

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON DECEMBER 20, 2022 AT 6:00
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: **Kimblin NeSmith, Chair, District 3**
 Eric Hinson, Vice-Chair, District 1
 Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2
 Brenda Holt, District 4
 Ronterious "Ron" Green, District 5
 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 NeSmith welcomed everyone and called the meeting at 6:00 pm. Invocation was given by Pastor Bill Glenn of the St. Labe Missional Church and Mission and Melani Green led with the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Dixon said there were no amendments to the agenda.

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

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

1. Recognition of Future Builders of America-Gadsden Chapter

Commissioner Green said she was not currently present but was on her way.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GREEN, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO TABLE THIS ITEM UNTIL ARRIVAL OF KERWYN WILSON.

Ms. Kerwyn Wilson arrived and Commissioner Green read aloud the Proclamation and it was presented to her.

CONSENT

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND MADE BY CHAIR NESMITH, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Commissioner Hinson asked Mr. Dixon why they amended the Holiday schedule. Mr. Dixon explained that New Year's Eve was inadvertently left off the schedule when previously presented.

2. Ratification Memo

3. Approval of Minutes

- **October 26, 2022 Workshop**

- **October 27, 2022 Nonprofit Workshop**
- **November 1, 2022 Budget Hearing**
- **November 9, 2022 Emergency Meeting**
- **November 15, 2022 BOCC Meeting**
- **November 28, 2022 BOCC Meeting**

4. Approval of Amended 2022 Holiday Schedule

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 December 20, 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.

Mr. Dixon read the above statement.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

GENERAL BUSINESS

5. Approval of Funding for Economic Development Trip to Lake City

Mr. Dixon presented above item and stated it was presented to the board for the approval of funding for travel to the Columbia County, Lake City, fl. He said lake city is by I-10 and I-75, was growing in all directions and was an opportunity worth their time. They have taken a very progressive approach to market the future of the county.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THERE WAS DISCUSSION.

Commissioner Green said this was a good concept and idea, but wanted to make sure other municipalities were buying in. He asked for the ones that were invited, did they ask for any financial contributions? Mr. Dixon said they have had conversations with Quincy and they are interested. They have started meeting with cities about this trip.

Chair Nesmith asked if they needed to table it? Commissioner Green said it is up to \$6,000 and they may not spend all of that. He did not think they should table it. Mr. Dixon said they wanted others to buy in. Chair Nesmith asked what would happen if the numbers changed? Mr. Dixon said they currently plan on 35 people going.

Commissioner Hinson asked the who was included and why they were paying for the Superintendent to go on the trip? They could drive themselves and the School Board had 18

Million dollars. Mr. Dixon said they lead him, he doesn't lead them. Commissioner Hinson said he was leading them.

Commissioner Holt said all cities and counties need everyone to buy in including the businesses. She added they could not train young people or older people for the jobs in that industry unless they had the school system buy in. They were the County Commissioners, they lead not follow.

Chair Nesmith spoke to the attorney. He asked the attorney to read the policy aloud. Mr. Knowles read the policy. Chair NeSmith asked Mr. Dixon to include that in the Agenda book.

Commissioner Green said he wanted clarification, they were not taking every staff member. He was hoping they would just send some representation.

Commissioner Hinson stated he was for this item if it was for staff. But they were talking about another agency. He said if they were in, they would put their money in. They have funding and wanted to make sure they were fair.

CHAIR GREEN CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 4-1 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM. COMMISSIONER HINSON OPPOSED.

6. CR 161-Point Milligan Road-Change Order #6

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and said it was for board approval and full participation of change order number six for CR161-Point Milligan Road in the amount of \$3925 to resolve/address a property owners' complaint. A recently installed guardrail blocked a private owner from accessing his property and there was not an obvious entrance.

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

7. Ben Bostic Road Project-State Funded Grant Agreement

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and said it was for approval of FDOT State Funded Grant Agreement SCOP for the above road.

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

8. Providence Road Project-State Funded Grant Agreement

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was presented to the board for approval of FDOT State Funded Grant Agreement SCOP program for the above referenced road.

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

9. Striping Project Bid Award

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and said it was for approval to award the Gadsden County striping project to Emerald Coast Striping in the amount of \$148,840.

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

10. City of Midway Animal Control Agreement

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and stated it was for board approval of the Interlocal agreement for animal control services with the city of midway. He said the city of midway shall pay to the county the sum of the \$416 a month for 3 years.

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

11. Approval of the Modification #2 to the State-Funded Small County Emergency Operations Center Design Initiative Grant F0073

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and said it was for board approval of the modification number two to the State-Funded Small County Emergency Operations Center Designed Initiative Grant Agreement. He said this was a cost reimbursement agreement accepting \$200,000 in State grant funds from FDEM. On February 1, 2022 BOCC approved modification number one and this modification will extend the agreement through December 31, 2023.

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

12. Approval to Accept the Proposed Hurricane Shelter Retrofit Contract #F0100 from Florida Division of Emergency Management

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and said it was presented to the board for approval of the hurricane shelter retrofit contract #F0100 in the amount of \$483,000 to retrofit a portion of the hospital to serve as the county's special needs shelter.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THERE WERE COMMENTS.

Commissioner Hinson asked about the fiscal impact. Chair Nesmith said it was a grant and there was no fiscal impact to the county.

Commissioner Green asked for cost estimate to get the facility running. Mr. Dixon said the county was already maintaining the building and was already absorbing those costs.

Commissioner Holt said there is some legislation for rural hospitals and may be able to generate funding.

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

13. Approval of the Contract with AE Engineering, Inc.

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and said it was for approval of the contract with AE Engineering, Inc. for the county's professional services-Engineers/Engineering Consultants. He explained both parties have agreed to same rates. Rod Myrick and Robert Thompson, of AE Engineering appeared before the Board and introduced themselves.

Commissioner Hinson congratulated them and had questions regarding the contract. Chair NeSmith said they would take care of that during the discussion. Commissioner Hinson stated this was different from other contacts and asked about the rate sheet. Mr. Dixon said there has always been a rate sheet.

Travis Howell, Alday-Howell Engineering, Inc. appeared before the Board and explained the rate sheet as it is used to establish a cost estimate on projects.

Commissioner Simpkins wanted to make sure, both AE and Alday-Howell have their standard rates and the County has theirs. She wanted to make sure they both agreed with the rate sheet BOCC has and Mr. Dixon said yes.

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

14. Approval of the Contract with Alday-Howell Engineering, Inc.

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and asked Travis Howell, the principal of Alday-Howell to come before the Board.

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

15. Approval of the USDA Lease Proposal

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and stated it was for approval of a lease proposal with USDA for the facility located on the west side of the livestock pavilion. He stated and the past they have leased the building to USDA. They want to lease the entire building and were asking for upgrades.

Commissioner Simpkins stepped out at 6:59 pm

Mr. Dixon stated there was a fiscal impact of \$55,054 with all prices reimbursable lumpsum after requests have been completed.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

CLERK OF COURT

16. Updates

There were no updates.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

17. Updates

Mr. Dixon hoped everyone will have a safe holiday. He said they will be having a get together when they return and thanked the staff for a wonderful year.

Commissioner Simpkins returned at 7:00 PM

COUNTY ATTORNEY

18. Updates

Mr. Knowles said he received notification from the Attorney General's Office that the first drop of the opioid settlement money has arrived. He said at a certain point they will need to workshop that matter.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

19. Commissioner Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2

Commissioner Simpkins thanked the Planning Department, Sonya Burns and everyone involved in the SHIP Program for the key presentation to Lawrence Rich.

She would like for them to have a workshop to discuss the funding they were receiving under ARP. Chair Nesmith said it was on the list.

She said ON New Years' Day, Radiant Life Changers will be having their Second Annual community brunch and she asked for the Board to partner with them in name. It will be held at the Eugene Lamb park at 12pm.

Commissioner Green asked what the partnership would consist of and Commissioner Simpkins explained the use of the facility and would not be financial.

COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE A MOTION FOR THE USE OF THE FACILITY, TENT AND TABLES FOR THE EVENT AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOIE VOTE TO APPROVE.

She also wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt said there will be a supply give-away at the St. John School on December 24th starting at 8:00 am. and she wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, Chair, District 5

Commissioner Green said they were doing a give-away on Thursday the 29th from 10 am – 2 pm and would get the information and make sure it was circulated. He thanked Tracy Stallworth for his assistance to be able to give away the supplies.

He thanked the Lake Talquin community on the golf cart parade and thanked the Sheriff's Department for letting him join in on the boat parade later that night. He asked the Administrator to give an update on Trulieve.

Mr. Dixon said they met with Mrs. Rivers, to talk about what they were experiencing. They were market driven. All companies were cutting back. Markets have recreational marijuana so their sells are capped in Florida. He said they planned to "mothball" a plant or two and recentralize their shops to recreational marijuana. He said this did not just hit Quincy.

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Commissioner Hinson asked if the administrator could provide them with a memo. He asked if they were given tax breaks. He said they need to have a special meeting next week to speak about the citizens that lost their jobs.

Commissioner Green said that was his purpose for asking to see what they could do. It is a private entity but it impacted the citizens.

He said he received a call about the 911 wait time in calls. The complainant said it took 2-3 minutes for someone to answer the phone. They need to have a conversation on what they can do to enhance the its Dispatch department. Another situation was the wait time for ambulances.

Chair Nesmith wanted clarification. Mr. Dixon said Dispatch was not under BOCC, they are under the Sheriff's Department. They can give them money, but could not direct where it goes. The Chiefs have been in conversation in the last month to look at transforming what they do.

Commissioner Green said there will be an event this Thursday for seniors.

He attended a memorial service for drowning victims in Lake Talquin that happened in 1962 where 18 individuals lost their lives. He asked they start thinking about a monument at the lake. He explained the situation.

He asked the attorney about the Administrator's evaluation. He wanted to know what are their rights in day to day operations, in order for him to give an evaluation and how do they talk to staff. Mr. Knowles explained what they should do.

He wished everyone happy holidays.

Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson Thanked One Gadsden Foundation, Figgers Foundation, and the Sheriff's Department for their assistance with Shop with a Cop Youth.

He said mental health was serious and they need to have a conversation for people that have mental health issues and were homeless. Chair Nesmith said they were going to workshop it.

He said COVID was spreading again as was the flu and encouraged everyone to get vaccinated.

Commissioner Green stepped out at 7:45 PM

He asked when they were going to apply for the ARP funding and Mr. Dixon said they have already applied and received it. Commissioner Hinson said every commissioner should have been informed.

Commissioner Green returned at 7:47 PM

He said the board agreed to have a meeting regarding the senior citizens and was hoping it can be done before Christmas. Mr. Dixon said they were unable to get prepared for this week.

Commissioner Hinson said they need to have a sense of urgency to make sure things get done. Chair NeSmith said workshops were on the checklist.

Commissioner Holt introduced Mrs. Dorothy Thomas and said she was her new aide. She also said the Board has not voted for anyone (Seniors) to receive any money yet.

Commissioner Holt stepped out at 7:56 pm.

Commissioner Simpkins said on January 1st they have uniform shirts for the students. She could be contacted if anyone wished to donate.

Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, Vice Chair, District 3

Chair Nesmith asked how many people had been affected with the laid off at Trulieve. Mr. Dixon said they did not know that yet. Chair Nesmith said CareerSource was having a job fair for the employees that were laid off.

Commissioner Simpkins stepped out at 7:57 p.m.

Commissioner Holt returned at 7:58 PM

He said regarding economic development, if not only do they need the help of commissioners, they also need help from the citizens. He said there is a position for an Economic Director on Indeed.

He congratulated Commissioner Simpkins on her portrait that had been added to the Chamber wall.

Commissioner Simpkins returned at 8:00 PM

He congratulated Commissioner Green on being the grand marshal at the golf cart parade held at Lake Talquin.

He said they will be getting workshops out of the way and they need a workshop regarding their succession plan.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION FOR CATHY JOHNSON AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Chair Nesmith said another workshop that is needed is regarding their revenue. He asked for recommendations on a County motto. Commissioner Simpkins suggested they put it out to the public to vote on it. He said they also need a bicentennial theme.

Commissioner Green's "greenlight moment"

Just in case you do not receive a gift during this holiday season, please remember that every breath that is given to you is your gift from the Almighty."

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MOTION TO ADJOURN

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR NESMITH DECLARED
THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:15 P.M.**

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**KIMBLIN NESMITH, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk