

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM  
JULY 2, 2025  
9:00 AM  
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: Ricky Jones-Chairman, Jessica Ward-Vice-Chairman, Cheryl Sanders, Ottilie 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 Ward led the Board in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Moron noted that they will be removing the recognition for Danny Gay to a future meeting. There is a late add for Cortni Bankston on SHIP changes to LHAP and Bill Williams sent some action items yesterday for approval.

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

**Approval of Minutes and Payment of County Bills**

**1. County Bill List for Payment**

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Payment of County Bills. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Awards and Recognitions**

**2. Coach Morgan Thompson -- Dixie Youth Girls 12-U Softball Team -- Recognition**

Coaches Morgan Thompson, Jason Thompson, Bruce Taylor

Mrs. Thompson announced the girls were undefeated at district, went to state at Bellview, they won first game and lost the second, then brought home the state championship. Thank you for your generous donation for state. All of the girls are excited to go to Louisiana to represent the state of Florida and hopefully bring home the world title. The Board expressed how proud they were of the team and congratulated them on their accomplishment. Commissioner Ward asked if the Board needed to approve the check. Mr. Moron asked Mr. Davis to come up and ceremoniously announce the donation to the team. The County donated \$5,000 per county policy. Chairman Jones asked if this was already added in on the bill run. Mr. Moron noted that it was included to the bill run. Mr. Moron noted that he would encourage the Board and the public to donate to the team as it is a very expensive.

The Board recessed at 9:13 am and reconvened at 9:14 am.

Commissioner Sanders gave an update on a recent medical issue. She noted this is why the Chairman chose to cancel the PUD hearing that was scheduled. Chairman Jones noted that it was not his place to giveaway her HIPAA information. We not only cancelled the PUD meeting, but we cancelled others.

**3. Danny Gay -- Recognition**

*Postponed to a later meeting.*

**Public Comments**

JoEllen Pearman inquired if there are any updates on the fire hydrants. Chairman Jones noted that this was turned over to the fire chief and he was going to get with Ms. Nita at the water department. He noted that he can follow up with the chief to check on an update. Ms. Pearman noted that she has three pictures of fire hydrants in disrepair.

## Department Directors Reports

### 4. Howard Nabors – Superintendent of Roads and Bridges

There was discussion about inmate labor, discussed that they are not working on Fridays, they did work on June 20<sup>th</sup> at the cemetery. She noted that they will not have inmates on July 3<sup>rd</sup> either, as Governor DeSantis has given state employees off. Commissioner Sanders noted that she would like all of the commissioners to look at the area in Lanark.

### 5. Fonda Davis – Solid Waste Director

Action Items:

#### 1. Amnesty Days

In order to prolong the operational lifespan of our landfill and maintain compliance with environmental and capacity regulation, I recommend we revise our amnesty schedule from monthly to quarterly Saturdays only. REQUESTED ACTION: Board approval to have quarterly Saturday amnesty days for the 2025 and 2026 calendar.

Mr. Davis noted that he and Erin have been going back and forth with RESTORE feel like we will have grant award in next six months. Commissioner Ward noted that she hates to do it, but we have to. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the changes to Amnesty Days as presented.** Commissioner Amison asked would this be for yard debris as well? Is there any way we could do just yard trash? Just afraid we are going to get an excess of debris on right of ways. Mr. Davis noted that we will start this in January and give people time to adjust. Chairman Jones asked if they were going to do away with the Monday yard trash days? Mr. Davis noted that they were not. Chairman Jones noted that we are changing the regular amnesty days to quarterly on Saturdays. Commissioner Sanders asked if they were still picking up in Carrabelle and Apalachicola. Mr. Davis noted that they are. She asked him to make sure they are picking up all the way through Carrabelle. **Motion carried 5-0.**

#### 3. Sanitary Nuisance

Chairman Jones said we probably need to think about how we are going to address the roll offs in the future. It may be better to do our roll offs through code enforcement. Something we may need to address in the future. If there is a policy that needs to be in place it is up to us to do it. Commissioner Sanders noted that the state health department may can help with some funds since it is a sanitary nuisance. Commissioner Ward noted that she has been talking to staff about this. The individuals that get fined it is still questionable as to what we can spend the fines on.

The Use of Container for the Health Department Violation:

We have supported the health department violation with container and tipping fees. As on now the tonnage total is 60.89 tons at cost of \$3,957.85.

REQUESTED ACTION: None

#### 4. Vacant Position

Informational item.

Commissioner Croom asked how many vacancies he had, he noted that he has two and they are both being advertised now.

VACANT POSITION:

FOR BOARD INFORMATION: Due to the resignation of Jeff Wren Friday, June 6, 2025, as a Ground Keeper in the Park & Recreation Department a position is now available as a Ground Keeper.

REQUESTED ACTION: None

Mr. Moron noted that the Board may want to address item 4 on his report.

#### 4. Discussion/Action Item: Mandatory Garbage Pick-up

Chairman Jones, Mrs. Erin Griffith and I have been meeting with Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Commission and a bear-proof garbage can provider to discuss a plan to purchase bear-proof canisters for Franklin County residents with the funds provided by the State legislature. We are at a point in the discussion where the Board should determine

if a county-wide mandatory garbage pick-up ordinance will be enacted. As the Chairman will explain shortly, this decision will affect the logistics, cost, longevity, and effectiveness of the program. If the Board is interested in the possibility of a mandatory garbage pick-up ordinance, I recommend scheduling a public workshop with FWC, local garbage pick-up providers, and the bear-proof canister provider to discuss this matter. Board discussion and possible action.

Chairman Jones noted that the state has allocated just above a million dollars for bear resistance cans. The legislative intent is for Franklin County to move towards mandatory trash pickup. We need to discuss possibly have a workshop to determine what we need to do. **Commissioner Amison made a motion to schedule a workshop, seconded by Commissioner Croom. Motion carried 5-0.** Commissioner Amison noted that the crabbers at Alligator Harbor had a bear proof can and it has been taken away. They want to know if they can get it back. Mr. Davis noted that it was one of the ones that had rusted out. Chairman Jones noted that the company we have been talking with have the clasp on the side of the can and its least likely to rust out.

#### **6. Jennifer Daniels – Emergency Management Director**

1. Franklin County Emergency Management would like to request the retroactive approval of the signing of the extension of the Local State of Emergency on Friday, June 27th, 2025, at 6:15pm on the behalf of the city of Apalachicola.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the signing of the extension of the Local State of Emergency on Friday, June 27th, 2025, at 6:15pm on the behalf of the city of Apalachicola. Motion carried 5-0.**

2. Franklin County Emergency Management would like to request the board's approval to sign the extension of the Local State of Emergency on Friday July 4, 2025 @ 6:15pm on the behalf of the city of Apalachicola.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the signing of the extension of the Local State of Emergency on Friday July 4, 2025 @ 6:15pm on the behalf of the city of Apalachicola. Motion carried 5-0.**

3. The EOC has continued to work on the Apalachicola Water Crisis to assist the City of Apalachicola. We have been coordinating with them on getting bottled water sent to distribution locations, assisting with the dissemination of public messaging, acquiring, and updating contracts for water tankers and shower and laundry trailers, managing donations, etc. Starting June 13, 2025, a total of 98 hours of overtime have been recorded for the EOC staff; this figure does not account for time spent on the Water Crisis during the regular 35-hour work week. During the week of June 13, 2025, 32.25 hours of overtime were accumulated, while the week of June 15, 2025, saw 49.75 hours of overtime. In the week of June 22, 2025, at least 16 hours of overtime were noted. Approximately 80% of the typical work hours (from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM) during the 35-hour work week are dedicated to supporting the water crisis. Furthermore. I am requesting the Boards permission to pay staff for the overtime they have worked.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized paying staff for the overtime they have worked.** Commissioner Croom inquired if Mrs. Daniels had allocated funds to cover the overtime. Mrs. Daniels noted that she does not have a specific allocation for overtime but does have funds in her budget to cover the cost. Mrs. Griffith noted that should EOC be activate during a named storm, we can request reimbursement for overtime expenses. **Motion carried 5-0.**

4. I am requesting a moment to say thank you to our staff and our CERT Volunteers for their continued support and hard work during this as well as other disasters. As of June 22, 2025, there have been a total of 72 documented volunteer hours for this initiative, equating to \$2,376.00 in in-kind labor.

#### **7. Dewitt Polous – Mosquito Control Director**

No action items for the Board.

#### **8. Erik Lovestrand – Extension Office Director**

No action items for the Board.

#### **9. Whitney Roundtree – Library Director**

Action Items:

Carrabelle Branch Hours of Operation:

Requesting to change the Carrabelle Branch's hours of operation from 9:00 AM–6:00 PM to 10:00 AM–6:00 PM,

Monday through Friday. The branch is currently open 49 hours per week with two full-time employees and one part-time employee, which often results in staff working alone. This change would allow for two staff members to be scheduled at all times, offering more support, and improving safety. If approved, the library schedule would change to 10:00 AM–6:00 PM Monday through Friday and remain 10:00 AM–2:00 PM on Saturdays. The Eastpoint Branch will keep its current hours of Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM–5:00 PM. This adjustment will not impact programming or affect the library’s eligibility for state aid.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized changing the Carrabelle branch’s hours of operation from 9:00 AM–6:00 PM to 10:00 AM–6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Motion carried 5-0.**

#### Informational Items

#### Policy Review in Progress:

The library is currently reviewing system-wide policies, including the Customer Code of Conduct. We are comparing with similar library systems to ensure best practices are being followed. Once revisions are complete, they will be reviewed by Attorney Shuler and brought before the board for approval at a later meeting.

#### Holiday Closure – Independence Day:

Both branches will be closed on Thursday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day.

#### Summer Reading Program – July Events:

Our “Color Our World” Summer Reading Program continues through July with creative and engaging activities at both branches. Events are designed to support early literacy, encourage artistic expression, and bring families together through hands-on fun.

### **10. John Solomon – TDC Administrator**

No action items.

Mr. Moron presented item 6 from his report at this time.

#### 6. Discussion/Action Item: TDC Admin Contract Advertisement

- At your December 3, 2024, regular meeting, the Board extended the TDC Administration contract to September 30, 2025. TDC Vendor contracts expire on December 31, 2025.
- As that date is approaching, is the Board interested in another extension of the TDC Administration contract or should staff begin the advertising process?
- **Board discussion and possible action.**

Commissioner Ward asked was it not our board policy to go out for bids? Aren’t we supposed to go out for bids on our engineers, auditors, outsourced? Mr. Moron said most of the time engineers is driven by grants and funding and it is driven by FDOT. Mrs. Griffith noted that we are in year one of a four-year contract with our engineers. With the auditors we are roughly the same. We do every so often go out for bids. Mr. Moron noted that we look at them differently. Mr. Moron noted that administrative is the closest thing to county employees without actually being county employees. Mr. Moron noted that you want to be as transparent as possible. Commissioner Amison noted that he remembers at a meeting before he came on that Mrs. Cheryl mentioned why Mr. Solomon’s contract had not gone out for bids. Commissioner Croom asked how long is the contract for? Mr. Moron noted there was a time in the past when we were trying to get the admin contract offset from the vendors. Where there would never be a time when we replaced all of them at once. He noted that he would need to go back and look at it. Chairman Jones said since we do not know the answers to these questions, let us bring this back at the next meeting.

Commissioner Sanders asked about item number 11. When are we choosing this? Mr. Moron noted that he did not send to the Times because it is so expensive. Have advertised on radio and online. I believe the deadline is July 11<sup>th</sup>. I did resubmit a number of previous applicants who asked me to do so. I have received maybe two or three new ones. Mr. Moron noted that he added a link to the agenda that will send you directly to our website where this ad is posted.

### **11. Steve Kirschenbaum – Interim Airport Manager**

DEP violation at site got county staff approval to meet on site. There was still a fine, but they said if we send a letter

they could possibly waive. He noted they did so, and they waived the fine.

Action Items:

1. Signage recommendation, replace all airport signage.

\*Pics attached Task TDC \$3,000.00 (The TDC will only cover a portion) working on FDOT for Hwy 98 signs. The rest needs to come from the airport. Mrs. Griffith noted that TDC may be able to help but that would be up to their board. They could possibly fund the welcome sign. Chairman Jones asked him to get a mockup and get to the TDC board.

Chairman Jones asked Mr. Kirschenbaum to get a quote from the vendor for each sign, so we know exactly what we are talking about. The signs that you want to use airport funds for, bring that back to us.

2. County to setup generator service contract with same provider for all generators  
Mrs. Griffith noted that EOC has a contract on their generators. Also, the new generators purchased through the grant were for the hospital and they would be responsible for those maintenance contracts. Chairman Jones noted that he could reach out to Mrs. Daniels and see who they use for their maintenance contract.

3. To alleviate workload at the fiscal managers office I need a recommendation to have Avcon put together a multi project grant application for Triumph, FI Commerce, FDOT and FAA for multiple projects at the airport using existing FDOT FAA grants for match. Mr. Moron noted that not all of the grants have the administrative fees so there are some that would not be recouped.

The Board recessed at 10:35 am and reconvened at 10:52 am.

### County Staff & Attorney Reports

#### **12. (\*\*\*)Late Addition) Cortni Bankston -- SHIP Administrator**

Board action to approve the following updates to the Down payment Assistance Program:

- a. Maximum award amount

Up to 5% of purchase price not to exceed \$20,000

- b. Maximum purchase price amount

Currently at \$285K, suggested increasing to \$385K. The amount we have to give as down payment will be affected. Chairman Jones asked how much USDA will go up to. Mrs. Bankston noted that other counties is \$510K. Mr. Moron recommend you give all changes as one, and then vote on all together.

- c. Addition of purchase assistance for manufactured homes (Mobile Homes)

Verbiage has been added to approve purchase of manufactured homes

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the updates to the Down payment Assistance Program:**

- a. Maximum award amount: Up to 5% of purchase price not to exceed \$20,000**

- b. Maximum purchase price amount: \$385,000**

- c. Addition of purchase assistance for manufactured homes (Mobile Homes)**

Chairman Jones noted according to Rural Development site, the limit is \$419,300 but I am good with where we are at. Chairman Jones called for public comments. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Moron presented item #3 from his report.

3. Action Item: SHIP Inspection Payment

- Attached to my report is an invoice from Mr. Terry Mutch for initial inspections for SHIP clients. Mr. Mutch has been a SHIP inspector for several years.
- These projects were started while SHIP was administered by Community Action Agency but were not completed when the county assumed the administrative duties as a county department.
- To complete and close-out these projects that were paused for some months, Mrs. Cortni Bankston asked Mr. Mutch, as he was familiar with these cases, to assist her with the inspections. Mrs.

- Bankston forgot to get a short-term agreement in place, prior to proceeding with these projects.
- Mr. Mutch's inspection price structure is \$395 for the initial inspection, \$300 for the mid-point inspection, and \$295 for the final inspection.
- If the Board approves these and future inspection payments to close out the projects listed on the invoice, the motion should include authorization for Attorney Shuler to create an agreement with Mr. Mutch for these projects, if he deems it necessary.
- Mrs. Bankston will present an agreement, at a future meeting, with a local inspector for future projects.
- Board action to approve this and future inspection invoices from Mr. Mutch for the projects listed on the initial invoice.

Chairman Jones asked how many projects there were. Mrs. Bankston noted that she believes there are five. Chairman Jones asked why a fee for the initial inspection is there. Mr. Moron noted that they never started the process of the inspections.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved this and future inspection invoices from Mr. Mutch for the projects listed on the initial invoice. Motion carried 5-0.**

Mrs. Bankston noted that she put a notice on the website regarding the amount of SHIP applications received and letting people know that there is delay due to the volume. She has received 65 applications. Mr. Moron noted that he will have someone from building department to assist her with the files. Tina will be handling file management. Commissioner Ward noted that on our issue on Ridge, Stacy did respond. I have called Mr. Bonds from Tallahassee but have not heard back. Moving forward we need to make sure we have a policy in place. After everything is done, it is their responsibility to keep up with warranties. Commissioner Ward noted that the Innovation and Policy conference registration is going. Asked Mrs. Bankston to register her for the conference. Chairman Jones noted that he plans to attend both as well. She will send an email and you can let me know if you want to attend.

### **13. Erin Griffith – Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator**

#### **a. REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS: Design Criteria Services for the Franklin County First Responder Communications Project**

The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners is soliciting Statements of Qualifications from professional firms, registered in the State of Florida, pursuant to Section 287.055, Florida Statutes, known as the Consultant Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA), to provide consultant services for the Franklin County First Responder Communications Project.

The County is opening responses today for communication consultants to develop the design criteria and specifications for the Franklin County First Responder Communications Project as funded through Triumph Gulf Coast.

In determining whether a responder is qualified, the County will consider such factors as the qualifications of professional personnel; understanding of project concepts and goals; willingness to meet time requirements; recent, current, and projected workloads of the firms; and work experience with other projects/agencies completing similar public safety communications projects and/or addressing similar issues experienced in Franklin County.

The Firm selected by the County will advise the County on the development and implementation of a new countywide first responder communication system for use by the Franklin County EMS and Volunteer Fire Departments, Franklin County Sheriff's Office, Franklin County Road Department, Franklin County School

Board, Weems Memorial Hospital, Carrabelle Police Department, City of Apalachicola Police Department, all as further described in the County's Application for Funds and grant award agreement with Triumph Gulf Coast project #333.

Board action to release the responses to the seven-member ranking/review committee to be comprised of Sheriff AJ Smith or a designee from his department, (1) designee from the City of Apalachicola Police/Fire Department, (1) designee from the City of Carrabelle Police/Fire Department, (1) designee from the Franklin County School Board, (1) designee from the Franklin County Volunteer Firefighter Association, County EMS consultant Richard Lewis, and County Coordinator Michael Moron.

COMPANY	LOCATION
Mission Critical Partners	690 Grays Woods Blvd, Ste 100 Port Matilda, PA 16870
Tusa Consulting Services	118 N Conistor Ln Ste B Liberty, MO 64068
Omnicom Consulting Group, Inc.	7788 McClure Drive Tallahassee, FL 32312
Tectonic Engineering	1279 Route 300 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Newburgh, NY 12550

**On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized staff to release the RFQs to the seven-member ranking/review committee as designated above for recommendation. Motion carried 5-0.**

**b. INVITATION TO BID: Renovations and Repairs to the Apalachicola Clinic, Franklin County Health Department**

The Work includes Renovations and Repairs to the Apalachicola Clinic, Franklin County Health Department. The Work includes siding demolition, insulation, vapor retarders, fiber cement trim, sheet metal flashing and trim, joint sealants, painting etc. See the Summary in the technical specifications.

The county is also opening bid responses today for the siding repairs and renovations to the Franklin County Health Department in Apalachicola. The work includes siding demolition, insulation, vapor retarders, fiber cement trim, sheet metal flashing and trim, joint sealants, painting etc. and necessary repairs needed to replace the damaged/deteriorated pressboard style siding on the Apalachicola Health Department with fiber cement siding.

Board action to release the bids for review and recommendation to the project architect, Doug Shuler of BFBS Architects.

COMPANY	LOCATION	BID AMOUNT	BID BOND
MKM Quality Construction	1220 Sleepy Hollow Road Mexico Beach, FL 32456	\$282,569	YES
Monolith Construction	524 East First Street Port St Joe, FL 32456	\$151,000	YES
GeoFlora Group	Apalachicola, FL 32320	\$291,600	YES
Oliver Sperry Renovation & Construction	401 Office Plaza Drive Tallahassee, FL 32301	\$141,900	YES

**On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized staff to release the bids to Doug Shuler of BFBS Architects for recommendation. Motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioner Ward asked to pull item 6 for discussion. **On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1-5. Motion carried 5-0.**

**1. BOARD ACTION: SCRAP CR67 PHASE IV CONTRACTS CEI SERVICES AND CONSTRUCTION**

Franklin County received \$3,140,281 in federal grant 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 includes widening and resurfacing, reconstruction of certain side drains, signage, and pavement markings. At the last meeting, the Board opened construction bids and responses for the project's CEI services. Southeastern Consulting Engineers was the highest ranked firm for CEI and submitted the attached negotiated fee estimate of \$213,831. Project designers and staff have concurred that this is a reasonable fee estimate. Also attached is the construction contract for Roberts and Roberts, who were recommended for award at the last meeting for the lowest, responsive bid in the amount of \$1,896,302.40.

**A. Board action to accept and approve the proposed fee of \$213,831 and authorize the chairman to sign**

*the attached CEI services contract with Southeastern Consulting Engineers.*

- B.** *Board action to authorize the chairman to sign the attached construction contract with Roberts ad Roberts, Inc. for the low bid value of \$1,896,302.40.*

## **2. BOARD ACTION: 2024-25 ARTIFICIAL REEF PROJECT INSURANCE CONCESSION AND DEPLOYMENT/CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT**

At the last meeting, the Board opened bid responses for the 2024-25 Artificial Reef Project as developed by the Apalachicola Artificial Reef Association. Walter Marine was the sole respondent and bid \$69,999.93 for the construction and deployment of 27 artificial reef modules. Walter Marine submitted an insurance waiver request as their firm would not require separate coverage as stipulated because they carry a general liability and Jones Act Policy which provides all the necessary coverages in lieu of the other types of policies (i.e., Standard workers compensation would not protect the county for accidents/claims aboard a vessel). Attorney Shuler, ARRA and FWC have approved the request.

- A.** *Board action to accept the insurance policy documents provided by Walter Marine as part of their bid response and not require additional policies which are not applicable.*
- B.** *Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached contract with Walter Marine.*

## **3. BOARD ACTION: ISLAND VIEW PARK FRDAP PROJECT – PLAYGROUND QUOTE**

Vendor Florida Recreational Products has submitted the attached \$61,625.71 quote based upon Sourcewell contract pricing for the playground area at Island View Park. The attached quote includes the equipment with the coastal upgrade package for bolts and fasteners (waterfront park location), the engineered wood fiber surfacing material for the play area, border material and installation for the equipment. Two views of the primary structure and accessory structure are pasted below. *Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached quote.*

The Fence for the dog walk area of the park project was also completed this past week. Signage and a waste receptacle for the dog walk area will be installed later this month.

Other pending project elements include a modular restroom facility, a picnic pavilion with tables and a primitive kayak launch, all currently in design and permitting.

## **4. BOARD ACTION: NOTICE OF SITE DEDICATION OLD FERRY DOCK GRANT CLOSEOUT**

As part of the grant closeout requirements for the Old Ferry Dock Boat Ramp Project, the county is required to approve and record the attached site dedication form for the location. The dedication form acknowledges that funding for the project was provided by the Florida Legislature, through the FWC's Florida Boating Improvement Program. The form also dedicates the ramp to the public for use as a boating access facility for a minimum period of (20) years. *Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the Site Dedication Form for the Old Ferry Dock Boat Ramp Project which will then be recorded in the Clerk's Office.*

## **5. BOARD ACTION: FAA GRANT APPLICATION TAXIWAY A REHABILITATION DESIGN PROJECT**

Back in October 2024, the county submitted an FAA grant pre-application for the Taxiway A Rehabilitation Design Project. Attached is the formal FAA grant application that was due and submitted to the FAA on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The formal grant application specified the same scope and grant amount that was requested in the pre-application. The taxiway's width is 50 feet, and the eligible FAA width is only 35 feet. Because of this variation, the FAA will fund 70% of the design and construction and FDOT will be responsible for the remaining 30%. *Board action to grant retroactive approval of the chairman's signature on the attached FAA grant application.*

## **6. BOARD ACTION: SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT JAIL REPAIRS FUNDING REQUEST -**



## CAMERA SYSTEM UPGRADE PHASE 2 AND ADDITIONAL FIRE HYDRANT

The Sheriff's Department has submitted a \$4,613.86 funding request for a fire hydrant to be installed on the north side of the jail and a \$79,942.02 funding request for their current vendor Redwire to finish the upgrades to the CCTV system at the jail. The camera upgrade will eliminate the two-platform system that the jail has been running for quite some time now. There are funds available in the jail repairs line item in the current budget to fund these two improvements. *Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached quotes from Lewis Smith Supply and Redwire.*

Commissioner Ward noted that it is normally the responsibility of the water company to install the hydrants. Because Sheriff Smith wants this hydrant on their property and not the right of way. Chairman Jones noted that the hydrants are placed per Florida Statute. No water company is going to add hydrants just because the owners want it. Commissioner Amison asked what the purpose is of having it on the property. Mrs. Griffith noted that this was one of the things on the latest inspection. Chairman Jones noted that they used to have a holding tank there, but it was in disrepair.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved and authorized the Chairman to sign the attached quotes from Lewis Smith Supply and Redwire. Motion carried 5-0.**

### 7. BOARD INFORMATION: MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT UPDATES

- Lanark EMS –a groundbreaking ceremony followed by an open-house for the St. James Lanark Volunteer Fire Department has been scheduled for Friday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. Announcement is the last page of this report.
- RFP for design services for the LAP Otterslide/Avenue A Sidewalks is currently being advertised, responses are due July 11<sup>th</sup>
- Site Plan Layout being developed for the TDC's Eastpoint Nature Center Project with cooperation from ANERR and the Coastal Conservation Corp
- West Fishing Pier Repairs at Buddy Ward Seafood Landing Park are underway
- RESTORE SGI Stormwater Project – County is STILL awaiting NTP from US Treasury.
- RESTORE County Wide Dune Project – County is STILL awaiting NTP from US Treasury.

Legislative appropriation for Eastpoint fire truck  
Bear resistance cans  
TDC – fiscally constrained County verbiage added

### 14. Michael Morón – County Coordinator

Mr. Moron noted that he did not add the SGI parade route because the sheriff and the Chairman have been hands on with coordinating that this year.

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1 & 2. Motion carried 5-0.**

1. Action Item: ARPC Planning Agreement Extension
  - As the Board is aware, the contract with Apalachee Regional Planning Services was scheduled to end on Monday, June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - I anticipated that most of the projects we have been working on would have been completed by now, unfortunately that is not the case.
  - With that said, so that we do not experience the same transition issues as when our last planner

- retired, I am requesting that we extend the ARPC planning agreement for up to 90 days.
  - I have discussed this proposed extension with Mr. Kwentin Eastberg and Justin Stiell of ARPC and with Bree Robinson (County Planner).
  - Board action to authorize an up to 90-day extension of the ARPC planning agreement.
2. Action Item: Freedom Festival Road Clouser
- The Eastpoint Civic Association requested a temporary road closure on Patton Drive for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Freedom Festival in Eastpoint.
  - The request is for Patton drive to be closed from the Island Drive intersection to the Highway 98 intersection from 9:00 a.m. until the conclusion of the event that evening.
  - Since this event was prior to today's meeting and it was the same request as last year, I approved the request with an expectation that the Board would ratify that decision today.
  - Board action to ratify the Eastpoint Civic Association request to close Patton Drive from the Island Drive intersection to the Highway 98 intersection.
3. Action Item: SHIP Inspection Payment
- Attached to my report is an invoice from Mr. Terry Mutch for initial inspections for SHIP clients. Mr. Mutch has been a SHIP inspector for several years.
  - These projects were started while SHIP was administered by Community Action Agency but were not completed when the county assumed the administrative duties as a county department.
  - To complete and close-out these projects that were paused for some months, Mrs. Cortni Bankston asked Mr. Mutch, as he was familiar with these cases, to assist her with the inspections. Mrs. Bankston forgot to get a short-term agreement in place, prior to proceeding with these projects.
  - Mr. Mutch's inspection price structure is \$395 for the initial inspection, \$300 for the mid-point inspection, and \$295 for the final inspection.
  - If the Board approves these and future inspection payments to close out the projects listed on the invoice, the motion should include authorization for Attorney Shuler to create an agreement with Mr. Mutch for these projects, if he deems it necessary.
  - Mrs. Bankston will present an agreement, at a future meeting, with a local inspector for future projects.
  - Board action to approve this and future inspection invoices from Mr. Mutch for the projects listed on the initial invoice.
- Item addressed earlier in the meeting.*
4. Discussion/Action Item: Mandatory Garbage Pick-up
- Chairman Jones, Mrs. Erin Griffith and I have been meeting with Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Commission and a bear-proof garbage can provider to discuss a plan to purchase bear-proof canisters for Franklin County residents with the funds provided by the State legislature.
  - We are at a point in the discussion where the Board should determine if a county-wide mandatory garbage pick-up ordinance will be enacted.
  - As the Chairman will explain shortly, this decision will affect the logistics, cost, longevity, and effectiveness of the program.
  - If the Board is interested in the possibility of a mandatory garbage pick-up ordinance, I recommend scheduling a public workshop with FWC, local garbage pick-up providers, and the bear-proof canister provider to discuss this matter.
  - Board discussion and possible action.
5. Discussion/Action Item: Shared DOH Employee/Code Enforcement
- As the Board is aware, county staff and Department of Health (DOH) staff have been working on an agreement that would allow Mrs. Wyndolyn "Sissy" Smith, a DOH employee and certified code enforcement officer, to serve as Franklin County's code enforcement officer.
  - As per my request, Mr. Mark Holcombe of Evergreen Solutions provided a range, based on six matches from peers, of a minimum (\$40,830.19), midpoint (\$47,030.38), and maximum (\$56,770.30) salary average for Code Enforcement Officers.
  - Based on this information, along with the county's code enforcement line-item budget, Mrs. Smith

and DOH agreed to a starting salary of \$42,500.

- A salary of \$42,500 plus \$31,187 of associated benefits is a total cost of \$73,678.
- Of this total cost, DOH will pay \$29,254, however, the county portion is \$44,424. The difference is due to the county's request to utilize Mrs. Smith more hours per week and the scope of her responsibilities as the county's code enforcement officer.
- After today's discussion, if the Board agrees to this proposal, I ask that you request Mrs. Erin Griffith to include funding for this partnership in the upcoming budget.
- Board discussion and possible action.

Commissioner Ward asked being that she is splitting her time, do we have to pay benefits. Mr. Moron noted that she is full time as a DOH employee. They are asking for us to pay the increase due to asking her to work more hours per week. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the shared DOH Employee/Code Enforcement and authorized staff to include funding for this partnership in the upcoming budget.** Attorney Shuler noted that he has worked close with her, and she is very good. She is very helpful and persuasive to getting things done before going to hearings. Commissioner Ward noted that her tact and way about approaching the homeowners is why it has been so successful. Commissioner Croom asked how many hours a week is she working. Mr. Moron noted that it is hard to say how many hours per week she is working. Commissioner Croom noted that she is doing a great job. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioner Croom asked if the department heads had evaluations for employees. Mr. Moron noted that Evergreen is working on this. They have a database that they want to train directors or supervisors on. Evergreen will also recommend an amount of award for high scoring employees. Mr. Moron noted that he will double check with them. They are working on the EMS issue right now because we have made that a priority.

6. Discussion/Action Item: TDC Admin Contract Advertisement

- At your December 3, 2024, regular meeting, the Board extended the TDC Administration contract to September 30, 2025. TDC Vendor contracts expire on December 31, 2025.
- As that date is approaching, is the Board interested in another extension of the TDC Administration contract or should staff begin the advertising process?
- **Board discussion and possible action.**

7. Informational Item: TDC Board Vacancy Reminder

- As a reminder, the Board is seeking candidates to fill the vacant TDC member seat.
- I have received new applications and requests from prior applicants to have their applications resubmitted for consideration.
- The notice is on the county's website ([Tourist Development Council Vacancy](#)) and has been sent to WOYS and The Times as public service announcements.

8. Informational Item: Transportation Disadvantage Update

- At your last meeting, Commissioner Croom informed the Board that ARC on the Gulf was stepping down as the provider of TD services for Franklin County, but he was working with ARPC to secure a new provider.
- Attached to my report is an email from Mr. Austin Britt, Regional Transportational Planner, explaining that Big Bend Transit will serve as the county's new provider.
- Mr. David Walker, Weems' CEO, is assisting with parking and a small office on the Weems' campus for Big Bend Transit.
- Either Commissioner Croom or I will continue to update the Board on this matter.

9. Informational Item: Armory Project Update

- Mr. John Jackson, Construction Administrator for the Fort Coombs Armory project, notified staff that it appears that F&F Construction may have a responsive bid, but he is waiting for some additional information concerning the front door.
- Once that information has been received and reviewed by Mr. Jackson, the recommendation along with the prepared AIA contract will be forwarded for your review.

10. Informational Item: Next Meeting Date

- Your next regular meeting date will be **Wednesday, July 16, 2025**, at 9:00 a.m. (ET).

## **15. Michael Shuler – County Attorney**

### **1. Request for Cost Estimate from County Engineer Related to Proposed Land Swap with Duke Energy.**

This request concerns the proposed land swap between Franklin County and Duke Energy. They would like to swap their 4.9-acre parcel, more or less, for the county's platted lot (30' x 80') next to their microwave tower in Apalachicola. The Duke Energy parcel is located to the West of the old Charter School site. Once the survey was received it, showed that Duke Energy's 70' wide easement covered the entire access easement that the county would use for ingress and egress. It seems to me that we should obtain written permission for the construction of a road before the land swap occurs, so I have been working with Duke Energy on that issue.

A partial copy of the survey showing Kevin Road, the access easement and the 70' wide Duke Energy transmission line easement is attached. I have highlighted in yellow the plat notes showing the access easement (which is shown in diagonal lines between Kevin Road and the dark boundary outline of the Duke Energy parcel) and the 70' wide transmission easement.

On July 1, 2025, I was informed that Duke Energy could not make a decision regarding the construction of a road underneath their transmission towers without engineered drawings. To save time and money, I previously sent them the county subdivision road standard, but that has been deemed insufficient.

Board action requested: Permission to obtain an estimate of cost and time from the county engineer to prepare engineered plans for a road and submit that to Duke Energy for its consideration.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board gave permission to obtain an estimate of cost and time from the county engineer to prepare engineered plans for a road and submit that to Duke Energy for its consideration. Motion carried 5-0.**

### **Information Items and Possible Discussion**

#### **1. Public Hearings on July 16, 2025.**

Copies of the ads sent to the newspaper for publication July 3, 2025, are attached.

#### **2. Public Hearing on July 25, 2025**

A copy of the ad sent to the newspaper for publication on July 10, 2025, is attached.

Commissioner Sanders noted that the Fina station out at Lanark they have a boat ramp. There has come an issue with parking. They are parking on the right of way and people are not able to access the boat ramp. There needs to be a certain area designated as no parking.

Commissioner Ward noted that we pushed to enact the change with TDC. We have talked before, and it was brought up again at conference how that Franklin County has unrecognized revenue. I would like to try to move forward with policy change to get that additional percentage so that we can get that funding for roads, bridges, paving. Chairman Jones noted that the house and senate would have to approve it. There are 3.5 cents available to the county, but they are saying we can only use 1 cent. Chairman Jones noted that he has the language already from when it was submitted previously, and we can resubmit it. Chairman Jones asked Attorney Shuler to work on this and bring back to the Board for approval.

The Board recessed at 11:48 a.m. and reconvened at 11:58 a.m.

## **Presentations/Updates/Requests**

### **16. Bill Williams -- Team Franklin -- Update**

(\*\*\*)Late Addition) Board Action Request:

a. Requesting BOCC designation of "Team Franklin" as the declared managing entity for Economic Development Council (EDC) within Franklin County. This authority is granted to the county under F.S. 125.045 and empowers the counties of the state to designate local authority for "public interest to facilitate the growth and creation of business enterprise."

b. Requesting BOCC designation of "Team Franklin" as the declared lead contact under the EDC designation for all economic development activities within the Federal Opportunity Zone as directed by Federal Statue and the

U.S. Treasury.

Mr. Williams gave an update to the Board. Chairman Jones said between the entities that make up that board how many acres of land are there. Mr. Williams noted there are about 150 acres. Chairman Jones noted that we are looking for some stability to the housing market. Commissioner Ward noted that it has been an honor to be on this board. This is unprecedented. If this does not work out it is not going to be from lack of effort. Mr. Williams noted that he has asked HUD to come here and look at this because we are being innovative. We are reaching out to the other parts of the general public. We are trying to let all of the people know what we are doing. Commissioner Ward noted the airport is involved in this process. Mr. Williams noted that with the footprint that you have with Team Franklin, we will move at your speed. We need to have that designation for funding. They need one entity to be able to turn to. Chairman Jones noted that yes, we do have the airport board doing economic development. Think it is asking a little much for the airport board to do economic development throughout the county. Wondering where Ms. Mary Swoope is going to fall into this? Mr. Williams noted that he believes she could be an asset to Team Franklin. Chairman Jones has there been any discussion with a lending institution for them partnering with you. Mr. Williams noted that informally they have spoken with some lending institutions and contractors.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized the request for BOCC designation of “Team Franklin” as the declared managing entity for Economic Development Council (EDC) within Franklin County. This authority is granted to the county under F.S. 125.045 and empowers the counties of the state to designate local authority for “public interest to facilitate the growth and creation of business enterprise. Motion carried 5-0.**

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized the request for BOCC designation of “Team Franklin” as the declared lead contact under the EDC designation for all economic development activities within the Federal Opportunity Zone as directed by Federal Statue and the U.S. Treasury. Motion carried 5-0.**

**17. David Walker (Weems CEO) -- Capital Outlay Fund Purchase**

The Hospital Board approved a radiometer purchase for our respiratory department for \$16,762.00 (see attached). They would like to make this capital outlay purchase from the Health Care Trust Fund Capital Outlay funding.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the radiometer purchase for the respiratory department for \$16,762.00 to be paid from the Health Care Trust Fund Capital Outlay funding. Motion carried 5-0.**

**18. Richard Lewis (Consultant) -- EMS**

Discussion/Possible Action: EMS Structure (Number of Ambulances with Chase Vehicle)

Chairman Jones noted that we need to be made aware, if we are saying we are going to have XYZ, then 50% of the time we do not have it, we need to know about it. We do not need to hear from the constituents. We need to be made aware. Commissioner Amison noted that the public needs to be aware that right now we are three and a chase but 50% of the time we do not have that. The reality is it is not going to grow overnight. Chairman Jones noted that another thing that we need weigh in from Erin is the TDC money. Not sure why EMS cannot tap into that. So, in the busy season we could have additional staff.

Chairman Jones asked Mr. Lewis to keep the Board informed of issues with staffing so that they are aware. Commissioner Amison noted that the public needs to be aware that even if we vote for this today, we are at less 50% of the time. Chairman Jones noted that EMS services should qualify for TDC funding. Maybe not this year, but next year we could possibly use some of these funds for an additional ambulance during busy season. Commissioner Sanders asked about the medical helicopter at Tarpine just over the Ochlocknee Bridge. Are we already engaging with them for their services? Mr. Lewis noted that yes, they are currently in Panacea. It is a possibility they may move closer to the high school next year. Company named AirLife One. Commissioner Amison noted that we have an airport, let them know that. Mr. Lewis noted that he had spoken with them about its years ago, and they have issues with the weather patterns here. That is why they are working with Wakulla now because it is closer inland. Mr. Moron noted that he would recommend the Board have a policy in place regarding staffing and overtime. That would limit the overtime and automatically notify the Board when it is getting close to its limit. Chairman Jones asked about staffing. Mr. Lewis noted that it is 49/86. Chairman Jones inquired about the minimum staffing. Chairman Jones noted that hopefully in making them

county employees will help with overtime. Chairman Jones asked Mr. Moron to get with Gulf Coast and Haney and the school. Anything we can do to diversify ourselves will help out. Chairman Jones noted that he is good with the three and one. He noted that the number is high but when we sit down and create the budget the numbers may be lower. Commissioner Sanders noted are we trying to meet a date of October 1<sup>st</sup>? Chairman Jones noted that he believed it is January 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Ward noted that she wanted to see if Mrs. Griffith had any input on this. Mr. Moron noted that she is not on the line, but she is aware of the cost. The three and one will drastically reduce what we can put in capital outlay. Actually, we will put nothing in, we may even have to pull money from it. Attorney Shuler said the way the ordinance is written you do have the authority to change those percentages. When the board enacted the tax y'all were encouraged to fix percentages between the two and the board chose to obtain the flexibility. Attorney Shuler noted that it was 50/50 to start with then the board allocated 150k to Carrabelle. Around 14 or 15 the board allocated 100% of revenues to operations. **Commissioner Amison made a motion to go with the three ambulances and one chase vehicle option.** Commissioner Ward noted that for the public's knowledge this is the same we are operating at now. Chairman Jones noted that our new EOC will also have a helipad. **Motion carried 5-0.**

#### **Commissioners' Comments**

Commissioner Ward gave the Board an update on the conference. Congratulated Chairman Jones for being elected or designated as Vice Chair of Small County Coalition board and Commissioner Croom for his election to the FACC board of directors.

Commissioner Ward noted that she discussed with FDOT how they could make some recommendations for safety concerns. My goal is I am going to try to get with the secretary of the district office to build the relationship as to know who to contact. Commissioner Sanders said she appreciates the fellow board members going to Orlando and proud of the appointments to the boards. We work together and along with other counties.

Mr. Moron noted that he and Cortni are working on the Municode issue. We may need to put a disclosure on the website that there may be some delays in working on some verbiage for that.

Commissioner Ward noted that she knows that we talked about Bear Creek being gated off. Yes, the state can gate off property. There is a way that entities can lease so I am looking at this.

Commissioner Amison brought up the issue of the hospital board meetings and if they are going to start having them here. Chairman Jones asked why is it a problem to have them here? Mr. Walker noted that the hospital board does not have a problem moving them here. He noted there are some audio issues in the room at the hospital.

Mr. Moron noted that he will have to get with Judge Shuler's office and coordinate with the court schedule.

Commissioner Amison spoke regarding the property tax and encouraged people to really look into that and realize how that is going to affect their wallets at the end of the year. He noted that is what funds all of our offices are the ad valorem taxes.

#### **Adjournment**

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

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**Ricky Jones – Chairman**

**Attest:**

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**Michele Maxwell – Clerk of Courts**

The audio is available upon request. Please e-mail [jgay@franklinclerk.com](mailto: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.