

**AT A WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON FEBRUARY 20, 2024 AT 4:00 PM, THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

**Present:** Ronterious Green, Chairman, District 5  
Alonzetta Simpkins, Vice-Chair, District 2  
Eric Hinson, District 1  
Kimblin NeSmith, District 3  
Brenda Holt, District 4  
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator  
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney  
Adriana Quijada, Deputy Clerk

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

Chair Green called the workshop to order at 4 p.m. Chair Green led into the Pledge of Allegiance.

**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.

Chair Green read aloud the above statement.

**Discussion and Direction regarding the Non-Profit Organizations**

Mr. Dixon presented the above item. He stated Ms. Burgess will walk them through the process they have laid out for them.

Ms. Burgess appeared before the Board and stated this program was established to help local non-profits. The purpose of this was to provide an efficient and effective method for allocating non-profit grant funds. The process has several minimum requirements and operates on a two-year funding cycle.

Ms. Burgess stated to be considered for funding, the agency must complete an application. The applications will be accepted between July 1 and July 31 and evaluated by August 31. Fund disbursements are made at the beginning of the County's fiscal year, October 1. She mentioned that

they have \$50,000 budgeted for the non-profits funding program and they would need Board direction as far as what would be the maximum amount that each non-profit would be able to receive each fiscal year.

Ms. Burgess went on to the evaluation process and mentioned the Community Review Team. This team would be consisting of 5 members appointed by the County Commissioners. Each Commissioner would appoint one person from their district with experience as a community member and specialist who will serve as grant reviewer along with three County Staff. Agencies will be evaluated based on their service delivery model, potential capacity, and ability to meet State, Federal, Foundation, and other potential resource eligibility requirements. The Community Review Team has the discretion to request presentations, copies of legal documents, additional written responses, or site visits to aid their ability to evaluate the proposals. Each funding cycle the CRT will complete its review of the applications and determine funding recommendations. The recommendations rendered by the CRT are not subject to appeal. Each agency will receive a decision letter that includes the funding recommendation.

Ms. Burgess stated the minimum eligibility requirements for the program:

1. The agency would have to be a non-profit corporation, incorporated in Florida or authorized by the Florida Department of State to transact business in Florida.
2. The agency would have to be a 501c3 with the U.S. Department of Treasury.
3. The agency must be authorized by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to solicit funds.
4. The agency has obtained a sales tax exemption registration from the Florida Department of Revenue.
5. The agency has a Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy.
6. The agency has a Dual Check Signing Policy that requires two or more signatures based on certain fiscal thresholds approved by the board of directors.
7. If required by law, the agency has its books and records audited annually by an independent certified public accountant who has no affiliation with the agency and whose examination is made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

8. If the audit contains a schedule of findings, the audit includes a corrective action plan.
9. The agency has an IRS form 990 completed within the last fiscal year or filed an extension with the IRS.
10. The agency has an administrative cost of 25% or less as evidenced by the IRS Form 990 and/or audit.
11. The agency has a local board of directors and/or a local advisory board.
12. The agency has a Records Retention Policy.
13. The agency has a Conflict-of-Interest Policy.
14. The agency has a comprehensive Fiscal Management Policy.
15. The agency has proof of general liability coverage.
16. The agency has not received a program funding award from the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners.

Ms. Burgess stated as far as reporting requirement, each non-profit will provide quarterly financial reports. All agencies are required to submit bi-annual and Year-End Narrative Reports. A template will be provided for the reports.

Chair Green asked if anyone know approximately how many non-profit organizations they have in this County. Commissioner Holt stated they have to count churches also.

Chair Green stated he heard about selecting a member for a board to represent their district. Ms. Burgess stated each Commissioner will select a person from their district to be a part of that board in addition to three county staff employees.

*Commissioner Simpkins appeared at 4:11 p.m.*

Commissioner Holt stated they needed to look at the qualifications for the members of that board. They need someone that has had a 501c3 previously. She thought that they should have at least five years of experience operating in this county. She stated that board should also collect the data on the needs in the county.

*Commissioner Hinson appeared at 4:15 p.m.*

Commissioner Simpkins stated they do need a needs assessment completed in their county. They were just operating on what they think.

Chair Green stated they needed a better handle on what they could afford to do. He stated \$50,000 was not a lot of money. Ms. Burgess stated that the current year budget was \$50,000 but \$10,000 was utilized, so they currently have \$40,000 in the budget.

Alma Venisee stated it was not a lot of money so she did not think that a lot of non-profits would apply for it. They may not carry liability insurance. She stated it was their responsibility to set the categories they want to fund.

The County Attorney mentioned the Sunshine Law. They need to make sure if this was the route they were taking, meetings needed to be held in the sunshine notice and minutes need to done. He also mentioned churches and stated to make sure there were specific restrictions on what they can and cannot do with the money.

Commissioner NeSmith stated they need a Coordinator. They need to make sure to fund the non-profits properly. He mentioned having galas and events to raise the money to get organizations involved. Chair Green stated to consider adding workshops quarterly to spearhead.

Commissioner Simpkins stated they have a grants person that could share their expertise on grant writing. She stated workshops are a great idea. She asked if the requirements are for current non-profits they fund as well or just new ones.

Ms. Venisee stated would use the \$40,000 to build infrastructure for non-profits interested. Carolyn Ford appeared and stated they need to look at the needs in the community.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the County Administrator about the responsibility for the advisory board. Dixon stated did not draft up any

Commissioner Simpkins stated start with appointing 5 members, then staff can give them further instruction of their role on that board. Mr. Dixon stated appointing the board will allow for the assessment.

Commissioner NeSmith asked once the advisory board selects an organization, does it come to the Board for approval. Mr. Dixon stated yes.

Chair Green stated once they get those 5 members, they could work out with the County Administrator on the timeframe; he would like to see it done within the next month.

**Motion to Adjourn**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR GREEN DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 5:29 P.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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

**ATTEST:**

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**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**