

**AT A WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON OCTOBER 9, 2024 AT 5:00 P.M.,
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

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

Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Green called the workshop to order at 5 p.m. Chair Green led into Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

Ms. Steele stated Commissioner Simpkins was online.

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.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 on the County's website at www.gadsdencountyfl.gov.

Chair Green read aloud the above statement.

General Business

5.a Introduction

Mr. Morris stated as a result of Public Law 117-2 (the American Rescue Plan), Gadsden County was awarded a total of \$8,868,920 related to COVID-19. ARPA requires all funds to be obligated by December 31, 2024.

As of September 3, 2024, the County has a balance of \$3,162,538. The County has a risk of losing ARPA funds if the County fails to obligate or spend funds per US Treasury guidance.

Mr. Morris stated they have a presentation that provides background, ARPA expenses and balances.

Staff seeks board direction on recommended ARPA prioritization of remaining funds to meet US Treasury Allowable uses and deadlines.

5.b American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Presentation

Mr. Dixon appeared and stated Ms. Harris will provide the presentation today.

Janice Harris appeared before the board and went through cooperative procurement and the ARPA Board approved priorities.

Chair Green stepped out at 5:08 p.m.

Chair Green returned at 5:10 p.m.

Commissioner Hinson appeared at 5:11 p.m.

Projects that can be obligated by Dec. 31 2024:

- Ambulance Remount (4 units)
- Fire Service Improvements
- Emergency Housing
- Elderly Affairs Building Expansion
- Parks Upgrade and Expansion

Remaining ARPA Fund needed to be shifted to general funds to address EMS salaries/benefits allocation deficits and other expenditure concerns. Total \$1,933,789

Ms. Harris went through projects to be funded by general fund as a result of the fund shift. Commissioner Simpkins asked if they were paying EMS salaries for the fiscal year that just ended. Ms. Harris stated correct.

Proposed Contingency Project – Wild Hog Population Control
Proposed funding allocation: \$100,000

Proposed contingency project – Butler building parking perimeter fencing \$300,000

Commissioner Hinson mentioned that \$300,000 for a small parking lot was interesting.

Chair Green asked if they had a price analysis for parking lot fencing – securing that space was definitely a necessity. Chair Green stated he would like for more money going to the Housing program.

Mr. Morris stated fencing will include supervisor of election and the gate itself is \$35,000.

Chair Green mentioned there being no protection for the building. Mr. Morris stated they have discussed getting metal detectors.

Commissioner Holt mentioned page 7 – would choose to look at other things other than lighting.

Commissioner NeSmith appeared at 5:42 p.m.

Commissioner Simpkins stated lighting was a priority to her.

Chair Green stated he would like more details on cost analysis. Mr. Dixon stated the goal was not to give any money back.

Commissioner Holt asked for a cost analysis on the other block down the road to get fencing. She also mentioned the upkeep of the jail. Chair Green stated he did a tour of the jail – it is outdated and old but not in bad condition. Commissioner Holt stated she was more interested in safety of the jail.

Chair Green asked Mr. Dixon to start a conversation with Talquin regarding lighting.

Commissioner Holt stepped out at 6:06 p.m.

6. Motion to Adjourn

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR GREEN DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 6:17 PM.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk