



Board of County Commissioners - Workshop

Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 1:30 pm

Code Enforcement Report Presentation

The Board of County Commissioners asks that all cell phones are turned off or placed on silent (vibrate) mode. Any handouts (information) for distribution to the Commission must be submitted to the Board Secretary (Clerk's Office) or to the County Coordinator on or before the Thursday prior to that Tuesday's meeting. Failure to do so will result in your removal from the agenda or a delay of any action relating to your request until a future meeting.

Meeting Information

The general public is allowed in the commission meeting room for regular meetings. The Board of County Commissioners encourages the public to continue the use of the livestream link or Zoom. Those wanting to view the meeting can use the livestream link <https://facebook.com/forgottencoasttv/> or go to Forgotten Coast TV's Facebook Page.

You do not need a Facebook account to view Facebook live. The livestream feed will promptly start 5 minutes before the meeting commences. Those wanting to participate virtually during the meeting 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 for assistance.

To join Zoom via computer, use the link <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89552699320> on the meeting date and time. If you do not have speakers or a microphone on your computer or prefer to call, you can dial in for audio. Call (301) 715-8592 or (312) 626- 6799 or (929) 205-6099 and enter ID number (895 5269 9320#). All attendees are muted by default.

If you would like to speak during the meeting in-person or via Zoom, you are required to complete the virtual speaker card

<https://www.franklincountyflorida.com/virtual-speaker-card/>. This card must be submitted to the County Commission Administrative Office prior to the start of the meeting in order for you to speak during the meeting.

During "Public Comments" you may comment on an agenda item for up to 3-minutes when recognized by the Chairman.

You may also address the Commission on an agenda action item for one minute (which may change based on the number of speakers waiting to comment) during the meeting after a motion has been seconded and you are recognized by the Chairman.

*Once recognized by the Chairman, if you are on Zoom with a computer or smart device select the 'raise hand' icon. If you have dialed in to the meeting by phone press *9 to raise your hand, then *6 to unmute.*

Public engagement is important to us and use of Zoom for public participation is still a new process to some. We appreciate your understanding.

1. Call To Order

2. Public Comments

This is an opportunity for the public to comment on the special meeting agenda item. When you are recognized to be heard by the Chairman, please adhere to the 3-minute time limit.

3. Code Enforcement Report Presentation

Ms Caroline Smith of ARPC will present the final report for the Franklin County Code Enforcement project.

Attachments:

- **Presentation** (Franklin_County_Code_Enforcement_Public_Workshops_Final_Report.pdf)

4. Commissioners' Questions and Comments

5. Adjournment

In accordance with Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, 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.

Contact: Michael Morón (michael@franklincountyflorida.com 8506535373) | Agenda published on 01/27/2022 at 4:16 PM

Franklin County Code Enforcement Public Workshop Series

Apalachee Regional Planning Council



Final Report for Franklin County Board of County Commissioners

January 7, 2022



Overview

The Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC) has partnered with Franklin County to provide technical assistance related to code enforcement. Specifically, ARPC conducted a series of six workshops on code enforcement in various locations in Franklin County, during which ARPC staff provided an overview of what code enforcement was, shared examples of success in similar communities, and provided opportunity for public comment. The public input provided was compiled and organized into a summary of public opinion on code enforcement, which is located at the end of this document.

Background

The ARPC is an intergovernmental, not-for-profit regional organization that works on behalf of its 9-county region (including Franklin County) to provide technical assistance in the areas of economic development, emergency preparedness, transportation, housing, quality of life, and growth management. By providing technical assistance in the mentioned areas, the topic of code enforcement is encompassed. ARPC staff sought to assist Franklin County as a neutral third party to understand and document community perspectives on code enforcement.

Public Workshops

ARPC staff facilitated a series of six public workshops on behalf of Franklin County in various locations throughout Franklin County. Below is the list of communities that received a public workshop and their respective number of attendees.

- Eastpoint - 20
- St. George Island - 46
- Unincorporated Carrabelle - 19
- Lanark Village - 39
- Unincorporated Apalachicola - 12
- Alligator Point - 22

Summary of Public Opinion

The series of workshops was attended by a total of 158 residents, including County Commissioners Bert Boldt and Jessica Varnes Ward. At each workshop the attendees were asked whether anyone was against having code enforcement in Franklin County. Within each workshop, there was unanimous support for having code enforcement in the form of two or more code enforcement officers.

The greatest takeaway from the series of code enforcement workshops held throughout Franklin County was that the residents of Franklin County wanted code enforcement officers. The residents of Franklin County wanted a fair-handed approach to code enforcement that addressed the most flagrant offenses. The second greatest voiced concern from the citizenry was a desire for a county code refresh potentially based on model codes from other counties crafted to take the specific needs of the different Franklin County communities into account. Some specific codes in need of update included the Sea Turtle Lighting ordinance and the Leave No Trace ordinance. Moving forward, many residents asked for a citizen’s advisory board to outline code enforcement needs and the code enforcement officer position as well as set fines for non-compliance. The residents also requested that complaints be accepted in writing as well as via phone call if the county pursued hiring a code enforcement officer. The public also expressed that they would like the officer(s) to go out and patrol the county.

A few issues that were mentioned across the county were the need for mandatory garbage pickup and the need to address illegal dumping. Another issue that was brought to attention numerous times was the issue of persons burning trash since the fires distract the sea turtles during their nesting season. However, the biggest concern across the workshops was (and has been) the need to address abandoned and derelict buildings as abandoned and derelict buildings pose a public health and safety concern.

Franklin County Citizenry Code Enforcement Priorities

Franklin County residents verbally assigned priority levels to a preselected list of common code enforcement issues, as outlined in the table below:

ISSUES RANKED BY FRANKLIN COUNTY PUBLIC ACCORDING TO PRIORITY LEVEL

Code Enforcement	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
Overgrown grass and lot mow violations			X
Trash and nuisance accumulation	X		
Inoperable, unlicensed, and abandoned vehicles on private property	X		
Buildings without permits/ expired permits	X		
Signs in the right of way/ Road obstruction		X	
Zoning violations/ Illegal Land Use	X		
Building maintenance (Derelict)	X		
Unlicensed contractors	X		
Dock and Shore Violations	X		
Environmental Violations	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority

Landscaping non-compliance			X
Tree protection regulation			X
Sea turtle protection		X	
Zoning conditions (environmental violations)	X		
Protected species management plans and monitoring reports	X		
Indigenous preserves	X		
Exotic removal	X		
Development order requirements	X		

Franklin County Citizenry Code Enforcement Index of Issues

Below is the supplementary index of other major code enforcement issues that were mentioned throughout the public workshops.

- Concerns about open fires to burn yard debris - creates a great risk to houses and properties if gets out of control.
- Zoning violations - having numerous structures/houses on one property.
- Garbage Issues – Garbage in the yard, junk cars, and appliances.
- Travel trailers should not be allowed on lots or limited for a time frame on a new build.
- Campers – living in three trailers without hookups.
- Houses that are not built to code.
- Hwy 98/commercial corridor needs clean-up via code enforcement.
- Get rid of abandoned and derelict sand fencing, mosquito infested pools and properties, and hazardous houses and buildings.
- Individuals renting out their homes and not paying taxes.
- People who remodel and/or expand their homes' occupancy levels without increasing the capacity of their septic systems, which leads to failing septic systems and environmental hazards.
- Franklin County does not have an Environmental Department. The public would like to see one or have the county address environmental compliance.
- Lighting Ordinance is not followed re: safe turtle lighting, unnecessary bright house lights, and architectural lighting that destroys SGI's dark skies.
- Residents want to see enforcement of the critical habitat ordinance.
- Put on the county's website a list of the features that code enforcement covers and then link each specific item to the County code that deals with that issue.
- Streamline the code enforcement process so issues can be resolved quickly.

- Yard debris on properties along Hwy 98 don't get picked up by the county because owners are advised that yard debris is too dangerous for county employees. However, waste management companies pick up trash along Hwy 98.
- Since the Code Enforcement Officer position deals with law enforcement and could be a dangerous job, consider putting it under the Sheriff's Department.

Code Enforcement in the Apalachee Region

Six out of the nine counties that constitute the Apalachee Region currently have code enforcement officers. In the counties that have code enforcement officers, officers are housed either under the Planning and Community Development Department or under the Building Department. These counties have budgeted for two or more code enforcement officers into their general budget for the Board of County Commissioners.



Figure 1. Carrabelle Code Enforcement Workshop on November 10,2021. Image courtesy of St. George Island Resident Gail Riegelmayr.