

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JUNE 18, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M., THE
FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

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

Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Green called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Chair Green led into invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Amendments and Approval of Agenda

Mr. Dixon requested to pull for discussion item 5.

Request to be added under Awards, Presentation and Appearances:

1a. Presentation on Coping Connections
(Jackie Robinson)

Request to be added under General Business:

12a. Approval of Gadsden County Bicentennial Cycling Event Agreement with TopView Sports

12b. Proposed Lease Agreement with Neighborhood Medical Center

Commissioner Hinson asked if there was anything in the consent agenda that could impact the budget. Mr. Dixon stated the Florida Humanities Summer Reading Grant and the Dollar General Foundation Grant. They are bringing in money.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED AND CHAIR GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

Awards, Presentations and Appearances

1. 1. Proclamation Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week

Chair Green presented the Proclamation to the Probation team.

1a. Presentation on Coping Connections

Mr. Dixon there will be a presentation by Dr. Jackie Robinson.

Dr. Robinson appeared to provide a presentation on Coping Connections. She stated it was a free resource and citizens needed to know about it. She started coping connections to help people connect and cope during difficult times during COVID and it was still available. They help with coping with stress, depression, grief, etc. and how to find therapists.

Dr. Robinson mentioned that on June 27, they will talk about the impact of heat on brain and behavior. She stated she would like help on how to get this information out to citizens.

Commissioner Hinson mentioned mental health and thanked her for taking on this issue. Chair Green stated he had sat at one of her workshops and stated it was phenomenal.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she would like for the PIO to put this on their website.

CONSENT

Chair Green stated they pulled items 5 and 11 for discussion.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH EXCEPTION OF ITEM 11 AND ITEM 5 AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

2. **Ratification Memo**
3. **BOCC Meeting/Workshop Minutes:**
 - a. May 21, 2024, Regular BOCC Meeting
4. **Approval to renew Digital Service Grant Agreement with the State of Florida Department of Management Services**
5. **Approval of Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement with the State of Florida Department of Transportation**
6. **Approval of Adopt-A-Road Agreement with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. Tau Theta Omega Chapter**
7. **Approval of 2023 Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement between the State of Florida Division of Emergency Management and Gadsden County, Florida**
8. **Approval of Florida Humanities Summer Reading Grant**
9. **Approval of Dollar General Foundation Grant**

10. **Re-Appointments to the Quincy-Gadsden Airport Authority (QGAA)**
11. **Approval to Award ITB 24-06 Rebid W.S. Stevens COVID Shelter to Graybelle Construction, LLC., and Approval to Negotiate the Contract**
12. **Approval of the Agreement for Gadsden County Professional Architectural Consulting Services with Hammond Design Group, LLC.**

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

5. **Approval of Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement with the State of Florida Department of Transportation**

Mr. Dixon stated item 5 was pulled to add some information. They needed to include in the agreement Robert F. Monroe as one of the coverage areas for this traffic agreement. Since they did that, the lump sum number on the fiscal impact would change to \$15,656.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE ITEM 5 WITH AMENDMENTS AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

11. **Approval to Award ITB 24-06 Rebid W.S. Stevens COVID Shelter to Graybelle Construction, LLC., and Approval to Negotiate the Contract**

Commissioner Simpkins stated she wanted to make sure that they were including for there to not be any change orders coming along. Mr. Dixon stated they anticipated no change orders.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE ITEM 11 AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

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 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 Green read aloud the above statement.

Harvey Suber, 216 Talquin Ave Quincy, FL

Mr. Suber appeared and stated they will be hearing a presentation from Kate regarding Animal Services and about a grant for a new facility for domesticated animals.

Kate MacFall, 1206 Walton Dr Tallahassee, FL

Ms. Macfall appeared. She stated needs for their shelter were outstanding. She hoped they would not turn down the grant and the offer has been out there for 6 months.

Commissioner Holt asked if any there were any groups that could apply for the grant that does this. Ms. Macfall stated maybe private ones, less so in rural communities. Commissioner Holt asked if other counties have this grant and Ms. Macfall stated several.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she did receive an email on this. She stated it would be good to take a look at what services they were willing to offer in the email.

Terry Meek, 2465 Arvah Branch Blvd Tallahassee, FL

Mr. Meek stated he was there regarding the re-appointment for Robbie Maxwell. He stated the airport was a class act and appreciated what the county does for them.

Forest Vickery, 1964 Queenwood Dr Tallahassee, FL

Did not wish to speak anymore.

Tracey Stallworth

Mr. Stallworth stated Mr. Dixon could not receive his award Saturday for Juneteenth and he wanted to present it now. He gave a background on Mr. Dixon and his accomplishments as a County Administrator.

Mr. Dixon gave his thanks and stated it was an honor to serve the public.

Chair Green stated they received 135 emails regarding Champs Chance and he will give them to the Clerk.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

GENERAL BUSINESS

12a. Approval of Gadsden County Bicentennial Cycling Event Agreement with TopView Sports

Mr. Dixon presented the above item.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 3-1 TO APPROVE. COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS OPPOSED.

12b. Proposed Lease Agreement with Neighborhood Medical Center

Mr. Dixon presented this item and stated the County Attorney will take the lead.

Mr. Knowles stated this was brought back as a request from Commissioner Hinson. He stated there has been an issue with Neighborhood Medical Center regarding the HVAC units needing to be replaced/repaired. Part of the problem with making these changes was that Neighborhood Medical Center was only paying \$100 a month. So, that was a lot of money for the county to invest in a building that they were not really receiving any return on investment.

Mr. Knowles stated he met with Mr. William Dillon and also the Executive Director for NMC to discuss a proposed lease agreement. The proposed lease agreement would up the lease amount and increase a security deposit to be commensurate with 12 months' worth of rental payments. Also, the lease has a provision that stated if the tenant vacates the premises in advance of the completion of the lease, the county would be getting money back for making the necessary repairs to the HVAC units.

Mr. Dixon stated they have secured a grant to renovate the building. He asked to keep that in mind.

Commissioner Hinson stated the board did not instruct the County Administrator to move in that direction. They should keep that in mind as well.

Chair Green asked about the original time frame being October. Commissioner Hinson stated the board did not agree to that.

Matt Thro, 31 Egret St. N. Crawfordville, FL

Mr. Thro appeared before the Board. He stated would like to come back and show all the services they offer.

Commissioner Holt stated she was in favor of the lease and wanted to make sure the dates match up. She was under the impression that they received a grant. Mr. Thro stated all FQHCs receive a federal grant that has very strict regulations on what they spend.

Mr. Dixon stated they will have a site visit on the 26th and December 2026 is the contract end date. Commissioner Hinson asked why they have a septic tank; everyone else has a sewer system.

Commissioner Holt stated there would have to be contractors. The scope of work needs to match the grant. Mr. Thro stated they were willing to work with the Board. Commissioner Simpkins asked if they were able to begin since inspection was next week. Mr. Dixon stated he did not see why not. They got the grant in anticipation of them leaving the facility.

Commissioner Simpkins asked about the time frame and Mr. Thro stated they could not fully provide services due to the state of it right now. They could work through whatever time frame they have. They were in design phase right now.

Mr. Dixon stated in the request, it only mentions HVAC. He asked if he was being directed to look at the other issues as well. Chair Green stated, in his opinion, he should. They would need to do the necessary things, especially with the grant.

Chair Green asked if it was possible until they find out about the details to do it month to month. Mr. Knowles stated they had discussed that they did not want to move back in until the AC was fixed. Legally, they could do it month to month.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION FOR 6 MONTH LEASE AND TO FINISH THE AC REPAIRS AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

CLERK OF COURT

- 13. Updates**
No updates.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

- 14. Updates**
Mr. Dixon stated there will be a renaming ceremony for the Gadsden County Extension Office tomorrow at 10 a.m. He also stated that EMS has a blood drive on the 20th.
- Mr. Dixon stated there will be a misdemeanor traffic clinic on June 22. He mentioned that the Housing program will have a homeownership workshop on June 22 at 10 a.m. On August 10, there will be a community job fair from 9-1 p.m.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

15. Updates

Mr. Knowles stated that Commissioner Holt asked about CRA at the last meeting. The County can set up its own CRA. The County selects a separate board or they can delegate themselves. Commissioner Holt asked if he could outline the advantages for having CRA in the County.

Mr. Dixon mentioned the Town of Havana submitted a re-response. Havana asked to combine the \$50,000 and the stipend and give them \$55,000. They also asked to go down from a 3 year to one year for their contract.

Commissioner Hinson made a motion to approve this and Commissioner Simpkins made the second. The board discussed.

Commissioner Holt stated that they do not approve things they have not seen. They could only approve it to come before them first. She had a problem with insurance on vehicles that do not belong to the county. They should have their own insurance.

Commissioner Hinson stated Mr. Dixon preferred to have a vote today. That was why he would go with the vote today. Everybody knows what in the contract already. Chair Green stated they should have a special meeting on this.

Commissioner Hinson rescinded his motion and Commissioner Simpkins rescinded her second.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO HAVE A SPECIAL MEETING CONCERNING THE HAVANA CONTRACT AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

16. Commissioner Eric F. Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson asked if they were able to clear up the issues with the Clerk of Court. Mr. Dixon stated he was not sure how to clear the issues with the Clerk. They have sent information that they requested.

Commissioner Hinson stated on June 29, Alpha Kappa Alpha will be having the Biz Crawl event. He asked Mr. Dixon to have it posted on their website.

Commissioner Kimblin E. NeSmith, J.D., District 3

Commissioner NeSmith stated he had a good meeting with CRTPA and he will be getting with the County Administrator.

Mr. Dixon stated CareerSource could only take care of 11 students for the summer youth program. Commissioner Simpkins asked if the reason was because the students did not qualify. Ms. Burroughs appeared and stated 40 students did not qualify. They were able to officially approve only 11 students.

Mr. Matthews from CareerSource appeared before the Board. He stated they needed to bring in the students to see who qualified and about 15 of them actually showed up with 4 of them being disqualified.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if their county staff reached out to those individuals. Some parents were not really sure why they were doing the other applications. Ms. Burroughs stated it was her understanding that the summer youth coordinator reached out to them. Some parents may have felt uncomfortable sharing more in-depth information in terms of proof of income.

Commissioner Hinson asked Mr. Matthews what were the qualifications. Mr. Matthews stated they need documentation of social security cards and ID. They needed proof of family size and income which they would usually get from their tax return from 2023. If that was unavailable, they would need last month's pay stub and birth certificates to determine household size.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if they got a response regarding Lincoln Drive and Mr. Dixon stated they were on it.

Commissioner Brenda A. Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt asked about the RFP for legal services. Mr. Dixon stated it will go out again this week. Commissioner Holt stated they needed a lot of help in that department. They need to make sure to have legal representation on all items.

Commissioner Holt asked about fencing for the back parking lot. Mr. Morris appeared and stated they have a design already put together for the fencing.

Commissioner Holt stated citizens need to sign up if they want to have events in parks. That way there would be no problems.

Commissioner Alonzetta Simpkins, Vice-Chair, District 2

Commissioner Simpkins stated on August 3, she will be requesting setup for her annual back to school drive at Gadsden East Park.

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned legal services and stated she never received information regarding the first proposal and who decided that they were going back out. Mr. Dixon stated they started getting calls regarding concerns about the language in the RFP. The Chairman asked for it to be sent back out.

Commissioner Simpkins stated before letters are sent to the Clerk's office on behalf of the Commissioners, those issues need to be addressed. She stated there were 2 letters sent over to the Clerk and it was as though those letters spoke on behalf of the entire commission.

Commissioner Simpkins stated they need to look at the emails from Mr. Thomas. She asked the County Attorney how he addressed those concerns. Mr. Knowles stated it would need to be discussed in an open meeting due to Sunshine Law. Those concerns need to be brought before the board and the board needs to make the appropriate action that they see fit.

Commissioner Simpkins asked the commissioners if they want to request a meeting with the Clerk to address those concerns. Those issues need to be addressed.

Commissioner Holt asked if the attorney received those emails and Mr. Knowles stated yes. Commissioner Holt asked if he had a legal opinion on it. Mr. Knowles asked which issue was she referring to and Commissioner Holt stated any of them. Mr. Knowles wanted to know exactly which issue she was referring to. Commissioner Holt stated she would like a written opinion whenever the Clerk says something concerning the board. She would like a legal opinion on all of them and Mr. Knowles stated ok. Commissioner Holt stated she was used to attorneys saying if they should or should not discuss something. Mr. Knowles stated the contract states when asked, he could provide that information.

Commissioner Holt stated if the Clerk makes a claim about the board, she would like a legal opinion. Mr. Knowles asked if she could provide a specific example of what the Clerk said.

Commissioner Holt asked Mr. Dixon if it was in the new RFP that they have to request an opinion from the attorney before he sees anything that endangers the board. Mr. Knowles stated whenever the board requests something, he brings it back in a timely manner. He stated there were 2 letters sent out that provided legal opinions that never went through legal review. He asked Commissioner Holt to point him to a specific example where the Clerk said something about this board and the board requested for a legal opinion. He has always done that. Mr. Knowles stated if there was something the Board would like him to address, he is always happy, ready, and willing to do that.

Commissioner Holt stated when they were discussing the youth program and about having disabled students, there was nothing said about them not being able to identify children that

are disabled when it comes to employment. There are certain laws that you cannot identify those children. She stated there were certain things that they need to be warned about.

Commissioner Hinson stated the Clerk was not talking about the board, he was just warning them about what transpired.

Commissioner Hinson stepped out 8:42 p.m.

Commissioner Hinson returned at 8:42 p.m.

Commissioner Holt stated they vote on something, put it in writing, it gets across the street and vendors cannot get paid. Some of that was not getting taken care of. She stated the finance department did not belong to the clerk; it belongs to the board.

Commissioner NeSmith stated he would probably contact the attorney first just to see the dynamics of the letter. If it is not directed towards the board, and the board is just included in the email, then it would be an issue for the Administrator to respond to if it was directed towards him. Commissioner Simpkins stated when they receive an email that says Commissioners, then at that point, they are asking a question to commissioners. When they receive these emails that say Commissioners, they need direction on it.

Commissioner Simpkins asked the County Administrator to schedule a meeting with the Clerk.

**COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE A MOTION FOR A MEETING WITH THE CLERK AND
COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD DISCUSSED.**

Commissioner Hinson stated he would hate for the attorney to give an opinion on everything the Clerk sends out because they may have 3 out of 5 board members that may not like what the attorney's recommendations would be. He makes sure they are legally safe. Commissioner Hinson stated everything he saw he could handle it himself and did not need the attorney.

Mr. Dixon stated one of the emails mentioned him driving county cars home. The question was, "who drives county cars?" They sent them that email with the list and his name was on it. He drives a paid for county car. He stated that they have interpreted it to mean that he has a car and a spare car. He does not have a car and a spare car. When they answered with who drives a county car home, they came back with a hundred questions. He mentioned about them garnishing his wages. He mentioned grants going out at the same time and mentioned that they might need a line of credit to make sure they do not impact the county's budget. The Clerk referred to it as a scheme and crooked. He stated he was not going back and forth with the clerk.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, Chair, District 5

Chair Green stated for everyone to have a great fourth of July and thanked Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority for adopting Strong Road.

Chair Green asked if any government entities will be out July 5th.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if the Property Appraiser's office and the tax collectors will be open or closed. Mr. Dixon stated they tend to move according to the county's schedule.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR THE COUNTY TO BE CLOSED ON JULY 5 AND CHAIR GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

Commissioner NeSmith appeared 7:36 p.m.

Chair Green stepped out 7:37 p.m.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, VICE-CHAIR SIMPKINS DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:02 PM.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**Ronterious Green, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk