

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN  
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON AUGUST 2, 2022 AT 6:00 P.M.,  
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

**Present:** Ronterious "Ron" Green, Chair, District 5  
Kimblin NeSmith, Vice-Chair, District 3  
Eric Hinson, District 1  
Jeff Moore, District 2  
Brenda Holt, District 4  
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator  
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney  
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk  
Crystal Jimenez, Deputy Clerk

**CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Green called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Bishop Willie C. Green gave the Invocation and Chair Green led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

**AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Dixon asked to add the Swearing in Ceremony of Commissioner Jeff Moore as Item 1-A, pull Item 6 for discussion and add Item 11-A Approval of Millage Rate for TRIM Notification and Set the Date, Time and Place for the Public Hearings to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2022/23 Gadsden County Budget.

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

**AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES**

**1. Recognition of Pastor Charles Morris**

Commissioner NeSmith read aloud the Recognition for Pastor Charles Morris; it was presented to him and he had a few words to say.

**1a. Swearing In Ceremony of Jeff Moore**

Gadsden County Judge Cathy Garner appeared and swore in new Commissioner Jeff Moore that Governor Ron DeSantis had appointed after the resignation of Commissioner Anthony Viegbesie.

**CONSENT**

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HINSON, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

**2. Ratification Memo**

**3. Approval of Minutes**

- March 25, 2021-Emergency Meeting
- June 15, 2021-BOCC Workshop
- October 5, 2021-Pre-BOCC Workshop

- **October 19, 2021-CDBG Public Hearing**
  - **May 24, 2022-Special Meeting**
  - **June 2, 2022-Budget Workshop**
  - **June 7, 2022-BOCC Regular Meeting**
  - **June 14, 2022-Procurement Policy Workshop**
  - **June 16, 2022-Budget Workshop**
  - **June 21, 2022-BOCC Regular Meeting**
  - **June 22, 2022-BOCC Workshop**
4. **Approval of the Revised E911 Rural County Grant Award Agreement for E911 System and MapSAG Annual Support and Maintenance**
  5. **Acceptance of the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant**
  6. **Approval of Mosquito Control Certified Budget and Agreement for Detailed Work Plan Budget FY2022-2023**  
Item pulled for discussion
  7. **Adoption of the Gadsden County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan 2022 Update and Approval of Promulgation Letter**

**ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION**

6. **Approval of Mosquito Control Certified Budget and Agreement for Detailed Work Plan Budget FY2022-2023**  
Mr. Dixon said there was correction in the numbers.

Commissioner when Hinson asked if they had everyone they needed. Mr. Dixon said they were searching for a certified Mosquito control person. The public can call Public Works at 850-875-8672 to be sprayed for mosquitos.

**COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AMENDED AMOUNT OF \$50,120 AND COMMISSIONER HINSON 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](mailto:CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov) until noon on August 2, 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 Jeff Moore read aloud the above statement.

**Mike Watson, 2793 Sycamore Road, Quincy, FL- Sycamore Road**

Mr. Watson appeared before the Board regarding Sycamore Road and its bad condition. Sycamore Road is in very rough shape and needs work.

Commissioner NeSmith said he did have the opportunity to ride that road and it was in very bad shape.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **8. Approval of Resolution 2022-018 Grant Amendments for FY 2022**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was presented to the Board for approval of Resolution 2022-018 and for authorization for the Assistant County Administrator and Finance Director to complete and execute all budget amendments necessary to maintain a balanced budget for fiscal year 2022 BOCC budget.

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

#### **9. Approval of Mosquito Control Agreement with Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs)**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was presented to the Board for approval of the Mosquito Control Agreement with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs).

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

Commissioner NeSmith asked the difference in this and the previous item and Mr. Dixon explained.

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

#### **10. FDLE Grant for Fiscally Constrained Counties for Salary Increases for Deputy Sheriffs and Correctional Officers**

Mr. Dixon introduced THE above item and said it was for approval of the FDLE Law Enforcement Salary Assistance (LESA) Grant for the Gadsden County Sheriff's Office. The funding from this grant will enhance the recruitment and retention plan of Sworn and Certified Officers. This will give Gadsden County \$500,000 to pass through to deputies and correctional officers and is recurring. The County will be putting another \$500,000 into the budget as well.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they could have the information that said it must be matched. Chair Green said to wait for the proper motion.

**COMMISSIONER MOORE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THERE WAS DISCUSSION THAT FOLLOWED.**

Mr. Dixon said for them to turn to page 3 and will see the grant and the requirements.

Col. Collins appeared before the Board. The Governor's goal was to have fiscally constrained counties be able to compete with bigger counties. With this grant channeled through BOCC, it will have them at the minimum threshold.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the starting salary for a deputy and it is \$39,500.

Mr. Dixon said that was the recommended minimum.

Commissioner Hinson said his goal was to retain and make sure the numbers were where they should be.

Commissioner Moore said to remember this was recurring money from State and felt it was a no-brainer.

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

**11. Procurement of Audio Equipment and Video Displays for the Gadsden County Commission Chambers**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated it was for approval of ratifying the procurement of audio equipment and video displays for the Gadsden County Commission Chambers.

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

Commissioner Moore asked if this was an upgrade of what they had, if it was needed or broken...

Mr. Dixon said it was broken.

Commissioner NeSmith wanted to make sure this was properly vetted and was the best price and the County Administrator assured him this was the best price for what they needed.

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

**11a Millage Rate**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and it was recommended to keep the millage rate at 9 Mills.

Commissioner Holt asked if the motion had to be read aloud in its entirety.

**COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF TENTATIVE COUNTYWIDE MILLAGE RATE OF 9.000 MILLS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE TRUTH IN MILLAGE (TRIM) NOTIFICATIONS AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SCHEDULE THE PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR ADOPTION OF THE TENTATIVE MILLAGE LEVY AND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 ON SEPTEMBER 13 2022 AT 6:00 PM AND ON SEPTEMBER 19 2022 AT 6:00 PM IN THE BOCC CHAMBER FOR ADOPTION OF THE FINAL MILLAGE RATE AND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 RECOMMENDED AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND.**

Ms. Daniels appeared before the Board and said what they set tonight could be lowered but could not be raised.

Commissioner NeSmith said that was his concern, they could set it higher and then come down. He asked Ms. Daniels, based on the overall projected budget and predictions of the Commissioners, did they have a budget that would meet all desires of the wish list that have been gathered from the Commissioners. Ms. Daniels said it was close, it could support what has been shared already. She said as they could see, the General Fund budget from Fiscal Year 22 to FY 23 was really close to what they anticipate it to be. They could shift some things that are already recommended but they were very close.

Commissioner NeSmith said the half Million dollars from the State is reoccurring funds, the original \$500,000, the County will have to continue to find the resources to carry that amount.

Mr. Dixon said that was there, it was recurring and did not want to get into it.

Commissioner Hinson said they had a collapsed bridge a couple of years ago and County almost went bankrupt because of lack of funds to support that.

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

#### **CLERK OF COURT**

#### **12. Updates**

Mr. Thomas was present and said he has sent several emails over last few months. Sometimes it's about reports, sometimes it's about problems and if fixed, and then he did not have to come before the Board.

1. He said the Audit is late, it should be delivered by June 30<sup>th</sup> and goes to the Auditor General and all the granting agencies and was very important. Every two years the County is required to do an actuary on retired employees' health insurance to determine the County's liability. They are required to hire an actuary to perform an OPEB study; this information is then given to their external auditors and those numbers are used in the Audit Report to determine the final net position. This is required to be done every two years. They hired an actuary, McGriff, in January. Their Human Resources staff was then required to provide information to that company so they could do the study and it usually takes several weeks to do it. They requested the information and the information was not provided and the Clerk sent an email to that effect, to all the Commissioners and staff. The Audit report was due to be reported to the State by June 30<sup>th</sup>. He just received confirmation that the final information was done July 20<sup>th</sup>. He added that their Audit is late because their staff did not timely provide the information. In government, there are certain things that are time sensitive and cannot do something because you do not want to do it. The State can withhold grants, some departments, such as SHIP, has already heard from the State on withholding funding and they can withhold revenue sharing. It was a simple thing that needed to be done to provide information and was not done. The Clerk said he was furious about it and it was unacceptable to him because it has never happened before.

He sent emails, he and the Administrator had a conversation on July 5<sup>th</sup> and he felt he knew how he felt about the situation unconditionally. He said it will take several weeks because the County failed to provide information in a timely manner.

2. Retired employees are entitled to continue with health insurance that they pay for, and have COBRA for people that did not retire but left employment and they are able to maintain health insurance for approximately 18 months and they pay for it. He said he received a call on July 1<sup>st</sup> from a retired Gadsden County citizen and was informed they may not have health insurance. She had paid 3 months to the County's Human Resource Department and those checks were held and had not cleared the bank. He said he has talked with them before about the holding of checks, the Clerk is custodian of County funds and if any County Department received funds, that money should be turned over to the Clerk in a timely manner, on a daily basis. There have been other issues with Human Resources and checks being held where deductions were made. Capital Health Plan has complained about that department being rude, unresponsive, and reconciliations not done on timely manner. He said he emailed them previously and recently have started seeing a slight improvement, but to him, this was its totally unacceptable at all levels. Something needs to be done about this and they could not hold checks and need to be forwarded in a timely manner. He said it was unacceptable and they should not stand for it.
3. They are the governing body and amended their Procurement policy and gave a little more authority to the Administrator. From the Clerk's standpoint, as long as there is money in the appropriate budgeted line item, that was fine. It becomes a problem potentially when there is not money in a budgeted line item and what they recommend to fix that is the Administrator brings to them a budget amendment to fix that to ensure prompt payment. If there is not a budgeted line item, from the Clerk's standpoint, authority that they do not have, it was against the law for the Board to vote for things, to incur debt when there is not proper money allocated for it. It can easily be fixed if the Administrator, in a timely manner, bring budget amendments to fix that problem.

## **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

### **13. Updates**

Chair Green said he hoped the Administrator would address a couple of the items in his comments.

Mr. Dixon said what the Clerk alluded to was correct, there was a problem and they thought it was a glitch and turned into a systemic failure in a part of the County they were not aware of. In their research over the past few weeks, they have found some issues and have responded to those issues involving retired employees, citizens and all issues he spoke of was housed in this area of the County. They have since made changes in how and who does that information without getting too deep into Personnel. Ms. Daniels' office has assumed all authority of dealing with incoming funding, money and the review of contracts, monthly, quarterly and annually. It was a failure on their part, they did not recognize it sooner and sometimes wished the Clerk would invite him over to his office for this type of conversation and would have gotten to it sooner. However, it was his responsibility to deal with and feel they have dealt with it, at least 95% have been dealt with and will deal with the remainder of it this week. They have reassigned activities and believe the situation has been remedied. He will meet tomorrow, or

at least has asked to meet tomorrow with the Finance Director and Ms. Daniels to make sure have closed all loopholes in terms of these activities and to ensure this does not happen again. He said he was trying to get away from this adversarial relationship. Everyone is a part of this County and if slipping and know how they are slipping and where they were slipping, do not send nasty emails or call with a nasty phone call, help to get to the bottom of it, if truly interested in getting to the bottom of it. This was an ongoing mistake for quite some time. They have managed to fix it and will be reviewing it in the coming weeks to ensure they have the proper accountability in place to make sure does not happen again. As far as the budgeting line item, they attempt to put everything they can in a line item. He did not see any reason, unless there was some sort of emergency, that he would ever do anything outside of the line item. He was more than aware that he was a phone call away from the Chair to request a meeting so he could ask him to approve something that was not in the line item. He did not care for the scary scenarios that this might happen, they were all professionals and certainly have no desire except to follow the rules. It is disingenuous to suggest anything else.

He said this weekend is Employee Recognition and Family Fun Day on Saturday at Lake Talquin and everyone was invited.

Omesha James appeared before the Board to give details.

Chair Green said he did see the hand of the Clerk. He said this was not a boxing ring. He wanted to be clear, on both parts, to stay tasteful.

The Clerk said he would not rebuttal, but there were two other statements he needed to mention, for the record, that he felt was important. In the budget process, inevitably, there is money that is going to the Health Council. He has not received anything from the Board stating, for the record, confirming what was said here that Mr. Dixon does not work for the Health Council in any capacity. He felt that needed to be clarified, and for record, there needs to be proof of that. I read a strong email from the County Attorney and if any of you have studied Government in college, you have had case studies and if he is still working for that entity while being County Administrator, that it is case study crooked. The second thing is, for the record, he wanted to verify/confirm that he made a request to the Board in writing about the money that was solicited for the Black History event and understood up to \$15,000 from people doing business before the Board. Since the Clerk is custodian of funds, if any money was taken in, it should have been provided to the Clerk. However, the previous Chair said the money was returned and he asked for an accounting, who contributed, what money was received and what money was returned. That request was made in writing and for the record, have not heard anything back.

## **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

### **14. Updates**

Mr. Knowles said they have a preliminary meeting scheduled for August 10 for their heir property program.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS**

### **15. Report and Discussion of Public Issues**

**Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4**

**COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR WE CARE AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER NESMITH HAD A COMMENT.**

Commissioner NeSmith said they have stated quite often that they wanted to change the terminology. Chair Green explained that has not come before Board yet and they have not officially changed the terminology. Mr. Dixon said they were working on that.

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

**COMMISSIONER HOLT ASKED FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR MS. MARY ANN PEOPLES-WILLIAMS AND COMMISSIONER MOORE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

Commissioner Holt said when they are looking at recurring funds, they need to include any that may not get in the lobbying efforts with fiscally constrained Counties because they may have to be put back later. They need to look at funding.

In looking at some of the emails, she felt things could be worked out, she's one to push for more employees and better things and they need to up their game some times.

**Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1 and**

Commissioner Hinson said for him, a Proclamation may sound small to some, but people doing things in the community for 30 years have made an indelible mark and he supports giving it. He felt they needed to at least have at a meeting about everything the Clerk said and have a check list of what was changed so everyone knows because it was very sensitive things that happened. He was asked if he was requesting a workshop and he said yes. He said they were at risk of losing money for housing based on what the Clerk said. He would like to have a workshop with the County Administrator, Clerk and can check off when it is fixed.

Chair Green interjected and said he did not believe they needed to have a workshop, however there needed to be transparency on it. It was just stated these were things they could be fixed and they need to know they have been fixed and needs to be brought back to the Board while the Clerk is present to agree that the issues have been fixed.

He thanked Mr. Knowles for the property class.

He congratulated Mr. Moore on his appointment as County Commissioner.

He announced that the Excellence Church in Midway was having a back to school supply drive on August 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. and Gregory Taylor is the pastor.

He also announced on August 5<sup>th</sup> would be food truck Friday in Midway.

On Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. the Havana Development Corporation is having their 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Back to School Resource Fair at Old Havana Northside High School.



He thanked the Board and said they have a super Board.

Commissioner Hinson said Congressman Al Lawson gave the City of Midway \$4 Million for infrastructure projects and was able to bring in a teen center. He said they were not trying to purchase Havana Northside and wanted to make sure that was clear.

**Commissioner Jeff Moore, District 2**

Commissioner Moore told Chair Green he ran a very efficient meeting and looked forward to getting to know everyone and working with them.

**Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, District 3**

Commissioner NeSmith asked the Administrator if he could come to the next meeting with various definitions of various awards with definitions.

He thanked the Administrator and Mr. Lee for work on Hardaway Highway.

He said he did receive emails regarding the issues and looked forward to a response to keep making Gadsden Great.

He said they had a phenomenal program (Summer Youth).

**Commissioner Ronterious Green, Chair, District 5**

Chair Green said they have been talking about collaboration a lot and had the opportunity to collaborate with the City of Quincy and that was very important to see the two Boards coming together.

Some of them had the opportunity to attend the State and National Commissioner Conference.

He said they had the opportunity to have their own Economic Development workshop a few Saturdays ago. He asked people to reach out to their County Commissioners.

He thanked Public Works for the signs in District 5 and thanked the PIO for getting the designs done of the signs. He thanked Mr. Dixon and staff for affording the opportunity to citizens for getting to know who they were by way of county government.

**Road Striping**

He asked for a schedule awhile back as it relates to striping of roads and they really need a list. You cannot see lines on High Bridge Road at night and was already a very dangerous road and need to get on it as soon as possible.

Commissioner Holt said next Thursday the Senior Citizens was having a skip day at her Oak Grove property.

Commissioner NeSmith thanked Mr. Stiell and was glad he was feeling better.

Chair Green said this was his first official meeting as Chair and to the Board that selected him for this opportunity, thanks.

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He then said “We all have opinions, but remember, your own imperfections and your opinionated opportunities, the issue or person that you are judging is somebody with breath and somebody with feelings and I advise you to choose your opinions wisely.”

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR GREEN DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:48 P.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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

**ATTEST:**

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**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**