

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JANUARY 17, 2023, 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
Nicholas Thomas, Clerk
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk
Crystal Jimenez, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair NeSmith called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm., Invocation was given by Commissioner Hinson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Dixon stated 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

CONSENT

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AND COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HINSON HAD A QUESTION BUT STATED HE COULD WAIT UNTIL HIS COMMENTS FOR DISCUSSION. CHAIR NESMITH CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

- 1. Ratification Memo**
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
 - December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting**
- 3. Approval and Signatures for SHIP/ER/First-time Homebuyer Programs Liens and Contracts**
- 4. E911 Recorder Maintenance Grant Award Agreement & Interaction Insight Corporation Support Agreement**
- 5. Gadsden County Sheriff's Office Training Funding Request for Homicide Investigation**
- 6. Gadsden County Sheriff's Office Training Funding Request for Florida SWAT Association Hathcock Sniper Course**

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Anyone wishing to speak on agenda items or non-agenda items should schedule or notify the County Administrator's Office before attending the meeting and will be asked to follow the Gadsden County Public Meetings Citizens Access Guidelines. Also, public comment for Commission meetings can be submitted via email to CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov until noon on January 17, 2023. 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 aloud.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

GENERAL BUSINESS

7. Appointment to the Apalachee Regional Planning Council

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for board approval for the appointment/reappointments for the Apalachee Regional Planning Council. He explained Gadsden County is entitled to have three representatives; two are appointed locally by the Board of County Commissioners; one must be a County elected official and one must be a municipal elected official. The Governor appoints a third representative. The City of Quincy wanted to recommend Commissioner Anessa Canidate. Commissioner Holt is currently serving on the Board and did not have a problem with continuing to serve but said an alternate was needed. Commissioner Hinson said he was the alternate.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO KEEP COMMISSIONER HOLT AS THE REPRESENTATIVE AND COMMISSIONER HINSON TO SERVE AS THE ALTERNATE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS HAD A QUESTION.

Commissioner Simpkins understood the Agenda item to read that the same people would serve on this board and the Transportation Disadvantaged. Mr. Dixon said no, this appointment was to ARPC and Transportation Disadvantaged was a separate item.

Commissioner Hinson said Commissioner Simpkins made a point. If they approve the item, they become the same representatives for both boards.

Commissioner Holt said that was not one of the options.

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

8. Appointment to the Apalachee Regional Planning Council-Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated that Commissioner Hinson was currently serving on that board. He was asked if he was interested in continuing, he said yes.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT COMMISSIONER HINSON AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS AS THE ALTERNATE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

9. Appointment to the Capital Regional Transportation Planning Agency

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for approval of an appointed BOCC Commissioner to the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA).

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT TO APPOINT COMMISSIONER HINSON AS THE REPRESENTATIVE AND CHAIR NESMITH AS THE ALTERNATE, COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE SECOND, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

CLERK OF COURT

10. Updates

Chair Nesmith asked Mr. Thomas if he had any updates. Mr. Thomas appeared before the Board and wanted to mention ARP (American Rescue Plan). He stated there is a time frame and money that has to be spent by December 30, 2024. Mr. Thomas stated he was going to send them a memo. The Library was paid off and was pledged with the half cent sales tax. He said overtime revenue increased and the transfer back to general funds was not increased over time and has accumulated funds that need to be closed out this fiscal year.

Commissioner Hinson said it has been a great year. At the last meeting, Commissioner Simpkins expressed her concerns and every meeting he brings it up. With the \$5.9 million, was it plausible to have a community center on the east and west side of Gadsden County? Mr. Thomas said there was some restrictions but was something they should look at seriously. Commissioner Hinson said the board went to a conference and they talked about mental health and at the conference they encouraged the board to put money for the kids. He thinks they could put a community center in sawdust and Havana. Coalition between mental health and COVID. Mr. Thomas said Mr. Knowles could look into it.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if he could clarify the indigent tax money they have. Mr. Thomas said since they renewed/restructured the contract with CRMC, there was money going to Capital Regional that they no longer wanted, they were making enough money as an emergency room. He said when they received government money, they had to be accountable for it and they did not want to expand services, they were satisfied with an emergency room. He said the County was giving them \$200,000 and in return they were giving the county back \$200,000 in rent that went to the General Fund. With the rest of the money, it could not be used for it just anything, it had to be indigent health care related. He said he thought the accumulation was now around \$2.2 Million and the Board has not addressed it yet. He has suggested in the past that they look at the Ordinance, the Statute and the health plan because this was something that was put on the ballot and people had an expectation for a hospital. He said before divvying up the money to different entities, once people realize they have it, people will start coming to them. He stated the main thing they need to determine was whether or not they wanted to do anything more with the hospital in terms of rooms. He knew part of what they want to do was put a shelter in but was sure it would not take up all of the unused space. He said the question was did they want to put facilities in place to go back to CRMC and show it was available or have new negotiations with them. He felt they needed to decide about the hospital first. He said in

his opinion, if they were not going to do anything more with the hospital which was the primary reason the tax was voted on, they ought to consider paying off the \$4.5 million debt service and rescinding the tax.

Commissioner Holt said this was one time they agreed. They should look at the indigent care and they need to revisit the whole issue.

Commissioner Green said he was interested in them pursuing the opportunity of having a hospital. He said Blountstown was getting a state-of-the-art facility as a hospital and asked if something like the Bond Clinic was possible. He said they could come back to the table and workshop having a working hospital not just an emergency room. Mr. Thomas said they should prioritize the hospital and make that clear before they start doing other things with the money.

Commissioner Hinson said there was a lot of money for infrastructure projects and they would not have to use general funds for anything.

Mr. Thomas said ARP (American Rescue Plan) money could be used for hospitals.

Chair Nesmith recognized Mr. Derrick Elias in the audience and thanked him for his service and everything he has done for the citizens of Gadsden County.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

11 Updates

Mr. Dixon said they will be receiving their tentative calendars for multiple workshops and there will be some on Saturdays and some back-to-back days.

He said Congressman Dunn will be here tomorrow at 3 PM and Thursday will be the Gadsden Legislative Delegation Meeting with Representative Gallop Franklin and Senator Corey Simon. He said the public is invited to the Thursday meeting. Commissioner Hinson asked if there was anything for Midway for infrastructure. Mr. Dixon said Midway remains the number 1 project for sewage. Ms. Steele said they are waiting on their paperwork.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

12 Updates

Mr. Knowles stated he had nothing to report and there were no questions for him.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

13. Report and Discussion of Public Issues

Commissioner Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2

Commissioner Simpkins: Few things, I received those, and I know you received them too, emails from Chris Nolan and the RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) grant. Have we taken a look at the RAISE grant that is out there and is available to local government? The local government is able to apply directly and I think that deadline is probably

coming up soon. Do we have someone that researches grants for us? Do we have someone, yes, I'm sorry.

Mr. Dixon: I'm not familiar with RAISE.

Commissioner Simpkins: It's in infrastructure, you go to Transportation.gov, it's on that website but it is an application that is out there that I think we need to take a look at.

Mr. Dixon: OK, I'll get our engineers to...

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Green, did you have your hand up because you had additional information that could assist Commissioner Simpkins?

Commissioner Green: Well, I was trying to see if that was the same grant that I sent information over to the Administrator.

Mr. Dixon: We sent that out to the engineers to look at.

Commissioner Green: OK, because I was trying to go back to my email to see if it was the same grant that I had already sent...

Mr. Dixon: That might be it.

Commissioner Simpkins: OK, because it's due like next month I think.

Commissioner Dixon: Yeah, that's it, I think it's the same one, we've sent it out to the engineers.

Commissioner Simpkins: Mr. Administrator, I know you have been working with the fire chief in some of the municipalities as it relates to the fire ISO ratings and I have still been in communication with insurance companies just trying to get clarification on the fire rating. I did receive some clarification that the astronomical increase is not from the rating itself, from the ISO rating, however, some people did not get dropped because that rating came out late. So, I want to make sure that when our citizens go to reapply next year for their insurance that we do not have any fire departments with a 10 rating so that they will be able to renew their insurance. They kind of were able to slide through this year. So, I want to make sure that it is a top priority for us to be taking a look at all of them. I know that we are doing a pilot in the St. Johns area but I want to make sure that we are doing what needs to be done in each of the areas with the fire departments.

Mr. Dixon: We all know about the historic increase that has happened to homeowner's insurance. What also happened was a re-inventory by ISO, which is an insurance organization, a rating of our fire departments. If the fire department did not have four certified fire fighters on call, then you were delinquent let's just say, out of order. That caught a lot of our fire departments because most of them do not have four certified firemen every night, they are a volunteer fire department. So, what we have already been talking about fire rescue, as you all know, and how to use EMS to begin the process of rethinking our fire rescue situation in Midway and Havana and those are just the big areas, but also in the unincorporated areas. The chiefs met with the volunteer chiefs to talk about what happened, why it happened and how we

can fix it. We've got some strategies coming into place now and in the long term, I think in the last meeting we met with the cities, because the city's push out 5 miles outside of their border to cover the County as well. So, us helping the cities help in the unincorporated area. We're looking at the piloting out in St. John's because that's one of the areas that is not covered. When you go from St. Johns over to Robertsville and then over to Greenshade, that area is totally uncovered. So, what we're hoping to do in the next few months is not only put in place some strategies and tactics, but again, to work with the City of Quincy who covers that area for us, if you can believe it or not, all the way out to Greenshade and we need to find a better answer to that, a better response. All of the fire chiefs are looking for better responses. We're talking to them about what we can do and how we're going to do it. We asked you all the other day to approve the opportunity for us to go and get more positions, that's what Chief Hood asked for the other night so that we can push out and figure out how to better improve the service. Because otherwise those tactics are just tactics, our response to fire did not improve any. Hopefully, with 1, 2 or three of those positions added, we can begin the process of reallocating or reorganizing our fire/rescue situation and improving ISO's all across the county.

Chair NeSmith: Alright, any follow-up? Commissioner Simpkins?

Commissioner Simpkins: That's all for that. Thank you. The success of our County depends on us working together. When I decided to seek this office, it was for the citizens of Gadsden County and to make the decisions that was best for all of the citizens in Gadsden County and when I sit here, I take it very seriously. Within the last couple of weeks, and I'm sure you all have received the same information that I have received, one and I just have a question because I want to make sure that we are following what we should be following. I received an email in regards to the Health Council and employment that there was supposed to be a resignation from the Health Council prior to a letter being given to someone cancelling a contract. I wasn't on the Board; however, it was one that I just happened to listen in on and I've gone back and just kind of read the information. I want to make sure, Mr. Attorney, because I think this was something you brought up. As the Administrator, is he able to serve as a Project Director for an organization?

Mr. Knowles: So, no ma'am, there is no dual employment for the Chief Officer of the County. That's not allowed.

Commissioner Simpkins: So, Mr. Administrator, of course I don't have the email pulled up here, but I received an email and on that email, it had your signature with you stating that the person's contract was null and void and it was after the date, I mean you were employed as the Administrator at that time, so could you kind of share..., am I the only, maybe I'm the only one that received it.

Commissioner Hinson: No, I received it too.

Mr. Dixon: I didn't receive it.

Commissioner Simpkins: You didn't receive it?

(Mr. Dixon started to talk and Chair NeSmith asked him to let Commissioner Simpkins get her questions asked because he was not familiar with the email.)

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Commissioner Simpkins: You didn't receive it?

Chair NeSmith: No ma'am, I didn't receive it.

Chair Green: Neither did I.

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Green...Commissioner Hinson, are you aware what Commissioner Simpkins is talking about?

Commissioner Hinson: Yeah, I'm aware.

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Holt, are you aware?

Commissioner Holt: I hadn't seen it.

Commissioner Simpkins: Oh, ok, because the email I received had the... maybe it didn't come through because it had everyone else's e-mail on it so that's why...

Chair NeSmith: When was it sent Commissioner Simpkins?

Commissioner Hinson: I think she cc'd all the Commissioners at the time from what I saw. I'm surprised you didn't receive it.

Chair NeSmith: Do you have a...

Commissioner Simpkins: I'm looking.

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Hinson, do you have a date?

Commissioner Hinson: One second, I saw (inaudible)

Commissioner Simpkins: While I'm looking for that, can he (indicated toward Mr. Dixon)

Chair NeSmith: Oh sure, Mr. Administrator,

Mr. Dixon: While I will certainly not discuss an employee issue of any kind, I can assure you and I did assure you, at your request, that I did resign the position as Executive Director, ah, however I also informed the Board that the contracts had my name on it and that I would continue as a volunteer only. As the project director, I was not being compensated, I have not received any form of money or anything else as such. I'm pretty sure I can as a volunteer and that job was my voluntary service and I've treated it as such.

Commissioner Simpkins: I have, I've worked with nonprofits for quite a while and I have never, ever, and we have had volunteers to work with nonprofits and I've never had a volunteer to cancel a contract. That's not something that I've ever heard a volunteer doing. I just can't see that a volunteer with a, I go in and I say I'm working with the Boys and Girls Club and they have a contract and they say 'Ms. Simpkins can you cancel this contract for me?' Once you end employment, then they then have someone else that takes that responsibility, not remain as a

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volunteer. That, I've just never heard. I'm still looking so that I can forward this email to you. I received it and I think it was after it was actually sent over. I received it on the 6th but I...

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Hinson, have you been able to find your copy?

Commissioner Hinson: I don't have my computer with me, I apologize, but I did receive it. If I'm not mistaken, at the beginning of the year he was the Executive Director at one point (inaudible). There were some things that was said, that's why I (inaudible) surprised but maybe there was something going on. Also, that board was sending emails to the Board of County Commissioners the Board as his name as executive director.

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Green?

Commissioner Green: I'm really searching for this email; do you know what month it was sent because we get a plethora of emails daily.

Commissioner Simpkins: I'm showing the 4th of January.

Chair NeSmith: While you're looking for that ah, Commissioner Holt?

Commissioner Holt: Yes, thank you. Commissioner, could you possibly just send that to us now?

Commissioner Simpkins: I can.

Commissioner Green: Send it to the attorney.

Mr. Knowles: No, no, no, if you wouldn't mind Commissioner Simpkins, just to avoid a sunshine violation, if you can send it to me and I will forward it on to the Commissioners. That would be a little bit better. Sorry Commissioner Holt.

Commissioner Holt: OK, that'll work. That's great. I had a question for you anyway. Mr. Attorney?

Mr. Knowles: Yes ma'am?

Commissioner Holt: Is there anything that you can think of in the State Statute that says that a volunteer for an organization cannot end a contract?

Mr. Knowles: No ma'am.

Commissioner Holt: I don't know of one either, I thought maybe I missed something. In this, if you are volunteering, that's not dual employment. If you are getting paid, that is dual employment. Now, I'm not trying to take up for Mr. Dixon because he can take up for himself. But what I am saying is this, when we hired him he was working for the Health Council, ok? Then when we hired him and it was brought up that his employment could not be dual employed, then he said he turned in his resignation. Mr. Dixon, if I may Mr. Chairman, they do have a copy of your resignation, right?

Mr. Dixon: Yes ma'am.

Commissioner Holt: OK, so, if he's not getting paid and the attorney says he can end contracts, he can end contracts. That is up to that organization on how they want to use that volunteer. If he's not getting paid, or anyone for that matter, is not getting paid are they perceived as employed or are they perceived as some advantage by being a part of any organization by monetary value in whatever you're getting. So, if these things do or do not apply or it there something that needs to be brought back, if it doesn't need to be brought back then we need to go ahead and seek a legal opinion. So, Mr. Attorney, do you have a legal opinion? If a person is not getting paid to work for an organization, are they employed? They are not getting a company car, they are not getting any advantages, is there anything saying that they are employed?

Mr. Knowles: Well, two things, let me clarify. I'm not aware of the State statute that prohibits a volunteer from terminating a contract. I think that was the question you asked. I'm not saying that a volunteer can terminate, I'm not aware of the State statute that deals with that that would prohibit that. Let me be clear. Your second question was?

Commissioner Holt: My second question is, there may or may not be a State statute so let's just go ahead and say that you're not aware of any, I don't know of any, the first thing I'll do is google. If there is not something that is found that is available anywhere on this phone and anyone at home can google it to find out. But, there is nothing, unless if that person is volunteering for the organization, can they not end a contract, whatever that organization have them to do, that's really up to that organization and the person, is it not?

Mr. Knowles: I imagine so, the organization can decide to do what they want. If you would like me to research that issue, I don't want to be bound by an opinion. I can research that issue for you to be certain, I don't want to give you a yes or no right here. That is a fairly broad issue, a fairly broad question, but I would imagine that an organization can do what they want to do with regard to that. But I can look it up...

Commissioner Holt: Don't, don't worry about it, I will too and I bet I'll have two other attorneys doing the same thing.

Mr. Knowles: Well, all I'm going to say is to be careful with that.

Commissioner Holt: I know, but I'm going to ask anyway. I need opinions.

Mr. Knowles: I understand. But they shouldn't tell you that, that's a Bar violation, so...

Commissioner Holt: No, no, no, they're not...

Mr. Knowles: They shouldn't talk with a represented client...

Commissioner Holt: Wait a minute, hold on, a represented client? They're not going to be my client...

Mr. Knowles: But you're discussing Board actions with them...

Commissioner Holt: Right...

Mr. Knowles: They should not talk with you, you can talk with them. I'm just saying if they do that, I have to report that as a Bar violation against them.

Commissioner Holt: We'll get to that later, we'll get to that later because I'm going to ask questions of everybody walking (inaudible), whatever. What I wanted to say is, that since this is brought up in a public meeting it should be researched anyway...

Mr. Knowles: I'll be happy to research it and...

Commissioner Holt: So, I think that is something that we can easily do, but thank you Sir.

Chair NeSmith: Thank you Commissioner, and before I go to Commissioner Green and Commissioner Hinson, when you locate it Commissioner Simpkins could you forward it to the attorney?

Commissioner Simpkins: Yes.

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Green and Commissioner Hinson...

Commissioner Green: OK, so, I guess I just want clarity and you stated already in reference to it, because it seems like this just will not go away. You stated that you're volunteering and we're having a discussion openly. I just want you to say it again, there was no pay involved. There has been no pay involved.

Mr. Dixon: Zero

Commissioner Green: There has been no stipends, no, I mean I just want that, because I just wanted to be openly said and that it be known because, in essence, I think the problem is really going to become is the opposite of what you are saying. So, I just want to be clear and that, I know we got the resignation and I think, we had a discussion a while back about there were some projects that were not completed and that's why you were going to volunteer to make sure that those projects were completed and after those projects were completed, you would then, I guess they would go on and do what they have to do as a board or as an organization. But I just wanted to be clear...

Mr. Dixon: February of this year...

Commissioner Green: Say that one more time?

Mr. Dixon: February of this year...

Commissioner Green: February of this year those projects should be completed. Again, I only asked that question because as I stated, it resurfaced, and...Thank you.

Chair NeSmith: Mr. Administrator? Obviously, I have not seen this email. With the Letter of Resignation when it was submitted to the Health Council, did you forward a copy of the resignation to all the board members, all of the commissioners?

Mr. Dixon: I think I sent it to the Chairman.

Chair NeSmith: You sent it to the Chair, and the Chair at that time was Dr. Viegbesie?

Mr. Dixon: Yes

Chair NeSmith: Can you send that original resignation to all the Commissioners?

Mr. Dixon: Yes.

Chair NeSmith: OK, send the original resignation to all the Commissioners so there will not be any questions. Ah, Commissioner Hinson and then Commissioner Simpkins.

Commissioner Hinson: Yes, I received the same thing, I'm just trying to do, to ask the questions that the citizens asked. The issue here at hand is influence more so than monetary value. If I represent an organization and even if I don't get paid but I've got my influence will make a move of dollar bills is just as important, I think. Mr. Attorney can look at that as well of the influence of being there. Because what happened here, is that the influence, because if we move money, the Board suggested that we keep the \$250,000 or whatever it was and at one point if I recall it right the board keep the van or whatever the van cost, the RV, \$250,000, would be in Board custody.

Mr. Knowles: The health unit?

Commissioner Hinson: The health unit, it will be in Board custody, right? So, that's why I have heartburn about the whole thing. So then, all of a sudden, 6-7 months later, the Board suggested that we move the Health Council, move the mobile health to the Health Council after we paid for it, after we did everything else, it was supposed to be here, at the Board of County Commissioners', right, and we're supposed to own it. Then we changed the vote so we can go back to that. I said it was kind of interesting that we give it to the health council (inaudible) leave us and they still own it. We gave the rights to the Health Council to own that facility. The influence, the influence is that we also carved out \$40,000-\$60,000 to give to the Health Council. The Board did that, right here. Influence, we get \$6,700 a month from the ½ cent sales tax. The reason I've got to say something, because by law we'll get in trouble if we do something improper, we got to make sure he's covering us more than anything else. So, \$6700 a month go directly to the Health Council, that's the ½ cent sales tax doing that, right? So, his influence, right, someone else can say a community center, but I think we can get funding for that, right? So, his influence, right, can easily impede someone else from an opportunity to get money from the half cent sales tax. So, it doesn't matter if you're getting a paycheck, because I looked at the Commission on Ethics, and (inaudible) a paycheck, if you are a part of the organization, if coming from you...I have a, I got something myself, just the appearance, I don't say, never get a dime, never even got a penny for it, never even thought of having a penny from it, but it's just the appearance of it, just the influence of it because we still can't have money going directly to it, even though you're probably not getting paid for it. So, ah, because of

opposition, I'm not sure, I'm not an attorney, I'd like for the attorney to look into that because people talking about it, you know, so, since we talking, I never even called it out, but since y'all talking, I've got to say something because it's here. I think we need to look into that and see, maybe see, because Commissioner Green having heartburn, I saw it in his heart he's really having heartburn about that. So, in trepidation, I think that it'd be great if we could, I know y'all were talking about looking into things, like we looked into the other stuff, you know, just calm the community down, if he can investigate, have someone to, I'm not sure what you think?

Mr. Knowles: On this issue?

Commissioner Hinson: I mean, I'm not sure what we need to do because I know people talking and I saw the letter, it's intense...

Chair NeSmith: Well, I think what we can do, Commissioner Hinson, at this point regarding this email, since several of us have not seen the email, when we receive it...

Commissioner Hinson: (inaudible)

Chair NeSmith: Yeah, because I'm not familiar with this email and I would like to see it and I would like to read it and then we can move forward. Just a quick question before I go to Commissioner Simpkins and then to Commissioner Holt; Mr. Administrator, I just want to reference a comment that Commissioner Hinson just stated. The health council did not receive a dime in this year's budget, is that correct or incorrect?

Mr. Dixon: You all requested that we not fund any non-profits.

Chair NeSmith: Right, until we create that process that we discussed.

Commissioner Hinson: What I was saying, this year, the Health Council received something after the fact, after that decision was made. We approved a lot of things in 2022 that benefit them.

Chair NeSmith: When you say they received something, you mean after our new budget cycle started they received...

Commissioner Hinson: First of all, they receive \$6,700 a month regardless. They receive \$6,700 a month in ½ cent sales tax. That's every month. Also, I think we changed some kind of policy, whatever, if I'm not mistaken and I didn't do too much research on it because I didn't think we're going to talk about it today, but we changed some things up with the health unit as well as some other things at the beginning of this year, ah, beginning of last year. So, there were some benefits that were there.

Chair NeSmith: So, Mr. Administrator, the \$6,700 from the half cent sales tax, bring some clarity to that please.

Mr. Dixon: Mr. Chairman, we have not sent anybody any money to my knowledge.

Chair NeSmith: OK.

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Mr. Dixon: Secondly, the bus was funded by the State to the Health Council, not to the County. And the money, and the...so...

Chair NeSmith: OK, thank you.

Commissioner Hinson: Hold on, hold on, I saw, ah, that's inaccurate information. I'm not saying, I hate to go like this right but I've got to say this but he said they hadn't received anything. I saw a documentation that showed every month \$6700 going to them. That, first of all we need to talk about that next. And, two, the BOCC allocated, if I'm not mistaken, \$250,000 towards the Health Unit.

Chair NeSmith: What we're going to do Commissioner Hinson, because...

Commissioner Hinson: (inaudible) I don't want people to think Eric Hinson is lying.

Chair NeSmith: OK, so what we'll do, Commissioner Hinson, as soon as we get the email to the Commissioners, then we can gather the other additional information at this point regarding this email, since several of us have not seen the email, when we receive it

Commissioner Hinson: You know what I said and you know what the County Administrator said.

Chair NeSmith: Yes sir. Commissioner Simpkins and Commissioner Holt?

Commissioner Simpkins: I just want to make this statement, because we are bound by Sunshine Law, we can't meet privately, so, when I received something and it has my fellow Commissioners' name on it, then I find that I have to bring it here. I want to know, as a matter of fact, I called the Attorney General to see if this was a discussion I could have behind closed doors so I don't want it to come across as Oh, you're bringing, you know, this is something that we could've just discussed, I just want you all to know that. Secondly, to finish my, I had additional, I was not finished with my discussion. The second part of it is I received, and I'm not sure if you all received it as well, but it was hand delivered to me, a packet on Saturday. Did you will receive that?

Chair NeSmith: I did Commissioner.

Commissioner Simpkins: OK, so, with this packet, there was a request for directions and guidance from the Board of County Commissioners from the Public Works Director and I know that we don't deal with day to day operations. However, when it comes to the services that are being provided to our citizens and how it affects the services our citizens receive, then it does become an issue for us. There were just some things in here that really bothered me. (Inaudible) I'm for treating everybody fairly and with respect. To call and request someone to resign on their day off, I wouldn't do that. That bothered me. It bothers me when staff, and this is not the first time that I have been told this, but when staff says that they are not to fraternize with me, well some of the staff in Gadsden County are my constituents, well, all of them if they live in Gadsden County, they are my constituents and I think that they should not be afraid to speak with me freely about anything. At the end of the day our tax dollars pay their salaries, right? If they live in Gadsden County, part of their tax dollars pays their salaries. So, that was something that bothered me. When we look at pay, I think people should be paid fairly and it

shouldn't be based upon who it is. I requested a copy of the budget and we don't have any control over salaries. We don't set salaries. However, when I look at some of them and then I look at a Director making a dollar less than their entry level employee and we had an opportunity to pay that person more, that bothers me. You all have read this, everyone has read this. I do feel that this needs to be addressed. When we have employees feeling like they are in a hostile work environment, then that is a problem and it affects services that are being provided to our citizens on a daily basis. You say that we are "One Gadsden" then we need to treat everybody, the citizens, the staff and all needs to be treated fairly. We need to do things professionally with no retaliation. We don't need the retaliation. We don't need to put the county in a position where we are having to go to litigation because it was not done the way someone wanted it to be done, especially if it was done in the correct manner. Mr. Attorney, I am going to, I need direction, I would like for you to give us direction. How do we handle things, what's the...I've requested the climate survey just a kind of see, that has an effect? In the school system we do a climate survey to see the people feel, the teachers feel, how the kids feel, how the staff feel. It makes a difference on the service that is being provided. So, I requested, I did request a climate survey and I hope that we will have that soon so that we can see how the staff feels, how the County Administrator feels, how his direct staff feels and we can get an idea fails get an idea on the feeling of our staff as a whole. I was not here when you all did the evaluation, not sure what's included on the evaluation. But if you're not in on the day to day operations then not sure what is included on that. So, Mr. Attorney, please tell me what we can do

Mr. Knowles: So, just a little bit quick background, I am sort of aware of what you have presented Commissioner. In our previous instance when we had another issue in Public Works, the Board, I believe, elected, or maybe the Administrator at that point, the Board, in this instance might want to follow the lead like we did with Ms. Robinson. They hired an outside firm, I believe the Krizner Group, to conduct an investigation into the allegations that were made. That is a mutual third party. Again, you all would need to approve that and then they can address all these issues that you have brought up here today, I don't think it is appropriate, necessarily, for me to do that, that would just be sort of a conflict of interest on my end, but if it is something that the board is inclined to do, the best way to sort of hash it out is to have a third party come in and do that and look of the allegations. I don't have a copy of what you're looking at, I don't have a full copy, I have glanced at it, but I do not have a full copy of it. That would be my best suggestion to you all. I do recall in that instance Dr. Grant called in FAC, our insurance carrier did pay for that, but there may be costs associated with that paid for that but costs for the board. If that is something that you're inclined to investigate as a commission, that would be my best advice.

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Simpkins, any further comment?

Commissioner Simpkins: I want to ask the, with the, I say something and that is something you can actually answer. With the property, the vehicle usage, how do you normally handle that? How was it handle?

Mr. Dixon: I don't know what you are looking at.

Commissioner Simpkins: OK, I'm sorry. Well let me just ask you...

Mr. Dixon: Additionally, I think the attorney will agree with me that I cannot discuss any employee issues in the public. I don't know what you're looking at, I don't know why you are looking at it, whoever sent it did not send it to me. I don't know what the allegations nor the issues are. I know what the issues are that I am dealing with every day as the Administrator. I don't know what issues someone has hand delivered to you all regarding what I do day to day. I'm sure the law says that you all should not be involved in that area; however, you are the Board. I'm sure the attorney can instruct you on how you should operate. But, if there are five people running the County, six, then we will have the chaos and confusion that we are having now. Because some employee, and it is not about employees whether they can speak to you, talk to you, telling you about issues, it is whether or not they receive direction from you or influence direction from you as to what they come back to the office and do. Are they doing it under the color of your name because you as a Commissioner has agreed with them, at home and therefore they don't have to respect the Administrator. Those are the problems we are bumping into, is people are greenlighting programs, projects and not receiving the proper authority to do so and then they are suggesting that a Commissioner has done something, said something. That is not how the way government should work. We are heading down the way of City of Quincy where the, the Commissioners are choosing employees, which employees to support, which employees not to support. I am the Administrator. I have to make decisions with a lot of information none of you have. And I won't even, under duress, provide that information to you. I should not provide that information to you because that is somebody's personal personnel situation. It should not be out here in the public eye and you shouldn't, because you will ruin people's reputation as a result of such. There are allegations made by somebody who might have ulterior motives. I don't know, but I'm sitting here simply saying I can't respond to any of that and I wish, I pray that you not put that kind of stuff in the public because it is somebody's position who you don't know what their personal motivation is.

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner Simpkins?

Commissioner Simpkins: as I stated earlier, when information is provided, Sunshine, and you're well aware of the Sunshine State law and it does not allow the Commissioners, as a matter fact, as I stated, I called the Attorney General's Office to find out if we could speak on this matter, letting them know what we received and if we could speak on this privately. Sunshine law applies. When I received, we don't handle day to day, that is the Administrator's responsibility. However, when there is an environment set where felt to be a hostile environment or what's going on affects the services that are being provided to the citizens, then that does, I now come into play as a Commissioner because I was placed here to serve the people, making sure their health, their safety, including the public, the roles and all of that is taken care of for our people. Nothing personal but what I'm saying I can't, you are right, I can't, you handle day to day. However, every staff member is an adult and we treat you professionally and when receiving information where staff, and it's not just one staff member, I don't, there are three sides to every story, your side, his side and then the truth. So, I understand that. But when you receive multiples that there is a lack of professionalism, I think it has to be addressed. The only thing I'm saying here is, I brought this out because it was sent to all of us. Opportunity to ask, not calling anyone's name, just gave general information. I have not called anyone's name. I'm just asking general information. Again, I ask what is the procedure for our cars and the use of county vehicles. What is the policy as it relates to county vehicles.

Mr. Dixon: I will get that information to you. That's all I can say. I don't know what issue...

Commissioner Simpkins: No, I'm just, the policy as it relates to traveling with the county vehicle. Traveling, is it just for purposes, business purposes or personal, or we have business outside of our county, outside of our state.

Chair Nesmith: Do we have county vehicle's Mr. Administrator? Who drives those?

Mr. Dixon: Yes, County Staff. Yes, we have business outside of the state, ah, Decatur County, we have business that's in Leon County, have business...

Chair NeSmith: So, those are for staff to attend those County business events?

Mr. Dixon: Yes, or they may be gone to lunch. I mean...

Chair NeSmith: OK, for county employees to attend county business.

Commissioner Simpkins: OK. County business, right. OK.

Chair NeSmith: Thank you Commissioner Simpkins. Now what we are going to do Commissioner Simpkins, as I get ready to go to Commissioner Holt and then Commissioner Green, again, as you stated, we have a plethora of information and well, I'm going to hold my comments because I'm gonna make sure Commissioner Holt and Commissioner Green...because there is a way we can address these various issues, from a policy perspective and we will come to that. I mean, there is a process that we've even discussed having a workshop because we...And I had this meeting with the County Administrator that you came in and that's why you heard us say that, you know, there was (inaudible) circumstances two years ago. The process, we didn't have an opportunity for there to be an open process when we were looking at the County Administrator and there was probably a lot of things that we didn't do that we can go back and correct. One of those things is we can get those policies in relationship to all the executive staff and staff as a whole. Because we have not looked at our policies. We just have not had time because we were addressing so many other issues, so, these very issues that you are discussing, obviously there is a, it's time for us to have that workshop so that we can look at our organizational chart and then look at policies coming down. As you stated, where's the culture, what's the culture of our staff, what surveys do we need to put in place. As a matter of fact, Mr. Administrator, even though the newest Commissioner, Commissioner Simpkins was not here last year to do the evaluation, could you still send her the evaluation so she will know what the instrument looks like? So that you will at least know how we evaluated the last two years. Because we need to make the adjustments.

Commissioner Simpkins: So, oh, I'm sorry, quick question. So, you created the evaluation?

Chair NeSmith: No ma'am. The evaluation tool was here when I arrived. We just utilized the tool that was already here, we utilized that tool.

Commissioner Simpkins: So, can we make sure that we put our policy and procedures as one of the workshops that we put on top of our agenda...

Chair NeSmith: Commissioner, we can have any workshop you want to have.

Commissioner Holt: Thank you. Commissioners, I think I have been at this too long. Last time I heard this much conversation about employees and their concerns, that's when we really got sued because they did it in an open meeting. What we need to do is back up any information that we have, I think under the sunshine law we are supposed to, I think at least reserve the information, right, Mr. Attorney?

Mr. Knowles: Yes ma'am, with regard to that you will need to, potentially, if there is a potential for any litigation, maintain all documents that you have or received into perpetuity until, I want to say until I say otherwise but until that is done and we have moved on.

Commissioner Holt: Probably until a judge says that, but, what I wanted to say is that under FAC, normally they will tell you if you get some any information get it to the administrator or turn it over to the county so that way they would have a record because commissioners have a tendency to misplace (inaudible) but, if you turn it over to the County, you have a tendency to have at least one document, OK? In this case, if there is any type of discrepancy with that, it makes sense to turn it over to someone, if the administrator doesn't want to look at it, someone that he may designate to look at. That makes sense, because you want to preserve the record. That's what I usually tell employees. If you talk with me about something, I have to turn it over, that's what I have to do. I tell them that, ahead of time, before it you give me anything. If you want to talk to me, talk to me, but I have to tell the administrator. That is what we have done before. The times that we went and got sued about is when we start discussing one side of an issue, which is what we are doing now. We cannot, in a public meeting, discuss one side of an issue because we are public officials. When we bring it up, you've brought it up, now we have to make a decision if are we going to workshop it. We shouldn't go through the particulars of the incident. We can workshop it, but that way it gives all sides a (inaudible). One person can't say that we discussed something that one person wrote that the other one did. You have both sides of that situation. Then we have a tendency to show proof that we are doing the, going to the day to day. I felt the same way when I came back in 2000. But I want to talk about this and the first thing those lawyers said was 'You don't want to talk about that'. Then the time that we did get sued, they pulled a video tape from the Board Meeting and that was what they used in, the person that sued us, that's what they used to win a lawsuit. When the Chairman and the Vice Chairman said we didn't do this and the same attorney that we're dealing with right now, she went and got it and put it the DVD and said there it is. So, what I'm saying is, if we're going to workshop this, then we workshop it and stop discussing it in an open meeting. The other thing is, that all the information that we may need to bring to the workshop then we say these are the things that we want to have. We want a survey done, we say let's do a survey. But, as you said, there are three sides to every story. If I say, this is a good example, if I say I want this road paved in my district and other Commissioners want something done in their district. If I tell the employee, and this really happened to me, really happened to me. I'm in South Florida long time ago, I'm in South Florida at a workshop and a road was done in my district and I knew nothing about it. That particular Commissioner and that whole little group there wanted it done in their neighborhood, their own neighborhood. I didn't know anything about it. When people started calling me, I was like, what? You paved that road, why you didn't pave my road. I didn't know road was paved because I was in a workshop the week that they did it. So, what I'm saying though is, no matter what our concerns are, let's back up. Let's say we want this thing workshopped. Because you are going to find there are a whole bunch of employees saying "a", there is a whole bunch of employees saying "b" and that's what they are going to do. I have not worked one year out of 21 years where I didn't have any complaints from anyone. The whole

time you are going to get complaints. So, let's do that, let's stop talking about this and let's move on. That way at least we look professional even if the attorneys are probably going to come after us anyway. But, let's go ahead and end this.

Chair NeSmith: Thank you Commissioner Holt. Commissioner Green?

Commissioner Green: Thank you. I was just going to add to the piece of the conversation as it relates to FAC, the Association that we are a part of. Wanting to know, I guess that's something we should consider looking into, how do we handle situations when there is something involving administration. Secondly, I will get the disclaimer that when I received the package, I too was puzzled by the information and was disheartened by some of the things. But, however I wanted an opportunity because as has been stated, there are multiple sides to every story. I did want the opportunity to speak with the Administrator, but I came on Thursday, he was not here and we have not had the opportunity so I have not placed any judgment on what I received due to the fact that I do want to hear his response to the information that was given to us to be fair. I'm going to always do my best to be fair in every situation dealing with everybody because at the end of the day, all of us are individuals who may have, may make bad decisions or have things that we need to work on as individuals. But, my role, me, I guess what I'm trying to say, all of us are not perfect, never going to have a perfect situation. But, however, we do want to put a handle on the things, that if they are true that are transpiring so that that way we can make sure that we don't have these unnecessary litigations and lawsuits that are seeming to become very popular these days. So, workshop was one of the things I was going to suggest as well, but in workshopping, what can you discuss in a workshop? So, is it even purposeful to have a workshop if you really can't deal with the issues without talking about day to day operations and that's why I'm thinking we may need to really consult FAC on the proper procedures of how to handle issues such as these or even allegations. Because, again, we don't know what's true or what's not true. We have information that has been printed and given to us but, how do we do research? I went to the attorney when I got it because I wanted him to see it. I wanted some guidance on x, y and z, so, as our County Attorney, that's why he had the opportunity to see the information. But I do want our employees to feel as if we are concerned about them, because we are, we just have to be careful in how we go about the process so that we do not get ourselves into trouble.

Chair NeSmith: OK, thank you Commissioner Green. Yes, Commissioner Hinson?

Commissioner Hinson: I just got through looking at it right now, finished looking at the paperwork right here. Commissioner Simpkins, what she was trying to do was trying not to expose the conversation. She assumed everybody had a chance to look at it. She watered down her comments so it wouldn't expose anyone else or (inaudible). I think that we need to follow the attorney's advice. How much do you think it will cost to do research? This thing is more serious than we think. It's not a walk in the park; not something that is he said, she said, this documentation that we've seen right here. So, how much it costs, a ballpark?

Mr. Knowles: Again, I wouldn't be doing it, just to be clear. That would be an outside firm.

Commissioner Hinson: (made a comment and was inaudible)

Mr. Knowles: \$5,000-\$10,000 and FAC may pay for it.

Commissioner Hinson: It may be covered by our insurance coverage. Like Commissioner Green said, let's go ahead and do the research. Have them do the research and come back and tell us. That way then we'll know up front whether or not they have all the facts in front of us. Now people will do research to everybody and also do research in all the departments. So, that's what they can do for us. We're talking about fiduciary responsibility, right? So, that's what this is all about, fiduciary responsibility. It's more than what she said, she has watered down the conversation.

Chair NeSmith: I understand.

Commissioner Hinson: If anybody sees this, it's like early time worship day. So, let's focus on the fiduciary responsibility. Give direction to the County Attorney to lead the charge in finding someone outside, an independent person who can do research. Because if it's not a problem, we don't have to worry about it, (inaudible). So...

Mr. Knowles: It'll be covered by Sunshine.

Commissioner Hinson: It'll be covered by Sunshine.

Commissioner Hinson: So, we don't have to report anything, the Board will have the information in front of us and we can move forward. That's the only fair thing to do.

Chair NeSmith: Well, let's do this Commissioner Hinson. One, again, did we have an email...Commissioner Holt, did you want to say something? I'm trying to move us forward.

Commissioner Holt: I wanted to say something right quick. I'm about through. When we make comments and say 'Oh Lord, this is awful than anything else' and we have only seen one side of the story. That's what gets to be bad, that's when we're playing to the cameras. You don't say that, what you do is you say is let's do the research. But the company did the research. If we decide up to \$20,000 is what we're willing to pay, that way we put a number figure on it and we can go ahead get started tomorrow. But, if you make accusations, that's where the problems come in at.

Chair Nesmith: OK.

Commissioner Holt: You cannot do that in a public meeting.

Chair NeSmith. Right. Thank you, Commissioner Holt. Let's do this. 1) There is an email pertaining that some Commissioners had and others don't. There is an e-mail that certain commissioners have and had an opportunity to read that the commissioners have not had an opportunity to read. OK? Let's give the commissioners an opportunity to read the emails who have not had an opportunity to read the emails. Then let's give every commissioner an opportunity to read through whatever documentation that was presented. Make sure Mr. Attorney, we forward it to the appropriate persons that we're legally responsible to forward to. Commissioners, we can come back once we've had an opportunity to read the emails and any other information that we have received, that we can come back in a subsequent meeting and then say OK, these are some areas that we would like to review so we will have specifics on

areas that we need to review so that if we decide that we're going to utilize the services of FAC, which would not be necessarily a cost to the organization unless...Mr. Attorney, is FAC provided any assistance, is that a cost to the board, to the people?

Mr. Knowles: I don't know. I don't believe it would be a cost to us. Again, I just agree with Commissioner Holt. We don't often agree but we agree tonight. But I agree with Commissioner Holt that, and that's not saying anyone here has done that, but we don't necessarily need to investigate it h.

Chair NeSmith: Right.

Mr. Knowles: I think we're all in agreement there. So, I wouldn't, I would be cognizant of what we discuss here in this meeting and certainly any documents that you have, if you could send me copies, the Administrator copies. We will retain those documents, look over those documents and again, you perceive however you would like from there.

Chair NeSmith: we want to make sure, Commissioners, that we perceive according to our legal Counsel, but the first step is for all Commissioners to read whatever documentation or emails that they have not had an opportunity to read. Let's start there. Alright? OK.

Moving on, Commissioner Holt. I'm sorry, Commissioner Simpkins, are you..., OK, I just wanted to make sure you had an opportunity...that was your time.

Commissioner Simpkins: Let me finish on a positive note, OK? I hope that we can put aside all of our differences in philosophy and approach to work and serve our community on common ground. I love you all.

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt said there was a light out on the mural. There is a pastor that has a beautiful poem for the County and would like for him to be able to bring it forward and bring it to the Board so they can put it as part of the County web page and site.

She asked the Attorney and the Administrator, if possible, she wanted a section on each one of the items and the Attorney's Opinion when they come to the Board so they do not have to ask his opinion on items on the agenda.

For economic Development when talking about the American Rescue Plan, on sewer and water, they need to definitely look at sewer and water on Highway 267. Companies will come if pipes are in the ground. They have to look at what they are missing. That is the purpose of the trip to Lake City. She said she has heard a lot of positive things about the Bicentennial. She asked what they could put on the ground that will make people come to Gadsden county.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, District 5

Commissioner Green went back to an email he forwarded to Mr. Dixon to have clarification for the \$64 Million that was available through the USDA Rural for Distant Learning and Telemedicine grant program and is due on January 30th to apply for. He hoped the County was applying for it. Mr. Dixon said it is one of those partnership grants that the County will need to

partner with someone to do it. Commissioner Green asked if he forwarded it over and Mr. Dixon said yes.

He asked for an update on the Non-profit for senior services. Mr. Dixon said they want to start off but need to get information to the attorney for him to sign off on it. They are starting to initiate a new plan to get it into working order. It will come back to the Board with a Budget request and they are looking at funding sources, including the Indigent Care program that the Clerk spoke about. Most of those seniors are indigent and in desperate need of healthcare and working those dollars into that plan is important. There is a workshop on the calendar and will be getting more information to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Green asked if they knew how many applicants have been received for the Economic Development position? Chair Nesmith said may have received about 3-4 applications. He did meet with the Director of Human Resources last week. Through their conversation, it was determined that, as Commissioner Hinson stated or eluded to some time ago, that 10-year requirement may be challenging, and the recommendation was that they may need to reduce down to 3-5 years.

Becky Maas, Human Resources Director, appeared before the Board and said she talked to some Development directors earlier and ones at the highest level are the ones you find in excess of 8 years of experience. She felt it would broaden the applicant pool if they lowered the years of experience. They are on Indeed, the most utilized recruitment tool. She recommended 3-5 years of experience and they could also say recommended instead of required. Commissioner Green asked for a close out date. Ms. Maas said it was open until filled. He asked how long it would be open until they start the process for some that have applied. She said the applicant pool becomes stale very quickly and she felt that was what he was referring to. She felt it would be good to add a message to existing candidates to let them know they were still recruiting for that position.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they have advertised with FAC. She said no but was something she could look into. Commissioner Hinson said they should advertise with FAC for a month or so. He said he just wanted someone who wants to make a difference.

Commissioner Simpkins said with the 4 applicants, have they looked at them or will they wait until they get a certain amount. Ms. Maas said they usually wait until there is a sufficient applicant pool and the sufficient number would be 6-8.

Commissioner Holt said she was not worried about the number, but the success stories instead. She asked what their portfolio looked like. Ms. Maas said that was one of the first opportunities that came up to increase the visibility and there were other things they could research and ideas to bring forth to the county administrator.

Commissioner Hinson said also someone with Planning and Zoning experience. Commissioner Green asked if that needed to be in the form of a motion.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE THE MOTION TO AMEND THE CRITERIA FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS'S POSITION TO 3-5 YEARS AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Commissioner Green asked about stripping. Mr. Dixon said within the next two weeks. Commissioner Green wished the PIO a happy birthday. He thanked the National Black Women Hoop-up Chapter of Gadsden County for a successful MLK celebration this past Monday and congratulated the speaker, Isaiah Tolucas. He asked Commissioner Simpkins to run back what she said for the greenlight moment. He congratulated Dr. Alma Littles from Gadsden County and she is the Interim Director of Medicine for FSU College of Medicine. Commissioner Holt suggested she be given a proclamation.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO GIVE DR. ALMA LITTLES A PROCLAMATION AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VIOCE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Commissioner Eric Hinson, Vice-Chair, District 1

Commissioner Hinson echoed everything Commissioner Green said regarding the stripping and said there was also an issue with lighting. He mentioned the trash all over the County and said there were also issues with trash in Havana on Barber Road.

He said they needed to have a workshop on a list of priorities. The City of Tallahassee gave the Veterans 5000 dollars.

Commissioner Holt stepped out at 8:28 pm

He said Children are our future and said they need to think about a community center and capture them at a young age. He asked if the \$200, 000 for the bicentennial was more important than \$7,000-\$8,000 for a community center.

Commissioner Holt returned at 8:37 pm.

Commissioner Green stepped out at 8:37 pm

Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, Chair, District 3

Chair NeSmith asked the Administrator if they had hired anyone for the Nuisance Abatement position? Mr. Dixon responded they were currently looking at Magistrates. Chair NeSmith asked about the Bipartisan Infrastructure bill, he said lighting was a problem throughout the entire county. Could they pay for lighting through that bill? Mr. Dixon said he would think so. Commissioner Holt agreed. Commissioner Holt said the lighting was brought up from the urban areas.

Commissioner Green returned at 8:43 pm.

Commissioner Hinson said maybe each Commissioner could get 10 lights. He said they need an Economic Developer like the Administrator. Chair Nesmith thanked everyone for their understanding. He said the end goal is for Gadsden County to be great.

Commissioner Simpkins said there will be a neighborhood clean-up in St Hebrew Saturday beginning at 9:30 am.

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners
January 17, 2023 – Regular Meeting

Chair Nesmith congratulated Mr. Ira Daniels for 20 years of organizing the MLK celebration in Gadsden County.

Commissioner Simpkins repeated for the “Greenlight Moment”:
I hope that we can put aside our differences of philosophy and approach to work and serve our community on common ground as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Stokely Carmichael. Thank you.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR NESMITH DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:50 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

KIMBLIN NESMITH, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk