

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
COURTHOUSE ANNEX – COMMISSION MEETING ROOM  
REGULAR MEETING, JANUARY 7, 2020 9:00 A.M.  
MINUTES**

**Commissioners Present:** Noah Lockley – Chairman, Ricky Jones-Vice-Chairman, Joseph Parrish, William Massey, Bert B. Boldt, II

**Others Present:** Erin Griffith-Assistant Finance Director, Michael Moron-County Coordinator, Michael Shuler – County Attorney, Lori P. Hines-Deputy Clerk to the Board.

**Call to Order**

Chairman Lockley called the meeting to Order.

**Prayer and Pledge**

There was a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Minutes**

1. Minutes-December 17, 2019

**On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 17, 2019.**

**Payment of County Bills**

2. Bill List for Payment

**On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Massey, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve payment of the County's bills.**

**Public Comments**

Mrs. Donna Butterfield, a resident of St. George Island, stated the contract for the Weems Memorial Hospital radiology department was scheduled to expire on New Year's Eve. She explained an Emergency Department that cannot take an x-ray is ready to be shut down and major liability lawsuits against this Board could have occurred. She reported at the last minute the contract was extended for 30 days. Mrs. Butterfield proposed the Board invite

Ascension/Sacred Heart into the community to provide health care in a fiscally responsible way and to prevent dangerous situations from happening. She suggested if the Board wants to help the citizens of the county and maintain employment numbers they can have a qualified provider come in and lease Weems Memorial Hospital as a nursing home. She reported then the county would have an ER facility, two doctor's offices, a large rehabilitation facility and a nursing home.

Mr. Alan Feifer, Concerned Citizens of Franklin County, discussed trust and transparency and said he has a good relationship with the Board and county staff. He reported he does not have that confidence with the Hospital Board or their CEO. He stated when he asked questions at the Hospital Board meeting he was told that was not the appropriate place and to put his questions in writing. He explained yesterday when he put something in writing he was told to ask the question at the Hospital Board meeting so apparently there is no place to ask the questions. Mr. Feifer stated the hospital was almost forced to close on New Year's Eve due to the expiring radiology contract and then the contract was extended 30 days. He said the Weems CEO was not forthcoming about this. He reported 2 of the Hospital Board members want to leave the Board because the numbers are being played with and decisions are being preordained rather than being fact based. Mr. Feifer said there is a level of intimation on the Hospital Board. He requested they start the year off with truth and transparency because the public trust is eroding. Mr. Feifer asked the Board to make good decisions so everyone can move forward in 2020 with a modern effective health care system.

## **Department Directors Report**

### **Superintendent of Public Works – Howard Nabors**

#### **3. Report**

##### **Action Items:**

None

##### **Information Items:**

- A. Work Performed/Material Hauled Report (Agenda Packet)

Mr. Nabors said they finally have a full crew back today and over the next two weeks will begin to grade roads and address garbage scattered over the county. He reported they will also be cutting the trails out at St. George Island in the next couple of weeks.

### **Solid Waste Director – Fonda Davis**

#### **4. Report**

##### **Action Items:**

None

**Information Items:**

A. Debris Pickup/Recycle Material Hauled Report (Agenda Packet)

Mr. Davis provided an update on the meeting yesterday with the City of Carrabelle, the City of Apalachicola and the Sheriff's Department in reference to animal control. He said things will remain the same as far as patrolling and at the meeting he assured them the county is in the process of hiring someone part-time to provide weekend coverage. He reported the Sheriff has agreed to have calls come from dispatch. He explained after hours during the day if someone calls Animal Control direct they will then call the Sheriff's Department dispatch and an officer will be dispatched to the complaint. He said if the call requires Animal Control then they will come out and if they are not required then the Sheriff's Department will address the complaint. Mr. Davis reported the City of Carrabelle has submitted questions they would like answered in relation to animal control. He asked if the Board would like him to answer the questions or if he should have Attorney Shuler look over the questions before they are answered. The Board agreed Attorney Shuler should look over these questions. Attorney Shuler said he will meet with Mr. Davis to discuss the questions and come up with a plan of action and responses. He stated if necessary they will bring this item back to the Board for any decisions. **On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Boldt, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize Mr. Davis to meet with Attorney Shuler on this matter.**

**Emergency Management Director – Pam Brownell**

5. Report

**Action Items:**

None

**Information Item:**

- A. Staff worked on updating the LMS (local mitigation strategy).
- B. FCEM Staff continues to work on FEMA reimbursement claims from Hurricane Michael. This includes working with FEMA staff regarding mitigation of damaged parks, roads, etc. Mitigation takes some time but EOC Staff continue to work diligently with FEMA Staff on the most beneficial repairs for Franklin County.
- C. Please see attached update on FEMA Reimbursement for Hurricane Michael

Chairman Lockley asked about the FEMA reimbursement. Mrs. Brownell said she talked with FEMA yesterday and our Project Manager has pushed everything forward and they are waiting on FEMA. Commissioner Jones asked what CRC stands for in the report. Mrs. Jennifer Daniels, Emergency Management Department, answered Cumulative Resource Center which is the

FEMA Center that pulls all the documentation and puts all the projects in. Commissioner Jones said it is the next step for compiling the documents. Mrs. Daniels agreed.

#### **Extension Office Director – Erik Lovestrand**

##### **5. County Extension Activities December 18, 2019 – January 7, 2020**

#### **General Extension Activities:**

Extension office assisted clientele with issues related to soil samples, palm tree seedling control, pine tree deaths, oyster farming issues, injured wildlife, and citrus tree health. Staff has begun moving more things to the new office location as the final floor work is being completed in early January. Plans for an open house event will be started as we get closer to being fully operational in the building.

Overall Extension Advisory Committee met for their second meeting of the year to discuss work during 2019 and plans for 2020.

#### **Sea Grant Extension:**

Extension Director participated in second Apalachicola Bay System Initiative meeting as part of the Community Advisory Board for the FSU-led Bay Restoration Effort.

Discussions continue with Sea Grant colleagues regarding a publication aimed at providing lessons learned by shellfish growers during Hurricane Michael preparation and aftermath. This will assist them with using best farm management practices to minimize losses and speed recovery following extreme weather events.

#### **4-H Youth Development:**

Apalachicola's 4-H Elite club participated in a service project with local seniors by donating blankets, socks and crocheted hats to help keep people warm this winter.

They also coordinated a "hidden book challenge" for the local community to encourage youth to read and share the books with others.

#### **Family Consumer Sciences:**

Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Assistant teaching hands-on cooking skills with pre-K youth to 8th grade with "Kids in the Kitchen curriculum. Includes kitchen safety, cooking skills, how to follow recipes and, always the favorite part, taste testing.

NPA Program Assistant has engaged a new pre-K site to be involved with the FNP program. This will involve youth in the Head Start program in Apalachicola with nutrition education.

#### **Franklin County Educational Team**

Erik Lovestrand, County Extension Director/Sea Grant Regional Specialized Agent

Michelle Huber, Office Manager/Program Assistant, Franklin County  
Kayle Mears, Family Nutrition Program Assistant  
Samantha Kennedy, Wakulla County Family and Consumer Sciences  
Rachel Pienta, Ph.D., Wakulla County 4-H Youth Development

Mr. Lovestrand said they will be doing a major move on Thursday to get their items out of the Armory and over to the new building. He stated they are also working on getting their internet and phone system set up. He reported they will have an open house in January. Commissioner Jones said he understands they had a Board meeting at the new building and the committee members he spoke with liked the building. Mr. Lovestrand agreed they hosted the Extension Advisory Committee meeting at this facility. He said Mr. Rex Pennycuff is their Chairman and is doing a good job.

### **RFP / RFQ / Bids Opening**

Mr. Moron read the following item:

7. The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners will open and read aloud received sealed bids for constructing C.R. 67/ Tallahassee Street Sidewalk Improvements. The project is located in Franklin County, Florida and consists of approximately 11,558 linear feet of sidewalk construction on CR 67/Tallahassee Street in Carrabelle, Florida.

**Request:** Board action to send the bids to the engineer for review and a recommendation.

Mr. Moron opened and read the bids, as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
CDM Contracting, Inc.	Lake Butler, FL	\$785,389.95
North Florida Construction, Inc.	Clarksville, FL	\$826,420.00

Both bids had a Bid Bond. **On motion by Commissioner Boldt, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to send the bids to the engineer for review and a recommendation.**

### **SHIP Program – Lori Switzer – Report**

Mrs. Switzer presented her report for the Board, as follows:

#### **8. Report**

#### **Hurricane Housing Recovery Program (HHRP)**

Just to recap, the County has been granted disaster funds in the amount of \$1,235,000 through Florida Housing, due to Hurricane Michael.

Approximately half of the funds have been released to the county which has enabled me to really move forward.

We ran the ad in the August 29th issue of the times. The application period ran for two weeks, from Oct 1 through the 16th. We received 46 applications which consist of:

7 houses

35 mobile homes

3 campers- referred to Angela Webster w/Capital Area Community Action

1 renter who is now homeless-we are currently in the process of helping with down payment assistance.

The SHIP inspector Michael McWilliams and I went to each of the mobile homes, took pictures and assessed the damage. Priority was given to actual hurricane damage, special needs and low to very low-income applicants.

At this point we will definitely be able to assist at least 19 applicants. 7 house repairs, 8 new mobile homes and 4 with mobile home repairs. The goal is to assist more applicants, but that will depend on how much is actually spent on the repairs and new mobile homes.

I am currently in the process of getting the applicants paperwork in order and getting contractors involved in starting on the repairs. In the meantime, we are working on the bid package and advertisement for the new mobile homes.

Chairman Lockley asked if Ms. Switzer is able to talk with a company so they can provide all the mobile homes and give them a reduction in the cost. Mrs. Switzer said that is next but they must run an advertisement for the bid process.

Ms. Switzer provided an update on SHIP, as follows:

### **State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP)**

For the FY 2018-2019 funds we have been able to assist 31 applicants.

5 with down payment assistance

8 with Rehabilitation and emergency repairs

18 with Disaster funds (\$10,000 grants-mostly assisted with roofing)

We ran the ad for applications for FY 2019-2020 this past September and accepted applications in the month of October.

We received 12 applications for the rehabilitation and emergency repair programs. We should be able to assist all of the applicants on the waiting list. We also have funds for Down Payment Assistance. We do not have a deadline for that program and have funds available until they are spent.

Chairman Lockley asked if she submitted the names of the 12 applicants for this program. Mrs. Switzer answered no. Commissioner Jones thanked Ms. Switzer for providing this report. He explained it is good for the Board and the public to hear the good that is going on in the county.

**Clerk of Courts – Marcia M. Johnson – Report**

The Clerk's Office did not have a report.

**RESTORE Coordinator – Alan Pierce – Report**

There was not a RESTORE report at this time.

**County Coordinator – Michael Morón – Report**

Mr. Moron presented his action items, as follows:

**Action Items**

10. FDEM Weems: At your December 3rd meeting, Mr. Pierce presented an amendment that he sent to the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) regarding the loss of revenue at Weems Memorial Hospital due to Hurricane Michael. Staff received the FDEM agreement, allocating some \$266,000, for Weems loss of revenue claim for expenses. FDEM is asking that the County sign and return the agreement prior to January 17 as the state would like to pay these funds as expeditiously as possible.

**Request:** Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman's signature on the FDEM agreement allocating \$266,578.78 to Weems Memorial as part of the Hurricane Michael Recovery Grant Program.

**On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Parrish, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve the FDEM agreement allocating \$266,578.78 to Weems Memorial Hospital as part of the Hurricane Michael Recovery Grant Program and authorize the Chairman's signature on the agreement.** Attorney Shuler stated when the paperwork came in originally it said the money would be used for capital improvements. He reported the state was notified that this is a revenue replacement not a capital program so the paperwork is being amended to reflect that. Mr. Moron stated they have received the amended paperwork.

11. Library Director: At your last meeting I was directed to have a meeting with the Library Director, the second meeting in his first sixty days, regarding on going complaints and problems received by Commissioners and county staff about his treatment of library staff members, library program volunteers, and patrons and the continued neglect of his daily responsibilities as Director. I met with Mr. Corey Bard on January 2nd to discuss these matters. Mr. Bard agreed that he needed to do a better job with his day to day responsibilities, however, he felt that any complaints about the way he treated staff, volunteers, and patrons had to be "made up" because he got along with everyone he came in contact with here in the county. I reminded

Mr. Bard that he was on a probationary period and could be dismissed by the Board with or without cause. I further explained that based on the comments made by the Board at the December 17th meeting, I wasn't sure how the Board would react to my update of our meeting. I made an offer to Mr. Bard, allowing him to resign with a severance pay option if he thought this job was no longer a fit for him; Mr. Bard refused that offer. At the end of our meeting, I advised Mr. Bard that I would update the Board on the results of the meeting. On Saturday, January 4, 2020 at 4:26 pm (ET) I received the following message from Mr. Bard: *"Just a warning, if I am fired, I will build a legal team, interview the directors going back a decade and present a case of an environment of intimidation, harassment and I have the resources to file lawsuits for the rest of your life"*

I remind the Board that Mr. Bard is slightly 2 months into his 6-month probation period and even though he has a master's in library science and work experience, based on his threat and drastic reaction to our meeting, I believe improvement is unlikely.

Although Mr. Bard is a probationary employee without a property interest in his employment, he has a liberty interest in his employment. If the Board decides to take adverse employment action against Mr. Bard, he must be permitted, at his request, to appear before the Board to tell his side of the story. Mr. Moron said this has been done in coordination with the labor attorney as the Board directed at the last meeting.

**Request:** Board action to take disciplinary action regarding Mr. Corey Bard's employment as the county's Director of Library Services.

**On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Massey, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to dismiss Mr. Bard and have a letter of separation put in his file from the labor attorney.**

12. Timber Island Road: The county has received the Florida Department of Transportation signed agreement for the work on Timber Island Road. This \$800,000 project includes repaving Timber Island Road from Highway 98 to the Carrabelle River and building guardrails on the Timber Island Bridge. Board authorization to start negotiations with the county's engineering firm, Dewberry Engineers, Inc. to design the improvements for this project.

**Request:** Board action to authorize county staff to start negotiations with Dewberry Engineers, Inc. for the project design.

**On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Parrish, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize county staff to start negotiations with Dewberry Engineers, Inc. for the project design.**

13. Pastor David Walker, Weems Interim CEO, informed me that Weems was selected to participate in a Technical Assistance Program with Texas A & M University. They will have representatives in the county on January 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> to conduct a site visit at Weems. Those representatives would like to be on the January 21st meeting agenda to explain the grant and



do a brief presentation entitled “The State of Rural Health Care”. The Weems Board Chairman and Interim CEO are both expected to be on the January 21st agenda to give an update and discuss the Healthcare proposals.

**Request:** Board action to add Texas A & M to the January 21st agenda.

**On motion by Commissioner Boldt, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to add Texas A & M to the January 21<sup>st</sup> Agenda.**

14. Genesis Halff, Inc. the engineers for County Road 30A project, has finalized the merger with Halff Associates, Inc. They would like the Board to authorize a consent assigning the county’s contract with Genesis Halff, Inc. to Halff Associates, Inc. Attorney Shuler will need to review the Contract Assignment Agreement. I have included a progress report (agenda packet) from Halff on the County Road 30A project.

**Request:** Board action to authorize the Chairman’s signature on the Contract Assignment Agreement assigning the county contract from Genesis Halff, Inc. to Halff Associates, Inc. contingent on the county attorney’s review and approval.

**On motion by Commissioner Parrish, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize the Chairman’s signature on the Contract Assignment Agreement assigning the county contract to Genesis Halff, Inc. to Halff Associations, Inc. contingent upon the County Attorney’s review and approval.**

### Information Items

15. DEO Quarterly Report: Mr. Pierce has submitted the Agreement DL012 Quarterly Report for period ending December 31, 2019 to the Department of Economic Opportunity. This agreement is for the \$750,000 that the county plans to use as a match for the FEMA Alligator Drive restoration project. The county is waiting for FEMA to approve Alligator Drive’s scope of work.

16. Tate’s Hell Ten-Year Land Management Plan: Attached to my report (Agenda Packet) is the Tate’s Hell Ten-Year Land Management Plan for your review. The plan was approved on October 18, 2019.

17. “Buddy” Ward Reef: The county has received a fully executed permit for the “Buddy” Ward Artificial Reef project. Mr. Grayson Shepard will appear at a future meeting to discuss the next steps with the Board.

18. 2020 TRIP Sidewalk Project: Based on Commissioner Parrish’s request at the last meeting, Mr. Curenton was able to verify that the sidewalk walk project, from around the NAPA store to Burger King here in Apalachicola, was not selected for funding. FDOT will send some guidance and instructions for re-applying for 2020 TRIP funding.

19. Extension Services Office Contract Amendment: At a previous meeting Mr. Erik Lovestrand, Extension Services Director, stated that there was a possibility that the county would request a contract extension for his new office renovation project. Due to some flooring issues, staff did

request and receive the contract amendment to extend the contract date. The flooring issues has been resolved and as soon as the contractor completes the work, we will close out the contract.

20. Building Inspector: On December 18, 2019, Mr. Patterson, your Building Inspector, was issued a Provisional 1 and 2 Family Dwelling Inspector license which allows him to perform all duties of a 1 and 2 Family Dwelling Inspector. He has one year from December 18 to pass all Building Inspector examinations but anticipates completion of these exams in 6 months. After that, Mr. Patterson will pursue his Building Official license which will take an additional six months to a year.

Commissioner Jones mentioned the Tate's Hell Management Plan is included in the informational items.

Mr. Moron said there will be a media release starting today on the technical assistance grant and Texas A & M coming here. He stated a copy of the final press release will be emailed to the Board.

### **Capital Area Community Action Agency – Angela Webster – Request**

Mrs. Webster read the following request:

#### **9. Request**

I received a call from the family at 579 Ridge Road requesting assistance with repairs to their home – damages caused by Limerock Fire. I was able to confirm from the list provided by EOC vinyl siding was damaged. The family residing at the above named address do not meet the income criteria for CDBG. I have collected all required documentation for proof of identity and proof of income to confirm the family is in fact ineligible due to income. The family informed me they were unable to arrange to have the home assessed as no local contractors were available. I reached out to a few local contractors to include: · Oxendine Construction Services (No answer, left several messages) · Greg Prickett Builders (No answer, voicemail box full – unable to leave message) · Poloronis Construction (Agreed to assess home, but not available until first of the year) I spoke with Tress (EOC) about the challenges of securing a contractor for this case. Tress referred me to Budget Remodeling & Solutions out of Bay County. I reached out to the company and they were on site within a week. During the assessment of the outside damage, survivor informed the contractor there was damage to the inside wall and flooring. It appears that over time the damages have caused leakage, so the quote includes the cost to repair the outside damage as well as inside. I have attached the estimate from Budget Remodeling & Solutions for a total of \$4063.64. They are asking for \$2000 down and the remainder once the job is complete. **Request:** Board action to approve use of fire relief funds to pay for the cost to repair damages to vinyl siding at 579 Ridge Road as the survivors do not qualify for CDBG?

**On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to use the fire relief funds to pay for the cost to repair damages to vinyl siding at 579 Ridge Road.**

Chairman Lockley asked if this will take care of all the survivors. Ms. Webster said there are 7 people left in campers. She explained their leases will expire in the next month or two and she requested the Board extend the leases for 6 months until they have permanent housing. **On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to extend the leases for 6 months for these 7 individuals.** Commissioner Boldt asked how Ms. Webster's agency coordinates with SHIP. Mr. Moron said they actually coordinate closer with Mrs. Deborah Belcher, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Administrator. He explained SHIP has stricter rules and regulations than the rules for the Capital Area Community Action Agency. Commissioner Jones reported Capital Area Community Action Agency is also specifically related to the Limerock fire and so is Mrs. Belcher. He stated Ms. Switzer is addressing hurricane recovery. Chairman Lockley reported they are doing a good job.

#### **County Attorney – Michael Shuler – Report**

Attorney Shuler said he does not have a report for the Board. He offered to answer any questions.

#### **Commissioners' Comments**

Commissioner Boldt asked if they have a strategy or talking points for Legislative Days. Chairman Lockley reported they will ask for money and help. Commissioner Jones said their talking points should be the same as the ones that were presented at the Legislative Delegation meeting. Commissioner Massey said they must reinforce these items. Mr. Moron reported the Board needs to get money for the fire suppression system at the Armory because they need to get this work done. Chairman Lockley stated they ask for what they must have. Commissioner Boldt reported this is a life safety issue at the Armory. Commissioner Jones said it may help that Visit Florida has committed in April to holding a statewide conference at the Armory.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

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Noah Lockley - Chairman

Attest:

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Marcia M. Johnson - Clerk of Courts