

REGULAR MEETING

Commission Board Room
Dixie County Courthouse
214 NE Hwy 351, Cross City, FL 32628
October 19, 2023 – 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
Daniel Wood, District 2
Mark Hatch, District 3
Jamie Storey, District 4, Chairman
David Osteen, District 5

STAFF

Paul Gainey, Asst. County Manager
Martha McCaskill, Administrative Asst/Grant Coordinator
Chana Watson, County Attorney
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court
Verna Wilson, Chief Deputy Clerk
Della J. Rhymes, Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk
Jacki Johnson, Chief Financial Officer
Brenda Royal, Chief Financial Officer

CALL TO ORDER

The Board Meeting/Workshop was called to order at 6:00 PM by Commissioner Storey.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

The Invocation was led by Commissioner Hatch and the Pledge to the American Flag was led by Commissioner Stephenson.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to approve Minutes from the Regular Meeting of October 05, 2023. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

VOUCHER APPROVAL

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve the vouchers. Commissioner Osteen seconded. Board approved.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

None were present.

PUBLIC HEARING: THE PUBLIC HEARING MAY BE CONTINUED TO ONE OR MORE FUTURE DATES. ANY INTERESTED PARTY IS ADVISED THAT THE DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF ANY CONTINUATION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING SHALL BE ANNOUNCED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING AND THAT NO FURTHER NOTICE CONCERNING THE MATTERS WILL BE PUBLISHED.

The motion to go into the Public Hearing was made by Commissioner Osteen. Seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Board approved.

APPLICATIONS for SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

A petition by **Gerald (Jerry) R. Herndon** requesting a **Special Exception** to be granted, as provided in Section 4.4.5 Special Exceptions of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle in an Agriculture (AG) zoning district in accordance with the petition dated 09/21/2023 to be located on the property described as follows: Dixie County Parcel # 01-08-13-0000-3638-0801, 147 NE 970 Lane, Branford, FL 32008.
(Commission District 1, Jody Stephenson)

Building and Zoning Official Leon Wright appeared before the Board and read the Special Exception request made by Gerald (Jerry) R. Herndon.

Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve the Special Exception request made by Gerald (Jerry) R. Herndon. Commissioner Osteen seconded. Board approved.

The motion to go out of the Public Hearing was made by Commissioner Hatch. Seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Board approved.

RESOLUTION 2023-109

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO APPROVE A SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO BE GRANTED, AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 4.4.5 OF THE DIXIE COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS TO PERMIT ONE RECREATIONAL VEHICLE IN AN AGRICULTURAL AREA (AG) ZONING DISTRICT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PETITION DATED AUGUST 2, 2023.

Gerald (Jerry) R. Herndon
(Commission District 1, Jody Stephenson)

Mr. Wright appeared before the Board and read Resolution 2023-109 in support of the Special Exception requested by Gerald (Jerry) R. Herndon.

Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve Resolution 2023-109 in support of the Special Exception requested by Gerald (Jerry) R. Herndon. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

KATHY NORRIS, ANIMAL CONTROL

Ms. Kathy Norris appeared before the Board and spoke about animals running loose throughout the neighborhood of Forest Hills. She said they are chasing people and hurting other animals. She said that animal control needs more assistance. She requested the Board help the Sheriff with this issue.

Commissioner Stephenson asked who owns the dogs.
Ms. Norris replied there are multiple dogs.

County Attorney Chana Watson stated the county does have an Ordinance for animal control. She said that animal control is authorized to pick up stray and nuisance animals.

Commissioner Stephenson said he will help set up some game cameras to catch the dogs on film.

GREG BAILEY, NORTH FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Mr. Kellan Bailey appeared before the Board to give a status update of several projects:

- They are consulting with the mechanical consultant about placing the AC units on the ground at the Cross City Library. He said they still need construction agreements from Subway and the Forever 54 Flower Shop.
- They are working on the CDBG survey and design on 95 and 97.
- The plans for Hal Chairs Road are being reviewed and they are addressing comments.
- The object markers are needed for County Road 340.
- They are coordinating with Anderson Columbia about the cost for the bridge joint.
- The appropriations requests are due by November 14, 2023.

Commissioner Storey said the Willow Hole Road needs to have the center line on the road marked. Mr. Bailey said he will check this.

JOHN LOCKLEAR, LOCKLEAR AND ASSOCIATES

Mr. Locklear had nothing to discuss at this time.

CINDY BELLOT, LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Ms. Bellot said that all is well at the Cross City Library. She informed the Board that FEMA has complimented the reception they have received from the public.

STEVE FREMEN, CODE ENFORCEMENT & VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

Mr. Fremen had nothing to discuss at this time.

STEVE HUTCHISON, COUNTY ROAD SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Hutchison was not present.

DWAYNE CHAUNCEY, MOSQUITO CONTROL DIRECTOR

Mr. Chauncey was not present.

TIM JOHNSON, SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR

Mr. Johnson appeared before the Board and informed them the Suwannee and Horseshoe roll off sites have been cleaned up. He said commercial loads will have to be brought to the Transfer Station. He asked for more clarity about the C & D along the roads.

Asst. County Manager Paul Gainey replied that FDOT is still doing this second pass pick up. He said there may not be a third pass.

Mr. Johnson thanked his staff for all their hard work.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the status of the fence around the rock pit and having a Toxic Round up for tires.

Mr. Johnson replied he was in the process of fencing prior to the storm but, will get back to working on the fence. He said that DEP has said no more tires this year and maybe next year. He said that businesses have abused this program.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the limb debris.

Mr. Johnson replied they are grinding at 317, and hauling C & D to Aucilla, and the county will burn the rest.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the grinding.

Mr. Johnson replied that Old Castle will be taking this material after it has been ground up.

Commissioner Wood asked about the Compactor at the Pole Gap.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey replied the slab is ready and they need to upgrade the power supply. The Compactor will be delivered and set up after that.

LEON WRIGHT, BUILDING AND ZONING OFFICIAL

Mr. Wright appeared before the Board and informed them that he has reviewed the site plans for a new Dollar Store at Eugene curve on the corner of Hwy 19 and 300 Street near the Shady Oaks RV Park.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about not using the services of North Central Florida Planning Council. Mr. Wright said the Board is still a member and they offer other services for the county. He said the Board is no longer using their planning services.

DARIAN BROWN, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

County Attorney Chana Watson appeared before the Board and requested they approve to contract services with an outside agency for Medicaid submittals. He said this is a complicated process and the EOC staff is not properly trained to do this type of billing. She said they will review the current contract that Hernando County has with this same agency and Dixie County could possibly piggy-back on this.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve the Medicaid Submittal Contract pending the attorney review. Commissioner Osteen second. Board approved.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if another person can be hired to help with this billing instead of hiring another company.

Attorney Watson said it may be possible; however, this other firm is trained to do this and they will get a percentage of the cost recovered.

SCOTT PENDARVIS, 911 COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR & I.T. ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Pendarvis was not present.

GAIL CARTER, INDIGENT CARE

Ms. Carter was not present.

HOLLY HOUGHTON, COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT

Ms. Houghton was not present.

ANGIE CROWLEY, HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR

Commissioner Stephenson asked where the tables and chairs for the Community Centers are. Ms. Crowley informed the Board they did inventory in June and October and there is a big difference. She said they are scattered between all the Community Buildings.

DUANE CANNON, COUNTY MANAGER

Asst. Co. Manager Paul Gainey appeared before the Board to request their approval of several items. He requested the following State of Emergency Extensions on behalf of Emergency Services.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval of State of Emergency Resolution 2023-112. (October 16, 2023, until October 22, 2023.)

Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve State of Emergency Resolution 2023-112. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval of State of Emergency Resolution 2023-113. (October 23, 2023, until October 29, 2023.)

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to approve State of Emergency Resolution 2023-113. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval of State of Emergency Resolution 2023-114. (October 30, 2023, until November 05, 2023.)

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to approve State of Emergency Resolution 2023-114. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board approve several items from the County Manager's Report.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval to move forward with the purchase of a truck bed for the road department in the amount of \$7,616.00. This is for the red labor truck. This purchase is budgeted for.

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to purchase a truck bed for the road department in the amount of \$7,616.00. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's direction and process on setting a minimum bid for the property in Jena, parcel #26-09-09-0045-0000-0590. It has been appraised at \$175,000.00. This was purchased for additional boat ramp parking in 2006.

Commissioner Osteen made a motion to involve a realtor in this sale so the county could get more money. (Motion died for lack of a second.)

Attorney Watson stated the Board had been losing money on selling county property. She said this property could be worth more money.

Commissioner Stephenson said the county needs to use it for additional parking or re-coup their purchase price on this property in Jena.

Commissioner Osteen said most people park at the new parking lot and/or along the sides of the highway.

Commissioner Storey agreed the purchase price should be higher.

Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to set a minimum bid for the property in Jena, parcel #26-09-09-0045-0000-0590 in Jena based off the original purchase price. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval to execute the SHIP Rehab Reimbursement for Norma Garza in the amount of \$20,189.20.
Commissioner Hatch made the motion to execute the SHIP Rehab Reimbursement for Norma Garza in the amount of \$20,189.20. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval to execute the SHIP Repair Reimbursement request for Barbara Nichols in the amount of \$13,670.00.
Commissioner Osteen made the motion to execute the SHIP Repair Reimbursement request for Barbara Nichols in the amount of \$13,670.00. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval to execute the FDACS Mosquito Control Agreement # 30495 for FY 2023- 2024 in the amount of \$37,748.53 (To be electronically signed).
Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to execute the FDACS Mosquito Control Agreement # 30495 for FY 2023- 2024 in the amount of \$37,748.53. Commissioner Osteen seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval to allow Board Employees to take off at 2:00 pm on October 26, 2023, to attend or Participate in the Homecoming parade. (This will be Administrative Leave)
Commissioner Osteen made the motion to allow Board Employees to take off at 2:00 pm on October 26, 2023, to attend or Participate in the Homecoming parade. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey request the Board's approval to allow Richard Vizcaino to hold a Trunk-n-Treat event at Purvis Landing on October 28, 2023, beginning at dusk for about an hour. The local residents agree to clean up any refuse after the event. This event is open to the public.
Commissioner Osteen made the motion to allow Richard Vizcaino to hold a Trunk-n-Treat event at Purvis Landing on October 28, 2023, beginning at dusk for about an hour. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval to execute the FDLE Grant for the Sheriff's Office Evidence Building in the amount of \$1,000,000.00.

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to execute the FDLE Grant for the Sheriff's Office Evidence Building in the amount of \$1,000,000.00. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval of the language for the Florida House of Representatives Special Alcoholic Beverage Licenses for Restaurants Bill.

Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve the language for the Florida House of Representatives Special Alcoholic Beverage Licenses for Restaurants Bill. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's direction for requested driveway/road repair at NE 467 Ave in Forest Hills.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve the driveway/road repair at NE 467 Ave in Forest Hills. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved. Commissioner Stephenson was opposed.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval to accept the concrete block from the Freedom Metal property/demoed building to be used as riprap material for the Road Department.

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to accept the concrete block from the Freedom Metal property/demoed building to be used as riprap material for the Road Department. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey requested the Board's approval for the High School Football Coach to use the Road Department Flatbed Trailer for the football team to ride on during the Homecoming Parade.

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to approve the High School Football Coach to use the Road Department Flatbed Trailer for the football team to ride on during the Homecoming Parade. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.

Asst. Co. Manager Gainey presented the following information items:

- The Homecoming Parade will be on Thursday, October 26, 2023, starting at 3:00 PM.
- The Dixie County Legislative Hearing will be on Monday, October 30, 2023, 11:00 AM at the BOCC Meeting Room.
- A Workshop will be held with the Cross City Town Council and the BOCC on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at 4:00 PM at the City Hall Meeting Room due to FEMA using the Cross City Library.

CHANA WATSON, COUNTY ATTORNEY

Attorney Watson informed everyone that Code Enforcement Hearings are scheduled for November 07, 2023, at 1:30 PM.

BARBIE HIGGINBOTHAM, CLERK OF COURT

Clerk Higginbotham had nothing to discuss at this time.

COUNTY COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Wood expressed his thanks to the Solid Waste Department.

Commissioner Hatch said the roads in Suwannee need to be addressed. He said a culvert collapsed. He said they need to get clarity from FDOT on the C & D that remains. He said the Board needs to give addresses to Scott Garner at the EOC, for the remaining debris on roads. He said there are several Trunk-n-Treat events scheduled around the county.

Commissioner Otseen asked about the stripping on the Jena Road. Asst. Co. Manager Gainey replied they got a quote in July; however, it may be next budget year before the work can be done.

Commissioner Osteen asked the County Attorney about working on the Sailboat Ordinance. Attorney Watson replied she is reviewing Ordinances from other counties.

Commissioner Osteen reminded everyone of the Halloween event to be held at DTRAC on October 29, 30, and 31st in Jena. He said there is an event planned for Horseshoe as well.

Commissioner Osteen asked about the status of the road closure request in Jena. He said the other property owner has several entrances available.

Mr. Junior Lytle says the power company, Tri County Electric, has an easement. He said this is the main line which services electricity to Dixie County from Talor County.

Attorney Watson stated this is a dedicated county road and easement. She said it is deeded for public use. She provided an Attorney General Opinion from 1998 for Hernando County which supported her recommendation to the Board to not close the road. She provided another opinion from the Florida Supreme Court for the City of Miami which supported the same recommendation. She stated to the Board that there was a survey done July 05, 2023, for the plated roads. She said the other party could present this in court. She again recommended the Board not close this road. She said there is possibly an encroachment issue with the power company, and she will reach out to them regarding the matter.

Attorney Watson said there is a process to close the road, however she does not recommend doing so due to the possibility of future litigation.

Commissioner Osteen made a motion to close the road. (Motion died for lack of a second.)

Commissioner Stephenson made a motion to follow the County Attorney's advice in this matter.

Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.

Commissioner Storey voted yes.

Commissioner Wood voted yes.

Commissioner Storey explained that he cannot justify closing this road in Jena due to the fact it would cost the taxpayers' money to fight for this in court and in the end it would remain open.

Mr. Lytle said there is a safety issue with this road.

Building Official Leon Wright said this is a 40 ft right of way. He said there are structures in the right of ways all over the county. He said this is a separate issue.

Mr. Lytle said the power line crosses above the Steinhatchee River from Taylor County in this location.

Mr. Wright said the guide wires for the power lines are in the road. He said he did look at the site due to the Code Enforcement complaint of a fence blocking the road.

Commissioner Hatch said Mr. Lytle will have to remove his fence from blocking the road.

Attorney Watson said the power pole issue is separate from the road closure issue.

Commissioner Hatch said the Road Department will remove the fallen trees from the area.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the Horseshoe Beach access canal being dug out.

Commissioner Stephenson said he will personally fix NE 467 Ave in Forest Hills at no cost to the county.

Commissioner Storey thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

There were no comments or concerns expressed at this time.

APPROVED

ADJOURN

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to adjourn at 7:41 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 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.