

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
AUGUST 2, 2022
1:30 PM
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: Ricky Jones-Chairman, Bert Boldt, II-Vice-Chairman, Joseph Parrish, Jessica V. Ward

Others Present: Michael Shuler-County Attorney and Michael Moron—County Coordinator

1. Call To Order

Chairman Jones called the workshop to order

2. Prayer and Pledge

Chairman Jones led the Board in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Public Comments

Ms. Candace Millender a resident on Buck Road in Eastpoint expressed to the Board that she felt the residents should receive some assistance from the Board. She noted that she does not receive school bus service and has a disabled child. She said there is still a runoff issue from Ridge Road and there are still trees in ditches from the Eastpoint fire and Hurricane Michael.

Ms. Nita Mosbley a resident on Hickory Hammock Road in Eastpoint said that she had found an opinion from the Attorney General giving the Board authority to maintain private roads with reimbursement.

Mr. Carl Whaley a resident on Peggy Lane in Carrabelle spoke to the Board as a resident and as fire chief of the Carrabelle district. He noted that some roads have become impassable by emergency vehicles. He said that the mosquito control trucks have not come down his road in the past two years. He said this is a health and safety issue for our citizens.

Mr. Chris Crosby a resident of Hickory Hammock suggested creating a 5–10-year plan to improve the conditions of the roads. He noted that there is an issue with the emergency response not being to access due to road conditions.

Mr. Carl Whaley said they are not asking for the roads to be paved but maybe grated once or twice a year.

Ms. Nita Mosbley encouraged Commissioner Boldt to pave the area of Jeff Sanders Road up to Hickory Hammock. She noted that often this road is almost impassable in her truck. Chairman Jones called for online comments and there were none.

4. Discussion - County's Requirements and Standards to accept Private Roads

Attorney Shuler provided the Board with the ordinance in place regarding subdivisions which establishes the standards for road and street development (FC Ordinances 89-7, 91-2, and 92-7). Attorney Shuler explained to the Board that a public hearing was held around 10-12 years ago regarding the maintenance of private roads noting the general rule is we don't put public equipment on private property. He said there is an exception that during a local state of emergency the county can assist people with getting to their property. Ultimately, the Board did not adopt the proposed ordinance that provided for limited private road maintenance of at least once a year contingent upon the availability of equipment and staff. A fee schedule was to be established and the property owner would pay the fee in advance to the county. Attorney Shuler noted that the meeting was highly attended, and the room was split with property owners wanting the service and business owners concerned the county would be competing with their services. The ordinance was not passed at that time.

Commissioner Parrish noted that he recalls looking into bringing a road in Carrabelle up to county standards and the cost was roughly \$10.5 million. Attorney Shuler noted that the preliminary road costs were near \$4.5 million before any stormwater issue was addressed. Commissioner Parrish said that nobody is going to comply with the ordinance regarding requirements for development if the county comes in and brings private roads up to standards. Commissioner Parrish expressed concern about the county competing with private businesses. Chairman Jones noted that our taxes are not just used for paving roads and there are multiple roads in his district that are not paved.

Ms. Millender spoke up and said that she doesn't have millions of dollars to repair her road. Mr. Whaley said that he had lived on Peggy Lane for 25 years and they were getting services from the county like some grating and mosquito control.

He said that he understood there were policies in place, but policies can be changed. He said that his tax dollars pay for equipment that he is getting no benefit from. He suggested before requests are passed through P&Z; they have to bring the property up to those standards. Mr. Tucker spoke to the board about his property in Eastpoint flooding due to a stopped-up drainpipe. He noted that the county had installed a drainpipe on his private property prior to him owning it and did not understand why maintenance can't be done now. Chairman Jones noted that permission was probably given by the previous owner just as Mr. Tucker had given them permission to come to unstop the drain. Mr. Tucker noted that the issue was not resolved and continues to flood his property. Commissioner Ward said she had done extensive research on this issue noting that Florida Statute requires that a private road must be maintained for four years before it can become public. She said that she had researched past minutes and in January 2005 a resident from Pogy Road came to the board regarding his road being deemed public. She noted that in the minutes, Mr. Chipman indicated the road had been maintained by the county. In 2008 the issue was brought up again, but she was not able to find the dedication and it appears to be a confusion of ownership again. In 2015 there was a motion to make Pogy Road a public road. She said there were multiple references throughout the years with the confusion of ownership of roads. She said there does not appear to be any evidence to prove the roads had been maintained. She noted that there isn't any proof that they have or haven't been maintained by the county, they just become county roads.

Commissioner Boldt noted that there is one resident on Jeff Sanders Road, but the road is used by a lot of people who live in the area. He said that we need to look at infrastructure, sediment, and a certain depth of ditches. He said that he is not discounting the value, but we have limited budgets for paving in each district. He noted that each commissioner should keep these roads on their radars.

Chairman Jones said regardless of what it takes, we need to find a way to make it work.

Mr. Moron asked the Board how they would like to move forward. He asked if they wanted to schedule this topic on a future agenda to act or for discussion. Chairman Jones said he thought the Board needed to look into the issue more before deciding. He explained to the audience that due to the Sunshine Law the Board does not discuss issues behind the scenes. He said that is why sometimes things in government seem to work really slowly. He said we need to figure out what we can do if anything. Commissioner Ward agreed. Commissioner Boldt suggested looking at how other counties are handling these issues. Commissioner Ward noted that she has researched extensively, and she would like to get the conversation started for a solution.

Mr. Whaley thanked the Board for their time and consideration of the matter. He expressed his concern with paving projects in the county that do not have residents living on them. He also spoke about how the Board would go about proving a private road had been maintained by the county and asked the Board to consider taking his word for it as a prior deputy sheriff, school board member, and fire chief.

5. Commissioners' Comments

There were no further Commissioners' comments.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Ricky Jones – Chairman

Attest:

Michele Maxwell – Clerk of Courts

The audio is available upon request. Please e-mail jgay@franklinclerk.com, call 850-653-8861 to speak with the Administrative Assistant, or submit a request in writing to obtain audio of this meeting.

FCBCC Workshop

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