

Emergency Meeting
Flooding concerns on NE 188 Ave
Dixie County Courthouse, Commission Board Room
214 NE Hwy 351, Cross City, FL 32628
September 21, 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
Martha McCaskill, Administrative Asst/Grant Coordinator
Michael Osteen, County Attorney
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 appeared before the Board and said this meeting is to discuss some concerns on Cooper Road / NE 188 Ave.

Commissioner Mills said they may need to put in a culvert to provide relief from the water in that area. He said he would like to take measurements today and tomorrow of the water levels. He said if the water is not rising then they won't do any work, however if it continues to rise, they may need to add a 24-inch pipe.

Commissioner Stephenson said they may need to upsize the culvert near Chavous Road.

Commissioner Mills said if needed they would start at Chavous and work back towards Cooper Road. He said the water would flow towards Little Al Land and on towards Johnny Green's place. He said they need to talk to Mr. Land and make him aware of the situation.

Commissioner Hatch said they need to look at the water along the Greenway Trail.

Commissioner Mills agreed that it is full.

Division Chief Scott Garner cautioned the Board that the water may come down the Greenway and then back to the North. He asked if the Hal Chairs and Chris Hodge properties will be in danger.

Commissioner Stephenson said they need to get with Locklear and associates for the satellite readings of ground elevations.

Commissioner Hatch requested Manager Cannon reach out to Locklear and Associates.

Manager Cannon said he has been talking to them.

Commissioner Stephenson suggested they look into renting some equipment.

Manager Cannon said he will check on this.

Road Superintendent Stevie Hutchison requested they rent a track hoe.

Commissioner Hatch asked where the water will go when it crosses Chavous Road.

Commissioner Mills said it stops.

Commissioner Hatch said they need to walk through this natural gully that goes through the area. He asked what are the water level measurements that Suwannee River Water Management has.

Manager Cannon said that Mr. Hugh Thomas had updated the task Force with that information. He said the water has been running on NE 188 Ave for nine weeks now and hasn't crossed Chavous Road yet.

Commissioner Mills said he wants to monitor this water throughout the day and then decide. He said if the water is going to flow over Chavous then they will address the issue. He said that the natural flow goes between the two trailers on NE 188 Ave.

Commissioner Hatch said the maps don't show the drain.

Commissioner Mills made the motion that if necessary, the County will cut NE 188 Ave/Cooper Road to alleviate the water. Commissioner Hatch seconded.

Chief Garner suggested that the Greenway Trail needs to be cut for the water to flow better.

Commissioner Mills agreed this is like a huge dike for the County.

Commissioner Hatch said the Hammock and the Chavous property and Sanchez Farms are all full of water. He said they are trying to move the water towards the river.

Manager Cannon said the Lidar Maps are accurate.

Commissioner Hatch said there is too much water.

Commissioner Mills asked how to get permission to put more pipes in the Greenway Trail.

Chief Garner replied this is a huge deal with DEP.

Commissioner Stephenson said they have small pipes feeding water to more small pipes and this does not work well.

Commissioner Mills said the drains are back fed from the river.

Commissioner Hatch said that Hwy 55A and Road 30 are still rising, and they have already addressed this area.

Commissioner Mills said they are taking a chance by helping some people and flooding other people.

Commissioner Stephenson said the water must be redirected.

Chief Deputy Clerk Verna Wilson said this is Mother Nature.

Commissioner Hatch said the County has had 60 inches of rain and the ground water is full and that no drainage system will help at this point. He asked if anyone has checked the boards in the Mallory Swamp gates. He asked if Locklear and Associates can start at the East end and walk back through the and check the natural drain.

Manager Cannon said he will ask them and if so, they will use Lidar. He asked if someone needs to accompany them.

Commissioner Stephenson said they need the elevations to be measured.

Commissioner Hatch said yes, and it needs to be someone knowledgeable of the Hammock area.

Manager Cannon said walking across private property to follow the natural drain will be a concern.

Mr. Steve Hutchison said he can walk the drain with Locklear and Associates.

Commissioner Mills made the motion that if necessary, the County will cut NE 188 Ave/Cooper Road to alleviate the water. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Manager Cannon said he has the signed agreements for Mr. Hutchison to take to the Sanchez Project.

Manager Cannon discussed the location and the Cow Pond elevations with the Board. They were given maps and the study of the area.

Commissioner Hatch asked if this project was worth doing.

Commissioner Stephenson replied yes.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that a Conflict of Interest issue has come up regarding the new Rock Pit property from Mr. Laster Fowler. He said that Commissioner Jamie Storey is named on the property Deed.

County Attorney Michael Osteen said that Commissioner Storey did not know that he is named as 1/3 owner of this property. He said that Commissioner Storey will fill out a Memorandum of Voting Conflict.

He clarified this is a technical issue only. He said another issue is that the Property Appraiser cannot find an easement on record for this property. He said they will need to get access from the other landowners.

Manager Cannon asked who will make contact with the property owners about the easement.

Attorney Osteen said he can prepare the documents and find out who the owners are and whomever knows them best should make contact.

Attorney Osteen said that Commissioner Storey will rescind his vote regarding the Laster Fowler Property being used for the new Rock Pit.

Property Appraiser Robbie Lee said there is not a recorded easement on file. He said the Board will need to get something established for the long run.

Commissioner Hatch asked about the mailboxes.

Manager Cannon said the Cross City mailboxes face the road. He said the Old Town mail is not being delivered to flooded areas within the county. He said the people must go to the Post Office in Old Town to pick up. He said he was told this is Federally Mandated and the homeowners must go to the Post Office to request any changes to the mailbox location.

Ms. Martha McCaskill informed the Board that the delivery people drive their personal vehicles to deliver the mail.

Commissioner Hatch said that Mr. Keith Lee said they have dug across the Chris Lord property and the Gabby Edmonds property. He said they did not dig on the Ray Hodge property.

Mr. Stevie Hutchison said the county dug across the Ray Hodge and Sedrick Lord property. He said that Mr. Larry Lord will not allow the county to access his property.

Commissioner Hatch asked about the Yantson property.

Manager Cannon said Mr. Yantson will not allow the county to access his property.

Mr. Hutchison said they can connect the canal at Mr. Randy King's property if Mr. Larry Lord will let them access his property.

Commissioner Hatch asked for legal clarity regarding the natural drainage system.

Attorney Osteen said the property owner must maintain the natural drain. He said that Building and Zoning can notice the property owner to clean this. He said the County can charge the property owner for the cost associated with cleaning the natural drain if they have to do it.

Commissioner Mills asked if there is a natural drain across the Larry Lord property.

Mr. Hutchison replied there was a few years ago before it was logged.

Commissioner Mills said they need to see a photo, or a document referencing this natural drain location and type up a letter to the property owner regarding the natural drain and the maintenance.

Attorney Osteen said he can draft a letter.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to have Attorney Osteen draft a letter to Mr. Larry Lord regarding the natural drain. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.

Attorney Osteen said he will need some historical facts to support the letter.

Commissioner Hatch recommended they look at the Lidar maps of the area.

Commissioner Stephenson said to use Google Earth.

Commissioner Hatch informed the Board that the Task Force will meet again at Mr. Dwight Knight's home tomorrow at 4:00 PM. He said that Ms. Martha McCaskill will take the minutes for this meeting.

Commissioner Hatch requested Director Brown get in touch with Ms. Carol Owens about getting an alternate route or repairing her driveway on 193 SE 790 St in Old Town. He said her husband is very sick and may need an ambulance at some time.

Commissioner Stephenson said he thought the Road Department was supposed to look at driveways that need to be repaired.

Director Brown said they can look at this and then pass it on to the Road Department and then it will come before the Board for a vote.

Commissioner Stephenson said that several county roads can't be accessed because of water. He said they don't have the materials needed to fix these.

Commissioner Mills suggested they ask Mr. Herman Sanchez if he has any rock.

Mr. Hutchison said he has done this, and he and Mr. Greg Sanchez said they can give the County a good price on some rock.

Commissioner Hatch said that any of the roads that are being built need to have a culvert put in.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

There were no comments or concerns expressed at this time.

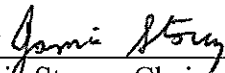
ADJOURN

Commissioner Mills made the motion to adjourn at 6:38 PM. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

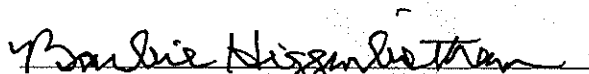


BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

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.