

***Clerk to The Board &
County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-
Dixie County Courthouse
Commission Meeting Room
June 03, 2021 – 1:00 PM***

While adhering to the CDC Guidelines and following State of Florida Executive Orders: 20-51 Establishing Response Protocol, 20-52 declaring a Public Health Emergency, 20-69 regarding Local Government Public Meetings and the Dixie County Emergency Declaration 2020-27. The Board will meet and limit access by staff and the public to the meeting room. 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
Mark Hatch
W. C. Mills, Vice Chairman
James Valentine
Jamie Storey, Chairman

STAFF

Duane Cannon, County Manager
Michael Osteen, County Attorney (not present)
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court
Jacki Johnson, Chief Financial Officer
Della Rhymes, Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Commissioner Storey.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

The Invocation was led by Commissioner Valentine and the Pledge to the American Flag was led by Commissioner Mills.

COUNTY EMPLOYEE POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

County Manager Duane Cannon appeared before the Board and informed them that he and Ms. Holly Houghton and Ms. Angie Crowley have been working on the County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual. He said they plan to also get together with some employees and go over everything and then present a Final Draft for the Board to review.

Clerk to the Board & County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-

Ms. Holly Houghton appeared before the Board to discuss the current manual that was adopted on December 16, 2010. She said there are 67 pages and they are also reviewing the EMS policies, too. She recommended that all the County Employees work under the same policy. She gave the members of the Board a handout referencing Minutes that have referenced or recommended or voted to enact several policies throughout the years.

****The selling of employee time back to the county was discussed.***

Ms. Houghton said there was some indication that the Board wanted employees to maintain at least 40 hours of reserve time. It was recommended that maintaining 80 hours for a two-week paycheck would be better for everyone. She said the policy read an employee could have 480 hours of sick leave on the books and 240 hours of annual time on the books.

Commissioner Hatch said that Mr. Arthur Bellot started this policy and followed the same rules that the State has in place for sick leave and annual leave which is 240 and 240 and anything above that the employee had to use it or lose it.

Ms. Houghton informed the Board that they have 4 or 5 employees which fall under the old policy on leave time and are grandfathered in.

****The donating of time from one employee to another employee was also discussed.***

Ms. Houghton recommended that maintaining 80 hours for a two-week paycheck would be a good practice.

****The changing of the Road Department and Solid Waste Department work week was discussed.***

Ms. Houghton said on July 18, 2013 it was changed from working five days a week at eight hours per day to four days a week at 10 hours per day.

Mr. Leon Wright and Mr. Roy Bass informed the Board that they are both over the sick time and annual leave time limits.

Ms. Jacki Johnson informed the Board that Mr. Brad Hoard had told her about Ben Corp. and she recently had a conference call with them. She said they offer programs for EMS people to cash in 80 hours of sick and it goes into a tax deferred account for them. She said the county does not have to match this contribution because it is not retirement. However, the employee can use it for retirement.

Mr. Bass asked for clarification on if the employee would lose any time if they did this.

Ms. Jacki replied they do not lose any time.

Ms. Johnson informed the Board that Ben Corp. will come to speak with the Board about this service if they are interested.

Clerk to the Board & County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-

APPROVED – June 03, 2021–1:00 PM – Page 2 of 9

Mr. Michael Latson said he is also close to the limits for sick and annual leave time.

****The creation of the employee Health Savings Account was discussed.***

Ms. Houghton said on March 02, of 2017 the Board voted to create this service for the employees, but there is nothing in writing to stipulate how this works. She said there has been some double dipping by employees and this is a problem. She suggested there needs to be a better way to handle this.

Commissioner Hatch said the intent was to help the employees pay the employee insurance deductible due to the rate of pay. He said it cost the county \$185,000.00 for employee insurance.

Manager Cannon said that Mr. Brad Hoard is the current insurance agent for the county and in 2017 this was implemented to offset the change of the insurance copay.

Commissioner Mills asked what happens if the employee doesn't use this on medical needs. Manager Cannon replied the account belongs to the employee and they can access the money anytime and do whatever they want to.

Manager Cannon said the issue is that employees have been paid more than what is the intent of the Board. He said some employees have been paid double out of this HSA money.

Ms. Houghton suggested a Flex Account like an EBT Card which is only good for certain things.

Commissioner Hatch asked about the employees who are paid under \$10.00 per hour and how much it would cost the county to raise their pay.

Manager Cannon replied \$132,000.00.

Commissioner Hatch recommended the Board add this HSA money to the hourly rate of pay for employees.

Commissioner Mills added that the Board would not be taking it away from the employee by doing this. He said the goal of the Board is to raise the pay scale for employees.

****The rewarding of the employees by giving them a \$.25 raise each time they passed a training class and \$.50 raise for a passed degree program was discussed.***

Ms. Houghton said the Board voted on this April 06, 2017.

Commissioner Hatch said this must be approved by the department head.

Ms. Houghton said they will work on the language for this.

****Employees who quit their job for medical reasons and want to return to work at their same rate of pay was discussed.***

Ms. Houghton said this was voted on June 06, 2019 by the Board, but they cannot find a written policy.

****The designation of Full-Time employee and Part Time employee was discussed.***

Ms. Houghton said the current policy states 35 hours is full time, however insurance states that 32 hours is considered full time.

She informed the Board that the Internal Revenue and the Affordable Care Act stipulate 30 hours a week or 130 a month is considered full time.

Commissioner Hatch said that sometimes hours must be flexible as needed.

Mr. Bass said the EMS rotates their part time hours.

Manager Cannon asked the Board why they have part time people at the nine Roll Off sites. Commissioner Hatch answered to save money.

Ms. Houghton asked the Board what they would like to designate the hours to be for part-time employees.

Commissioner Hatch replied 29 hours

Commissioner Mills said that once the new assessment is implemented, he would like the Board to consider not having part time employees.

Commissioner Hatch asked what it would cost the county to employ only full-time employees. Ms. Johnson replied multiply the salary by 135%.

Commissioner Stephenson said if the Labor Board were to get involved there would be trouble.

Commissioner Storey added that if an employee drives a truck home then they can say they are on call 24 hours and make that claim and get paid.

Manager Cannon recommended the Board chose to follow the IRS rules at 30 hours or 130 hours per month and make this the new policy.

****The Hiring and Termination of employees was discussed. (Resolution 2011-451)***

Ms. Houghton said Resolution 2011-451 was adopted on October 06, 2011. She said the current policy is that the Board will hire and terminate department heads. It was recommended the Board hires the Attorneys, the County Manager, and Engineers, and the County Manager be responsible for hiring and terminating department heads.

Clerk to the Board & County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-

APPROVED – June 03, 2021–1:00 PM – Page 4 of 9

Ms. Johnson asked the Board if someone is terminated, is there an appeal process. Commissioner Stephenson said there must be due process before you fire someone. Commissioner Hatch said that Human Resources should be involved in the process.

****New Hire Orientation was discussed. (Resolution 2011-451)***

She said the Board had indicated that all new employees were required to attend a Commission Meeting within their first 60 days of employment.

Commissioner Mills asked about the procedure for employees who quit their job and give two weeks notice. He asked if they are required to work the notice.

Ms. Houghton said if the employee quits their job without notice they forfeit their annual and sick leave.

Commissioner Hatch recommended they add the requirement for an exit interview with the County Manager and the department head and Human Resource.

Ms. Houghton discussed disciplinary action. She said that EMS has verbal and written warnings. She said there is a need for a triplicate form so that the employee, the department head, and Human Resource all have a copy.

Commissioner Hatch recommended the need for employee evaluations.

Ms. Johnson said they must have a good job description.

Ms. Angie Crowley agreed.

Ms. Houghton said normally at the end of the probationary period the employee would be evaluated. She stated the Board is an at will employer and can terminate employees anytime.

Mr. Michael Latson says he requires the employees sign a form stating that they understand the employee and the employer have an "at will" agreement.

Mr. Bass said they have a Notice of Consultation Form at their office for disciplinary use.

Ms. Houghton said the exit interview is very important because it is more than the collection of keys, phones, name badges, passwords, and usernames.

Commissioner Stephenson recommended the county hold the last check or comp time or sick leave if the employee doesn't turn in everything prior to leaving

Manager Cannon said the labor law will dispute.

Ms. Johnson recommended employees sign for equipment, keys, etc., and then you know exactly what they should leave behind.

Clerk to the Board & County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-

****Department Business Confidentiality and Public Records Requests were discussed.***

Ms. Houghton said in the past all records requests were sent to the Clerk of Court who then forwarded them to the appropriate department.

Clerk Higginbotham said that it would be better to go directly to the source for records requests.

Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk Della Rhymes clarified that there is also a difference between a request for public records and a request for official records.

****Pay scale increases were discussed. (Resolution 2011-18)***

Ms. Houghton said that the current policy says the starting rate for an employee is \$9.75 and then after six months the employee gets a \$.50 raise.

Commissioner Stephenson recommended putting a hold on this until they find out more about the county finances.

Ms. Houghton said because of the wage and hour increase, you must now start employees at \$10.00 per hour. She said then you can give the \$.50 after six months or you can suspend this \$.50 increase for now.

Commissioner Mills said this employee manual needs to be reviewed every year.

Manager Cannon recommended the Board follow Florida Minimum Wage Guidelines. He said you have people working at \$11.00 now and then in the year 2022 this will be the new minimum wage an hour.

Clerk Higginbotham suggested a 90-day probation period.

Ms. Martha McCaskill suggested the employee raises be based on performance.

Ms. Houghton said that McDonald's start employees at \$12.50 per hour.

Ms. Martha McCaskill said the cost of living must be figured into the pay scale.

****A Flow Chart of the Chain of Command was introduced.***

Ms. Houghton closed with saying they will go over the manual page by page with employees.

Commissioner Hatch recommended there be a call-in policy for sick time off.

The Clerk Workshop began at 3:00 pm.

Chief Financial Officer Ms. Jacki Johnson appeared before the Board to discuss and explain the inner workings of the Finance Department. She gave the Board a handout and an example of the steps involved with handling the different bank accounts and keeping the records. The Building Department was used as example. She said you must transfer driveway fees to the road department and book impact fees to a different fund.

She discussed how the payroll and budget transfers were handled. She discussed insurance and withholding. She discussed paying bills from the vendor account. She said in the past, if there was not enough money in one account, the practice was to borrow from another account. She said the county has 113 cash accounts.

Commissioner Mills asked if all those accounts are needed.
Clerk Higginbotham replied these can be reduced.

Ms. Johnson said the bookkeeping of the cash accounts is confusing. She said that inconsistent bookkeeping practices have been happening for a long time.
She said they are setting up timelines and deadlines to follow for more efficiency.

Clerk Higginbotham asked if they were going to have a Workshop with the County Park Attendants.

Manager Cannon replied they had a staff meeting with all of them.

Ms. Houghton recommended the Board have policies and procedures in writing.

Commissioner Stephenson said if you ask an attendant how to handle something, they don't know the answer.

Ms. Houghton asked the Board how to handle the campers that are left behind in a rental spot when no one is staying there.

Commissioner Stephenson said there is a two-week limit.

Ms. Houghton informed the Board that this is not happening.

Commissioner Stephenson recommended creating a site plan for the campers to park in and number the spaces.

Commissioner Hatch said he thinks there is already one somewhere.

Mr. Bass asked if the person is paying the camping fee.

Commissioner Stephenson said the Park Attendant is supposed to keep a record of the 14 days.

Commissioner Mills said that the Board had previously agreed that if no one wanted the spot then they could stay longer.

Commissioner Stephenson recommended to make a list and take reservations for camping.

Commissioner Mills said it is first come first serve.

Clerk Higginbotham said she was told that at Gornto Springs people are not charged as long as they don't stay in the camper, even if it is hooked up.

She recommended raising the camping fees in comparison with the surrounding counties.

Manager Cannon said the attendants should be turning in money weekly.

Clerk to the Board & County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-

Manager Cannon spoke to the Board about the Spurgeon Cheek property and the Freeman tract. He said that nothing has been rented. He said there is not any power so the camping would be primitive.

Commissioner Hatch instructed Manager Cannon to figure up six months of expenses for the campgrounds to be reviewed by the Board.

Commissioner Stephenson said he wants to meet with the park attendant and have the handbook and guidelines to discuss. He said he wanted a copy of the handbook and guidelines. Commissioner Mills said he wanted a copy as well.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that there are no guidelines of what to do. He said these are volunteer people. He said they get free camping, free electric and a free phone to be on site at these locations.

Clerk Higginbotham asked what the tradeoff for these volunteers is.

Commissioner Mills said they are supposed to keep the area clean and keep vandals away.

Manager Cannon said he will look at all of this for the Budget. He said the Community Buildings and the County Parks are losing money.

Commissioner Mills asked if the Board could agree that the County needs to stop losing money and cover their expenses.

Ms. Johnson discussed the need for a purchasing policy for everyday purchases and a threshold that would need further approval by a department head or the Board.

Commissioner Mills said that anything over \$5,000.00 comes before the Board.

Ms. Johnson asked for clarification about showing local preference because it can affect grants. Commissioner Hatch replied this is for vendor purchases only and to help support local businesses and products.

Ms. Johnson said these things are needed for the Audit and to show compliance.

Commissioner Stephenson recommended the Board set policies and set the budget and stick to the budget.

Manager Cannon said they will work on a purchasing policy.

**There was some discussion about how a purchase order works.*

Ms. Johnson asked the Board to consider a policy about having a goal for reserve money. She said you would need two to three months of operating money in reserve.

Commissioner Hatch said the county has been operating on the bare minimum for years.

Commissioner Stephenson agreed there need to be a reserve for emergencies.

Clerk to the Board & County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-

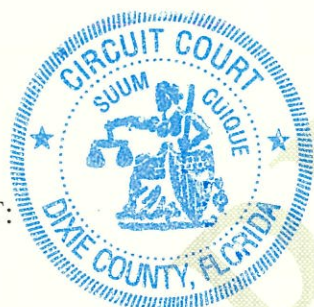
Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk Della Rhymes appeared before the Board and gave them an update on several Clerk operations. She informed the Board that Ordinances from 2007-2020 have been sent to the Department of State in Tallahassee. She said the Board Minutes from June of 2020 through November of 2020 were out sourced to a court reporter for drafting and due to the poor quality of the recordings and the reporter's unfamiliarity with the voices of staff, these will need more attention before they are ready for the Board to review. She informed the Board that they are current with the Minutes from 2021 and that all 2021 Ordinances have been filed with Tallahassee.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

There were no comments or concerns expressed from the public at this time.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Mills made the motion to adjourn at 4:25 PM. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.



ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

Jamie Storey

Jamie Storey, Chairman

Barbie Higginbotham

Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk-Auditor

PLEASE BE ADVISED that if a person decided 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.

Clerk to the Board & County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop-