

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING  
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM**

**SEPTEMBER 8, 2020**

**4:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

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

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

**Call to Order**

*A. Public Notice*

*To comply with CDC and Government social distancing requirements, the general public will not be allowed in the commission meeting room for this meeting; therefore, this Board of County Commission regular meeting will be conducted via livestream and Zoom. Those wanting to view the meeting can use the livestream link (<https://www.youtube.com/user/SGIBeachLife>) or go to Forgotten Coast TV's YouTube Page. The livestream feed will promptly start 5 minutes before the meeting commences. Those wanting to participate during "Public Comments" should use the Zoom log-in/call-in information provided below. There is a link to a list of videos and Getting Started Resources on the main "Agenda and Minutes" webpage for those unfamiliar with Zoom. If you are experiencing any issues with the livestream or Zoom, call (850) 653-9783 extension 373 for assistance.*

*Any person who wishes to appeal a decision made by the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners, with respect to any matter considered at the meeting, must have a record of the proceedings. He or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made.*

**B. Franklin County BOCC is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

**Topic: BOCC Special Meeting - CARES Act Funding**

**Time: Sep 8, 2020 04:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Join Zoom Meeting with Computer, Tablet, Smartphone**

**<https://zoom.us/j/93408473770>**

**Meeting ID: 934 0847 3770**

**One tap mobile**

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+1 312 626 6799  
+1 669 900 6833  
+1 253 215 8782  
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Meeting ID: 934 0847 3770

Chairman Lockley called the meeting to Order.

### **Prayer and Pledge**

Commissioner Jones said a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Public Comments**

*This is an opportunity for the public to comment on agenda or non-agenda items. When you are recognized to be heard by the Chairman, please sign the speaker's log and adhere to the time limit. An individual will be allowed to speak for three minutes whereas a designated representative of a group or faction will be allowed to speak for five minutes.*

There was no public comments.

### **CARES Act Funding - Traci Buzbee - Presentation**

- C. Mrs. Buzbee will discuss and answer questions regarding the CARES Act funding program.

Ms. Buzbee said she will address the businesses at the end of the discussion. She stated on September 7<sup>th</sup> she sent a list of all of the expenses to date. She reported the Sheriff's Office has some items that are eligible and some that are non-eligible. She explained the only other non-eligible expense was submitted from the Clerk's Office and it was for revenue loss. Ms. Buzbee pointed out currently revenue loss is not an item that is eligible. She stated if the Heroes Act passes in the next couple of weeks there is language in the Act that would allow the county to use 25% of CARES Act funding for revenue loss. She reported there are some recommendations on moving items to line items but other than that these are all proposed expenses. Ms. Buzbee stated some of the ones with the Sheriff's Office are questionable and either she or someone else can follow up with the Sheriff's Office. She highlighted these items for the Board. She stated all of these items must be related back to COVID so she does not see body cams being covered. She said the CAD software requested by the Sheriff's Office also has nothing to do with COVID and is actually a state requirement. Ms. Buzbee explained she does not know how the sally port repair is COVID related. She said she is not sure if the Board wants to discuss the requests from the Sheriff's Office or how they want to proceed. Commissioner Parrish stated his understanding is if the CARES Act funds are expended in the wrong way the county is responsible for paying the money back. Ms. Buzbee agreed and said they will audit the county. Commissioner Parrish reported he is relying on her as their consultant and administrator of this

program to make sure that does not happen. He expressed concern that if this money is spent the wrong way the money to pay it back will come from the taxpayers. He said he is not going to discuss different submittals because that is her job. Commissioner Parrish reported she is being paid to look out for the Board and the taxpayers. He explained he would prefer to be cautious because he does not want to submit anything that may not be eligible. Commissioner Parrish reported he looked through what was submitted and he requested at an earlier meeting that the Board be more involved and see where they are going rather than finding out at the end. He stated he is not reviewing all of this because he is not familiar with what is allowed under the CARES Act. Commissioner Parrish said the business requests will be reviewed by Opportunity Florida. He stated they are relying on Ms. Buzbee for the other requests. He explained it is up to her to determine if they are eligible or not and to let the Board know why she came to that determination. Ms. Buzbee reported she read all the guidance and looked at every webinar and any update. She said she read the Heroes Act and is staying on top of this because it is changing. Ms. Buzbee explained she wants the Board to know if a constitutional officer does not like what they hear from her the Board will know why she is taking that action. Commissioner Parrish agreed when she decides what they will fund and what they will not the Board needs to know why. He said the Commissioners have I-pads so she can keep them updated on what is going on. Commissioner Parrish stated they hired a consultant because they wanted someone who was connected with all the state agencies and could make a determination like Ms. Buzbee is doing. He reported it is hard work and the county is paying a premium for administrative fees. Ms. Buzbee stated the fee is 5% of the contract and if they took 5% of the \$2.1 million their fee would be \$105,000. She explained to date the fee might be \$8,000 so there is no way they will get to that amount. She reported they bill for real hours and are not billing just to reach the \$105,000. Commissioner Parrish said it will take a lot of hours to do this but he just wants it to be done right. Ms. Buzbee reported the county has a contract in hand with cash in hand for \$528,930 and they are promised another contract for 75% which would bring the amount up to \$2.1 million in total funds. She stated there is a delay because those contracts have not been released yet and there is no absolute date when they will be sent out. Ms. Buzbee said this comes up every time they have a state call and she encouraged the Commission to contact the Governor's Budget and Contracts Office to see what is going on. She said if the county only gets \$528,000 this conversation goes away because there is no way they can afford all these things. She reported the Governor sent something out Thursday or Friday maybe to the chairman asking what ordinances they have put in place and what have they spent. She explained they do not know if they are trying to determine who needs contracts. Ms. Buzbee suggested they may need to contact Representative Jason Shoaf's office and have him contact the Governor's Office. She stated they need to know whether they will send the contract or not because the money must be spent by December 30<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Lockley said he received the message but did not know what to tell them since they had not talked with her. Ms. Buzbee questioned which message he received because one came from the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) and one came directly from the Governor's Office. She explained the one from FAC was a 4 pages questionnaire. She commented one response is due back to the Governor on Wednesday and other one is not due back to the Governor until the 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Moron explained the response due on the 15<sup>th</sup> is asking about any ordinances that were adopted or restrictions that were put in place because of COVID. He was not sure the

county received the other email. Ms. Buzbee said she has not seen the email but Calhoun County received it. Commissioner Jones explained the Governor signed an Executive Order and FAC put that in the email and they have until the 15<sup>th</sup> to respond. Mr. Moron said that is the email requesting documentation and the county has 2 ordinances and 1 Resolution that will be sent. Ms. Buzbee asked if Chairman Lockley got a call or email from the Governor. Chairman Lockley stated it came from FAC. Ms. Buzbee read an email which asks all counties to send a detailed letter stating the COVID measures they have implemented. Mr. Moron said he got the same email but the deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Buzbee explained the only other 2 questionable requests are the State Attorney's Office expense for computers and the body storage at the funeral home. She said Mr. Moron explained the State Attorney's Office purchases computers every 2 years. Mr. Moron stated he is verifying with the State Attorney's Office that they purchased something out of the normal rotation of computers for COVID. Ms. Buzbee reported the request from Kelley Funeral Home is for body storage for COVID-19. She stated it does not have anyone's name and she asked the staff at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and they did not know either. Clerk Johnson said she asked about this and her staff said the medical examiner because of COVID has nowhere to accept the bodies in Tallahassee so Kelley's Funeral Home had to provide something with refrigeration for the bodies. Ms. Buzbee questioned if this would be a family expense. Mr. Moron replied no, because they have a contract to transport the bodies since the county does not have a medical examiner. Mr. Moron said they need to find out if they get paid extra from the medical examiner's office. Ms. Buzbee stated this is a questionable one so they will need the contract and need to write something up. Clerk Johnson offered to call Mrs. Griffith about this item. Commissioner Massey said this bill was paid on the bills from last month. Mr. Moron agreed to find out what this bill is for. Ms. Buzbee stated she was asked by a Commissioner to go through what other counties are doing and what is eligible. She reported the other counties are doing food drives, purchasing cleaning supplies, and providing individual and business assistance. She said Leon County is providing help for the homeless, doing county wide testing, buying personal protective equipment (PPE) for businesses, employees and for senior citizens in nursing homes, providing temperature kiosks and installing sanitation stations. Ms. Buzbee explained they can also provide temporary facilities for hospitals and health departments. She reported some of the business grants have a line items for day cares. She stated everything must be COVID related and as long as the expense relates back to COVID it will be okay. She pointed out they must be careful with individual assistance because \$175,000 was also sent to the SHIP Program and they cannot approve the same thing as this is the same pot of funds. Commissioner Boldt asked if the expenses to date by department are the expenses already expended by the Board of County Commissioners for COVID. Ms. Buzbee answered yes, that is what has already been paid. Commissioner Boldt asked if they still need to filter these bills to determine if they are COVID related. Ms. Buzbee stated she looked through them and the only one in question was the body storage. Commissioner Boldt asked if these bills are reimbursable to the county. Ms. Buzbee replied yes, but the county already has the money so they will move the money from the CARES Act funding to the different accounts these bills were paid out of. Commissioner Boldt said it seems they need to focus on relief to individuals and businesses. Commissioner Jones agreed. Commissioner Boldt asked if some of this money can be placed in reserve. Ms. Buzbee replied they can put it there now but these funds must be expended by December. Mr.

Moron clarified the only way funds will go in reserve would be if the loss of revenue was approved by the Heroes Act or Heals Act. He reminded the Board by December all this money must be spent. Chairman Lockley said he wants the business and individuals to get these funds but questioned if they received double assistance if they have already received assistance from the CARES Act. Ms. Buzbee explained that is the struggle because she is seeing the emails where people do not want to turn in documentation. She reported the reason for the documentation is to determine if the person already received other funds. She stated if the county pays and the person received other funds then the county must pay the money back. Ms. Buzbee explained they can get a contract with a business but then the county would be suing the business to get the money back. She reported on the individual side they must prove they have not received unemployment or anything from the CARES Act. She stated this is all the same money coming in different ways. Ms. Buzbee said it is double dipping if the county gives money to a business or individual who has already received money from the CARES Act. She stated it is not an easy task to make this determination. Chairman Lockley asked if she will be the one to make this determination. Commissioner Parrish said the businesses will be determined by Opportunity Florida. Ms. Buzbee said both she and Opportunity Florida will review the business applications. Commissioner Parrish stated Opportunity Florida has access to databases so they will know if some of the businesses got money. He said the applicants must be honest when they do their application. He stated he likes that a state agency will be reviewing this and not just the county. Ms. Buzbee clarified it is going through U.S. Treasury at the federal level. Commissioner Parrish clarified all business applications are going through Ms. Buzbee and Opportunity Florida. Ms. Buzbee stated Opportunity Florida is pre-qualifying the applicants or deciding they need more documentation but they are working together. Commissioner Parrish said this way they review the applications and the Board does not make the decision. Chairman Lockley questioned how long it takes for the information to be verified. Commissioner Parrish said it must be done before December and a lot of businesses do not know about this program. He explained he has received a lot of calls in the last two weeks and he has referred them to Ms. Bankston and Mr. Moron to get them an application. He said he has received comments about how cumbersome the application process is. Ms. Buzbee stated their application is less cumbersome than some of the counties but this is the information that Treasury is going to say they must have. She explained yesterday she talked to Commissioner Jones about a questionnaire that can be sent out and if the person answers yes then they can follow up with them on the application. Ms. Buzbee stated she does not advise the county to lessen the requirements. Commissioner Parrish said he understands but they all received an email from a constituent asking them to lift the \$5,000 cap on the small businesses because the paperwork is burdensome and the same that is required for much larger federal grant programs. He explained this is part of the federal grants program and he does not have a problem with it but people are not going to be truthful sometimes. Ms. Buzbee reported the Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) has a database but the names are not in there unless the business received more than \$150,000 so they cannot verify any business that got less than \$150,000. Ms. Buzbee said over 100 businesses in Franklin County received PPP money. She reported they must make sure these businesses are not using these funds for the same thing they used the PPP funds for. She stated if the business did not get PPP then they skip that information on the application but if they got PPP they must know how much they received,

how they spent it and what the terms of the agreement were. She explained they must know because this is the same pot of money and there is a second round of PPP that is in the Heals Act. Ms. Buzbee reported they must also know if they are planning on that money because they can get more from the PPP. She stated her biggest fear is letting a business slide because the paperwork is cumbersome and she knows it is cumbersome but she cannot stress this enough. Commissioner Parrish said if they obtain this money fraudulently then the county is responsible. Ms. Buzbee answered yes. Commissioner Parrish reported then it will be up to the county to collect the money from the person and they will have to tax the taxpayers to get the money back. Ms. Buzbee stated that is why they are asking for backup documentation. Commissioner Parrish said this does not sound like a good deal. Ms. Buzbee reported there is nothing that says the county has to include the businesses so the decision is up to the County Commission. Chairman Lockley stated they want to help the businesses but they want them to be truthful. Ms. Buzbee said some counties enter into a contract with the person receiving the money but the county would still have to go after them if Treasury says it is ineligible. Chairman Lockley stated there is no way to verify they received some of this money and then the county will have to pay it back if they receive the funds which is not fair to the county. Commissioner Boldt said they need a filter or vetting process. Commissioner Jones reported they do not have the time. Commissioner Parrish stated the money must be spent by December 30<sup>th</sup> or the money must go back but that does not mean they will spend it on fraudulent claims and the taxpayer must pay it back. He explained he does not agree with some of these expenditures. He addressed the request from Franklin Foods. Commissioner Jones said they submitted new paperwork. Commissioner Parrish stated he does not have the new paperwork but this has nothing to do with COVID. He explained they give money out of the county budget to some of these organizations. Commissioner Jones stated they give to some of them but not that one. Commissioner Boldt reported they need to notify the public on how to apply for these funds so they have notified them that funds are accessible. He explained the dilemma is how to validate the application. Commissioner Jones stated the bigger dilemma is they are planning on giving 10% of these funds to the public. He reported they said they would set aside \$250,000 for businesses which is 10% of the \$2.1 they are possibly getting. Commissioner Jones agreed there are issues in the paperwork but they have not seen how the other 75% is going to be worded when they receive it. He explained it may have stipulations that the first 25% does not have and they have no way of knowing ahead of time. Commissioner Jones stated if they are going through all this ineligible requests on the government side why not put more money on the business side. He said there are businesses that have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue and they are only receiving \$5,000 which is not much money to have to go through this process. He stated if they are spending 90% on government then they should be good because they control that. Chairman Lockley reported they have businesses that are honest but someone is going to slip through. Commissioner Massey said if they make a mistake then the county will have to pay the money back. Commissioner Jones reported most businesses will not apply for \$5,000. Commissioner Boldt asked how they notify the public to apply. Mr. Moron stated there is a plan in place to notify the newspaper and WOYS but they paused the plan until they had this meeting. He reported they did not want to advertise how much the businesses were getting until the Board addressed this matter. He stated they want to know how much to give to the businesses and

then they will come up with a plan and advertise it because time is running out to spend the money. Commissioner Jones questioned what they are doing with the money that was set aside for requests that were ineligible and what they are going to do with the other \$2.1 million. He said he hopes they are not planning on making it government money. Commissioner Massey stated they need to give it to the businesses. Commissioner Jones said COVID has hit everyone hard and they need to do their best to help the people in the community. Ms. Buzbee reported \$250,000 was put in there as a placeholder and is up to the Board to consider. She said the \$5,000 is on the application and the application is out there but it does not mean that amount cannot be raised. She explained she would not advertise this program until the county gets the contract for the additional money because they do not want to go over the amount they have in the bank which is \$528,000. Commissioner Massey stated there are so many business across the county it will take all of the \$2 million and some people will not get any money. Commissioner Jones agreed they cannot give an astronomical amount to businesses but questioned how much \$5,000 actually helping them. Commissioner Massey questioned how many businesses will apply for the money. Commissioner Jones said it is hard to know without a pre-application process. Mr. Moron discussed upping the amount once the applications come in. He explained Commissioner Parrish said a lot of businesses do not know about the program and once they advertise it and get the applications they will have a better idea of the number. He suggested they set a temporary number today, put additional money over the \$528,000 in reserve and in October make a decision to up the cap or use the money for something else. Mr. Moron asked Ms. Buzbee if this would work. Ms. Buzbee answered yes. She reported the total number of businesses that applied for PPP was 205 (102 in Apalachicola, 39 in Carrabelle, 64 in Eastpoint and 0 in Lanark Village). She stated they cannot tell who they are because they received under \$150,000. Commissioner Jones verified she said all the CARES Act dollars are the same pot of money that was used to supply the businesses with the PPP money or other funds. Ms. Buzbee confirmed they are the same pot of funds. She explained the CARES Act has different pots of money that trickle down. She reported originally in some states CARES Act funding did not go to smaller counties. Ms. Buzbee stated Treasury actually deposited cash directly to counties with over 500,000 people which was 12 counties in Florida. She explained the State of Florida got the funds that are to be divvied out to the other 55 counties. She said all the CARES Act funding came from the one bill signed by the President in March. Commissioner Jones asked if the 205 businesses that got PPP are ineligible for the funds the county has now. Ms. Buzbee answered no, they can still apply and get funds but that is why they need a description of what they received and how it was spent. She explained in the first round they asked for 2 ½ months of salaries to keep the employees employed. She stated the business could qualify in another way instead of how the PPP was spent. Commissioner Jones verified receiving the PPP does not disqualify them. Ms. Buzbee said it does not and she could work with them on what the money could be used for. Commissioner Jones stated this money is more for economic relief. Ms. Buzbee answered yes, but it could pay for rent, utilities, or health care expenses. She reported it was 8-10 weeks for the initial round and then they amended it and gave them until December. Ms. Buzbee explained they must find out if the business still has PPP funds that they have not spent. She stated they must make sure the businesses are not duplicating the funds. Chairman Lockley reported they must be careful because SHIP is also paying light bills and rent. Ms. Buzbee said they are only

addressing individuals not businesses. Chairman Lockley asked what happens if the individual has a business. Ms. Buzbee said the individual would cover the house and the business would cover rent, mortgage or utilities for the business but it will get complicated if they have a home based business. Chairman Lockley agreed because a lot of people work out of their home. Ms. Buzbee reported this needs to be added to the application. Mr. Moron said the SHIP Administrator also needs to watch for this. Ms. Buzbee suggested she coordinate this matter with the SHIP Administrator. Mr. Moron agreed to have Mrs. Lori Switzer-Mills, SHIP Administrator, contact her. Mr. Moron stated the Board needs to get ready for the 5:15 p.m. budget public hearing so he will put Ms. Buzbee on the Agenda for the next meeting to provide an update. Ms. Buzbee reported she did not get through all the items they need to discuss. Chairman Lockley said they sent the money and application and put a deadline and it takes time to work through all this. Chairman Lockley stated he voted to have a consultant that specializes in these matters and he is putting his faith in her. He advised her to do the best she can and tell them if they are wrong and cannot do something. He said there will not be any feedback on his part. Ms. Buzbee reported she will email the group and go through the constitutional officers requests and show what is eligible. Commissioner Boldt asked if she can give them a general planning calendar schedule of what they need to do between now and December to get the money distributed appropriately. Ms. Buzbee stated she tried to do that but they do not have a lot of answers or a contract for the other money. She explained she could do that but it would have to change if the other contract does not allow them to do some things. She said she does not know if they want something that may not be accurate or want to wait until the plan comes in. Commissioner Boldt stated a calendar can be done as soon as the contract arrives.

### **Commissioners' Comments**

There were no Commissioner's comments.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

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Noah Lockley - Chairman

Attest:

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Marcia M. Johnson - Clerk of Courts