

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
FRANKLIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX
JUNE 2, 2015
9:00 AM**

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: William Massey – Chairman, Joseph Parrish – Vice Chairman, Pinki Jackel, Noah Lockley, Cheryl Sanders

Others Present: Alan Pierce – Director of Administrative Services, Michael Shuler – County Attorney, Michael Morón – County Coordinator, Lauren Luberto – Deputy Clerk to the Board

Call to Order 9:00 AM

Chairman Massey called the meeting to order.

Prayer and Pledge

There was a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Lockley to approve minutes from April 7, 2015 and May 19, 2015 meetings. Commissioner Jackel asked for discussion. She had one issue with the wording used on a section of the May 19 minutes regarding the library. She asked the wording be changed to clarify the statement. Commissioner Jackel also asked that Lauren Luberto add her name to the “Others Present” section of the minutes to show that she was in attendance. Commissioner Sanders amended her motion and Commissioner Lockley amended his second to reflect Commissioner Jackel’s comments. Motion carried, 5-0.

Payment of County Bills

Motion by Commissioner Lockley, seconded by Commissioner Sanders to approve payment of county bills. Motion carried, 5-0.

Michael Moron notified the Board that the Health Department had an item that he failed to include on the meeting’s agenda. He asked that Health Department present their item at this time. The Health Department staff presented Dr. Ivan Backerman a plaque of recognition for his service and dedication to the community over the years.

Department Supervisor Report

Howard Nabors – Superintendent of Public Works

Mr. Nabors did not have any action items for the Board. Commissioner Jackel stated she has received some calls regarding certain street corners needing the vegetation cut back to clear visibility. She asked Mr. Nabors to take a look at these areas. He replied that he would do so.

Fonda Davis – Solid Waste Director

Mr. Davis informed the Board the new playground equipment on St. George Island has been installed and is fully accessible to the public. He also notified the board that the 2015 Dixie Softball District Tournament will be held June 19-21 and the Baseball State Triple A Ozone Division Tournament will be held July 17-22 at the Will S. Kendrick Sports Complex in Carrabelle. Lastly, he stated his department has been enforcing the Leave No Trace Ordinance and all has been going well thus far.

Pam Brownell- Emergency Management Director

Information Items:

1. EOC Staff will be attending the Region 2 Meeting on June 4th.
2. EOC Staff will be attending SCAT training from June 1st – June 3rd.
3. There will be a C.H.A.R.M. (Community Health and Resources Management) workshop held at the EOC on June 2nd. This workshop is being hosted by Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve.
4. EOC Staff attended the Civic Club Meeting on May 21st to issue Re-Entry Tags and gave a presentation about preparedness and CERT.
5. EOC will be Hosting our 1st Hurricane Preparedness EXPO on June 13th from 10am – 5pm at Franklin County Emergency Management Office, located at 28 Airport Road, Apalachicola. Everyone is invited to attend.
6. DON'T FORGET – HURRICANE SEASON STARTED JUNE 1ST.

Erik Lovstrand- Extension Agent

Mr. Lovstrand was not present at the meeting.

Mike Cooper- Weem's CEO

Mr. Cooper notified the board that the financials for the month show a loss of \$50,000 however they still had a good month as it was their biggest revenue month of the current fiscal year. Mr. Cooper stated that all of the \$385,000 that Medicare requested back has been returned. Now Weems can go back and recollect the \$385,000.00. They are trying to recoup the money back as quickly as possible but he cannot put a date on when it would be here. Commissioner Jackel commented that the hospital's current liabilities have gone from \$623,000 to \$1.1 Million over the last 7 months. The Board cannot continue to sustain increasing liabilities. She also pointed out that the ambulance financials seem to be the brightest spot on the income statement. She has noticed that of the \$500,000 that the county subsidized the ambulance services with, only about \$200,000 has been used year to date by the hospital. Weems should currently have a

surplus of the ambulance subsidy yet she cannot see where those monies are in the bank account. Commissioner Jackel asked if the hospital was using reserves for operation out of the ambulance funds. Mr. Cooper stated that all the money goes into one pot, it's all in one bank account. Commissioner Jackel commented that it seemed as though the hospital does not need a total \$500,000 contributed by the county to the ambulance subsidy if they currently have a \$200,000.00 surplus with only 3 months left in the fiscal year. The board may need to look into this during budget time. She is concerned that the hospital is showing only \$90,000 in the bank account when they should have a surplus from the ambulance service of over \$200,000.00. She asked Mr. Cooper to have John Graham, Weems Memorial CFO contact her to discuss her concerns further.

Mr. Cooper updated the board on the status of the installation of the hospital's new computer system and the status of physician recruitment. Beginning tomorrow, Dr. Fountain will be the new LOCUM physician. He will be here for up to 90 days and will be working out of both Weems' clinics. Mr. Cooper said he is still looking into a permanent physician.

Mr. Coopers updated the Board on the status of the USDA loan. He stated it was in the review committee at the federal level. He also notified the board that he did not have an update from CHP. He spoke to them yesterday and was told the hospital is still in the review process.

Commissioner Lockley asked if the hospital still offered Capital Health Plan as a provider to their employees. Mr. Cooper stated that he has changed them to Blue Cross Blue Shield. Commissioner Lockley asked if it cost more money to make the switch. Mr. Coopers replied that it would cost approximately \$60,000 in premiums, however they now have 69 families that can utilize hospital services where in the past they could not. Commissioner Jackel asked if both Weems clinics were under contract with Capital Health Plan. Mr. Cooper replied that Weems East was under contract but he had not yet signed the contract for Weems West, however they continue to pay claims. Commissioner Jackel asked Mr. Cooper if he was going to sign that contract and he replied that he would eventually sign but currently he is still in negotiations with Capital Health and he is trying to get the whole hospital included. Commissioner Jackel then asked if Mr. Graham had concurred with the decision to change employee coverage to Blue Cross Blue Shield and spend an additional \$67,000, of unbudgeted funds, given the current financial situation of the hospital. Mr. Cooper replied that they had talked about it. Commissioner Jackel asked if the issue was brought before the Hospital Board. Mr. Cooper replied that he believed he did so at last month's meeting. Commissioner Jackel commented that she believed Mr. Cooper is doing a good job but there are some financial decisions that she disagrees with him on. She very much disagreed with him spending \$67,000 of hospital funds to change over their healthcare group when they only had 4 day's supply of cash on hand. She stressed the fact that the hospital needs to work any issues out with Capital Health Plan. Mr. Cooper responded that he is diligently working on the issue. Commissioner Sanders commented that she agreed with Commissioner Jackel 100 percent.

Commissioner Lockley motioned to schedule a meeting with the Hospital Board. Seconded by Commissioner Sanders. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for the first County Commissioner meeting in July.

RECESS: 9:39 A.M.

Chairman Massey called for a recess.

RECONVENE: 9:47 A.M.

Chairman Massey reconvened the meeting.

Alex Quintana, representative for Congresswoman Graham, notified the public they would be at the Eastpoint Library today. Chairman Massey asked about dredging the Eastpoint Channel. Mr. Quintana replied he is putting together a briefing to present to Congresswomen Graham regarding this issue. Commissioner Jackel stated that she and Mr. Pierce have compiled a lot of information regarding the Eastpoint channel and she would like to make sure Mr. Quintana is forwarded a copy of the information.

Mr. Pierce asked Mr. Quintana if he could update the board on the legislative bill that Congresswoman Graham has filed regarding Apalachicola Bay. He replied that he would get the information forwarded to them as soon as he returned to his office in Panama City. Commissioner Lockley asked for the contact information to the Panama City Office, Alex provided the information.

Mr. Pierce notified the Board that Fonda Davis was going to be out of town Thursday and Friday this week but Albert Floyd would be taking his calls.

Ms. Hofman/Mr. Langston – Wakulla County Senior Center - Discuss Senior Services in Franklin County

Mr. Langston notified the Board that currently Franklin County has two divisions of senior services. Franklin East services are provided by Wakulla County and Franklin West services are provided by Gulf County. He reported that he has submitted an RFP letter to Area Agency on Aging of North Florida showing interest to be the single source vendor for Franklin County as a whole. Currently, Wakulla County Senior Center is the only entity that showed interest in providing senior services as a whole to Franklin County. He explained further to the Board the services that are provided and he asked the Board for their continued financial support. Commissioner Sanders thanked Mr. Langston for his service to Franklin County. She asked if Mr. Langston was the only one to submit an RFP. Mr. Langston confirmed that no other entity or organization showed any interest for Franklin County. Commissioner Sanders clarified that the monies the county contributes to elder care services would now go into one pot and not be split between East and West. Commissioner Parrish asked if the services to be provided in the future under one vendor would be the same as the services that are currently being provided under the East and West program. Mr. Langston confirmed that the services would be the

same, if not better. Mr. Langston discussed the program and services provided further to the Board.

Anna Carmichael – Friends of the Library

Mrs. Carmichael spoke to the board regarding a new lease for the Eastpoint Library and asked if the county will maintain the yard and parking area so that the Friends of the Library can continue to raise money to pave the driveway. Commissioner Jackel asked Attorney Shuler if maintenance of the yard and parking lot can be included under the terms of the lease without repercussions. Attorney Shuler replied the grading and upkeep of the parking area and the road is not dependant on inmate labor. Currently, Department of Corrections allows the county to use inmate labor for maintaining the grounds. The lease that Attorney Shuler has drafted states that as long as Department of Corrections allows the county to use inmate labor we will upkeep the grounds, but should the Department of Corrections take inmate labor away then it will become discretionary to the Board. The county has no control over the use of inmate labor. Commissioner Parrish expressed concern that inmate labor cannot be used if children are present. Commissioner Lockley stated he did not want to see the library make significant improvement to the landscape and then expect inmate labor to maintain it. The Board, Mrs. Carmichael and Attorney Shuler further discussed the terms of using inmate labor to maintain the grounds.

Attorney Shuler also addressed the monthly lease payment of \$2,000.00 and also the beginning effective date of the lease.

Motion by Commissioner Jackel to approve the lease as recommended by county Attorney Shuler with the provisions and contingencies he discussed. Ms. Carmichael asked if the new lease will state if the law changes for inmate labor will the county maintain the grounds? Commissioner Jackel stated should they lose the option of inmate labor the Board would then revisit the issue at that time but they would not commit to the upkeep of the grounds. Motion died for lack of a second.

Marcia Johnson – Clerk of Courts

Mrs. Johnson was not present and did not have any items for board discussion or approval.

Commissioner Jackel asked if the Board could receive preliminary dates from the Clerk's office as to when the budget hearing would be held. Alan Pierce stated the general plan this year is to have the workshop the last week of July, nothing will be held in August and the public hearing will be held sometime in September.

Alan Pierce – Director of Administrative Service

Michael Moron gave Mr. Pierce's report.

1- Inform the Board that the summer harvesting areas opened yesterday, June 1. FWC, in consultation with the industry, has lowered the bag limits to 5 bags per person per day. Harvesting will be allowed 4 days a week for the first half of the summer season, and then it will expand to 5 days a week during the second half. It is anticipated the current shelling program will last into August with shelling going on 2 days a week.

Mr. Jim Estes, FWC, said that the summer harvesting areas north of the bridge, which were recently shelled, do not have a lot of harvestable oysters on them; however, FWC is reviewing whether the recently shelled areas should be closed so that oysters will be able to grow on the new shell without being disturbed.

Commissioner Sanders mentioned she has overheard public comments stating the Board of Commissioners is responsible for the poor oyster harvesting season and the 10am deadline. She clarified that the Food and Drug Administration is the one who implemented that deadline and that the Board had nothing to do with that. She stated the Board has worked hard and has been instrumental in getting the county funds for oyster harvesting.

2- Board action to advertise for design and engineering services for the design of the sidewalk on CR 67. The Board may recall that this is a City of Carrabelle project that county is handling for the city as the city is not LAP certified.

Motion by Commissioner Parrish, seconded by Commissioner Lockley. Motion carried, 5-0.

3- Inform the Board that the county has received a notice from the City of Apalachicola that it is holding a meeting on Monday, June 8, at 6 PM, at City Hall, to receive public input on a special exception to allow a library to be built on the property at the corner of 12th St. and US 98. The first step in building a library there will be for the city to approve a special exception for the use of a library. The actual location of the library has not been finally determined but it is possible that the library will be closer to the Chapman Auditorium than was previously discussed.

Motion by Commissioner Lockley to have Attorney Shuler attend the City Hall meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Sanders. Motion carried, 5-0.

4- Inform the Board that the bids for the Armory will be opened at the June 15th meeting. One of the local providers of windows is trying to get their window distributor to respond to the bid, and so we have given them 2 more weeks. Emo Architect knows the Board wants as much money in this project used locally as possible so he has sent out a bid addendum to the bidders giving them 2 more weeks.

5- County staff met with FWC staff on May 27 to discuss the new approach to bear management FWC is working on. The FWC hand-out from the meeting is in the Board packet. The FWC Commissioners will be voting on new guidelines for bear management at their June 30 meeting. When the rules become final, FWC staff would like to make a presentation to the Board as it is proposed that there be a short season for bear hunting in Franklin County in October.

At this time, the most important change for the public to be aware of is that FWC has changed the definition of a "bear conflict" so that FWC officers can be more pro-active in removing bears from human areas. It used to be that in order for a bear to be "in conflict" with humans there must have been an incident. Now, the requirement to remove a bear is that there only has to be a "steady" presence of a bear in the area.

FWC acknowledges that because of the large amount of public land in Franklin County the county is always going to be producing bears. Since 33% of all bear conflicts state-wide and in Franklin County involve human generated garbage, FWC is offering the county up to \$20K for a program, or programs, that would help decrease bear/human interactions. The FWC is willing to consider innovative ideas from the county, but one idea that has been utilized in other counties is the purchase and installation of "bear clips" on garbage cans in bear prone areas. "Bear clips" are attachments that help keep the lids of garbage cans secure. The can does not become bear proof, but it does become bear resistant. Since the largest provider of garbage cans in the county is Waste Pro, and Waste Pro owns the garbage cans, Waste Pro will have to agree to have "bear clips" installed on their cans. In other communities Waste Pro has allowed them as it saves Waste Pro in the end from having to replace cans. FWC can provide up to \$20K worth of bear clips. It takes approximately \$30 worth of "bear clips" for each can, so approximately 600 cans could be secured in the county. There might be better ideas, but FWC is familiar with the benefits of "bear clips." The Board discussed FWC's bear clip offer and what the best use of the \$20K would be.

6- Mark Curenton has been working with Emo Architects on another Historic Preservation Grant for the Armory. At this time the Governor has not renewed Franklin County designation as a Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI), and without such a designation all Historic Preservation Grants require a 50/50 match. How much cash match is the Board prepared to put up?

The REDI designation for northwest Florida was submitted by Opportunity Florida so it is not just Franklin County that is affected by the lack of action.

7- Board action to allow the Franklin County School Cross-Country team to hold a fundraising 5K race on St. George Island on Saturday, July 4, at 8:30 AM. The team sponsor has coordinated the race with the Sheriff's Office. The race will not conflict with the annual July 4th Parade, because according to parade organizers the Parade will take place on Friday, July 3rd. The 5K race route is the same as the Chili Cook-off route.

Motion by Commissioner Jackel, seconded by Commissioner Sanders. Motion carried 5-0.

8- On Tuesday, May 26, US Rep. Graham, state senator Montford, and state representative Bashears were in Eastpoint. The county was represented by Commissioner Sanders. Rep. Graham announced she had filed legislation to help protect the Apalachicola River. Does the Board want me to get a copy of the legislation so we all know what has been filed?

This item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

Commissioner Parrish asked about the deadline for item #6 on Alan's report. Mr. Pierce stated the deadline was the end of June.

Chairman Massey asked Mr. Pierce when the paving in Carrabelle would be done. Mr. Pierce stated he is waiting on items from Preble-Rish.

Walter Armistead, on behalf of First Baptist Church of St. George Island asked the Board for abandonment of Wefing Street and Austin Street on St. George Island by the county. The property was deeded to the Church back in 1979 by Leisure Properties. The property included all of the lands surrounding Wefing Street and Austin Street. He believed originally it was intended that the county would abandon both streets but it was never done. The property was vacant at time it was deeded and the county never spent any money developing those roads. Over the years, a church and retreat center was constructed and Austin Street was paved with Church funds and is currently used as the parking lot. Commissioner Parrish asked if any adjoining property owners would be affected should the County abandon the streets. Mr. Armistead stated that the Church's owns the property on each side of the street; therefore, no one else would be affected. Commissioner Parrish asked Attorney Shuler the proper way to abandon the streets. Attorney Shuler answered that the Board needs to authorize and conduct a public hearing.

Motion by Commissioner Parrish to move forward with Attorney Shuler's recommendation to hold public hearing to abandon the Wefing Street and Austin Street on St. George Island. Seconded by Commissioner Jackel. Motion carried 5-0.

Alan Pierce stated for the record that he has the 1988 Feasibility Study and 1991 update. Both times the State of Florida concluded that it was not cost effective to put a central sewer system on St. George Island. Mr. Pierce has had these reports in his office for 25 years.

Mr. Pierce also notified the Board that at some point over the next few months there will be oyster shells stock piled on private property behind the Eastpoint Visitor center to be utilized for the shelling program.

Commissioner Jackel notified the public that the Eastpoint Children's Fishing Tournament will be held Saturday at the Eastpoint Pavilion. It's hosted by Fisherman's Choice and the

Pennycuff's with the support of the community.

Commissioner Jackel also questioned why her motion to approve the library lease was not seconded as this item came as a recommendation by the county attorney and 99% of the time the board follows along with attorney recommendation. She would really like to see the Board come together to resolve the issue. Chairman Massey stated that he could not second a motion being that he is the Chairman.

Commissioner Sanders stated that she would like to move forward with the Mud Bog ordinance regarding the hours of operation. Commissioner Sanders also replied to Commissioner Jackel's comment about the library. She stated that she is not against the library but she has questions about the upkeep of the road and she would like to see that cleared up first.

T. Michael Shuler – County Attorney Report

Attorney Shuler did not have any items for board discussion or approval.

Commissioners' & Public Comments

Liz Sisung, resident at 627 Highway 98, Eastpoint stated that she is unhappy with some of Transfield Services maintenance of the section of the highway in front of her house.

Motion by Commissioner Sanders to have Mr. Pierce and Mr. Moron contact Transfield and Department of Transportation to log complaints. Seconded by Commissioner Jackel. Motion carried 5-0.

Michael Moron reminded the public that the next board meeting would be held on Monday, June 15, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 11:16 AM.

William Massey - Chairman

Attest:

Marcia M. Johnson - Clerk of Courts