

Workshop
Funds Allocation Restore Act Grant Meeting
Commission Board Room
Dixie County Courthouse
214 NE Hwy 351, Cross City, FL 32628
August 01, 2024 – 1:30 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, County Manager
Martha McCaskill, Administrative Asst/Grant Coordinator
Chana Watson, County Attorney
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court
Verna Wilson, Chief Deputy Clerk
Brenda Royal, Chief Financial Officer
Joannie Morse, Deputy Clerk
Victoria Darkow, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Board Meeting/Workshop was called to order at 1:30 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 Hatch.

County Manager Paul Gainey

Mr. Paul Gainey led the introductions and stated that this meeting was called for discussion about the Restore Act Grant funds.

GREG BAILEY, NORTH FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Mr. Greg Bailey presented a slide show and stated that he wanted to bring some ideas to the Board on different ways to use the Dixie County Restore Grant money to benefit the County.

Mr. Bailey stated that the last time this topic was discussed, Hurricane Idalia came through and that it had changed a lot of the projects that were planned previously. Mr. Bailey stated that FEMA was now covering some of the funding for the work and he is trying to see if the County could combine some of the funding from FEMA with some of the money from the Restore Act Grant for the projects. He stated that he wanted to give the Board the opportunity to confirm or adjust as they saw fit.

Existing Dixie County Restore Projects Listed in the State Expenditure Plan

- **Project 11- 1 – Horseshoe Beach Working Waterfront**
- **Project 11- 2 – Shired Island Park Beach Nourishment & Living Shoreline**
- **Project 11- 3 – Horseshoe Cove Oyster Restoration**
- **Project 11- 4 – Coastal Public Access Program**
- **Project 11- 5 – Coastal Septic to Sewer Conversation Program**

Restore Projects Status

- **Project 11 – 1 – The application has been filed with the Gulf Consortium and is under review. A total of \$849,435.48 has been requested.**
- **Project 11- 2 – The project is underway and was funded via Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) utilizing Hurricane Idalia Funds**
- **Project 11- 3 – Oyster restoration funds can be applied for through the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection Oyster Reef Restoration Program**
- **Project 11- 4 – No action has been taken.**
- **Project 11- 5 – No action has been taken.**

Restore Project Funds

- **Project 11- 1 – Horseshoe Beach Working Waterfront ----- \$2,150,564.52**
- **Project 11- 2 – Shired Island Park Beach Nourishment & Living Shoreline ---\$2,000,000**
- **Project 11- 3 – Horseshoe Cove Oyster Restoration ----- \$1,000,000**
- **Project 11- 4 – Coastal Public Access Program ----- \$1,460,000**
- **Project 11- 5 – Coastal Septic to Sewer Conversation Program ----- \$5,200,000**
- **U.S Department of Treasury – Restore Funds ----- \$1, 952.575.58**

Mr. Greg Bailey stated that the projects are totaling \$14,612,575.58 dollars with a remaining amount of \$13,763,140.10 dollars. He stated that some of the projects have been impacted due to Hurricane Idalia, so he suggested utilizing the additional funds for infrastructure, shoreline access and acquisition of property if it is already a part of a project.

- **Project 11- 1 – Horseshoe Beach Working Waterfront**

Mr. Bailey stated that the Horseshoe Beach Working Waterfront was impacted by Hurricane Idalia and that Chief Darian Brown received money to fix the dock.

Commissioner Osteen mentioned that Horseshoe Beach needs parking.

Mr. Bailey pointed out vacant parcels on a map for the Board to review. He stated that there is an opportunity to purchase a parcel and turn it into a parking lot.

Mr. J D Nobles stated that the Boat Ramp in Horseshoe Beach needs to be repaired and suggested buying a parcel and turning it into a parking lot.

Commissioner Hatch stated that his concern would be on the commercial side of it and what are we doing to impact that. He stated the ramp was put there for commercial fisherman.

Mr. Brian Selph stated that the County could designate the biggest parking bays for commercial use only and parking.

Mr. Bailey stated that he is concerned that one Boat ramp isn't enough and if the County expands the dock, then Horseshoe Beach won't have adequate parking.

- **Project 11- 2 – Shired Island Park Beach Nourishment & Living Shoreline**

Mr. Bailey stated there is a lot of camping in Shired Island.

He stated that they could expand the use of the campground and talk to the Federal Government about utilizing the area next to the road for an RV park with camp sites to try to get the activity off the beach.

Chief Scott Garner stated that they are working on moving the well to the north end of the park, which is Federal land. He explained that the reason for moving the well is for saltwater intrusion and water quality.

Mr. Bailey stated it would be hard to get access to the federal land.

Mr. Bailey stated that in prior years, the County was successful getting storm money and that they constructed a seawall on 349. He stated that some of this Restore Grant Funding could be used to place the second seawall on the other side of the roadway on 349 for resiliency.

Chief Garner stated that that project is already in process through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Funds.

Mr. Bailey stated that Hurricane Idalia damaged the Cow Creek Bridge as well and that the boat ramp is inaccessible now. Mr. Bailey stated that the County could possibly use money to replace the bridge. He stated they could approach the State and offer to give them the South of the bridge in exchange for a boat ramp and parking.

Mr. Bailey mentioned that the Board could use some of the Restore Grant Funds to improve the Jena Boat Ramp.

Commissioner Osteen stated he would like to improve the parking and put some rest rooms there.

Commissioner Hatch stated that he would like to see the numbers run on the seawall on the other side of the Baptist Church to the ridge in Suwannee, on both Jena Highway Bridges and then the Horseshoe Beach Commercial Boat Ramp and to look at the property acquisition for the boat ramp parking but doesn't want to forget the commercial side of it.

Commissioner Hatch stated that he would like to look at the land acquisitions for the Boat ramp parking but not to forget the commercial side of it.

Commissioner Hatch asked Brooke Hiers if she can handle helping with the asking around regarding property acquisition for the additional parking for the Horseshoe Park.

Mr. JD Nobles mentioned the Florida Wildlife Commission (FWC) program, Eel Grass Program, Commissioner Hatch said the County is looking into this program; however, the FWC is hard to reach.

Mr. Brett Selph stated that he has participated in this program some 10-12 years ago and it went well. He has monitored the program with Reef Researcher Victor Blanco of Taylor County, Did a tv show on Public Broadcasting System (PBS), had FWC biologists on board his boat and discussed major seagrass laws, but didn't get a lot of traction with the FWC.

Commissioner Hatch asked if Mr. Selph has a FWC contact number and asked if he could get it to Chief Garner?

Mr. Selph stated yes, he could.

- **Project 11- 3 – Horseshoe Cove Oyster Restoration**

Mr. JD Nobles stated that the University of Florida is doing a study in Horseshoe Cove with crab traps in the water to see how long it takes the oysters to grow on the trap.

President of the Oyster Association Mrs. Angela Croft stated that the Oysters are dying, and they are trying to figure out what is causing it. She stated that they are trying to figure out what is in the water because the problem is bigger than just the heat. Mrs. Croft stated she would like to see the Boat ramp fixed in Horseshoe.

Chairman Storey agreed.

Mr. Bailey stated that he is hearing good comments and feedback. He stated he will get a cost estimate on improving the two bridges in Jena, the seawall in Suwannee, the Boat Ramp in Horseshoe Beach and the parking lot.

Mr. Bailey introduced the planner and event writer for his company, Mr. Brandon Stubbs.

Commissioner Stephenson asked to get a cost estimate of the expansion in Shired Park.

Chairman Storey mentioned that the best place to put a well in Shired Island is by the highway on the hill and that the County needs to dig a little deeper, but not too deep or we get brackish water and get farther away from the water to get fresh water.

Chief Garner stated that where the County is looking at drilling the well is in the right of way.

Chief Garner presented some models of the current tropical storm path to the Board to review, stating that he just received these.

Questions

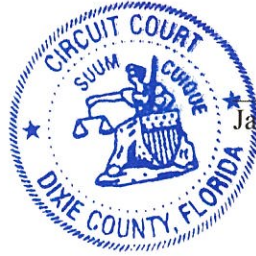
No additional questions were asked at this meeting.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Storey made the motion to adjourn at 2:40 PM. Commissioner Osteen seconded. Board approved.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:



Jamie Storey

Jamie Storey, Chairman

Barbie Higginbotham

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.