

Workshop
Town of Horseshoe Beach and BOCC
Location: Temporary Town Hall Location
18 5th Ave E Horseshoe Beach, Fl. 32648
February 24, 2025 – 6:00 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
David Osteen, District 5

STAFF

John Jenkins, County Manager
Martha McCaskill, Administrative Asst/Grant Coordinator
Roy Bass, Assistant County Manager
Chana Watson, County Attorney
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court Clerk
Joannie Morse, Deputy Clerk

HORSESHOE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jeff Williams, Mayor
JD Nobles, Council Member
Brooke Hiers, Council Member
Brett Selph, Council Member
Nikki Selph, Town Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jeff Williams called to order at 6:00 PM.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

Mayor Jeff Williams opened the meeting with the pledge to the American Flag and reciting of The Lord's Prayer.

Mayor Williams continued with updates on several projects within the community, which included the following:

FIRESTATION- Chief Darian Brown gave the update on the Horseshoe Beach Fire station and said the County is in the process of purchasing the property. He said they have the final contract in possession, the design planning is 100 % complete, and once they receive the signed contract for the purchase of the land, they will go forward with the bid process.

Mayor Wiliams stated there have been some expressed concerns regarding the waterlines to the new fire station.

Town Council Member J.D. Nobles stated that Mr. Greg Bailey of North Florida Professionals is in the process of looking for additional funding to run the waterline from the water plant to the new fire station. He said it would potentially cost the County approximately \$80,000 and he heard Mr. Bailey was working on this.

Mayor Williams stated he had understood that running the water line was included in the project grant money; however, they needed additional funding to run the water line further out to the country.

Mr. Nobles said that was correct.

Chief Brown stated that they met about three (3) months ago and the original hope was to run the water line out because he knew this would benefit the city, but then the additional amount needed came to be around \$85,000 more than what it would cost to put in a well system. He said this jeopardized both buildings going up and they didn't feel like it was something they needed to move forward with at that amount of cost. He said since then they have designed buildings with the water systems included, but the costs to redesign and include the water system with addition costs for plumbing and piping are approximately \$80,000 to \$100,000.

Mayor Williams asked if he understood correctly that the current funding for the fire station doesn't cover any water coming from the water tower to the fire station.

Chief Brown answered yes, they will put in their own well and tank system. He said they requested municipal water for the building, but was told there was no capacity to do that so they moved forward with 100% completion of a water system to supplement the building fire suppression as well as day to day use. He added that with that and the overrun of the cost they put a full system in the design plans, which will accommodate the building and capability for his crews to put the trucks back in service when they return.

County Manager John Jenkins stated that he thought they needed to pursue the water line, because maintaining a self-contained system will cost more over time.

Chief Brown stated that if they pursue the water line, they will have to add \$100,000 to the cost according to engineers, it will cause a three (3) month minimum delay for reengineering which could possibly jeopardize those projects, and any cost overruns will have to come out of that station.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that he thinks they should move forward with what Chief Brown has been working on already to get it going and then look at running the waterline later.

Chief Brown stated there are infrastructure grants available through Economic Development for the City as well as the County that could help storm affected communities with municipal water lines, sewer lines, sewer plants, water plants, regional hospitals, etc. He said he fears that if the County starts to use this money for this fire station now, we will jeopardize the projects, and they also have a timeline for the money to be spent and delays will cause problems if they are not careful.

Commissioner Stephenson reiterated that he thinks it would be good to have the well system and also hook to water so that we could have both at a future date.

Mr. Nobles stated that Engineer Greg Bailey insinuated that he could come up with the funding and run the water line before the fire station would be ready to go online. He also suggested getting with Mr. Bailey regarding this.

Chief Brown asked if Mr. Bailey had said what grant funding he was speaking about.

Mr. Nobles stated he thought this was from additional funding and it was presented to him as if Mr. Bailey wasn't sure if they would need to seek it for the town or county and recommended reaching out to Mr. Bailey.

Commissioner Hatch stated that if needed they could make an interlocal agreement.

Commissioner Stephenson stated again that he suggests keeping the project moving forward.

COUNTY PARKS

Mr. Jenkins stated that he has a conceptual site plan from engineers.

Chief Garner asked if Mr. Jenkins could share the agreement with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Mr. Jenkins said yes, he could.

Mayor Williams Provided information on the portable trailer/bathroom trailer pricing for the Mexico Beach Project with contact information for the builders of this type of building.

Mayor Williams also asked if there was any way the town can have some impute in the design and layout on what the County is doing at the County Parks in the area. He said he heard the County was placing many pavilions and recommended to be careful with having too many pavilions. He added that they might want to consider maximizing the boat parking and maybe cut out some pavilions.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if anyone has seen the building (bathroom facilities) at Anderson Park in Old Town. He suggested the County and Town of Horseshoe Beach look into building one like the one out there because he thought it was built for around \$15,000, which would be cheaper than ordering one.

Mayor Williams asked how much money the County got for the parks.

Chief Garner stated that between insurance and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) the County received \$267,013.00 for Idalia, and no additional funding for Helene.

Mayor Williams asked them to revisit this and find new claims being that the County still has some time to make claims.

Town Council Member Mr. Brett Selph said there is additional dock damage that was originally repaired after Idalia and then destroyed again after Helene that would need to be claimed as well as seawall damage.

Chief Brown asked the town council members to make a detailed list of damages, turn it back into their office and they will report it. He recommended getting the list into their department fairly quickly because they are already a good way into this project, and he is not sure of the cut-off date.

Mr. Nobles said the town members would help as needed.

DREDGING

Mr. Nobles stated the permit has been submitted by the Locklear and Associates design team to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Army Corp of Engineers and it will take around six (6) months to get the permit.

He also said Locklear and Associates found that additional fill dirt was needed after Hurricane Helene and recommended the County to find additional funding for this.

Commissioner Hatch asked if this project would be covered under the HMGP Grant and be addressed in the upcoming workshop.

Chief Brown said he doesn't think so; however, it may be a viable project through the Florida Commerce/Economic Council.

Mayor Williams asked if it might be possible to go back down the same avenue with the State Disaster Bill.

Chief Brown answered if the bill is passed, yes.

CANAL CLEANOUT

Mayor Williams stated that Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) said they were done, but they were not done. Mr. Williams said he sent pictures to them of the canals with debris, and they sent a contractor back out to rebid handpicking the rest of the canals.

Mayor Williams asked for contact information for the canal dredging contract manager. Chief Garner said there is not one because this was a State project and the State-Department of Transportation contracted with vendors, not the County.

Chief Garner stated that ACDC is responsible for overseeing to make sure the job is done correctly.

Mayor Williams said he would send contact information for the person he has been speaking with from FDEM. He said her name is Stephanie Haupe.

BP FUNDING

Mr. Nobles stated the renovation portion to the outside commercial boat ramp is the first project being funded in Dixie County under this go around of money to be released about April or the beginning of summer.

Mayor Williams asked if the engineering firm was handling BP funding?

Mr. Nobles answered yes, that is what he heard in the Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) meetings.

Mayor Williams asked if there would be opportunities for other projects.

Commissioner Hatch said not right now.

Mayor Williams asked for a ballpark schedule of when we can submit new projects.

Commissioner Hatch answered that it takes a while.

Mr. Williams asked if they should submit these projects to the County now.

Commissioner Hatch said yes.

Town Council Member Brooke Hires asked for the plan for the Mainstreet Boat Ramp.

Commissioner Hatch said they plan to make this a usable commercial ramp, and make the ramp good, also possibly purchase more parking. Mrs. Brooke Hires asked if they spoke to the Buckley's regarding purchasing the two lots across the road. Commissioner Hatch said yes, but they haven't gotten anywhere with that yet.

Mayor Williams asked the County to consider the Jetty's and running these all the way from Horseshoe Beach out if there is additional funding left.

Commissioner Hatch recommended looking at the Ordinance with the Army Core of Engineers and the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) from around 1961 and get the GPS Coordinates and lengths before moving forward with that.

ROAD REPAIR

Chief Garner stated the paving of Highway 351 is on one (1) Damage Inventory List (DI), and the rip-rap is on another DI.

Mayor Williams asked for an update on the pavers.

Chief Garner stated they are working on getting the pavers through Idalia funding as well as new ones through Helene. He added that the new pavers will interlock with the old pavers.

Mayor Williams asked for an update on the cattle gap.

Assistant County Manager Roy Bass stated that it was not collapsed; however, where the two sections came together it had under washed and then dropped down, and the County Road Department Director Mr. Hutchison picked it back up, concreted it, and reconnected it.

Chief Garner said there is another DI for the undermining of the culvert crossing Highway 351, per Mr. Hutchison. He said he wasn't sure regarding the culvert on 2nd Ave East.

Commissioner Hatch asked Chief Garner to place the culvert on 2nd Ave East on a DI also.

Chief Brown asked Mr. Bass to take pictures of the culvert and take them to his office so they can place it on a DI.

OLD WARNING SIREN AND POLE

Chief Garner stated the pole is inadequate and can be removed. He said the same with the one that is in Suwannee.

NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENT OF GARBAGE, FIRE AND MOSQUITO

Mr. Nobles stated that the County has said in 2026 the county will start collecting non advelorum fees for garbage, fire and mosquito services. He said these are fees that are not currently being collected for camper lots.

Mayor Williams stated Dixie County is currently number one (1) per capita in the State for Elevate Florida Applications.

Commissioner Hatch recognized Building and Zoning Official Leon Wright for being the driving force behind this program and recognized Savinacious for their work to help the County as well.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Mayor Williams asked for at least one County Commissioner to be available to come to the Town Council Meetings at Horseshoe Beach.

Commissioner Hatch recommended getting some cleaning up completed in Horseshoe Beach.

Commissioner Stephenson also encouraged the County to clean up quickly because of the environmental effects.

Mr. Nobles asked for an update on the Debris pile removal at the Mainline.

Mr. Brett Selph stated the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is responsible for this. Mayor Williams said it is half FDOT and half Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM).

Commissioner Osteen stated that he has spoken to Former Florida Representative Chuck Clemons, and he is working on things for our County even though he is retired.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that he has also spoken with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Mayor Williams asked how much of the twenty-three million dollars of HMGP Idalia Money will be going to the Elevate Florida Project.

Chief Brown stated that the County will be having a Workshop on March 6, 2025, to discuss funds allocations. He said the County will determine what percentage of HMGP funds will be applied to the Elevate Florida Program and the remainder will be available for other projects within the City and County. He said the information on what percentage goes to Elevate Florida has to be submitted by March 07, 2025.

Chief Garner stated that the total number of applications submitted county-wide is 77.

Commissioner Hatch asked what happened to the State Pilot Program that some people filed for after Hurricane Idalia and then Hurricane Helene happened.

Mr. Benoit stated that those are rolled into the Elevate Florida Program.

The Sunset Bar and Grill owner stated that within the month they will reopen.

Commissioner Stephenson asked everyone to keep their eyes open for any additional programs for secondary homes within the "V" zones.

Mayor Williams stated that everyone should get a permit if they are rebuilding, because if FEMA finds out there is no permit they will have to kill the power and tear down the structure and will be the owner will be made to elevate and build it back to code. He said the savior to give the homeowner a little latitude with FEMA is having a permit.

Mr. Wright responded by saying that the State has said that if they come in and find violations within the County, they can withhold the funding for the programs such as Elevate Florida and the HMGP Grant.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

A citizen asked if the local seafood was safe.

Mr. Selph answered that testing is happening constantly, and the State is monitoring the water.

Another citizen asked where the State is tested.

Mr. Selph said there are multiple sites.

Another Citizen approached the Board and gave results of a census for Horseshoe Beach. He said that the total number of full-time residents living in Horseshoe Beach is 85.

Mr. Nobles recognized the BOCC Board members that were present. He asked the Horseshoe Beach residents to consider attending and participating in the regular monthly BOCC Meetings.

It was discussed that the next Town of Horseshoe Beach and BOCC meeting will be held on May 12, 2025, at 6:00 PM at Horseshoe Beach Town Hall. The next two (2) meetings will be held in Cross City, dates to be determined.

3. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Williams.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:


~~Jody Stephenson, Chairman~~
Mark Hatch, Vice Chairman


~~Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk-Auditor~~
Verna Wilson



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.