

**Regular Meeting**  
***Dixie County Courthouse***  
***Commission Board Room***  
***214 NE Hwy 351, Cross City, FL 32628***  
***December 16, 2021 – 6:00 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 (via telephone)  
Mark Hatch, District 3  
Jamie Storey, District 4, Chairman  
James Valentine, District 5

**STAFF**

Duane Cannon, County Manager  
Paul Gainey, Asst. 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 at 6:00 PM by Commissioner Storey. Commissioner Storey informed everyone that a Sheriff's Deputy will be present for every meeting to comply with Courthouse Security.

**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 Hatch.

**APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES**

*Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve the Minutes from the Workshop of October 21, 2021 County Employee Policy and Procedure Manual. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.*

**VOUCHER APPROVAL**

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

**CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS**

No Constitutional Officers were present for this meeting.

**GREG BAILEY, NORTH FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Mr. Greg Bailey was not present for this meeting.

**JERED LIZOTTE, LOCKLEAR AND ASSOCIATES**

Mr. Jered Lizotte was not present for this meeting.

**CINDY BELLOT, LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Ms. Cindy Bellot was not present for this meeting.

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

Mr. Steve Fremem was not present for this meeting.

**STEVE HUTCHISON, COUNTY ROAD SUPERINTENDENT**

Mr. Steve Hutchison was not present for this meeting.

**DWAYNE CHAUNCEY, MOSQUITO CONTROL DIRECTOR**

Mr. Dwayne Chauncey was not present for this meeting.

County Manager Duane Cannon appeared before the Board and said he is taking his State Board Directors Licensing test. He has his Applicators License already.

**MICHAEL LATSON, SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR**

Mr. Michael Latson had nothing to discuss at this time.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the metal at the roll off site. He said he has used his own equipment to help pile this up. He said there is no written contract for the metal pick up. He asked if there was money in the Budget to pay someone to burn limbs and pick up the metal.

Mr. Latson said he does have a person to push up the dump.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if it may be possible to get an outside contractor to handle the metal or do this in house and have them haul and weigh the metal and process it.

Mr. Latson said more equipment would be needed to do this. He has been advertising for another person and they must have a CDL License.

Manager Cannon said that the Solid Waste Department is three positions short currently.

Commissioner Mills said he spoke with the County Manager about getting contracts drafted for the people who pick up the metal from the dump. He said the former person died and his son is trying to handle this. He said that everyone has been very busy.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if the county could get a better price by handling this themselves.

Commissioner Mills said that Dixie County generates more metal garbage than other counties.

Commissioner Stephenson asked why the public can't haul the metal to the transfer station.

Commissioner Mills said people may not drive that far to dump the metal. He said it would cost the county too much to haul the metal to the mill.

Manager Cannon said he will work on the contracts for the people to pick up from the roll off sites. He said in the past this was a verbal agreement.

Mr. Latson cautioned everyone that the DEP will say everything needs to be separated to be in compliance.

Commissioner Stephenson said that other county roads are cleaner, and their dumps don't have an attendant. He said the metal is out of hand and things need to improve.

Commissioner Mills said that they had an employee who use to move the metal from site to site. He said they get more metal now and it would take two grapple trucks to handle this now.

Commissioner Stephenson said he hopes that the new dump stickers help with the decline of metal that is being dumped.

County Attorney Michael Osteen said he will get together with the contractors and the County Manager and draft a contract between them and the county for the metal pick up from the dumps.

Commissioner Stephenson asked what is the rate paid for metal.

Commissioner Mills said he thinks it went up to \$3.00. He said it is all considered tin and you get the lowest rate of pay.

**LEON WRIGHT, BUILDING AND ZONING OFFICIAL**

Mr. Leon Wright was not present for this meeting.

**DARIAN BROWN, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Director Brown appeared before the Board and thanked Tri County Towing for paying for the EMS and Fire Employee Christmas Dinner. He said that they paid for everything.

Director Brown informed the Board that the Florida Department of Health did an inspections on the files, licenses, trucks, and staff. He said that all had passed. He said this was last done in 2018.

Director Brown informed the Board that the EXPO is December 17, 2021 at 5:00 PM. He said there will be free hot dogs, food and drinks, and toys, and more and that all are invited.

**GAIL CARTER, INDIGENT CARE**

Ms. Gail Carter was not present for this meeting.

**HOLLY HOUGHTON, COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT**

Ms. Holly Houghton was not present for this meeting.

**ANGIE CROWLEY, HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR**

Ms. Angie Crowley had nothing to discuss at this time.

**DUANE CANNON, COUNTY MANAGER**

County Manager Duane Cannon appeared before the Board to request their approval of the Road Projects to be submitted to FDOT for the 5-year Road Project Plan.

**Not Programmed**

McCrabb Landing Road NE 349<sup>th</sup> Ave, NE 765<sup>th</sup> Ave, NE 356<sup>th</sup> Ave from SR 349 to NE 339<sup>th</sup> Ave.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve McCrabb Landing Road NE 349<sup>th</sup> Ave. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

Jena CR 358 from US 19 to SW 661<sup>st</sup> St.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to approve Jena CR 358 from US 19. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.***

Rudolph Parrott Road SE 71<sup>st</sup> Ave, SE 265<sup>th</sup> ST, SE 269<sup>th</sup> St from CR 351 S to SE 60<sup>th</sup> Ave.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve Rudolph Parrott Road SE 71<sup>st</sup> Ave. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

**Programmed**

NE 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave from NE 592<sup>nd</sup> St to US 19

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve to waive the Solid Waste, monthly 4 yard can fee, for Eddy Hines in lieu of county access across his property to access the new rock pit site.

***Commissioner Mills made the motion to approve to waive the Solid Waste, monthly can fee, for Eddy Hines in lieu of county access across his property to access the new rock pit site. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve to execute the Amended Agreement with DSI for the ARPA administrative oversight. Language has been added to be compliant with ARPA guidelines.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve to execute the Amended Agreement with DSI for the ARPA administrative oversight. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve or deny the six driveways on the list as presented: Mary Goodrich, Valorie Pitts, Cynthia Alfonso, Jerry Chaney, Terri Reisen, Lewis David.

Attorney Osteen said they must have a legislative finding of valid public benefit to go on private property in the minutes.

Commissioner Stephenson said that EMS and Fire have equipment to access and help people. He said the county does not have the funds to fix all these roads.

Commissioner Storey said the Board may do away with this because they can't do this legally any way. He said he would also like to help some people. He said he understands that some people were turned down last time.

Commissioner Hatch said the Governor's State of Emergency says the Board can do this.

Attorney Osteen said they have discussed this several meetings. He said this must benefit more than one household.

Manager Cannon said he needs direction from the Board.

Commissioner Storey said if we can't fix them all them, we can't fix just one, either.

Attorney Osteen said the emergency nature is now gone.

Commissioner Storey said yes, they could not fix anything due to water standing and now the water is gone.

Commissioner Mills asked what is considered the public, one person or 100 people.

Commissioner Stephenson said individual private driveways do not fall under a public benefit.

Commissioner Mills asked why we would get in a lawsuit if we fix them as we can when we can and continue to service all of them.

Commissioner Stephenson said there are several private easement roads throughout the county.

Commissioner Mills asked them if they can fix them all or not or adopt a policy to fix what you can when you can.

Attorney Osteen said this is not legal to fix these specific driveways. He said that his opinion is based on attorney general opinions and other counties and such.

Commissioner Mills said they want to help everyone legally.

Commissioner Valentine said the Board has done this for years.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to deny these specific roads to be fixed unless they can fix all the driveways. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

***Commissioner Mills said to let the record show he voted no on this motion.***

***Commissioner Mills made a motion to get a decision on fixing private driveways from the Governor for what is allowed and not allowed. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve to execute the Supplemental Agreement with Passero for Runway 4-22, project # 431310-1-94-22 in the amount of \$119,660.00.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to execute the Supplemental Agreement with Passero for Runway 4-22, project # 431310-1-94-22. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve to continue staging lime rock at various locations in the county right-of-way for road repairs as needed.

Commissioner Hatch said to stop this staging.

Commissioner Stephenson said this should not be in the right of way.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to table staging lime rock at various locations in the county right-of-way for road repairs as needed. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve to accept the Courthouse Renovation Plans as presented.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to accept the Courthouse Renovation Plans as presented. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve for the road work on SE 909<sup>th</sup> Ave in the town of Suwannee for the purpose of drainage improvement.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve for the road work on SE 909<sup>th</sup> Ave in the town of Suwannee for the purpose of drainage improvement. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Commissioner Hatch said this would be handled in house and would need six loads milling and tow loads of rock.

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve for an Administrative Day on December 30, 2021 for all BOCC employees, following suit with Governor Ron DeSantis' announcement of the closing for state offices on this day.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve an Administrative Day on December 30, 2021 for all BOCC employees, following suit with Governor Ron DeSantis' announcement of the closing for state offices on this day. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve to set up a date for a workshop with the town of Horseshoe Beach Representatives to discuss some business.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that the new Mayor, James McClellan, would like to meet and discuss some business.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to schedule a Workshop with the Town of Horseshoe on January 06, 2022 at 9:00 AM. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Manager Cannon requested the Board approve for Dennis Rollison to utilize the Board easement off NE 299<sup>th</sup> St behind the Transfer Station as access to his leased pasture.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to allow Mr. Dennis Rollison to utilize the Board easement off NE 299<sup>th</sup> St behind the Transfer Station as access to his pasture. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board approved.***

Commissioner Hatch said make sure to keep the gates closed.

Manager Cannon informed the Board that they Mail/Emailed/Faxed a letter to Senator Hutson on SB 1078 Soil and Water Conservation Abolishment and they also sent this to Senator Bradley and Chris Doolin as well.

County Manager's Office has now filled out and submitted all Special Assessment changes to the County Tax Collector's Office to date. He said they have done 180 parcels.

**MICHAEL OSTEEN, COUNTY ATTORNEY**

County Attorney Michael Osteen appeared before the Board to discuss a lease extension. He said they have a MOU since 2015 with the Lower Suwannee Communication Shelter Sharing to share a tower with a five-year renewal contract.

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

Attorney Osteen said the Board is a plaintiff in the Opioid lawsuit represented by Avera and Smith. He requested the Chairman sign the paperwork so the county can receive funds from the lawsuit.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion for the Chairman sign the paperwork. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.***

Attorney Osteen asked the Deputy Clerk about clearing up some old business for Building and Zoning.

Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk Della Rhymes informed the Board that Ordinance #2020-04 will need to be reaffirmed.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to reaffirm Ordinance 2020-04. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board reaffirmed.***

Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk Della Rhymes informed the Board that Resolution #2020-02 will need to be reaffirmed.

***Commissioner Stephenson made the motion to reaffirm Resolution 2020-02. Commissioner Hatch seconded. Board reaffirmed.***

Commissioner Stephenson asked about an issue presented by Mr. Guy Richardson. He asked if this has been checked on by the County Manager.

Manager Cannon said he is looking at this and will go over this with Attorney Osteen.

**BARBIE HIGGINBOTHAM, CLERK OF COURT**

Clerk Higginbotham had nothing to discuss at this time.

**At 7:04 PM** Commissioner Stephenson requested that everyone go outside for his presentation. He stated that along with heavy rainfall there were also other mitigating factors which contributed to flooding. He said that a project that was started in 2008 has raised the water table. He said this will take 10 or so years for the water table to go back down. He said Mathis Lake goes dry periodically. He proceeded to give a visual explanation of how the rainwater is affected by the different layers of material in the lake. He said that sometimes digging to drain property



also causes the property to flood. He also gave a visual presentation of the canal systems and the Mathis Lake gates and how they affect water shed throughout the county. He pleaded that people from Tallahassee come down and look at the devastation of the county and provide some assistance. **Concluded 7:20 PM**

### **COUNTY COMMISSION ITEMS**

Commissioner Valentine had nothing to discuss at this time.

Commissioner Hatch said he went to the meeting in Suwannee about the General Manager for the Water and Sewer Plant. He said the privatization was tabled. He said that Mr. John Taylor had stepped down due to health issues. He said there are four people who are qualified to serve: Karen Ross, Talmadge Strickland, Linda Brock and Butch Carr.

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion for Ms. Karen Ross to fill the vacant position previously held by John Taylor on the Suwannee Water and Sewer Board. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.***

***Commissioner Hatch made the motion to approve Mr. Talmadge Strickland to replace Mr. Maxie Clark on the Suwannee Water and Sewer Board. Commissioner Mills seconded. Board approved.***

Commissioner Hatch said there are three elected seats available for this Board. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Stephenson said he wanted to go on record that he is not in agreement with the Board voting to bring Mr. Steve Hutchison back after assaulting him with no repercussions. He said this means you can hit a supervisor with no repercussions. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Stephenson recommended the rotation of the county crew for the Graders and everyone work together to clean the ditches and concentrate in one area at a time.

Manager Cannon said they have talked about fixing one district at a time in the past.

Commissioner Storey said this will put a lot of wear and tear on a Grader. He thanked everyone for attending and wished them a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Mills apologized for not being present and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. He said that in his experience when you combine crews to work on the same project, they are less productive.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**

Mr. David Fulks spoke to the Board and said he opposes Mr. Talmadge Strickland to the Suwannee Water and Sewer Board. He said he is not suitable for the position.

Ms. Robin Rouse spoke to the Board and said she has been getting a lot of resistance from the public. She said people have knocked over her mailbox and code enforcement has been called to me. She said she has a RV that is used for storage and was told to move it out of sight. She requested this be grandfathered in, so she does not have to move this.

Commissioner Hatch said you can use this for storage. He suggested she see Building and Zoning.

Ms. Rouse asked about getting some workers to clean up the trash and litter in the Hammock.

Ms. Rouse asked if the Board had voted on the Storm Water Mitigation money.

Commissioner Stephenson said that has been sent to the state.

Commissioner Hatch said this is a work in progress.

Mr. Burt Buzbee spoke to the Board and said he did not allow any tires to be dumped at roll off site #1. He asked how the attendants will be affected after January 01, 2022 when they tell people there is no dumping without a decal. He asked how to handle this issue and who is responsible.

Commissioner Hatch said this has been addressed.

Mr. Latson said they have talked about this. He said the decal must be visible to the attendant. He said that out of county garbage being dumped is a problem. He said that he followed someone from Alachua County with a truck and trailer load and they pulled into a Dixie County roll off site. He said he called the law.

Mr. Latson said if there is a problem call the Sheriff.

***Commissioner Mills made the motion for the dump decal to be visible to the attendant. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Board approved.***

Commissioner Stephenson asked about some missing stickers for the dump.

Mr. Latson said they do have the serial numbers when they show up.

Commissioner Stephenson said that Dixie County hauls more beds and bed springs to Aucilla than any other county. He said he thinks some of this comes from other counties.

Mr. Latson said these are coming from motels across the river.

Commissioner Mills said that everyone needs to comply and follow the rules and regulations. He said this may save you money on your tax bill. He said that Dixie County has more trash and scrap metal than others because its coming from other counties.

Commissioner Stephenson said if you don't want a sticker, the citizens can also hire a private person to haul trash.

Ms. Linda Brock spoke to the Board about recycling and asked if this was a possibility. Commissioner Hatch said they tried that before and it was a nightmare.

Ms. Brock spoke to the Board and asked about the difference between the Storm Grant money and the COVID money. Commissioner Hatch said hopefully the money can be combined and used.

Human Resources Administrator: Ms. Angie Crowley informed the Board that they need CDL drivers.

Mr. Latson said you can recycle at the transfer station.

**ADJOURN**

*Commissioner Hatch made the motion to adjourn at 7:54 PM. Commissioner Valentine seconded. Board approved.*

ATTEST:



*Barbie Higginbotham*  
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk-Auditor

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
DIXIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

*Janie Storey*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Janie Storey, Chairman

**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.*