

AT A CARES WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JANUARY 18, 2022 AT 4:00 P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

- Present: Dr. Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie, Vice Chair, District 2
Ronterious "Ron" Green, District 5
Eric Hinson, District 1-appeared by Zoom
Kimblin NeSmith, District 3
Brenda Holt, Chair, District 4 – appeared by phone
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk
Sara Green, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Viegbesie welcomed everyone and called the workshop to order at 4:09 p.m.

Mrs. Blackshear gave the Invocation. Chair Viegbesie led in the Pledge of allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD (3-Minute Limit)

Anyone wishing to speak on agenda items or non-agenda items should schedule or notify the County Administrator's Office before attending the meeting and will be asked to follow the Gadsden County Public Meetings Citizens Access Guidelines. Also, public comment for Commission meetings can be submitted via email to CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov until noon on January 18, 2022. 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.

Commissioner NeSmith read aloud the above statement.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Discussion Regarding the Re-Approval of Funds for the Gadsden County CARES Act

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said they were gathered to discuss the re-approval of the CARES Act Residual Funding previously approved on June 15, 2021 by the Board. He said the total grant award was \$7,967,316. To date \$2,980,406.39 is remaining. Of this amount \$1,765,000 was earmarked for the broadband project utilizing Figgers Communication, Inc. (FCI), leaving a balance available for reallocation of approximately \$1,360,000. After the broadband project he broke down the numbers as follows:

Programs

Table with 2 columns: Program Name and Amount. Rows include Building Management System (\$15,000), IT Enhancements/Licenses (25,000), COVID 19 Media Campaign (75,000), and Granicus Website Services (87,000).

New Positions:

Table with 2 columns: Position Name and Amount. Row includes County Operations Coordinator (65,000).

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Grants Coordination (Contractual Services)	50,000
Grants Monitoring	50,000
Senior Housing Specialist/SHIP	45,000
Communications Tech/Motorola, etc.	58,000
Budget Technician/OMB	36,720

Projects:

Gadsden Youth Initiative	60,000
Renovation of Public Works Vehicle Repair Area	200,000
Renovation of Public Works Common Area	100,000
Commission Chambers Redesign	150,000
Architecture/Engineering for Shovel Ready Projects	<u>200,000</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$2,981,720</u>

Commissioner Holt said she was looking at the positions and did see the need for the positions and the shovel ready projects.

Chair Viegbesie asked about the new positions and this was one-time money and the positions would be re-occurring.

Mr. Dixon said the positions were very necessary positions and were needed now more than ever as they begin the upward mobility.

Commissioner Green arrived at 4:18 p.m.

Mr. Dixon said the question was about positions and they were needed. The Senior Housing Specialist is needed and goal this year is to do 30 houses as opposed to 4 that was done last year.

Chair Viegbesie said his concern was this was one-time money from the Federal government and he wanted to know how they would budget to continue the positions and how it would affect the other services provided.

Mr. Dixon said the Clerk informed them last year they had \$2-3 Million in the SHIP Housing/Hurricane fund. They made sure they got that into the marketplace but realized they did not have enough people to get this into the marketplace, nor the right kind of people to run other programs so they could feed the low income or those that needed the SHIP housing and other programs.

Commissioner NeSmith wanted to restate in representing the people of Gadsden County, they need to enhance the County's revenue. In order to serve the County properly, the revenue is needed to do so. He said the Citizens deserve a \$1 Million budget next year.

Chair Viegbesie asked they stay on task for this workshop as there was another workshop scheduled after this one, followed by the Board meeting.

Commissioner NeSmith said his comments was in-line with what the Chair said. How could they fund the salaries if they did not enhance their revenue?

Commissioner Nesmith asked how many people were in the SHIP department and Mr. Dixon said there was a total of three.

Commissioner Holt said after Hurricane Michael, FEMA recommended no less than five people in that department and she did not see any positions they could do without, they needed to adjust the budget.

Chair Viegbesie said the positions would be recurring so they would need revenue to continue to carry the positions.

Commissioner Hinson asked how much was in the General Revenue fund. Ms. Daniels said the General Fund balance was \$5.2 Million; the unassigned fund was \$3 Million.

Commissioner Hinson said even though he understood what that meant by assigned and unassigned, could it be explained to the public so they would better understand.

Ms. Daniels said unassigned is revenue in the fund that is not restricted or assigned to any particular source; assigned meant it is assigned to a particular fund.

Commissioner Hinson asked how much should they have in reserve. Chair Viegbesie said he could not tell specifically, but when the representative from Purvis Gray gave the range he felt it healthy for the County to have should be enough to carry the County for 30 days in the case of extreme circumstances.

Mr. Knowles said Florida Statute provides that reserve for contingency may be provided which does not exceed 10% of total appropriations and the reserve may not be more than 20% of total appropriations.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the percentage of general fund that was in reserve. Mr. Knowles said the most recent audit on the Clerk's website for fiscal year 2020, as of fiscal year 2020, the County's governmental funds reported combined ending fund balances of \$21,327,792, an increase of \$2.596 Million in comparison with the prior year. Of the approximately \$21.3 Million total fund balance, unassigned fund balance was \$3.5 Million and is available for spending at the County's discretion. The General Fund is the chief operating fund of the County and has a decrease in fund balance of \$207,772 and the total general fund balance was \$5,466,689 of which \$3,584,011 was unassigned. As a measure of the general fund's liquidity, it may be useful to compare unassigned fund balance to total general fund expenditures. Unassigned fund balance represents 17.33% of total general fund expenditures, excluding transfers.

Commissioner Holt asked, if possible, to post general information before a meeting and the public would be able to see it.

Mr. Knowles explained this information was on the Clerk's website. **(NOTE: The public can find the information by looking at gadsdenclerk.com under "Audit Reports".)**

Commissioner Holt asked to carry the \$140,000 over to the next meeting.

Commissioner Hinson said one question he had about CARES, and he had spoken briefly with the County Administrator about it, he included \$100,000 to the homeless budget the year before (he was appearing by Zoom and with surrounding noise, became inaudible to understand what was being said).

Chair Viegbesie said what has been determined, the remaining money to be spent in the CARES Act, which was \$2.9 Million, the amount that has not been allocated to be used is \$140,000. When this item comes up for discussion at the regular meeting as to what they should be doing with that remaining money, that would be the time to advocate for the \$100,000 of that to be allocated to the homeless issue.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 4:54 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**ANTHONY VIEGBESIE, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk