

REGULAR MEETING

Dixie County Courthouse

Board Meeting Room

July 08, 2021 – 10:00 AM

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, District 1

W. C. Mills, District 2, Vice Chairman

Mark Hatch, District 3

Jamie Storey, District 4, Chairman

James Valentine, District 5

STAFF

Duane Cannon, County Manager

Martha McCaskill, Administrative Asst/Grant Coordinator

Michael Osteen, County Attorney

Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court

Della Rhymes, Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk

Jacki Johnson, Chief Financial Officer

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order at 10:55 AM 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.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve Minutes from the MBAR Aquifer Recharge Project Workshop of June 03, 2021 Minutes. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve Minutes from the County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual Workshop & Clerk to the Board Workshop of June 03, 2021. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

Commissioner Mills made the motion to approve Minutes from the Special Meeting of June 21, 2021. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

VOUCHER APPROVAL

Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve the vouchers. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Dixie County Sheriff Darby Butler appeared before the Board to present a new program for inmates at the jail. He said it is called "Home Away" and is a way for the inmates to communicate with their families by video. He said they will contract with a company at no cost to the county for a fiber optic line to be installed. The company will provide all the equipment and maintain it for four years. He said the families of the inmates pay for this service upfront. He said the jail will get 20 percent of the inmate revenue this will generate.

Commissioner Hatch asked if this percentage can be used for jail use. Sheriff Butler said there are some stipulations like inmate welfare, jail improvements and vehicle purchases.

Sheriff Butler said this will be good for inmate morale and cut down on visitors to the jail.

County Attorney Michael Osteen said he has reviewed the contract, and everything is in order.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to allow the Sheriff to move forward with the Home away Video Visitation Program. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the condition of the roof at the jail. Sheriff Butler replied they are having the same leaking issues.

AMENDING - ORDINANCE NO. 2015-07

(First Reading: July 08, 2021)

DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

AN ORDINANCE OF THE DIXIE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RELATING TO ANIMAL CONTROL; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS; ESTABLISHING VIOLATIONS; ESTABLISHING RESTRICTIONS; ADDRESSING DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS ANIMALS; PROVIDING FOR IMPOUNDMENT AND REDEMPTION PROCEDURES; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

County Attorney Michael Osteen appeared before the Board and read the Amendment to Ordinance 2015-07 aloud. He said this is the first reading. He said the amendment only pertains to the fee structure on page 8 section F.

BRAD HOARD, HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. Hoard had nothing further to discuss with the Board.

KEITH SEGAR, SUWANNEE WATER AND SEWER

Mr. Keith Segar appeared before the Board and said they had some damage done, but not much. He expressed his thanks to the Emergency Operations staff for good information.

GREG BAILEY, NORTH FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Mr. Greg Bailey appeared before the Board and said they have the specs for the courthouse security equipment that will be purchased to incorporate that into the design concept.

Mr. Bailey spoke to the Board about creating a Citizen Advisory Task Force (CATF). Manager Cannon said they have two people signed up for this and are needing a third person. Commissioner Storey said he has someone in mind to call.

Mr. Bailey informed the Board that they need all five members by the next Board meeting. Mr. Bailey said this CATF will be a committee to discuss county projects and make recommendations to move forward with grant applications. He said they must have five people named and approved at the next meeting.

Mr. David Finnegan from Suwannee Gardens spoke up and said he will volunteer for this.

Mr. Bailey informed the board that the GDBG cycle is open again and they can work on the Seawall at Suwannee.

Commissioner Mills made the motion to get an updated cost estimate on this job.

Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Mr. Bailey said that one side of the road was done, now they must do the other side of road.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to reach out to the legislatures of our area. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.

Manager Cannon spoke to the Board about the SCRAP and SCOP grants. He said at the next Board meeting of July 15, the Board will need to discuss moving forward with the design of these roads, Co Rd 340, and Palm Drive, and Willow Hole Rd to Hwy 349.

Ms. Barbara Cummings asked about the status of Chavous Rd.

Mr. Bailey said this work will be done this year.

Manager Cannon spoke to the Board about the LHAP program. He said some of the records can't be found and they need a survey done to make a map.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to have a survey done for the LHAP program. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

JERED LIZOTTE, LOCKLEAR AND ASSOCIATES

Mr. Jered Lizotte was not present for this meeting.

CINDY BELLOT, LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Ms. Cindy Bellot had nothing to discuss at this time.

STEVE FREMEN, VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

Mr. Steve Freman had nothing to discuss at this time.

Commissioner Hatch inquired about the foreclosure on the Jimmy Crown property in Suwannee.

County Attorney Michael Osteen said there is more to this issue. He will get the information and cost to the Board. He said they need a Final Judgment for the amount of money and a Final Order to Foreclose.

Mr. Freman said the next Code Violation Hearings are scheduled for July 13, 2021.

STEVE HUTCHISON, COUNTY ROAD SUPERINTENDENT

Road Superintendent Stevie Hutchison appeared before the Board and said the School Board wants the county to tear down some of the old portable buildings at the old Dixie County High School. He said Ms. Gail carter would like one of these buildings for the Veterans Memorial.

Commissioner Mills made the motion to give the portable building to the Veterans Memorial on Hwy 19 near Old Town. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Commissioner Stephenson asked who will move the building.

Ms. Gail Carter spoke to the Board and said they will need donations to help move the building. She said that Mr. Hunt will move the building to the Veterans Memorial site and set it up for \$4,800.00. She said the building will need some repairs and they would like to build a deck on the front. She said everything will be up to code.

Commissioner Stephenson requested she get with Mr. Leon Wright about what needs to be done.

Building Official Leon Wright spoke to the Board and said that commercial occupancy is in the works and there is more to this.

Ms. Carter said it will be Gail handicap accessible and there will be a driveway to the back of property where building will be located.

Mr. Wright said that the plans to make changes later will affect this process.

Ms. Carter said the Veterans Festival is in October with programs and music and they will sell food and take up donations. She said they normally hold the festival at the First district Community Center. She said all the money goes to the Veterans Memorial.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if the Board could donate what it would have cost to tear down the building.

Commissioner Hatch said that is not allowed.

Attorney Osteen said the Board would have to take bids to tear down the building.

Commissioner Hatch said the Board can make a donation.

Mr. Hutchison said he will ask School Board member Paul Gainey how soon the building needs to be moved.

Commissioner Hatch and Commissioner Mills both agreed to help pay for the cost of moving.

Mr. Hutchison informed the Board that the School Board wants 20 loads of rock for the student parking lot at the Dixie County High School

Mr. Hutchison informed the Board that there is a problem with the Neely Hicks and Grady Hires Road Projects. He said the aprons don't match up with the driveways. He said the Engineer put them in the wrong place.

Commissioner Hatch said the Board needs to decide when to mill a road.

Manager Cannon said the Board must decide every year when they do the applications for resurfacing.

Commissioner Stephenson recommended doing a core sample first to test the thickness of the road.

Ms. Martha McCaskill expressed thanks on behalf of the folks who live near the Mount Olive Cemetery for the millings.

Mr. Hutchison said he will be on vacation next week.
Commissioner Stephenson expressed his thanks to Mr. Hutchison and his staff for working during storm.

Commissioner Mills complimented Mr. Hutchison for the way he prioritizes the jobs.

DWAYNE CHAUNCEY, MOSQUITO CONTROL DIRECTOR

Mosquito Control Director Dwayne Chauncey appeared before the Board and said they had a good turn out on the meeting about the Bee population and how to save them.

Commissioner Hatch said this Department is complaint driven and funded.

Mr. Chauncey agreed. He said they must have a reason to spray. He said they can't spray in heavy wind or rain. He said they have stocked up on chemicals.

MICHAEL LATSON, SOLID WASTE

Mr. Latson had nothing to discuss at this time.

LEON WRIGHT, BUILDING AND ZONING

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the size of allowed storage buildings.

Mr. Leon Wright replied 300 square foot is allowed. He said you cannot use an old mobile home for storage.

DARIAN BROWN, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Director of Emergency Services Darian Brown appeared before the Board and said there are no major issues yet. He said they are watching the water level of the river. He expressed his thanks to his staff and said that many had cancelled their scheduled vacations to stay and work. He said he appreciated all the interest in the information that has been shared.

GAIL CARTER, INDIGENT CARE

Ms. Gail had nothing further to discuss with the Board.

HOLLY HOUGHTON, COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT

Ms. Holly Houghton had nothing to discuss with the Board at this time.,

ANGIE CROWLEY, HUMAN RESOURCES SUPERVISOR

Ms. Angie Crowley had nothing to discuss with the Board at this time.

DUANE CANNON, COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Duane Cannon appeared before the Board and informed them that he has met with Ms. Holly Houghton and Ms. Angie Crowley to go over the employee policy and procedure book. He asked if the Board wanted them to go over this again and then review and approve a final version for the Board to approve.

Ms. Houghton said the Krizner Group has suggested that the Equal Opportunity section must be looked over and the Workman's Comp Insurance section must be looked over.

Manager Cannon said they can schedule another Workshop later.

Manager Cannon said he has a contract from Mr. John Sewell to handle the County Equipment Auction in person.

Commissioner Mills made the motion to move forward with the auction and accept the contract from the Auctioneer. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about including the Sheriff in the County Auction.

Mr. Hutchison said they handle their own auction.

Ms. Houghton recommended advertising the Auction in the Bulletin and with Hardison Ink.

Manager Cannon spoke to the Board about replacing the Co Rd 357 Shirred Island Creek Bridge. He said that FDOT says it will be in the year of 2025. He said the Board can chose a full closure, a partial closure or a temporary bridge scenario.

Commissioner Stephenson asked how long it will take to replace the bridge.

Manger Cannon replied one and ½ to two years.

Mr. Greg Bailey said he would suggest the Board recommend that FDOT maintain one lane of traffic while doing this work

Commissioner Valentine made a motion to choose option two for a partial closure.

Commissioner Hatch seconded.

After more discussion Commissioner Valentine withdrew his motion and Commissioner Hatch withdrew his second.

Commissioner Valentine made the motion to open one lane at all time with whatever option they chose. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that they advertised for sealed bids on the River Shores at Jena properties. He said that Lot 9 had two bids. One bid for \$15,100.00 and another bid for \$15,007.90.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to accept the bid of \$15,100.00 for Lot 9.

Commissioner Stephenson second. Board approved.

He said that Lot 46 had two bids. One bid for \$15,100.00 and another bid for \$14,700.00. ***Commissioner Valentine made the motion to accept the bid of \$15,100.00 for Lot 46. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

He informed the Board that the two bidders were Mr. Clay Spivey and Mr. Phillip Bryan.

Attorney Osteen said he will handle the closings and the Deeds. He suggested the proceeds go towards the cost of the Fire Assessment Study

Manager Cannon informed the Board that Mr. Martin and Ms. Dawn Pierce the owners of Who Dats and Good Times Marina express their thanks to the Board for the use of the boat ramp parking lot and they raised \$2,500.00 from the event.

Manager Cannon suggested the Board submit an application for the Small Counties Solid waste Grant for help with tipping fees at Aucilla. He said this is a revolving grant.

MICHAEL OSTEEN, COUNTY ATTORNEY

Commissioner Stephenson asked about when the Board should go in and out of Public Hearings during Board Meetings.

Attorney Osteen replied the Board will discuss land issues in the Public Hearing session as the Adjustment Board and then the Board will go into a Regular Meeting session to discuss Resolutions and Ordinances and other matters.

BARBIE HIGGINBOTHAM, CLERK OF COURT

Clerk of Court, Barbie Higginbotham appeared before the Board and informed them that the Auditor is here and will be here for the next three weeks.

Ms. Jacki Johnson appeared before the Board and informed them that the Property Appraiser will be certifying the Tax Roll for TRIM. She said the Board must respond by August 04, 2021 with the millage rates.

Commissioner Stephenson said it is hard to set millage rates when there are still many unknowns.

Ms. Johnson said this is State law and there are deadlines to follow. She said they are working on the proposed Budget. She said she hopes to have better numbers in the next two weeks.

Commissioner Hatch said the county is maxed at 10 mills and they should stay where they are.

Mr. James Ward commented that Dixie County has been at 10 mills for several years.

Ms. Johnson said this is a physical constrained county.

COUNTY COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Valentine had nothing more to discuss.

Commissioner Hatch informed the Board that Mr. Vernon Long brought this to his attention. He said there is a group of people that have signed a petition against the high fence deer farms. He said that Mr. Chuck Clemons has been notified that Dixie County has several deer farms that would be impacted by this petition.

Commissioner Mills had nothing more to discuss.

Commissioner Stephenson thanked everyone for their help during the storm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Barbara Cummings asked about the Fire and Solid Waste Assessment.

Manager Cannon said the letters will go out July 15 to the public and the Board will hold a Public Hearing on August 05 and vote on the subject.

Ms. Cummings asked why the Board is doing everything at the same time.

APPROVED


ADJOURN

Commissioner Mills made the motion to adjourn at 12:30 PM. Commissioner Stephenson 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 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.