

**FEBRUARY 1, 2022**  
**Track: 92**  
**JASPER, FLORIDA**

**REGULAR SESSION**

The Board of County Commissioners, Hamilton County, Florida, met in regular session on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room, 207 Northeast First Street, Jasper, Florida. Present were Commissioners Randy Ogburn, Robert Brown, Richie McCoy, Josh Smith and Jimmy Muphy, a full Board being present. Also present were County Coordinator Louie Goodin and County Attorney Cliff Adams.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Josh Smith and led in prayer by Commissioner Ogburn with the Pledge of Allegiance being led by Chairman Smith.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to approve the consent agenda and pull (EMS Grant Invoice) for further discussion. Second was made by Commissioner Brown, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**2020 COUNTY-HELD CERTIFICATES**

The Board briefly discussed the 2020 tax certificates and agreed to place the item back on the agenda for the May 3, 2022, meeting to allow legal staff time to review the parcels and make a recommendation to the Board.

## **2015 COUNTY-HELD CERTIFICATES**

The Board briefly discussed the 2015 tax certificates and agreed to place the item back on the agenda for the May 3, 2022, meeting to allow legal staff time to review the parcels and make a recommendation to the Board.

## **SHIP / CDBG PROGRAM – STATUS REPORT**

Ship Coordinator Spencer Nabors was not present for the meeting; therefore, County Coordinator Louie Goodin provided the Board with an update regarding the current Ship, CDBG-CV, and American Rescue Plan. Mr. Goodin advised that there was nothing new to report in regards to Ship and that he is still waiting on notification from the CDBG-CV application. Chairman Smith and the Board questioned Mr. Nabors not being present for the meeting. The Board also discussed the American Rescue Plan with Sarah Hardin with Windstream. Ms. Hardin stated that she and staff have answered the questions of the committee and Board and would request that the Board consider approving the contract to allow Windstream to proceed with the placement of infrastructure in the county. County Attorney Cliff Adams stated that his questions have been answered; however, there are still concerns with the language of the contract and the request for proposals for the American Rescue Plan funding. After a lengthy discussion the Board agreed to allow staff to proceed and meet with the committee to get the information as requested.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS – CHADD MATHIS**

Economic Development Director Chadd Mathis provided the Board with an update on the current economic development projects. Mr. Mathis also discussed with the Board the ownership of the X-ray

machine being used at the Doctor's Clinic by Watson's Healthcare. Mr. Mathis stated that after review of the agreement between the Development Authority and the Board, that the X-ray machine belongs to the county. Mr. Goodin also provided the Board with a lobbyist report and stated that all appropriations requests have made it out of committee and will be proceeding to reconciliation.

### **RECONSIDERATION OF MOTOR GRADER BIDS**

The Board reviewed the options presented by staff regarding the Motor Grader bids. After a lengthy discussion with representatives from Ring Power, Linder and Beard Equipment, the Board made the following decision:

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to select option #3 as presented and to keep the current Grader with no buyback and to reject the bids that were submitted. Second was made by Commissioner McCoy, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

The Board thanked Ring Power and Beard Equipment for their patience with the Grader bidding process.

### **DR. RENALDAS SMITDAS OFFICE RENOVATIONS**

The Board reviewed the write-up for Dr. Smitdas's office renovations as provided by Building Official John Auer. Chairman Smith discussed with the Board his conversation with Dr. Smitdas and staff regarding the office renovations and the need to determine their expectations. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to allow Chairman Smith to continue the discussion with Dr. Smitdas.

**PUBLIC HEARING – INTENT TO CONSIDER THE  
ENACTMENT OF AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO  
SIMULATED GAMBLING DEVICES AND INTERNET CAFES**

Chairman Smith recessed the regular Board meeting and called the public hearing to order at 9:35 a.m.

County Attorney Cliff Adams read the title to the ordinance before the Board and stated that the ordinance was legally published. Chairman Smith read a letter from Sheriff Reid in support of the Ordinance and State Attorney John Durrett addressed the Board and explained the legal issues with the simulated gambling devices / Internet Cafes. Mr. Durrett also provided the Board with how Columbia County and Suwannee County are handling the same issue. Attorney Andrew Decker, representing Ida Tucker owner and operator of Pirates Gold in Jennings, explained their business plan and the participation in the community as well as the financial investment. After the discussion, The Board stated that Pirates Gold may be in the city limits of the Town of Jennings which wouldn't fall under this ordinance which will only be for the unincorporated area of the county. Mr. Decker suggested that the Board consider amending the ordinance to meet different issues with these types of businesses. William Russell, operator of Full Time Arcade, spoke on behalf of his business and stated that he has had no problems that required law enforcement and that his facility is different from some that come in and cause issues in the community that require law enforcement. Sheriff's Department Captain Chip Belote presented the Board with a copy of Florida Statute 849.08 outlining the law as it pertains to gambling and stated that these businesses are violating the gambling statute when cash prizes are being won. The Board questioned the

practices in the facilities and Ms. Tucker and Mr. Russell explained how they operate. The Board then discussed the enforcement of the facilities with Mr. Durrett and Mr. Belote. Commissioner Ogburn stated that he was concerned with the gambling aspects of the businesses. Chairman Smith stated that the Board will have to consider the options or proceed with the Ordinance as drafted by legal staff. Mr. Decker again requested that the Board consider modifications to the ordinance to allow certain criteria to determine the businesses that could operate in the county.

There being no further comments from the Board or public, Chairman Smith closed the public hearing at 10:15 a.m.

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to adopt the Ordinance relating to simulated gambling devices and internet cafes as prepared by legal counsel. Second was made by Commissioner Murphy, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

### **HAMILTON COUNTY DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – HENRY LAND**

Emergency Management Director Henry Land introduced Rob Evans, with IPG, as the architect for the new emergency operations center. Mr. Evans presented a schematic design of the facility which he stated was similar to a facility in Henry County Ga. Mr. Evans stated that the approximate cost of the facility as designed would be \$4 to \$5 million and is a work in progress. After a lengthy discussion, the Board reviewed a map of the possible location of the facility.

Mr. Land also discussed a Firefighter Stipend to assist with the certification process for Volunteer Firefighters. Mr. Land explained the brochure that was recently mailed to each household seeking individuals that would be interested in becoming a certified Volunteer Firefighter. The Board and Mr. Land discussed the funding per call for certified Firefighters and other fire related calls and took the following action:

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to allow the following compensation for Volunteer Firefighters: \$2,500 for a Volunteer Firefighter to get the certification and work for a county fire department for 6 months, \$50 per call for a certified Volunteer Firefight, \$25 per call for Wildland fire calls and \$15 per call for support personnel to fire. Second was made by Commissioner Brown, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Mr. Land also advised the Board that new address changes are forthcoming, but the changes will allow the 911 address system to be in compliance with the State's.

## **ROAD PAVING PROJECTS – STATUS REPORT**

Greg Bailey, with North Florida Professional Services, provided the Board with a status report on the current road projects.

**SW 69<sup>th</sup> DRIVE** – Mr. Bailey discussed the task order for SW 69<sup>th</sup> Drive for parcel 3599-010.

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to approve the task order with NFPS for SW 69<sup>th</sup> Drive (parcel #3599-010). Second was made by Commissioner Muphy, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**BAISDEN LAKE LOOP / SW 107<sup>th</sup> AVE.** – Mr. Bailey advised the Board his staff still waiting on the approval from FDOT with all required documentation having been submitted.

**OAK STREET** – Mr. Bailey advised the Board that Duke Energy has relocated the utility poles and has scheduled the relocation of the others with Norfolk Southern.

**GIBSON PARK** – Mr. Bailey stated that his staff are working on the design and permitting for the project.

**SW 90<sup>TH</sup> BLVD.** – Mr. Bailey provided the Board with an update for the SW 90<sup>th</sup> Blvd. paving project. Chairman Smith explained the consensus of the individuals attending the District 2 meeting on SW 90<sup>th</sup> Blvd. and advised that there are individuals that support the paving project; however, at the current time he would like for the Board to halt the project and consider only paving the existing right-of-way from Hwy. 41 to the Friendship Cemetery at an approximate cost of \$500,000.

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to halt the SW 90<sup>th</sup> Blvd. paving project with staff and NFPS to contact FDOT as to the options available to the Board and for staff to provide a cost estimate to pave the existing right-of-way from Hwy. 41 to the Friendship Cemetery. Second was made by Commissioner Murphy, motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Brown abstained from the vote due to being a property owner.

**RURAL LEGISLATIVE DAYS** – Mr. Bailey stated that he thought that the event was successful, and that Hamilton County was well represented.

**CR 137 PAVING PROJECT** – Commissioner Ogburn advised the Board that FDOT has provided a punch list for the paving project and that Anderson Columbia is working on the list.

**CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION ON THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN – WINDSTREAM**

Ms. Hardin discussed the concern with Windstream being considered a sole source provider in Hamilton County for Broadband infrastructure. Ms. Hardin stated that according to Windstream’s legal department the contract would be sufficient. After a lengthy discussion, the Board agreed to allow legal staff to get answers and work out the details of the contract.

**EXCAVATOR QUOTES – REVIEW AND POSSIBLE AWARD**

The Board discussed the Excavator quotes as previously provided by the following vendors from the State’s contract list: Beard Equipment - \$177,105, Ring Power - \$153,193 and Linder - \$164,369. The Board questioned each vendor as to their equipment and price then took the following action:

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to purchase the Excavator from Ring Power in the amount of \$153,193.00. Second was made by Commissioner McCoy, motion carried with a four (4) to one (1) vote. Voting against the motion was Commissioner Murphy.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEM B (EMS GRANT ASSISTANCE)**

- Motion by Commissioner Ogburn to approve the EMS Grant Assistance invoice as presented. Second was made by Commissioner Brown, motion carried with a unanimous vote.



## **APPROVE BILLS**

- Motion by Commissioner Brown to approve the bills (vouchers 152389 – 152565 and checks 067299-067391) and to include invoice from Hunt & Moses Realty, LLC in the amount of \$2,750. Second was made by Commissioner Ogburn, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

## **CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- County Coordinator Louie Goodin reminded the Board that the Technical Working Group meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 p.m.
- Commissioner McCoy provided the Board with a report as to the Rural Legislative Days and stated that the county was well represented and also advised the Board of complaints that he has received from Swift Straw burning.
- Commissioner Ogburn discussed the possibility of having a business / occupational license for the county. The Board agreed to place the item on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Commissioner Murphy discussed the need for a workshop to discuss potential grants and the possibility of a grants writer position. The Board agreed to hold the meeting at 4:30 p.m. on February 15, 2022, prior to the regular scheduled meeting.
- The Board discussed whether the new Health Department design is inclusive in the plans for the new EOC and EMS departments.

- Chairman Smith discussed the repairs to the access road to Jennings Bluff to which Mr. Goodin stated that the Road Department has already taken care of. Chairman Smith also read a letter from the Tourist Development Council.

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Ogburn adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

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JOSH SMITH, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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GREG GODWIN, EX-OFFICIO CLERK





