

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
JANUARY 16, 2024
9:00 AM
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: Ricky Jones-Chairman, Jessica Ward-Vice-Chairman, Cheryl Sanders, Office Amison, and Anthony Croom, Jr.

Others Present: Michele Maxwell-Clerk of Court, Michael Shuler-County Attorney, Michael Moron-County Coordinator, Erin Griffith-Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator, Cortni Bankston-Zoning Administrator, and Jessica Gay-Clerk to the Board

Call to Order

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Ward led the Board in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Jones noted that there may be discussion later in the meeting about postponing the public hearing on road abandonment and requesting this be added to the agenda.

On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the agenda with the addition as noted above. Motion carried 5-0.

Approval of Minutes and Payment of County Bills

1. County Bill List for Payment
2. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the payment of County Bills and the FCBCC minutes from January 2, 2024. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Comments

Mr. Edwin Lott spoke to the Board regarding the boat ramp at Alligator Point. Mr. Lott noted that there is a FWC grant which application period opens February 19th and closes March 20th. Mr. Lott would like the county to apply for a FWC Boating Improvement Grant to repair and improve the boat ramp located in the Sun and Sand residential neighborhood in the Alligator/Bald Point area. This topic will be discussed later in the meeting on Mr. Moron's report.

Department Directors Reports

3. Steve Paterson -- Building Official -- Eastpoint Building Update

Mr. Paterson gave an update on the Eastpoint building recently purchased. Noting the carpet has been ordered, delivered but not installed. They have an electrician who will inspect everything to make sure it is all safe and repair anything that needs repair. He noted they will be replacing all lighting with LEDs. He noted that the teller room cabinets have been removed and a half wall is being built where Planning and Zoning department will be. Commissioner Ward inquired if the Board meetings will be moved over there. Mr. Moron noted that the meetings will remain here but eventually a room may be built so that you can rotate meetings and possibly hold workshops over there.

Mr. Moron presented the following item from his report at this time.

3. Action Item: Eastpoint Building Upgrade Cost

You have just heard Mr. Paterson's update on the Eastpoint building as we prepare to move your Administration, Building Department, and Zoning offices from the current location to the building. Even though there have been many discussions on the upgrades needed before we could occupy the building, there was never Board action approving these upgrades. The few upgrade projects are well under the County's \$10,000 bid limit, however I thought there should be some action on the record, authorizing staff to proceed with the upgrades. These projects will be paid from Building Department budget and American Rescue funds.

Board action to approve the necessary projects to upgrade the Eastpoint building for the Administration, Building Department, and Zoning offices.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the necessary projects to upgrade the Eastpoint building for the Administration, Building Department and Zoning offices. Motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Jones noted that we are not using ad valorem tax dollars for these upgrades. Mr. Moron explained the reallocation of funds from the American Rescue Fund due to the relocation of the supervisor of elections office.

4. **Jennifer Daniels -- Emergency Management Director -- Weather Stem Update**

Mrs. Daniels explained the weather stem program is with a company that we have partnered with for several years and have numerous stations all over the county. They have been donated or purchased with grant funds. There are currently six weather stem stations. They are located at the Apalachicola EOC, old St. George Island bridge, Carrabelle/Lanark Island View Park, Ochlocknee River State Park, Franklin County High School, and FSU Coastal Marine Lab. She noted that have a grant to purchase three more, and they are in the process of partnering to install one at Alligator Fire Department, Dog Island looking at the airport, St. George Island State Park. She noted they are currently in the process of getting power poles for the ones at SGI park and Dog Island. She noted live data is available from these stations at any time. There is an app you can download and access this information. Chairman Jones thanked Mrs. Daniels for updating the Board. He noted that he wanted to make sure the Board and public were aware that there would be nine total and where they would be placed.

Reports

5. John Solomon – TDC Administrator

Information Items:

1. The TDC Board voted on 1-10-24 to recommend the TDC spending Plan.
2. July Collections were \$601,106
3. August Collections were \$217,277
4. September Collections were \$249,963
5. October Collections were \$235,669

Mrs. Griffith presented the following from her report at this time.

3. BOARD ACTION: DRAFT TDC SPENDING PLAN APPROVAL FOR PUBLIC HEARING

The Tourist Development Council has reviewed and approved the attached DRAFT TDC spending plan at their January 10th meeting. If there are no further changes needed to the DRAFT plan, we will need board action to post and advertise the draft to meet the ten-day advertising requirement for the public hearing where the plan could be adopted by ordinance.

Board action to approve advancing/advertising the attached draft plan and ordinance for your February 6th meeting.

On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved advancing/advertising the attached draft plan and ordinance for your February 6th meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Moron presented the following item from his report at this time.

12. Informational Item: Rural Counties Day

The County is registered for Rural Counties Day Capital Courtyard Event on Thursday, January 25th in Tallahassee. Mr. John Solomon (TDC Administrator) agreed to manage the county's display setup at this event. There is a Legislative Networking Reception at the Doubletree by Hilton from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, January 24th. Let me know if you plan to attend the reception or have any additional questions regarding the Capital Courtyard Event scheduled for Thursday.

County Staff & Attorney Reports

6. Erin Griffith – Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator

1. BOARD ACTION: CR67 PHASE IV GRANT AGREEMENT & RESOLUTION

Franklin County has received \$3,140,281 in federal funds from the Florida Department of Transportation's American Rescue Plan SCRAP Program to fund the construction and CEI for the final 2.6-mile section of CR67, from Forest Road 172 to the Liberty County line. The project

scope will include widening and resurfacing, reconstruction of certain side drains, signage, and pavement markings.

Board action to approve and adopt the attached resolution of authorization for the chairman to sign the attached award agreement.

**RESOLUTION OF AUTHORIZATION
FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

WHEREAS the Florida Department of Transportation has awarded the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners funding from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for the construction to widen and resurface CR 67 Phase IV from Forest Road 172 to the Liberty County line (Financial Project Number 451770-1-54-01), and

WHEREAS the Florida Department of Transportation requires the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners to adopt a Resolution authorizing the Chairman to sign the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds agreement, and

WHEREAS the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners has voted in an open meeting to have the Chairman sign the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds agreement,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, that the Chairman is hereby authorized to sign the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds agreement for the construction to widen and resurface CR 67 Phase IV from Forest Road 172 to the Liberty County line (Financial Project Number 451770-1-54-01).

This Resolution adopted on January 16, 2024.

On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved and adopted the attached resolution of authorization for the Chairman to sign the attached award agreement. Motion carried 5-0.

2. BOARD ACTION: EASTPOINT LIBRARY LEASE MODIFICATION

Last summer, the Friends of the Library group contacted the county with an offer to transfer the ownership of the Eastpoint Library location for the balance of the USDA loans (instead of asking for a rent increase on the \$2,000 per month the county has paid since 2015). The Friends group had been struggling with the rising cost of private property insurance (their premiums have increased to \$19,522 per year). On August 1, 2023, the board voted unanimously for the county to begin working with the USDA to formally assume the outstanding loan (approximate balance below \$200,000). To provide temporary relief for the Friends group during this transitional assumption process with the USDA, would the Board consider adding property coverage for the building to the county's governmental policy? The county's governmental insurer, the Florida

League of Cities, can provide property coverage for \$7,463.

Board action to approve the attached addendum #1 to the Eastpoint Library Lease Agreement to assume responsibility for insurance coverage beginning February 1st.

On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the attached addendum #1 to the Eastpoint Library Lease Agreement to assume responsibility for insurance coverage beginning February 1st. Motion carried 5-0.

3. BOARD ACTION: DRAFT TDC SPENDING PLAN APPROVAL FOR PUBLIC HEARING

The Tourist Development Council has reviewed and approved the attached DRAFT TDC spending plan at their January 10th meeting. If there are no further changes needed to the DRAFT plan, we will need board action to post and advertise the draft to meet the ten-day advertising requirement for the public hearing where the plan could be adopted by ordinance.

Board action to approve advancing/advertising the attached draft plan and ordinance for your February 6th meeting.

Item addressed earlier in the meeting.

4. BOARD ACTION: UPDATED TRAVEL AND PER DIEM POLICY

When county employees or elected officials are required to travel for training or special events, travel expenses are reimbursed pursuant to a written policy that has been in effect since 2012. The mileage per diem is updated annually to the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. The current per diem rate for meals (\$8 breakfast, \$12 lunch, and \$26 dinner) is only paid when travel extends beyond one day. The attached proposed revision has been reviewed by the county auditors and will change the standard rates reimbursed for meals to \$13 breakfast, \$15 lunch, \$26 dinner. These rates are sourced from the U.S. General Services Administration.

Board action to adopt and authorize the chairman to sign the revised travel and per diem policy resolution with an effective start date of February 1st.

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION FOR TRAVEL AND PER DIEM POLICY
Revision dated: January 16, 2024

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, in accordance with Florida Statute 112.061(14)(a) adopts this resolution establishing a revised travel and per diem policy:

WHEREAS, effective February 1, 2024, Franklin County will pay the following per diem, food, and mileage allowances for authorized traveler on behalf of Franklin County. Travel claims

containing a statement that the expenses were incurred as necessary travel expenses in the performance of official duties must be submitted and must be verified by written declaration that the statement is true and correct as to every material matter. Any person who submits a fraudulent claim commits a misdemeanor of the second degree. Additionally, any person who receives reimbursement based upon a false claim is civilly liable for the overpayment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners has determined that Franklin County will pay the following Per Diem:

- Lodging: Actual Cost
- Mileage: Standard Mileage Rate established by the Internal Revenue Service on January 1st of each year.
- Meals: Only paid when travel extends beyond one day and meals are not included at location/event (meals are not eligible to be paid for Class C travel). The per diem rates for meals listed above are sourced from the U.S. General Services Administration.
- Breakfast: When travel begins before 7:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.
\$13.00
- Lunch: When travel begins before 12:00 noon and extends beyond 2:00 p.m.
\$15.00
- Dinner: When travel begins before 5:00 p.m. and extends beyond 7:00 p.m.
\$26.00

All travel must be approved by the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners and/or Department Head prior to traveling to receive payment/reimbursement.

This Resolution is adopted by the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners this 16th day of January 2024.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board adopted and authorized the Chairman to sign the revised travel and per diem policy resolution with an effective start date of February 1st. Motion carried 5-0.

5. BOARD ACTION: MANUAL CHECK FOR NEVES MEDIA

Franklin County has received invoices from Neve’s Media for the past (4) months of newspaper advertisements for the landfill, parks and recreation, animal control and some varied display advertisements, including the full ½ page advertisements for the county budget in September. At this time, the county is still awaiting the official proof of publication affidavits for those ads

before the invoices can be paid – the newspaper is working to provide those affidavits this week.

Inv #2023ci-3656	\$ 450.00
Inv #2023-68584	\$ 400.00
Inv #2023-68636	\$ 400.00
Inv #2023-68639	\$ 400.00
Inv #2023ci-3715	\$ 880.00
Inv #2023ci-3741	\$ 1,760.00
Inv #2023ci-3762	\$ 960.00
Inv #2023ci-3800	\$ 800.00

Board action to approve the issuance of a manual check for the outstanding invoices above once the affidavits are received.

Commissioner noted that these are paid for out of the general fund and the county is required to advertise per statute.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the issuance of a manual check for the outstanding invoices above once the affidavits are received. Motion carried 5-0.

Item added: Supplemental Check Run by Finance Department MSBU distribution and a few late vendor invoices– Board action to approve

On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom and Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the supplemental check run by finance department. Motion carried 5-0.

7. BOARD INFORMATION: MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT UPDATES

- Waiting to be obligated by FEMA for SGI Fishing pier
- Still waiting for NOA for county wide dune restoration project
- Sod is being installed at Vrooman Park; the sod is going to be dormant because it is this time of the year

Commissioner Ward said we talked last week; you said the fence would be installed the 22nd. Mrs. Griffith said they will be here on February 1st.

8. Michael Morón – County Coordinator

1. Action Item: Letter of Appreciation for Sheriff Tommy Ford
Sadly, Lt. Baron Cortopassi, of the Franklin County Sheriff Department, passed away and his services were held on Thursday, January 4, 2024. To allow all Sheriff Deputies and other local law enforcement personnel the opportunity to attend Lt. Cortopassi's funeral services, Sheriff Tommy Ford of Bay County voluntarily provided deputies to cover patrol, corrections, and courthouse security in Franklin County on the day of the service. Commissioner Ward asked for a letter of appreciation for Sheriff Ford. Mrs. Cortni Bankston will read that letter of appreciation

and there will be signature blocks for both Chairman Jones and Sheriff Smith. Sheriff Smith will present this letter of appreciation to Sheriff Ford at Sheriff's Day in Tallahassee later this month. Board action to authorize the Chairman's signature on the letter of appreciation for Sheriff Tommy Ford.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office would like to recognize and thank Sheriff Tommy Ford and the Bay County Sheriff's Office for their respect and generosity.

On January 4th, 2024, Sheriff Tommy Ford sent Deputies and Corrections Deputies to answer calls for service as well as staff our detention facility, our courthouse, and our schools which allowed all Franklin County Sheriff's Office employees to attend the service of Lieutenant Cortopassi. Without their support, this would not have been possible.

Please let this serve as Franklin County Board of County Commissioners and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office's letter of appreciation for Sheriff Tommy Ford and the Bay County Sheriff's Office for being exceptional partners and always providing selfless assistance in our time of need.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized the Chairman's signature on the letter of appreciation for Sheriff Tommy Ford. Commissioner Ward commended Sheriff Ford noting he did not have to do this. Commissioner Croom said he is very thankful for Sheriff Ford, and it is great to have these types of relationships for times of need. Commissioner Sanders noted Cortopassi was a great man and anytime she needed him, he was there. Chairman Jones noted it is always helpful when you have neighbors that can help make the best of a bad situation. Sometimes you look at things like what can we do, and that is why it is always great to have a friend as a neighbor. **Motion carried 5-0.**

2. Action Item: Waive Armory Rental Fees for Senior-Junior Prom

The County has received a request from the School District to waive the Armory rental fee for the Senior-Junior Prom. The Prom is scheduled for Saturday, April 20th. The Board has waived this fee in years past. Board action to waive the Armory rental fee for the Senior-Junior Prom scheduled for Saturday, April 20, 2024.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board waived the Armory rental fee for the Senior-Junior Prom scheduled for Saturday, April 20, 2024. Chairman Jones inquired about the policy being drafted about waiving the fees noting this should not have to be brought to the Board every year. Attorney Shuler and Mr. Moron are working on this policy. **Motion carried 5-0.**

3. Action Item: Eastpoint Building Upgrade Cost

You have just heard Mr. Paterson's update on the Eastpoint building as we prepare to move your Administration, Building Department, and Zoning offices from the current location to the

building. Even though there have been many discussions on the upgrades needed before we could occupy the building, there was never Board action approving these upgrades. The few upgrade projects are well under the County's \$10,000 bid limit, however I thought there should be some action on the record, authorizing staff to proceed with the upgrades. These projects will be paid from Building Department budget and American Rescue funds. Board action to approve the necessary projects to upgrade the Eastpoint building for the Administration, Building Department, and Zoning offices.

Item addressed earlier in the meeting.

4. Action Item: Code Enforcement Services

Recently, the Board advertised for Code Enforcement services but unfortunately no firms or individual submitted proposals. As an option, the Board asked staff to meet with Sheriff Smith to discuss the possibility of his deputies serving as code enforcement officers. Chairman Jones, Mrs. Cortni Bankston and I met with Sheriff Smith and Deborah Dempsey to discuss this matter and agreed to the following procedure:

- i. Mrs. Bankston will continue to receive all complaints and manage the complaint database.
- ii. Once a complaint is verified by Mrs. Bankston, she will send a notice stating the violation and requirement for compliance within 30 days.
- iii. If there is no compliance by the 30th day, the notice will be forwarded to the Sheriff's Department for enforcement.
- iv. Mrs. Bankston will receive status updates from the Sheriff's Department until the case (violation) is closed.

Sheriff Smith agreed to this plan with the intention of the Board funding a permanent part-time or full-time position for the 2024-25 budget year, depending on the number of violations received prior to budget discussions. The Sheriff's Department will be paid \$250 per complaint and will be reimbursed for code enforcement certification training. The other option would be a County permanent part-time or full-time certified code enforcement employee. The total annual cost, which includes benefits and what I consider a fair base pay for a certified code enforcement permanent part-time employee, is approximately \$52,900.64. The cost for a full-time employee with all benefits would be \$73,032.20. How would the Board like to proceed? Board discussion and action on proceeding with Code Enforcement services.

Commissioner Ward noted that she does not want the board involved in enforcement noting she received four complaints last week. What we are doing right now is not working. Environmental, safety hazard? She wants things done and in a timely manner. The more people you get involved in something there is a lack of communication. Commissioner Sanders said we need a permanent part-time or full-time employee. Until then get the sheriff to enforce and pay the \$250. We do need it under the county umbrella. I think it is a person that needs to be under the Board's umbrella. Commissioner Amison said we would pay the sheriff's department \$250 a complaint, once he has room in his budget that would go away. Mr. Moron noted that this would be a decision at budget time. Commissioner Amison said who is going to carry more weight so to speak when you get sheriff's deputy. Commissioner Sanders noted that code enforcement carries a gun and badge also. Commissioner Amison noted a sheriff's deputy carries a little more weight. Noting

he is fine either way, but we need to have something that we have some teeth in. Commissioner Croom said he concurs with the fellow commissioners. Something needs to be done and we are overdue for it. He noted when people see a uniform deputy there is a little more push behind it. Chairman Jones noted this plan would give us a way to try and start something now to see how it goes until budget time next year. We put out an RFQ and there was no response. The \$250 covers if they have a call that comes to my house, if they have to come four times, its just \$250 per residence or place. Commissioner Amison said this is a good thing to test the waters. Commissioner Sanders noted that when we advertised it last time, we did not have a salary amount in there. Commissioner Ward said this \$250, we have in our budget now because we have money budgeted for code enforcement. I know that we have some really good ordinances on the books, a 1991 ordinance for Franklin County is not good for the county because we have changed. As this process starts, we are going to see a lot of ordinances that need to be updated. Commissioner Amison asked what the time frame is. Chairman Jones said the 30-day window is going to give Sheriff time to get officers trained. Chairman Jones said he would like to see some language added that at the end of the 30 days, this will be turned over to the sheriff department for enforcement. Mr. Moron noted the sheriff would like to have all of his deputies trained, Mrs. Bankston is trying to get someone to come to them for training. Mr. Moron noted that the salary amounts would include benefits. Commissioner Ward inquired about how many hours of the day does Mrs. Bankston spend on code enforcement complaints. Mrs. Bankston noted that some days she gets nothing and then at times she is bombarded with 6-7 at one time. Commissioner Ward noted that she wants someone proactive, looking for complaints. Things get missed sometimes. I want someone going out actively looking for things. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved partnering with the Sheriff's office for Code Enforcement services. Motion carried 5-0.**

5. Discussion Item: Gun Range Relocation

Chairman Jones would like the Board to discuss relocating the shooting range. As the Board is aware, the current location behind the Humane Society Building has created some issues, especially with the animals housed in that building. Commissioner Ward has done extensive research on this matter, especially on a new location, so perhaps she should initiate this discussion. Board discussion.

Commissioner Ward noted that she has reviewed minutes from past meetings from around 2018-2019 where this topic was discussed. The current location is not safe for volunteers, landfill employees or sheriff's office employees. Commissioner Ward showed photos of random junk left at the range noting these are ridiculous incidents and conditions. She said we have got to do something. Commissioner Ward noted that the Board had discussed relocating the range kind of behind the road department. However, this location would not be ideal due to the close proximity to the shop and there is not enough land. She noted that they had worked with FWC, but we do not meet the residential criteria as well as they want too much money and want the facility manned. Although Commissioner Ward noted that it was not a bad idea to have it manned considering the conditions of the current location. Commissioner Ward noted that the county owns another piece between the road department and the school board property. It is approximately 55 acres. She suggested the Board look into relocating the range to this property.

A road would need to be constructed. The property is large enough to construct adequate burns on each side for safety. We could put targets up kind of like the ones at the range in Apalachicola. Commissioner Ward noted that she does not want to charge because that is why a lot of people use the one in Eastpoint because it is free to the public. Chairman Jones said he thinks this is a good idea noting DOT would need to contact about building a road. He suggested talking with Mr. Davis and including it as a part of Parks and Recreation. Commissioner Amison noted that there are no targets at the current location. If we do not provide something for people to use, they are going to bring stuff. He noted he was in support of Commissioner Ward's idea. He did note that he had been out to the range several times and there did not seem to be a constant barrage of gun fire. Chairman Jones suggested staff adding this to the agenda in February for the Board to act on. Commissioner Ward noted that she really does not like using this property for this, but we have to do something. Chairman Jones noted that we may have to get plans drafted. Mrs. Griffith noted that a wetlands delineation may be in order. Mr. Moron noted he would contact DOT about cutting a road.

6. Discussion Item: Camp Gordon Johnston Parade

The 29th Annual Camp Gordon Johnston Veterans Parade will be on Saturday, March 9th starting at 10:45 a.m. (ET) in Carrabelle. Inform Mrs. Cortni Bankston if you will be participating in the parade so she can complete the parade entry form.

7. Discussion Item: Alligator Point Boat Ramp

Mr. Edwin Lott and I have been in discussions, over the last month or more, about a boat ramp in the Alligator/Bald Point area. There is a group that would donate up to \$10,000 to repair the boat ramp located at the S-Curve. Mr. Lott would like the county to apply for a FWC Boating Improvement Grant to repair and improve the boat ramp located in the Sun and Sand residential neighborhood in the Alligator/Bald Point area. The discussions are at the point where Mr. Lott and other interested neighbors should come before the Board with a presentation and discuss this matter further. There is a lot of history related to these two boat ramps and the Leonard Landing boat ramp that should be discussed at a public meeting. After that presentation and discussion, the Board could direct staff on how to proceed regarding any of the boat ramps in the Alligator/Bald Point area.

Mr. Moron suggested holding a public meeting with dialogue and public input. Chairman Jones noted that we can all agree there needs to be improvement, but the issue is property owners are not in favor. Chairman Jones will touch base with Senator Simone. We only have two acres north of 98, we are limited in property that the state does not own. Mr. Moron will contact Mr. Lott, would like him to point out the pictures specific, then we can come together. Commissioner Sanders said for 18 years we have applied for boating improvement grants all over the county. The water is not enough to launch a 21-foot boat. This board has tried, the last time I heard it, maybe we could sneak down there in the middle of the night. We have a pending lawsuit and DEP is probably going to get involved. DEP has to do the permitting. Commissioner Sanders asked the public to stop the negative stuff on Facebook and Next Door about commissioners and staff. Maybe we can get some stuff done when we work together. Commissioner Sanders said there is not anyone in Tallahassee that she has not contacted back then and now. Chairman Jones noted that it is going to take the legislature doing something. The state forestry owns property

there. It is not just where can we put a boat ramp, its where we can put one that is going to be accessible. All of the agencies are going to be weighing in. Chairman Jones aske Commissioner Ward to please add this to the list to speak with legislative delegates tomorrow.

8. Informational Item: County Logo

Attached to my report is the final version of the new County logo. The new logo will be used on vehicles, stationary, clothing, and signs. I have that sign in different formats, so let me know if you need the logo in one of the formats.

9. Informational Item: FBO Lease

Attached to my report is a No Objection letter from the FAA regarding the approved FBO lease with Centric Aviation. In November, the County received a Lease Compliance Review Letter regarding this same lease. This was discussed at your December meeting, and the Board agreed that the FAA compliance letter was based on their review of an early draft of the FBO lease not the BOCC approved lease. As directed by the Board, a copy of the BOCC approved lease was sent to FAA for review which has resulted in the No Objection letter, therefore closing this matter.

10. Informational Item: Mary Mayhew FHA

Ms. Mary C. Mayhew, President, and CEO of the Florida Hospital Association is scheduled to appear at your February 6th meeting to discuss options for the future of Weems Memorial Hospital. Let me know if you would like to talk to Ms. Mayhew prior to the meeting day.

11. Informational Item: FAC Legislative Day

As a reminder, tomorrow Wednesday, January 17th is FAC's Legislative Day in Tallahassee. Commissioners Sanders, Croom, and Ward will be in Tallahassee all day at the Legislative Day events. Chairman Jones, Commissioner Amison, and I will attend the Florida Great Northwest's Leadership Northwest Florida Presentation event here in Apalachicola on Wednesday. Chairman Jones has additional information on the Florida Great Northwest presentation.

Rep Shoaf's office has you on the schedule for 10:30 am. Hopefully, we will hear from the senator's office today with a firm time. Commissioner Ward asked if the Board had additional items besides, we have the Alligator Point thing on there, and I know we have appropriations. Does any of you have anything else. Jones said we have someone paid to talk to them about the appropriations. Mrs. Griffith is going to send a list from Traci. Chairman Jones noted definitely the boat ramp. Chairman Jones another pertinent issue is for them allow rural counties to be able to add a one cent tax for infrastructure. As of right now we cannot try to do that due to how the statute is written. In the past it has been a hard no. We are just asking to be able to ask the voters to do it. Commissioner Sanders said to make sure that Shoaf and Simone know to keep all of the rural benefits intact, such as SCRAP and SCOP, SHIP funds and Visit Florida. Mr. Moron said maybe ask them to increase the boat ramp allocations. Find out if Leonard Landing is going to be expanded. Commissioner Sanders said the original DEP leases was only about 20, now 40+. They doubled the leases knowing that there is inadequate ramp. Commissioner Amison noting his frustration all along, is the state is making the money off the leases, but they want to provide a safe ramp. Commissioner Amison asked if there was any way we could stop the state from buying up all the property. It takes everything off the tax roll.

12. Informational Item: Rural Counties Day

The County is registered for Rural Counties Day Capital Courtyard Event on Thursday, January 25th in Tallahassee. Mr. John Solomon (TDC Administrator) agreed to manage the county's display setup at this event. There is a Legislative Networking Reception at the Doubletree by Hilton from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, January 24th. Let me know if you plan to attend the reception or have any additional questions regarding the Capital Courtyard Event scheduled for Thursday.

13. Informational Item: The Landings Workshop

As a reminder, there is a workshop scheduled this afternoon at 5:00 p.m. (ET) regarding The Landings proposed project located on St. George Island. This is a workshop, not a public hearing, so there is no action for consideration before the Board this afternoon.

14. Informational Item: Next Meeting Date

Your next scheduled regular meeting date is Tuesday, February 6th at 9:00 a.m. (ET).

Mrs. Griffith added the following item to the agenda at this time.

BOARD ACTION – LATE ADD, UNSCHEDULED ITEM – FINAL CHANGE ORDER & PAY APPLICATION FOR LAP ALLIGATOR DRIVE MULTI-USE PATH

Franklin County has just received the final quantity reconciliation change order from CEI engineers AECOM for the Alligator Drive Multi-Use Path Phase III and IV. This final change order is an additional reduction to the contract price of \$20,738.10. Also attached was the final pay request for this project in the amount of \$49,179.36.

A. Board action to approve the final change order #2 which is a reduction of \$20,738.10 for the Alligator Drive Multi-Use Path Project.

B. Board action to process the final pay application to Roberts and Roberts in the amount of \$49,179.36

On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the final change order #2 which is a reduction of \$20,738.10 for the Alligator Drive Multi-Use Path Project and approved processing the final pay application to Roberts and Roberts in the amount of \$49,179.36.

Chairman Jones called for public comments and there were none. **Motion carried 5-0.**

9. Michael Shuler – County Attorney

1. Request that Franklin County consider abandoning the entire 30' wide alley/Gunn Street in Block 3 East, St. George Island Gulf Beaches, Unit I

Attached is correspondence from Mr. Patrick Sparks petitioning the County to consider abandoning all of a 30' wide alley/Gunn Street in Block 3 East, St. George Island Gulf Beaches, Unit 1. Also are attached are maps that I have copied from that subdivision showing Block 3 and the alley/Gunn

Street, together with a resolution of intent to consider the request for abandonment at a public hearing to be held on February 20, 2024, at 5 p.m. (ET) in the county commission meeting room located at 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola, Florida, and a notice of public hearing. If the Board elects to move forward on this request, the proposed abandonment will be advertised, and public hearing will be held on the request at the date, time and place indicated. Board Action Requested: Board discussion of the request and the resolution scheduling the public hearing on February 20, 2024, at 5 p.m. (ET) at 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola, Florida.

**RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO CONSIDER ABANDON A PUBLIC ROAD/ALLEY
AND SCHEDULING PUBLIC HEARING**

WHEREAS Franklin County, a political subdivision of the State of Florida, has heretofore acquired by dedication the public road/alley described hereinbelow; and,

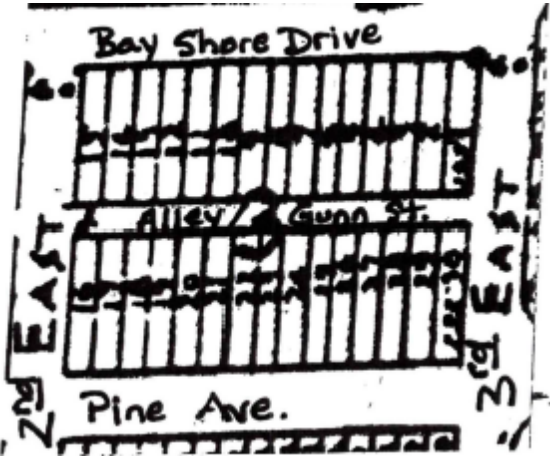
WHEREAS Franklin County based on the written Petition of Patrick Sparks, has determined that the interest of the county and the public in said roads should be considered for abandonment as provided by law; and,

WHEREAS following abandonment, ownership of the road/alley will transfer as provide by Florida Statute section 336.12.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that on February 20, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. (ET), a public hearing will be held at 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola, Florida, to consider the advisability of exercising the authority granted by Florida Statute section 336.09(2) to abandon the following public road/alley as provided by law:

Public Road/Alley to be Considered for Abandonment:

All of a 30’ wide alley/Gunn Street in Block 3 East, St. George Island Gulf Beaches, Unit 1, as recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 7, Franklin County, Florida. A map of the public road/alley to be considered for abandonment which is shown below:



Adopted in open session, this the 16th day of January 2024.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the resolution scheduling the public hearing on February 20, 2024, at 5 p.m. (ET) at 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola, Florida. Motion carried 5-0.

The Landings at St. George Island Workshop

Earlier in the meeting Mr. Curenton handed me an email request from Scott Davis requesting the workshop be rescheduled due to Mr. Dan's passing. This request does come from the developers' representative. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized rescheduling the workshop at a later date. Motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioner Sanders asked Attorney Shuler at the last meeting about how many days' notice we have to give Alliant for cancelation of the contract. Attorney Shuler noted that he believes it is 90 days. I sent an email to the Board at the last meeting with that information. It is a short period, and it can be cancelled without cause.

Recess Reconvene 5:00 p.m. (ET) Workshop 5:00 p.m. (ET) *CANCELLED*****

10. The Landings at St. George Island

Notice is hereby given that on January 16th, 2024, beginning at 5:00 p.m. (ET), the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners will conduct a public workshop to discuss The Landings at St. George Island, FL located at 41 West Baysore Drive, St. George Island, FL 32328. This is not a public hearing to adopt an Ordinance for The Landings at St George Island, FL., therefore no vote will be taken at this workshop. This workshop will be streamed on Zoom only (not on FCTV). Zoom link information can be found on this agenda below the 'Meeting Information' heading.

Item addressed earlier in the meeting.

Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Ward noted that she reached out to Mr. John Creamer with FWC he was going to speak to his bear management crew to see how they could help us. She noted that she had given him Mr. Davis's information, and they are to get together and hopefully come up with a plan for the deer carcass collection bins.

Chairman Jones said he did meet with Mr. Creamer while he was in town. We have had ongoing discussion about restoration efforts, about the type/size of the material. The material brought to me was two to three inches Kentucky blue material. The range is from 2-6 inches. I just want everyone to know that we are still having these conversations with them.

Chairman Jones noted that one other thing he would like to comment on some recent Facebook post from the Eastpoint Civic Association about projects that were facilitated by this Board. I wanted to take this time to express thanks as a representative of Eastpoint, that this Board supported all of these projects. I wanted to give thanks to the Commissioners for their support in the things for the Eastpoint Civic Association.

Commissioner Sanders noting that if they are repaving 98 maybe talk to them about making some parking spots around the landing. I do not know if everyone realizes the rain that we have

received. We almost had an emergency last week on Womack Creek. It has changed the ecosystem out there where they are holding back the flow, I want you all aware. Jamie Miller from NF Construction did put a bigger pump out there and he was able to keep up with it. We need to emphasize to the contractors that we need them to finish that project ASAP. We need to get that job hurried up as fast as possible. Mr. Moron noted that the sheriff is working with FBC in Eastpoint for a possible shelter from the cold weather approaching.

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.