they could provide that site for the charter school. He said the school was designed for trade school skills.

Commissioner Hinson said they need to do research first.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

24. Updates

Mr. Knowles said regarding the Derrick Elias case, the FAC attorney had mediation and was not able to reach resolution and has requested a shade meeting on March 15th before the next meeting.

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

He said they will be seeing other pharmaceuticals settlements and will be a little bit of influx into the County.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

25. Report and Discussion of Public Issues

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt said she is requesting a workshop on the attorney's contract and felt it should have been bid out. She has the billing for that law firm and has a lot of data.

(Inaudible) grant for a local organization with the Department of Agriculture and put in for \$500,000 and has been approved for \$400,000 and was the first time, they received 1,000 points and the money will be spent here and will be coming before the Board in the near future.

She said they should look at purchasing commercial property and leasing it out to businesses to encourage more businesses to come to the area. They also should look at abandoned property that may be available for commercial use.

Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson said he wanted to thank the GC Black History Cultural and Educational Organization for a magnificent job that was done on Saturday. Mr. Dixon said he had the pleasure meeting with those groups several times along with the City of Quincy.

He also thanked the BOCC for helping with the cause and the City of Quincy.

He asked for a Proclamation for Dorothy Mae Harrison.

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

He said he will bring back the Summer Youth employment for ages 14-18 so they can get jobs and asked it be placed on the next agenda.

He also asked they consider 3500 hotspots, he did not want to take that from the kids.

Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, District 3

Commissioner NeSmith wanted to channel Commissioner Hinson because of who he thanked for the parade and gala.

He also wanted to channel Mr. Dixon for thanking staff earlier, they did a phenomenal job.

He thanked Mr. Dixon and Ms. Bradley for the list of accomplishments for the past 14 months; he had the opportunity to speak at New Deliverance Temple and the focus of his presentation for their Black History Program was to give them an overview of accomplishments. He said they have to inform the public of what they're doing because they do not know what the BOCC does.

He said they need a workshop on the goals and objectives for this year.

He said Chair Viegbesie mentioned earlier, they do a lot of travelling and wanted the public to know they have a lot of information for the Administrator.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, Vice Chair, District 5

Commissioner Green said he would be remorse if he did not extend his gratitude regarding the events this past weekend.

He said he would like to have a list of accomplishments as well.

He also said they were in the third month; the season was changing and crime will be growing. He has talked with Col. Collins and would love to partner with the local police, the cities and county so they could work together as it related to crime. He shared an incident that happened on Harden Street where an elderly individual was sitting at their dinner table and bullets came flying into the house and his vehicle.

Commissioner Holt said since they were talking about infrastructure, cities were putting cameras on certain locations and intersections and that might help deter crimes.

He said he heard a couple of names mentioned and when they are publicly mentioned and thanked, it gives them the incentive to want to do more.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO GIVE A PROCLAMATION TO TRACY LOCKWOOD AND CHAIR VEIGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO GIVE A PROCLAMATION TO MS. ROSETTA ROLLE HYLTON-ANDERSON AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO GIVE MS. KAREN WELLS A PROCLAMATION AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Commissioner Anthony O. Viegbesie, Chair, District 2

Chair Viegbesie said Commissioner NeSmith made the comment about their travels they have made. He has brought material for the County housing dealing with homelessness and said he has shared that with the Administrator.

CHAIR VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE LIGHTING OF COURTHOUSE IN BLUE AND GREEN IN HONOR OF ORGAN DONATION AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Commissioner Holt said some people asked for a Proclamation for Milton Thomas, the gentleman on the hill coming into Quincy that waves and welcomes everyone. There was not a motion made. She also asked that people not pay any attention to emails from her because she has been hacked, along with Mr. Dixon.

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 9:52 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk