

IN A JOINT WORKSHOP WITH THE CITY OF QUINCY
AND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD
IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JULY 28,
2022 AT 5:30 P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS
HAD, VIZ:

Present: Ronterious “Ron” Green, County Commission Chair, District 5
Kimblin NeSmith, County Commission Vice Chair, District 3
Eric Hinson, County Commission District 1
Brenda Holt, County Commission District 4
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Keith Dowdell, Mayor, City Commission District 1
Angela Sapp, City Commission District 2
Ronte Harris, City Commission District 3
Fredia Bass-Prieto, City Commission District 4
Anessa Canidate, City Commission District 5
Rob Nixon, City Manager
Gary Roberts, City Attorney
Justin Ford, Dewberry
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk
Crystal Jimenez, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Green welcomed everyone to the joint workshop and called it to order at 5:35 PM. He then gave the Invocation and led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

Commissioner Holt appeared at 5:36 p.m.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Opening Remarks

Both Chair Green and Mayor Dowdell gave opening statements and thanked everyone for coming to the workshop.

Mr. Dixon said he has been directed to make this happen.

Rob Nixon said he was humbled to have the opportunity to work with the City Commission and has been told to make this happen in the most efficient way. He was looking forward to this first of many meetings.

2. Presentation of County Request Regarding the Joe Adams Industrial Park

Mr. Dixon said they were about to spend approximately \$15 Million in the County and hopefully realizing an opportunity to share in development of the Grant. These grants have been awarded to the County and were behind in the push on one of the grants.

Ronte Harris appeared at the workshop at .5:46 p.m.

Mr. Dixon said they would like to package them together, the Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Sheriff's Department, along with Public Works. He said they have talked about a dual set-up with Public Works. He said this gives them a chance to grow. The city has a business park they developed years ago and it was the County's desire that the City be willing to donate a portion of the property for this build.

Justin Ford, Dewberry Engineers, said he has been fortunate to work with both bodies on a regular basis and the City of Quincy reached out to them in regards to a grant they received. They did a thorough evaluation. There is about 363+/- acres the City owns and approximately 75 acres is wetlands. The County it is requesting approximately 39 acres to use as a governmental complex. There is a solar farm there and the City of Quincy has expressed the desire to expand it. One project that is urgent at this point is the EOC facility. Mr. Sampson has begun to lay out a footprint of the building. He explained the EOC facility as shown, sits on 4.5 acres of County owned property behind the existing National Guard Armory. It would house the EOC and future buildout for the Sheriff's Office space, and other uses such as dispatch and the full build-out was pushing 45,000 square ft. They have allocated next to that the new EMS facility that would have access to Joe Adams Road. They have taken into consideration the new by-pass and have designed it so it would not be impacted. He said the County and the City have shown interest in new Public Works Facilities and the City does have a grant to move forward with their portion of the project.

Option 2 is very similar and all that changed was the Administrative buildings in a different place.

Option 3 showed combined Administrative buildings-to left for the City or to the right for the County.

He said it was a beautiful piece of property and was doable.

3. Discussion

Mayor Dowdell asked if they leave the solar farm where it is at the present time, would that cause confusion of the buildings and Mr. Ford said his opinion was no. He recommended to do landscaping buffering and ways can be hid from governmental complex.

Angela Grant said when looking, was the property line the bold dash line and was told yes.

Ms. Bass said her biggest concern was taking up 39 acres of prime real estate in the County. This was no tax revenue in this ever and how do they explain this to citizens. Maybe look at swapping dirt. Tax revenues have to go up. She was not saying no, just this was a prime spot and was 39 acres. Even though getting \$15 Million to build, there is a lot of sites they could trade and be able to get in tax revenue on property.

Chair Green said he was aware there were other properties.

Mr. Dixon said they were entering this with eyes wide open. They just finished cataloging all properties and they were cognizant of situations. He said County was just like the City in being cash poor.

City Commissioner Harris said he was pleased to know the door was open for conversation. He was more interested in the map or outline that was presented in the feasibility study.

Mr. Ford said in the same vein of discussion, if there becomes a need in the future, there was room for expansion.

City Commissioner Harris said no doubt when construction starts, the interest will start. He would like to see a conversation centered around if the whole 39 acres was necessary.

Commissioner Holt said on the property, they were not interested in collecting (inaudible). What was important is what type of businesses want to come and they have to look at future growth. They could look at properties together.

City Manager Nixon said with regards to the project they were discussing now, what is the minimum amount of land needed?

Mr. Dixon said they would take less frontage and less land.

Mr. Ford said if they move all of Public Works, some of the area is not developable.

City Commissioner Bass-Prieto said with utilities, how would they get them there and who would be responsible? She asked where was the area that was set aside for the City of Midway? There were questions and Mr. Ford said they did have a conservation overlay that mirrored the wetlands. He said they were not proposing any impact of that. As far as utilities, they have adequate utilities along Joe Adams Road as far as water, waste water and natural gas. They would have to extend to serve proposed buildings and could not speak on who would pay for what.

Commissioner Holt said that would be covered in the development.

Commissioner Hinson said Ms. Bass-Prieto had interesting points. This was his first time hearing this and thought they would have other options in different areas. He said most factories were in remote locations because of big trucks coming in. He said would someone want to build home around a Public Works facility? He gave credit to Congressman Lawson for bringing in money.

City Commissioner Sapp said they did need a building for their Public Works because the current building was not healthy for their workers and at one time High Bridge Road was a remote area of Quincy. She did say she was in favor of controlled growth.

Mr. Dixon said they have given great thought to the location, it was an industrial location with SuperValue next door, WalMart, the Jail and Prison. They tried to consider other locations. The equipment they carry was newer equipment and did not come with the horrors they remembered. He said the State and Federal agencies need answers from the County and City.

Commissioner Holt said Mr. Dixon said most of what she was going to say. They have to work together. They will meet the deadlines for the grants and they need to work on some things.

She said both were known for negative things and want to be known for the positive. She said they could meet again and come to a conclusion.

Commissioner NeSmith said this was just the beginning.

Commissioner Hinson said they do not have time to fight over small stuff. Why not refurbish Public Works? The easiest money to get grants for is a County Courthouse. Move the jail to a remote area like Hardaway. They need to hire a lobbyist to bring infrastructure into the County. Move the Courthouse to a remote location and businesses will follow.

Mayor Dowdell thanked everyone for coming to the table and they now know where everyone stands. He said they have to give to get something. He said they will leave the day-to-day things to the managers and attorneys. He said the County was the ones that would have to put this together. They have to make it happen and this was a good beginning.

City Commissioner Bass-Prieto said she did not get a clear answer as to if any of this could be moved to outlying parcels. She agreed with Commissioner Holt that she would not want to live behind a jail and they do have potential for residential. There is Walsh Road and that would open up the Joe Adams frontage to access property. Joe Adams Road was not built for heavy equipment from Public Works. She added while trucks may be quieter now, they still were not quiet. One of her biggest dreams is to have functional, affordable housing plans. She wanted to see homeowners and see revenue.

Chair Green said it would be great if they could have quarterly sessions to collaborate together and affordable housing was one.

City Commissioner Candidate said this was very exciting. She was more interested in seeing how they could have availability for other businesses to come onto the property for taxes. Since she has been on the Board have not had much discussion on the business park from the former City Manager.

Commissioner Sapp thanked everyone for being here. Seeing these maps made things easier to visualize. They have people in outlying areas that are challenged with transportation. She also said putting City and County Public Works in one building is good as long as they could be kept separate.

Chair Green said it would be redundant if they all went around the table and expressed sentiments because all sounded the same.

Commissioner Holt asked they look up “The Golden Triangle”.

Chair Green said this was preliminary.

Mr. Nixon said this was an exciting time for them and a unique opportunity. The County Administrator and he have been in close contact on several projects and now were speaking the same language.

Mr. Dixon echoed the words of the City Manager. He said the sooner they spend money they can get more money. He said from what he understood, the City wanted the County to focus on

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners
July 28, 2022 – Joint Meeting with the City of Quincy

21-25 acres and try to leave enough frontage so they could have the anticipated businesses there, make sure as they are beginning the drawing of everything, they are shielding Public Works, that they put in infrastructure that the City will use, the road was already there.

Commissioner Holt said a traffic light was needed on Highway 267 at that intersection.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURHTER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR GREEN DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7: its19 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**RONTERIOUS GREEN, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk