

**FEBRUARY 20, 2024
JASPER, FLORIDA**

REGULAR SESSION

The Board of County Commissioners, Hamilton County, Florida, met in regular session on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room, 207 Northeast First Street, Jasper, Florida. Present were Commissioners Travis Erixton, Jimmy Murphy, Robbie Roberson and Richie McCoy. Commissioner Robert Brown was absent due to illness. Also present were County Attorney Andy Decker and County Coordinator Gary Godwin.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman McCoy and led in prayer by Chairman McCoy with the Pledge of Allegiance being led by Chairman McCoy.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Motion by Commissioner Roberson to approve the consent agenda. Second was made by Commissioner Erixton, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**BRIGHTER DAY PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY –
PRESENTATION – DR. KENNETH ROSIER**

Dr. Rosier was unable to attend the meeting due to the hospitalization of his wife.

OPIOID CRISIS SETTLEMENT FUNDS

County Attorney Andy Decker presented the Board with a resolution for the disbursement of the Opioid Settlement funds to the Hamilton County Alcohol & Other Drug Prevention Coalition. Mr. Decker explained the details of the resolution per their request. Commissioner Roberson commended the Coalition for the work they do in the schools and community.

- Motion by Commissioner Murphy, to approve the Resolution as presented between the HCADPC and the Board for the expenditure of the Opioid Settlement funds each year for the duration of the agreement. Second was made by Commissioner Roberson, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

ANIMAL CONTROL PROPOSAL – PAMELA WISNISKI

Pamela Wisniski addressed the Board regarding Animal Control in the county. Ms. Wisniski discussed several issues which are as follows: relocate the facility near the State Prison or County Jail which would allow inmates to take care of the animals, offer a low cost spay / neuter program, better enforcement of the Animal Control Ordinance and establish leash laws, enact breeders license, work together with other agencies to continue to resolve the animal control issues. The Board advised Ms. Wisniski that grants are being considered for a new facility and that staff is working diligently to correct any issues with Animal Control.

SHIP / CDBG PROGRAM / CDBG-CV – STATUS REPORT

Ship Administrator Spencer Nabors provided the Board with a status report for the Ship, CDBG, CDBG-CV and HHRP grants. Mr. Nabors advised the Board that the asbestos has been removed from the Selph property with the county to begin demolition in a few days. Mr. Nabors also stated that the engineering contract for the CDBG-CV program has been approved by Florida Commerce and recommended that the Board approve the contract with NFPS in the amount of \$186,500 which is within the CDBG-CV budget for engineering services.

- Motion by Commissioner Roberson to approve the CDBG-CV engineering contract with North Florida Professional Services in the amount of \$186,500. Second was made by Commissioner Erixton, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS – STATUS REPORT AND REQUESTS

The Board discussed the SRWMD wetland survey permit which has been reduced to \$100.

- Motion by Commissioner Erixton to approve the payment of the SRWMD permit fee in the amount of \$100 as recommended. Second was made by Commissioner Murphy, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL – MIA MAULDIN – REQUEST TO ADOPT RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT PRESERVATION OF THE OKEFENOKEE SWAMP AND ITS SURROUNDING WATERSHEDS AND REQUEST TO APPOINT A NEW MEMBER TO TDC BOARD

TDC Director Mia Mauldin briefly discussed the resolutions with the Board. County Attorney Andy Decker also discussed both resolutions and answered questions from the Board and public.

- Motion by Commissioner Roberson to adopt the Preservation of the Okefenokee Swamp and the surrounding watersheds Resolution as presented. Second was made by Commissioner Muphy, motion carried with a unanimous vote.
- Motion by Commissioner Murphy, to approve the Resolution for the appointment of Christina McCulley as a TDC Board member. Second was made by Commissioner Erixton, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

ROAD PAVING PROJECTS – STATUS EREPORT

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

LAKE BAISDEN LOOP – Mr. Bailey stated that Lake Baisden Loop paving project is nearing completion. County Coordinator Gary Godwin stated that the Board will need to approve a change order pertaining to the Bemby property ditch. Wanda Cox discussed with the Board the need for lights on the road to assist with individuals speeding. Mr. Lizotte stated that the project is nearing completion with a punch list to be generated by the end of the month.

GIBSON PARK BOAT RAMP – Mr. Bailey advised the Board that he is still waiting for the final approval from FWC.

CROSSROADS FIRE DEPARTMENT – Mr. Bailey stated that the final plans have been submitted to staff for review and approval.

JOBS GROWTH GRANT – Mr. Bailey advised the Board that his staff is continuing to work on the project. The Board questioned Mr. Bailey as to the timing of the project and the appearance that there seems to be no urgency on the part of NFPS. Mr. Bailey stated that NFPS would sit down with the Board and staff to review the plans that will be forwarded to SRWMD this month with a project starting date by June 2024.

5 HOLE BOAT RAMP – Mr. Bailey stated that the Army Corp. of Engineers is requiring an archeological survey of the area due to grave sites being present. Mr. Bailey provided the Board with proposals. The survey proposals are as follows: Archaeological Consultants Inc. - \$9,500, Chronicle Heritage - \$22,812.68 and Search Inc. - \$12,480.

- Motion by Commissioner Roberson to approve the proposal from Search Inc. based on the review and recommendation from County Attorney Andy Decker. Second was made by Commissioner Erixton, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

CR 25A – Mr. Bailey advised that his staff are in the process of responding to final comments from FDOT and the resurfacing project will be advertised soon.

DISCUSSION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Board discussed the current salary for the Code Enforcement Officer and after a brief discussion, agreed to address the issue during the budget due to no recommendation for a salary increase.

During Correspondence and Announcements, the Board took the following action:

- Motion by Commissioner Roberson to approve the Code Enforcement Interlocal Agreement with the Town of White Springs. Second was made by Commissioner Erixton, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

STORM RELATED ISSUES – DISCUSSION AND REQUESTS

County Coordinator Gary Godwin provided the Board with a status report on the continued storm debris removal from Hurricane Idalia and advised the Board that a public notice needs to be placed on the county website and in the Riverbend Newspaper that the county is no longer responsible for storm debris effective February 21, 2024. Mr. Godwin also stated that FEMA will pick up additional debris from several locations that were previously identified.

APPROVE BILLS

- Motion by Commissioner Erixton to approve the bills (vouchers 165345 – 165656 and checks 072823 - 072942) to include invoice no. 139433 from Thomas Howell Ferguson P.A. Second was made by Commissioner Murphy, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT STAGE

- Motion by Commissioner Erixton to declare an emergency and approve for the stage to be rebuilt and for staff to let bids for the construction of the project. Second was made by Commissioner Murphy, motion carried with a unanimous vote.

GREEN POINT RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

County Attorney Andy Decker provided the Board an update as to the withdrawal from the Development Agreement with Green Point Research.

- Motion by Commissioner Roberson to approve the withdrawal from the Green Point Research Development Agreement. Second was made by Commissioner Erixton, motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Murphy abstained from the vote due to previous business relations with Green Point Research.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- County Coordinator Gary Godwin advised the Board that the restrooms at Gibson Park will have to be re-built with the Board to possibly consider a new site plan for the facility.
- Mr. Godwin announced that the Nutrien Technical Working Group meeting will be held at the Annex on Thursday, February 22nd at 1:00 p.m.
- The Board also discussed the possible moratorium on RV's / campers until the issues can be resolved. Mr. Decker advised that he would prepare a resolution for the next meeting for the Board's consideration.
- Mr. Godwin advised the Board that he has received several quotes for a new Animal Control facility with the estimated cost being \$100,000. The Board then discussed several options as to where to locate the facility.
- Commissioner Murphy discussed with the Board the need for Amnesty Days due to the amount of trash, tires, and litter on the roads. The Board agreed to agenda the item for discussion at the next Board meeting.
- Commissioner Erixton stated that several Churches in his district have requested assistance with dirt and drainage issues. The Board advised each Commissioner to contact the Road Department for assistance.
- Chairman McCoy requested that the Board do a walk through at the old Jail to be able to assess the needed repairs and preserve the historical building. Mr. Godwin will set a time and date for the Board.
- The Board discussed the litter situation in the county and the implementation of fines / regulations. The Board agreed to have signs placed throughout the county.
- The Board advised the county GPS equipment will be up and running by Monday of next week.

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman McCoy adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

RICHIE MCCOY, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

GREG GODWIN, EX-OFFICIO CLERK

