

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON MAY 21, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M., THE
FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

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

Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Green called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Chair Green provided invocation and led into the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

Amendments and Approval of Agenda

Mr. Dixon stated he had no amendments to the agenda and stated item 13 was not approval of the sale on that property; the potential asker had been told no a number of times and they have asked to bring it before the board.

Commissioner Holt appeared at 6:03 p.m.

Chair Green stated he would like to table item 12 due to having a brief conversation and would like to do more of an in-depth conversation as it related to the individual occupying the residence.

CHAIR GREEN MADE A MOTION TO TABLE ITEM 12 AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 TO APPROVE.

Awards, Presentations and Appearances

Mr. Dixon presented the proclamation below.

Commissioner Hinson appeared at 6:05 p.m.

1. Proclamation Recognizing EMS Week

Chair Green presented the proclamation to the EMS staff.

Chief Hood gave his thanks and presented his staff.

2. Proclamation Recognizing Public Works Week

Commissioner NeSmith presented the proclamation to the Public Works staff.

3. Recognition of Pat Durden

Commissioner Simpkins presented the recognition to Pat Durden.

4. Recognition of Dr. Henry Grant

Commissioner Hinson presented the recognition to Dr. Henry Grant.

CONSENT

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

5. Ratification Memo

6. BOCC Meeting/Workshop Minutes:

a. April 16, 2024, Regular BOCC Meeting

7. Approval of Johnson Control Fire Protection Agreement to replace the Fire Alarm Panel at the Gadsden County Jail

8. Approval of the Judicial Inquiry System (JIS) Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) – Access Certification Statement

9. Approval of Signatures for Special Assessment Liens – State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP)

10. Approval and Signatures for Satisfaction of Special Assessment Lien

11. Approval of the 2024 Spring Rural County Grant Agreement for E911 System and MapFlex Annual Support and Maintenance

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

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.org 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 via Zoom using the credentials on the County's website. The Board's meetings are also broadcast live on the Board's Facebook page.

Chair Green read aloud the above statement.

Caroline Smith, 617 Williams St, Tallahassee

Ms. Smith appeared before the Board and stated she was with the Apalachee Regional Planning Council. They are working on an economic development plan project and wanted to provide an update. She stated at the next County Commission meeting, they plan to provide more of a presentation and a full update. Earlier this year, ARPC partnered with Gadsden County to write a new economic development plan for the county. They are currently writing the draft plan which will be available to them soon for their review.

Marion Lasley, 5 Dante Court

Ms. Lasley appeared before the board and had complaints in regards to their neighbor, Champs Chance dog compound. She had concerns regarding noise from barking and odor from dog feces. She was requesting for the county to do a cease-and-desist letter for this compound.

Christopher Smith, 149 Virgil Way

Mr. Smith also had concerns about the Champs Chance dog compound. He had concerns about so many dogs in a little area.

Bill Olms, 330 Virgil Way

Mr. Olms stated that dogs get on their property about once a month and not sure how friendly the dogs are.

Carl Pounsberry, 10870 Old Federal Rd Quincy

Mr. Pounsberry stated they own a cattle farm across the street from the dog compound and had concerns about that as well. He stated the dog compound is a good thing but not in a residential area.

Chair Green stated this was the first-time hearing about this and stated he would like to go down and see it for himself.

Mr. Dixon stated the hurricane illuminated this particular situation. That area was hit pretty good. He noticed dog cages in the front yard. He was unaware of what was happening in Code Enforcement and if there has been a call. He asked Morris Roosevelt if he was aware of code enforcement activity.

Morris Roosevelt appeared and stated there was a code enforcement case on that property. The owner has made comments to them that she had been looking at purchasing some property that was more suitable for the activities she was having. They were working with her as well as the Planning Board on this situation.

Ann Blount, 1010 Buck Blount Rd

Ms. Blount appeared and stated she wanted to talk about agriculture in this County and the importance of it.

Public Hearing

General Business

12. Board Direction Regarding an Eviction Action

Tabled

13. Approval for County Administrator to negotiate the sale of County-Owned parcel 2-27-3N-2W-0000-00121-0200

Mr. Dixon presented the above item. He stated the property is the EMS station on Highway 27. He stated they have told them no a number of times, however, they wanted to be brought before the Board. Mr. Dixon stated his recommendation is not for approval, to not engage in the conversation in selling the property.

Betty Kellem appeared and stated Mr. Peter Patel had talked to T.J. Lewis. He wanted to put a hotel there. Chair Green stated there seemed to be a whole lot of confusion on this item. Mr. Dixon stated his point had always been that the county had no reason, certainly at the money she was talking about, that was the money they paid for the property. Also, that is an EMS station they were talking about, not just a building. Their plans have to be worked out for the future.

Chair Green asked the attorney if he had the opportunity to review this in depth. Mr. Knowles stated he reviewed it in terms of how they need to proceed legally. He did not get this in advance; it was new to him.

Commissioner Holt stated there was a procedure that needed to be followed. It has to be open to the public, then they could take offers.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if Mr. Lewis had a conversation with the County Administrator. Mr. Dixon stated yes, they asked to be brought before the board. There was no reason for the county to sell the property. He stated he had never given an impression that they wanted to sell the property.

Commissioner Simpkins stated there was discussion relating to negotiation; there was a counter offer. These are things that the Attorney should be a part of from the start, not only at the tail end.

T.J. Lewis appeared. Commissioner Simpkins asked if he had communication with the County Administrator. Mr. Lewis stated yes, he received a phone call in March regarding this property. He spoke with Ms. Kellem and she submitted an unsolicited offer for the property.

It originally came in at \$60k and he was told by the County Administrator that they would not accept that amount for that property.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she noticed that there was communication as it related to EMS being moved to Greenshade. Mr. Lewis stated they met with EMS to see if that was feasible.

Commissioner Holt stated the property has to be bided; she asked the Attorney if he sent a copy of the state statute to the board members. Mr. Knowles stated he sent a copy to Mr. Lewis that was included in the new agenda item. He stated they updated the item over the weekend and

Ms. Rogers sent the updated item with the information he provided to the Administrator and Mr. Lewis.

Commissioner Holt asked the Attorney if this was already on the agenda when he read it. Mr. Knowles stated he did not receive this item at all. They edited the item over the weekend to reflect statutory requirements.

Chair Green stated the agenda has been ready in advance and should never hear that the Attorney just got an item.

Commissioner Hinson stated the Chairman has to approve everything. The Chair is the driving force. He stated the Attorney was not to blame.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she should be a part of conversations related to her district.

Mr. Dixon stated this was a conversation had with the team about whether or not it was a good idea for the county. They discussed every opportunity and could not figure out a good deal for EMS.

Cathy Johnson appeared and stated as a nurse, she relies on EMS to be there.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO NOT APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE THE MOTION.

14. Approval of Fire and Rescue Interlocal Agreement Between Gadsden County, Florida and the City of Quincy, Florida

Mr. Dixon presented the above item.

COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Clerk of Court

15. Updates

County Administrator

16. Updates

Mr. Dixon stated the youth fair moved to this Saturday from 9 to 1 p.m. Their first budget workshop will be May 30th 4 p.m. He stated they need a proclamation for Homeowners Association Month.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION MONTH AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR PROBATION WEEK AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Mr. Dixon stated they met with Commissioner Simpkin's community and becoming before them will be a request to enter into a long-term agreement for St. Hebrem Park. He stated they will be looking for volunteers to come help clean, paint, etc.

County Attorney

- 17. Updates**
No updates.

18. Discussion Items by Commissioners

Commissioner Eric F. Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson thanked the Board for remaining calm and doing good work. He requested a proclamation for his parents who have been married for 60 years.

COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE A MOTION FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR COMMISSIONER HINSON'S PARENTS, WILLIAM HINSON AND JEANETTE HINSON AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Commissioner Hinson thanked all the students in Gadsden County who graduated during the Covid era. He asked to do something spectacular for the graduates.

Commissioner Kimblin E. NeSmith, J.D., District 3

Commissioner NeSmith asked the County Administrator about legal services and Mr. Dixon stated it came in today, he will get with the Chairman in the morning.

Commissioner NeSmith stated Arnita Green will be retiring after 36 years at the Clerk's office and would like to do a recognition.

COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE A MOTION FOR A RECOGNITION FOR ARNITA GREEN'S RETIREMENT AND CHAIR GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Commissioner NeSmith mentioned May Day and asked if they have their own May Day celebration. He stated he would like to have a motion to coordinate their own May Day event. Chair Green stated they do not necessarily need to have a motion for that but maybe they could give some directions to start having a conversation.

Commissioner NeSmith asked about the Summer Youth program. Chair Green stated they maximized the numbers. Mr. Dixon stated yes, they have, he will be sending out something in the morning.

Commissioner NeSmith thanked them for the construction on Hardaway Highway.

Commissioner Brenda A. Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt stated June 19 they will be having the dedication of the extension building they approved.

Chair Green stepped out at 7:52 p.m.

Commissioner Holt mentioned fencing on the back parking lot. She stated there were several problems the last 2 weeks.

Commissioner Holt stated on May 25, there will be a celebration at Fort Negro; there was a battle down there during the early 1800's.

Commissioner Holt stated she will not be in town for the budget workshop.

Commissioner Holt asked if the security guard at the lake was certified to carry a weapon. She stated they should be certified for their own protection and she asked the County Administrator to look into that.

Commissioner Holt asked the County Attorney to give a legal opinion once he gets an item. She stated they have had attorneys before give opinions on everything. Mr. Knowles stated that the original item stated that he reviewed it but he did not. He had contacted the County Administrator and T.J. Lewis. He asked Commissioner Holt if he were to receive an item 5 or 10 minutes before a meeting starts, that she would like for him to prepare a memorandum? asked if gets item 5-10 min before meeting, to prepare a memo? Commissioner Holt stated what she was saying was that if he got an item, even though the item is on the agenda, go ahead and give them a legal opinion of it then. She asked Mr. Knowles if when he does not receive anything early, did he go after it and call Mr. Dixon. Mr. Knowles stated usually he receives an item from staff. Commissioner Holt asked if he was aggressively going after the items and Mr. Knowles stated yes, because he usually receives them ahead of time.

Commissioner Hinson mentioned lighting and stated it was too dark in some areas. There are Issues with striping as well.

Commissioner Holt asked the County Attorney if there were any requests for contracts that he received that has not been able to get back to staff. Mr. Knowles stated he just received an email regarding the debris removal contracts from Ms. Rogers this evening. He also received a request earlier today regarding the engineering secondary contract. Commissioner Holt stated she asked him that because she was asking the Administrator for emails, anything pertaining to contracts.

Commissioner Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned Selman Road and stated there was a lot of traffic. County vehicles and city vehicles going down that road and some citizens were concerned about safety. There were big vehicles going down that road fast. Mr. Dixon stated that road needed to be widened and they also need to look into lighting for that road.

Commissioner Simpkins asked about working on the blue reflectors on fire hydrants. Mr. Dixon stated they have talked about it but it sounded like something they could do with the nonprofit fire departments and maybe put a program together.

Commissioner Simpkins would like for them to look at where they see themselves five years from now. What would they look like in 10 years and how they can keep the youth to stay in Gadsden County.

Mr. Dixon mentioned the lady from ARPC that spoke earlier. They are an agrarian based economy; need to do more to ensure safety. Commissioner Hinson stated need to look at how much you need to make to afford a house.

Commissioner Holt mentioned getting transportation to Amazon. They need to apply for infrastructure funding for city buses to come over from Tallahassee. Commissioner Hinson stated their biggest investment is in children. Build 10 acres of land for teachers.

Chair Ronterious Green, District 5

Chair Green thanked the new Parks and Rec person, Ms. Shawana, who was already doing phenomenal work. The first community cleanup for the park is June 1st for the Shiloh Community. He also mentioned that he had a great event with the Seniors at the lake. He asked the County Administrator to take a look at having the weed trimmed in the water. Chair Green mentioned the parking at this facility when they are closed because it could cause major liability.

CHAIR GREEN MADE A MOTION FOR A PROCLAMATION FOR 50 YEARS OF SENIOR SERVICES AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Motion to Adjourn

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, VICE-CHAIR SIMPKINS DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:35 PM.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

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

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk