

Workshop
SREC and Community Centers
Commission Board Room
Dixie County Courthouse
214 NE Hwy 351, Cross City, FL 32628
January 18, 2024 – 4:30 PM

The Board meetings are audio recorded. The public can hear and participate in the meeting via conference call by dialing 1(917)900-1022 and enter code 32628.

COMMISSIONERS

Jody Stephenson, District 1, Vice Chairman
Mark Hatch, District 3
Jamie Storey, District 4, Chairman
David Osteen, District 5

STAFF

Paul Gainey, Acting Assignment County Manager
Martha McCaskill, Acting Assignment Asst. County Manager/
Administrative Asst/Grant Coordinator
Chana Watson, County Attorney
Verna Wilson, Chief Deputy Clerk
Della J. Rhymes, Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Board Workshop was called to order at 4:30 PM by Commissioner Storey.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

The Invocation was led by Commissioner Hatch and the Pledge to the American Flag was led by Commissioner Osteen.

SHIP PROGRAM

Mr. Matt Pearson presented information about the Hurricane Housing Replacement Program (HHRP). He said Dixie County received \$3,423,000.00 for the damage caused by Hurricane Idalia. He said as SHIP administrator for the county funding, they will prepare a Resolution to modify SHIP assistance. He said applicants must be SHIP eligible, based on income level. He said his office will contract with the CDBG Administrator for bids. He said the plan is for funding mobile home replacement and roof repairs. He said this should help folks who are income eligible, who do not have insurance, and/or the insurance or FEMA funding was not enough to cover expenses. He said their estimates show that 138 homes received more than \$20,000.00 in damages. He said that FEMA will not share information with SHIP on who received funding.

Commissioner Osteen asked if the mobile homes, replacing primary homes in the coastal towns, will have to be raised off the ground.

Mr. Pearson replied that the current Building Code must be followed.

Commissioner Osteen asked how long the process is from approval to move in.

Mr. Pearson replied there is a waiting list with contractors.

Mr. Pearson informed everyone that \$250,000.00 is the maximum per house and this includes raising the home off the ground in the coastal towns.

Building Official Leon Wright stated there are multiple ways to raise the home off the ground and asked if these matters.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about deadlines for the funding.

Mr. Pearson informed everyone of the deadline to spend the money by June 30, 2025.

Mr. Wright added there are different height requirements for different areas along the coast.

He said benchmarks, surveys, and flood elevations will be a determining factor as well. He said they may need this information up front. He said this information can be acquired through the Building and Zoning Department.

Mr. Pearson said the CDBG Administrator will charge \$15,000.00 - \$18,000.00 per home to process the paperwork. He said this is their area of expertise. He said they have worked with this team in the past.

Commissioner Osteen asked about helping folks who lost a second home.

Mr. Pearson replied these funds are for primary residences only. Secondary residences and/or rental properties do not qualify.

Mr. Pearson said there is a concern with the lengthy process with FEMA funding, and repairs being made for low-income families. He said the FEMA funding must be used first before the family can get additional funding from this program.

Mr. Pearson said another concern is that many of these storm damaged homes were in bad shape to begin with. He said it must be proven the damage is from the storm.

Commissioner Hatch said residents have been encouraged to get demo permits.

Mr. Wright said 75 demo permits were turned into FEMA this past week. He said that FEMA has also put together their own list of damages.

Mr. Pearson said there is a concern about duplication of services due to the lack of contractors.

Commissioner Hatch asked Mr. Wright if he can work on this with the SHIP team and the CDBG team.

Mr. Wright agreed this will help to streamline the process.

Mr. Pearson informed everyone there will be a 20-year lien on new home replacement. This has been implemented to encourage people not to sell the home. He said the percentage of pay back to the county will decrease by the years the resident stays in the home.

Mr. Pearson said people can apply for the Hurricane Housing Replacement Program (HHRP) funding now. Dial Phone # 386-362-4115, press star 242, to connect with Ms. Stephanie Barrington.

Mr. Pearson said that folks who were not affected by the storm can still apply for the regular SHIP funding. He said Dixie County receives \$350,000.00 per year from the state.

Mr. Pearson said that applicants for the Hurricane Housing Replacement Program (HHRP) are classified by their income level. He said they are statutorily required to spend at least 30 percent on extremely low income, 30 percent on low income and these both take priority over the moderate-income level.

Mr. Pearson said this Hurricane Housing Replacement Program (HHRP) requires at least one month of banking information and proof of property ownership. He said the applicant must have a clear deed to property.

County Attorney Chana Watson said there is also a concern about fraudulent activity. She presented an example for reference.

County Manager Paul Gainey recommended the Board review the information presented by Mr. Pearson tonight and have SHIP administration prepare the Resolution for the BOCC Meeting of February 01, 2024, or February 15, 2024.

Commissioner Hatch requested they incorporate the assistance of Building and Zoning into the language of the Resolution.

Mr. Pearson said the county can put an agreement together for SHIP and they will execute the agreement. Attorney Watson clarified a MOU between SHIP, the BOCC and Building and Zoning will be drafted for new construction or replacement of mobile homes under the Hurricane Housing Replacement Program (HHRP).

Commissioner Hatch asked when this can be presented to the public.

Mr. Pearson replied after the Resolution is approved.

Attorney Watson asked who will sign the MOU.

Mr. Pearson replied he will sign the document because he is the director of the Economic Development Council.

Mr. Pearson said this is a long process and there is no timeline for repairs or new homes.

He said the applicants will be prioritized. He said an application window of 30 days will be implemented.

If they apply in March, the application will be reviewed in April.

Attorney Watson clarified this program does not cover site-built homes.

Mr. Pearson replied the applicant will get repairs or a mobile home replacement.

Mr. Pearson said the applicants must prove they can pay the taxes and home-owners insurance in order to get the mobile home.

Mr. Wright questioned if a person lost their primary home on the coast and could not get temporary housing on the coast. He asked if the mobile home could be placed on another piece of property they own within the county.

Mr. Pearson replied yes. He said the applicant does not have to place the mobile home back on the original property site.

County Manager Paul Gainey said they will present the SHIP MOU and Resolution on the County Manager Report at the next BOCC meeting.

COMMUNITY CENTERS

County Manager Paul Gainey presented information on the Community Centers Revenue and Expenditures for the year 2023 back through the year of 2020. The information presented shows a loss to the county for each year.

2023

- **First District Community Center**
Total rental income was \$1,700.00, expenses were \$12,217.57, for a loss of \$10,517.57.
- **Trail Riders**
Total rental income was \$2,400.00, expenses were \$11,418.95, for a loss of \$9,018.95.
- **Bookie Evans/Hwy 55A**
Total rental income was \$0.00, expenses were \$9,566.68, for a loss of \$9,566.68.

Ms. Angie Crowley clarified these facilities are rented every weekend. She stated the total rental fee for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday is \$50.00. If rented during the week the total fee is \$50.00 per day. She said one of the issues is with key pick up and key return because her office is closed over the weekend.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if a lock box could be used for key pick up and drop off.

Ms. Crowley said the lock box code would need to be changed continuously. Chief Deputy Clerk Verna Wilson asked if the cleanup crew Supervisor could change the codes on the lock boxes.

Attorney Watson said there is also concern with the tables and chairs being removed from the facility.

Commissioner Osteen asked if anyone checks if the AC units are turned off or on.

Manager Gainey replied the Supervisor of the female inmate squad/cleaning crew must do a pre and post inspection of the facility.

Commissioner Hatch recommended \$85.00 for the First District per day, \$75.00 for the Trail Riders per day, and \$65.00 for the Bookie Evans/Hwy 55A location to break even.

He said that Hwy 55A, Jena and Suwannee have always been free to help the community.

Commissioner Stephenson said they had previously discussed coming before the Board to waive the fee on a case-by-case basis.

Commissioner Storey said the fee must be set at a cost per day.

Ms. Crowley said a deposit for security/cleaning is needed. She said the cleaning and inventory of tables and chairs is also needed.

- **Commissioner Stephenson recommended the fee be set at \$100.00 per day, plus a \$100.00 deposit for the First District Community Center.**
- **Commissioner Hatch recommended \$85.00 per day, plus a \$100.00 deposit for the Trail Riders.**
- **Commissioner Hatch recommended \$65.00 per day, plus a \$75.00 deposit for the Bookie Evans/Hwy 55A location.**

Manager Gainey said he will put together some recommendations for the Board to review at the next BOCC meeting.

Commissioner Hatch and Manager Gainey recommended they wait to discuss the Old Town Community Center. He said the electric bill is \$27,000.00 per year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. James Ward thanked Mr. Pearson and the SHIP program for helping him build his home in 1994.

ADJOURN

Commissioner _____ made the motion to adjourn at _____. Commissioner _____ seconded. Board approved.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:

Jamie Storey, Chairman

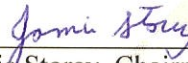
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk-Auditor

ADJOURN


Commissioner _____ made the motion to adjourn at _____. Commissioner _____ seconded. Board approved.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:



Jamie Storey, Chairman



Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk-Auditor

PLEASE BE ADVISED that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearings, he/ she will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, he/ she will need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

“Persons with disabilities requesting reasonable accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact (352) 486-4931 (Voice & TDD) or via Florida Relay Service at (800) 955-8771.”

The Board meets the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM and the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM. Individuals that would like to be placed on the agenda should call Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court, by 4:00 PM on the Friday Preceding the Board meeting, at (352) 498-1200.