

**AT A PUBLIC HEARING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN  
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON OCTOBER 19, 2021 AT 4:30  
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

**Present:**       **Brenda Holt, Chair, District 4**  
                  **Dr. Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, Vice Chair, District 2**  
                  **Eric Hinson, District 1-absent**  
                  **Kimblin NeSmith, District 3**  
                  **Ronterious “Ron” Green, District 5**  
                  **Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator**  
                  **Opal McKinney-Williams, Assistant County Attorney**  
                  **Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk**

**WELCOME**

Chair Holt welcomed everyone to the CDBG-CV Public Hearing and called it to order at 4:32 P.M.

**PRESENTATION**

Mr. Dixon read aloud the subject matter and stated this was Public Hearing number two regarding the county making AN application to DEO seeking \$1.6 million in CDBG-CV funds to rehabilitate, improve and furnish the county-owned facility that once served as the cafeteria to the William S. Stevens Historic High School for the purpose of providing a dedicated COVID shelter for Gadsden County citizens.

- 1. Overview of CDBG-CV Funding Opportunity**
  
- 2. Summary of Gadsden County’s Application Seeking CDBG-CV funding for a Gadsden County COVID Shelter**

**Ms. Sheree Keeler, Senior Program Consultant, with The Integrity Group, Inc.,** presented the item to the Board. She stated this program requires two public hearings to be conducted and documented prior to submission of the final application. The first public hearing was held on March 10, 2021 to advise the public the Gadsden County would be making application seeking CDBG-CV funds. At that public meeting, The Integrity Group provided an overview of the CDBG-CV application components and compliance requirements. Citizen input, questions or concerns were solicited and encouraged; however, none were received. She completed the pre-app and submitted it to DEO, they reviewed it and determined a COVID shelter that can also serve as a dedicated location for COVID vaccinations, testing, vaccinations or treatment not requiring a medical facility or setting. She further explained since the \$1.6 million was published in the presentation last week, those numbers have increased a little due to an increase in materials and would now be \$1.7 million. She said the project would seek funding from the CDBG-CV program for property and facilities that the County owns that once served as the historic Dr. William S. Stevens High School to renovate the building that once served as the cafeteria. Some of the renovations include asbestos removal in the tile, re-roofing, a new H-Vac System with appropriate filtration that is required for people that may be COVID positive to prevent the flow of air from infecting other people.

*Commissioner Viegbesie arrived at 4:37 p.m.*

She further stated other renovations were including but not limited to: beds and linens; Food Storage, preparation space, stove/refrigerator; ADA restrooms with showers and supplies; secured lockers for personal items; improved ADA parking and sidewalks; storm order features; secured storage space for documents and office equipment; protected personal equipment; and other supplies and commodities as necessary for the safe operations of the COVID shelter. One reason the COVID shelter was needed and important, if someone is COVID positive, they could not afford to rent a hotel room.

*Commissioner Green appeared at 4:40 p.m.*

This would provide a safe place for people to shelter that had nowhere else to go until they tested negative. It could also provide shelter for COVID-positive people that are homeless.

The updated estimated project total based on new budget projections is a total of \$1,777,469; administration is \$50,000; engineering is \$150,000; additional engineering of \$6000 should DEO determine that the project is subject to Federal environmental permitting; construction and FE&E in the amount of \$1,521,469.

*Chair Holt stepped out at 4:41 p.m.*

*Chair Holt returned at 4:43 p.m.*

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if this application would compete for the source of funding with the CDBG disaster relief application that was submitted earlier for other projects and Ms. Keeler shook her head no.

Ms. Keeler said while this was disaster related, it was not disaster related with a named storm. There was a separate pot of money appropriated by Congress for COVID to HUD for CDBG-CV grants.

**Opal McKinney-Williams, Assistant County Attorney**, said for clarification, it was mentioned that this was Item 19 but was Item 17 on the Agenda for the 6:00 p.m. meeting.

Chair Holt said this was a County-owned building and was why they were able to get grants.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the Administrator if this application was for the grant of \$1.7 Million for the cafeteria. Mr. Dixon said the cafeteria was considered a separate building and they were applying on a number of fronts.

Commissioner Green asked if there were any penalties for utilizing the facility for something else.

Mr. Dixon said the whole idea is to have the facility ready when and if something happens. He said they were approaching this with a multi-purpose use in mind.

Chair Holt asked if there were any comments from the audience and there were none.

Chair Holt commented this was specifically for COVID and one reason why this was done was to make sure they had something they thought would get approved because the last three years, different organizations in the County have applied for shelters. They were told it would not happen and they had to come up with something very creative in order to go for funding they thought would be approved. What better way but to do something with COVID and there was a funding mechanism for it. She said they could apply for this particular grant but there was no limit when there was no disaster going on.

Chair Holt asked if there were any more questions and there were none.

Mr. Dixon said if anyone needed to step out, now was a good time.

Commissioner NeSmith asked when the deadline was. Ms. Keeler said after tonight's Board meeting, she would be working with Ms. Bradley to get the signature pages and she will convert the documents into the DEO Grant Portal and everything will be input, uploaded and submitted by the deadline date. Commissioner NeSmith asked if it had to come back before the Board and was told no.

*Chair Holt and Commissioner Viegbesie stepped out at 4:54 p.m.*

*Commissioner Green stepped out at 4:55 p.m.*

*Chair Holt returned at 4:56 p.m.*

*Commissioner NeSmith stepped out at 4:57 p.m.*

**THE PUBLIC HEARING ENDED AT 5:00 P.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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

**ATTEST:**

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**NICHOLAS THOMAS, CLERK**