

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
MAY 21, 2025
9:00 AM
MINUTES**

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

Others Present: Michael Shuler-County Attorney, Michael Moron-County Coordinator, Erin Griffith-Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator, and Jessica Gay-Clerk to the Board

Call to Order

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of the Agenda

Late add by Erin regarding JAG.

Mr. Moron added a letter of support for ANERR.

Chairman Jones asked to add to agenda for discussion for food trailer area.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, to approve agenda with changes 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 Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Payment of County Bills and the FCBCC Regular Meeting Revised 11/19/2024 and Regular Meeting minutes 4/9/2025. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Department Directors Reports

3. Jennifer Daniels – Emergency Management Director

No action items.

County Staff & Attorney Reports

4. Justin Stiell -- County Planner

1. Board authorization for Chairman to sign the letters provided, granting permission to Mrs. Holland to submit Department of Environmental Protection permit application and Army Corps of Engineers permit application.

2. Authorization for County staff to complete any required documents related to this application for parcel ID: 29-09S-06W-7310-022E-0070.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1 and 2 from Mr. Stiell's report. Motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Jones noted that he has added to the agenda, the vacant piece of land that is going to be improved enough to use for food vending. He noted that he was under the understanding that it is really not commercial site plan because they are not adding buildings, with foundations. It is really just improving the parking lot. Chairman Jones noted that he had spoken to several people in the public and noted that since it was commercial property, they would need a site

plan. However, that was determined to be incorrect. Just wanted to make sure the public is aware. Mr. Stiell noted that he summed it up pretty well, and it is always nice when neighbors work together. Chairman Jones said when I was talking to Mr. Taranto, I was talking more about the fence than anything. He noted this is something that the county probably missed when it was sold in the past. We are just trying to make sure there is not a fire hazard. Commissioner Ward said while we have Justin on the line, I know that we have a new county planner in June. I would like whenever they have something that comes before them, if it follows our plans set out, I think the county planner should have the authority to approve it. I want a streamline process for continuity. Chairman Jones read the email into the record he noted that Mr. Armistead said there will be a porty potty setup for employees only. Commissioner Ward noted that if it is zoned a certain way, it should be within the property owners' rights to do what the rules allow. He noted that the property owner could potentially sue the county if we do not allow them to use it how they want to. Mr. Stiell noted that this is quasi matter, and you are only checking to see if the site plan matches the land use plan. Attorney Shuler noted that if you check off all of the boxes then it has to be approved. He noted that we went through this with the big box store on the island, but it met the code and it had to be approved. Chairman Jones noted that it is not this commissions job to put people in business or keep them out of business. Commissioner Ward noted that she enjoys getting feedback from the community. She noted that they cannot make everyone happy. But we have rules and laws that we have to follow. I just people to know that we cannot always give people what they want. Commissioner Sanders asked if you were working it out with Mr. Taranto. Chairman Jones noted that he thinks the fence may be a fire hazard. We are still working on that. Commissioner Ward thanked Justin for reaching out to the property owners for their questions.

5. Erin Griffith – Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator

Added 11 and 12 for the sheriff's department

Chairman Jones called for public comments on items 11 and 12.

There were no public comments.

On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1 through 9 and 11 and 12. Motion carried 5-0.

1. BOARD ACTION: CIGP PATTON DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS - GRANT AGREEMENT

Franklin County has received \$655,225 from the Florida Department of Transportation's County Initiative Grant Program to widen and resurface the .735 miles of Patton Drive from SR30 (US98) to SR300 Island Drive. This project will widen the road from the existing 10' lanes to two standard 12' wide travel lanes. Roadway swales and ditches will also be graded to improve drainage. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached grant agreement and resolution of authorization.

2. BOARD ACTION: CR370 ALLIGATOR DRIVE RELOCATION PROJECT - TASK ORDER

At the April 9th meeting, the Board received a grant award agreement through the Florida Department of Transportation's SCOP program for the CR370 Alligator Drive Relocation Project (old fire department cutoff road). The project scope includes the survey, design, permitting, preparation of construction plans/specs, construction and CEI services to construct approximately 300 feet of new roadway consisting of two 12' wide travel lanes and 2' grassed shoulders. As Franklin County follows the Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act (F.S. 287.055) in selecting engineering firms for design improvements, the ongoing county engineering contract with Dewberry and Florida Statute 287.055 allows the county to negotiate with the contracted engineer for this project and staff recommends approval of the attached design services proposal in the amount of \$38,121.40. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached task order with county engineers Dewberry for the design and construction bid plans/specifications for this project.

3. SGI FISHING PIER ACCESS ROAD AND SEAWALL REPAIRS - TASK ORDERS

Franklin County received multiple denials from FEMA regarding the SGI Fishing Pier Access Road Seawall repair which collapsed during Hurricane Idalia. FEMA will not provide funding for the \$690,717 needed to repair the seawall; however, FEMA has obligated the \$112,829 repair to the asphalt roadway surface which was damaged by the storm. Unfortunately, the county will not be able to complete the roadway repairs without repairing the collapsed section of the seawall first. The attached \$13,950 task order from contracted engineers Dewberry will complete the design and construction bid specs for the roadway repairs.

The county has requested a legislative line-item appropriation request for funding assistance to repair the seawall section, but it is undetermined at this time if it will be funded. The county will continue to seek funds for the repair through other programs as grant cycles open for submission. To keep the project moving forward at this time (as it could take a long time to permit the repair/replacement of the seawall section) without secured construction funding,

staff requested the attached \$89,085 cost proposal and hourly not to exceed fee (HTE) of \$5,700 from contracted engineers Dewberry for design, survey, Geotech and permitting for the seawall repairs to be paid by the SGI Fishing Pier Maintenance Fund.

- a.** Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached \$13,950 task order with Dewberry Engineers for the FEMA funded design and construction plans for the SGI Fishing Pier Roadway Repairs.
- b.** Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached \$89,085 and HTE of \$5,700 task order for the design, permitting and construction plans for the SGI Fishing Pier Access Road Seawall Repairs to be paid by the SGI Fishing Pier Maintenance Fund.

4. BOARD ACTION: BUDGET REQUEST LETTER TO DEPARTMENTS

Franklin County is beginning preparations for the fiscal year 2025/2026 Budget. All budget requests must be submitted by July 1, 2025. I have prepared the attached draft budget request letter with the following instructions:

“Franklin County is beginning preparations for the fiscal year 2025/2026 Budget. All budget requests must be submitted utilizing the forms provided by July 1st, 2025. At the direction of the Board, please keep your request to the minimum that your department can operate while providing the same level of services with the same number of employees. Funding requests for additional capital outlay beyond your current allocation is also discouraged. The State has extended the legislative session to address issues with the State’s budget and proposed property tax reform. The financial impacts to the county’s revenues are unknown at this time due to the pending legislative changes and uncertain national economic conditions.

In the current 2024/2025 budget, the county funded year five (in year four) of the five-year pay plan implementation and provided a 4% inflationary adjustment to bring salaries to current market rates. The five-year plan offered a statistical peer-data-based solution to address wage disparity, market value discrepancies, some wage compression issues and provided a gradual escalation in base salaries to meet the \$15.00 minimum wage mandate in 2026. The pay plan has addressed many of the county’s issues with compression and has also resulted in improved employee retention and recruitment. A full pay plan re-evaluation is recommended every 5-7 years, and a full re-evaluation will be planned during the upcoming year. An inflationary general wage adjustment for all employees will be utilized for planning purposes in the upcoming budget.” Board action to authorize sending the budget request letter as drafted or with any changes/additional instructions.

5. BOARD ACTION: BUDDY WARD SEAFOOD LANDING PARK UNLOADING DOCK - ESTIMATE

At the request of Commissioner Amison, staff received several quotes to construct a new dock along the side of the boat ramp at Buddy Ward Seafood Landing Park. Boaters have complained that the ramp location is difficult to launch as there is no dock alongside the ramp for boaters to safely guide the boat off the trailer without assistance. The attached \$17,159 quote from Jason White Construction will construct a 6’x32’ dock with flow through decking (to reduce damage from future storm surge) with a 5’ ramp landing. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached estimate to be paid from budgeted boat ramp maintenance funds.

6. BOARD ACTION: COURTHOUSE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT – 3RD & FINAL CHANGE ORDER

Southeastern Consulting Engineers have recommended approval of the attached \$39,510.07 final change order #3 for the Courthouse Improvements Project. This final change order includes the additional work required to accommodate a 2’ higher slope elevation change in the drainage and outfall structures needed to connect the roof drains to the city sewer inlets, relocation of a conflicting waterline and removal and restoration of sidewalk areas and curbs. This project still falls within the approved budget as the county had anticipated funding the bid alternate for a new roof. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached change order #3 for Monolith Construction for the Courthouse Improvements Project.

7. BOARD ACTION: DISTRICT 2 PAVING FUNDS – RIO VISTA DRIVE RESURFACING TASK ORDER

Commissioner Sanders has requested the attached \$37,245 task order from contracted county engineers Dewberry and Associates to design and develop construction specifications and plans to resurface Rio Vista Drive from Highway 98 to the new pavement at the end of the boat ramp area. The cost of this task order will be paid by District 2’s paving funds. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached task order with county

engineers Dewberry for the design and construction bid plans/specifications for this project.

8. BOARD ACTION: DISTRICT 5 PAVING FUNDS – BEAR CREEK ROAD RESURFACING TASK ORDER

Commissioner Ward has requested the attached \$15,975 proposal from contracted county engineers Dewberry and Associates to design and develop construction bid specifications and plans to resurface Bear Creek Road from Ridge Road to Wilderness Road. The cost of this task order will be paid by District 5's paving funds. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached task order with county engineers Dewberry for the design and construction bid plans/specifications for this project.

9. BOARD ACTION: LATCF FUNDS – SYLVESTER WILLIAMS PARK PROJECT PLAYGROUND QUOTE

At the last meeting, the county obligated the balance of the remaining LATCF funds for park playground improvements for the playground at Sylvester Williams Park. Commissioner Croom had requested the attached quote based upon Sourcewell Contract Pricing from Florida Recreational Products. The LATCF program will fund approximately \$51,702.21 of the quote with the balance provided by the county's Parks and Recreation Department. The county parks department will be responsible for the removal and demolition of the existing playground set which was in poor condition and the installation of border timbers and wood chips. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached \$58,563.83 quote for the Sylvester Williams Park Playground Project.

10. BOARD INFORMATION: MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT UPDATES

- Lanark EMS – County staff met contractor Oliver Sperry onsite to begin sitework on Monday, May 19th.
- Armory Convention Center Project – Pre-Bid Construction meeting was held last week, was well attended. Bids are due June 3rd.
- CR67 Phase IV – Bids for construction and CEI are being advertised now, bids are due June 3rd.
- RESTORE SGI Stormwater – Pre-construction meeting held, county is still awaiting formal notice to proceed (NTP) from the US Treasury, earliest possible NTP date will now be June 9th. Unfortunately, the Treasury timeline has delayed the project's NTP into the peak summer season. The county has been in discussions with the awarded contractor and the CEI engineers to delay the construction start on disruptive portions of the project scope until after August 1st. An engineering diagram is attached to this report which provides an overview of the location of the new stormwater pipes, inlets and outfalls, the areas of roadway resurfacing, and the additional retention pond.
- Apalachicola Artificial Reef Association Co-Op reef project with Franklin County and FWC is out for bid now, bids are due June 13th.

11. LATE ADD: BOARD INFORMATION: CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION – SHERIFF'S NARCOTICS JAG GRANT

The attached certificate and cover letter accepts and acknowledges that the Board will serve as the coordinating unit of local government for the Sheriff's JAG Narcotics Grant. This certificate also attests that the county will abide by the different state and federal JAG program requirements and policies. This certificate is a required transmittal to go along with the grant application for the \$39,674 award which assists in funding a drug investigation officer. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached Certificate of Participation and cover letter for the Sheriff's JAG grant application.

12. LATE ADD: BOARD INFORMATION: SHERIFF'S JAG GRANT AWARD AGREEMENT – HEAVY DUTY PICKUP

The Sheriff's Department has received the attached JAG Byrne Grant for \$70,000. This award will provide funding for a new heavy duty 4x4 pickup truck which will be able to tow a variety of first response equipment, including ATVS and boats for search and rescue activities. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached grant award agreement for the Franklin County Sheriff's Department.

Chairman Jones inquired about the materials, and would the contractor be able to be reimbursed for materials being stored. Mrs. Griffith noted yes. Chairman Hones noted that he wants to do this with least impact to businesses during summertime.

6. Michael Morón – County Coordinator

1. Action Item: LOS ARPC Regional Workforce Housing Study

- The Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC) has developed a grant proposal for a Regional Workforce Housing Study throughout the Apalachee Region.
- “The purpose of this project is to uncover where gaps in housing availability exist and provide data-driven recommendations to improve workforce housing availability.”
- ARPC’s intention is to submit a request for funding under the Florida Commerce Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) Grant (FY 2025-2026).
- ARPC is requesting a letter of support for the grant proposal.
- Board action to authorize a letter of support with the Chairman’s signature for this grant proposal.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, to authorize a letter of support with the Chairman’s signature for this grant proposal. Motion carried 5-0

2. **(Late Add)** Action Item: LOS ANERR

- The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (ANERR) is asking for a letter of support from the Board as they request a continuation of federal support and funding.
- Draft copies of the letter are attached to my report.
- Board action to authorize the Chairman’s signature on the letters of support for ANERR.

Chairman Jones called for public comment of the letter of support for ANERR. There were no public comments.

On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom and Commissioner Ward, to authorize the Chairman’s signature on the letters of support for ANERR. Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Amison updated the Board on the latest meeting with FWC. He encouraged the board members to reach out to their state representatives discussion about FWC meeting.

3. Discussion/Action Item: EMS Workshop

- For the last few meetings, the Board has been discussing changing the status of the Emergency Medical Services department to a County department.
- Mr. Richard Lewis (EMS Consultant) has provided several options, for your review, that includes different levels of service and ambulances.
- The Board asked staff to schedule a workshop to allow public input on this important matter.
- Staff is suggesting Thursday, June 5th at 6:00 p.m. (ET) for this workshop.
- Board discussion and possible action.

4. Discussion/Action Item: VFD MSBU Workshop

- At your last meeting, the Board discussed scheduling workshops with each of the volunteer fire department districts, to allow each department to justify their request to increase the Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU) assessment.
- Staff would like to schedule the MSBU workshops in the following manner:
 - i. The City of Carrabelle and St. Teresa/Lanark Village workshops will be held at the Carrabelle City Commission meeting room on one evening starting at 6:00 p.m. (ET).
 - ii. The Alligator Point and Dog Island workshops will be held at the Carrabelle City Commission meeting room on a different evening, also at 6:00 p.m. (ET).
 - iii. The Eastpoint, St. George Island, and City of Apalachicola will be held in this meeting room at 6:00 p.m. (ET) one evening.
- Is the Board agreeable to this format?
- Board discussion and possible action.

Chairman Jones noted that we need to make sure that members of first responders community know that we are going to have these discussions. Commissioner Sanders said before we have any meetings with the fire departments or anything, is there a way that we can get all of the information that I feel this board, as far as budget and ISO letter, rosters of the fire department, and the contract that we want them to enter in. Is it possible to request this information and have before the workshops? Commissioner Ward said she thinks it is important if we are asking them to support this, it is important that they know where this money is going to. Justify why we are increasing.

Chairman Jones said that is what these workshops are going to be for? Mr. Moron noted that basically Commissioner Sanders is asking for this information to be received ahead of time in order for the commissioners to review and ask questions before hand. Commissioner Sanders noted that the ISO rating is important, but the letter is also as important. Mr. Moron said are you asking Attorney Shuler to go ahead and prepare the contracts now? Commissioner Sanders noted that is her way of thinking. She said she has had a lot of people asked why they needed a raise, and she cannot answer them. Attorney Shuler noted that he would prefer to have a motion and vote to direct him to present a contract

to the fire departments. Attorney Shuler noted that if he is going to be negotiating with them, he would like board authority by motion and vote. Commissioner Sanders also would like their nonprofit status to make sure those are still active. **Commissioner Sanders made a motion authorizing Mr. Moron to send a letter to each volunteer fire department requesting their financials, a roster of all volunteers who are certified and not certified, a detailed justification for the increase, the nonprofit status and the ISO rating, and authorizing Attorney Shuler to begin drafting a contract. Seconded by Commissioner Ward.** Commissioner Amison noted that he does not know what has happened in the past with this. We should have financials already; they are using public funds. Lanark MSBU fund paid for the election. It is still tax dollars. That is why we are elected to make these decisions. Not a big fan of giving tax dollars out without transparency. I know it is going to be growing pains because in the past the fire departments have not had to be accountable. We are going to have to be transparent about these funds. Commissioner Amison noted that he will not approve anything without financials. They are going to show me where it is going to be spent or I will not approve it. Commissioner Sanders noted that they are supposed to be sending in rosters every year because of comp insurance. Mr. Moron noted that he will hold off with scheduling anything until the Board is comfortable in doing so. Chairman Jones noted to have all of the trucks on SGI replaced. Currently, their MSBU would go totally to replenishing the fire trucks. Commissioner Sanders asked if the money was still in the state's budget for the Eastpoint fire department? Chairman Jones noted that he is not certain, but he believes it is. Mrs. Griffith noted that with the rolling lease purchase agreement in place, dump trucks have a use in secondary market. Fire trucks also have a use in secondary market. Unfortunately, there is not a secondary use for ambulances. We would probably have to replace the chassis and every other year we will have to purchase an ambulance or replace a chassis. Mr. Moron noted we needed a plan moving forward to help our fire departments. Commissioner Croom asked Attorney Shuler how it would work with the contracts. Attorney Shuler noted that he would contact each of the other six departments and present the one approved with St. James Lanark, ask them if they approve in toto or if there are changes deletions they would like to make. The essential terms will be non-negotiable such as financials and reporting. Having required that of one fire department, you would need to do so of all. Commissioner Croom said he was just asking the process, dealing with the city commission. Attorney Shuler noted that he will be dealing with the volunteer fire departments. How the volunteer fire departments interact with their city commissions is irrelevant. This agreement is between the county and the fire departments. MSBU for the two city MSBU is only charged to the unincorporated areas. **Motion carried 5-0.**

5. Informational Item: Comp Plan & Zoning Ordinance Update

- Mr. Justin Stiell (County Planner) will be on your June 4th agenda to review a draft version of the County's updated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.
- Mr. Stiell will circulate that draft prior to the meeting for your review.

6. Informational Item: RCSC Member

- Mr. Ken Jones (RCSC Administrator) would like the Board to appoint members to the Riparian County Stakeholders Coalition (RCSC).
- Attached is a RCSC report that explains "Who We Are", "What We Do", "Current Priorities", "How You Can Help", and "Contact Information".
- Let me know if you are interested in serving on this coalition and I will have Mr. Jones contact you.

7. Informational Item: Community Action Member

- Mr. Tim Centers, Chief Executive Officer for Capital Area Community Action Agency, is asking for the Board to appoint a commissioner, or a designee, to their Board.
- They meet virtually on the 4th Tuesday every other month at 6pm.
- Let me know if you are interested and I have Mr. Centers give you a call.
- On another note, Mr. Centers wanted the Board to be aware that the delay of the state's budget could affect the Head Start program funding, which would cause a temporary closer of the program.
- Mr. Centers will keep us updated.

8. Informational Item: Bring Me A Book Forgotten Coast in Chapman Building

- The City of Apalachicola is closing the City Hall complex which is causing some non-profit agencies to seek new locations.
- One of those agencies is the Bring Me A Book Forgotten Coast.
- Fortunately, they contacted Mr. Tim Centers and was able to agree on using the spare room on the 1st floor of the Chapman Building to store their books.
- Their operation will not conflict with the Head Start program or operations.

9. Informational Item: FWC June 3rd Workshop

- FWC has scheduled another presentation/workshop on June 3, 2025, in the Chapman Auditorium.
- Per Mr. Devin Resko, this workshop will be different from than the one in April.

- “Based on the feedback and input from stakeholders from the April and May workshops that were held throughout the state, the content of the June workshop will be dedicated much more to the outline of recommendations FWC plans to present to the FWC Commissioners in August regarding the reopening of Apalachicola Bay, as well as some statewide measures.”
- This meeting will be noticed on the website with the more than one commissioner may attend statement.

10. Informational Item: NFWFMD Meeting

- The Northwest Florida Water Management District will hold their Governing Board meeting, here in your meeting room, on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, from 10am – 3pm.
- I will notice this meeting on the County’s website with a statement that one or more County commissioner may attend this meeting.

11. Informational Item: Next Meeting Date

- Your next regular meeting date will be Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. (ET).

The Board discussed the various entities being displaced with the city property closing.

7. Michael Shuler – County Attorney

1. Animal Control ordinance public hearing rescheduled to 11:00 a.m. (ET)

See pages 3-28.

A redline ordinance is attached showing the changes to Section 12, which is the Dangerous Dog section of the ordinance, and the deletion of Section 14, which is the Animal Control Appeal Board. The Animal Control Appeal Board is presently a citizen advisory board which can hear appeals of decisions made by Animal Control. Mr. Davis is aware of the proposed removal of this appeal board and is without objection. To my recollection, no one has appealed to the Animal Control Appeal Board in over 15 years, as all citations have been heard by the court. The redline draft contains instructions in the header and footer to guide review of the additions and deletions to the ordinance. The ordinance also provides that the current interlocal agreements between the county and the two cities (Apalachicola and Carrabelle) concerning animal control services shall remain in full force and effect. Board Action Requested: Consideration of animal control ordinance, as amended.

2. Public hearing on proposed Planned Unit Development Evaluation ordinance

Presently, June 13, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. (ET) is clear on everyone's schedule, including Ms. Gutchner-Mills. Board Action Requested: Approval of a public hearing on June 13, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. (ET) to consider the PUD Evaluation ordinance. Ms. Kim thanked the board for holding the PUD ordinances.

On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the public hearing to be scheduled for June 13, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Reminder of the public hearing on petition to abandon approximately 600 feet of St. Teresa Avenue.

This is also scheduled for 11:00 a.m. All documents are on the agenda. Copies of s. 336.09; 336.10 and 336.12 are attached. See Pages 29-31.

4. Possible Fire and Rescue services MSBU Increase

Discussion and possible action to schedule a workshop in Carrabelle for the four fire districts on the eastern end of the county and a workshop in Apalachicola for the three fire districts on the western end of the county.

5. E-911 Address Ordinance

Does the Board want to schedule this for a public hearing?

The Board discussed having the hearing and should it be held in the evening. The board consensus was to have this during a regular meeting. Attorney Shuler noted that in his opinion regardless of the time of the meeting it is the subject of the hearing that determines attendance. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized scheduling a public hearing on the E-911 Address Ordinance during a regular meeting. Motion carried 5-0.** Attorney Shuler noted that he will schedule this meeting for a meeting in July.

6. Property swap with Duke Energy

I notified you last meeting that the survey from Duke Energy showed that the entry to their property runs underneath their proposed transmission line easement and that I had communicated to them my concern regarding access to the

property. Duke Energy's response was to send me their "guidelines for encroachments into transmission easements." Their "guidelines" are not an easement and, as we all know, encroachments are things located where they should not be. Therefore, I have informed them that my recommendation to my client is that the Board require Duke Energy to grant Franklin County an easement guaranteeing ingress, egress, and utilities as a condition of the land swap, including the right to construct, maintain and reconstruct an improved road, over, under and across Duke Energy's transmission line easement area. As of the date of this report, I have not received a commitment to provide such an easement from Duke Energy. In short, my recommendation is "no easement, no land swap." I hope it does not come to that as I know the Board is interested in using this parcel for possible workforce housing.

7. The Landing at SGI, LLC

See pages 32-44

The Landings attorney delivered a Bert Harris Notice via email the evening of May 14, 2014, pursuant to s.70.001, Fla. Stat. They claim approximately \$6.7 million dollars in lost value to their property due to the St. George Island Overlay, or words to that effect. Their notice starts a statutory clock for a response from the county. A copy of s. 70.001, Fla. Stat. and their letter are attached.

Commissioner Amison asked if we are just waiting on an easement to access property on Duke swap. Attorney Shuler noted that essentially that is correct.

Planning and Zoning Adjustment Board Report

8. Critical Shoreline Applications

a. 2368 HIGHWAY 98 EAST

In consideration of a request to construct a 1,000 sq ft dock uncovered dock. Property located in Lanark Village, Franklin County, FL. Request submitted by Makaira Construction Group, agent for Ingrid Alonso and Alien Magrinat, applicants.

b. 1569 ALLIGATOR DRIVE

A consideration of a request to construct a new 1,965 sq ft dock consisting of a 160 sq ft terminal platform, a 1,522 sq ft access pier and a 253 sq ft covered boat lift. FDEP issued joint FDEP and CORPS SPGP Authorization on March 17, 2025. Property is located in Alligator Point, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Florida Environmental and Land Services, Inc., James Barrett/Elva Peppers, agent for William McMillan, applicant.

Commissioner Sanders asked if there is a house on 2368 Highway 98 East. Mr. Steve noted that they are not asking for power, just a dock. **On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items a and b. Commissioner Ward confirmed that P&Z board approved and there is a house on 1569 Alligator Drive. Motion carried 5-0.**

The Board recessed at 10:20 a.m. and reconvened at 10:30 a.m.

9. Variance Requests

a. 537 GULF SHORE DRIVE

A consideration of a Variance request to encroach 25 ft into the 50 ft wetland setback to accommodate the proposed construction of an equipment building and access routes to the building. Property located on Dog Island, Franklin County, FL. Request submitted by Susann Price, agent for Duke Energy, applicant.

Attorney Shuler noted that historically the board has reduced the footprint of the structure to 1000 square feet. This is different because it is a public utility. Do not feel this is necessary in this circumstance because it is not a habitable structure. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the variance request for 537 Gulf Shore Drive. Motion carried 5-0.**

b. 34-8 WARREN AVENUE

A consideration of a request to encroach 6' beyond the 11' allowance in the S-4 District to construct an addition to the residential structure. Property is located in Lanark Village, Franklin County, FL. Request submitted by George and Teresa Bookwalter, applicants.

Commissioner Sanders asked if there was any resistance at the meeting for this, Mr. Paterson noted no. Commissioner Ward asked if there have been other instances like this approved. Mr. Paterson noted that in the past the board there had already approved these types of request. Mr. Paterson noted that no one showed up in resistance of those. Commissioner Sanders noted that she is going to have the board help her in making this decision since this is in the S4 district. Mr. Moron asked are you hinting towards tabling this? **Commissioner Sanders made a motion to approve. Commissioner Ward seconded, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the variance**

request for 34-8 Warren Avenue. Commissioner Ward noted that we need to move forward with continuity. Commissioner Ward noted that she is at an impasse because there has been a precedence set, but staff recommended against it. Mr. Stiehl noted that the zoning code specifically identifies that this zoning prohibits any setbacks. There are locations that have buildings that are closer than the setbacks would allow. Mr. Stiehl noted that he recommends the board deny the variance. Commissioner Amison asked whatever happened to the special zoning board over there, was it dissolved? Commissioner Sanders noted that it was dissolved by the BOCC. Commissioner Ward asked if there was any hardship that you are aware of. Mr. Stiehl noted that the applicant has stated that this is for a quilting room, and he does not see that as a hardship. Attorney Shuler noted that my memory is that citizen advisory board was not created by ordinance it was just created by motion of the board. The ordinance was never amended to include the advisory board. **Commissioner Sanders rescinded her motion to approve and made a motion to table. Seconded by Commissioner Ward.** Commissioner Ward asked if there is a way, they can work with staff to make this comply with our code. She noted that she just wants to make sure that we do what is right. Chairman Jones noted that if we are going to table, Justin can review and get that information to all of us. **Motion carried 5-0.**

10. PUD Ordinance Review

a. PUD Ordinance Review

Review of PUD Ordinance for Consistency with the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan for recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Attorney Shuler noted that this item is for information only. There is no action for the Board to take. Chairman Jones noted that we were doing what the state statute said. The school board member does not have to be in attendance, they just have to have a quorum. It is up to them to fill the seat. Attorney Shuler noted that the statute requires they have a representative.

Mr. Paterson noted that he and Mr. Moron met with DOT and Weber. DOT wants us to require a driveway permit from them before we issue permits. Chairman Jones asked would that put a hold on permits. Commissioner Sanders noted that this was the process in the past. The property owner would submit their application to DOT. She noted that it was a lifesaving thing at the time. It will be Hwy 98, 65 and 300 which is Island drive to the beach.

Chairman Jones noted that on May 31st Horizon Skies will be doing a drone showcase. It is a free event from like 5-10 pm at Battery Park. Commissioner Ward noted that she reached out to DOT and asked if they are planning on resurfacing and restriping highway 65. Commissioner Croom noted that he called, and they wanted some geographical landmarks. The Board recessed at 10:50 am and reconvened at 11:03 am.

Public Hearings -- 11:00 a.m. (ET)

11. 11:00 a.m. (ET) Public Hearing: Animal Control Ordinance

This Public Hearing was continued from the May 7th BOCC Regular Meeting

AN ORDINANCE REGULATING ANIMALS IN FRANKLIN COUNTY, FLORIDA AND REPEALING ALL OTHER ORDINANCES OF FRANKLIN COUNTY REGULATING ANIMALS, PROVIDING FOR AREA REGULATED, PROVIDING DEFINITIONS, PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT, PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES, PROVIDING FOR APPEALS AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attorney Shuler noted that at the last meeting the Chairman and Commissioner Amison raised some issues which we have discussed. There were some changes made to the ordinance.

- Area regulated on page one added a provision
- Dangerous animal provisions updated
- Sworn statement – this cannot be waived by state law

Commissioner Ward noted in reference to the quarantine, is that still ten days. Attorney Shuler noted that yes, it is ten days from the date quarantined. Self-quarantine is still an option. You can remove that, but I would not recommend the Board do so. I would leave that at the discretion of the staff. Commissioner Amison noted that we have had an issue where the lady who spoke at the last meeting, that same animal attacked a child the first of the week. Attorney Shuler noted that is an ongoing investigation and we should not be discussing that. Commissioner Amison noted that if we are going to do self-quarantine, we should allow our staff to observe the animal three to five days before allowing it to go back to the owner. It could potentially alleviate any harm in the neighborhood. Attorney Shuler noted that I think we are saying the same thing, if the animal control director does not believe the animal can be safely self-quarantined, we impound the animal. Chairman Jones asked if they are allowed to keep the animal in the same area as before. Commissioner Ward noted that is her question, if the dog has already had an unprovoked attack how we know the owner is going to quarantine as required. Attorney Shuler noted that if the Board wants to remove the self-quarantine option it could do so at this time. Commissioner Amison noted that he is okay with doing away with the self-quarantine

altogether. Commissioner Ward noted that we are opening ourselves up for issue if we allow self-quarantine and another event happens. Commissioner Croom asked about the penalties for violating the self-quarantine. Commissioner Amison noted that it was his understanding there is no penalty for violating the self-quarantine but in the event, there is another event, they could be subject to misdemeanor charges. Commissioner Amison noted that by removing the self-quarantine option it provides clear lines to staff and gets rid of that liability. Attorney Shuler noted that the violation for self-quarantine, it is a civil infraction up to \$500. Commissioner Sanders and Commissioner Ward noted that they both agree there should be no self-quarantine. Chairman Jones noted that he believes we are protecting our staff by removing the self-quarantine.

Molly Hill spoke to the Board about animals in her neighborhood. She wanted to bring to the Board's attention there is a bill on the governor's desk that really tightens up state law on dangerous dogs. I think the state is actually trying to take care of the issue you are talking about. There is another one called Dexter law that has passed unanimously and is headed to the governor's desk. People are reluctant to report their neighbors and they want to complete the form. When the police are called, if animal control and police could encourage people to fill out the form and update how they are handling it. Chairman Jones noted that is one of the things that started us on this journey, we knew the state was proposing changes.

Diana Anthony spoke to the Board thanked them for the changes noting this is a vast improvement. She asked if they had reached out to animal control to find out how many complaints they are getting and how many dogs they are declaring dangerous. She noted that she spoke with him, and he had noted there had only be one. She noted that they may not necessarily have to go through the entire process because owners may decide to have them euthanized. She asked if the animal control staff were provided training. Just wanted to make sure they are complying with the minimum requirements. She noted that she is frustrated with how the situation was handled and now the animal that injured her dog has reoffended.

Mr. Moron called for public comments online and there were none.

Commissioner Amison asked if we have ever in the past had a discussion of animal control being under the sheriff's umbrella. Commissioner Sanders noted that she does not recall it. Commissioner Amison noted that with the sworn affidavits. Commissioner Ward noted that she has spoken with the sheriff and Mr. Davis in the past, and Mr. Davis and the sheriff are interested. However, there were some concerns with staffing. Commissioner Ward recommended Commissioner Amison contact Mr. Davis and discuss with him the reasoning behind waiting to propose this transition. Commissioner Amison noted that he would like to have this discussion in the future. Attorney Shuler noted that one thing to remember is whether it is the county or sheriff's department, they will be required to follow state statutes. Attorney Shuler noted one solution may be require your staff to be notary publics. Commissioner Ward and Commissioner Amison were not in favor of this idea. Commissioner Ward noted that most of the time, the sheriff's department is present. Can the officer sign off on it? Attorney Shuler noted that a sworn statement is clearly required in the statute. Commissioner Ward noted that unless the county is going to cover the notary, she does not think it is a good idea. It is too much personal responsibility. Commissioner Croom noted that the notary is just swearing the signature is true, not the facts in the document. Commissioner Ward noted that there are all kinds of rules required when you are a notary public. Attorney Shuler noted that he is confident that law enforcement will help to the best of their ability. **Commissioner Amison made a motion to approve the ordinance as amended by discussion, seconded by Commissioner Croom. Motion carried 5-0.**

12. 11:00 a.m. (ET) Public Hearing: Abandonment of part of St. Teresa Avenue

Attorney Miriam Thornton presented the request to the Board noting it is less than 500 feet in length dedicated as a public right of way in 1927. This portion splits the 14 parcels my client owned. Effectively to the north is co-owned by the ones who own the south. It has been about 100 years and has never been constructed. Our request is to have it abandoned so the parcels can be united. Attorney Shuler asked the attorney to give an overview of the publication process. Published notice on May 1st. Should the resolution be adopted we will need to publish the notice along with the resolutions accepted. After it has been published, it will be recorded in the public records. Commissioner Ward inquired as to how they would be able to get access to the road. It is not accessible. They are driving over their parcels to get to their beach front parcels. It is a common ownership. Commissioner Amison noted that what the county has is an easement that is not acceptable.

Attorney Shuler noted that it is a public road that is platted on a subdivision plat that is recorded. The instance here is that it is platted but not opened. Attorney Shuler referenced a lawsuit in 2004 about something similar where some of the roads had been opened and some had not. Commissioner Amison noted that we have had people in the past very vocal about not abandoning public lands, but in this case, you would have to go across private lands to access the easement. Attorney Shuler noted that the easement extends further back and is accessible at some point. Commissioner Amison and Commissioner Ward noted that it appears in what we are looking at it is landlocked. Commissioner Croom said so you are asking for 600 feet, about half an acre. Attorney Thornton noted that St. Teresa Avenue goes from west side of St. Teresa all the way over to Bay North. The west side is opened up because people have property on both sides of the roads. These

particular people have bought the land all the way to 98. Now they want it contiguous from 98 to the water. On the west side it is platted different. Commissioner Sanders noted that she can remember when a part of this was opened up, but the county has always recognized it as a county easement. This is a continuance of a road. Commissioner Amison noted that he does not see an easement going through east and west. Commissioner Sanders noted that we need a larger picture showing St Teresa all the way through. Commissioner Ward asked about precedence. Is this something we have done in the past? I know I have people in my district that would love the county to take a road. Commissioner Sanders explained before the property owners did not own the property on the water side, it was owned by St. Joe Company. She noted there is a road, but it is just not cleared out. The Board discussed abandonment of the easement. Chairman Jones asked Attorney Shuler Is the property to the left had abandoned the road. Attorney Shuler noted that he was not sure. Attorney for applicant noted that she believed so. There are quite a few that the abandon road is included as part of the legal description. Chairman Jones called for public comments. Applicant Jack Bixler spoke to the Board noting that he was who assembled a buyer group for the seven lots. The current part of the road is landlocked, and you cannot drive a golf cart down it. We are trying to abandon a landlocked, never used road. Chairman Jones called for additional public comments and there were none. Chairman Jones inquired if the county decided to do this where would the property be attached to. Attorney Thornton noted that the property had the same owners north and south. They are common ownership. Essentially the goal is to wipe out that portion of St. Teresa so they would have long thin parcels north and south. Commissioner Sanders noted that she has known it has been a county easement and it is public property. She is going to say we need to deny. **Commissioner Sanders made a motion to deny, seconded by Commissioner Ward. Motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Ward asked where we were on TDC vacancy. Mr. Moron noted that he was not sure if we had resolved all questions. Chairman Jones noted that what it would entail is whoever the business owner is, the state requires a paper to sign. Attorney Shuler noted the Chairman had asked a question and the answer was an individual doing business within the county on an advisory board. Is there conflict yes, is there prohibition, yes but is there an exception, yes. Under statute there is a provision that there is a financial form. That disclosure has to be completed by applicant and it is brought to the board for request of a waiver, and they can sit on the advisory board. As far as I am concerned it is up to the applicant whether they want to apply and complete the disclosure form. Mr. Moron noted that he does need to run the add for the collector of tax and non-collector of tax, technically at large. Mr. Moron noted that he can run the ad he just wanted to make sure we had answered all of the questions. Chairman Jones noted that also does the Board want to allow the previous applicants to be included. Chairman Jones asked MR. Moron to contact the previous applicants and ask if they wanted to be included. Commissioner Amison noted that we need to find out if we have any insurance in place for cyber security. That is something that we need to be aware of. If we do not, it would be a good idea to get some in place. He noted that we have all received suspicious emails. Commissioner Amison noted that nothing has happened, it was something that came from another source that was doing business with us. We have not been hacked. In the past I have brought this up because neighboring hospitals have been hacked. We may want to check in and see if we have insurance in place so that we are not liable down the road. Commissioner Croom noted that he had a conversation and evidently there is mention of teams from out of state that want to set up on the right of way to collect money. Chairman Jones noted that he believes all of that is wrong. WE need to find a different way to collect money. There has to be a better way to do it. Especially with it busy and kids right by the road. Commissioner Amison noted that in the past there have been local teams there, and people visiting, see the kids have made a good amount of money. People are generous, and that is where they have seen it. Chairman Jones noted that his kids participated in travel ball, and it was parent funded. Commissioner Amison noted that he was never a big fan of the buckets, preferred fish fry, etc. Mr. Moron noted that we need to speak with the Sheriff and get his advice. Chairman Jones reminded everyone the ARPC is doing their group collaborative tomorrow. There is also an option to attend via Zoom. Commissioner Ward noted that he does not want the public or commissioners to think she has gone behind closed doors regarding the animal control. She just wanted to speak with the sheriff and department heads before bringing up to the Board. She said we have to respect our department directors.

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.