

# **Regular Meeting**

## ***Dixie County Courthouse***

### ***Commission Board Room***

***214 NE Hwy 351, Cross City, FL 32628***

***November 04, 2021 – 10:00 AM***

*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  
Della Rhymes, Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk  
Jacki Johnson, Chief Financial Officer

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Board meeting was called to order

#### **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.

#### **APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES**

*Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve Minutes from the Meeting of September 16, 2021. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.*

*Commissioner Hatch made the motion to attach the governor's executive order and the local state of emergency to the minutes September 16, 2021. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.*

### **VOUCHER APPROVAL**

*Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve the vouchers. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.*

### **CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS**

There was nothing discussed at this time.

***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 Hearings was made by Commissioner Hatch. Seconded by Commissioner Stephenson.*

Commissioner Storey allowed Mr. Lee Boyer to appear before the Board.

#### **Lee Boyer, Pllumi Investments**

Mr. Boyer informed the Board that his boss has a Property in Suwannee with a pole barn on it. He said it was sold to him as a RV lot. He said he understands the special exception must be renewed annually. He said they had applied for this and the Board denied this. He asked why was this denied and what can they do to get it approved and move forward. He said he wants to know what he is allowed to do with this lot.

Building Official, Leon Wright said this lot was investigated previously. He said there was an old mobile home with a pole barn roof over. He said the mobile home was torn down and the property was used as a RV lot. He said there are no records to support this designation. He said there was opposition and that is why it did not pass.

Commissioner Stephenson said to Mr. Boyer you are not being singled out, there is a process to follow.

Mr. Boyer said the property has had power since 1984 and a grinder pump since 2003.

Commissioner Hatch said the Board usually votes to deny if there is opposition. He said they may deviate from this practice if it's a commercial request. He said this is a residential request. The process is to wait one year and pay \$300.00 again if you want a RV lot.

Commissioner Stephenson asked how long a person can camp on their property.

Mr. Wright said this area is not zoned as a campground.



Code Enforcement Officer, Steve Fremen said you cannot camp in a residential area at all per the current Land Development Regulations (LDR). He said there is no septic, no water, no power.

Mr. Boyer commented that if his boss comes down from Jacksonville to stay here, then he can't do anything with the property.

County Attorney Michael Osteen recommended that Mr. Boyer speak to his neighbors and try to work this out.

Mr. Wright said you can get a permit to build a home or get a mobile home. He said you can camp while building.

Mr. Greg Bailey said that camping is allowed in an agricultural zoned area and not in a residential zoned area. He said the zoning is the issue.

Attorney Osteen said this is happening in Jena with five campers on one lot and they party all weekend and disturb the neighbors.

A petition by **Gregory Hartman** requesting a **Special Exception** to be granted, as provided in Section 4.4.5 subparagraph (9) of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle (A4) zoning district, in accordance with the petition dated 08/30/2021 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel # 33-09-13-4492-0000-0830 411 NE 542 Street, Old Town, FL. 32680; 0).

**(Commission District 4, Jamie Storey)**

***Tabled from 10-07-21, 10-21-2021***

Building Official Leon Wright appeared before the Board and read the special exception request made by Greg Hartman.

Commissioner Storey said he has spoken with Mr. Hartman. He said that he sold his house and bought this property. He said he wants to stay in his camper while cleaning up the property. He said he will then put a nice mobile home on this property.

***Commissioner Mills made the motion to approve the special exception requested by Greg Hartman. Commissioner Stephenson seconded with the stipulation that he has one year to clean property and get the mobile home permit, or the special exception will be revoked, and the power will be shut off. Board approved.***

***The motion to go out of Public Hearings and back into the Board Meeting was made by Commissioner Stephenson. Seconded by Commissioner Hatch.***

**RESOLUTION 2021-150**

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 SUBPARAGRAPH (9) OF THE DIXIE COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS TO PERMIT ONE RECREATIONAL VEHICLE IN AN AGRICULTURAL (A4) ZONING DISTRICT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PETITION DATED AUGUST 30, 2021. **Greg Hartman**

***Tabled from 10-07-21, 10-21-2021***

Mr. Leon Wright appeared before the Board and read Resolution 2021-150 in support of Greg Hartman to the Board by title only.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve Resolution 2021-150 in support of Greg Hartman. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

Attorney Osteen said he will need to revise Resolution 2021-150 before it is signed by the Chairman.

**DARIAN BROWN, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Director Brown appeared before the Board to introduce the new Medical Director to them. He said that Dr. Wilson came to the Emergency Room on his day off to check on two fire fighters from Dixie County.

Commissioner Hatch thanked him.

Dr. Wilson said he looks forward to working with everyone.

**ELIZABETH PHILLIPS, HAVEN HOSPICE**

Ms. Amanda Gardner and Ms. Nicole Sayers appeared before the Board to request they approve the Haven Hospice Proclamation in observance of November 21, 2021 and the month of November being National Hospice and Palliative Care Month.

Attorney Osteen read Proclamation 2021-167 aloud to everyone.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve Proclamation 2021-167. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

**KEITH SEGAR, SUWANNEE WATER AND SEWER MANAGER**

Mr. Segar was not present for this meeting.

**GREG BAILEY, NORTH FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Mr. Bailey appeared before the Board and informed them that the Courthouse Security Plans should be done in three weeks. He said they are checking the mechanical rooms for usable space.

Mr. Bailey said the residents will be notified by letter of the 95 and 97 CDBG projects.



Mr. Bailey said the 362 and 364 project plans will be completed next month and will be submitted to FDOT for approval. He said it may take them 10 weeks to review. He said this process may be delayed at the state level because it is still voluntary to work in their offices.

Mr. Greg Bailey went over the five State Expenditure Plan (SEP) projects discussed at the Gulf Coast Consortium Workshop this morning.

1. Horseshoe Beach Working Waterfront, the Board agreed that a dock is needed.
2. Shired Island Park Beach Nourishment and Living Shoreline, the Board agreed to leave this plan as is.
3. Dixie County Oyster Restoration, the Board agreed to expand the area to include Suwannee.
4. Coastal Public Access Program, the Board agreed to leave this plan as is and or look for another if this does not go through.
5. Coastal Septic to Sewer Project Conversion Program, the Board agreed to drop this and look for other sources for funding.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to move forward with the projects as discussed. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

Commissioner Hatch thanked Mr. Bailey for the work done for Mr. George Sapp. He said he has another road he would like him to look at in Suwannee.

Commissioner Mills said he would like the engineer to look at the ditch from the railroad bed to Chavous Road and then on through 188 Road. He said he would like to get an analysis on a ditch within the county right of way from the Greenway to Thompson and up 188 and through the Hammock.

Mr. Bailey said he can come back in a couple days.

Commissioner Hatch, Commissioner Mills and Commissioner Stephenson all scheduled to meet with Mr. Greg Bailey on November 08, 2021 at different times throughout the day.

Commissioner Hatch discussed the putting a Culvert and Driveway Ordinance in place. He said people are not getting the permits that are needed through Building and Zoning. He said this is falling through the cracks.

Manager Cannon said that Mr. Wright will address that issue.

Commissioner Stephenson said the Road Department looks at this and decides if a culvert is needed or not.

Mr. Bailey said this is part of the building permit and inspection process and you need documentation.

Attorney Osteen said there is an Ordinance in place, but it has not been enforced as written.

**JERED LIZOTTE, LOCKLEAR AND ASSOCIATES**

Mr. Lizotte was not present for this meeting.

**CINDY BELLOT, LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Ms. Bellot thanked the Board for their support of the Library and the Tech Centers.

**STEVE FREMEN, CODE ENFORCEMENT & VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER**

Mr. Fremen appeared before the Board to discuss another issue of people bringing in campers and sheds and tents with no power or septic and are living off the grid.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if the elected Judge would normally handle these cases instead of a Magistrate.

Attorney Osteen said the county has always had a code enforcement Ordinance in place. He said the Judge does not want to handle these cases and is not required to do so. He said the Board has hired a Magistrate for code enforcement cases. He said the Board amended the Ordinance to allow this to happen. He said the Magistrate hears the cases and sets fines. He said this is a long process.

Commissioner Stephenson said this process costs a lot of taxpayer money that can't be recouped.

Commissioner Hatch said the taxpayers are complaining about the mess.

Mr. Fremen said some folks will clean up their property and other do not.

Attorney Osteen said any prior judgements and mortgages will be paid first before the county.

Commissioner Stephenson suggested getting other agencies to help with this problem.

Mr. Fremen said that FWC has not helped so far and the DEP will only help if the issue is environmental. He said they try to get the serious issue to court.

Commissioner Stephenson said people are living in campers and there are too many to police.

**STEVE HUTCHISON, COUNTY ROAD SUPERINTENDENT**

Mr. Hutchison was not present for this meeting.

**DWAYNE CHAUNCEY, MOSQUITO CONTROL DIRECTOR**

Mr. Chauncey was not present for this meeting.

Commissioner Hatch said the signs are a mowing nightmare and he would like staff to spray around the signs to kill the weeds.

**MICHAEL LATSON, SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR**

Mr. Latson was not present for this meeting.



**LEON WRIGHT, BUILDING AND ZONING OFFICIAL**

Mr. Wright had nothing more to discuss.

**DARIAN BROWN, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Director Brown appeared before the Board and informed them of a proposed company that can help with collections of the bad debt. He said that after 60 days his staff will turn the debt over to collections.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to move forward with using the collection agency. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

Commissioner Stephenson clarified that the county is not taking anyone's property for this bad debt.

Director Brown said the agency will send out the bills and they will keep a percentage of the collection.

Director Brown informed the Board that in 195 people applied for a new 911 address in Dixie County for the year of 2021.

Director Brown said they have donated the re-chassis to the Town of Cross City.

Director Brown requested the Board allow the County Manager to sign the re occurring 911 grant.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to allow the County Manager to sign the paperwork for the re occurring 911 grant only. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

Director Brown requested the Board's approval of the SCBA equipment purchase and use Drummond Bank for the loan.

***Commissioner Mills made the motion to approve the loan with Drummond Bank for the SCBA equipment purchase. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.***

Director Brown informed the Board that the state is mandating changing the type of stretchers that are allowed in the trucks. He said these must be auto loading stretchers and they are very expensive. He said they have some old ones they can surplus and sell these to Citrus County for \$2,500.00 each.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to sell the stretchers. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

Commissioner Stephenson asked what the money from the sale will be earmarked or used for.

Director Brown replied it will be used for new equipment for the new fire engine.

Director Brown discussed the local state of emergency continuation. He said that they are not under any constraints for EMS and they are not recommending that the Board do this. He said this is always up to the Board to continue or not. He said it is required by law and policy.

Division Chief Scott Garner informed the Board that Verizon will be here tomorrow at the EOC Building from 8:00 AM until noon. He said they will be showing some new emergency response equipment for several counties.

Director Brown informed the Board about the COVID antibodies that are being given at the hospital. He said his department can give these out too. He said they will use this at the nursing home and for emergency staff if needed. He said there are four shots and the patient must be supervised for an hour after receiving the shots. He said this is free, but availability is limited.

Commissioner Hatch asked about Verizon partnering with Amazon broadband.

Chief Garner informed the Board that the Verizon temporary tower is activated at the Dixie County Jail. He said the Greenway tower in Old Town is operational as well.

**GAIL CARTER, INDIGENT CARE**

Ms. Carter was not present for this meeting.

**HOLLY HOUGHTON, COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT**

Ms. Houghton was not present for this meeting.

**ANGIE CROWLEY, HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR**

Ms. Crowley had nothing to discuss at this time.

**DUANE CANNON, COUNTY MANAGER**

Manager Cannon appeared before the Board to request approval of several action items.

Manager Cannon requested the Board's approval to submit both the House and Senate Appropriations Project Requests in the amount of \$2,711,262.00 for the Dixie County Stormwater Task Force funding.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve the submittal of the House and Senate Appropriations Project Requests for the Dixie County Stormwater Task Force funding. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board's approval for the updated Airport Hangar Contract. The change was in section 3: to include sales tax and utility services and a \$25.00 late fee for rent paid beyond the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Also, to allow County Manager staff to execute and sign the contract on behalf of the Board.



***Commissioner Mills made the motion for the change to the Airport Hanger Contract and to allow the County Manager staff to execute and sign the contract. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board's approval to execute the loan from Capital City Bank for the John Deere 350 Excavator in the amount of \$303,500.00.

***Commissioner Mills made the motion to approve the \$303,500.00 loan from Capital City Bank for the John Deere 350 Excavator. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board's approval of Resolution 2021-168 in support of the purchase of the John Deere 350 Excavator from Capital City Bank in the amount of \$303,500.00.

***Commissioner Mills made the motion to approve Resolution 2021-168 in support of the loan from Capital City Bank for the John Deere 350 Excavator. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board's approval to advertise for an IT and Communications position.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve the advertisement for an IT and Communications position. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon said the County Attorney will present the Verbiage change to Ordinance 1993-05 stating changes to the size of pipe for the driveways.

Manager Cannon requested the Organizational Meeting for the Board to vote for the Board Chairman and Vice Chairman be scheduled for November 18, 2021 during the regular 6:00 PM Board Meeting.

Manager Cannon requested the approval of the Commissioner Committee Assignments to be scheduled for November 18, 2021 during the regular 6:00 PM Board Meeting.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that he will be meeting with the Tax Collector on the Special Assessment Evaluations and corrections. He said he will be busy with this a few days per week over the next month.

Manager Cannon clarified that the Solid Waste Assessment is to cover the cost of hauling garbage to the Aucilla landfill.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that he has chosen Mr. Paul Gainey as his Assistant County Manager.

Manager Cannon said the five-acre property for the rock pit is being surveyed and certified.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if they can remove the crushed lime rock from the operation pad and use it to fix some roads.

Commissioner Hatch asked about rebuilding or selling the 350 and the 200.

Commissioner Mills said he would need to look at them and assess them. He said that the county recently sold the D6 bulldozer at auction which was supposed to have a bad motor. He said he bought this for scrap and all it needed was batteries and seals in the transmission.

Manager Cannon said that Commissioner Mills will evaluate both the 350 excavator and the 200 piece of equipment for repair or surplus.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that the Bid advertisement for the Rivers Phase II SRWMD Project. He said this will connect the retention ponds near the Ruth Rains Middle School and the canals that run to the Belly Deep Canal. He said it has been submitted to the newspaper.

**MICHAEL OSTEEN, COUNTY ATTORNEY**

Attorney Osteen appeared before the Board and said that all the contracts will be reviewed at the next Board meeting.

Attorney Osteen discussed Ordinance 1993-05 for culverts and driveways. He said the policy is good. He said it specifies the minimum size of the culvert as an 18-inch diameter by 30 foot in length. He asked if the Board wants to change the size or materials of the culvert specifications.

Commissioner Mills said these sizes won't work for some driveways.

Attorney Osteen said that driveway permits are applied for with Building and Zoning.

Commissioner Mills said that Mr. Danny Dey has been trained to inspect the driveways.

Mr. Wright said Mr. Danny Dey does the inspections. He said years ago they stopped inspecting the driveways and now we have started this up again in 2018. He said that the staff does not want any confrontation with the public over this.

Attorney Osteen asked how to fix this without a confrontation.

Mr. Wright said there should not be any confrontation at all. He said the inspections can be sent through the IWORKS system. He said the Road Departments wants more documentation from his staff. He said this can be made part of the Building and Zoning Departments inspection process.

Attorney Osteen said they can work on the language together.



Mr. Wright said there should be no crazy substitutions for culvert material.

Mr. Greg Bailey asked what is the process.

Attorney Osteen asked who will authorize this.

Mr. Wright said that other counties have their Road Department do the inspection.

Commissioner Hatch recommended adding mitered ends to culverts.

Attorney Osteen recommended getting all the suggestions and then he will draft the Ordinance revisions.

Attorney Osteen informed the Board that there was an incident yesterday at the County Manager's Office of an altercation between Commissioner Stephenson and Road Superintendent Steve Hutchison. He said the County Manager was a witness. He said it is currently under criminal investigation by city and county law enforcement. He said that he can handle the civil part of the process. He said the Krizner Group will be doing an administrative investigation as well. He said that Mr. Hutchison is on paid administrative leave at this time pending the outcome of both investigations. He said that the Human Resource Administrator has a conflict of interest in the matter so he will act as the liaison between the Krizner Group and the Board. ***Commissioner Mills made the motion to allow the County Attorney to be the liaison between the Krizner Group and the Board. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

***Commissioner Stephenson did not vote due to a conflict of interest.***

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to allow the administrative leave with pay for Mr. Hutchison. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

***Commissioner Stephenson did not vote due to a conflict of interest.***

**BARBIE HIGGINBOTHAM, CLERK OF COURT**

Clerk Higginbotham appeared before the Board to present a population census letter from the University of Florida to be signed by the Board Chairman. She said the population was 14,928 for the year of 2021 per the letter.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to sign the population census letter. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

Clerk Higginbotham informed the Board of the Veteran's Day Parade next Thursday at 10:30 AM.

Commissioner Hatch requested this be advertised for the Board to be in the parade.

Attorney Osteen said he has purchased \$650.00 in candy. He requested the Board reimburse him for \$500.00 of the cost.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to reimburse Attorney Osteen \$500.00 for the candy. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Director Brown said the Verizon presentation at the EOC is for emergency use equipment only.

Director Brown informed the Board that they have received a grant for a commercial washer for the turn out gear.

### **COUNTY COMMISSION ITEMS**

Commissioner Valentine had nothing more to discuss.

Commissioner Hatch had nothing more to discuss.

Commissioner Stephenson instructed the Road Department staff to repair the bat house at the Community Center that had been damaged.

Commissioner Stephenson also mentioned that there was dirt put on private property again without coming before the Board and he would like to check on this.

Commissioner Mills said that it was referenced earlier about raising the millage rate. He said this is only a reference. This is not happening,

Commissioner Storey thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He said there is still people waiting for help and the Holidays are approaching.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**

Ms. Lita Winegart spoke to the Board and expressed her concern about the blind curve near her home. She said there is a lot of traffic and no speed limit sign. She thanked the fire department for responding to an unattended ground fire in her neighborhood in a timely manner.

Ms. Mary Goodrich thanked the Board for all their help and spoke to them about more rainfall, but said the water is going down.

Ms. Robin Rouse questioned the Board about when to apply for a permit for driveway. She asked about the status on the mailboxes.

Commissioner Mills replied when you apply for a house permit.

Commissioner Stephenson said the Postmaster General in Old Town about this issue with the mailboxes. He said the Postmaster informed him that the mail carriers for Dixie County are contracted and are not required to deliver from the right side of vehicle. He said the mail carriers



in other counties work for the Postal Service and are required to delivery from the right side of the vehicle. He said that the Postmaster said it is not the responsibility of the county to fix the rock around the mailboxes. He said the placement of the mailboxes is the homeowner's responsibility.

Commissioner Hatch said this is not an issue within the city limits. He said the mailboxes are facing the road correctly.

Manager Cannon said the placement of the mailboxes is between the homeowner and the US Postal Service not the county.

Ms. Mary Goodrich said she had turned her mailbox around and the Postmaster said turn it back around or they will not deliver mail to me.

Ms. Robin Rouse asked about who to get dirt from.

Manager Cannon said to contact the Road Department.

Commissioner Stephenson said there is a process to follow.

Ms. Mary Goodrich said she had gotten some sediment, not clean dirt.

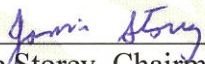
**ADJOURN**

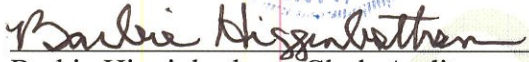
*Commissioner Mills made the motion to adjourn at 12:18 PM. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.*

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:



  
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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.*