

***Emergency Meeting  
Flooding  
Dixie County EOC Building  
August 08, 2021 – 5:00 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, 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  
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court  
Verna Wilson, Chief Deputy Clerk  
Della Rhymes, Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board meeting was called to order at 5:00 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 Manager Duane Cannon spoke to the Board and said they are gathering today to make plans and address any issues with the city and everyone for next week.

Emergency Operations Division Chief Scott Garner informed the Board that they had six water rescues today. He said these were people who needed to get out of their house and to the road. He said the shelter is open at the Trail Riders. He said the Red Cross wants to close this down because only one person has stayed there. He said they are moving from a Level 1 to a Level 2 degree of operations for tomorrow at the EOC. He said another ½ inch of rain fell today. He said the forecast is for more rain next week and there are three tropical waves moving towards the Florida Keys and Miami and the Gulf of Mexico by next week.

Director of Emergency Services Darian Brown spoke to the Board and said he expects the water to level off and start to recede soon. He said they should think about other ways to pump the water off affected areas to alleviate the homes that are underwater. He said he is limited on staff because his crews are tired, and some are sick with COVID. He expressed his thanks to Human Resource Supervisor Ms. Angie Crowley for helping with the telephones all weekend.

Chief Garner reminded everyone to take photos of the areas affected by the water and send them to [dixiecountypics@gmail.com](mailto:dixiecountypics@gmail.com). He said there will be no damage assessments done until after the water recedes. He said only then will FEMA get involved.

Manager Cannon asked about the schools opening on time.

Chief Garner said they had met with school officials and Thursday, August 12 will be the first ½ day of public school. He said that Kinder Cub and the Dixie County Learning Academy will both follow the same guidelines for opening. He said he does not know how they will handle the Pre- K and Kindergarten classes.

Dixie County Sheriff Darby Butler informed the Board that he has no needs at this time. He said the rising water at the jail has stabilized. He said the Road Department brought some dirt in to help. He said they are using the prison lift station and it is running to Cross City. He said the inmate meals are coming from Lancaster Correctional facility. He said their 911 call load is high and he thanked everyone for their help. He said his officers may need to access some of the low-lying areas by using the EMS boats and or trucks.

Mr. Joseph Henderson from the Town of Cross City said that the FDOT has told them to stop pumping the water to the ditches along Hwy 19 because it is flooding the Highway.

Mr. Ryan Fulford said that FDOT didn't shut down the road or close one lane. He said Mr. Chuck Clemons had been called about the issue and he said to turn the pumps back on.

Ms. Natalie McKellips from the Dixie County Health Department spoke to the Board and said they will be closed because of the water on the road. She said that people will need to go to the Gilchrist County or the Levy County Health Departments. She said that private water wells are a concern for the flooding. She asked if any water tanks had been set up for people to get fresh water.

Chief Garner said that no water buffaloes have been set up yet for this widespread event. He said the tanks only hold 400 gallons and that is not enough. He said they can issue boil water notices, but not much else at this time.

Ms. McKellips said that mosquitos are a concern too. She also thanked the Board for the sandbags to keep water out of the Health Department building.

Road Department Superintendent Stevie Hutchison informed the Board that they will be getting their original crews of inmates from Trenton. He said they will have to go pick them up. He thanked Sheriff Butler for helping with the sandbags. He told Mr. Joseph Henderson that he may use their trucks to re-fuel the water pumps and keep it at the City Yard. He said he has sent his crews home. He said the pump generators will run for three hours on a tank of fuel. He said the truck will hold 400 gallons of fuel. He informed the Board that it is too wet to grade roads and he has sent these Grader men home.

Manager Cannon gave an update from the Solid Waster Department. He said the road to the Transfer Station is underwater. He said that he has spoken with Mr. Tim Johnson and Mr. Michael Latson and they agree to use the two packer trucks to haul to Greenville directly. He said they have 60 dumpsters rented, but the packer trucks can't get to some of them because of the water level. He said folks may have to haul their trash to the roll off sites.

Mr. Johnson said they may be able to get to some of these rented dumpsters, but not all of them.

Mr. Tim Johnson informed the Board that they may not get to the roll off sites this week. He said the concrete at the Transfer Station is breaking.

Commissioner Mills asked how many tons a packer truck hauls in comparison to the trailer. Mr. Johnson replied ½ the load.

Manager Cannon said sending the packer trucks to Greenville will be three and ½ hours round trip so the garbage pick ups will be slow for the next week. He said the road to the Roll Off site in Jena is underwater, too.

Commissioner Mills said he has been talking with Mr. Jay Weingart of Old Town Upholstery. He said the water level has dropped two inches and the level of water on the road East of Purvis has also dropped.

Commissioner Stephenson said the water level has dropped out near Mr. David Capo's home. He said the water is coming off the Sanchez Farms fields across the culvert on Hwy 351 and the water near Spillers Road is rising, too.

He said that a citizen has taken a tractor and cut the road behind the area where Commissioner Storey lives and now there is a traffic hazard to go along with the flooding hazard. Commissioner Mills said they need to put some barricades up on this road.

Commissioner Stephenson said the water is rising at the Twin Lakes area.

Commissioner Hatch said there is a sink hole in the Punk Clark Loop Road that has been patched with cold patch near Mr. Andy Lee's home. He said from the Cross City Airport back through the Town of Cross City the water level is dropping. He said there is water on both sides of the Greenway Trail. He said the water level at the Steal Bridge is dropping.

Clerk of Court Barbie Higginbotham said that people's houses are flooded especially in Mr. Joseph Henderson's neighborhood.

Commissioner Stephenson said that there is a track hoe in Sanchez's field, near the old junk yard behind the prison and one on Lee Childers' property next to the junkyard. Both digging ditches, if connected it would send water towards the prison.

Commissioner Storey said that the water level at his house has dropped five inches.

Commissioner Hatch cautioned that they should be careful when cutting roads.

Manager Cannon said he will ask for a meeting for the Commissioners to agree and vote on cutting any county roads before this is done.

Commissioner Hatch said he has spoken with Town Manager John Driggers and Mr. Henderson and recommends the Board allow the city to have any old culverts from the County Yard and use them for the Town of Cross City.

Commissioner Stephenson said they should add more pipes to the box culverts too.

Commissioner Mills said they can do this after the water goes down and before the next flood.

Manager Cannon said they will address these issues case by case at the Regular Board meetings.

Chief Garner again reminded all to send their photos to [dixiecountypics@gmail.com](mailto:dixiecountypics@gmail.com).

Commissioner Stephenson said that the Suwannee River Water Management District said the county must have a study done before they can fix any culverts along Old Hwy 19. He said since they are in a Local State of Emergency, they should be able to fix them without a study.

Commissioner Hatch said the county does not need permits for this.

Chief Garner said the Board will need to extend the Local State of Emergency on Tuesday, August 10, 2021.

Commissioner Hatch said the Board does not have to meet for that. He said that Chief Garner can call them on the phone for that approval.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**

There were no comments or concerns expressed at this time.

**ADJOURN**

Commissioner Valentine made the motion to adjourn at 5:48 PM. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.



ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

  
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Jamie Storey, Chairman

  
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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.*