

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON MAY 17, 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 - Zoom
Eric Hinson, District 1 - Zoom
Kimblin NeSmith, District 3
Brenda Holt, District 4
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk
Crystal Jimenez, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Viegbesie called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Pastor Randy Ross gave the Invocation and the Chair led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no amendments to the Agenda.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER NESMITH, THE BOARD VOTED 3-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPEARANCES

1. Proclamation Honoring Gadsden County Public Works Week

Mr. Dixon said we are honoring Public Works tonight. The Public Works employees came forward and Chair Viegbesie read aloud the Proclamation and it was then presented to them.

2. Proclamation Honoring Gadsden County Emergency Medical Services Week

The EMS employees came forward and Chair Viegbesie read aloud the Proclamation for them and it was then presented to them.

Commissioner Hinson appeared by Zoom and wanted to personally congratulate the individuals.

3. Proclamation Honoring Older Americans 2022 – Gretna

Chair Viegbesie read aloud the Proclamation and it was presented to them.

4. Proclamation Honoring Older Americans 2022 – Havana

Berta Kemp appeared before the Board and the Proclamation was presented to her on behalf of the Havana Senior Citizens.

5. Presentation from the Boys and Girls Club regarding the Quincy Facility

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item.

Kacy Dennis, CEO, appeared before the Commissioners. He has been a part of the organization for the past 18 years. He stated that they have a \$500,000 donation from Donor Mike May and is asking for a match from the County. He stated with the more BGC programs they have, there will be a decrease in violent crimes. He described what the BGC program is about, how it impacts the children and the outcomes of the program.

Rebecca Edwards Pustejovsky, Boys and Girls Club Board Member, appeared before the Board and said her focus is growing the reach and the impact of the BGC in Gadsden County. The first step was to promote and introduce the BGC to many people who had not previously been involved. She stated the Under the Blue Moon Soiree in March raised \$85,000 for the BGC. She stated they created a positive momentum and they do not plan on stopping there. She shared some comments from the public stating how great the event turned out.

Sara Mitchell, Trulieve, appeared before the Board and said Trulieve is happy to partner with the BGC to offer free summer program memberships to Trulieve dependents in Gadsden County and it would be approximately 140 children. With the partnership with BGC and through donations, Trulieve will help the BGC purchase back packs and they will have toy drives for the Christmas season.

Miles Black appeared before the Board. He has been a member of the BGC since he was 5 years old. He stated the benefits of being a member. He was also one of the five members selected from the football team to go to nationals in Orlando, Florida and they won. He made great friendships that he can depend on. He stated he was also a summer youth helper.

Shea Simmons, parent of a member, appeared before the Board. She stated she has found the BGC to be refreshing, innovative and the members become family. She's a product of Joe Ferolito and the crew from the Quincy Recreation Department. She stated that her and her husband both work and are sorely disappointed that recreation and after-school activities have gone by the wayside in the County and in the city. As a parent, she has seen the benefit of the program and she is imploring and begging the Board to please fully fund this deserving program.

Ms. Shawanna Moye, Gadsden County Area Director for Boys and Girls Club, appeared before the Board to talk about the proposal and strategic planning for a state-of-the-art stand-alone facility in Gadsden County. The proposed design is located at 640 South Shelfer Street, Quincy, FL 32351. She stated that this project could cost between 3.5 – 4 million dollars to complete.

Commissioner Green appeared via Zoom and said he was in support of the Boys and Girls Club. He stated he was glad to hear the goal was reached from the event in March and is hoping that the Board can come along side to support the effort of the BGC because it is a needed thing for our County.

Chair Viegbesie stated he will in his part do all he possibly can and be an advocate for it and will do the best that they can do to make sure that this endeavor is a part of something that we have in Gadsden County.

Commissioner Holt thanked them for the presentation. She wanted to make sure the Board workshopped this item to make sure it is successful and explore all avenues of funding. She wants to make sure there is a good working plan they can go by.

Commissioner NeSmith thanked them for coming and the work they are doing. He stated that the Board is very serious when it comes to young people about their well-being. He echoed the other commissioners that they will do everything they can to bring this into fruition and expanding it because we have to keep our youth in positive activities.

Commissioner Hinson thanked them for the presentation and he has been a strong supporter for years. He stated he has brought the conversation up before with the BGC former CEO about bringing the BGC to Havana.

Chair Viegbesie thanked them for their service and stated that they will do everything that they can possibly do to make the investment they need for a better Gadsden County future. He stated the best is yet to come.

CONSENT

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

6. **Ratification Memo**
7. **BOCC Meeting/Workshop Minutes:**
 - **April 19, 2022 Regular Board Meeting**
8. **Approval of Funding from the Gadsden County Law Enforcement Education Fund (LEEF) to pay for training for Colonel Bobby Collins to attend the Breath Test Operator Course CJSTC #851**
9. **Approval of Funding from the Gadsden County Law Enforcement Education Fund (LEEF) to pay the Annual Membership Fee and SHRM-CP (Certified Professional) Exam Fee for the Human Resources Director**
10. **Approval of Funding from the Gadsden County Law Enforcement Education Fund (LEEF) to pay for training for five deputies and investigators to attend the “Statement Analysis Interviewing Techniques” seminar in Tallahassee, Florida**
11. **Approval of Signatures for Special Assessment Liens and Rehabilitation Contracts – State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP); Hurricane Housing Repair Program (HHRP); Emergency Repair Program (ER)**
13. **Satisfaction of Judgement – Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners Waste Service**

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 May 17, 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.

Pastor Willie Gaines, 5775 Ben Bostic Road, Quincy – Community Neighborhood.

He appeared before the Board and thanked them for allowing him to speak on behalf of the Friendship Community. One thing that was brought up was the fire hydrants, most of them were non-working or broken. He stated he has pictures to clarify on his phone. He also stated that there were some suggestions in the last meeting for signs to hold people accountable for littering. Another thing he has brought up before is that we desperately need speed limit signs. The last thing he wanted to mention is that our community is one of oldest communities in Gadsden County and unfortunately, we have been overlooked and outdated.

Commissioner Holt stated that she has talked about some of these items with Pastor Gaines and if they work together with Mr. Lee and Mr. Dixon, they can get some of those improvements done.

Tracey Stallworth, 770 Selmar Road – Juneteenth Celebration – appeared before the Board. He represented Faith in Florida and had Impact Gadsden Interfaith Council join him. They have partnered together and will be having the Second Annual Juneteenth Celebration on June 17th, 2022. Mr. Stallworth wants the Board's support and have them participate because this year will honor fathers. The theme is "We See You".

Janice Harris appeared before the Board from Impact Gadsden Interfaith Council and she asked the Board to help get the word out. She stated the event will be on Friday, June 17th from 6:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m. at the Quincy Courthouse.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if they have produced an electronic or digital flyer yet. Mr. Stallworth stated it will be completed by this Friday. Commissioner NeSmith asked if it can be forwarded to the Board once completed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 14. First Public Hearing:** To receive Comments from the Public on the County's Community and Economic Development Needs and to Describe how the CDBG Program Can Address and Identify Needs

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item and stated this was for discussion of County's Community and Economic Development needs and to describe how the CDBG program can address the identified needs.

Justin Stiell, Director of Planning Department, appeared before the Board. He stated that they are going to be applying for the CDBG program in July. This is the first of two public hearings and

he explained the grant. There will be a second public hearing in June as part of the application process.

Chair Viegbesie announced this was a public hearing and asked if there were any comments from the audience and there were none.

Commissioner Holt asked that it be noted that cities could apply for grants and this would not prohibit them from applying. This could be for economic development, street improvements, etc.

GENERAL BUSINESS

15. Approval of the Gadsden County Jail 2022 Planned Service Agreement

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. He stated that it is the contract that services all of the emergency lighting, doors and etc., throughout the jail. It is a regular contract that requires the Board's permission in the order of \$3,055.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if this was an annual agreement. Mr. Dixon stated yes. Commissioner NeSmith asked if it is the same amount as last year. Mr. Dixon stated it is roughly the same amount.

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

16. Approval of Amendment A1 to the Agreement with the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and the Florida Department of Health

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. He stated it amends the contract to add language regarding civil rights into the contract.

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

17. Approval and Appointment of AHAC New Committee Members

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. He stated that this is a committee that is responsible for aiding them with the SHIP housing program. They have asked for more money and this committee now requires more members, from eight to eleven, so members have been added and they are before the Board for approval.

Commissioner NeSmith asked what the term lengths are for the members. Chair Viegbesie stated it is staggered.

Sonya Burns, Housing Coordinator, appeared before the Board and said the terms are staggered but it is always at the discretion of the Board of County Commissioners.

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

18. Approval of a Task Order for the Design of a Pavilion for the Gadsden County Recreation and Multipurpose Sports Complex at St. Hebron

Mr. Dixon introduced the above item. He stated this would make the park more usable by the community at large and more aesthetically pleasing. This request is to create a \$3,750 task order with Dewberry Engineering.

Commissioner NeSmith had questions and asked if there were design costs. The representative from Dewberry Engineering, Justin Ford, stated yes. Commissioner NeSmith asked if there was something unique with this pavilion as there are pavilions in other parks. Mr. Ford stated yes, there has been some discussion about trying to get away from the traditional pole barn kits to something more aesthetically pleasing. He stated the Building Department said in order to make sure all the codes are met and to get the permits, they need something signed and sealed by an engineer. He reached out to the sub-contractor to do the structural design. He also stated this plan can be used over and over in different areas.

Commissioner Holt asked what the design will be. Mr. Ford stated he did not have the design with him but it will be a single pitched pavilion with an architectural look with stacked stone around the bottom. It will also be more expensive to construct it but will be more appealing. Commissioner Holt asked if they will have one for each district, if not, she could not vote for it.

Mr. Dixon said there has been a conversation of making all parks more aesthetically pleasing. He stated they have been talking in the budget about upgrading all parks.

Commissioner Holt said they must do a budget in park design for the district. She wanted the Commissioners to understand that she wants a pavilion in all districts. She said one design, five buildings. She stated she is still trying to get a bathroom made in St. John and there are other things she has asked for that has not been addressed. Mr. Ford said this would not be a recurring cost if the pavilions are made in different areas.

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

CLERK OF COURT

16. Updates

Chair Viegbesie asked the Deputy Clerk if there are any updates from the Clerk. Deputy Clerk stated no.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

17. Updates

Chair Viegbesie asked Mr. Dixon if there is anything to report. Mr. Dixon stated he had nothing to report.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

18. Updates

Attorney Knowles apologized for the confusion about the shade session. He stated the in-person court reporters are hard to come by to physically show up. In saying that, he requested that they have a shade meeting Tuesday, May 24th at 4:00 p.m. and a special meeting at 5:00 p.m. He stated his motion for the shade meeting is to discuss a litigation strategy in one of the pending litigation cases.

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

Attorney Knowles reminded his two Canvassing Board members, Commissioner NeSmith and Commissioner Green, that they need to do their signature training and he needs the certificates.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS

19. Report and Discussion of Public Issues

Commissioner Brenda Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt passed out a packet to all of the Commissioners of invoices for legal fees that have been charged over the last year. She stated that they ran over \$106,000 and she was very interested in having in-house legal services. She stated for the \$84,000 they could have had in-house legal work done. She was going to put in a motion but she wants to give the Commissioners an opportunity to look over the invoices. She also asked the Attorney for all of the invoices after the last one in the packet, that she receives a copy of those invoices. She stated that in order for them to do workshops, they have to know what they are paying for. She thinks this one should be first workshop so that they know what they are paying for. She stated she will be putting in motions as they go along.

Commissioner Holt asked for a Proclamation for Ethel Armstead, she is turning 100 years old.

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

Commissioner Holt received several calls about the Board being unprofessional with the long-drawn-out comments. She stated that she informed them that they are trying to take care of the business of the County but they wanted them to be more on task.

She also brought up about them going after funding for different projects. It was mentioned that they are bringing items to be done but the Commissioners are not finding funding.

She stated there was a question about Intercommunal travel between Gadsden County and Leon County. It was asked that if the Board was going to have infrastructure money coming, how can they use that money for transportation to get people back and forth to work. She asked that it is looked into and if they will do grants with Leon County or with Big Bend.

Commissioner Eric Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson asked to schedule a budget workshop soon. He also wanted to schedule an American Rescue Plan workshop. He stated there is a budget of 4.5 million dollars. In that

budget, they need to start looking at lobbying. He asked to increase and at least double the amount of what was budgeted.

Commissioner Kimblin NeSmith, District 3

Commissioner NeSmith apologized to Robbie Jones for not understanding the peanut butter jar campaign. He didn't know that the campaign included the peanut butter in the jar. He apologized for littering him with empty peanut butter jars.

He thanked Mr. Dixon and Mr. Lee for the attention to Tolar Road and the culvert.

He thanked Mrs. Bradley for the meeting with the City of Chattahoochee regarding their upcoming event. He said Mrs. Bradley represented them well.

He stated that it was brought to his attention that the City of Chattahoochee is partnering with the Gadsden County School Board for an electronic message Board on the campus of Chattahoochee Elementary School. It will be used to share information that goes on with the school district and with the City of Chattahoochee.

He stated there will be a special event on Friday at 3:00 p.m. where they will have an investiture ceremony of the Circuit Court Judge, Tiffany Baker, at the Quincy Courthouse.

He asked the Chair and the Commissioners to continue to think about having the State of the County Address.

He stated many of the citizens in Gadsden County are not aware of exactly what the Commission does. He asked if they could possibly think about creating a Gadsden County Citizens Academy where citizens take a class every year to expose them on how County government works.

He stated he is pleased to have Rosetta Rolle Hylton-Anderson back after having shoulder surgery a few weeks ago.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, Vice Chair, District 5

Commissioner Green was hoping to get a schedule for the road striping. He has had a few complaints again, especially on High Bridge Road.

He thanked Mr. Lee and Public Works for assisting on a call earlier this week.

He believes that there were some Neighborhood Watch signs that were supposed to have been designed and he wanted an update on them.

Mr. Dixon said he did not have any updates now but he will get with Mr. Lee and Ms. Steel about it and if he can contact them as soon as the meeting is over.

He thanked the Commissioners for a great meeting.

Commissioner Holt asked Attorney Knowles for an update on the census they were talking about how they can do anything to improve those numbers. Attorney Knowles said he can reach

back out to the University of Florida people that he spoke with previously. He stated that there was still some information they were looking at and there was also unfinished data. Mr. Dixon stated that the person they spoke to found great problems with the census and they were concerned about them propping down a lot of money into what they were considering unfinished data. Attorney Knowles will reach back out to them tomorrow and he will have a report at the next meeting.

Commissioner Holt said when it is time to get funding from the state and federal government, they need to be able to see if they can get funding from where they were last year. If their numbers are down, it's going to be difficult. She stated she is in the process of scheduling a meeting with the City of Gretna.

Mr. Dixon said to the point that Commissioner Holt made, they have received a lot of calls to come to the communities to talk about the issues in the area. He stated that the Board is available to talk to the community individually or collectively in group settings about what they are doing and how they are attacking situations.

Commissioner Anthony O. Viegbesie, Chair, District 2

Chair Viegbesie thanked Public Works and EMS for their dedicated service to the citizens of Gadsden County.

He asked to name the Swamp Creek Bridge after Reverend Lewis Jackson in honor of his memory. He was fishing and drowned there doing what he loved to do. He asked for a motion to name the bridge the "Rev. Lewis Jackson" bridge with signs posted at both ends. He has spoken with FDOT and CRTPA and they stated that is the County's Road and it could be named as such if the Board wishes.

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

He motioned for a Resolution to present a celebration for the blessings of longevity for anyone 90+ years of age. There are eight so far:

Ora Green, Jointer Young, Geneva McCray, Perliess Murray, Inez Robinson, Jeanette Scott, Christell Williams, Willie Scott.

These resolutions will be presented to the seniors at the meeting of gathering place of the seniors, i.e. the senior center, or they will directly deliver it to their place of residence or a church.

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

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners
May 17, 2022 – Regular Meeting

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR VEIGBESIE DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:15 PM.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk