

**AT A STRATEGIC PLANNING
WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN
AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY,
FLORIDA ON OCTOBER 9, 2023
AT 3:30 PM, 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, Secretary to the Boards

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair NeSmith started the workshop at 3:34 pm. Commissioner Green provided invocation. Chair NeSmith led into the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD (3-Minute Limit)

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.gov 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.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- 1.** Ms. Gabrielli stated they will start a team building activity. She passed the activity ball around to people to introduce themselves and answer a question from the ball.

Ms. Gabrielli started with a “Pipeline to Success Teambuilding Activity”.

Ms. Gabrielli explained what is strategic planning and also mentioned the Census.

Commissioner Holt arrived at 4:09 pm.

Discussion of Outcomes from 2021 Strategic Planning

- Mission, Vision, Values
- Strategic Planning
- Goals

Ms. Gabrielli stated a mission statement should clearly define the purpose of the organization as well as products and services that are offered.

Current Mission Statement: “Building a more sustainable community by improving health, education, infrastructure, economic development, safety, and overall quality of life.

Vision Statement is a statement about what your organization wants to become.

Current Vision Statement: “The model community of excellence globally”.

Values: Values are beliefs that are shared among the stakeholders of an organization.

Ms. Gabrielli went through the priorities of the County.

Goals – specific accomplishments that must be achieved in total.

Commissioner Green asked how often these should be changed. Ms. Gabrielli stated one to 2 years is a good time frame.

Chair stated building sustainable community through economic development.

Commissioner Holt asked before they change anything, to look at the goals.

Ms. Gabrielli went through the 2021/ 2022 goals.

Commissioner Holt asked if had they had a health plan. Mr. Dixon stated since then, access has changed. Before, doctors were not going to telehealth. Since the pandemic, it is the new and best thing. Envisioning Telehealth centers.

Commissioner Green stated they have not really agreed to anything; they need to come up with a solution. He asked if they were working with other health departments and physicians.

Mr. Dixon stated they had a dialogue; the health department is really caught up in politics of the day. Commissioner Green asked how would they come up with plan if there were no experts.

Commissioner Simpkins stated looking at their outlining areas, what truly are reasons for citizens not going to doctor. She stated there was a high percentage of uninsured. How do they get there to be insured? What role could they play to help? She stated it goes beyond just looking at the one clinic and that particular area. They need to look at those numbers and citizens in that area and how many were not seeing doctors because they are uninsured or was there another reason for them not going to the doctor. She stated they need to look at Telehealth. They need to look at the County as a whole, especially unincorporated areas. Commissioner Holt stated they need to look at a plan and say yay or nay. The health department cannot answer anything unless the government says so.

Commissioner Simpkins stated there were a couple events bringing citizens in and she questioned them as to why they do not go to the doctor. A lot of it was because of trust issues.

She said they need a health clinic on the west side. They need to look at the healthcare plan as a whole, and look at how to increase health equity in the County.

Mr. Dixon stated they need them all, that was reality. They need a federally qualified health center.

Chair NeSmith stated that was a major issue and Commissioners have a brilliant input. Healthcare has a lot of moving parts. There are limitations with the health department. They need to bring in a Coordinator.

Commissioner Simpkins stated her concern was could they afford to form another department. Chair NeSmith stated they need to locate the resources to coordinate healthcare.

Commissioner Green stated it would be good to ask the legislator for assistance on forming this department.

Ms. Gabrielli added in a new goal of hiring a Director of Health Administration.

Commissioner Simpkins asked what that position looks like; she did not want to rush this. She stated it needs to serve purpose and make sure the Board decides what that position should entail.

Commissioner Green stated no for setting that goal to January 1. He stated they would need more time. Chair NeSmith asked what was a good time frame. Commissioner Green stated Spring. Commissioner Green recommended to add to that workshop and go from there. Ms. Gabrielli said for them to start that workshop as soon as possible.

Commissioner Holt said she said January 1 for the goal because of the legislative session.

Ms. Gabrielli asked about the date for the goal. March 1? Commissioner Holt stated January 1.

Commissioner Simpkins stated they were in October now, and some are traveling and they have the holidays. She did not see January 1 working. Commissioner Green would like to determine the date during the workshop.

Commissioner Hinson arrived at 5:05 pm.

Commissioner Simpkins stated the physician would handle the health care plan.

Commissioner Hinson stated they were a fiscally constrained County. They need to maximize what they have already.

Commissioner Simpkins asked about the funding for the public safety coordinating council.

They changed the word 'fund' to 'reconvene' under Public Safety Coordinating Council.

Ms. Gabrielli asked if they had any updates on combating homelessness. Mr. Dixon stated no.

Commissioner Green stated he did not think they have an overpopulation of homelessness. He asked how would they find these people to have numbers.

Commissioner Simpkins stated they have homeless problems in her district and it would be a priority for her. Mental health plays a part with homelessness in some ways.

Chair NeSmith asked if they have a section within the housing department that does research on homelessness. Commissioner Green stated it was important if they could get some numbers. Ms. Gabrielli stated there is a lot more homelessness than they think.

Chair NeSmith asked if they had a way to collect data.

Commissioner Holt stated maybe Public Safety would know about collecting data. Also mentioned the school system having data.

Commissioner Simpkins stated data is available. Big Bend has data.

Commissioner Simpkins stated there are individuals out there currently working with the homeless. The Commissioners have not responded to them and it should be a top priority.

Commissioner Hinson stated they need to go to St. Pete and see how they handle mental health.

Mr. Dixon stated they attempted to address the food desert. The County has donated funding to second harvest.

Ms. Gabrielli mentioned the Economic Development plan. Mr. Lewis stated they added another for \$500,000.

They added 'inventory of County owned property being conducted' under Research Transitional Housing. The date was set for 3/1/2024.

Commissioner Hinson stated they have a lot of seniors that have a lot of land and kids. The code hurts the community. They need to look at the land development code.

Mr. Dixon stated they ran the Summer Youth program for a couple years. They met with the school district. He stated they will meet in November to start talking about the program. How they could get kids on the entrepreneur program.

Commissioner Holt stated they need to look at a County and School Board meeting.

Commissioner Simpkins stated it was important to meet with the schools, but they need to make sure they were bringing in business partners as well. They need to make sure they are focusing on repairs, maintenance.

Ms. Gabrielli mentioned the feasibility study for the Gadsden County Community College. Commissioner Hinson stated to change the date to October 2024.

They also changed the date for implementing bike trails to September 2024.

They moved the date for assisting in promoting minority farmers in Gadsden County to March 2024.

Ms. Gabrielli mentioned the goal of paving up to 5 miles of dirt road each year. Mr. Dixon stated it was not really going anywhere; they have no funding to pave dirt roads. The date was changed to 9/30/2024 for paving dirt roads.

Ms. Gabrielli mentioned the goal of adding private dirt roads of at least 5 miles into the public maintenance system. They changed the date to 9/30/24.

Ms. Gabrielli mentioned the goal of providing broadband access to everyone in the County. The date was changed to 1/1/25.

The goal of getting all 4 I-10 interchanges ready for economic growth. Mr. Lewis stated they submitted a feasibility grant of \$500K.

The goal of conducting feasibility plan for new I-10 interchange at Highbridge Rd and Hwy 65. The date was set for 9/30/2024.

They mentioned the review and revise of all County Ordinances. They changed the title to 'review and revise outdated County Ordinances'. Changed year to 2024. Many ordinances were revised including alcohol, church development, board rules.

The goal of conducting a feasibility study for the new county administration and courthouse complex. There is an Architect on board; they were working on the ability to fund a feasibility study.

The goal of enhancing the public transportation system. They changed the date to 9/30/2024.

The goal of updating the transportation element of the comprehensive plan with detailed needs related to county roads and bridges. Mr. Stiell stated they received grant from FDOC, they were working to revise transportation element ARPC. The date was changed to 1/1/25.

The goal of improving street lighting throughout county - in progress. The date was changed to year 2024.

The goal of improving street lights within communities and neighborhoods – Commissioner Hinson stated they could look at the costs first.

The goal of evaluating existing parks for access, safety – In progress. The date was changed to 2024.

The goal in increasing access for trails and parks – Date changed to 2024.

The goal of meeting or exceeding water quality standards – Mr. Dixon stated to change that title to ‘continue to meet and exceed water quality standards by working with partners Water Mgmt. District, Talquin, and Municipalities.

The goal of overhaul comprehensive plan – the date was changed to 2025.

The goal of providing access to and promote lakes and rivers – Ms. Steele stated their first event is in December.

Commissioner Holt stated Talquin is its own government. She stated they needed sewer lines and Talquin did not want to provide it. They had to apply for CCBG grants.

Commissioner Green stated the mission statement was fine how it is to him.

They changed the mission statement to show more focus on economic development.

Adjournment

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR NESMITH DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 7:53 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

KIMBLIN NESMITH, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk.