

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM  
AUGUST 6, 2025  
9:00 AM  
MINUTES**

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

Others Present: Michele Maxwell-Clerk of Court, Michael Shuler-County Attorney, Michael Moron-County Coordinator, Erin Griffith-Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator, 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 the first draft included the Sheriff's Department, that has been moved to the 20<sup>th</sup> due to scheduling. Weems Memorial item has been pushed to the 20<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner Amison has some questions and would like to meet with EMS director and Mr. Walker. He noted that Erin's report was added yesterday. **On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, 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. Approval of Minutes**
- 2. County Bill List for Payment**

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the minutes from the 6/18/2025 Regular Meeting and the Payment of County Bills. Motion carried 5-0.**

Chairman Jones noted that he has a couple of speaker cards that are not agenda item specific. He noted that if you have any discussion for items on agenda listed as informational you will need to speak during public comments time.

**\*\*\*9:05 a.m. (ET) Burt Harris Claim Response**

**3. 9:05 a.m. (ET) Discussion and action on Franklin County's response to the Bert Harris Claim served by The Landing at SGI, LLC.**

Action Item: Adopt and provide the required Settlement Offer stating that The Landing's Bert Harris Claim does not fall within the scope of the Bert Harris Act and that even if it does, the County stands by its decision when it adopted ordinance 2018-02 (The SGI Overlay ordinance)

Action Item: Adopt and provide the required Statement of Allowable use as determined by the Future Land Use map (Commercial), the C3 zoning designation of Commercial Recreational and subject to ordinance 2018-02, the SGI Overlay District.

Mr. Theriaque presented the draft settlement offer to the Board. Mr. Theriaque noted that the Board could vote on each item individually. Chairman Jones called for the public comments. Mr. Mason Bean asked the Board to buy this property and make it a public park. He asked the Board to put this on the table. Ms. Cheryl Klaus echoed Mr. Bean and said let us buy this property. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the settlement offer as presented. Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Theriaque presented the draft statement of Allowable Uses Letter Zoning Code-C-3. Chairman Jones asked in what is added in the letter is there anything that addresses the height. In the zoning code C-3 it is actually an older

version of our document, the maximum height is 47 feet. Mr. Theriaque noted that he will need to get a current copy of the code and attached to the letter. Chairman Jones called on public speakers at this time. Mrs. Barbara Sanders spoke to the Board, noted that she cannot say from her glancing over it last night that everything is right. She noted that the deeds recorded are confusing. The other problem she has with it, is as she understands it the letter of allowable uses is only a portion of the special warranty deed. If you accept Mr. Theriaque's letter today, she asked the Board to include some wiggle room, as far as description of property, add more or less. She would like to build in more or less or some sort of similar language, so that if there is a mistake, we have a chance to fix it. Chairman Jones noted that on page three section two, it says the property is 11.72 acres. Ms. Allison Goodson noted she would like to speak on PUD ordinance and how it was passed. Chairman Jones noted that she has filled out a speaker card and should this matter come up, she will have an opportunity to comment then.

Commissioner Ward said she agrees and would like to add additional language. Mr. Theriaque noted that this document is simply a reflection of what is in your plans, overlay district. I have no issue in adding additional language. He asked for a copy of book 1392 page 702. Mrs. Barbara Sanders noted that the acreage is on the property appraiser's site where you get your tax id numbers and it includes some submerged land. Some of that property is what I consider submerged land.

Mr. Theriaque requested a motion to check the book and page number, and if we agree with Mrs. Sanders, allow me to change if needed, and add the language more or less as it pertains to the acreage. **On a motion to approve by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison with changes as noted above. Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Theriaque noted that he can address the issue as to whether the PUD ordinance needs to be readdressed. He noted that he has read the letter, reviewed the statutes, ordinances and notice of intent, as well as the Newmont vs State in 2007 decision. He noted that he does not think anyone can predict what the circuit court would do if a lawsuit were brought. He stated that he believes the Board appropriately enacted the PUD ordinance. The original purpose was to adopt an ordinance that allows PUD in Franklin County and establish a process and criteria to evaluate a proposed PUD. The Board deleted the prohibition of PUDs on St George Island. I don't believe that the deletion of the prohibition changes the purpose and intent of the ordinance. He noted that in the abundance of caution the Board could chose to hold another public hearing, and that would resolve the issue raised in the memorandum.

Ms. Goodson noted the notice requires particular types of ordinance changes to be listed in title. The Newmont decision does not apply. The Board is required to publish the entire language of the ordinance. There are several interest groups who stood down once St. George Island was taken out of this ordinance. Strongly recommend that you heed Mr. Theriaque's advice, and rehear this ordinance, allowing constituents to speak. Puts you at genuine risk if you refuse to ignore. She noted that county commissioners are not authorized to use their vote to benefit themselves, or relatives. Move forward with policy that aligns with the voices and values of your voters.

Mrs. Barbara Sanders noted that she echoes Mr. Goodson's comments. She noted that she did not nit-pick the ordinance, and was taken by surprise at the meeting, that SGI was added. If I were going to go back to the drawing board, I would let the public have a say. We can all make mistakes with acres, citations. I would like you to consider redoing the ordinance hearing process.

Ms. Cheryl Klaus spoke to the Board saying she would restate some of things Ms. Goodson and Mrs. Sanders. When you take a section of land out, and then read it I think that is a substantial change. A lot of people stood down when the island was removed. They did not have a chance to be properly noticed and investigate. Is there any way if you chose to, instead of going through the whole process, could Commissioner Amison amend his motion and not accept Attorney Shuler's inclusion of St. George Island?

Mr. Theriaque noted that he is not aware of any Sunshine Violation. He thinks any allegations of this is frivolous. He said he believes there is a legitimate argument that the substance of the ordinance was not changed. If you accept their argument, it becomes a loop that is incredible lengthy and costly. I do not see the original substance of the ordinance changing. What you are hearing is that certain members of the public stood down because they thought SGI was not going to be included in the PUD ordinance. It is your policy call as to whether to recall the ordinance and rehear.

## Public Comments

Mr. Ben Naselius spoke to the Board representing Tall Timbers from Leon County. The mission of Tall Timbers is to foster exemplary land stewardship through research, conservation, and education. Mr. Naselius noted they have two really big projects coming up and he wanted to share a little information about those. RCPP through USDA land management grant, any landowner or manager over ten acres is welcome to apply. There are two aspects, 75-100% cost share to manage their land, and land management assistance. The other is in conjunction with the Florida Wildlife Corridor – regional experts for Big Bend region and explore options and bring partners together for creative conservation efforts. There are marketing dollars in there. It pairs directly with the ARCPP program to provide dollars for the land management.

- Tall Timbers, established in 1958 for the study of prescribed fire as a management tool and a conservation practice
- Tall Timbers land conservancy formed in 1999 to assist landowners in pursuing permanent conservation easements to protect their property in perpetuity.
- Here today to share two projects we are working on in Franklin County.
- \$25 Million Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)'
  - Grant received by Tall Timbers from the USDA to support rural landowners in land management. This includes two kinds of assistance
    - Financial assistance: between a 75 - 100% cost share for land management activities
    - Land management support: Assistance from Tall Timbers staff to implement conservation and management practices including prescribed fire, invasive species treatment, tree planting, forest stand improvements, and more.
    - Not just intended for large landowners, everyone is welcome to apply
- Tall Timbers partnership with the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation
  - Grant received by Tall Timbers by the Wildlife Corridor Foundation, who have been working throughout the state to connect Florida's wild spaces and make sure our natural areas are connected.
  - The Foundation has partnered with Tall Timbers as one of the conservation experts in the Big Bend region to further their mission, including education of the wildlife corridor,
  - We are beginning and education and outreach campaign getting the word out about the corridor, the importance of rural landowners in the corridor, and what you can do to protect and steward your piece.
  - We will be targeting direct mail, as well as social media ads, newspaper, and other opportunities.

Chairman Jones noted that the Board would contact him individually if they have any questions regarding his presentation.

Commissioner Ward noted that she feels like it would be the right thing to do, I do not want to, we have been demeaned and our reputation has been questioned. To sit there and have people talk about us the way that they have, I am over all of it. I do think that since the public does not feel they were here to speak their peace; I feel like it would be in our best interest to hold another hearing. Mr. Moron noted before the commissioners make a rash decision, let staff meet with Mr. Theriaque and planning, then come back to you before we plan. Mr. Moron noted that will those people be pleased, will those people be satisfied. How low can we go here? There has to be respect and trust that this board is doing what is best for the county. If people came to you respectfully and have a true concern. The accusations, I see what you all do in the background. If we are going to respond to bullying by the public just to get their way? Chairman Jones noted that he believes we need to have staff look at this and bring it back to us on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Moron noted that staff and attorneys can bring a couple options back to you. Mrs. Barbara Sanders noted a problem with Mr. Moron's suggestion is that you now have a PUD ordinance. Someone could submit a PUD for St. George Island? I do not see why it needs to be delayed. I think you should act today to invalidate the ordinance and start over. There were people who were not heard, and the process is very important. I ask you to reject Mr. Moron's recommendation. Chairman Jones said what you are asking (Ward) is to have a rehearing on the ordinance and exclude SGI. Commissioner Ward noted that no, she is saying hold a hearing because SGI was not in the draft ordinance, and people were not here to say anything. Attorney Shuler noted that the way he heard it is if you want to reschedule a public hearing, you will start from scratch. Attorney Shuler said you would be starting the process from scratch. Commissioner Sanders said she cannot say too much about this. However, it is not only St. George Island that is

concerned about these PUDs it is all over the county; others have concerns too. Commissioner Ward said she feels like some people in the public did not come forward because SGI was excluded. We could have those people come in and speak. Will it change the ordinance, I do not know? But I feel like the public needs to be able to speak. It does need to be brought up at the next meeting so that we can procedurally decide on what we are going to do. Chairman Jones noted that we spent a year of going through the process, and then a month before we started getting feedback that we do not want them anywhere. Chairman Jones noted that he did make a post on Facebook post showing the coastal high hazard line. It may not even apply to St George Island. Attorney Shuler noted that as far as procedure goes, I do not think it would be procedurally incorrect to make a motion to rehear the ordinance. **Commissioner Ward made a motion to readvertise for a public hearing on the PUD ordinance the way it was presented at the public hearing as it was adopted which included the entire county.** Commissioner Ward noted that when we had the original ordinance the one advertised in the paper stated NO NEW PUDS shall be allowed on SGI. That is what was advertised? When we had our public hearing, you said we are going to remove SGI and the PUD ordinance would apply to the entire county? It was a 4-1 vote. What I want to do is hold a new hearing on the ordinance that we adopted?? Attorney Shuler noted that we could do two things, you could direct me to notice a hearing, the notice would be AS YOU APPROVED ON JULY 25<sup>th</sup>. If you tell me to schedule a public hearing, I am going to use the draft of the ordinance approved. **Seconded by Commissioner Sanders.** Mr. Moron noted that what we are advertising is what was voted on July 25<sup>th</sup>? Mrs. Barbara Sanders noted that she is worried about the gap in between. We really do not have a coastal high hazard map. It was created by the regional planning. They took our flood maps and colored them red. Chairman Jones noted that they will look into that. Ms. Goodson noted that personal attacks were not her intention, and she believes procedure is important. The point is sticking to the rules, so that everyone knows this was done transparently. Chairman Jones noted that it was not about anything she said this morning. There was way more said online than what you mentioned today. Ms. Cheryl Clouse noted that she does not know why Commissioner Amison cannot recall his motion from the previous meeting where the ordinance was approved. Chairman Jones noted that we do not use Roberts Rules of Order. Ms. Clouse noted that we recognize SGI is special, so much that the Board is considering making it a special district. Ms. Brenda Carlin did not fill out a speaker card before the hearing, however, Chairman Jones allowed her a chance to speak. Ms. Carlin noted the reason people may not have shown up, is what you put forth was not a draft. I believed it was the final wording of what you are going to vote on. She noted that she is confused as to what another public hearing is going to do. Chairman Jones noted that the Board could make a motion or vote at that time to exclude or include SGI. Mr. Moron called for an online public comment that did not fill out a speaker card. Ms. Walsh spoke noting she appreciates the work but also wanted to make a comment in terms of the community knowing the process the board takes. When there are going to be zoning changes in such enormities, there is usually not only a publication but anyone within 200 feet, should have been notified with a certified mailing. I do believe our county is beautiful and special, but St George Island is special. I believe it should go the same way for the whole county. You are imposing many of the residents in an open way, that it touches the entire county. I feel you are opening the door for over development. She noted there were some issues with zoning and development in Gulf County because of sweeping change of zoning without anyone having input. She spoke regarding her opinion on staff speaking against the public. She noted that she would hate for us to develop to the point of Panama City. She encouraged the Board to advertise in other ways besides the newspaper. She noted that usually it should be advertised in three platforms. Chairman Jones noted that what we talked about was what the PUD was the zoning change was for any one project. Ms. Walsh noted but you were saying an entire change for the entire county. Chairman Jones noted that we have moved to have a new public hearing. Commissioner Sanders said so we took a vote on the PUD, and it includes SGI. We are going to have a public hearing to talk about excluding SGI?? Commissioner Ward noted that we are going to have a hearing on the ordinance as adopted. Commissioner Ward noted that a public hearing is to be able to discuss and change things. Commissioner Sanders noted that the reason she did not vote on it, was the acreage size. She thought it should have been larger. I just want people to understand that we are going to be talking about the entire ordinance. Commissioner Amison noted that we get to the next hearing, a commissioner decides to amend, are we going to have to go back and readvertise and hold new hearing?? I am trying to figure out how we can get work done?? I do not think we can make everyone happy. How are we going to get business done?? Commissioner Ward asked what can and can't be changed? I think people's perceptions of public hearings, I think the biggest thing is at the end of the day we are not going to make everyone happy. Chairman Jones asked if up until the board votes at a public hearing everything being considered to be a draft? Attorney Shuler noted there is a final ordinance that is put in the Notice of Intent book at the Clerk's office, that is the publication of the final version, but changes can be made through the enactment process as long as the consistent with the general purpose of the ordinance. Ms. Allison Goodson believes authority is outlined in the memorandum she provided. Commissioner Ward asked if we could add to verbiage for notice, that the ordinance is drafted and can be changed?? Attorney Shuler noted that he would not recommend that. The notice that is published is a long-standing format that follows legal standards. Mrs. Barbara

Sanders noted that is what the supreme court talks about is the loop. The point is what is material?? What is important? Sheryl Clouse asked what is a materialistic change? Adding a chunk of critical land? She still thinks you could rescind based on Florida Parliamentary procedure. **Motion carried 3-2, Commissioner Amison and Commissioner Croom opposed.**

The Board recessed at 10:30 am and reconvened at 10:42 am.

Commissioner Croom noted that the people who really know me, you know where I stand. Commissioner Ward noted that next Thursday there is a meeting in Havana about the bay opening. Commissioner Amison noted there is also a meeting the day before regarding the bears.

## **Department Directors Reports**

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

#### **1. Request Letter from the Board to St. Joe Company**

As you are aware from the flooding that occurred in September 2024 and previous years, Kentucky Street and Delaware Street in Lanark do not have anywhere for the water to properly drain, and all the residents' homes in that area flood. The St. Joe Company has 274 acres backing these properties, and is draining onto them, creating serious flooding. I would like to request that the board send a letter to the St. Joe Company and request that they reroute the drainage to somewhere else, which does not cause anyone's property to flood, and so that these residents also do not flood.

Commissioner Sanders thanked Mr. Nabors for bringing this up and noted this has been an issue for a while. It looks like St Joe Timberland has timbered the area and messed up the natural drain. If we could get St Joe to reroute the water to Duval Road, the ditches there could take the water. There are several other things, but this would help for now. Commissioner Sanders would like a letter written to Tim Sterns boss with the Woodland Division. Letter asking them to support us in trying to eliminate the problem out there and we are willing to do what we need to do as county. **On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, to authorize staff to send a letter to St. Joe Company requesting their support in trying to eliminate the flooding at Lanark.** Chairman Jones asked Mrs. Sanders and Ms. Goodson to just raise their hands if they want to speak throughout the meeting. Chairman Jones asked if it was okay for the Board to reach out individually to contacts in order to see if we can resolve the issue. Mr. Moron noted that we could also speak with Representative Shoaf. **Motion carried 5-0.**

#### **Railroad ditches – flooding**

Have not been dug or maintained in years. Write letter to the railroad and ask them to dig them out. Mr. Moron noted that same thing, if we can call Rep Shoaf, then follow up with a letter if we need to. Commissioner Amison asked if we need to make a motion to send a letter. Mr. Moron noted that we can have some conversation, if for some reason that does not seem fruitful between now and the 20<sup>th</sup> we will put it on the agenda.

#### **2. Employee Promotion**

Mackenzie Wilson has met the job specifications to change from Dump Truck Driver 1 to Dump Truck Driver 2. We request the Board's approval for this promotion, which goes from pay grade 4 to pay grade 5 according to the BCC Pay Plan, effective for August 15, 2025, payroll.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom and Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved Mr. Wilson's promotion as presented above.** Commissioner Ward asked if he discussed this with Erin. Mr. Nabors noted that he has. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Chairman Jones noted that the calendar looks a lot better, double-digit numbers. Commissioner Ward noted that FDOT has been mowing throughout the county and weed eating the ditches. Commissioner Ward noted that she wants everyone who is working out there in the heat, stay hydrated and make sure you have what you need. Commissioner Ward commented on the emblem and noted that they look really good. Mr. Nabors noted that they are going to add numbers to each mosquito truck so that if someone has an issue, they can call and identify what truck it is. Chairman Jones noted they need to be added to both sides. Commissioner Amison asked Mr. Nabors to go look at the dead trees on Highway 98 especially area of Jule Road.

**5. Fonda Davis – Solid Waste Director**

No action items.

Commissioner Ward noted that there was an issue at Wayside Park at Carrabelle with a concrete seat being broken, Corey went out and fixed it. They also took a bear proof can out to Alligator Point. Thanked them for it.

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

No action items.

Commissioner Ward noted that she did read the report and it is very transparent. It does help with the community and what you guys do. Commissioner Croom noted that he read, it was very detailed, straight to the point. I will be getting with you regarding the emergency plan in the future. Chairman Jones noted this is the kind of document we discussed in the past regarding Strategic Plan for the county.

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

No action items.

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

No action items.

**9. Whitney Roundtree – Library Director**

No action items.

**10. Steve Kirschenbaum – Interim Airport Manager**

1. Begin Applying for grants with AVCON for airport priority projects at no-out of pocket cost to the county. The grant process utilizing FDOT, FAA, Florida Commerce, USDA, and Triumph available funding all with AOED, County Fiscal Manager oversight and Commissioner approvals.

Chairman Jones noted that when we go to apply for a grant, with AVCON taking the lead, how does that look monetarily? Mr. Kirschenbaum noted that it will all back to Erin for review before it comes to the commission. Mr. Moron said are you asking who will pay for AVCON's work. Chairman Jones noted that when you all identify a potential grant that you want to apply for, it will come to the Board, and we will vote on it. Mr. Moron noted that AVCON collects their admin fee from admin fees built into FAA and FDOT grants. You have a separate AVCON agreement if there is no admin money in the grant, they charge you an hourly rate for doing the groundwork and putting the grant together. Commissioner Amison noted that there is a cap on that as well. Mr. Moron noted that if we get close to that cap, he will come back to the Board with a request to increase the cap. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized applying for grants with AVCON with the process of everything being run through the Fiscal Manager for airport priority projects. Motion carried 5-0.**

2. Finish wetland delineation at the site so we know what property is available for future development Mr. Moron noted that there was discussion after this meeting, and Caroline from ARPC, she thinks she could include this as part of the plan. Mr. Kirshenbaum noted that this is at the recommendation of the Board and the cost is \$6,000. Mr. Moron noted that he is correct, this was approved by the board, and there was discussion afterwards. He noted that Carline believes she can include this with the site plan prep through ARPC. After the meeting, there was a discussion, and she thinks she can include this cost. Mr. Kirshenbaum noted that he would like to move forward with the recommendation of the board. It is up to you, I hear what Steve is saying, you do not know how long it will take ARPC to fund it. Chairman Jones asked where the copy of the quote is? We should have this information. Mr. Kirschenbaum noted that he will get that quote for the Board. Commissioner Ward asked did we have any pending projects that this is contingent upon. Mr. Kirshenbaum noted that he believes the faster we do this the sooner we can get things in place. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, to table until the next meeting in order for Mr. Kirshenbaum to provide the quote to the Board. Motion carried 5-0.**

3. Work in conjunction with Team Franklin and the ARPC for site development and utilize assistance as needed **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized staff to work in conjunction with Team Franklin and the ARPC for site development and utilize assistance as needed. Motion carried 5-0.** Commissioner Sanders noted that AVCON has

reduced fuel prices. Mr. Kirschenbaum said they have reduced fuel by \$1 per gallon.

## **County Staff & Attorney Reports**

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

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 9. Motion carried 5-0.**

#### **1. BOARD ACTION: FDOT AIRPORT PAVEMENT MARKINGS PROJECT GRANT AWARD AGREEMENT**

Attached is a \$500,000 grant award agreement from the Florida Department of Transportation to design and upgrade the pavement markings on the runways at the Apalachicola Regional Airport. This project will consist of cleaning the current pavement markings and remarking on runways 6-24, 14-32 and 18-36 and their taxiways. Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached resolution of authorization and grant award agreement for the Airport Pavements Marking Project Grant.

#### **2. BOARD ACTION: OTTERSLIDE AND AVENUE A SIDEWALKS PROJECT-RANKING RESULTS & PERMISSION TO PROCEED WITH CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**

At the July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board opened RFQ responses for design services for the Otterslide and Avenue A sidewalks project. Of the five responses received and reviewed by the ranking committee, Dewberry Engineers was the highest ranked firm. Board action to accept the ranking results for the LAP Otterslide and Avenue A Sidewalks Design Project and to allow staff to begin contract negotiations and issue the notice of intent to award to Dewberry Engineers.

#### **3. BOARD ACTION: PURCHASE ORDER FOR EASTPOINT VFD FIRETRUCK**

In this year's legislative session, the county had submitted a legislative line-item appropriation request for a Fire Truck for Eastpoint Volunteer Fire Department. Fortunately, this request was advanced, and the county received a funding notification on July 1<sup>st</sup> from the Fire Marshal's Office that \$577,440 was available for the purchase of the truck. In the award notification, the defined performance period for the grant is one (1) year starting July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026. The award letter notices that if an equipment purchase will take longer than one (1) year to complete and meet reimbursement requirements, the assigned contract manager must be notified as soon as possible, and the county may need to resubmit the Local Initiative Funding Request Form or Appropriations Project Request Form to the appropriate local parties for the funding to roll forward into the next legislative year. Historically, the roll forwards have been funded, and Commissioner Jones reached out to Representative Jason Shoaf who confirmed that he did not foresee a problem with the funds rolling forward for obligated projects as the legislature had refunded in the past and delivery delays were not irregular for the fire marshal program (although it is not possible to guarantee the funds beyond June 30<sup>th</sup> date until next session). The truck for Eastpoint is more specialized as the truck is constructed to meet the size requirements of the station and also supports a CAFS (Compressed Air Foam System) which is versatile for residential and wildland applications. Unfortunately, with this specialized apparatus and chassis, the truck's contract specifies a delivery date within 660 days, roughly two-years, but vendor Tactical Fire has said that the truck is anticipated to take 18-months. The updated quote with pricing based through the Florida Sheriff's Association Bid List for the Toyne FTL, 304 L, Marine grade Stainless Steel High-capacity rural mobile water supply pumper tanker, 1250 GPMs, 2000 GWT, with CAFS, hydraulic assisted portable 2100 GWT for rapid and safe deployment for the rural setting, includes rescue style ladders and hard suction is \$579,940.00, the amount over the grant award (\$2,500) will be the responsibility of Eastpoint Volunteer Fire Department. Board action to approve and authorize the issuance of a purchase order based upon contract pricing through the Florida Sheriff's Association for the Eastpoint Volunteer Fire Department's Fire Truck with funding provided by the Fire Marshal's Grant pending receipt of the updated proposal with reference to the contract pricing number. Approximately \$2,500 will be the responsibility of the Fire Department as the updated purchase price was greater than the grant award.

Chairman Jones noted that he wanted the Board to be aware of the conversation we had in the background. We are going to reapply for this appropriation because of the length of time it takes for the truck to be delivered. Chairman Jones noted that when he spoke with Representative Shoaf he said when submitting for approval to the legislature again, there is a box to check to have something be reapproved. Mr. Moron noted that he believes we should ask for a new fire truck each year. Commissioner Croom noted that he was unaware we were over the award amount on item 3. He spoke with Mr. Pruett, and he does not think his board will have an issue with the overage. Chairman

Jones noted that he believes the increase was due to tariffs. **On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved and authorized the issuance of a purchase order based upon contract pricing through the Florida Sheriff's Association for the Eastpoint Volunteer Fire Department's Fire Truck with funding provided by the Fire Marshal's Grant pending receipt of the updated proposal with reference to the contract pricing number. Approximately \$2,500 will be the responsibility of the Fire Department as the updated purchase price was greater than the grant award. Motion carried 5-0.**

4. BOARD ACTION: WEEMS HOSPITAL WIRING UPGRADE FOR CONNECTION OF NEW CT SCANNER & GENERATOR –  
***REMOVED FROM ACTION LIST – WITHDRAWN – DELAYED UNTIL 8/20/2025 MEETING, AWAITING FINAL QUOTES***

5. BOARD ACTION: DISTRICT 2 TEMPORARY PAVEMENT PATCH PROPOSAL ALLIGATOR DRIVE  
In September, Hurricane Helene eroded two roadway segments along the bayside of Alligator Drive. The county has been moving through the slow FEMA approval process for the permanent repairs/mitigation work along the shoreline since the storm. The attached proposal from Roberts and Roberts will provide a temporarily pavement patch for the damaged sections from 1569-1577 and 1623-1630 Alligator Drive and will allow for a smooth, safe roadway surface until the permanent repairs are obligated, designed/bid and constructed. Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached \$12,000 proposal from Roberts and Roberts for the temporary pavement patches for two areas of washout along Alligator Drive to be paid by District 2's paving funds.

6. BOARD ACTION: DISTRICT 1 PAVEMENT PATCH PROPOSALS SGI 7<sup>TH</sup>/EAST GORRIE AND UTILITY CUT PATCH BETWEEN 10<sup>TH</sup> & 11<sup>TH</sup> WEST GULF BEACH  
Commissioner Jones and the Franklin County Road Department have received complaints on the rough utility patch area between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> West Gulf Beach and a damaged apron area at 7<sup>th</sup> East and Gorrie. Jason White Construction has provided the attached \$10,000 estimate to patch the two areas of concern. Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached \$10,000 proposal from Jason White Construction to patch the areas noted above to be paid by District 1's paving funds.

7. BOARD ACTION: DISTRICT 1 RESURFACING PROPOSAL 8<sup>TH</sup> STREET WEST FROM GULF BEACH TO PINE  
Commissioner Jones and the Franklin County Road Department had also received complaints regarding the numerous potholes and rough apron area along the paved section of 8<sup>th</sup> Street West between Gulf Beach Drive and Pine Street. The attached estimate from Jason White Construction will mill and resurface the rough area of existing roadway. Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached \$23,000 proposal from Jason White Construction to repave 8<sup>th</sup> Street West from Gulf Beach Drive to Pine Street to be paid by District 1's paving funds.

8. BOARD ACTION: DISTRICT 3 DESIGN & BID SPECIFICATION TASK ORDERS MARGARET KEY LIBRARY PARKING AREA AND SYLVESTER WILLIAMS PARKING AREA  
Commissioner Croom requested the attached two task orders from county engineers Dewberry to develop the design documents, survey, permit stormwater, provide construction bid specifications and construction inspection/administration for two projects: improve the Margaret Key Library Parking Area at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Highway 98 (\$15,975) and develop a delineated, paved parking area with stormwater at Sylvester Williams Park (\$18,690). The Margaret Key Library Parking Improvements will be completed alongside the City of Apalachicola's project for new landscaping design and drainage improvements around the building. Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached task orders with county engineers Dewberry & Associates for the design and bid specifications for the projects mentioned above to be paid by District 3's paving funds.

Ms. Elizabeth Perkins, Charmain of PALS, gave their profound thanks to Commissioner Croom for being generous to help fund the parking. She noted it will be a benefit to our library and the entries there at the Chapman area. **On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison, Commissioner Ward, and Commissioner Sanders.** Commissioner Ward noted that anyone who has been out there to pick up their children, knows how needed this is. Chairman Jones asked was this supposed to connect them all. That is the plan. **Motion carried 5-0.**



9. **BOARD ACTION: PAYMENT OF DMS INVOICE FROM PROPERTY APPRAISER'S OUTLAY FUNDS**  
The property appraiser's office has forwarded the attached invoice from the Florida Department of Management Services for payment of a retroactive retirement adjustment for a position which had been designated as senior management, and unfortunately, the wages of a new hire (who performed the same assigned job duties and held the same title as the SMSC designated position) were not reported correctly as a senior management service class petition. This invoice shall be paid by the returned budget funds held for the Franklin County Property Appraiser's Office in the county's capital outlay fund. Board action to approve the payment of the attached invoice from DMS from the Property Appraiser's funds held by the county in the capital outlay fund.

10. **BOARD INFORMATION: RETAIL STRATEGIC PLAN GRANT APPLICATION SUBMITTED TO COMMERCE**

On Friday, the county submitted the attached Florida Commerce Partnership Grant Application and letters of support for the development of a Retail Strategic Plan.

11. **BOARD INFORMATION: BUDGET UPDATE AFTER WORKSHOP & TRIM SUBMISSION TO PROPERTY APPRAISER**

On Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, the county held the budget workshop to set a millage rate to go out on the TRIM property tax notices. At the start of the workshop, the proposed millage rate was 5.2849 which would have generated \$20,007,594. The proposed millage as presented was approximately 7.57% above the rolled back rate of 4.9131 (the rate which nets the same ad valorem property tax proceeds in the current year, excluding the effect of amounts transferred to tax increment districts and the value of a new construction – DR-420 TRIM Form. Current year rolled-back aggregate taxes \$18,599,954), or \$1,407,640 over in ad valorem proceeds.

Upon conclusion of the budget workshop, the proposed millage rate was reduced to 5.0429, 2.7% above the rolled back rate, and approximately \$502,752 over in ad valorem proceeds.

The current millage rate is 5.2222 and generated \$18,081,346. The proposed millage rate of 5.0429 for the upcoming budget will generate \$19,102,706.

TRIM notices will be sent to all property owners early this month and there are two public hearings scheduled in September before the county's budget can be formally adopted.

- September 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:15 p.m., Franklin County Courthouse Annex, 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola
- September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5:15 p.m., Franklin County Courthouse Annex, 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola

12. **BOARD INFORMATION: MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT UPDATES**

- Sylvester Williams Park playground equipment being delivered within two weeks
- Apalachicola Health Department Siding Repairs to begin next week
- Lanark EMS building materials to be delivered today, vertical construction to begin by the end of the week

Commissioner Sanders asked about the Stan Roberson grant, working waterfront grant? Do you think we have anything you can think of in the Alligator Point area that we may could help the clambers and oystermen? Mrs. Griffith noted that we may could look at it as a design perspective. I think the estuary was saying that it would be extremely difficult to get a permit. Chairman Jones noted that they said the only place we would be able to get a permit is the marina. Commissioner Sanders noted that we need to utilize this if possible. Commissioner Sanders inquired as to when the FRDAP grants are supposed to be in. Mrs. Griffith noted that she believed it is in September. She noted that she knows Bree is working on two applications. Commissioner Ward noted the same thing goes with the RIF grants. If we can work on that she would appreciate it. Chairman Jones noted the legislature is going to start meeting early this year in October. The delegation meeting will meet on August 21<sup>st</sup> at 2:30.

**12. Michael Morón – County Coordinator**

1. **Action Item: FDOT/EP Agreement**

In August 2023, the Board signed a FDOT Community Aesthetic Feature Agreement for the Eastpoint Beautification project. What was not included as part of that agreement was a permit for the "Welcome to Eastpoint" signs. The County has received a new Aesthetic Feature Agreement that includes permits for the "Welcome to Eastpoint" signs. The Chairman's signature is required on this agreement. Board action to authorize the Chairman's signature on the

new FDOT Community Aesthetic Feature Agreement that includes a permit for the new “Welcome to Eastpoint” signs.

2. Action Item: 75 Highway 65 Commercial Site Plan Application

At your last meeting, the Board approved a Land Use and Zoning Change for a 10-acre parcel of land at 75 Highway 65, Eastpoint, Florida. Before you today, is the Commercial Site Plan application that was recommended for approval by your Planning and Zoning Adjustment Board. The Planner’s Review and Complete Application Packet is attached for your review. Board action to approve the Commercial Site Plan Application for 75 Highway 65 10-acre parcel.

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

3. Discussion/Action Item: SGI Special Zoning District

Prior to the Planned Unit Development discussions, the Board was prepared to start the process of a Special Zoning District for St. George Island. That process was paused to address PUDs. It was always the Board’s intention to address many of the issues specific to St. George Island with a Special Zoning District. Now that the PUD matter has been addressed, is the Board ready to proceed with the St. George Island Special Zoning District? If so, the first matter to discuss is the creation of a Citizen Advisory Board (CAB). This Board will consist of St. George Island home and business owners that will work alongside the County’s planning staff and planning consultant to assist with the creation of a special zoning district. To clarify, this CAB will not become St. George Island’s separate Planning and Zoning Adjustment Board. The CAB’s only purpose will be to assist with the creation of the Special Zoning District. Chairman Jones, Ms. Bree Robinson, and I will meet with interested candidates and present a 5 -7 member CAB for your approval. Discussion and action to proceed with the creation of a St. George Island Special Zoning District, including a Citizen Advisory Board.

Commissioner Ward noted that we do need to address these in other places of the county. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized staff to proceed with the process of created a St. George Island Special Zoning District, including a Citizen Advisory Board. Motion carried 5-0.**

4. Discussion/Action Item: TDC Candidates for Vacant Seat

Last week, you should have received a link to applications for eight candidates interested on serving on the TDC. This morning, you will be asked to select your top five candidates for this seat. Each candidate will be scored based on their ranking (1 = 10 points, 2 = 9 points, 3 = 8 points, etc.). Your rankings will be tallied and then the Board could appoint a candidate based on the total score. Discussion, ranking, and action to appoint a candidate based on the total scores.

Each of the Board members completed a sheet. Once tabulated, Mr. Moron will announce the results later in the meeting. Ms. Goodson asked for clarification on the process of selecting Special District members. They will be interviewed by the Chairman, Ms. Bree Robison, Mr. Moron, then basically the Chairman will tell us who he wants placed on the Board and then it will be up to the Board to decide. Ms. Goodson noted she will just stay tuned to future meetings.

5. Discussion/Action Item: TDC Administrative Contract Advertisement

The TDC Administrative Services contract advertisement is almost completed. As part of the ad, I would like to include the duration of the contract. Should it be for two, three or four years? The completed advertisement will be forwarded to you before it is sent for publishing. As part of today’s discussion, I would also like to extend the vendor contracts to September 30, 2026. There will be no other changes to those contracts except for the term of the contract. Vendor contracts that start on October 1, 2026, will have the same duration as the Administrative Services contract that will start on October 1, 2025, so those contracts will expire and are advertised on different years. Discussion and action to approve the extension of the TDC vendor contracts to October 1, 2026.

Commissioner Croom inquired as to what was the term limits before? Was it two, three, four?? Mr. Moron noted that they have not advertised since 2018-2019. Chairman Jones noted that we have advertised one time since then. Commissioner Sanders noted that she likes four years. Chairman Jones asked if the admin contract is included in the vendor contracts. No, that excludes the admin. Commissioner Amison noted that we may want to stay with two years,

because we have this potential legislature coming down. If that happens, we may have to look at bringing that in house. I would at least err on the side of caution until we see how it works out. Two years for now and we will revisit it then.

**Commissioner Amison made a motion to extend vendor contracts to 9/30/26 and to advertise the administrative contract as a two-year contract, seconded by Commissioner Ward. Motion carried 5-0.**

6. Discussion/Action Item: Mandatory Garbage Pick-up Workshop

The County was notified that FWC will be able to amend the existing contract with the County to include the new appropriated \$341,750 from the Legislature. The total amount allocated to the county is slightly over a \$1,000,000.00. With that said, is the Board ready to proceed with scheduling a workshop to discuss mandatory garbage pick-up? The type of vendor contract to purchase, distribute, and track the bear-resistant garbage cans will depend on the County's decision to enact mandatory garbage pick-up. Discussion and possible action to schedule a workshop on mandatory garbage pick-up.

Mr. Moron suggested scheduling for October. Give me some dates in October that you are free, and I will start narrowing it down. Commissioner Amison noted that the second week in October will not work for him. Mr. Moron asked each of the board members to give him a call and let them know their schedules.

7. Discussion/Action Item: Policies for FAC Review

At your last meeting, the Board discussed the possibility of submitting policies for the upcoming Florida Association of Counties Innovation and Policy to be held in Alachua County on September 17th and 18th. The deadline to submit a policy is Friday, August 8th. At your next meeting, we will need to change your September 17th regular meeting date. Discussion and possible action.

Commissioner Ward noted that one policy, Attorney Shuler is going to bring up and the other was a moot point. Mr. Moron asked about moving the September meeting to 16<sup>th</sup>. **On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved changing their September meeting today to Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. Motion carried 5-0.**

8. Informational Item: Vacant PZA Seat

Rachel Chestnut resigned from the Planning and Zoning Adjustment Board. Due to other PZA members scheduling conflicts, it was very likely that we would not have met quorum requirements for the Tuesday, August 12th regular meeting. Staff contacted the PZA members, and everyone is available for an August 19th meeting, so the PZA meeting will be on the 19th instead of the 12th. There are two seats available, District 4 and At-large. Commissioner Amison is searching his district for a candidate for that seat; However, the At-large seat can be filled from any district in the County. Let me know if you have any potential candidates in mind for the At-large seat.

9. Informational Item: FWC Commission Meeting

As previously discussed, the next Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 13th and Thursday, August 14th starting at 8:30 a.m. This meeting will be held at the Florida Public Safety Institute Conference Center Building at 85 Academy Drive in Havana, FL 32333. As currently stated on the meeting agenda, the FWC Commission will hear proposed rules on the Apalachicola Bay Oyster Management and Statewide Regulations on Thursday, August 14th as an agenda action item from FWC staff. Mr. Jon Creamer, Regional Director, stated that there will be reserved seating and set aside time for Franklin County Commissioners to address the FWC Commission on this agenda item. Also on the agenda, but scheduled for Wednesday, August 13th, is the final rules for a Black Bear Hunt. If any Commissioner is planning on attending the FWC meeting for that agenda action item, similar arrangements will be made for you. Mr. Creamer will need to know if you are attending as soon as possible.

10. Informational Item: St. Paul AME

The County was informed that St. Paul A.M.E. Church located in Apalachicola has been officially listed, by the National Park Service, in the National Register of Historic Places. I have contact information for the Bureau of Historic Preservation if anyone has additional questions.

11. Informational Item: Next Meeting Date

Your next regular meeting date will be Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. (ET).

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

#### Action Items

#### 1. FAC Policy Change Request

Attached is a draft of the proposed FAC policy change request concerning amending s.286.011(8) to allow for private meetings when a governmental entity receives a notice of claim under the Bert Harris Act. Board Action: Discussion and action on the request and approving its submittal to FAC for consideration.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved submitting the FAC Policy Change request concerning amending s.286.011(8).** Commissioner Ward noted that she will take the proposed policy to the FAC board. **Motion carried 5-0.**

#### 2. Use of old Alligator Point-St. Teresa VFD for Training Purposes

The Alligator Point volunteer fire department has requested to use the old fire station for training purposes. There will be no fire or breaking of glass. They will provide training for themselves and other volunteer fire departments in Franklin County. They will also add the county as an additional insured on their insurance policy. Board Action: Discussion and action on the request to allow use of the old Alligator Point fire station for training.

Commissioner Sanders noted that she has made them aware that when we begin the construction of the road, they will have to vacate the property. **On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the request to allow use of the old Alligator Point fire station for training. Motion carried 5-0.**

#### Information Items and Possible Discussion

#### 3. SB 784 Amending How Plats are approved:

A copy of SB 784 is attached. SB 784 makes major changes to the approval and processing of plats. No longer will plats be approved in a public hearing. Plats will be administratively approved by a person designated by either an ordinance or resolution of the Board. A written notice of receipt and identifying missing documents or information must be provided within seven business days, including information regarding the completeness of the process and applicable time frames for reviewing, approving and otherwise processing the plat. Unless the applicant requests an extension of time, the plat shall be approved, approved with conditions, or denied within the time frame stated in the notice. A denial of the plat must specifically state in writing the reasons for denial. A resolution will be forthcoming for the Board consideration of who to appoint as the administrative person to approve plats.

Mrs. Barbara Sanders asked that when you set up, you have a final say person and someone to look over their shoulders. Every tiny detail is important. It is a double triple checked process.

Commissioner Ward asked what plats we approved? Attorney Shuler noted that you would no longer be the final reviewer and approver of plats, you will never see them.

Notice of Intent for Public Hearing on 8/20/25:

E911 Address Ordinance.

The ad is scheduled to publish on 8/7/25

Notice of Intent for Public Hering on 8/20/25:

Ordinance Amending MSBU Ordinance to Remove Referendum Requirement.

The ad is scheduled to publish on 8/7/25

Notice of Intent for Public Hearing on 8/20/25:

Banning Fires on all public beaches.

The ad is scheduled to publish on 8/7/25

#### 1. Code Enforcement Magistrate Agreement

A copy of the signed agreement for magistrate services is attached.

2. Reef Materials Manifest and Pre-Deployment Notification

A copy of the signed Notification is attached. I spoke with Mr. Grayson Shepard, and he tells me that he expects around 30 reef modules delivered on or about August 12, 2025.

3. Possible Duke Energy Land Swap

I am scheduled to speak with Duke Energy's attorney on 8/7/25 to discuss the Board's request that they cost share the \$11,500.00 expense for the road construction plans that they require to consider approving a paved road underneath their transmission line, which is the access point for the land the county may receive in the land swap.

Chairman Jones inquired about the public hearing we are planning on the banning of fires on all beaches, I think it would be more in line with public interest if we consider this for just during turtle season. Attorney Shuler asked what the pleasure of the Board is.

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Ward, to limit the beach fire ban for during turtle season only.** Chairman Jones noted the language of our ordinance does not address removal of fire debris and we may want to address. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioner Sanders noted that someone from the LVF called yesterday and asked when we are going to look at the individual MSBU. Lanark is saying they need to be increased. The other thing is I have had some calls from Alligator Point and our beach accesses down there at night we have people partying. Who do they call? Sheriff's department.

At this time, Mr. Moron gave the outcome of the TDC Board vote.

- Torben Madson 15
- Leigh Cobel 14
- Cutler Edwards 12
- Roxanne Christie 11
- Carl Whaley 10

Commissioner Amison inquired if Mr. Madson would qualify for the position as a tourist related business owner. Attorney Shuler noted that he has not seen any of the applications and if the Board would like him to look at them, he can. Commissioner Amison noted that they have to be affected by tourism. Commissioner Croom asked what about tourism events that they participate in. Attorney Shuler noted that he would have to look into. We could take a lunch break and come back, or we can defer this to the next meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Moron noted that we can put it on the agenda for the next meeting. Chairman Jones said he is okay with that he does not think it is going to matter.

**Commissioner Sanders made a motion to table the appointment of the TDC member until the August 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, seconded by Commissioner Amison. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Presentations/Updates/Requests**

**14. David Walker (Weems CEO) & James Osteen (EMS Director) -- Request**  
***Item moved to August 20th meeting***

**Commissioners' Comments**

Commissioner Croom noted that Second Chance Heart will be at the FCS tomorrow. Commissioner Sanders noted the girls went to LA for world season. They did not bring home the trophy, but they made us proud. Commissioner Amison reminded the Board and the public that the FWC oyster meeting will be held on Thursday! Can we have more than ten people from Franklin County show up that are not elected officials.

## **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.