

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM  
SEPTEMBER 16, 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 Croom led the Board in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Chairman Jones reminded everyone to remember our Sheriff in our prayers today. Attorney Shuler requested the Board add an item for consideration to hold an Executive session to review the recently filed Bert lawsuit. Commissioner Sanders noted that there may be some people to speak on the communications item today. Chairman Jones noted that would be fine and asked that they go ahead and fill out a speaker card. Chairman Jones noted that he would also ask the Board to amend the agenda for the time certain item on Attorney Shuler's report. Attorney Shuler noted that his item concerning the land swap with Duke Energy is scheduled for 9:10 am. **On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the agenda with amendments as noted above. Motion carried 5-0.**

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

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

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the FCBCC Regular Meeting 9/3/2025 and Budget Hearing 9/8/2025 and the Payment of County Bills. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Public Comments**

Mr. Milton Strickland a resident of Apalachicola requested the Board create a partnership between the private sector and county in relation to the bay reopening. Mr. Strickland spoke about cultivating oysters, bag limits, and the lottery. He noted that it is important to find out from a different view, we need to know what is out there, particularly on the part of the bay they are not opening. Do not think they plan to open restoration. The miles are where people were not making a lot of money, but it is doing what we love and making a living. Requesting the Board to consider establishing a partnership.

**Constitutional Officers**

**3. Michele Maxwell -- Clerk of Courts -- Unclaimed Funds**

**Unclaimed Money**

The Clerk's office is authorized by law to pay into the Clerk's Fine and Forfeiture fund all unclaimed money deposited or collected. A list was published in The Apalachicola Times, and pursuant to law, proof of publication is to be filed and recorded in the minutes of the county commission. The list totaled \$240.00 and represented ( 16) sixteen checks that were never cashed. The charge for the advertisement was \$16.31 and the proof of publication is attached. Clerk Maxwell noted there is no action needed by the Board.

**Department Directors Reports**

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

There were no action items.

**5. John Solomon – TDC Administrator**

1. On September 10th, 2025, the TDC Board voted to recommend approval of a request from the Camp Gordon Johnson Museum for a Museum Infrastructure Grant for up to \$24,595.00, this Grant is for Lighting and Display upgrades, Signs, Utility Equipment for grounds and other Equipment.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Camp Gordon Johnson Museum Infrastructure Grant for up to \$24,595.00.** Commissioner Ward noted that Camp Gordon Johnson was one of the first museum that was awarded when we started this grant. Know that statute changed, and hope that we can use more funds for infrastructure in the future. **Motion carried 5-0.**

2. On September 10th, 2025, the TDC Board voted to recommend approval of a request from the City of Apalachicola for construction of Phase 1 of the V- Pier Fishing Pier for up to \$500,000.

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the request from the City of Apalachicola for construction of Phase 1 of the V-Pier Fishing Pier for up to \$500,000.** Commissioner Croom asked how many phases there were. Mr. Solomon noted that as of now it is two phases. Chairman Jones noted that this is a reimbursable request, the city spends the money, and the county reimburses them. **Motion carried 5-0.**

3. On September 10th, 2025, the TDC Board voted to recommend approval of a request from Franklin County for the Following improvements to the Sports Arenas.

- a. DW Wilson Sports Arena Batting Cage Lighting - \$6220.28
- b. Kendrick Sports Arena Batting Cage Lighting - \$16,619.98
- c. DW Wilson Sports Arena Musco Lighting System - \$998,900.00

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the request from Franklin County for the improvements to the lighting at DW Wilson Sports Arena, Kendrick Sports Arena, and DW Wilson Sports Arena in the amounts noted above. Motion carried 5-0.**

4. On August 13th, 2025, the TDC Board voted to recommend for approval the list of the 2025-2026 Small and Large Event Grant and the Museum Grant recipients, totaling \$255,500.

**On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the list of the 2025-2026 Small and Large Event Grant and the Museum Grant recipients, totaling \$255,500. Motion carried 5-0.**

5. The TDC will be holding a speaking event on November 10th at 8:00am with a Motivational Hospitality Speaker Simon Bailey on November 10th currently to be held at the Commission Meeting room.

Chairman Jones noted that TDC is funding this event and it will not cost anything for our vendors to attend.

6. Visit Florida

Mr. Solomon noted that he has been appointed to the Marketing Committee for Visit Florida.

Mr. Moron presented item 5 from his report at this time.

**5. Discussion/Action Item: Coastal E TDC Vendor Contract Amendment**

- Recently, the Board approved extending TDC vendor contracts from December 31, 2025, to September 30, 2026.
- Upon reviewing their original contract, Coastal E discovered an error.
- Most of the “pass-thru” fee items are per budget except for Social Media Campaign Management in Section D. This could cause an issue with the Finance Department if the exact budgeted amount is exceeded during a campaign.

- One option to correct this issue would be to add language to the contract amendment, changing Social Media Campaign Management in Section D to per budget to align with the other fees.
- Board discussion and action to approve the additional language in the contract amendment as stated.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the additional language in the contract amendment as stated above. Motion carried 5-0.**

The Board moved to Attorney Shuler's item regarding the land swap with Duke Energy.

**1. Possible Property Swap with Duke Energy**

Attached is the Resolution to be considered at your meeting scheduled for September 16, 2025, at 9: 10 a.m. As required by Fla. Stat. 125.37, the Notice of Intent to Exchange Property was published once a week for two consecutive weeks in advance of the September 16, 2025, meeting. The Exchange Agreement is also attached hereto for your convenient reference. It has also been posted on the county's website. Board Action: Discussion and Board action to adopt the resolution.

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board adopted the resolution regarding the Possible Property Swap with Duke Energy. Motion carried 5-0.**

**RFP/RFQ/Bid Opening**

**6. Sealed Bids: St. George Island Multiuse Path**

The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners will receive sealed bids from any qualified person, company or corporation interested in constructing: ST. GEORGE ISLAND MULTIUSE PATH This project consists of reclaiming and resurfacing the St. George Island Multiuse Path from West 3rd Street to East 3rd Street. Other work to include necessary drainage improvements, upgraded signage and pavement markings and other safety improvements.

COMPANY	LOCATION	BID AMOUNT	BID BOND
North Florida Construction, Inc.	Clarksville, FL	\$195,375	Yes
Roberts and Roberts, Inc.	Tallahassee/Panama City	\$217,449.75	Yes
C.W. Roberts Contracting, Inc.	Tallahassee, FL	\$312,699.70	Yes

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized staff to turn the bids over to Dewberry for review and recommendation. Motion carried 5-0.**

**County Staff & Attorney Reports**

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

**1. BOARD ACTION: FWC BEAR PROOF TRASHCANS GRANT AWARD AGREEMENT**

During last year's legislative session, funds were appropriated to FWC to fund a \$683,500 grant to Franklin County to purchase bear-proof garbage can containers for county residents and on June 4, 2025, the board approved the grant award agreement. During this year's legislative session, FWC approved an additional \$341,750 in additional funds to be used for the purchase of bear-proof garbage cans. Attached is amendment 1 which increases the grant award to the new total of \$1,025,250. All deliverables outlined in the project scope must be completed by June of 2027. Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached grant award agreement amendment 1 for the FWC Bear Proof Trashcans Project.

**2. BOARD ACTION: COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CORE CONTRACT**

At the start of each new fiscal year, after adoption of the county's budget, the Florida Department of Health submits their core contract for approval. There are no changes in the new core contract from last year's contract. The fee schedule for the health department is also attached for reference. Board action to approve the 2025/2026 core contract for the Franklin County Health Department. Board action to approve and authorize payment of the attached quote from

jail maintenance funds once the work is complete.

### **3. BOARD ACTION: TRIUMPH FIRST RESPONDER COMMUNICATION SYSTEM DESIGN CONSULTANT RANKING RESULTS**

At the July 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the Board opened responses to the responses to the RFQ for design services for the Triumph First Responder Communication System Upgrade. This consultant will advise the county on the development and implementation of a new countywide first responder communication system used by Franklin County EMS and Volunteer Fire Departments, Franklin County Sheriff's Office, Franklin County Road Department, Franklin County School Board, Weems Memorial Hospital, Carrabelle Police Department, City of Apalachicola Police Department, and all as further described in the County's Application for Funds and grant award agreement with Triumph Gulf Coast project #333. The RFQ responses were released to a (7) member ranking committee for review and recommendation. The four respondent firms made presentations and took questions from ranking committee members via Zoom on Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. The highest ranked firm is **Omnicon Consulting Engineers** (6/7 ranking committee members submitted ranking forms).

Board action to authorize staff to begin contract negotiations with the highest ranked firm, Omnicon Consulting Engineers, pending review and approval of the procurement package by Triumph Gulf Coast.

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

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

- Apalachicola Health Department Siding Repairs are underway – Commissioner Croom posted a great progress photo online, north side of building has been stripped of old siding, rot repaired, and new wrap installed.
- TDC Spending Plan Revision – 2025 Statutes are now available, schedule date for public hearing for spending plan amendment, Draft Project List attached for reference
- Lanark EMS interior sheetrock underway
- RESTORE SGI Stormwater Project underway – work to focus on retention pond areas at center of island for first 30-days of project to be ready for FDOT's resurfacing of Franklin Boulevard
- District 1, District 3 and District 5 Road Paving Segments are out to bid, originally bid separately due to concerns regarding the availability of funds and quantity of roadway segments, re-bid as single project with disclosure that not all segments may be awarded due to budgetary constraints
- RESTORE County Wide Dune Restoration Project – dune construction at Carrabelle Beach Park and St. George Island's Lighthouse Park is now out to bid.
- Courtroom Renovation Project is now out to bid
- Rio Vista Drive resurfaced in District 2
- Loading Dock at Buddy Ward Seafood Landing Park is now complete
- County is submitting CDBG-DR funding request to repair the hurricane damaged section of the SGI Fishing Pier Access Road Seawall – required public comment period for the funding application ends September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The notice is attached and has been posted to the county's website: [Notice of Public Comments and Intent to Apply for CDBG-DR Grant Funds / Aviso de Comentarios Públicos e Intención de Solicitar Fondos de Subvención CDBG-DR](#)
- County audit report for fiscal year end September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, has been posted to the county's website and included as an attachment to this report
- Final public hearing to adopt the county's 2025/2026 budget is scheduled for Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:15 p.m.

### **8. Michael Morón – County Coordinator**

#### **1. Action Item: ARPC Planning Services Agreement**

- At your July 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the Board approved a 90-day extension of ARPC's Planning Agreement.

- The purpose of the extension was to assist Ms. Bree Robinson's transition as the County Planner.
- Ms. Robinson is requesting that we amend our agreement with ARPC to an hourly rate effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. There are still a few projects that were started when Mr. Justin Stiell of ARPC was serving as the county's interim planner, and Ms. Robinson would like the ability to confer with Mr. Stiell if needed.
- ARPC's hourly rate is \$\_\_\_\_ for planning services.
- Board action to approve ARPC's hourly rate of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for planning services.

2. Action Item: State Loan Agreement – Benjamin Franklin Statue

- As the Board is aware, Governor DeSantis has commissioned the creation and installation of a Benjamin Franklin bronzed statute for Franklin County.
- This statue will be installed and unveiled at the Franklin County Courthouse in Apalachicola.
- Attached is a Florida Department of State 10-year Loan Agreement for the bronze statute for your approval and Chairman's signature.
- Attorney Shuler reviewed the agreement.
- Board action to authorize the Chairman's signature on the Department of State's Loan Agreement for the Benjamin Franklin bronze statute.

3. Action Item: FCS Homecoming Parade

- It is almost time for the Franklin County School Homecoming Parade.
- The parade will be on Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 2:00 p.m. (ET).
- The parade will begin at the intersection of CA Gillespie onto Highway 98 and end at Jefferson Street in Eastpoint.
- The school district will request the required FDOT permit.
- Board action to approve the Homecoming Parade route on Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 2:00 p.m. (ET).

**On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1-3 from Mr. Moron's report.** Commissioner Ward asked if they would remove the statute in ten years, hopefully not. **Motion carried 5-0.**

4. Discussion/Action Item: Staff Resignation

- Last Friday, Mrs. Cortni Bankston submitted her resignation effective Friday, October 10, 2025.
- Mrs. Bankston was offered employment with Cloudpermit, the company that provides our online code enforcement application.
- I am in the process of determining how to move forward with the SHIP program and the administrative portion of code compliance.
- One thing for certain, I will need to advertise for a clerk that will assist with one of, or both departments. If approved today, I will circulate the notice before advertising.
- Board discussion and action to authorize advertising for a clerk.
- 

Commissioner Croom inquired if this was internal and external. Mr. Moron noted that it will do both at the same time. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom to authorize advertising for a clerk as noted above.** Commissioner Croom noted that she is definitely going to be missed and wished her luck in her future endeavors. Commissioner Sanders wished her all the best in the future, go out there and make yourself proud. Chairman Jones thanked Mrs. Cortni for everything. Commissioner Amison thanked Mrs. Cortni for everything. Commissioner Croom thanked her for everything, hates to see her go, but understands there are opportunities you cannot turn down. **Motion carried 5-0.**

5. Discussion/Action Item: Coastal E TDC Vendor Contract Amendment

- Recently, the Board approved extending TDC vendor contracts from December 31, 2025, to September 30, 2026.
- Upon reviewing their original contract, Coastal E discovered an error.
- Most of the “pass-thru” fee items are per budget except for Social Media Campaign Management in Section D. This could cause an issue with the Finance Department if the exact budgeted amount is exceeded during a campaign.
- One option to correct this issue would be to add language to the contract amendment, changing Social Media Campaign Management in Section D to per budget to align with the other fees.
- Board discussion and action to approve the additional language in the contract amendment as stated.

*Item addressed earlier in the meeting.*

6. Informational Item: New Crosswalks

- Franklin County submitted requests to FDOT for new crosswalks, one in Apalachicola and two in Eastpoint.
- I will let the Board know when FDOT responds.

7. Informational Item: End of Fiscal Year Special Meeting

- At your October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Clerk’s office will present two bill lists for payment. The first will be the end of FY 2024-25 bill list and the other will be the first bill list of FY 2025-26. Therefore, there is no need for an end of FY 2024-25 special meeting.

8. Informational Item: Upcoming Meeting Dates and Times

- The Final Budget Public Hearing is scheduled for **Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>** at 5:15 pm (ET).
- Chairman Jones scheduled a Town Hall meeting on **Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>** at 6:00 p.m. (ET) to discuss a special zoning district for St. George Island.
- Your next regular meeting will be **Wednesday, October 1, 2025**, at 9:00 a.m. (ET).

Alligator Point beach cleanup will be held on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Amison inquired about the railroad; Mr. Moron noted has not heard back from Buster. Commissioner Amison noted that there are still dead pine trees on highway 98 and one that recently fell just passed Franklin County line. Commissioner Amison noted that he is not sure if they are on state right of way or Dessert Ranches. Mr. Moron noted that he is waiting to hear back from St. Joe Company regarding Commissioner Sanders request for the drainage.

9. **Michael Shuler – County Attorney**

**ADD ON ITEM: Request to Schedule Executive Session Regarding Bert Harris claim.**

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized Attorney Shuler to schedule an executive session for the Bert Harris claim.**

Attorney Shuler asked if there is a preference of the Board of when to hold the meeting. Board consensus to have after a regular scheduled meeting. Attorney Shuler noted that he will work with Mr. Theriaque’s office and coordinate a date. **Motion carried 5-0.**

1. Possible Property Swap with Duke Energy

Attached is the Resolution to be considered at your meeting scheduled for September 16, 2025, at 9: 10 a.m. As required by Fla. Stat. 125.37, the Notice of Intent to Exchange Property was published once a week for two consecutive weeks in advance of the September 16, 2025, meeting. The Exchange Agreement is also attached hereto for your convenient reference. It has also been posted on the county's website. Board Action: Discussion and Board action to adopt the resolution.

*Item addressed earlier in the meeting.*

2. Code Enforcement Ordinance Draft

Attached is a draft ordinance providing for property safety and maintenance to be enforced by code enforcement. The draft ordinance provides definitions and includes provisions concerning dilapidated structures, junk, lot mowing, nuisance abatement, notice and hearing procedures, abatement by the county, emergency situations, appeals, code enforcement costs and distribution of code enforcement fines. Board Action: Authorization to schedule public hearing on possible amendment to code enforcement ordinance.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized scheduling a public hearing on possible amendment to code enforcement ordinance. Motion carried 5-0.**

3. Purdue Pharma and Sackler Family Opioid Settlement

In January 2025, the Florida Attorney General announced a \$7.4 billion multistate opioid settlement with Purdue Pharma and the Sackler Family. Florida's share is estimated to be between \$233.37 and \$325.93 million dollars. September 30, 2025, is the deadline for joining the settlement. Franklin County's share is not presently known because the number of participants is not yet known. Board Action: Discussion and action whether to authorize joining the settlement and authorizing the chairman, or his designee, to complete the on-line agreement to join the settlement.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized joining the settlement and authorizing the Chairman or his designee to complete the on-line agreement to join the settlement. Motion carried 5-0.**

4. SB 180 Information

Paragraph 28 of SB 180 contains the restriction on local government comp. plan amendments, land development regulation amendments and procedures concerning development. The entirety of paragraph 28 is attached to this report. In sum, paragraph 28 of SB 180 declares null and void all local comprehensive plan amendment, land development regulation amendments and adoption of procedures concerning development that are more restrictive or burdensome. This law is retroactive to August 1, 2024 and applies until October 1, 2027. SB 180 expires June 30, 2028. SB 180 provides for a private right of action and attorney fees unless the local government withdraws or notices an intent to repeal within 14 days after receipt of notice from a resident or business owner of a violation of SB 180. In sum, SB 180 does not mean that the Board cannot presently undertake planning, but, to the extent that any proposal makes development more restrictive or burdensome, it cannot take effect until October 2, 2027. A copy of a letter dated August 8, 2025, from Florida Commerce to Jackson County, declaring its comprehensive plan amendment null and void because of SB 180 is attached.

5. Hidden Beaches Subdivision

I have reviewed the plat of Hidden Beaches subdivision and Chapters 334 and 335, Florida Statutes. As a result of that review, I have concluded that the private roads located within the Hidden Beaches subdivision are not part of the County Road System. This means that the County Commission may not rename any road located within that subdivision. The property owners will have to amend the plat if they want to change the name of any private road within Hidden Beaches subdivision.

6. Highway 98 Improvements between Eastpoint and Carrabelle

The FDOT attorney informs me that the improvements should commence on September 22, 2025.

Chairman Jones noted that we have several ongoing cases that I really do not feel like they need to wait until December. One is on St. George Island and has been going on for months. If you could please contact them and see what alternate dates, they can come up with.

The Board recessed at 10:06 am and reconvened at 10:21 am.

**Presentations/Updates/Requests**

**10. Renee Brannan -- Sheriff's Office, Director of Communications -- Dispatch System Update**

Ms. Brannan spoke to the Board regarding the dispatch system. She noted that our fire department equipment is out of date, we have minimum to no communication with fire departments. We are patching equipment; in my opinion we are using funds that need to be used to upgrade the equipment. We do not have communication with the fire departments. We need to upgrade the fire departments equipment. We are dependent on apps on their

phones. You get an address and type of call. First responders cannot communicate with us to give EMS updates on patients. The tower at the sheriff's office needs to be torn down. That is where our antennas to the fire departments sit. One sits on the oyster radio tower. St George Island fire department had offered to give the lease to the sheriff's department. There is not enough coverage on that tower. I think our best bet is waiting on the Triumph consultants. There is a patch, but how much money do you want to spend on a patch vs a whole new system. Chairman Jones noted that last time Williams Communications was here looking at it, did they give any indication of anything they could do other than replacing the whole thing. Ms. Brannen noted that you could assume lease for SGI and Alligator Point, and they could possibly patch that. Chairman Jones asked could we erect a new tower at the sheriff's office. Mr. Bryan Kocher with Williams Communications noted that there are ways to patch what you have. To maintain the VHF system, you would need to take over AP and SGI tower. There is a good possibility in doing that. Another potential would be to move fire over to the state system. Get EMS and Sheriff on a common system. Chairman Jones noted that the money is not the issue. I would hate that to be my family and there not be communications available. We are in line for Triumph to fund all of that. If there is anything we can do to locate it to another tower, I am good with that. Mr. Kocher from Williams noted that he can provide a study. Commissioner Ward noted that she personally does not like the word patch. What is the timeline for the consultant? Mr. Moron noted that could move quickly, but then they have to do engineering and design. Mr. Moron noted that keep in mind, if we spend money on the 800 now, I doubt Triumph is going to reimburse us. Commissioner Ward noted that she does not want to spend money unnecessarily but would like to get it done as soon as possible. Mr. Moron noted that he would like Williams Communications to give us two options: what will a patch cost, how long it will take, and then give us a cost for a brand-new system. Commissioner Sanders noted that it is not just Alligator Point it is all of the fire departments. Commissioner Sanders noted that Ms. Brannen and Williams Communications is telling you that our system cannot be fixed. She noted that this has been going on for too long. Mrs. Brannen noted that the antenna at the sheriff's office is not an option. The quicker fix would be to do the AP and SGI tower and see if that equips us with what we need. Mr. Moron asked if there are other towers in between should those two towers not work. Mr. Kocher said yes there are some private towers that we could work to rent space. Chairman Jones noted that we should know ahead of time if the two towers are going to be sufficient. Mr. Kocher said he could have a proposal by the next meeting. He noted that he could do a coverage study, come back in two weeks, report to the board. Commissioner Croom asked if we could get a proposal for the 800 also. Chairman Jones noted that he has a couple speaker cards.

Ms. Lyra Erath spoke to the Board noting that she appreciates the information this morning. We all understand the new system is going to be awesome, but we have an immediate need today. We appreciate Commissioner Sanders bringing this before the Board for a fix. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Sanders thanked Ms. Brannen noting she has taught her more about the communication system. Chairman Jones noted this is the system for all of our volunteer fire departments and first responders. Ms. Brannen noted that fire departments and first responders are on the same system. We are dispatching about three or four ways. If we were all on the same system, it would cut down on response time. Commissioner Croom noted that is when things get lost in transition. Thanked Ms. Brannen and Williams Communication for coming today.

#### **11. Dr. Hart & Dr. Conrad -- Southland Emergency Medical Services Transition**

Mr. David Walker and Dr. Conrad appeared in person. Dr. Hart appeared via Zoom.

Commissioner Ward noted that basically all that is changing is Southland is dissolving and the employees under it will now be independent contractors for the hospital.

Mr. Walker noted that we have a similar contractor's agreement between the hospital and physicians that Attorney Shuler is reviewing. Chairman Jones asked if there is any action needed from this Board. Attorney Shuler noted that yes, the Board will need to agree to the dissolving of this contract and the Board will need to approve the individual contracts because they will be over \$50,000. Mr. Walker noted that it will be like budget neutral for us, we may be able to bill more insurance. Chairman Jones noted that if we are coming out of a contract that had administrative fees, we should be coming ahead. Mr. Walker noted that it should be around \$11k. Commissioner Amison asked if each individual physician would have a contract. Mr. Walker noted yes. Will Alliant be doing the admin portion of this? Mr.



Walker noted that Weems will be handling this and paying out like they do any other vendors. Commissioner Amison noted that we should have some savings. Mr. Walker noted that at the end of the year, we may see a bigger pickup because we can bill different insurances that we currently cannot bill.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, to direct Attorney Shuler to proceed with dissolving the contract with Southland and Weems.** Chairman Jones asked if the hospital board has voted on this. Mr. Walker noted that each of the board members have been contacted, but it has not been voted on. Commissioner Ward noted that it could be that the hospital board does not meet until the end of the month. Dr. Conrad noted that they wanted to make sure there is no break in continuity. Chairman Jones asked how long this has been in the works. Mr. Walker noted that he just found out this past week. **Motion carried 5-0.**

**12. James Osteen -- EMS Director -- New Ambulance Purchase**

Commissioner Ward inquired if this was a sole source provider. Mr. Osteen noted that he did get a couple more quotes which were slightly over \$400K each.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the new ambulance purchase as requested.** Commissioner Croom noted that this is coming out of the health care trust fund. Attorney Shuler noted that all of the ambulances have come out of the capital outlay portion of the trust fund, other than the ones funded through grants. **Motion carried 5-0.**

**Planning and Zoning Adjustment Board Report**

**13. Variance Requests & Critical Shoreline Applications**

**a. 1571 Alligator Drive**

This will require a motion for the Variance followed by a motion for the Critical Shoreline request. A consideration of a request to place 1,334 sf, or 100 cubic yards, of clean fill behind 400 sf, or 15 cubic yards of limerock riprap retaining wall. The toe of the riprap and all fills will be placed above the Mean High-Water Line, Request to include construction of a new 2,543.25 sf single family dock, consisting of 1,512 sf of access dock, 160 sf of terminal platform, and 876 sf for 2 covered boat lifts. Property is located in Alligator Point, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Florida Environmental & Land Services, Inc./James Barrett, agent for Charles W. Roberts, III, applicant.

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the variance request for 1571 Alligator Drive. Motion carried 5-0.**

**On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the critical shoreline application for 1571 Alligator Drive.** Ms. Robinson added a comment this had a recommended contingency. They have applied for permitting but it has not been received yet. Recommend approval contingent upon permits. **Commissioner Ward amended her motion to approve contingent upon permitting, seconded by Commissioner Sanders. Motion carried 5-0.**

**14. Commercial Site Plan Applications**

**a. 118 US HWY 98**

A consideration of a request to construct a 4,000-sf building that will be a Sherwin Williams paint store and a 15,166-sf paved area to include parking, driveways, and walkways. Property is located in Eastpoint, Franklin County, FL. Request submitted by Harrell & Jackson, Inc/Brian Jackson, agent for Bay and 98 LLC, applicant.

**On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the commercial site plan for 118 US Hwy 98.** Commissioner Ward noted that the zoning is already there, and we are just approving the site plan for the building. **Motion carried 5-0.**

**15. County Grants Report**

**a. FRDAP Application - Sylvester Williams Park**

Current FRDAP Application: For this grant cycle, Franklin County is applying for:

- A full-sized basketball court.
- A 12' x 24' shaded picnic pavilion.

This funding opportunity is a key step toward transforming Sylvester Williams Park into a welcoming hub for recreation, play, and community events, with future phases planned as resources become available.

**b. FRDAP Application - Gene Sewell Park**

Current FRDAP Application: For this FRDAP grant cycle, Franklin County is applying for:

- A full-sized pickleball court with high fencing
- A 10' x 10' shaded picnic pavilion designed to support active play, social gatherings, and overall enjoyment of the park.

This funding opportunity is a key step toward transforming Gene Sewell Park into a welcoming hub for recreation, play, and community events for residents of all ages, with a particular focus on senior-friendly activities.

**Commissioners' Comments**

There were no further Commissioner comments.

**Adjournment**

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

---

**Ricky Jones – Chairman**

**Attest:**

---

**Michele Maxwell – Clerk of Courts**

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