



**AT A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON APRIL 5, 2022 AT 6:00 P.M., THE
FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: **Dr. Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, Chair, District 2**
 Ronterious “Ron” Green, Vice Chair, District 5
 Eric Hinson, District 1 – appeared by phone
 Kimblin NeSmith, District 3
 Brenda Holt, District 4
 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 meeting to order at 6:02 p.m., Vice Chair Green gave the Invocation, then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

 Mr. Dixon said he had two items he would like to add; the Gadsden Senior Services would like to speak as Item 2a and Commissioner Hinson submitted an Item regarding the Summer Youth Program that will be Item 18a.


Commissioner Holt asked for discussion for clarification regarding the Figgers Contract and was told that if it was for clarification it could be done under her comments.

COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

1. Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Program (ROTA) Presentation
Speaker was not present


2. Second Harvest of the Big Bend Food Bank Presentation

 **Shari Hubbard, Director of Communications for Second Harvest**, appeared before the Board and wanted to discuss the services they provide. She explained they have a backpack program that provides food-insecure children with a bag of food each Friday to ensure their nutritional needs are met over the weekend and she listed the distribution sites available. There is a Mobile Pantry Program that is funded by grants and donations and are conducted jointly with one of their agency partners or community organizations. The events are often conducted in a church are nonprofits parking lot with the date and time being announced. There are additional opportunities setup for Gadsden County citizens:

- Child nutrition programs with the school pantry program, kids’ café program and summer break spot.

- Family nutrition programs with new partner agency food pantries, high risk/homeless organizations and grocery lockers.
- Senior nutrition programs that help feed low income seniors with their Financial Resources have been exhausted.


2a. Gadsden Senior Services

 Reggie Cunningham appeared before the Board and said they have operated since 1974 in the Simon Scott facility. They are the lead agency in the county and only service approximately 15% of the elderly population. He came before them now to initiate a partnership with the BOCC to enhance and better help the seniors.

Chair Viegbesie said they were very grateful for what the Senior Services Center has done for the seniors.

 Commissioner Holt thanked them for bringing this item.

CONSENT

 **COMMISSIONER GREEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.**


3. **Ratification Memo**
4. **Approval of Minutes**
 - **March 25, 2021-Emergency Special Meeting**
 - **March 1, 2022 – Regular Meeting**
 - **March 15, 2022-Regular Meeting**
5. **Approval and Signature for Satisfaction of Special Assessment Lien**
6. **Project Safe Neighborhoods Seminar**
7. **Gadsden County Sheriff's Office Recruitment and Community Promotional Items**
8. **International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training 2022**
9. **Approval of Addendum #1 to the Lease Purchase Agreement Between the GCBOCC and Leasing 2, Inc.**
10. **Approval of a Letter of Support for the Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC) Making Application to the Florida Department of Economic Development (DEO)**

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION


CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

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 April 5, 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 the statement aloud.

Shari Hubbard, Second Harvest

 **Pastor Willie Gaines, 5775 Ben Bostick Road, Quincy, FL** appeared before the Board. He said he has noticed a lot of things in the community that have been overlooked, were undone and has created a committee that meets first the Saturday of every month. There are a lot of things needed and one is a speed bump on Frank Jackson Road. They have been working on street lights for Obama Road, speed bumps and need speed limit signs on the road.


Chair Viegbesie said they have discussed street lights and speed bumps. He asked he work with the Administrator on these issues.

Commissioner Holt thanked him for discussing some of these issues. They also need to establish a crime watch there.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

GENERAL BUSINESS

11. Havana Middle School Sidewalk LAP Agreement

 Mr. Dixon introduced the above item for the Havana Middle School sidewalk LAP agreement.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GREEN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

12. Willacoochee Creek SCOP Construction Bid Award

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was to award the construction of the Willacoochee creek SCOP resurfacing project to Ferrovia Services, Inc. in the amount of \$98,677.82.


UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GREEN, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

13. Willacoochee Supplemental Agreement

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was a supplemental agreement to be awarded in the amount of \$112,200 to cover designed, construction and CEI. There will be no fiscal impact to the county.


 **UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GREEN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**

14. Point Milligan Supplemental Agreement


 Mr. Dixon introduced the above referenced item. The original agreement was awarded in the amount of \$3,029,801 to cover design, construction and CEI. Currently, \$252,500 has been spent on the design, leaving \$2,777,301 for construction and CEI. The lowest construction bid received was \$2,940,936.90. Current CEI cost is \$88,865 and additional funding was requested and approved in the amount of \$252,500. The new agreement is for \$3,282,302.


UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GREEN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

15. James Edward Butler Building Elevator Modernization


 Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was presented to the Board to award Bid 21-29 to provide additional safety features and keep the elevator in compliance with the recent update to the State of Florida Elevator Code.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER NESMITH, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

 Commissioner Hinson asked for this to be explained. Mr. Dixon said Codes been updated and elevators built after the Code was published in 2000 have to be brought up to code and completed by December 31, 2023.


 Commissioner NeSmith asked along with this, was there a maintenance plan and was told yes.

16. Approval of Value Adjustment Board Members


 Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was presented to the board for the selection of the Value Adjustment Board members.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GREEN TO APPROVE THE THREE PREVIOUS MEMBERS, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

17. Update of the 2022 Summer Youth Employment Opportunities & Initiative Program

 Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated it was providing an update of the upcoming 2022 Summer Youth Employment Opportunity and Initiative Program for the youth of Gadsden County. In the past the Gadsden Summer Youth Employment Program has provided youth of Gadsden County between the ages of 14-18 the opportunity to obtain work experience in a real-world environment. The program was adjusted during the summer of 2021 to the Youth Initiative Program to provide youth between the ages of 17 to 19 training that would lead to industry recognized certifications that support in demand industries: manufacturing, healthcare, information technology and public service. Both programs have merged for the summer of 2022 to allow youth between the ages of 14 to 16 the opportunity to learn and obtain real live work skills and allow youth between the ages of 17 to 19 the opportunity to obtain industry recognized credentials, both while earning a modest wage. Youth ages 17 to 19 will obtain certifications that would assist them in obtaining employment in

that industry. The youth will earn a minimum wage of \$10.00 per hour. He said they were looking to bring in at least 100 kids and looking to sprinkle them throughout government and will talk to the Constitutionals about accepting some of the students. He said there will be two tracks, if someone is in a CNA program in school, they will attempt to engage them with a CNA program to work so their learning does not go in vain. By engaging the younger students, they know they need to be provided with work ethic on how to work, how to be at work, what work really means, choices made and how it will impact your future. He said there were wakeup calls last year and have sought how to address them at every point. He said they were trying to be inclusive of every student they could. He said the student did not have to be in the Gadsden County school system but be a resident of the county. He said there was a limited capacity and was attempting to be as engaging as possible with these many kids is possibly can but also to make sure they have a quality opportunity and they learn the quality of work.


 Commissioner Green said the date for applications have begun and asked what level of marketing they were using. Mr. Dixon said currently it was just in the schools but next week will start social media exposure to encourage kids.


Commissioner NeSmith wanted to emphasize as they were implementing the program, the youth need to develop skills and did not want them sitting at a job just answering phones, they need to develop skills.


Chair Viegbesie asked what the will of the board was. Commissioner Green said this was for informational purposes only. Chair Viegbesie asked why this was presented for informational purposes and not for action.


Mr. Dixon stated he did not think it required action, however if the board believed it did, he would present it for action. Chair Viegbesie asked now or a future meeting and Mr. Dixon stated now.


Mr. Knowles asked what was budgeted for it and was the budget sufficient? If not, they may need to bring it back. Mr. Dixon said it was based on the budget they have now. If they were going to make an action item with budgetary change, it would need to be rescheduled. If there is no change, no action needs to be taken. Mr. Knowles stated they were just reading the program that they approved in last year's fiscal budget as was presented.


 Commissioner Hinson said anything that affects the budget over \$25,000 must be advertised.


 Commissioner NeSmith asked if they were advertising something? Mr. Knowles said this item that is presented does not change the budget, it was approved in the budget for 2021-2022.


 Commissioner Green asked what was in budget and budget was advertised, why does it need to be re-advertised? The budget has been approved with this line item.


 Ms. Daniels wanted to reiterate what the attorney said. \$150,000 was previously approved in the budget process and was an increase over last year. If they decide to add to that, they will have to instruct staff where to take money from and if outside what already allocated, they would have to advertise.

 Commissioner Holt said that was correct.


 Commissioner Hinson asked why not go to 125 kids. Chair Viegbesie asked if it was possible to increase from \$150,000. Mr. Dixon said if they have more than 100 kids that want to work, they will come back before the Board to request more money.


 Chair Viegbesie said maybe memory was not serving him correctly, he could not recall what funding they had last year, was it rolled over?

 Commissioner Green said he wanted to be clear, all agree they want to make sure to provide for youth in the County. If they go over the 100 kids, they will bring it back to the Board for approval and to get proper funding.

 Commissioner Holt said for the people that made comments that the BOCC does not support youth, they started this program years earlier.

18. Approval of Work Authorization Number 2022-011 with The Integrity Group, Inc. to Update the County's 2016 Local Mitigation Strategy Plan


 Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and said it was for approval of work authorization number 2022-011 with The Integrity Group to update the County's 2016 Local Mitigation Strategy Plan.

 **Tashonda Whaley, Interim Emergency Management Director**, appeared before the Board. She explained this plan is required of all local governments by federal government to receive any funds.


UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GREEN, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS MATTER.

18a Discussion of the FY22 Summer Youth Program

 Mr. Dixon introduced this item.

 Commissioner Hinson said this was for discussion and he was requesting \$300,000 for the employment of 250 youth for up to 6 weeks.


Chair Viegbesie asked him what he wanted to do.

 Commissioner Hinson said there were a few options and listed them.

 **COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF SECOND.**


CLERK OF COURT

19. Updates

 The Deputy Clerk said there was nothing to report


COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR


20. Updates

 Mr. Dixon said bulky item pickup starts this month in each of the districts.


He told the commissioners there was a list of requested workshops and staff would like the commissioners to prioritize them and get the list back to Administrator to schedule the workshops.

Chair Viegbesie suggested to individually prioritize and get that to Administrator and let him sum up and address.


 Chair Viegbesie said Economic Development would not be a workshop, it would be more of a retreat and also the goals and objectives were not something they could do in 1 hour.

 Commissioner Holt asked if this included all requests? She requested a workshop on the law firm and all contracts and that was not an agenda item when they voted on it.

Chair Viegbesie said he heard legal services and the comp plan.


 Commissioner NeSmith suggested to add what Commissioner Holt said to the bottom and what other workshops they wanted to add.

 Mr. Dixon said procurement will be internally. They need to revamp that policy.

 Commissioner NeSmith said it seemed goals and objectives were being discussed right now.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

21. Updates

 Mr. Knowles said he spoke with Commissioner Holt on Sunday and wanted to bring everyone up to speed on FCI and he created a timeline.

February 1, 2022 - Text with Moskowitz regarding agenda item

February 14, 2022 - Text and phone call with Moskowitz at 2 PM

February 15, 2022 - Text to Commissioner Moskowitz to try and meet while he was in town

February 16, 2022 - Text to Commissioner Moskowitz to inform him of information regarding Gadsden County School Board regarding distribution of hotspots

February 18, 2022 - Text with Commissioner Moskowitz regarding getting a contract from FCI per Board direction

February 23, 2022 - Call from Attorney Levi Williams and text with Commissioner Moskowitz to ascertain whether Mr. Williams was representing FCI. This was confirmed by Commissioner Moskowitz via text.

February 24, 2022 - Email from me to Atty. Williams where I requested a conference call.

February 24, 2022 - Call from Levi Williams

February 24, 2022 - Email from Atty. Williams where there was a “request [for] the grace of the Gadsden County Commissioners to have the opportunity to present a new contract, independent and separate from any prior agreements, at the next meeting. Also stated that we would have a draft by March 3, 2022.

March 15, 2022 - Email from Chad Marcus, Esquire, attorney with Levi Williams Law Firm at 10:25AM. I responded on March 25, 2022 at 11:22AM laying out some of the concerns from with the proposed document given what the Board had previously approved, Commissioner comments and direction from the Clerk. This contract was also forwarded to all Commissioners on March 15, 2022 at 11:28AM via email.

March 16, 2022 - Call from Levi Williams at 8:44AM which was returned the same day.

March 17, 2022 - Call to Mr. Levi Williams at approximately 3:00PM regarding the contract presented on March 15, 2022 wherein it was explained the County cannot make any advance payments along with other concerns. Mr. Williams expressed concern that the County was frustrating the purpose of the contract via the cease and desist order. I explained to him that the cease and desist had been lifted in the addendum and forwarded him a copy of the executed addendum as he stated he did not have a copy of the document.

March 17, 2022 - Email from Mr. Levi Williams at 3:51PM acknowledging receipt of the addendum

March 21, 2022 - Email from me to Levi Williams requesting FCI’s proposed contract as previously promised.

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March 25, 2022 - Email from me to Levi Williams again requesting an update regarding FCI's proposed contract


March 25, 2022 - Email from Levi Williams at 4:35PM with updated contract.


March 28, 2022 - Email to Administrator with revised contract asking whether it would be put on the agenda.


April 2, 2022 - Text from me to Administrator requesting an update on behalf of Commissioner Hinson

Chair Viegbesie had previously stepped out and returned at 7:47 p.m.

Commissioner Holt said what she wanted to know was if they made it within that 30-day period. Mr. Knowles said his timeline laid out everything that have taken place. Commissioner holt asked what their cut off deadline was. Mr. Knowles stated they were given 30 days from February 1st. Commissioner holt said that would've been March 1st. She said nothing was received by that first meeting in march. Mr. Knowles said not that he received, no. Commissioner holt asked the administrator if he received anything and he stated no. Commissioner holt said that meant no contract was received. Mr. Knowles said the contract he received was on March 15, 2022 at 10:25 AM. Mr. Knowles said the board gave FCI the indulgence from February 1 and March 1 in the contract received by the attorney was on March 15th. Commissioner holt said the board did tell Commissioner Hinson at one time if he brought something back but was not sure when that was said. Mr. Knowles stated it was at the March 15th meeting. She said anything after the March 1 deadline was dead and was nothing to consider unless it comes from a commissioner. She said Commissioner Hinson was told he could bring something else back but not that (original) contract.

 Commissioner Hinson asked the attorney to start back in February. Mr. Knowles said he received a call on February 23 from Levi Williams. He received the revised contract on March 15th. Mr. Knowles went over the timeline again. Commissioner Hinson stated part of the heartburn he had was, he asked for a public-records request approximately two months ago and has yet to see it. He said he was given a stack of papers and felt it was not accurate information and it was confusing. They tried to give him a zip drive. The city asked for a public-records request from the county administrator, the attorney and Figgers Communication. Commissioner Hinson stated he had a heartburn because their email was down for 4-5 weeks. He also stated he had not received a response to his public records request.

 Chair Viegbesie asked if there was any reason why he has not received his public records request or was Commissioner Hinson asking for a different format. Mr. Dixon said the County attorney was handling that.

 Commissioner Holt said this was her item and she did not intend to have an explanation from the attorney or anyone else. She wanted to know if they received a contract or any communication before March 1st and they had not. There was no reason to debate something that was not on the agenda.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

22. Report and Discussion of Public Issues

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4



Commissioner Holt asked if the bid had closed on the striping. Mr. Dixon asked if there was a particular road she was asking about. He said he would get the particulars and get back with her.

She said there were several projects they were working on before Mr. Dixon came on. One was the Massey Building; the COVID 19 monument and the Mobile unit. Mr. Knowles explained with the Massey Building, the person they had been dealing with retired; they spoke with Mr. Searcy and that call discombobulated things. The plan was received and they are in the process of finalizing the sublease. There was further discussion about what the Department of Health needed regarding the sublease. Regarding the mobile unit, it was in purchasing now, the bids came in way too high and they had to go back and redo and was closing now on the purchase and will be informing the Board of same by the next meeting. With the monument, they discussed placement today and was looking at a structure and pushing it through. They should have finals by the next meeting. She said they had a call about the shelter and would be making a presentation on Friday before Easter.

She asked the attorney about the Clerk's statement about the County not receiving donations from companies that may do business with the County. She said they do business with the State of Florida, with cities and was quite often companies do give donations. She asked him to look up some legal opinions and Statutes that say they could or could not, may or may not receive funding from...

Mr. Knowles stated he had already done it and could forward that to the commissioners.

She asked about the School Work program, has the School System applied for any funds? Mr. Dixon said they discussed ways the county could help the school district. They discussed grant funding and grant opportunities and felt right now they were building their capabilities to go after funding.

Her next item was on transportation. As they are working on the Amazon facility, there still are transportation issues of getting people back and forth. Mr. Dixon said they have spoken with Amazon and GCDC had a virtual meeting on March 22nd and it was discussed about the possibility of entering into an understanding of transportation and spoke with Big Bend Transit as part of that conversation. They are igniting the conversation with their counterparts with StarMetro, looking at something like they did for the Gadsden Express that might make a couple of pickups and go straight to Amazon.

Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1




Commissioner Hinson asked when they will start the budget process. Mr. Dixon said they have begun internally and will be within the next month.

When will they start having workshops regarding the American Rescue Plan? Mr. Dixon said the money should come in sometime in May according to the Representative.

Figgers Communication, he said he wanted to bring that back to the Board at the next meeting since they have a contract.


Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, District 3

 Commissioner NeSmith said he understood they had a power outage. Ms. Daniels said they had a power surge. Commissioner NeSmith asked if they have a generator. Mr. Meeks said that one has been ordered with a 22-week ETA.

He thanked them for the installation of the Cochran Road signs.

He thanked staff for the new spirit of recognizing staff. He asked to have an electronic board placed permanently on the Courthouse Square courtyard.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, Vice Chair, District 5

 Commissioner Green said they had a great time in recognizing employees.

He thanked Ms. Sarah and Ms. Carolyn at Ingram's Marina for hosting the Neighborhood Watch meeting and it was a great success. He thanked Staff for coming out and cooking the food and the Sheriff's Office for attending and for hearing the call of the communities.

He asked Mr. Dixon about the situation on Old Federal Road regarding cars on the property. Mr. Dixon said Mr. Stiell has taken charge of that and going through the Land Development Code. This is the same owner that has the "car yard" in Chattahoochee.

Regarding the Neighborhood Watch program, one thing that was asked for was signage. That neighborhood has started being active.


EMS

He said he has had a and couple of calls in reference to policies determining what hospital to take patients. He would like to have a policies and procedures workshop. Next week is National Public Safety Dispatchers Week. The Greenery will be feeding the dispatchers on Monday and hoped the County could partner.


COMMISSIONER GREEN ASKED FOR A RESOLUTION FOR DISPATCHERS AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

He encouraged parents to make sure students got proper rest and nourishment for upcoming FST testing.

Commissioner Anthony O. Viegbesie, Chair, District 2

 Chair Viegbesie echoed the comments of the other Commissioners.

He said it was National Library Week and gave thanks to the staff.

 Commissioner NeSmith said he meant to thank the Sheriff, Col. Collins and Col. Barkley earlier as they came to the Chattahoochee Rotary Meeting and gave a presentation regarding mitigating crime and enhancing the quality of life of youth and families.

Receipt and File

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VIEGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:42 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk