

Emergency Meeting

Emergency Operations Center
17600 SE Hwy 19, Cross City, FL 32628
September 01, 2023 – 8:30 AM

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

Duane Cannon, County Manager
Paul Gainey, Asst. County Manager
Chana Watson, County Attorney
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court
Verna Wilson, Chief Deputy Clerk
Della J. Rhymes, Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk
Brenda Royal, Chief Financial Officer

CALL TO ORDER

The Emergency Meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM by Commissioner Storey.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

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

County Manager Duane Cannon appeared before the Board and informed them of the need for assistance with storm debris removal throughout the county. He said there is more debris than the county has ever had to deal with before. He said this will be a huge financial burden to the county. He said they have been presented with an option to help with this matter.

Emergency Management Chief Scott Garner appeared before the Board and informed them of an email he received from FDOT which states they will assist fiscally constrained counties with all remaining debris removal and emergency road clearance at no cost to the county upon request. He said he would recommend the Board agree to request assistance from FDOT. He has submitted the request on behalf of Dixie County.

Manager Cannon added that FDOT may possibly contract with others to handle the debris at their expense.

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to agree to request storm debris removal and emergency road clearance as provided by FDOT. Commissioner Wood seconded.

County Attorney Chana Watson stated it wasn't necessary for the Board to approve the contract due to the State of Emergency, but she recommended that they do so.

Chief Garner said this would free up the County Road Department to continue with their daily work. He said with the FDOT agreement C and D, white goods, and vegetation will need to be separated. He will clarify and get the specifics for all. He said this clean-up process will be slow.

Commissioner Hatch asked about what has already been collected at the roll off sites.

Chief Garner said the county may have to deal with that expense; however, he intends to clarify that with FDOT. He said that Taylor, Lafayette, Madison, Jefferson, and Dixie County are all eligible for this FDOT assistance.

Manager Cannon said the Board will be updated as more information becomes available. He said they will get clarification on where the debris will need to be staged for FDOT pick up, either curb side or at the roll off sites.

Chief Garner agreed.

Commissioner Hatch stated that people may continue to bring debris to the roll off sites.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the removal of the debris in the canals.

Manager Cannon said they will also get clarification about canal debris removal. He said if this is not covered with FDOT, they will reach out to private companies to do this work.

Commissioner Hatch stated that road debris and canal debris may be handled differently and separately.

Attorney Watson also recommended the Board accept the offer from FDOT for storm debris removal.

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to agree to request storm debris removal and emergency road clearance as provided by FDOT. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.

Chief Garner requested the Board approve **RESOLUTION 2023-92** in support of the Emergency Declaration Extension for Hurricane Idalia from September 03, 2023 through September 10, 2023 and to be able to extend this weekly as needed.

Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve RESOLUTION 2023-92 in support of the Emergency Declaration Extension for Hurricane Idalia from September 03, 2023 through September 10, 2023 and to be able to extend this weekly as needed. Commissioner Osteen seconded. Board approved.

Chief Garner informed the Board that hot meals will be provided for the coastal communities, First District Community Center, Old Town Elementary School, and the Little League Ball Field. He said distribution pods will be set up. He said they have requested shower units, restroom trailers, and laundry trailers for the Town of Horseshoe, Suwannee, and possibly Jena.

These will be set up at the County Park in Horseshoe and at Glen Dyals Park in Suwannee.

Commissioner Hatch said that Suwannee Water and Sewer should be operational today. He said they will be checking all meters for leaks.

Commissioner Hatch asked about the possibility of staging tankers in the coastal communities for fires.

Director of Emergency Services Darian Brown replied they only have two (2) tankers; however, he has requested some help.

Commissioner Hatch informed everyone of looters in Horseshoe. He said these people looked like legitimate contractors. He said the Town of Horseshoe has put a curfew in place to deter this activity. He said there will be law enforcement presence in all coastal communities and along the rivers and coastal shorelines. He recommended the Board enact a curfew for Suwannee and Jena pending the Sheriff's input.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to enact a 11:00 PM until 6:00 AM curfew pending the Sheriff's review for Suwannee and Jena. Commissioner Osteen seconded.

Attorney Watson will communicate with Attorney Conrad Bishop and request a copy of the Town of Horseshoe Beach curfew for review.

Dixie County Sheriff Darby Butler spoke to the Board via telephone regarding the curfew for Suwannee and Jena. He said that everyone needs to put forth a united front. He said because of the curfew that the Town of Horseshoe had in place, law enforcement agencies were able to approach, question, and apprehend several looters posing as contractors with commercial trucks.

He said they can apply these same methods in Suwannee and Jena if needed by the residents of the communities to deter looting. He recommended a curfew from 11:00 PM until 6:00 AM.

Commissioner Hatch said he will network with the Suwannee residents and Commissioner Osteen will network the Jena residents regarding the need for a curfew.

Sheriff Butler said the Resolution supporting a curfew will allow other law enforcement agencies to partner with him and work under the Sheriff's office and provide more law enforcement protection for the citizens.

Commissioner Hatch made the motion to enact a 11:00 PM until 6:00 AM curfew pending the Sheriff's review for Suwannee and Jena. Commissioner Osteen seconded. Board approved.

Chief Garner requested that all community, county and municipality needs and requests be coordinated through the Emergency Operations Center. He said it is important for this to be tracked and monitored due to unforeseen billing issues that may arise. He said that assets and provisions will be paid for by the state if coordinated properly through Web EOC.

Commissioner Hatch suggested making a list of community needs and give it to the EOC.

Chief Garner said they have people in place to help coordinate and track missions and community needs and requests.

Attorney Watson recommended an inter-agency meeting with the Town Councils and the Board and Emergency Services to go over the processes and procedures for request submissions in order to maintain some organization and consistency.

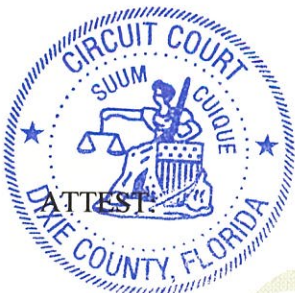
Manager Cannon spoke with Mr. Jeff Williams, from Horseshoe via telephone, about requests for help for Horseshoe Beach. He informed Mr. Williams that all requests must run through the Web EOC program for state verification and to avoid billing issues. He requested Attorney Watson reach out to Attorney Bishop and relay information about processes and procedures to avoid miscommunications.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

There was nothing discussed at this time.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Osteen made the motion to adjourn at 9:50 AM. Commissioner Wood seconded. Board approved.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

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.