

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND  
FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FL ON  
OCTOBER 3, 2023 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  
Adriana Quijada, Clerk Secretary to the Boards

**Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair NeSmith called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Commissioner Hinson asked for a moment of silence. Chair NeSmith led into the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

**Amendments and Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Dixon requested to pull Item 6.

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

**Awards, Presentations and Appearances**

**1. TMH EAP (Employee Assistance Program) Presentation**

Mr. Dixon said they had a presentation from TMH Employee Assistance Program presented by Becky Maas, Human Resource Director. She said they recently switched to TMH and they were local.

Bob Carton, EAP Director, appeared before the Board and said EAP was available to all employees of Gadsden County at no cost to the person. Ms. Maas said she left brochures on the dais for the Commissioners. There has already been participation in the program.

Mr. Dixon said this was a wonderful program that would be free for the employees and their families.

**CONSENT**

**COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AND CHAIR NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**

**2 Ratification Memo**

**ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION**

**CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

The Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners welcomes and encourages public participation at all meetings of the Board. Citizens are free to speak for up to three (3) minutes on non-agenda items. Public comments and participation are also encouraged for items on the agenda. Additionally, if you are unable to attend a meeting in person, comments from the Public can also be submitted via email to [CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.org](mailto:CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.org) until noon on the date of the meeting. 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. Citizens are further encouraged to participate via Zoom using the credentials on the County's website. The Board's meetings are also broadcast live on the Board's Facebook page.

Chair NeSmith read the above statement aloud.

**John Dunn, 819 Shady Rest, Havana, FL** - regarding the Havana Trail

*Commissioner Holt appeared at 6:13 pm.*

Mr. Dunn appeared before the Board regarding the Havana Trail. He wanted to know if the County Commission would agree to maintain the trail, mowing and blowing off the apron.

Commissioner Hinson said this was a program that was started by the BOCC.

Chair NeSmith said he would put Mr. Dunn in touch with the Administrator.

Commissioner Green asked what was the estimated costs for maintenance. Mr. Dunn said it would be between 1/3 or 1/4 of what Wakulla pays for the St. Marks Trail.

Commissioner Holt asked about the funding mechanism for maintaining the trail and asked if there was any state or federal funding that other trails may use and he did not. Mr. Dunn said the main thing the County would have to do was mow and blow.

Commissioner Simpkins said the Board needed to maintain the trail and asked if Iron Bridge was a county road that Public Works maintains and the Chair said yes. She said that was something they should be doing anyway.

**Mr. Tracey Bentley, Talquin Electric Coop**

Chair NeSmith said he had an opportunity to attend the solar farm ribbon cuttings in Wakulla, Liberty County and in Hinson community.

Mr. Bentley said in regards to the solar farms, they do smaller scale utility farms and it was clean energy. They get a 20-year price rate on it and the price will not change for 20 years.

Commissioner Holt asked if there would be any reduction in rates because of solar. Mr. Bentley stated because of their solar price, they would not be doing subscriptions.

Mr. Dixon asked him to tell how he provides energy. Mr. Bentley said they did not have generation and transmission. They contract with Seminole Electric.

**Mike Watson, 2793 Sycamore Road**

Mr. Watson said he knew there was a lot of roads in Gadsden County that needed to be paved. He said it needed to be taken into consideration on how much Sycamore Road was used. He suggested they form a committee from each district to meet to see which roads needed to be paved and in what order.

**Gary Murray, Woodberry Road**

Mr. Murray asked for the status on Woodberry Road. He said they need lights on that road also. He asked for clarification today because he has heard different things.

Commissioner Holt said Mr. Knowles was looking at the survey. Mr. Dixon said they were looking at the survey and Mr. Knowles said they requested a meeting and asked for records that they have not received yet. Can make better assertion once they receive that.

Chair NeSmith asked Mr. Murray if he met with Mr. Charles Hayes.

Commissioner Holt said she would like for them to give Mr. Murray all the facts so he would not have to wonder where they were with this matter.

Mr. Dixon asked Mr. Hayes to come forward and said they have completed the survey and Mr. Hayes and the Attorney were now getting together regarding the property. He further explained this was a dirt road that the County has looked into accepting it into the County system.

Mr. Knowles said there was a statute that provides if the County maintains that road for 7 years, it is available to become property of the County. They have to have records that are available to take under that statute. Commissioner Holt asked if the records are not available, what options do they have? Mr. Dixon said the survey would allow them to compare with names to make sure they have everyone's permission.

**Derrick Elias, 233 Cheeseborough Avenue**

Mr. Elias appeared before the Board and wanted to speak with them concerning safety. Every day where Robert F. Monroe is located, people engressing and egressing is atrocious. He has witnessed 7 accidents there. He has seen law enforcement that, some on their own time, patrolling. He asked the County to take the lead and possibly put up a light that would fully function at certain times of the day before and after school and then be a caution light at other times.

Commissioner Hinson stated they have talked about this before. He asked the County Administrator to comment. Mr. Dixon said they have actually sent deputies out and has spoken with the Head Master and flashing lights have been installed. He said the best thing would be to have anyone exiting to go right and not cross over to Lanier Road to avoid accidents.

*Commissioner Holt stepped out at 6:56 pm.*

Commissioner Hinson asked for a traffic light there to stop everyone coming through or have a caution light. They did not want to wait until someone dies. He also mentioned it was a state road.

*Commissioner Holt returned at 7:00 pm.*

Mr. Dixon asked about a legislative request to fund the auxiliary road to be built. Maybe that would help.

Commissioner Green asked what was the last response from DOT when they reached out to them. Mr. Dixon said they have done studies and continue to do studies. Lights are the last thing they want to do because it stops traffic.

*Commissioner Simpkins stepped out at 7:02 pm.*

Commissioner Holt said she expressed about having another entrance to that property.

**Stacy Copeland, 690 McMillian Road Chattahoochee, FL**

*Commissioner Simpkins returned at 7:04 pm.*

Ms. Copeland appeared before the Board. She said she was small business owner, licensed massage therapist at 310 W. Washington Street, Chattahoochee. She said she appeared a couple of years ago trying to get funding and her building needs work. She asked if they have any funds to help small businesses with repairs.

*Commissioner Green stepped out at 7:07 pm.*

Chair NeSmith said they now have an Economic Development Director, Mr. Lewis, that encompasses every level of businesses. He asked Mr. Dixon if it was ok that they met. Mr. Dixon stated yes. Mr. Dixon asked if Chattahoochee had a CRA and Chair NeSmith said he did not think so.

Commissioner Hinson said every year they host different programs and resources at the County Courtyard square and asked her to get in contact with him.

Commissioner Hinson said American Rescue Plan gave money to cities and to check with Chattahoochee to see if they received money because it has to be spent by 2024.

Commissioner Simpkins said Franklin shared a Black Business Loan Program and the criteria is not as strenuous as other programs. Ms. Copeland stated she was not interested in loans, could not afford that.

Commissioner Holt said to get with Mr. Presnell and see the availability of state funding.

*Commissioner Green returned at 7:15 pm.*

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

#### **3. Public Hearing-Approval of Resolution 2023-027 and Year End Budget Amendments #1 for FY 2022-2023**

Chair NeSmith announced this was a Public Hearing.

Mr. Dixon said this item seeks approval for Resolution 2023-027 to complete and execute all budget amendments necessary to maintain a balanced budget. Chair NeSmith asked if anyone wished to speak and there was no-one.

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

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**4. Approval of Agreement with Shelter Luv**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This item is presented to the Board for approval of a service agreement with Shelter Luv for the Animal Control Department. Currently, the Animal Control Division needs a means to manage record keeping of animals and post pets online for owners to locate lost pets.

Commissioner Holt asked why it was \$2.00 and not \$5.00. Mr. Dixon stated that was what they charged them.

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

**5. Approval of Resolution 2023-024 Grant Budget Amendments for FY 2023**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This agenda item seeks Board approval of Resolution 2023-024 and 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 2023 BOCC budget.

Commissioner Green said he spoke with Housing in reference to the Grant. He asked if they have an estimate about how many projects that could serve. Mr. Dixon stated he will get one based on past performance how many they have served.

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

**6. Approval of Resilient Florida Program Planning Grant Awards (Materials to be Provided)**

Item Pulled

**7. Approval of Proposal and Service Agreement with Johnson Controls**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This agenda item is presented to the Board for approval of a Johnson Controls Proposal and Service Agreement for battery replacement in the fire alarm and troubleshooting Air Handler Shutdown process on the first floor in the W.A. Woodham Building.

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

**8. Approval of AE COM, Inc. Task Orders for LAP Multi-Projects CEI**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This agenda item seeks approval to execute Task Orders Addendum with AECOM, Inc. for the CEI Services of the Multi Local Agency Programs Projects.

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

**9. Approval of Local Agency Program Supplemental Agreement for Iron Bridge Road and Strong Road**

Mr. Dixon introduced above item. This agenda item seeks approval of the Local Agency Program Supplemental Agreement Addendum for Iron Bridge Road and Strong Road. Funds are being added due to the increase in the Resident Compliance Specialist – RCS Services. A subconsultant will be hired to complete the RCS Services. There will be an increase of \$178.20 for the Iron Bridge Road. The revised SA amount total will be \$655,490.00. There will also be an increase of \$178.20 for Strong Road. The revised SA amount total will be \$1,002,025.00. FDOT has allocated funding for the above reference project. There will be no fiscal impact to the County.

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

**10. Approval of State Funded Grant Agreement (SCOP) for Fairbanks Ferry Road-2<sup>nd</sup> Phase**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This item seeks Board approval of the State-Funded Grant Agreement for Fairbanks Ferry Road – 2<sup>nd</sup> phase. Fairbanks Ferry Road was selected for funding by FDOT through their SCOP program in the amount of \$169,653.00. There will be no fiscal impact to the County.

Commissioner Hinson said the first time, they had the road widened a little bit, and he asked if that would be included in the second phase. Mr. Young re-appeared and said yes, they were requesting for those paved shoulders to be widened.

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

**11. Approval of State Funded Grant Agreement (SCOP) for Hardaway Highway**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This agenda item seeks approval of the State-Funded Grant Agreement (SCOP) for Hardaway Highway in the amount of \$4,091,811.00. FDOT has allocated funding for this project.

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

**12. Approval of State-Funded Grant Supplemental Agreement for Attapulgus Highway**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This item seeks approval of the State-Funded Grant Supplemental Agreement for Attapulgus Highway in the amount of \$3,116,903.00. The agreement is being supplemented to reduce the limits of the project from 8.2 miles to 5.8 miles due to the bids received being substantially higher than what was awarded. The total cost of the project will be reduced to \$3,116,903.00 to account for construction cost adjustment. FDOT has allocated funding for this project.

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

**13. Approval of CEI Agreement with AE Engineering, Inc. for Attapulgus Highway**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This item seeks approval of the CEI Agreement with AE Engineering, Inc. for Attapulgus Highway at the rate of \$383,679.00. FDOT has allocated funding for CEI Services for this project.

Commissioner Hinson asked if that was standard. Mr. Dixon said all of that was laid out in the process.

Commissioner Simpkins said in the last meeting, she requested something to be tabled and the reason was that the Engineer was listed as the CEI for the same project and asked if it was normal procedure for them to charge to be both the CEI and paying additional fees for the same project? Mr. Dixon stated he thinks those charges were related to the development of the project. Commissioner Simpkins stated she was going to need clarity on the development. She wanted to know if it was normal for them to pay the CEI and also paying additional fees that they incur.

Commissioner Simpkins asked what was the normal as it relates to the engineers and the billing as it relates to the previous task order. Mr. Young said anything they do, they bill for it. Mr. Dixon said any vendor has the right to charge for the services they provide.

Commissioner Green asked regarding the previous company-Dewberry.

Commissioner Hinson asked how come this one project cost \$383,679.00. Mr. Dixon said the costs within these grants are tightly controlled by DOT. Dewberry served as CEI on many projects.

Commissioner Holt said they have had charges on the front-end and back-end of contracts. They have had Dewberry for a long time.



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

**14. Approval of Bid Award and Construction Agreement with Roberts and Roberts, Inc. for Attapulcus Highway**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This agenda item seeks Board approval to award the construction of the Attapulcus Highway resurfacing project to Roberts and Roberts, Inc. in the amount of \$2,733,224.00. The project will be funded from the FDOT SCOP agreement.

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

**15. Approval of Mosquito Control Certified Budget and Detailed Work Plan Budget FY 2023-2024**

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. This item seeks Board approval of the Mosquito Control Certified Budget and Detailed Work Plan Budget FY2023-2024. According to Florida Statutes, Chapter 388, the Public Works Department must apply to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for matching funds annually.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if they have mosquito control now? Mr. Dixon said the real answer is no but they hired someone with substantial knowledge but is not licensed in Florida.

Commissioner Green asked with this process in place, how long before they are able to provide services? Mr. Dixon said it depends on who they work with. They will look at how soon they can get someone on the floor. Commissioner Green stated mosquitos are year-round.

Commissioner Hinson asked how long have they been without an operator? Mr. Dixon stated about 1 year. Commissioner Hinson said they need to market this because it could be a serious situation, they have wild hogs all over place and mosquitos carry disease. He said maybe they need to advertise for this. Mr. Dixon said the position was advertised and filled.

Commissioner Holt said it was a two-edged sword; they did not want to overdo it because of pesticides.

Commissioner Hinson said to maybe look at how much they were paying. Also, now citizens have to call Public Works for spraying.

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

**16. Approval of Settlement Agreement, Waiver and Release with Cynthia Roberts and Mas Allen Roberts**

Mr. Knowles said this was the settlement agreement they had from the Shade meeting.

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

**CLERK OF COURT**

**17. Updates**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

**18. Updates**

Mr. Dixon said they have before them the calendar with dates they have been able to confirm. The Legislative agenda for next year is due next month. If they have any ideas for programs, let them know.

Mr. Dixon stated they have a Strategic Planning meeting. The Governor asked to come over for a ground-breaking ceremony on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Fire service workshop will be held October 26<sup>th</sup>.

They need a workshop for Indigent Tax, Library, and HCA hospital.

Commissioner Hinson said they have Integrity and hired someone dealing with infrastructure and they need to hear from them every 2 months or quarterly.

**COUNTY ATTORNEY**

**19. Updates**

Nothing

**DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS**

**20. Commissioner Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2**

Commissioner Simpkins stated they have had individuals present to the Board addressing different issues and requests; they told them they would be going into their budget. When they went into the budget, they did not address any of those issues like housing and assistance with housing. She stated she knew they had non-profits come forward and have organizations assisting constituents and would have additional funding if the County stepped in and they have not taken a look at that. She would like for them to address this. Commissioner Simpkins stated she was in Juvenile Court last week and they have a serious problem in this County. The Courtroom was full of their young people. She had a parent call and ask about drug programs for youth. They only have programs for adults. She stated they were crying out. She stated they need to address this issue on their troubled youth.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if legislative priorities were written by staff; would like to know prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> what their priorities are since they are not having a Board discussion regarding that. She noticed on the calendar that they have the Bicentennial Gala on November 4<sup>th</sup> and she has not seen any advertisement or tickets being sold. She would like to know who was selling the tickets and what the layout was for that.

Commissioner Simpkins stated, in the words of the Chair, One Gadsden, and the importance of unity, however, there is a divide. The County is working in silo. She received calls from different municipalities and was told there is a lack of trust as it relates to the County, and that was a serious problem. She was hearing it from Commissioners, Council members, and it needed to be addressed. She had a problem with requests not going through unless it was requested by the Chair. She stated she was elected by the people of District 2 and will do it with integrity.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she received invoices and they spent \$280 for a flyer. That is a problem. They are supposed to be good stewards of taxpayers' money. She stated it was a waste of taxpayer dollars and needs to be stopped. Commissioner Simpkins asked the Attorney what would be the reasoning for if they put an RFP out, and it does not reach the dais, and already gone through the process, why would it not come to the Board for approval. Mr. Knowles that could maybe happen if it was under the \$35,000 threshold, but the practice of the Board has been that all contracts come before the Board. He did not recall there being an RFP where it has not come before them, however, he could see a scenario where that bidder won, they submitted invoices that were under the \$35,000 threshold, but he did not think the Clerk would pay that. His experience was that the Board awards RFPs and RFQs. Commissioner Simpkins said it should have come in January 3<sup>rd</sup> for a bid and she did not see where there was any challenge to the bid. She stated she received an email from the Clerks' office in regard to contracts, and the fact that the RFP was put out, and they met on it, and someone won the bid. She asked the Administrator why it never came to them.

Mr. Dixon said he did not know what RFP Commissioner Simpkins was referring to. She said it was for the Graphic Design. She saw where it was sent back out again. Mr. Dixon stated that any time there were any questions like that, he would prefer to not answer it in public; it has to do with bidders and with what bidders submitted. However, this seems to have been coming for a while, so he wanted to shed a little light on it. He stated what Commissioner Simpkins saw was the last of 4 bids, he believed. They were regarding graphics and graphic services. He stated what she did not see was that their internal office let that bid 3 times. He stated they generally do not accept a single bid, however, after the third time and someone else won the bid, they were willing to advance the bid. That did not seem fair to him. He asked that the bid be put out again and that the bid be managed by someone different. The person who has the contract now is alleging that the County, internally, has some bias against him. In order to be fair to both parties, they put the bid back out again and he will manage that process through.

Commissioner Simpkins said she was aware it was put out twice, there was only one bid the first time, and the second time there was 2 bids; there was not a formal challenge put in and that was why this was submitted to the Administrator. The person complained but did not put in a formal challenge.

Mr. Dixon stated, obviously, she spoke with the Assistant County Administrator. Commissioner Simpkins stated no she did not. Mr. Dixon stated he was more than aware of this process, he also understood that in order for the County to be fair, both parties have alleged misappropriate opportunities, and the only way to be fair is to be re-bid the situation.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she did not want him to assume she spoke with the Assistant County Administrator. She said she wanted the respect and she has been trying to maintain composure. She respects the County Administrator and expects the same from him. Even though they do not see eye to eye, she still expects respect.

Chair NeSmith said in his role as Chair, he has to provide respect to everyone and give ample opportunity to speak. He will not allow anyone to be disrespectful to anyone.

Commissioner Simpkins asked them to be fiscally responsible with their citizens funds and the \$280 for one flyer to be made was ridiculous.

**Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4**

Commissioner Holt asked the County Administrator about the flyer. Mr. Dixon said he did not know what a flyer cost and would check with Ms. Daniels. They have an understanding with someone that does that, and they have tried to be careful with what goes out. The professional has a fee. If there were concerns with that fee, it will go out for bid. At some point, that fee was agreed to. He stated if they have an issue with the fee, they could try to limit the number of flyers they request from them.

Commissioner Holt said the reason she asked about that was because when they do make accusations, or bring up stuff in public, they need to be verified one way or another. She stated if there are specific concerns, they could bring those and they can workshop this.

Commissioner Holt mentioned going after economic development; they have not addressed it. They were trying to parcel out the money they already have and it is going to give out. They need to concentrate on the Economic Development side. She stated they have not done a job fair in so long. They need to be looking at what companies they could bring in that would suite their region. She stated she knew they are supposed to be a state that has a lot of tourism. What kind of tourism are you going to have in a small county? So, the job market is where they need to concentrate on. Commissioner Holt stated they have the legislative delegation coming.

She asked what are they going to ask them for that will help them get funding? So, these are the things that she thinks they need to talk about. She stated if they could work on these things, all the others will fall into place.

Commissioner Holt stated they were going to have to address these items between them and the Clerks' Office. Chair NeSmith said he and the Administrator have already started taking action. Mr. Dixon said if they would, he appreciates the support, but he did not think this helps. If they could give him and the Chair the opportunity to meet, he would appreciate not going to that level. Commissioner Holt said she has no problem with a conversation with the Clerk, but what she was saying, these things are more immediate. She stated they can look at the conversation, but at a certain point, there has to be action. She stated it was not unusual to have confrontations in public meetings. She and the Clerk have bumped heads in the past.

Commissioner Holt said they were not doing a bad job, but on the economic development side, they were not getting an 'A' on that. She stated kids need jobs; they need an Economic Development plan to invite those companies in. They need to get on a bus and go to Columbus, MS and see what they are doing in industrial development.

Chair NeSmith said they all had input as to which workshops they wanted. If someone had stated that they needed to go in a different direction, they would have heard that. Also, they have the legislative delegation coming up. They can talk about everything to do with economic development. He stated they have strategic planning coming up on Monday the 9<sup>th</sup>. They have the opportunity to bring up economic development there as well.

**Commissioner Ronterious Green, District 5**

Commissioner Green said he had a very interesting conversation with the Economic Development Director and encouraged everyone to do the same. They have someone who will listen to their concerns. He wanted to make sure they give him the opportunity to meet and speak about this.

This month is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and they need to encourage everyone to get tested, including men. Commissioner Green thanked the Administration for getting their packets in a timely manner.

Commissioner Green stated he sent the Administrator pictures as it related to Shiloh Church; the limbs and trees they are requesting to be attended to. He was not sure if it was County property and not sure if they have had the time to address that situation so he could provide the Church with answers. Mr. Dixon said he has not as of yet gotten back with him with any information. He stated they will probably be able to get him more information tomorrow. Commissioner Green stated the Church also had a complaint about the bus stop sign that is no longer in use in that area.

Commissioner Green asked for a follow-up on Serenity Land. They had a constituent come and ask about information for Serenity Lane. Mr. Dixon asked Mr. Young if he had any information. Mr. Young said not yet.

Commissioner Green asked, if possible, he would like the opportunity to take a ride through District 5 with Public Works. They have roads that are holding water during the rainy season. Mr. Dixon stated he believed that was one of the areas in the legislative agenda that they have not addressed.

Commissioner Green asked for updates as it related to Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Dixon stated they have met with the party and had very interesting talks. They will see if they could bring something back for the Commissioners.

Commissioner Green stated he had the opportunity to visit 2 senior centers this week. They had guests there giving vital information regarding wills and the center was packed. He stated they should do a Town Hall meeting in those senior centers.

Commissioner Green stated he asked a while back about Social Security services and they did not have a building in Gadsden County, what were they doing to make sure those needs were being fulfilled? Mr. Dixon said they were reviewing all options with Social Security. They believed in the Zoom services they were giving; however, they were looking at every opportunity to kind of stabilize that and to create a central place for folk who may not Zoom.

TJ Lewis, Economic Development Director, said he has been researching on 2 projects in Havana and Chattahoochee. The total is \$6 Million. The application is due on October 5<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Green mentioned Ranch Road and asked the County Administrator if he got any information about that project. He saw some land clearing and had a citizen in that area to call and ask what was going because they did not receive a public notice. He said it was towards Ranch Road near the Apalachee Center. Mr. Dixon said he put that in with the Building Inspector and will have an answer for him tomorrow.

Commissioner Green thanked Commissioner Simpkins for bringing up the juvenile situation. He stated it was a great opportunity for them to reach out with all of their Law Enforcement partners and County Judge. He stated it was not a problem just for the Board but the County as a whole.

Mr. Dixon said he meant to say that in given what the Board directed and what they are hearing, they have begun re-creation of the Public Service Coordinating committee made up of the Judges, State Attorney, Public Defender. They were looking at how to set up that Board and

infuse it with money for programming. They create programs, but in a silo. With the Public Service Coordinating Committee, they create those programs in front of those folk and those folk have input into those programs. There are 2 programs out there now that have been in touch with the Circuit Administration, who is looking at reviving mental health court and doing something with Juveniles because of addiction. Mr. Dixon stated on last Thursday, they met with the Sheriff's Office and the Sheriff's Office has invited DCF and Florida State Hospital. The Sheriff has been made aware of a grant and as soon as they finish writing it up, it will come before the Board because the Jail belongs to the Board of County Commissioners. That program potentially is about \$6 million. He stated the Sheriff is attempting to set up a rehabilitation opportunity for those who with substance abuse and mental health situations. The basis of this program is not only to get them into a program that will help them, but to provide services after the fact. Now, they need a program prevention wise.

Commissioner Green stated it was Homecoming for their only public High School, Gadsden County High, on Friday and there is a parade at 4:00 pm. He asked for participation.

**Commissioner Eric Hinson, Vice-Chair, District 1**

Commissioner Hinson said "idle mind is devil's workshop". They need to make sure kids are in vocational training in 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

*Commissioner Holt stepped out at 9:14 pm.*

Commissioner Hinson stated they had 240 People in jail and they put in place a work program. Mr. Dixon said that was the program they are looking to supersize.

Commissioner Hinson said he voted against going to Mississippi because they were dealing with COVID at that time. He stated another place they need to go to is St. Petersburg.

*Commissioner Holt returned 9:17*

Commissioner Hinson asked the Chairman to look into how much money they received for opioids in the County.

Commissioner Hinson mentioned that the Havana Carver Heights/Havana Projects did not allow residents to drive in; they put chains to prevent it. Now, they have bars around the facility so kids cannot play outside.

Commissioner Hinson stated on October 7, One Gadsden Foundation is partnering with school board member Cathy Johnson and Pastor Jones. The second harvest will be at the old North Havana High School.

Commissioner Hinson thanked the Gadsden County Athletic Hall of Fame and said he appreciated his coaches.

**Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, Chair, District 3**

Chair NeSmith stated he received a package from Robbie Jones and asked if there was something he wanted to present? Mr. Dixon stated he would come and talk about the wild hogs.

Robbie Jones appeared before the Board to speak on wild hogs. He stated October is Peanut Butter Challenge month.

Mr. Jones said they had a meeting with USDA and IFAS regarding trapping pigs and would be more advantageous to partner with them. They will bring trapper to handle traps and will euthanize them. He stated they cannot kill nor eat the pigs. 20% of wild hogs carry different diseases. They need to be taken to a respected processing facility to make sure they have no disease.

Commissioner Green asked if there was an estimate cost on the services. Mr. Jones stated it was between \$100-200,000. Commissioner Green asked if there was any grant funding. Mr. Jones stated they were in the season for re-writing the farm bill, so if there is money put federally into the farm bill for trapping again, there could be that chance to get funding but that money has been exhausted from the last farm bill.

Commissioner Green asked if it was something they could ask for from their legislature. Mr. Dixon said he did not see why not.

Commissioner Hinson said what he was told was that the legislature put a lot of interest in killing bears. They had 20 hogs on his parent's road.

Chair NeSmith asked the Commissioners to submit their representatives' names for the Parks and Recreation Boards.

Chair NeSmith stated the Gadsden Hospital, Inc. has several vacancies. They have sent out advertisement for persons to volunteer on that Board.

*Commissioner Holt left at 9:35 pm.*

Commissioner Hinson said he thought the Board dissolved Gadsden Hospital, Inc. He stated that the previous Board they had voted to give all power to Capitol Regional Hospital. They need to look at the contract first before they start talking about this.



Chair NeSmith stated they need to start working on the Summer Youth Program now and not wait until Spring. He stated they were understaffed. They need to organize the program now because quantity does not guarantee quality.

Chair NeSmith mentioned non-profit organizations and stated they needed to have a workshop.

Chair NeSmith thanked the Administrator, Staff and Ms. Fryson for help with the cleaning supplies in Chattahoochee.

Commissioner Green wanted to make sure when they have the workshop, that they have different categories for non-profits. There are some that have a 501c3 and did not want to do anything.

Commissioner Green provided a green light moment:

“One of the marvelous things in our community is that it enables us to welcome and help people...”

**RECEIPT AND FILE**

**21. Florida Commerce: State Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Competitive Florida Partnership Grant**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**WITH NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR NESMITH ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 9:58 P.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**