

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM  
JUNE 18, 2025  
9:00 AM  
MINUTES**

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

Commissioners Absent: Cheryl Sanders

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**

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

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Davis is here by request of Commissioner Ward. They have a discussion they think the Board needs to be aware of. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the agenda. Motion carried 5-0.**

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

**1. Approval of Minutes**

**2. County Bill List for Payment**

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the minutes from FCBCC Regular Meetings held on 4/23, 5/7 & 6/4 and the Payment of County Bills. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments at this time.

**Constitutional Officers**

**3. Honorable Amy Cook -- Tax Collector -- Tax Sales**

Mrs. Amy Cook, Franklin County Tax Collector, reported that Franklin County's online sale of tax certificates has recovered 97 percent of all eligible unpaid taxes. She noted that 908 of the 1,043 tax certificates were sold, generating \$1,822,021. The remaining 135 certificates, valued at \$53,525, were not sold and have reverted to Franklin County, where the county-held certificates may be held for up to 22 months, after which a tax deed application can be filed. Mrs. Cook noted that the fact that the county recovered 97% of all eligible unpaid taxes demonstrated strong investor participation and continued confidence in the program. The average awarded interest rate was 9%, making this not only a fiscally responsible initiative but also an attractive investment opportunity.

**Department Directors Reports**

**4. Jennifer Daniels – Emergency Management Director**

Request retroactively approve Chairman's signature on LSE

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board retroactively approved the Chairman's signature on the LSE from June 13, 2025 to June 20, 2025. Motion carried 5-0.**

Mrs. Daniels requested the Board extend the LSE for another seven days. Attorney Shuler noted that he worked with the city attorney, and he has reviewed and made some corrections. Commissioner Ward asked if we could extend without you having to come before the Board. Mrs. Daniels noted that we can do like we did on Friday and have the Chairman sign and you can retroactively approve. Commissioner Ward noted that she wanted to make sure that we have a plan in place so that we provide the citizens. On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison and Commissioner Croom, to extend the LSE from June 20, 2025 (6:15 PM) to June 27, 2025 (6:15 PM). Attorney Shuler noted that it has been the Board's policy to authorize the Chairman to sign the LSE and then have the Board retroactively

approve. It is a long-standing policy of the Board. Attorney Shuler noted that seven days is by statute. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Purchase for Walter Filtration System for EOC (\$15K)

Commissioner Ward noted that she contacted Erin yesterday, and this will come out of our capital outlay fund.

**On a motion to approve by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison.** Chairman Jones noted that he discussed with Mrs. Daniels that this system is large enough to fit the new building to be built. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Chairman Jones noted that we filed the LSE because the state asked us to. He noted that this is the first LSE that he knows of that we have done without a named storm. He noted the state said they would need this in order to help the city. This LSE cannot provide things from the state, but it can allow the state to provide. Mrs. Daniels noted that this opens the door to allow the state to provide services. The state is saying they have provided the tanker truck and water and that the county has to exhaust all funds before they will assist. They have given us a list of local vendors. Those vendors will have to contract with the city itself in order to assist at this time. Chairman Jones noted that he was asked to be in some conversations over the weekend not just as the Chairman but with his knowledge from serving on the EPWSD. Chairman Jones noted that they did make the call to ask the state to extend their services.

Mrs. Daniels noted that she has also called, and they are attempting to get additional funds. Commissioner Ward extended her heartfelt thanks to the mayor of Carrabelle and the citizens for their offer to provide the part. Commissioner Ward noted that working on this together we will get it resolved. She noted that we are going to help everyone out. Thanked Mrs. Daniels for her work on this. Commissioner Croom thanked Mrs. Daniels for being our middle person in this. Commissioner Ward said if you need me to make a phone call or anything I can do please let me know. Mrs. Daniels noted that she included a rundown of what we have done so far.

Mr. Fonda Davis spoke to the Board at this time.

Commissioner Ward said she asked Mr. Davis to be present at the meeting today. I know that I received a call about the code enforcement team. There are boats on the property that cannot be hauled off. If there is a contractor that we can have crush the vessel, can your trucks pick up? Mr. Davis noted that they can.

Commissioner Ward said she has been getting calls about the bear proof cans. When you come to our area treat it as your own. Do not throw your garbage all around. Is there any way we can get more bear proof cans? Mr. Davis noted that replace is anywhere from \$1500-2000. Mrs. Griffith noted that they are not removable cans. Commissioner Ward said if we do have to replace a can, it comes out of your budget? Yes. Commissioner Ward noted that if we need to replace a can, we need to. Mr. Davis asked if the money could come out of TDC funds? Mrs. Griffith noted that she will need to look into this. She noted that she believes he can buy one garbage can from his budget. Chairman Jones noted that legislation passed looks like it will be in favor of our area. Mr. Davis asked the commissioners to come out to the landfill and see where we are at. Chairman Jones asked how much concrete do you have out there? Mr. Davis noted that he has a lot. Chairman Jones said Eastpoint is looking at getting approval of a new fire truck from the State. Chief Pruett said if they receive a new truck, they are going to give the old one to the county to put out at the landfill. Commissioner Croom said a citizen come up to him at the store and commended him for the restrooms at the Carrabelle Park. They did note that the lights would not come on. Mr. Davis noted that we were having issues with the lights about a month ago.

## **County Staff & Attorney Reports**

### **5. Cortni Bankston -- SHIP Administrator**

#### **a. Informational Item**

Rachel Holmes -- Down Payment Assistance

Chairman Jones noted that the down payment amount was voted to adjust with USDA values and noted those values have changed. Chairman Jones noted that the Board made this change about four years ago. Mr. Moron noted that he will need to research the minutes. Chairman Jones noted that the purpose is to ensure we are giving the purchaser the down payment they need to get into the house. Commissioner Ward noted that this is the first year SHIP has allowed purchase of mobile homes. Commissioner Ward made a motion to approve. Mrs. Bankston noted that she did ask for a vote, but it was an informational item. Chairman Jones inquired if we needed to wait until we confirm the approved down payment amounts. Mrs. Bankston noted that she can reach out to the realtor to see if they need more than the \$10K but this closing is set, and they are waiting for these funds. Chairman Jones noted that if you already have it set up to close and it helped them get in the house then I am fine with that. I just know that our policy is different. Attorney Shuler noted that it sounds like we need to approve the payment with provision that they cannot close and come back for more money. If they want to wait on the closing and find out what the amount is they could do that.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison to approve the \$10k down payment assistance for this resident that is ready to close on their house. Motion carried 4-0.**

**b. Invitation to Bid: New Mobile and Modular Homes**

There was only one package received from:

North Florida Custom Homes, 2195 N Young Blvd, Chiefland, FL 32626.

- 1 Bed/1 Bath Mobile Home \$76,528
- 1 Bed/1 Bath Modular Home \$113,350
- 2 Bed/2 Bath Mobile Home \$84,000
- 2 Bed/2 Bath Modular Home \$117,646
- 3 Bed/2 Bath Mobile Home \$89,858
- 3 Bed/2 Bath Modular Homes \$123,370
- 4 Bed/2 Bath Mobile Home \$99,951.75
- 4 Bed/2 Bath Modular Home \$128,552

Mrs. Bankston noted that since we only received one bid, she would need to obtain approval to proceed from Florida Housing. The Board could approve contingent upon Florida Housing approval. The review committee will consist of Angela Lolley, Kim Raffield and Bree Robinson.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved contingent upon approval of Florida Housing and the review committee named above.**

Commissioner Ward noted that when these people start receiving their homes, she would like staff to make sure that these people are aware of warranties. She asked that they be provided with documentation needed to validate the warranties and make sure the homeowners are aware of them. Commissioner Bankston noted that you have a company that puts in the mobile home and then another that puts in the air conditioner. The air conditioning would be under a different warranty. Chairman Jones asked if the bid amounts included setup. Mrs. Bankston noted that these costs do include the mobile home and setup. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Commissioner Ward noted that a lot of our ordinances are outdated, and she would like to come up with some ordinances to help with these magistrate cases. So that it is easily enforceable. She has asked that Cortni get a list of ordinances together. Commissioner Ward inquired to if we could use the money from the fines to help pay for cleanup of other properties. Commissioner Ward asked if our building inspector had to go and inspect it? Chairman Jones noted that as he understands it is that anything to do with condemning a structure falls under the building inspector because it goes under his license. It is a legal issue; it has to be the building official. Commissioner Croom asked if the SHIP process is first come, first serve. Mrs. Bankston noted that it is first come, first eligible.

**6. Erin Griffith – Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator**

**BID OPENINGS:**

**A. INVITATION TO BID: SEALED BID OPENING FRANKLIN COUNTY 2024-25  
ARTIFICIAL REEF PROJECT**

The county is opening bid responses today for the 2024-25 Artificial Reef Project as developed by the Apalachicola Artificial Reef Association and funded by \$10,000 in private contributions to the association and a \$60,000 grant from FWC. Contractor selection will be to the lowest responsive, qualified bidder, based on price per unit with the greatest quantity of reef modules to be deployed for the available amount of \$70,000.

*Board action to release the bids for review and recommendation to staff, FWC and the Apalachicola Reef Association. Proceed with issuance of award once other agencies have confirmed.*

COMPANY	LOCATION	BID AMOUNT	BID BOND
Walter Marine	Davie, FL Orange Beach, AL	\$69,999.93	Not required

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison to authorize release of bids for review and recommendation to staff, FWC, and the Apalachicola Reef Association and to proceed with the issuance of award once they have confirmed. Motion carried 4-0.**

**B. INVITATION TO BID: SEALED BID OPENING FORT COOMBS ARMORY  
AND CONVENTION CENTER PHASE II RENOVATIONS**

The county is opening bid responses today for the Fort Coombs Armory and Convention Center Phase II Renovations. These renovations will be funded by tourist development sales tax proceeds as allowed by Florida Statute 125. The project scope includes the following:

1. renovation of the existing multi-purpose room to install a new ADA compliant toilet room, small multi-purpose room and associated Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Fire Sprinkler systems.
2. renovations of the existing corridor hallway and ramp, installing a new ADA compliant ramp, trim work and doorway to the multi-purpose room.
3. renovations of the existing exterior windows, interior running wood trim, and wood doors in the Main Hall and offices on the first and second levels.
4. demolition, repairs and installation of new shingle and membrane roof systems.
5. re-finishing the existing wood floors in the main hall, corridors and offices, new glass globes to be installed on the existing lighting fixtures and new electrical outlets in the main hall.
6. renovations of the main entrance doors. Base Bid is to REPAIR the doors and an ADD alternate to provide NEW doors.
7. painting of the interior, other interior improvements and other work indicated in the Contract Documents.
8. includes the cleaning and painting of the exterior brick façade.

*Board action to release the bids for review and recommendation to the project architects, Gilchrist, Ross and Crowe.*

COMPANY	LOCATION	BID AMOUNT	BID BOND
Monolith Construction-Panhandle	1420 Industrial Road Port St. Joe, FL 32456	\$1,067,586.29 \$46,431.72 add alternate	YES
Shaffield Building Specialists, Inc.	1515-2 Henway Court Tallahassee, FL 32303	\$1,590,000 \$80,000 add alternate	YES
Southland Contracting, Inc.	1843 Commerce Boulevard Midway, FL 32343	\$1,197,761 \$11,270 add alternate	YES
Inland Construction & Engineering, Inc.	1243 Jenks Avenue Panama City, FL 32410	\$1,351,950.60	YES
F and F Construction	Port St. Joe, FL 32456	\$920,768.02 \$18,000 add alternate	YES

Discussion of replacing the doors, board has tried to refurbish but it has not been successful. Commissioner Ward noted that being someone who has rented the armory, there is only one plug downstairs.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized releasing the bids for review and recommendation to the project architects, Gilchrist, Ross, and Crowe. Motion carried 5-0.**

Chairman Jones noted he would like to pull items 4 and 6 to discuss separately.

**1, 2, 3 and 5**

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1 through 3 and 5 from Mrs. Griffith's report. Motion carried 4-0.**

The Board moved to item number 4 at this time.

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

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. Dewberry Engineers have reviewed the construction bids and recommend awarding the bid in the amount of \$1,896,302.40 to the low bidder Roberts and Roberts, Inc. The highest ranked firm for CEI services for the project is Southeastern Consulting Engineers as scored by the ranking committee. The ranking committee members as listed at the last meeting were going to be Kimberly Raffield, Cortni Bankston and Michael Moron. The new planner, Bree Robinson, ranked instead of Michael Moron due to scheduling.

- A. Board action to accept the change in the ranking committee as stated at the last meeting whereas Bree Robinson served as the alternate ranking committee member for Michael Moron.*

- B. *Board action to authorize the Planning Department to begin negotiations with Southeastern Consulting Engineers to develop a contract to perform the CEI services on this project.*
- C. *Board action to authorize the chairman to sign the attached notice of intent pending concurrence from FDOT to award to the lowest bidder Roberts and Roberts, Inc. and contract documents once available for the low bid value of \$1,896,302.40.*

## **2. BOARD ACTION: ISLAND VIEW PARK FRDAP PROJECT – DESIGN TASK ORDER**

At the last meeting, it was mentioned that the county had received the letter of commencement from FDEP for the Island View Park FRDAP Project. 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 \$22,455. In the task order, Dewberry will assist the county in developing the design and construction bid specifications for the 16'x32' picnic pavilion, assist with design and specifications for getting utilities onsite for the modular restroom building, assist the county with selection of a compatible modular restroom unit, obtain permits for the primitive kayak launch, prepare the final site plan and perform limited construction inspection once the project is underway.

*Board action to approve and authorize the chairman's signature on the attached task order with county engineers Dewberry & Associates.*

## **3. BOARD ACTION: EOC SOFFIT REPAIR QUOTE**

There are several sections of the soffit which have blown out on the EOC building. The county received the attached quote of \$11,200 to replace the soffit on the building. As this building will continue to be used as the EOC for up to two years before the new EOC is constructed and ready for occupancy, staff recommends the board proceed with the repair for the building for it to be in best condition during activation if necessary.

*Board action to approve the attached repair quote to replace the soffit at the EOC.*

## **4. BOARD ACTION: WEEKEND PAY POLICY – RENEWED FROM 2024**

In July of 2024, the Board adopted the attached 2024 Premium Seasonal Weekend Pay Policy for board employees to address staffing shortages and increased workload during peak-season months during the year. As the county has become a year-round tourist destination, there has been an increased need to have staffers available year-round for weekend response and maintenance. In the attached 2024 policy, Franklin County paid non-exempt employees a supplemental premium pay equal to an additional 25% of his or her rate of basic pay for non-overtime hours worked on a Saturday or Sunday (not to exceed ten hours per day) during peak season. Employees entitled to overtime for hours worked will be paid at the standard overtime rate of 1.5 times his or her regular rate of pay. Last year the policy took effect on July 2nd and remained in effect through mid-September. It was stated in the 2024 policy that it was subject to renewal each year. In the attached revision, due to the increased demand for weekend staffing, the policy will remain in force year-round until cancelled.

*Board action to adopt and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached Premium Weekend Pay Policy.*

Chairman Jones noted that he likes what we are doing, and we are moving this from a year-to-year policy to an official policy. Commissioner Ward noted that our staff are bombarded especially on the weekends, and she believes they should be incentivized.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board adopted and authorized the Chairman to sign the attached Premium Weekend Pay Policy. Motion carried 4-0.**

## **5. BOARD ACTION: LETTERS OF INTENT TO MEET CONDITIONS: EASTPOINT LIBRARY USDA LOAN ASSUMPTION**

After many months of silence from the USDA, the county was sent the attached letters of intent to be signed for the Eastpoint Library USDA Loan Assumption. These letters attest that the county 'intends' to meet the conditions that were originally stipulated for the loans. The original letters of condition are attached for

reference.

*Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached letters of intent pending review and approval from County Attorney Michael Shuler.*

#### **6. BOARD ACTION: SET DATES FOR BUDGET WORKSHOPS**

The property appraiser will certify to the county the certified taxable value on July 1st – the preliminary budget is then due to the commission by July 15th. The County Coordinator has checked with the Clerk of Courts and has confirmed that there are no court activities scheduled for Thursday, July 24th and Friday, July 25th.

*Board action to approve Thursday, July 25th for the constitutional officers, county departments, and other government agencies and Friday, July 26th for the non-governmental agencies if needed.*

Chairman Jones noted misprint noting it should be July 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Griffith asked did the Board want to make a decision on the non-governmental agencies as far as them coming in. Chairman Jones noted that he thinks we would need to wait until closer to time, once we get some preliminary numbers. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup> for the constitutional officers, county departments, and other government agencies and Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup> for non-governmental agencies if needed.** Attorney Shuler noted that he was going to discuss rescheduling the public meeting for July 25<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Jones noted that he does not see an issue, if we do have the workshop on Friday, it usually does not last long. **Motion carried 4-0.**

#### **7. BOARD INFORMATION: MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT UPDATES**

- Lanark EMS – Site clearing work is underway, project is now ready to schedule a groundbreaking ceremony before vertical construction begins.
- Siding Replacement Project for the County Health Department Building in Apalachicola is out for bid now bids are due July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- RFQ for Design Criteria Consultant Services for the Triumph First Responder Communications System Upgrade is currently being advertised, responses are due by July 2<sup>nd</sup>
- RFP for design services for the LAP Otterslide/Avenue A Sidewalks is currently being advertised, responses are due July 11<sup>th</sup>
- RESTORE SGI Stormwater Project – County is STILL awaiting NTP from US Treasury, hopeful conditions will be cleared and NTP will be issued by the end of the month where the contractor can move forward with utility locations and coordination, however, disruptive construction elements will not begin until after September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- RESTORE County Wide Dune Project – County is STILL awaiting NTP from US Treasury, hopeful conditions will be cleared and NTP will be issued by the end of the month where contractor can move forward with planting efforts
- SGI Multi-Use Path Resurfacing Project – 100% plan set received by county, submitting plan set to FDEP for review and approval. Construction bid specifications in development now.
- Sylvester Williams Park Playground Equipment to be delivered in August
- Letter of funding request to Governor regarding advanced legislative appropriation requests: Eastpoint Fire Truck, 2<sup>nd</sup> Allocation Bear Proof Cans

Chairman Jones asked if we have been able to reimburse the contractors for the materials purchased for the St. George Island stormwater project? Mrs. Griffith noted that they are eligible to request payout for stored materials. However, we have not received any invoices yet. We received the grant award in August, and we did not expect it to take this long to receive a notice to proceed. Chairman Jones noted that he wanted to make sure no one is being hung out because of the delay. Chairman Jones asked Mr. Moron to reach out to the senators about the ribbon cutting in Lanark noting they were instrumental in getting the funds for the fire truck and he would like to extend an invitation to them.

- Civil Site Plan Layout is complete for Lanark EMS Station on 3-acre site – advancing to Geotech and soil surveys for site, finalized floorplan

## 7. Michael Morón – County Coordinator

### 1. Discussion/Action Item: Value Adjustment Board Members

- Clerk Maxwell is requesting Board action to appoint Value Adjustment Board Members (see attached memo).
- Your appointments should include two County Commissioner, one as the VAB Chairman, and a citizen member who owns homestead property within the county. The citizen member cannot be a member or employee of any taxing authority.
- Board discussion and possible action to appoint two commissioners, one as VAB Chairman, and a citizen member who owns homestead property within the county.

Commissioner Amison volunteered to serve as the chairman. Commissioner Ward noted that Commissioner Sanders was last year's alternate. Chairman Jones will serve as alternate this year. Mason Bean will serve as the citizen member.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board appointed Commissioner Amison to serve as chairman of the VAB, Chairman Jones to serve as the alternate, and Mr. Mason Bean to serve as the citizen member owning homestead property within the county. Motion carried 4-0.**

### 2. Discussion/Action Item: Vacant TDC Member Advertisement

- Attached to my report is the advertisement and application for the vacant TDC Board member.
- If this Board approves both documents, the ad will run for the next three weeks with a July 11<sup>th</sup> deadline. Applications will be opened at your July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Board discussion and possible action to approve the advertisement and application for the vacant TDC member advertisement.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the advertisement and application for the vacant TDC member advertisement. Motion carried 4-0.**

### 3. Discussion/Action Item: Haney/Triumph Pre-Application

- As the Board is aware Commissioner Amison has been working on a possible partnership with Haney Technical College, the Franklin County School District, and Franklin County for a satellite Haney campus in Franklin County at the airport.
- In his effort to create a draft partnership package to present to the Board for review and approval, Commissioner Amison met with Haney, School District and Triumph representatives on Monday to discuss a path forward.
- Commissioner Amison will discuss this proposed partnership in more detail this morning but is seeking Board support to allow county staff and consultants to submit a pre-application to Triumph for \$250,000 that will allow for necessary upgrades around the hangar that Haney will occupy.
- Board discussion and possible action to approve the submission of a pre-application to Triumph for \$250,000 for upgrades around the hangar that will be used by Haney as their satellite campus.

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the submission of a pre-application to Triumph for \$250,000 for upgrades around the hangar that will be used by Haney as their satellite campus.** Commissioner Ward asked who would be drafting the application. Mr. Moron noted that we would need to increase the task order and work with John. We also have Tracy and Mary Swoope in the event he needs additional help. Commissioner Amison noted that the chairman and manager of the airport board can also help fill in some gaps. Commissioner Amison said they have really put in a lot of work, Mr. Wilson the chairman and Mr. Kirschenbaum. **Motion carried 4-0.**

### 4. Discussion/Action Items: County Organizational Chart

- Commissioner Croom would like an organizational chart that would provide a visual representation, facilitate communication, and help with understanding the county's organizational structure.
- It would also assist with ensuring the right people are involved with important decisions that are made and clarifies the chain of command.
- The discussion point is how far to drill down and what type of chart would the Board expect?

- Board discussion and possible action on the creation of a county organizational chart.

Commissioner Croom noted that he would like to see job titles, not particular names as those may change. Mr. Moron will create a rough draft and bring back to the Board.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved staff to draft a county organizational chart. Motion carried 4-0.**

5. Discussion/Action Item: ARPC Letter of Support

- Mr. Kwentin Eastberg and Mr. Josh Adams (ARPC) would like to submit the Franklin 98 Project for the National Planning Award for Resilience and Sustainability.
- “This award recognizes a strategy that creates a more sustainable community and/or increases the ability of a community to recover from, and adapt to shocks and stresses (economic impacts, natural disasters, human-caused disasters, climate change, etc.), resulting in it becoming stronger, more equitable, and better prepared for the future.”
- Mr. Eastberg and Mr. Adams are asking for a letter of support from the Board as part of the submission package.
- Chairman Jones has some additional information regarding this request.
- Board discussion and possible action to authorize the letter of support for this award submission.

Chairman Jones noted this project has turned out to be a really good project. He noted that the initial fifteen-million-dollar award. He noted that the program has outperformed the plan. He noted that FDOT did not have on their five-year work plan the road repair between Carrabelle and Eastpoint until this award to ARPC. He noted that some property owners who declined the project in the first round have now decided they would like to be a part. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized the letter of support for this award submission. Motion carried 4-0.**

6. Informational Item: Duke Energy Vegetation Program

- Attached to my report is notification from Duke Energy of the upcoming Vegetation Management Activities.
- This maintenance will be in the Carrabelle substation area and will start in a few weeks.
- Let me know if you have any questions and I will have the proper Duke representative give you a call.

7. Informational Item: Next Meeting Date

- Your next regular meeting date will be Wednesday, July 2, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. (ET).

Commissioner Croom spoke with Mr. Eastburg and noted that ARC on the Gulf is ceasing their transportation services on June 30<sup>th</sup>. We are in search of a new vendor. Chairman Jones noted that Mr. Eastburg has stated they are working towards a smooth transition with no gap in services.

**8. Michael Shuler – County Attorney**

1. Cancellation of PUD hearing

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, canceling the PUD Enabling Ordinance hearing. Motion carried 4-0.**

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Ward, rescheduling the PUD Enabling Ordinance hearing for Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm.** Chairman Jones clarified for the public. When we canceled the hearings, it was because one of our commissioners was not available due to health issues. It was shocking to me the level of distrust that people place in their local government. I do not know how we could be more transparent. There are some things that are just no one else’s business. I appreciate everyone for their care and concern and hopefully she will join us soon. Commissioner Ward noted that it is not fair to our public to not have a full board for something that will impact the entire county for years in the future. Attorney Shuler noted that it has been a long-standing policy of the Board, that you do not make important county wide policy decisions without a full board. **Motion carried 4-0.**

1. Ordinance Removing Property Owner Vote Prior to Amendments to Resolution Establishing MSBU Rates

A public hearing on the ordinance is scheduled for June 18, 2025, at 11 :00 a.m. The purpose of the draft ordinance is to rescind the requirement for property owner vote prior to amendments being made to the resolution establishing MSBU rates for fire and rescue services.

Board Discussion and Action: Discussion and action on the draft ordinance. The Board can adopt the ordinance as



drafted, disapprove of the ordinance as drafted or table to a date and time certain in order to avoid the expense of readvertisement.

2. Ordinance Establishing a Uniform E-911 Address System for Franklin County

A public hearing on the ordinance is scheduled for June 18, 2025, at 11 :05 a.m. The purpose of the draft ordinance is to establish a uniform E-911 address system for Franklin County.

Board Discussion and Action: Discussion and action on the draft ordinance. The Board can adopt the ordinance as drafted, disapprove of the ordinance as drafted or table to a date and time certain in order to avoid the expense of readvertisement.

Attorney Shuler requested the Board cancel the two public hearings noticed above due to Commissioner Sanders's absence. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board cancelled both hearings as outlined above. Motion carried 4-0.**

3. Special Magistrate

On June 11, 2025, I received a notice that your current special magistrate for code enforcement hearings is leaving his current law firm to another law firm. The county has to decide whether to follow the current special magistrate, Mr. Cole Davis, to his new firm, stay with current firm or select another law firm.

Board Discussion and Action: I recommend that the Board continue to use Mr. Cole Davis as your special magistrate.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved following the current special magistrate, Mr. Cole Davis, to his new firm. Motion carried 4-0.**

Information Items and Possible Discussion

4. St. George Island Storm Water Drainage Project

Last week, Mrs. Griffith requested, and I provided, a title opinion letter as a requirement prior to the issuance of the notice to proceed.

5. Franklin County Dune Restoration Project

Last week, Mrs. Griffith requested, and I provided, a title opinion letter as a requirement prior to the issuance of the notice to proceed. The U.S. Treasure requested an amendment to the letter including copies of the muniments of title evidencing the county ownership. That amended letter has been provided.

6. Duke Energy Property Swap

On June 12, 2025, I had a phone conference with Duke Energy representatives concerning the construction of a paved road across their 70-foot-wide transmission easement. That easement currently runs across the entry to the approximately 4.9-acre parcel of property presently owned by Duke Energy that is intended to be traded to Franklin County for its single city lot (30' x 80') next to the existing microwave tower in downtown Apalachicola. The Duke Energy parcel is west of the old ABC school site . Its representatives stated that once Duke Energy approves plans for a road, that they will not rescind that approval, but they could not act in the absence of a road building plan. I offered to have the county engineer prepare plans for their review, but the Duke Energy representatives tell me that they want to move forward quickly, and that engineering could take a while. I have sent them the county road standard from the subdivision ordinance for approval of the construction of a road to that standard. While Duke Energy has expressed concern about the existing tower, I do not think that the land swap should proceed until we have, in writing, approval from Duke Energy for a paved road and utilities across their transmission line easement.

The Board recessed at 11:10 am and reconvened at 11:20 am.

**Planning and Zoning Adjustment Board Report**

**11. Variance and Commercial Site Plan**

All Variance requests will be discussed and acted on an individual basis.

**a. 139 West Gulf Beach Drive and 124 W Pine Avenue**

*This will require a motion for the variance followed by a motion for the commercial site plan. A consideration of a request to modify 10' rear building setback along alley to 5' setback and construct four (4) condominium units, office space and accessory uses building consisting of three (3) stories with 10,862 total sf. Properties located on St. George Island, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Tullo Planning Group, LLC, agent for Gene Brown, applicant.*

Mr. Paterson presented the request to the Board. Commissioner Croom noted that he spoke to Mr. Paterson about it because it had two addresses. He noted that the W Gulf Beach Drive was for the structure and W Pine Avenue is for wastewater. Commissioner Ward noted she spoke with Justin and Bree yesterday. The application was asking for ten

parking spots. The plat is contradictory. They are putting some parking spots on the side of the building and there is another roadway to the west that Mr. Brown owns which will have some parking spots. In essence there will be ten parking spots. Mr. Stiell would recommend that the applicant be required to combine all lots into one parcel. The canter levers are fitting and not sticking out. Commissioner Ward said Justin explained to her they are asking for setbacks on one side. Concern with safety issue, hazard if a fire were to happen. Where would the fire department access? Justin noted that the applicant would be a better person to respond to that. The fire trucks would go down the alley or Gulf Beach Drive. Commissioner Ward said the applicant would be able to explain the hardship for the variance. Attorney Pat Floyd spoke to the Board on behalf of the applicant. Attorney Floyd presented the Board with three letters from adjacent property owners in support of the variance being requested. Mr. Gene Brown spoke to the Board noting they have complied with everything except the setback. There is not enough room to build marketable units on that space. He noted that he is entitled to build four units on this five lots. He noted that the Board authorized Mr. Thomas a variance. Attorney Shuler said he would restate in terms if you do not get the five-foot encroachment, those two bedrooms would be seven foot? Mr. Gene noted roughly. Commissioner Ward asked Mr. Brown if he owned the parcels that he is going to be putting parking spots or sewage. Mr. Brown noted that all of the properties are listed in his name or he and his wife. Attorney Shuler noted that one of the requirements by Mr. Stiell was to unify all of the lots under one title which will not be severed in the future. Mr. Brown noted that he is willing to work with Attorney Shuler to set this up. Ms. Gina Tullo from Tullo Planning Group spoke to the Board regarding the request. Mr. Justin Stiell spoke to the Board. He noted that the applicant has provided an alternative site plan which has not been seen by staff. He quoted the language of ordinance 2018-01. Commissioner Ward asked about septic tanks. Chairman Jones asked if what we are looking at today the same thing that the planning and zoning board looked at last week. Ms. Tullo noted that it is the same. The Board called for public comments at this time.

Barbara Sanders spoke via Zoom. She noted that the way this needs to be resolved is there a need for a variance. I do not know that maximizing one's profit will qualify for a hardship. We might have messed up, but we are not going to continue to make that mistake. If you do find a hardship, I request that you send it back to P&Z for the very questions you have asked today.

Mason Bean asked the Board to heed the planning and zoning and deny.

Commissioner Ward asked about the multiple family units, does that go against the code? Mr. Stiehl noted that no, it complies. Commissioner Ward asked if the schematic presented earlier, is what was presented to P&Z. Commissioner Ward noted that at the end of the day her decision is based on does this comply with our zoning code, building code and comp plan. If there is any difference in what we have, it is only fair that Justin takes a look at what we are looking at. AS the planner does this confirm to things we have voted to in the past?

Mr. Stiell noted that this is a legislative decision to be made by the Board. I have not heard anything in testimony today that says it is a hardship. I would recommend that the board not award the variance.

Attorney Shuler asked if Attorney Floyd had the case law that he referenced. Attorney Floyd noted that in the cases that he looked at referred to more on the ground and not in the air. The basis of his reference is that there is more leniency for variances in the air. Attorney Floyd noted that he does not have any case law references for anything in the air and not on the ground. Ms. Tullo noted that Mr. Brown is not maximizing his space and had to buy additional property. All the information in front of you was submitted in the original application.

Attorney Shuler noted that if we do not have case law, we cannot consider it. He pointed out the additional language in ordinance 2018-01. Read additional setback verbiage. Financial hardship has never been the basis for the granting of a variance. Commissioner Croom noted that if Mr. Brown instructed his people to abide by all rules and laws? My question is, why wasn't everything abided by? There are fire separation requirements. The setbacks on the side we accommodated. We felt like this was the easiest to accommodate. Felt it was the best way to comply without removing square footage from the bedrooms. Commissioner Croom asked why the 116 West Pine was listed on this item? Mr. Stiell noted that he is not sure, and he is looking at the file now.

Commissioner Ward discussed tabling and send it back to P&Z for them to review with the changes. Commissioner Ward noted that he has a problem with receiving documents that our P&Z have not reviewed. Chairman Jones noted that we should not have received any documents today in a quasi-judicial hearing. Mr. Stiell if it is going to be consider a revised site plan it is going to need to go back to P&Z for their recommendation? Chairman Jones noted that when it is presented to P&Z it has to be ready to go. What they say does matter, and we want their weigh in. It has to be consistent. Everything that was given to us today should have been submitted to P&Z.

**Commissioner Ward made a motion to table this and send back to P&Z, make sure they have what you guys are planning on doing, then it come back to us. Seconded by Commissioner Amison.** Commissioner Amison noted that P&Z denied this not only because of the site plan but because there is no hardship. He noted that he will second

and support Commissioner Ward, but he leans more with staff on this. **Motion carried 4-0.**

**12. Land Use and Rezoning Request**

**a. 75 Highway 65**

*This will require a motion for the Land Use Change followed by a motion for the Rezoning request.* A consideration of a request to rezone & change land use of property from current zoning/land use of P-1 Preservation to requested zoning/land use of C-2 Commercial Business District. Property is located in Eastpoint, Franklin County, FL. Request submitted by Inovia Consulting Group - Jim Waddell, PE, applicant for GC65. LLC, applicant.

**13. Commercial Site Plan Applications**

The Board will consider action on all Commercial Site Plan applications with one motion. A Commissioner may request to have an application considered with a separate motion.

**a. 75 Highway 65**

*This application was submitted to staff in November 2024 but due to staff finding the requirement of Rezoning and Land Use Change being required first, the Commercial Site Plan application was not presented to PZA and/or BOCC* A consideration of a request to construct a corporate office and material/equipment storage facility for GC65, LLC/Galloway Construction located in Eastpoint, Franklin County, Florida. Application submitted by Inovia Consulting Group/Jim Waddell, P.E., agent for GC65, LLC, applicant.

Attorney Shuler recommended the Board authorize a public hearing scheduling for item 12, and table item 13 until the second meeting in July. Mr. Jim Waddell noted that out of an abundance of caution, he would rather reschedule for a hearing so there is no stone left unturned. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present the Board authorized scheduling a public hearing for item 12 and tabling item 13. Motion carried 4-0.**

**Presentations/Updates/Requests**

**9. Kim Bodine -- CareerSource**

- a.** Budget & State ITA Waiver Approval
- b.** One Stop Operator Agreement Approval
- c.** Reappointment of Mr. Ted Mosteller
- d.** Reappointment of Elinor Mount-Simmons

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Budget & State ITA Waiver, One Stop Operator Agreement, Reappointment of Mr. Mosteller and Ms. Mount-Simmons. Motion carried 5-0.**

**10. Mary O'Brien, CPH -- Regional Transportation Planning Manager -- ARPC**

Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) -- Overview of the process, explanation of goals, and Q & A  
Ms. O'Brien provided a presentation of the RRTP as follows.

The Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan is an initiative of Apalachee Regional Planning Council in partnership with Florida Department of Transportation and the counties of Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson and Liberty.

- Introduction
  - FDOT Guidance on Rural Transportation Planning – 2018
  - Interlocal Agreement – 2022 Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, Liberty
  - Create and deliver a Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) – 2023
  - Needs Plan & Priorities Adopted by ARPC Board January 2025
- RRTP Goals
  - Outline the Region's priority transportation needs over the next 20 years
  - Facilitate coordination and collaboration regarding transportation planning
  - Provide education and outreach, specifically on the FTP Emphasis Areas of Safety, Sustainability, System connectivity, & ACES vehicles
  - Facilitate data driven decision making
- RRTP Process
  - Public involvement
  - Gathering local, regional, and state data
  - Researching local and state resources such as comprehensive plans
  - Formation of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
  - Creation of an interactive map
  - Development of Needs Plan & Priorities

- Moving Forward
  - ARPC Board adopts annual priorities rankings
  - Encourage rural local governments to update their capital improvement program to incorporate regional transportation priorities
  - Resource for local governments
  - Coordination with adjacent Regional Planning Councils
- Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan
  - Part 1: Foundation & Process
  - Part 2: Existing Conditions & Analysis
  - Part 3: Projects
  - Part 4: Implementation

**11. Lynn Wilder (ANERR Board Member) & Kimberly Crossen (SGI Sea Turtle Permit Holder)**

Adding "No beach fires" during sea turtle season, and request it be added to the ordinance.

FWC Sea Turtle Permit holder, Friends of the Reserve Board, and St. George Island Sea Turtle Patrol presentation to the Board of County Commissioners

Bottom line: The SGI Sea Turtle State Permit holder, SGI, Dog Island, and Alligator Point Sea Turtle Patrol entities, and the Friends of the Reserve Board request that "no beach fires or bonfires" be added to the Franklin County Leave No Trace ordinance 14-01. Additionally, consider expanding the ordinance to include all nesting beaches in Franklin County, not just St. George Island.

Issue: Fires on the beach are a health and safety hazard for the general public, county employees, AND nesting sea turtles and their hatchlings.

Chairman Jones explained the Board amended the Leave No Trace ordinance in 2023. He noted that there are sometimes issues with Municode not updating the website. Mr. Moron noted that he can take Municode offline for now and everyone can use the link where Cortni has uploaded the ordinances. Chairman Jones noted that everything we have now with warming fires is only for Carrabelle Beach. Attorney Shuler noted that the only prohibition of beach fires is you cannot burn construction debris, etc. Attorney Shuler noted that the public beaches should be included but the Board has never regulated private owned beaches. Ms. Wilder noted that some are burning construction debris. She suggested adding the language specifically prohibited the use of construction debris to the ordinance. Commissioner Ward asked if they should prohibit fires year-round due to safety issues? Chairman Jones noted that there is a lot of questions with this. Do we want to prohibit fires during December/Christmas when it is cold? Attorney Shuler noted that he will need a motion and vote of the Board to schedule a public hearing. **Commissioner Ward made a motion to approve a public hearing on the leave no trace ordinance ensuring that we have all turtle nesting beaches covered and adding additional language to the fire prohibition during turtle nesting season.** Attorney Shuler noted that he would draft an ordinance with a year-round ban on beach fires. If the Board chooses to scale back to just turtle season they can. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Ms. Wilder noted that the Keep Franklin County Beautiful group could probably help with the purchase of some of the bear proof cans. Commissioner Ward thanked them and their groups for coming to the Board with not only issues but solutions also.

**(Cancelled) 11:00 a.m. (ET): Public Hearings**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Public Hearings scheduled for today's meeting (June 18, 2025) at 11:00 a.m. (ET) and 11:05 a.m. (ET) are cancelled. Once the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners reschedules the Public Hearings, the new date and time will be posted on the County's website and advertised on local media.

**12. (Cancelled) 11:00 a.m. (ET): Public Hearing -- Amending Ordinance 2013-1 (MSBU)**

**13. (Cancelled) 11:05 a.m. (ET) Public Hearing -- Establishing A Uniform Addressing System (911)**

Mrs. Griffith requested the Board entertain a motion for the following late adds.

**LATE ADD ACTION ITEMS:**

**8. Manual Check for TDC's Visit Florida Membership**

The Tourist Development Council missed submitting the pay voucher for Visit Florida's membership renewal

which is \$3,000 per year. *Board action to authorize the Clerk's Finance office to cut a manual check for \$3,000 to Visit Florida.*

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized the Clerk's Finance office to cut a manual check for \$3,000 to Visit Florida. Motion carried 4-0.**

**9. West Fishing and Observation Pier at Buddy Ward Seafood Landing Park Project**

The TDC had approved up to \$50,000 for materials and labor to repair the decking and railing on the two fishing piers at the Buddy Ward Seafood Landing Park. The repairs were completed on the East Fishing Pier in January. The county has received a repair estimate from MKM Quality Construction for the West Pier repairs of \$16,785 and just today, received the direct materials quote from Builder's First Source of \$8,597.74. *Board action to approve moving forward with the repairs and materials for the West Fishing Pier at the Seafood Landing Park.*

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved moving forward with the repairs and materials for the West Fishing Pier at the Seafood Landing Park. Motion carried 4-0.**

**Commissioners' Comments**

Commissioner Amison encouraged the Board to reach out to the FWC Commission, the Governor's office, and State legislators regarding the consideration of adding oysters to the restricted species list. Chairman Jones suggested the Board consider passing a resolution in opposition of this change. He noted that if this is done, in ten years, there will be no oysters in Franklin County. Commissioner Amison explained the process of harvesting oysters provided this designation is passed and agreed with Chairman Jones regarding the long-term effects. Mr. Moron noted that he will work on a resolution draft for the next meeting. Commissioner Amison encouraged Franklin County citizens to show up for the FWC meeting noting this is the time for their voices to be heard.

**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.