

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
MARCH 18, 2026
9:00 AM
MINUTES**

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

Others Present: David Theriaque for Michael Shuler-County Attorney, Michael Moron-County Coordinator, and Erin Griffith-Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator, 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

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the agenda as published. Motion carried 5-0.

Approval of Minutes and Payment of County Bills

1. County Bill List for Payment

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

Awards and Recognitions

2. John Solomon -- Volunteer Week Proclamation

Franklin County Volunteer Week April 19th – 25th, 2026

WHEREAS the entire community has the power to inspire, equip, and mobilize individuals to take action that changes the world; and

WHEREAS, individuals and communities are at the forefront of social change, realizing their ability to make a difference; and

WHEREAS, during the week of April 19th – 25th, 2026, volunteers across the nation will be recognized for their commitment to service; and

WHEREAS, giving of oneself in service to another not only empowers the giver but also enriches the recipient; and

WHEREAS volunteerism increased to 28.3% of Americans volunteering in 2025; and

WHEREAS volunteering in 2025 had a remarkable rebound with 75.7 million adults volunteering; and

WHEREAS volunteers are essential to building a caring and productive community; and

WHEREAS a volunteer saves an organization an average of \$34.79 per hour nationally; and

WHEREAS, in Florida, a volunteer saves an organization an average of \$33.00 per hour; and

WHEREAS volunteers dedicate their time and efforts solely to improve our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Franklin County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim the week of April 19th – 25th, 2026, as National Volunteer Week in Franklin County. We encourage all citizens to engage in volunteer work and urge others to recognize those who selflessly share their time and talents with those in need.

On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board adopted the Volunteer Week Proclamation resolution.

Chairman Jones speaking, any discussion? Commissioner Sanders speaking, I just want to do a comment. We are so blessed to have so many good volunteers in Franklin County, starting from your fire department, first responders and all that. That is volunteers too. And then I am going to tell a little story that happened last week, and it was about a person that was coming up there cutting some trees down for me, y'all. He called me said, Miss Cheryl, I cannot be there. I am running a little bit late. I said, What? What is the matter? He said, there is an eagle hanging from a tree over here on South Bay Shore, and I am going to go get the eagle down. How high is that tree? He is an 85 feet. Went up there, along with Mr. John Johnson from Carrabelle. He did the rehabbing of eagles and stuff. Along with walk color rehabbing, they got that eagle down. Now that was a volunteer right there, otherwise, and come to find out the mama eagle, brought a fish that had a hook in in a line, and its anchor in there, and they were able to cut the barb off and get the thing out of the eagle. But I thought that was pretty cool. You know, 85-foot feet, because he is tree man and going to get up there. But that eagle had laid up, hung upside down for a day over a day, and they said, now she had, but that is what is called volunteers. So, John, I thank you for wanting to recognize the volunteers in Franklin County on everything that they do, from legal to saving lives. Mr. Solomon speaking, yes, ma'am, our community is made up of volunteers. Nothing would get done without and it is good to see that, and I even put it in this year that in 2025 we actually saw a rebound in volunteerism throughout the country and the state of Florida. It went up, which is good to see that the younger people are starting to get involved and volunteer their time as well. Commissioner Ward speaking, Mr. Chairman, I just echo Commissioner Sanders. We would not, I do not know what we do without our volunteers. I appreciate them greatly. Chairman Jones speaking, they do a lot of different things in our communities, and it is a lot of people that do it. The things Commissioner Sanders mentioned, we also have all most of our youth sports teams are all volunteers, and the people that are making sure that those leagues run are all volunteers. So yes, we are, we are thankful to that. In our small county, we have, I think, an inordinate amount of volunteerism. We are the benefit of that. Anyone else before we vote, all in favor, any opposed? That is unanimous, sir. Thank you. Mr. Solomon speaking, yes sir, thank you. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Public Comments

Mr. Al Stone speaking, good morning, commissioners, thank you for what you do. Just a brief update on Facebook. We do have the thing that I mentioned to you about a month ago, from Hell to Communion on the third, which will be third April, 3, which is Good Friday out at Dwarf Cypress, which I did not know that was Mrs. Cheryl's dad when I spoke to you before. I would encourage you, if you can't be there, please come and join us on Facebook Live. We have people from Maine, Michigan, Montana, and everything in between, who have responded, which is pretty amazing. So, I would encourage you to join us there. Pray. Did not know our country would be at war, but pray for our neighbors and our nations. Thank you for what you do and I do pray for you often. It will be held from 7:03 to 8:09. 7:03 is daybreak. 7:26 is sunrise, and 8:09 which is amazing. Why we even found that day is when the moon will set. Full Moon will set. It is beautiful, if the weather's right, it will be a spectacular place.

Department Directors Reports

3. Jennifer Daniels – Emergency Management Director

Ms. Amanda Anthony presented the items for action to the Board.

1. MOU Radio Club

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Radio Club MOU. Motion carried 5-0.

2. MOU Big Bend Transit

On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous

vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Big Bend Transit MOU. Motion carried 5-0.

3. MOU Division of Emergency Management

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Division of Emergency Management MOU. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Resolution Local Mitigation Policy

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the Local Mitigation Policy Resolution. Motion carried 5-0.

4. John Solomon -- TDC Administrator

1. On March 11th, the TDC Board voted to recommend approval of a request from St. James/ Lanark Fire Department for Personal Protection Equipment & Piercing Nozzle system- \$15,896.69.

2. On March 11th, the TDC Board voted to recommend approval of a request from St. James/ Lanark Fire Department Generator for Firehouse- \$12,080.69.

3. On March 11th, the TDC Board voted to recommend approval of a request from St. George Island Fire Department for Thermal Imaging Cameras, Gas Detectors, Stroke Basket, and Battery-operated Stair Chair- \$21,980.92.

On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1, 2 and 3 from Mr. Solomon's report above. Motion carried 5-0.

4. On March 11th, the TDC Board voted to recommend approval of a request of a Museum Infrastructure Grant from St. George Island Lighthouse for Flooring, Upgraded Security and Electrical repairs - \$6,526.93.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved item 4 from Mr. Solomon's report. Motion carried 5-0.

Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator Report

5. Erin Griffith – Fiscal Manager/Grants Coordinator

The Board requested to pull items 4, 6, 7 and 10 for discussion. Items 1-3, 5, 8-9 and 11 are voted on as consent items. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 1-3, 5, 8-9 and 11 from Mrs. Griffith's report. Motion carried 5-0.** The Board moved to item 4 at this time.

1. BOARD ACTION: NOTICE OF AWARD 8TH STREET EAST DUNE WALKOVER PROJECT

At the last meeting, bids were opened for the 8th Street East, SGI Dune Walkover Project. This project consists of the demolition and replacement of a 6' x 173' wooden dune walkover and installation of parking improvements to prevent forward encroachment onto the dunes. Engineers MRD & Associates have reviewed the bids and have recommended award to the low bidder, MKM & Associates, in the amount of \$99,730.87 for this project. *Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the notice of intent to award and construction contract documents once available for the 8th Street East Dune Walkover Project.*

2. BOARD ACTION: NOTICE OF AWARD COURTROOM RENOVATION PROJECT

At the February 18th meeting, bids were opened for the Courtroom Annex Renovation Project. The project scope includes demolition of existing walls, doors, ramps, casework, and carpet flooring in the courtroom, as well as removal and storage of existing seating for later reinstallation. New work includes construction of wood-framed platforms with plywood and oak trim, new ramps, wall partitions with gypsum board and sound attenuation insulation, and installation of solid surface countertops with oak wood tops and trim. Electrical work includes updates to receptacles, outlets, and related power provisions as indicated in the

electrical plan. Carpet installation will be provided in designated areas, with transition strips and vinyl nosing as specified. All materials and finishes, including carpet, vinyl nosing, and pony wall braces, are based on the design standards provided. Project Architects BFBS have reviewed the bids that were received and have recommended award to the lowest responsive bidder D&B Builders in the amount of \$175,815.84 (D&B was the 2nd lowest bidder, but 1st responsive bidder as the 1st low bidder did not meet the bid requirements). *Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the notice of intent to award and construction contract documents once available for the Courtroom Renovation Project.*

3. BOARD ACTION: CONSOLIDATED SOLID WASTE GRANT AMENDMENT

Attached is Amendment 1 to the Consolidated Solid Waste Grant Agreement. The grant award is increased by \$337.96 to fund additional fuel expenses in fiscal year 25/26 for the solid waste department. The total grant award is now \$94,087.96. *Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached grant award amendment.*

4. BOARD ACTION: LANDFILL SLOPE STABILITY ANALYSIS

The Franklin County Landfill consists of an active Class III Landfill (yard debris, construction and demolition only), a composting operation, a yard trash processing operation, a transfer station operation, recovers clean materials and processes composting wastewater. Every (5) years, as part of the operating permit renewal, a comprehensive review and analysis is done to assess the remaining useful life of a landfill site. The five-year operating permit was last renewed in 2022. Due to the incredible volume of construction demolition processed in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael, the 2022 permit had shortened the remaining useful life (capacity) of the landfill to just ten years. In anticipation of the 2027 permit renewal, the county's engineers have submitted the attached \$116,798 task order to modify the existing operating permit with FDEP. The original landfill was permitted with a 5:1 slope for ease of maintenance, but the airspace capacity offered by that slope is rapidly being depleted. At this time, the county is likely one major hurricane away from being at capacity (as four times the average volume of C&D was processed in one year after Hurricane Michael). To prolong the useful life of the existing landfill, the FDEP permit will need to be modified to allow for 3:1 slope (maximum permissible slope). This change in permitted slope would allow for an increase in airspace capacity and would extend the life of the landfill by more than ten years. The county is moving towards a full landfill transfer station operation which will also export the C&D material –but this project will likely take up to 2-3 years to complete and the additional space opened by the slope stability study may allow for the preservation of landfill capacity to be able to open during times of need/crisis in the future should the transfer station be unable to meet demand. *Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached task order to be paid by the Landfill Tipping Fee Fund.*

Chairman Jones speaking, Mrs. Erin, I have a question. How long is it going to take them to do this analysis? Mrs. Griffith speaking, the analysis portion will probably take, I would say, six months to a year. So, they are trying to get it done before the landfill permit renewal. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Croom to approve item 6 as presented.** Chairman Jones speaking, commissioners, do you have any discussion on this item? Commissioner Amison speaking, Mr. Chairman, I do. I just wanted to Aaron to read this off, because I have been getting phone calls, especially since we have shrunk amnesty days. And I know a lot of times we are doing stuff on consent and folks are missing. So, I just, I told Erin yesterday I was going to pull that just for information purposes, for the public. **Motion carried 5-0.**

The Board moved to item 6 at this time.

5. BOARD ACTION: PATTON STREET BOAT RAMP GRANT AMENDMENT

Attached is a grant award agreement amendment for FWC's Patton Street Boat Ramp Project. FWC has reduced the minimum size of the required acknowledgment sign from 4' x 8' to 3' x 4'. The original acknowledgement sign was lost during one of the recent hurricanes and was noted as missing in FWC's site inspection in 2025. The replacement sign is already installed and FWC has sent the attached amendment

to amend the grant agreement going forward as the smaller acknowledgement signs are less likely to blow down in weather events. *Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached grant award amendment.*

6. BOARD ACTION: 1ST SECTION 6 PUBLIC FACILITIES TDC PROJECT PROPOSAL – ADDITIONAL RESURFACING & ASSOCIATED CEI FOR SGI COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

In January, the Board approved advancing the public facility roadway resurfacing in the Commercial District of SGI to the TDC for their approval and completion of the required independent professional analysis/review. Excerpt from January 7th report for background information: “As reported during this year’s budget discussions, there was a change in the 2025 statutes which allowed Franklin County (which is categorized as fiscally constrained) to expend tourist development taxes for improvements to public facilities and eligible infrastructure projects (Section 6 expenditures) so long as certain conditions are met: the county governing board approves the use for the public facilities by a vote of at least two-thirds of its membership, no more than 70% of the cost of the proposed public facilities will be paid for with tourist development tax revenues and sources of the remaining costs are identified and confirmed by the county’s governing board, at least 40% of all tourist development tax revenues collected in the county are spent to promote and advertise tourism and the TDC must pay for an independent professional analysis demonstrating the positive impact of the infrastructure project on tourist-related businesses in the county. Previously the county was not authorized for Section 6 expenditures as Florida Statute required a minimum collection of \$10,000,000 each year in tourist development tax proceeds for eligibility.

The county’s RESTORE SGI Storm Water Project in the commercial district of St. George Island (spans from 3rd Street East to 3rd Street West) is funding approximately \$930,775 in roadway resurfacing along segments damaged by the installation of the storm water pipes. While the contractor is on-site and paving is already part of the project, the county requested the attached \$577,351 change order construction quote and the corresponding \$45,446 additional CEI services proposal to resurface additional areas of the busiest thoroughways (blue highlighted streets in the project excerpt below) left unpaved between the areas of the RESTORE project’s resurfacing (black highlighted streets in the project excerpt below). St. George Island is the county’s busiest tourist destination and tourists are the primary users of the commercial district. This project has excellent potential to move forward as the county’s first section 6 public facilities TDC funded project should the commission decide to advance for review. “

The county has now received the attached independent professional analysis. This analysis was very thorough and concluded that “the proposed resurfacing satisfies the requirements of Section 125.0104(5)(a)6.e, Florida Statutes, as an eligible public facilities expenditure with a demonstrated positive impact on tourist-related businesses in Franklin County.”

- a)** Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign change order #3 with North Florida Construction in the amount of \$577,351 to include the additional areas of resurfacing to be paid by TDC sales tax proceeds.
- b)** Board action to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached additional CEI services proposal in the amount of \$45,446 from Southeastern Consulting Engineers to be paid by TDC sales tax proceeds.

Commissioner Croom speaking, I have just a question about, so it said about the TDC funds can cover up to 70% of this project. My question is what specific funding source will cover the remaining portion. Chairman Jones speaking, it would be an add on, because there is already about \$5 million worth of work going right there. So that would be used as leverage to do we would not have to meet that 70% requirement, because not no, it's going to be more like eight or 9%. Mrs. Griffith speaking, commissioner, yeah, there's approximately \$930,775 in in just roadway resurfacing work being done by the restore SGI stormwater project, and we're using those federal funds to meet that match requirement. So, you know, with the 930,775

in strictly roadway resurfacing, which does not include the storm water pipe component the county is requesting the additional \$577,351 and \$45,446. So, the match was, was met by that grant project. Commissioner Croom speaking, I got you okay. I was trying to see if I was missing it, and I read it couple times. **On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison to approve item 6a. Motion carried 5-0. On a motion by Commissioner Amison, seconded by Commissioner Sanders to approve item 6b. Motion carried 5-0.**

Mrs. Griffith speaking, as an attachment to my report there was, it is actually the first section six project that we are advancing forward, and the attached independent professional analysis that is actually the first one of those that we have completed. So, I do recommend you know just if you have not flipped through to flip through it, because there was a lot of interesting information and data that was provided by the economist. Chairman Jones speaking, so it was an interesting report. Do you have that in front of you? Can you read that caption off page 15 that you share with me about a week or so ago? Because, again, these are TDC dollars. If you are not renting a house, short term house, or staying in a hotel, you are not paying these dollars here. let us see in the findings section, which is on page 15. Mrs. Griffith read the following finding: The St. George Island Commercial District is the economic core of Franklin County's tourism industry and the sole point of entry for every visitor to the island. The roadway segments proposed for resurfacing were damaged during installation of storm water pipes as part of the county's RESTORE St. George Island Storm Water Project, leaving pavement in a patched and uneven condition along the corridor's busiest thoroughways. Restoring these segments to a continuous, uniform surface directly supports the visitor experience that sustains tourism-related business activity throughout the county. Franklin County's economy is among the most tourism-dependent in Florida. Visitor spending generates an estimated \$312.4 million in total economic output, supports approximately 2,036 jobs and \$83.7 million in household earnings, and accounts for an estimated 37% of the county's gross domestic product. That activity flows entirely through the St. George Island Commercial District. The same visitor spending generates an estimated \$5.9 million in annual tax revenue, including \$3.4 million in Tourist Development Tax collections. At a total project cost of \$622,797, the proposed resurfacing represents approximately 66 days of TDT collections alone. The proposed resurfacing satisfies the requirements of Section 125.0104(5)(a)6.e, Florida Statutes, as an eligible public facilities expenditure with a demonstrated positive impact on tourist-related businesses in Franklin County. The investment restores infrastructure damaged by a prior public works project, supports the quality and accessibility of the island's primary commercial corridor, and protects the continued performance of a tourism economy on which Franklin County's fiscal health fundamentally depends. Chairman Jones speaking, thank you, Mrs. Erin. I know that was a long read. Thank you for doing that. That is a really long way of saying yes, we are aware that now that the statutes changed, we can still have a leeway to spend these funds to help with projects like these, but they still have to go through an independent analysis, and we still are not just spending money how we want to spend money. It has got to meet the demand, and it has got to meet the criteria of what the statute itself proclaims that's all to make sure the public was getting out of that.

The Board moved to item 7 at this time.

7. BOARD ACTION: SBA TOWER LEASE ASSIGNMENT & COST ASSUMPTIONS

In October, the Board approved a \$185,000 patch proposal from Williams Communications to provide and install a single VHF simulcast analog channel for county-wide fire communications utilizing the existing leased SBA site at Eastpoint and St. Teresa with installed point connectivity and relicensing. All fire department radios and pagers are being reprogrammed as part of this change. This patch will allow for a common process for the notification of all fire agencies and will provide a reliable form of communication until the construction of the county's first responder communication system. In late December, Williams Communication began working on modifying the channels on the existing towers – the SGI VFD had sole use of the tower site in Eastpoint as did Alligator Point/St. Teresa with the prior systems that did not

interface. In January, the two tower sites were changed to provide connectivity to all fire departments and first responders and are no longer department specific. The county's existing lease agreement with SBA towers (St. Teresa) had previously been paid from Alligator Point's MSBU sales tax proceeds and the tower site rental in Eastpoint had been paid by the SGI VFD – as both leases were for department specific channels/access, since January both towers now provide access to the patched county-wide network.

- A) *Board action to approve the attached assignment of the lease and monthly cost from the SGI VFD for the Eastpoint Tower effective back to January 1st, 2026.*
- B) *Board action to re-assign the costs of the St. Teresa tower from the Alligator Point/St. James VFD to the county effective back to January 1st, 2026.*

Commissioner Sanders speaking, has Williams Communications said how long is it going to be to be able to program these new radios or not the new radios, but the existing radios and pagers? Mrs. Griffith speaking, they are about to start the reprogramming efforts. Actually, as part of my informational items down here, our communications consultant Dave Snow has been able to gather the outstanding radio equipment inventory from the volunteer fire departments. Williams will actually be working on that migration, really, in the next couple of weeks.

Commissioner Sanders speaking, okay, that is good. This is something that we have worked for toward. And Erin, thank you for all your hard work on this. This was really important to those two fire departments that they did not have to spend their MSBU money on towers that we are going to be part of the county that many wanted to start with. Chairman Jones speaking, Mrs. Erin, I do have a question. In looking at these things with these towers, we, this as far as not just this, but what Commissioner Sanders was asking about with the patch being done, is it, is it possible that it is actually going to be done in early April, maybe, or at least by mid-April, will be done. Mrs. Griffith speaking, we feel like it will be. Chairman Jones speaking, tower thing will happen, pretty much transitionally, correct? Mrs. Griffith speaking, yes. Actually, I have another. Actually, we are also working with Omnicom for the first draft of the RFP for the first responder radio communications project, which will be the tower construction and implementation. The RFP must first be reviewed and approved by Triumph before we are able to advertise. Chairman Jones speaking, yeah, but I am talking about the one we are actually about to vote on. So, once we approach this today, will that just be a shortchange to move it from paying for it is basically all we are doing. Mrs. Griffith speaking, yeah, that is correct. Mr. Moron speaking, Mr. Chairman, if you notice, she has it effective back to January 1st. Chairman Jones speaking, yes. **On a motion by Commissioner Amison, second by Commissioner Sanders, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved items 7 a and b as outlined above. Motion carried 5-0.**

8. BOARD ACTION: EASTPOINT LIBRARY – USDA LIBRARY LOAN ASSUMPTION RESOLUTION

The county has been working through the lengthy USDA loan assumption process for the Friends of the Library's construction loans used to build the Eastpoint Library Location. The county has taken multiple public actions already to assume the existing loans in exchange for ownership of the location. The USDA has come back and allegedly; the attached resolution will be the final form necessary to complete the assumption. *Board action to adopt the attached USDA loan resolution and authorize the chairman to sign.*

9. BOARD ACTION: OCHLOCKNEE BAY BOAT RAMP REPAIRS

The county has received a repair estimate for the dock damage at the Ochlocknee Bay Boat Ramp. This dock has been closed since a site inspection in fall of last year found it to be in terrible condition. FWC noted the dock as unusable in their last ramp inspection as it was roped off to the public, and the county will need to remedy the site as quickly as possible as maintenance is required by the grant award agreement.

Jason White Construction has submitted the attached \$22,088 proposal to provide the labor and equipment necessary to repair the floating dock. The county will furnish the materials for the project. *Board action to approve the attached repair quote for the Ochlocknee Bay Boat Ramp Floating Dock to be paid by Boat Ramp maintenance funds.*

10. BOARD ACTION: EMS DIRECTOR OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Franklin County received fourteen applications for the EMS Director Position. The interview committee reviewed the applications and interviewed six of the fourteen applicants. The committee concluded interviews on Monday and has recommended that the county extend an offer of employment to applicant Cristgen Graham (resume attached). *Board action to extend an offer of employment to Cristgen Graham as recommended by the interview committee.*

Chairman Jones speaking, alright, any questions commissioners, we did pull it for discussion. Commissioner Croom speaking, you said we interviewed six. Is there anything? Is there any way for, I guess my knowledge and the public knowledge that we can acknowledge or find out or name who the other five applicants were? Mrs. Griffith speaking, we had Brian Merry, Joseph Johnson, Jerry Jacobs, James Osteen, Cristgen Graham and Dylan Joy. But I will, I will amend my report as well. Commissioner Croom speaking, okay, thank you, Erin. **On a motion by Commissioner Croom, seconded by Commissioner Ward, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved extending an offer of employment to Cristgen Graham as recommended by the interview committee.** Commissioner Croom speaking, I did pull all these applications myself, and it was really good applicants. Chairman Jones speaking, there was really good applicants in the fourteen applications. **Motion carried 5-0.**

11. EMS DEPARTMENT SETUP – UPDATE

The interview committee has just finished interviews for the EMS Director Position on Monday. Applications to fill other positions were originally thought to be due by March 18th, however, it will be important to have the EMS Director on board to assist with interviews and the hiring process. The due date for applications for the other positions will be left open until adequately staffed. There are several other large policy/procedure items that the county must address before this service assumption can occur: medical director contract, billing company contract and procedures, shift-employee's personnel rules and payroll procedures, establishment of vendor relationships - all which will need to be coordinated with the clerk's finance department prior to implementation. The assumption of the EMS department is likely not going to occur prior to June 1st. The county will process the next allocation to Weems for the ambulance service for the months of April and May. Also, I wanted to mention as well, which was also one of my update items, that we are working with the EMS consultant Richard Lewis for the first draft of the RFP for the ambulance billing company.

12. BOARD INFORMATION / MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT UPDATES:

- SGI Fishing Pier and Boat Ramp Access Road Seawall Repairs FDEP Permit Received, county staff is working to draft a pre-application to Triumph. Per Triumph's website: Pursuant to Section 288.8017, Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. was created to make awards from available funds to projects or programs that meet the priorities for economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties. The disproportionately affected counties are Bay County, Escambia County, Franklin County, Gulf County, Okaloosa County, Santa Rosa County, Walton County, or Wakulla County. See, Section 288.08012. There is a funding eligibility category on the pre-application that the county has yet to find a project that has qualified as such, but we would like to try again – that category is infrastructure projects for construction, expansion, or maintenance which are shown to enhance economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties. Triumph's blank

pre-proposal submittal form is attached for reference.

- DW Wilson Sports Arena Pickleball Courts out to bid (solicitation attached), mandatory pre-bid meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 16th, onsite at 10:00 a.m.
- Eastpoint Nature Center Project (solicitation attached), mandatory pre-bid meeting scheduled for next Wednesday, March 25th, onsite at 10:00 a.m.
- Pre-construction meeting with FDEP for RESTORE dune construction was held onsite yesterday with Coastline Construction and coastal engineers MRD & Associates. Dune construction project elements will begin within 1-2 weeks, dune construction is anticipated to take one week at each county park location (SGI's Lighthouse Park and Carrabelle Beach Park) – planting, and access improvements will occur at a slower pace.
- Working with Omnicom for first draft of RFP for First Responder Radio Communications Project – Tower Construction and implementation, RFP must be reviewed and approved by Triumph prior to being able to advertise.
- Communications consultant Dave Snow has been able to gather the outstanding radio equipment inventory from the volunteer fire departments; Williams Communications now has the information that was needed to be able to move forward with the migration onto the new system patch.
- Working with EMS Consultant Richard Lewis on first draft of RFP for Ambulance Billing Company
- Roddenberry Surveying began field work on Miller Street and Jubilee Street in Lanark; right-of-way survey should be available by the end of the week.
- Lanark EMS Helipad – county will need to request approval from the City of Carrabelle to clear area of property to the north of the landing approach – airspace will need to be kept clear of obstruction.
- Requested task order from county engineers for design/permitting of dock slips at Indian Creek Park Boat Basin
- Requested task order from county engineers for civil site engineering, permitting and development of bid specifications for Sheriff's Administration Building
- Apalachicola Library Paving Project bid specifications and advertisement will be ready to go by the end of the week
- Sylvester Williams Parking Area Improvements are still on pause due to stormwater permitting requirements, a lighting retrofit quote has been requested from the commercial division of Duke Energy for the existing ballfield light poles
- County working to close books for last fiscal year by 31st of this month – 2024/2025 grant files and programs will be reviewed by county auditors in April

Commissioner Ward speaking, Mr. Chairman, I have something for Erin if she is finished, a couple actually. For one, I mean, look at these project updates. It is a lot of stuff going on. Erin, if you could kind of briefly explain, because I know there has been a lot of people that have asked about the bid process. So, when we have, or potentially have people that want to bid on projects that the county is going to be doing, can you explain how that works, so that our public contractor, or company or whoever will know how to bid on a project. Mrs. Griffith speaking, yes. So, the county's bid policy, if there is, if the work is going to be less than \$25,000 you know, you can actually proceed with just having one bid. And a lot of times it is actually difficult for the county to be able to secure multiple bids from multiple contractors for smaller jobs. So that does make sense to do it that way. From 25,000 to 40,000, you can actually solicit. You can actually request in writing, three bids from various vendors, and so long as two out of the three, you actually receive a response. You can then advance with the low bidder. At that point, any work that's anticipated costs more than \$40,000 we have to go to full bid, and that will be advertised on the county's website and you can actually bid. Interested bidders can actually register to be alerted of bid notifications by that bid registration, and also, if we go to full bid, we actually advertise on the county's website. We also posted the bid to the online bid platform Demand Star, which has, you know, vendors actually registered all over the state that can actually see the bid solicitation. We also advertise the bid in the Apalachicola Times, and then also if the bid is anticipated to cost more than \$100,000, we are required to advertise for two weeks in a newspaper of general circulation, which would be the Tallahassee Democrat or the Panama City News Herald. Commissioner Ward speaking, thank you, Erin. I appreciate that, and I want the public to also be aware that anytime we do go out for bids on certain projects, we have to follow certain rules and guidelines based on Florida statute or Florida Building Code, which means, you know, we have to get engineering specs and the whole nine yards. So, things might be a little bit more expensive than usual. That is why we go with the lowest bidder. But I just wanted to make the public aware about all that. Mr. Moron explained contractors or interested parties can go to the county's website and register to receive notification of bids going out. Commissioner Ward speaking, one more. It is really not for Erin, but I just want to put her on notice. I know our parks and rec director, Mr. Davis, is on vacation this week, but when he gets back. I do not know how he could do this, but the batting cage at Vrooman Park, the timer, the way that people turn on the lights for the batting cage. I was wondering if there is a different way, we can tackle that, if there is another option, like maybe just a light switch. I am having a lot of people complain about the switch out there. When Fonda gets back, I will call him and talk to him.

Planning and Zoning Adjustment Board Report

6. Critical Shoreline Applications

a. 303 Magnolia Bay Drive

A consideration of a request to construct a 14' x 32' boathouse and lift over an existing boat slip along with modification of existing terminal platform to a 10' x 16' terminal platform with a roof. Property is located in Eastpoint, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Kramer Clark, Makaira Construction Group, agent for Dennis Montgomery, applicant.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Croom, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board approved the request to construct a 14' x 32' boathouse and lift over an existing boat slip along with modification of existing terminal platform to a 10' x 16' terminal platform with a roof. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Variance Requests

a. 1371 Chip Morrison Drive (Seawall)

A consideration of a request to construct a seawall within the Coastal Construction Control Line - applicant is requesting to place a 90" x 14' seawall above the MHWL but within the Critical Shoreline District (150' from MHWL). Property is located in Alligator Point,

Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Josh Hall, Backroads Consulting LLC, applicant representative, for Jennifer Blanke, applicant.

Commissioner Sanders speaking, Mr. Chairman, before we move on to nine A and B, there has been a situation from the last meeting on 1369, with that project that we had down there off of Chip Morrison Drive. Apparently, from what I understand, we have not received a letter, but there were some complaints to DEP, and DEP came down here and looked at the project, and it got me concerned, because, from what I understand, although we had not been notified, there is a stop work order on the project at 1369. Mr. Mike Wexner speaking, I am the engineer of record on the 1369, 1371 and 1373. He wants to extend it or figure out how he would pay more. But I knew that you would. I am sorry. I apologize. I could, I would like to share some additional information that I was not prepared to speak to in the last meeting when we talked about 1369, right? Could I beg the commissioners time to do that? Chairman Jones speaking, so let me ask a question for you started, other than you being the contractor, is this all owned by the same people? Mr. Wexner speaking, no, there are two different owners, one that owns 1369, right, and one that owns 1371, and 1373. Chairman Jones speaking, but you are the contractor of record for all? Mr. Wexner speaking, no, I am the engineer for all three. Chairman Jones speaking, I just want to clarify where we know, that is good. Mr. Wexner speaking, I am also working with Back Roads Consulting on the environmental permitting. Okay, so if we could get the pictures I sent back up. This is the home at 1369, the one we talked about last month, and what you see there is that the house that is located on this property that had a sea wall that was destroyed during Hurricane Michael back in 2018, was completely ripped off, went out into the ocean. And where you see the concrete and the supports on the piers, that is how high the sand was. Back in the summer of 2024, now this was pre-Helene. I was contracted by that owner to rebuild the sea wall. And so, if you go to the next picture, so, what you are looking at here is, and it is hard to see it, but this is the house that lost the sea wall in the background, further in the distance is it was an existing sea wall that was placed by the property owner at 1371 and 1373. So, the vinyl sea wall that you see there is no longer there in the lower picture in September of 24 Helene completely wiped out that sea wall. And so, we have been working on this project now for two years, and we have made a judgment call to start working and try to get this done before turtle season. So, last month, when we got the approval for the variance, we went ahead and made a joint decision to start this project in an effort to try to get it done before turtle season. So, this is the area where we are talking about, they are in desperate need of these sea walls, and we would like the county's permission to approve these variances. We were hoping to get them all in at one time. We have been working on a FDEP permit, coastal control line permit for over two years now, and we are, our heads are up, our backs are up against the wall with the next turtle season. So, this is the background of this project. Commissioner Sanders speaking, DEP, issued a stop work order on it. I do not know why. The gentleman may know why, but until, if you remember what we said it last time, we said, contingent on DEP permits. They do not have DEP permits. They started without permits. So, they started the project without permit.

Chairman Jones speaking, does DEP have that current project pause? Mr. Josh Hall Back Roads Consultant speaking, we are waiting on approvals right now. They should be coming in any day. The work has stopped, the stuff is just staged there right now. Chairman Jones speaking, all right. So, does that address your question? Commissioner Sanders speaking, what I am saying is I would like until DEP rectifies this problem, and if you look at what planning and zoning said in the comments, planning and zoning said last at the last meeting and on this they are given the recommendation that if anything changes with the project through DEP that they are recommending for the project to come back before planning and zoning and get final approval if anything changes between the project in, you know, in mine, and then getting approval from DEP if anything changes, they want it to come back before them. And I think that we need to take planning and zoning recommendation. So, what I would like to see is, until all that stuff is settled with DEP, let us table these two items, because DEP is. Chairman Jones speaking, so, but you are not suggesting that they go back to the planning and zoning, just table for us so to be taken up. Commissioner Sanders speaking, then follow up planning and zoning recommended, because they did start to work without

permits. But that is my recommendation on that. And I do not know, I have not, was not able to talk to Bree yesterday about it, but that would just be something. I went down there yesterday and looked at it, and it is a pretty massive project. Chairman Jones speaking, it is a big area that looks like Hurricane Michael took out a lot of sea wall. Commissioners, do you have any more questions, or from the engineer that is here, or the person that is here representing the applicant. Before we go, we do have a public comment on this item. Commissioner Ward noted she will wait until after public comments.

Mr. John Barry speaking, thank you. This morning, commissioners, I do not have, I mean, let me clarify this first, I do not have a dog in this hunt, okay? And the reason I started looking at it is because I could not find a hydrology report. As you know, down on Alligator Point, every time you put a sea wall in, you start changing the way that wave action goes and you start eroding more of the beach. In this situation, I looked at the drawings. It is a, if I understand it correctly, a 14-foot-high sea wall. I think the first house at 1369 probably half the property has already been lost and was purchased that way, already lost. The second piece of property, 1371 and 1373, unfortunately, the owner who bought this property bought it and did not know, and I am pretty sure they did not know that the rip rap that you will see in the VIP in the pictures that I sent you was actually illegally dumped. Then add that to a 14-foot wall and the number of loads of dirt that has got to come in there, you are going to have basically like a fortress around it. And again, I understand that they have the ability to protect their property, but also, I understand that it is caveat emptor in the capitalistic society that says buyer beware, and there should have been background studies as to how bad the erosion really is there. I think the county already owns several lots down there in that one section, and that's all I have to say, is I didn't think they acted in good faith when they started the project, ahead of time, and being a member of the turtle patrol previously, for eight years, I know there's been five or six turtles nest in that area right there, and it the last storm did wipe out what was left of a rumbling of a sea wall. That is a little background on it. Chairman Jones speaking, Mr. Barry, I got a question for you. So, you said, when you were talking that basically, if I understood you right, maybe you did not say it, but you implied it, that if I put up a sea wall on my property, the other beach is going to, the hydrology is going to change. It is going to erode away other properties. Mr. Barry speaking, in my opinion, yes. Chairman Jones speaking, so it could just as easily be said that one stops erosion, others continue to have erosion. Mr. Barry speaking, that is correct. Chairman Jones speaking, so, you know, as far as sea walls go, we pretty much always granted those because people have a right to protect their property. Like you said, one of them, according to the Property Appraiser site, the property is half gone already. Anyway, you know. And there's also, I'm not saying it should be done, but there's also an ability, if I own that waterfront property, you can also, which now might not be a good time with the way DEP is already involved, but you can also ask to backfill and fill back what you have if you have something verifying that you had ownership of more than what you have now. Probably comes at an enormous cost, but I think the bigger thing today is what Commissioner Sanders was talking about when DEP has done a stop work order on this project. But anyway, I digress. I just, I wanted to clarify that, because I thought that is what you said, but I do not that could be said one way, both ways. Mr. Barry speaking, that is correct. You interpret it correctly. It is like I say, I do not have a dog in the hunt, but I will tell you, it will affect that coastline. Chairman Jones speaking, yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Barry.

Mr. Wexner speaking, I just wanted to add on to what the gentleman just said. We have been working with just as the commissioners know, with FDEP all along, and have observed other property owners making improvements to their property without FDEP approval. We have been actively talking with FDEP all along. We have tried to get their engineers out. We have tried to get the Corps out. We have tried to go through that bureaucratic process that others have not done to get this project going. And the Blankes who have 1371 and 1373 hired a contractor to come in there and put that sea wall in that was not permitted. And there has been others that have restored their property with no permit, we have actually been trying to do for two years the right thing, and rather than place blame or make excuses, you know, we have been trying to help these owners protect their property, and that is all we have tried to do. We are not trying to circumvent any procedures. We have diligently tried to obtain the proper permits, to obtain the approvals,

to get construction. And we have about 45 days, or had about 45 days, to get this done before turtle season. So, if we are not able to continue this project in a timely fashion. It will be later this year before we can and we proceeded, okay, right or wrong, we proceeded in an effort to try to get this project done before turtle season and not go through another hurricane season. And that is the only reason we have not tried to circumvent any DEP procedures; we have not tried to do anything that was illegal. We have just tried to protect the property.

Chairman Jones speaking, yes sir, I understand that. I think our biggest problem, the fly in the ointment, if you will, is DEP is now involved. So, they are not just watching the property. They are watching Franklin County as well, because they are already involved. Mr. Wexner speaking, well, here is the thing, and this is, again, just for your information, the involvement of FDEP did not come from FDEP. It came from the neighbors who complain. Okay, that is how they got involved, and they, DEP has actually been working with us quite well. But there is no compliance issue, they are none at all. Chairman Jones speaking, so, do they currently have that other job stopped or not? Josh Hall speaking, yes, everything stopped. There is no compliance issue. Just waiting on approvals from them, and we need this in order to get the approval from that. Mr. Wexner speaking, it is like, you know, the chicken and the egg, what came first? So FDEP is waiting on the county, and the county is waiting on FDEP. So, after the last meeting, do you understand what I am saying there? So, after the last meeting, we went back to the DEP and said, okay, we got permission. We did not ask for another evaluation of the project to give us approval to come back to the, you know, the commissioners. So, like I said, it is, this has been going on for two years, and other owners just say, well, forget that. We are just going to do it. Chairman Jones speaking, so, I think we are missing a part of this somewhere.

Ms. Robinson speaking, I think we are commissioners. If I, could I interject myself here? So normally when a sea wall application is presented to the board. By that point, they have been able to apply for permits. They have got DEP and core permits in hand, and they can show those to you. This case is a little bit different. It is within that coastal construction line. They cannot get approval for cccl permitting without a letter of no objection from Franklin County. Franklin County's code, it does say, if you are going to do any sea walls, erosion control structures, you have to get a variance from the board before you can move forward. So, staff, we could not issue a letter saying, yes, we have no objections to this go forth in your permitting, because technically, in the code, they do need a variance first. So, in this case, the county does have to take a step first, and then they can go apply for their cccl permitting and get everything in order. That is why on 1369, and 1371, and 1373 which are on the agenda today, the recommended approval is contingent, and there is some language that goes with that related to the whole cccl permitting process. Chairman Jones speaking, okay. So, if I am hearing you right, you are saying that it is the pleasure of the board, but if we did want to approve today, we can still make it contingent on DEP, and they are still in the same criteria they are falling under now, is that what you are saying? Ms. Robinson speaking, I believe we are on the same page. Yes, the way that recommended approval is worded, it is the recommendation is contingent upon all required permits being obtained as the project is within the cccl, and should the permitting process require modification to the proposed design that is in front of you, then the revised design would have to return back to the board. So, you would be approving a variance. They would go to DEP apply for the cccl permit. If nothing changes, they would be good to go. If something anything in their design. If DEP sees that they need to modify something, it will come back in front of you and you would have to review it again. Chairman Jones speaking, so even if we did approve this variance today, it does not give them the ability to start working today. Is what you are saying. Ms. Robinson speaking, yes, it is all still contingent on DEP's hands, which is how the whole stop work order situation came about. They did jump the gun and start work before they were supposed to. I do not know the reasoning behind that, but that was what happened. Chairman Jones speaking, it is what it is. You know, that's part of it, but that, I think that helps. Commissioner Ward speaking, Mr. Chairman that cleared up my question too, and I was looking at Mr. Wexner. I was like, that did not make any sense, but she explained it. So, I do feel like that obviously it was a boo boo that you guys started the work. I see why, I see both sides. But you know, again,

as the Chairman said, FDEP is now looking at us. I honestly do not know. I guess I do have a question for Bree. Why did we, is this something we have to do? Why didn't this all come together at the same time? Because could not they have come all together at the same time and then submit the letter? Ms. Robinson speaking, they could have in this case, there is two different property owners in play. I believe they are working together for the purpose of the application. And technically it is three separate parcels under the property appraiser's information. One application was submitted on time. That was 1369 and then the remaining two, which you are seeing today, 1371 and 1373 there was an issue with their original application, so they got held back. Okay, thanks. Commissioner Amison speaking, Mr. Chairman, I have a question. You said you have been working on this for two years. Yes, sir, why are you just now asking for variance two weeks ago or two meetings ago? I am sorry. I mean, you know, I am just trying to figure out if you knew you are going to have to have a variance, and DEP was contingent on our variance. Why? Why we wait that long to do it? Josh Hall speaking, we did not know that. I found out with the request for additional information from the FDEP. Commissioner Amison speaking, I was just kind of baffled. Mr. Wexner speaking, I think there was some history there too, with how the no objection letters were processed and how they came about so that that was another delay in in the project was, you know, once we submitted and paid for all the fees with FDEP, we got hit with, okay, now you got to do this, and now you got to do that, and it just dragged the process out. But that is exactly correct. We have been we started on this pre-Helene, and we have actually had per DEP had to get multiple surveys. FDEP surveys every six months to keep up to date with the mean high-water line, and so it has been quite a lengthy, frustrating process just to get through the permitting and the bureaucracy. I would like to add one more comment to the gentleman about the 14-foot wall. We are, what we are planning to do and this is, per the design, is to put these 10-inch diameter. They are marine treated post, okay, this is, these are specially designed posts that are 18 foot long. We are putting them eight feet into the ground, and the height of the wall, the actual physical height, is 10 feet above the shoreline. It is not 14. So, the other thing that we are doing is we are putting sea wall boards. These are rough cut sea wall boards below the water line or below the beach. So, we are actually starting the wall below 10 feet. So, the physical wall will be at least 13 feet high, but it starts three feet below the beach, and the height of the wall, physical height is 10 feet. Just want to clarify that.

Mr. Moron speaking, all right, Mr. Chairman, if no one has comments. This one is on me. Ms. Theresa Jacobs, she did turn in the speaker card on time. I did not give that to you on time for this item, yes, sir. So, if you would unmute, the chairman will allow you to speak.

Miss Jacobs speaking, good morning, everyone. How are you today? I live on Chip Morrison, across the street from these three properties. I just wanted to bring a couple things, and y'all have mentioned this already a little bit. I am very concerned. I would like to know if a hydrology report has been done. This is within the coastal construction line, and it will directly affect properties on either side and the dunes and everything when they put the sea wall in, and I wanted to know if there is a hydrology report that has been done. I do not know that y'all know. If you have knowledge of this, it erodes in front of the sea wall. It erodes badly on either side where the sea wall is. And I just want to know if DEP is required, because normally they do within the coastal construction line. And I wanted to know from the engineer if they have done a hydrology report. Mr. Wexner speaking, I have done a hydrology analysis to make sure that the sea wall is vented properly to the ocean. It is a unique design, and that was part of the approval process that we went through with FDEP. They have asked for guarantees on this wall, and that is not possible. It is not possible to guarantee anything on the shoreline. What DEP requires is elevation, which is similar to the drawings that we put up there relative to the coastal control line. And that is what we have provided. We have provided the elevations of the sea wall and the effects of the hydrology in trying to relieve the hydraulic pressure that could occur from a surge, and that is the best we can do. We cannot predict what the future will hold with hurricanes. FDEP cannot do it, as an engineer, I cannot do it. We cannot guarantee that this wall will survive a major storm, but that is the best we can do to try to protect these properties. Miss Jacobs speaking, I know that this property needs protecting, especially 1369, it is way out there. But I also know that protecting that property should not destroy everybody else's and that is my concern is that the beaches

on either side will be eroded. They will be eroded. That is a given. And we already have a huge sand bar that is accumulating off this property as well, and this will only make that larger. My other concern was that this project was started before the state permitting from FDEP has been issued. If it has taken you two years and there is a problem, there have a problem with the permitting, apparently. The other thing I want to bring up is the sea wall height. If you put a ten three foot in the ground, 10 foot above ground, that is going to be almost within two or three feet of that back deck of that house on 1369, that is really high just from looking at the property and looking at the house. The other thing is, there was a previous sea wall there. They do not last. They do not stay. There has been a concrete one. There has been the plastic one that they are not going to stay there because it is already eroded two or three sea walls that I know of, and it damages the property on either side. The other thing that I am concerned about is our turtles. I have been on turtle patrol as well as Mr. Barry, and we have turtles that nest right there, where you are putting the sea wall, and you are going to dig down into the sand, 345 feet, whatever it was you said, and that is going to really change the dynamics of the beach right there. And we just had sea oats planted across all those three properties, and they are being destroyed by all this construction as well. Mr. Wexner speaking, I will just add a few more comments to that. One of the criteria that FDEP asked us for was to obtain permission from the adjacent properties that would be the property east of 1369, and the property west of 1373. I have obtained written permission. We have, Back Roads and me to put this wall in and try to mitigate the effects of any kind of surge that would affect the properties east and west. And I have got that written permission, and we understand the turtles, the Blankes' brother, own the property west of 1373, and I have been in constant communication with the homeowner that is on the east side and trying to come up with a plan to mitigate any effects of scour around these properties at the time of a hurricane. And that is the best we can do. Now regarding the sea oat plantings, none of the homeowners knew that that was occurring, and so that was a surprise to us, that that was done. Again, we were not trying to stop that. We were not trying to do anything that would be contrary to the turtles and we understand that the situation fully. I assure you; we really understand what is going on with this beach. Miss Jacobs speaking, well, I know that we already have serious erosion problems, especially to the east of this property, of these three properties. And to the west, the brother-in-law, that is the brother-in-law to the 1371 and 1373, has a lovely dune, and his property is high and those two or three houses right there will be impacted by the movement of the sand from the sea wall. Chairman Jones speaking, you know that Ms. Jacobs, you are under public comment. Ms. Jacobs speaking, yes, well, I have requested to speak on this particular. Chairman Jones speaking, you did, but I mean. Miss Jacobs speaking, anyway, that is all I have to say. I just wanted to make sure that the board was aware that will cause an erosion problem, that they do not currently have a DEP state permit, if they have been working on it for two years, there might be a reason why, and I think that we are so close to turtle season, I think they should probably wait. Chairman Jones speaking, thank you, Miss Jacobs. Miss Jacobs speaking, thank you. Have a great day. Chairman Jones speaking, so I have a question, if you know, sure you said that Miss Jacobs was brought up that they were, they were sea oats planted. Were they planted on these people's property without their knowledge or understanding? Mr. Wexner speaking, yes. Chairman Jones speaking, yeah. I do not think that should ever happen. Mr. Wexner speaking, yeah, you are supposed to get a permit to do anything inside the coastal control line, and that's what I was saying earlier. It was unknown that those were planted. And in trying to protect the properties east of these properties, the homeowners have taken action on their own to protect their property while we have for two years trying to do it correctly. Yes, sir, but that was a good question, Mr. Chairman. Commissioner Sanders speaking, that was that project that went around the county at different places and did the sea oats, but they should have been doing them in places that people said, What? What they were doing, living like the living shoreline Mr. Moron speaking, commission. I mean, I am not sure which way the board is going to go with this, but either which way. You know, in my best Attorney Shuler, thing, we could defer this to David Theriaque, because he is here now. He is our land use attorney. So, I would ask that, you know, he takes a look at it. I know this slows down the project, and I understand about turtle season, but I do not know. I would like to see some I guess they would like to see some progress. And I guess you guys can determine which way you want to go. Commissioner Sanders speaking, well, with reason why I said, let us table it is because we can take it is like the gentleman said they have been waiting two years. What is another two weeks, you know,

I am saying, and see where DEP is on that. And if you do not mind, Mr. Chairman, I am going to write the, I mean, I am going to read the recommendation of the planning and zoning in the record to where we can have that. I know we see it, but it says the recommendation is contingent upon all required permits being obtained as the project is within the coastal construction control line and should the permitting process require modification to the proposed design, then the revised design must be returned back to the board for review and approval. See what I am saying. So that's reason why I am going to put the motion out there to table these two items. Chairman Jones speaking so we are doing the first one. Commissioner Sanders speaking, okay, **I will make a motion to table this and give this to the attorney, our land use attorney, Mr. Theriaque, for review to come back with his opinion at the next board meeting, and that is my motion to table.** Chairman Jones speaking, all right, so we do have a motion to table until the next meeting. Commissioner Ward speaking, **I will second with comment.** Chairman Jones speaking, all right, that motion was made by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Ward. Go ahead, Commissioner Ward. Commissioner Ward speaking, I see both sides to this story here. I understand, and I have always advocated, if you want to protect your property, you should be able to do that. I do know that I am not happy that you guys started the work beforehand, because now again, we have got to stop work order with DEP. I think that is going to hurt you guys when we, if we did, say, hypothetically, approved this today moving forward. I think you guys are on the radar now, so I do not think approving this today is going to get it moved forward any quicker, because I think they already know. They already know, you know, so, but I do see both sides. The hydrology report, you know, I see both sides of that too. But if you look at the property appraiser's website on this, these properties stick way, way out, way further than any other home. I do not think I mean, again, I am not no expert by any means, hydrology wise or other, but it is going to affect those are hypotheticals that we cannot answer. I am just looking at what we have in front of us, in terms of people just trying to protect the property. So that is all I have to say on that, that topic. Chairman Jones speaking, so, Ms. Bree, I hate to put you on the spot, but I will ask you a question. In Franklin County's code, do we require hydrology report for a sea wall? Ms. Robinson speaking, no, I have not seen that language anywhere. I will speak directly to Mr. John Barry, because I know he is the one that stated that in his public comment. We discussed this on the phone that does not appear in Franklin County's code. That is something we typically look to DEP or if they are going to ask for it. **Motion carried 5-0.**

b. 1373 Chip Morrison Drive (Seawall)

A consideration of a request to construct a seawall within the Coastal Construction Control Line - applicant is requesting to place a 90' x 14' seawall on the coastal front and 60' tapered to grade seawall on the west side of the property to all be placed above the MHWL but within the Critical Shoreline District (150' from MHWL). Property is located in Alligator Point, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Josh Hall, Backroads Consulting LLC, applicant representative, for Jennifer Blanke, applicant.

Chairman Jones speaking, now with 1373 it is pretty much the same, same variance, the same seawall, the same facts. **Commissioner Sanders speaking, I make a motion to table this and to ask the attorney opinion on it.** Chairman Jones speaking, all right, to the next meeting. **Commissioner Sanders, table to the next meeting.** Chairman Jones speaking, **so we have a motion to table to the next meeting by Commissioner Sanders second by Commissioner Ward comment.** All right, go ahead, Commissioner. Commissioner Ward speaking, so on the hydrology aspect. Bree does the DEP require hydrology report, or do they do it on a case-by-case basis? Do you know? I do not want to put you on the spot. I guess I need to. Ms. Robinson speaking, I honestly, I do not know. I have never gone through cccl permitting, but Josh Hall, the environmental consultant, he would probably be able to answer that. Okay, they do not always require it, so it is up to them. They determine it. Chairman Jones speaking, any other discussion Commissioner comments? All in favor, any opposed? **That has also been tabled by 5-0 motion to the next meeting.** Mr. Wexner speaking, can I make one more comment, I just want to thank Commissioner Sanders for your comments and involvement in this, for taking the time to go out and look at this project, and for all of you and the commissioners, as well as all the groups that and folks that are here today that support this project

and the homeowners. I just appreciate the attention that we are getting, and I appreciate your service. I really do. Commissioner Sanders speaking, Mr. Wexner, the thing you got to understand is this, we have been dealing with Alligator Point for a very, very long time, and it was at one point that all the erosion was happening to the east of that around where KOA and all that. Now that erosion has moved around the corner to Chip Morrison. What we do not want to do is do something that is going to cause it even worse, moving to the west. So, if you look out there, and you are going in there, and you look across the harbor, Alligator Harbor, toward Leonard's Landing, and you look towards St Teresa, you see that spur coming out there. That is all that dirt, I mean, all the sand that Franklin County has put in front of the KOA to try to keep that road together for, I know, 28 years. So that is what I am saying. We do not have but one time to get things right. And if this causes a major, major problem down the line, they are going to be looking at y'all and say, okay, but now if you look at that house right to the east. That man, he said he was not going to ever do anything about it, because he was tired of trying to fight Mother Nature. And that is what it is. It is Mother Nature coming in and claiming, no matter what man does, Mother Nature, she is going to come claim what is hers eventually and win, but that is it. Mr. Wexner speaking, well thank you all very much, and we appreciate any feedback. Thank you.

The Board took a brief recess at this time.

County Coordinator & Attorney Reports

8. Michael Morón – County Coordinator

1. Action Item: Artificial Reef Grant Application

- Mr. Grayson Shepard is about to submit the FWC Artificial Reef Grant application.
- The consultant assisting Mr. Shepard with the application recommends a letter from the Board acknowledging that Franklin County will allow Carrabelle to use their funds to place a structure in our reef. The Organization of Artificial Reefs works with the City of Carrabelle as their permit holder/grant recipient.
- I ask that Board approval is contingent on Attorney Shuler's review.
- Board action to authorize the Chairman's signature on a letter allowing the City of Carrabelle, using their funds, to place a structure on our reef contingent on Attorney Shuler's review of the letter.

On a motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Amison, to authorize the Chairman's signature on a letter allowing the City of Carrabelle, using their funds, to place a structure on our reef contingent on Attorney Shuler's review of the letter. Commissioner Amison speaking, actually, I would like to have a little discussion about it if we could do that. Chairman Jones speaking, we have a motion, we have second, go ahead discuss. Commissioner Amison speaking, and this is just to educate me. It just seems like Carrabelle, it seems. And now this is what is being said. You know, like with some of these agencies that is wanting to put funding in, they kind of get frustrated with the county because it seems that it is a longer process with us, where Carrabelle and the cities, it does not seem to be as big of a hang up. Is there a specific reason why we have to go through such a lengthy process to put, like this case, bringing it here to a meeting? Why can't we just have staff take care of that? I mean, I am just trying to figure out. Chairman Jones speaking, I think it is part of the grant process well. Commissioner Ward speaking, Mr. Chairman, I think it has to do with our attorney's approval of whatever they write, just to make sure the county's safe with whatever. Mr. Moron speaking, I guess two things that the liabilities, I think that is what Commissioner Ward is alluding to, and because they will need the chairman's signature, not staff signature on the letter. That is what triggers it me, bringing, as simple as it may be, bringing it to the Board of County Commission, both, unfortunately, a lot of things. Chairman Jones speaking, I think it is, I do think it is part of the and I am good with being corrected. I think it is part of the actual wording of the grant, okay, that it has to be the Commission approved. It has to be really. Commissioner Amison speaking, it was just me thinking about it, yeah, after you had asked me to reach out to Grayson yesterday, and I did, and I am sitting there in my little world later on, and I am thinking, you know, with, especially with projects like that, where you have variables involved with weather pattern, stuff like that. It just seems,

and y'all know what I am talking about, I mean, level right now, in two weeks, have a perfect time to do this, and then we liable to have a month of four to six, six-to-eight-foot seas, you know? And that is why I was just trying to figure out why it just seems lengthy. So let me state for the record no one has complained. I was just complaining to myself in my head. Chairman Jones speaking, so, this one is a little bit different because it is allowing Carrabelle to use some of their funds to place a structural board, I think that is what complicated. I do think whoever they have working with them, consulting on this, told them this is the process to take as well. Commissioner Amison speaking, it was just for my knowledge. Chairman Jones speaking, alright, so we do have a motion, and second. **Motion was made by Commissioner Ward, second by Commissioner Amison**, any additional discussion before we vote? And this motion was to approve this signature. **Motion carried 5-0.**

2. Discussion/Action Item: SHIP Program Update

- Ms. Carolyn Smith and Ms. Stacy Slavichak of ARPC spent a few days in the County last week to assist with closing FY 21/22 for the SHIP program. The County needs to close out this, and two other fiscal years, that are past due with the State.
- In addition, they secured funding that would allow the program to proceed with ordering manufactured homes for Mr. Smith and Mr./Mrs. Turner. There is a zoning matter that must be addressed before ordering a home for Ms. Ordonia.
- The close out of FYs 21/22, 22/23, and 23/24 were not part of the contract signed with ARPC to administer the SHIP program, as these years are past due with the State.
- To pay ARPC to administer and close out these three years, the County needs to authorize a supplemental agreement and agree to fund the agreed amount from Professional Services. I have discussed this matter with Mrs. Erin Griffith.
- Board discussion and action to authorize a supplemental agreement with ARPC and payment for these services from Professional Services.

Mr. Moron speaking, so the three fiscal years, past due with the state that we need to close out and file. Unfortunately, SHIP has a rule, the admin money that is there to pay to close out these years, to make sure the money spent reports are done correctly, has a three-year window on it. So, if you do not use the admin funds within the three years, you cannot use it in the future to go back and fix something. So that's why, number one, I need a supplemental agreement, and also for the board to agree to pay it out of professional services. So, I did not put it on this they're still working out, because they have to evaluate for the three years what was done, how much work was done, and they could tell me what's left to be done and then give me a cost. The cost will probably run about each year, somewhere between about \$5000 to \$7000. Maybe now the 21-22 and 22-23 for sure, we are going to have to use professional services funds as part of that supplemental agreement. 23-24 however, runs out in June of this year, so I might be able to use some of that admin. It might be a split. So, we might, you know, I am going to go and beg the state to maybe extend the 23-24 funds from June to the end of the calendar year, which will be December, which will help tremendously. But I threw that in there to get your approval today, just in case. I cannot, but we are ready. I am waiting for some revised proposals from the company, so we are ready to order the manufacturing homes for Smith and for Turner. After the meeting, or sometime this week, Commissioner Sanders, we need to talk about Miss Ordonia. The problem is her zoning is industrial, and that is because she is in that area of Buckeye. So, Bree and I, Commissioner Sanders, we just sit down and come up with a plan for that. Commissioner Sanders speaking, noting that was Commissioner Ward's district. That is me. Oh, Vaughn, that is me. I apologize. I thought I was commissioner Ward. Commissioner Sanders speaking, so, what she has got is go before whoever, and get her zone and vision to go to residential. Mr. Moron speaking, yes, because it is industrial, and I thank Miss Brie Robinson for all her helps. Thus far with that. She is sharp, and she picked up on that right of way, even though she had nothing to do with Chip. She just overheard a conversation. She was right on it. So, I thank her for that. So, what I'm asking the board for, after all that, ask the board to agree to the supplemental agreement and to pay whatever is necessary for the to close out

these three years, get these applications done to pay that from professional services, because we can't use ship admin funds. What we will do is roll the ship admin funds. I want to get in trouble with Linda. Thank you. It is not I use the term program funds, bad term into the grant funds program and grant funds, quick, quick definition. Grant funds are the original 350 we get from the state program funds is basic, basically, recapture money. So, if we do a down payment assistance and there is like a 10-year lien on it, or whatever that we put now that you got to pay back the money with money, you pay back with time. So, the person sells the house and before the 10 years, we prorate, and that money comes back to the county once they sell that house. That goes into program funds, which is a whole different set of rules, but still could be used for shipment housing. Commissioner Sanders speaking, I make a motion that we approve what Michael is asking us to do on supplemental agreement and payment professional services. Chairman Jones speaking we have a motion to approve by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison. Michael, just to make sure we're all understanding this. The money we could have used on admin for those years will go into grant funds and make it there will be more there to do work with. Mr. Moron speaking, yes, right to address the applications that we have that is correct, sir. Just want to make sure we were all and I also want to thank publicly we are doing this now because we call there, there. We used to, we say ARPC in general a lot, because they do a lot for us. But Carolyn and Stacy, I mean, they spent two and a half days here, and they were there. They were at it all day long. So, I want to thank them, too publicly. Chairman Jones speaking, commission, alright, any additional discussion before we vote? Commissioner Ward speaking, Mr. Chairman, I just, I want to get this done and over with. I know it has been a burden on the county, on our financial department, people, you know, and I have had people contact me consistently wanting updates, and I am like, there is not any, there is not any. We are still working on us. They are working on it. I want it done. Yes, ma'am, and I want oversight on it. Yes, that is all I am going to say. Mr. Moron speaking, yes. I know we have burned before. I will not let that happen again. Any additional discussion? Chairman Jones speaking, all in favor. Any opposed. That is unanimous. All right, commissioners. **On a motion by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Amison, and by a unanimous vote of the Board present, the Board authorized a supplemental agreement with ARPC and payment for these services from Professional Services. Motion carried 5-0.**

3. Discussion Item: Health and Property Insurance Update

- Last year, the Board agreed to look at employee's health insurance and county property insurance.
- As for the health insurance, I recommend inviting a representative from Capital Health Plan to present and discuss our current plan and other options. Especially, the dependent and family payment and deductibles.
- After this presentation, the Board can decide to engage a consultant to look at other health insurance providers.
- A review of the County's property insurance will require a consultant to compare our current policy and determine if any other submittals are of equal offering.
- Mrs. Erin Griffith will be responsible for creating the consultant's request for qualifications, and after that advertising and selection process is completed, meeting with the consultant to create the specifications and policies for other potential providers.
- As reflected on her report this morning, Mrs. Griffith "plate" is currently filled. As soon as opportunity presents, Mrs. Griffith will let me know and we can proceed with the process of selecting a consultant for a property insurance study.
- Board discussion.

Mr. Moron speaking, remember, last year we agreed to consultants, for both, number one, looking at the health insurance. There are some of your employees that do include their family as part of the insurance payment, they complained that cost to them is too much for them, and they would like the county to look at other possibilities to help them out. I recommend, before we pay money in a consultant, let us get some information for free. My recommendation is bringing Capital Health Plan representative in here. And you

guys could question them and say, hey, here is our problem. You know, we love the plan that we have, but what can we do to help with you know, somebody wants to put their wife on the plan, or their husband or their kids, whatever? That is what is killing our employees do not get paid. They are just it is that cost is really high for them. So that is my recommendation for that. If you are still not satisfied with the answers you get from Capital Health, then we may need to hire a consultant to look what else is out there in the marketplace. I would tell you; I do not know what it is a struggle right now, even I believe at some point in the past and Commissioner Croom could help me. I know the school district had to blend its Blue Cross, Blue Shield and Capital Health. But it got rid of the Blue Cross, Blue Shield, that was too expensive. So yes, some of you, well, not some of you all of y'all pretty much in business in some way. So, you guys understand about health insurance. You guys know what we are facing out there, you know, but that is my recommendation as it applies to health insurance. I do not know if you have other suggestions or another path you would like to follow with this? Let me know.

Commissioner Ward speaking, Mister Chairman. I will speak on behalf of it has been a few years back, but I did some research myself on health insurance. I do not have the county's insurance. I have insurance with my other employer, but it is and it was with Florida League of Cities. I checked with the Florida Sheriff's Association. I mean, I did a lot, and I talked to Erin about it, and I have my notes, but they are not here with me, but I do remember and recall it has to do with, of course, the deductible. If you have the higher deductible, for the higher deductible, you are having less of a premium. It is, you know, it is all different. I am actually going to provide my work documentation of what our fees are, just for comparison. But I think anywhere you go is probably going to be comparable about the same. Because I think the reason why other like, for example, Bay County, they have less, they pay out less for their families because they have a higher deductible. So, it depends on, you know, a higher deductible is okay, but if you have and like last year, when I broke my ankle, I would, I probably would have been hurt if I had to stayed in that higher deductible range. But it is all about the co pays. It is all about the deductibles, I think, is what boils down to how much, of course, obviously, the premiums are, but it depends on what you want. I have had people that have had Capital Health Plans say positive things and negative things about it. So, it just depends, I guess, again, on what you want, what you are looking for. That is all I have on that one. But I do agree that, you know, CHP, can maybe come and discuss their, what they could offer. Did they come to meetings and discuss that sort of thing? Mr. Moron speaking, I will ask them. I mean, once they know what the issue is, I am sure they can address those specific issues. Commissioner Ward speaking, I mean, this is research we could do on our own. I mean, that is silly, but anyway, that is my thought on that. Commissioner Croom speaking, I think that we do need to look at it as well, because there's families that you know does not have insurance over there, they go through another avenue, because it's so high your families, the market, the free market, yeah, we got a bunch of middle age and younger generation families, you know, they got kids, and I think it's just worth having. Just worth having discussion and looking into. And sometimes, you know, I do my own research as well, and I have on this, but sometimes we may be missing a piece of something that we have not seen. Chairman Jones speaking, the other thing too, Mr. Moron, is I am good with them coming in, if they will do that. To go what other commissioners saying, the other issue I am looking at is maybe one of our issues is we only offer one plan. So, it is what it is. They ought to at least be two or three options. You know what I mean. There were to be more than one there. This is County's insurance, either want it or you do not kind of deal. Yeah, that is not much of a benefit. Mr. Moron speaking, yeah, we got to figure out if a blended plan will cost the county more in some way. Chairman Jones speaking, you know, to look at it was at the same time, or you cannot if you are going to offer insurance as employees offer, you are not. And I think just offer one plan, it is going up seven to 9% for the last eight years and I have been here, yeah, yeah. That means, it means someone is completely doubled in the time I have been here. That is a lot of money. Mrs. Griffith speaking, Commissioners, I will say, prior to moving to Capital Health Plan, we were actually experiencing double digit increases. So that it is unfortunate, it is still an increase, but it had been historically lower than what we had seen previously when we were with Blue Cross. So just want to put that out there. Commissioner Ward speaking, Mr. Chairman I will say too with Florida Association of Counties, I know they provide services. I know they do not provide these particular types, but cannot I

mean, is that something we might come look to them to kind of help us ascertaining, I mean, to do some comparative study. They cover 67 counties. Cannot we just contact someone up there and say, hey, can you kind of give us a rundown of what the other counties are doing? That could be a kind of our consultant to look at what they have from the other counties. That is just my thought. Chairman Jones speaking, not that it will change anything. No, I am definitely not trying to blow anybody up here today. What would change this whole conversation is if the state of Florida that requires all counties and municipalities to be part of their retirement system will at least let us opt into their insurance plan. Mr. Moron speaking, wouldn't that be fantastic? Chairman Jones speaking, we all serve the same residents. We have had this whole discussion for a year now about fraud, waste, and abuse. Well, if we are paying twice as much for insurance and what we could be paying with the state, how is that not wasted money? It is all taxpayer dollars. Again. I am not trying to blow anybody up, but that is a real concern. Mr. Moron speaking, maybe that should be a legislative ask at the next when they can run again. Chairman Jones speaking, you know, I just think it makes sense, but there has got to be a reason why they are not doing it. Mr. Moron speaking, okay, and from health, we go to the property tax commissioners. You know that is a deeper study and harder, because you know that definitely, if this where you guys want to go, you know, I mean, you saw Erin's report this morning, we have to give her a chance to catch her breath. And after that, if that is where you want to go, we could have a talk about it. Then when she lets me know, she has a moment to address that situation. Chairman Jones speaking, you said property tax. You are talking about property insurance? Mr. Moron speaking, I am sorry, Commissioner, yes, the property insurance. We will have to, you know, if that is where you got commission. I am going to be very honest with you. I love what we have. I will tell you guys; I do not think there is a better experience I have ever dealt with than when Weems was destroyed during the one hurricane. Look, they picked the emergency room, it was moved like two or three times. They covered all that. They covered all the modular offices we needed, the roof. I mean, the list could go on and on. So, I am going to be honest with you guys, this is one of these times I'm going to say this, and this might not be a popular statement, but when it comes to insurance, you get what you pay for. Chairman Jones speaking that is true. Commissioner Ward speaking, I will say, Mr. Chairman, not only that, but when the courthouse got flooded. Oh yeah, we had we called them and they were here like within it was at night, I think, after hours with their fans and doing what they needed to do to make sure that was mitigated. So, I am sure Erin could give us a list of things.

Mrs. Griffith speaking, actually commissioners, I would like to take the time to actually take a quick minute to explain two of the most important policy programs and coverage extensions that are provided by the league. And this is also good information for you all to have prior to the impending hurricane season, which we never like to hear that that is coming around again, but the league has actually determined that in the aftermath of natural disasters. They found that local governments were often so overwhelmed and understaffed that it was impossible for staff to prevent additional damage caused by ongoing water intrusion and inability to make timely repairs to the insured locations. So, they found that it was actually in their best interest to provide coverage. And this coverage has been in place since prior to Hurricane Michael, and it's actually called, what is called property damage mitigation coverage, or PDMC, which covers up to \$500,000 per name storm in emergency stabilization services, which includes water removal, demolition, tarping for a 30-day window of coverage for scheduled buildings with no deductible or out of pocket costs. FM, it also has what is called a turnkey recovery program, which eliminates the upfront costs for local governments, which is important when you are a county with limited resources and operating capital. This program was a lifesaver for the county in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael. Across the county, there was extensive damage to multiple county locations. The turnkey recovery program enabled the county to resume operations as their assistance with the damage. County locations enabled the county departments to be able to concentrate efforts providing aid to residents with recovery, damage assessment for private property owners and debris removal instead of trying to stabilize the county buildings. The lease teams are sent prior to the projected landfall and during Hurricane Michael, their turnkey recovery team was staged at the county's EOC. The county sustained major damage during Michael to the roof at the county courthouse, the roof on Williams Memorial Hospital, and numerous other damages sustained at park locations and the

recycling center at the county landfill. There is no cover, no insurance coverage extended for county roadways, piers, docks and the county are dependent upon FEMA assistance to make repairs on those assets. County departments are often overwhelmed in the aftermath of disasters, trying to ensure that roadways are passable and restored to safe condition as quickly as possible, and by securing those sites. The league also provides the assessment of every single county insured asset in the aftermath of the storm, and actually provided the county with a comprehensive damage booklet, which we were then able to actually use that information we provided as documentation to FEMA. Through the league's coverage and the turnkey recovery program. The league provided emergency backup generators, which powered the county courthouse in the week after Hurricane Michael and provided emergency demolition of the flooded ceiling and wall areas and mobilized drying and mold remediation services provided and also provided an emergency patch on the torn roof membrane. The same services were completed at Weems Memorial Hospital, all with no out-of-pocket costs for the county. In addition, Weems hospital roof was damaged beyond repair, and the coverage provided mobile units, whereas the hospital was able to stay open during an ongoing repair process while the new roof was installed, the turnkey recovery program effectively managed this project from start to finish, and paid all contractors directly for the permanent repairs and manage the expedited AHCA clearance process for the repairs. The county paid one check for the insurance deductible for this location, which was approximately \$150,000 and all other expenses, which totaled nearly \$3 million were paid directly by the League. The county had approximately eight large FEMA repair projects in the aftermath of FEMA, which took years to complete for the county, and as the county attempted to fund the upfront repair cost of these projects, anxiety was high that the FEMA reimbursements would not arrive in time, and the county would need to secure short-term financing to repair those projects. I can say with certainty that had the timing not worked out for these projects, or had the county experienced a direct hit or any additional damage, any additional damage, more than what we had received, it would have been impossible to fund the repairs without the stop gap financing. The turnkey recovery program at least removes anxiety for those concerns associated with trying to make necessary repairs to county buildings with their management and coverage of the upfront repair costs. I cannot emphasize enough the value of this program and the aftermath of Hurricane Michael, and even talking about Hurricane Michael, I'm probably my eyes probably starting to twitch, because it was absolutely the most stressful thing to go through being in county government, so I definitely fingers crossed we don't have to go through that anytime soon again. Chairman Jones speaking, thank you. Mrs. Erin. All right. Do you need any direction? Mr. Moron speaking, no, I just kind of wanted to let you know when the time comes up, we will have a discussion again, if necessary. Chairman Jones speaking, so let us see CHP will do a presentation. Mr. Moron speaking, I sure will, sir. Chairman Jones speaking, we will go from there, because we are trying to have this discussion before budget for next year. Correct? Mr. Moron speaking, yes. What I will do once I get a date from them, I am going to contact each of you, because I want to know your individual concerns. Second, forward it to them so they will be ready for that presentation.

4. Informational Item: Executive Session

- The Executive Session scheduled for Wednesday, April 1st, is postponed.
- The Board will be notified of a new proposed date.

5. Informational Item: New IFAS Director

- The University of Florida completed their search to fill the vacant position of Franklin County Extension Director, Sea Grant Extension Agent in the UF/IFAS Extension Franklin County office.
- Dr. Sharon Cilano is the recommended candidate to fill the vacant position. A copy of her resume is attached to my report.
- Dr. Cilano will appear before the Board at a future meeting, after she has a chance to settle in.

6. Informational Item: Chairman on Gulf Consortium Executive Committee
 - The County was notified that Chairman Jones was elected to the 2026 Gulf Consortium Executive Committee as an at-large member. Congratulations!
7. Informational Item: Transportation Disadvantage Campaign
 - Transportation Disadvantage started a “Check the Box” campaign.
 - They are asking everyone to Check the Box and donate \$1, or more, to the Transportation Disadvantage Voluntary Trust Fund when you register or renew the tag on your car, truck, or boat.
 - 100% of all donations go to assist people in our community. It helps provide transportation for children at risk, seniors, disabled and low-income residents in our community.
 - Chairman Jones is on the TD board and may have additional information regarding this campaign.

Mr. Moron speaking, the Transportation Disadvantage Campaign, Mr. Chairman, would you explain that a little bit more, but it is very important, and it is as simple as checking that box when you renew your tags. Chairman Jones speaking, yes, so there is a place where you are doing your thing for your tag, or they should be asking if they are doing it for you. There is a box you can check to donate \$1 and it goes straight to the Transportation Disadvantage Program trust fund that funds ours and everybody else's transportation disadvantage program. To make sure you are aware this transportation disadvantage program, yes, they have to schedule it, but it is more than just going to the doctor. You can use transportation disadvantage for going to the pharmacy, going to the grocery store, all kind of different things that are available. They are also talking about maybe sometime in the next year, setting up more of a public transportation like we are going to be going from here to here on scheduled routes, because of the ones that are more popular routes, and try to actually, we are leaving at 10 o'clock, we are going like a bus route, almost like a bus route. So that is something they are also talking about doing as well, but it all relies on the funds that are there. But I will say, I am sketchy with the math because I did not think about being prepared for it today. So, if you do, if I am riding on transportation disadvantage, I think I can go to Panama City and back for \$5. So that is a return of investment of, you know, like \$1 for every 50 miles. I mean, it is astronomical what they are able to do with the funds that they have. And again, these provide transportation for some of our neediest people in our community. So good program, and there is this chance for everybody to give if they want to do it is \$1. Mr. Moron speaking, so it would be great if you could take the flyers on the agenda and put it on for those of us that have social media, social media outlets just to put that on there. That would be helpful for the transportation TD.

8. Informational Item: Organizational Chart Update
 - Last week, Mrs. Angela Lolley sent you the final draft of the County's Organizational Chart for your review.
 - Chairman Jones suggested that the Board consider forwarding the final draft to the County's Department Directors for their review before it is considered for final approval.
9. Informational Item: March and April 2026 Meeting Dates
 - Your next regular meeting is on Wednesday, April 1st at 9:00 a.m.
 - The Economic Development Council will meet tomorrow at 1:00 p.m.
 - The Airport Operations Economic Development Board regular meeting is on Tuesday, March 24th at 9:30 a.m.
 - Weems Board of Directors regular meeting will be on Thursday, March 26th at 9:00 a.m.
 - The next Planning and Zoning meeting is on Tuesday April 14th at 5:30 p.m.

Commissioner Croom expressed concerns about his emails and responding to emails twice. Mr. Moron noted they are working to merge the .com and .gov accounts and hope to have this issue resolve soon.

Commissioner Sanders gave an update on the Barnacle devices. She noted that it had been deployed seven times, and it was replaced, safely and successfully back in the box. And they enhanced the no parking information around the point. And also, there was some complaints about speeding and stuff, and they did a speed study. I just want to put this down here for y'all. They said that conducted the speed study between the 12th and the 17th of March, they had a total of 4,411 vehicles passed through the study area. They said vehicles traveling the posted speed limit was 2689 and vehicles one mile to 10 Mile over the speed limit 1593, vehicles, 11 miles and above was 129 and they had four vehicles recorded at over 51 miles per hour. So, they believe that they can fix this. But he wanted the board to know, and I want to thank him for doing that.

Chairman Jones announced the mobile mammogram screenings. It is a free and just in Gulf County. So, this is a little bit different than what has ever been done before. And I know this from the TD meeting last week, transportation disadvantage. They are doing it in Gulf County. It is only today. It is for breast and cervical cancer, but if any ladies are found to have cancer today because of that screening, yes, this is going to follow them all the way through with assistance with medical needs. That is good with everything that they need from beginning to end. It is a little bit different than what has ever been done before. I even asked him to clarify the meeting last week. So, I know it is late notice. I knew about it last week. I should have let you know sooner. But I mean, knowing that it is going to have that ability to follow you if you actually do get diagnosed with cancer, I think it is a big benefit. All right, commissioners, you have anything for Mr. Moron.

Commissioner Sanders speaking, one more item concerning the Alligator Point area. They had a very could have been worse car wreck up there Friday, and the vehicles ended up out there on the rock. If that one car had not hit that truck before she hit the rock, she had been in the Gulf of Mexico. So, there has been some people may be talking to us about a guardrail. Mr. Moron speaking, I have it flagged about rumble strips as you get to the corner. Yeah, I was going to talk to Howard about that after the meeting and see what he thinks. You know that is a county road, not a state road, so let me talk to him.

Commissioner Sanders speaking, it is rumble strips. I know out there at Crooked River Road, you got speed bumps. You do not need no speed bumps or something. But I do not, but I do not believe you know it will help if it is human error. In other words, if you are doing something else, not paying distracted drivers, yeah, if you are doing something else, that is not going to help. So, I mean, that there is only one thing is pay attention in that area. Because, I mean, we have dropped the speed limit from 30 to 25 right in that area, because it is on that curve.

Mr. Moron speaking, would you consider Commissioner asking like the group after, would they prefer rumble strips? Or on each approach you know, like you know what? We are coming down 65 the blinking light telling them that you know. Let us start with the blinking light before we rumble strip is a big Some people complain about what it does to the front end of the car, or whatever. Commissioner Ward speaking, which is why we do not have speed bumps. Mr. Moron speaking, so, let us start with a warning light that flashes, maybe one that when just like coming out 65 when they when it senses a car approaching. Commissioner Amison speaking, rumble strips will make them get off the phone, flashing light? Mr. Moron speaking, so, let us have a talk and I will bring it up when I go to the meeting in April. Commissioner Sanders speaking, okay, I will bring it up and after seeing what they prefer. Mr. Moron speaking, yeah, let me know. Commissioner Sanders speaking, you know, my thing would be about three rumble strips, yeah, because that flashing light, like Ottice said, they may not see that flashing light if they are doing like this, like that. They will hear that rumble strip and they feel it too. Commissioner Amison, they will not mess their car up if they are not going 50. Commissioner Ward speaking, well, that is why the new roads now

have the rumble strips already in them. They have that machine that they will do on the side, like the new pavement over here, if you notice, in the middle and on the sides. I do not know if that is something we might could do too, instead of rumble strips themselves ran off the road, right? So maybe that would be a cheaper option. I do not know if you could go Roberts and Roberts or some road pavement company. Commissioner Amison speaking, probably, that is why I was going to suggest might want to talk with, with some of those road pavement companies, and they probably have a way of installing that. They do on 65 because on 65 you got the flashing light, but does not it also have that pavement? Mr. Moron speaking, once you cross over from Franklin into Gulf County, if you go to St. Joe, you know right away. Commissioner Ward speaking, that is the standard now with any new paving, so it might be a cheaper, easier option to do that, less evasive, too. Mr. Moron speaking, Commissioner, if you would talk to APSTA and let me know, and then we will go from there. Commissioner Sanders speaking, see what their opinion is, because they were worried about it because, I mean, it was sticky situation, and I talked to some of the first responders five o'clock. They said ambulance, the ambulance was right there. Good deal, good and that that makes a difference being out there, and they must employ the county.

9. Michael Shuler – County Attorney

Attorney Theriaque appeared via Zoom noting he had nothing for the Board. Chairman Jones speaking, Michael, I do have a question before we get further in the agenda, and I did not catch it earlier on our action item we did for the grant on the reef grant. Is that good the way it stands? Mr. Moron speaking, oh, because attorney's review. I will, once the letter is finished, I will have Attorney Theriaque look it over.

Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Ward speaking, I have got one. So, I know that, of course, everybody is talking about the gas prices going up. I know there has been some questions, especially on social media recently, about gas prices and things. I just want the public to be aware that this board, or these county commissioners or the county officials in any capacity, has nothing to do with the control of gas prices. It is controlled by the patron that owns, I should say, not the patron the owner of that gas station. So, for example, and I did some research on this, because it kept coming up. And I was like, well, who does control gas prices? So, I contacted the Department of Agriculture. And the lady explained to me, she is like, well, if you ever notice gas stations close to airports, they are going to have higher gas prices than the gas station down the street because they are going to come fill that rental car up that they rent to take back to the airport. That is why they get more money. In Carrabelle, I think there is the one store has always a higher price than the one, literally across the street. That is because that owner of that gas station has put and set that price. Now this taxes from the gas, of course, goes to the Department of Revenue. Of course, the maintenance of the gas in terms of the purity and things is the Department of Ag, and then the gouging, price gouging, for any storm, is controlled by the Attorney General. But I just want the public to know that that we have nothing to do with setting gas prices. It is that that owner of that gas station that sets that gas price, he can raise it, he or she can raise it, can lower it, and that's kind of, kind of where that is. And of course, I know it is based on the transportation into the county from wherever it is coming from, the oil gas company. Mr. Moron speaking, Mr. Chairman, if we did, would you entertain a motion for 99 cents a gal? Commissioner Ward speaking, that would be nice. Mr. Moron speaking, just asking. Would be nice if we could. Commissioner Ward speaking, I know a lot of people say, well, they travel out of the county for fuel, and that is all fine and good. I mean, people, it is up to the consumers. What this young lady was telling me was it is up to the consumer to pick and choose where they want to fuel up their cost. I know a lot of people go out of town. But I do also want to emphasize to the community that anytime people get gas in our county, fill up a boat, RV, whatever the case, that some of that money that goes to the Department of Revenue does come back to our county for that is how we get our roads paid. I know I just had seventh and ninth, seventh and eighth and then Frank McKamey and Beacon done in my district. That is how those got paid for, is through that gas tax. So, I just want the public to be aware of that, because I have seen a lot of information and a lot of miscommunication out there, so I just wanted to put that on the record. Chairman Jones speaking, so while

we are talking about that, I'll go ahead and bring this up, because it keeps coming to me from different sources, not from one place. This county commission and our Planning and Zoning board, we do not have a master plan on what is going on, what piece of property? And they pulled it, basically, we pull a rabbit out of a hat, and somebody buys a piece of property and like, what you are the new, proud owner of McDonald's or a gas station, or anything else, the owners submit to the county what they want to build. It is not up to this board of what is going to be built where that is not the way it works. Yes, it is their property. They have a right to submit for what they want to do on their property, what kind of business they want to run. You know, it had not happened, I think you know. But you have communities like over, so, in Crawfordville, there are six different auto parts in a half mile radius. I assure you that county did not say, well, we will put them all together. No, that is they want to do, because they are competing with their competitors. That is what they are doing. So, I think a lot of people either do not know or do not want to know. But when people are trying to develop business in our community, which is a good thing, it helps alleviate the tax base from all residential which is the most expensive way to pay for a tax is businesses can help offset some of that, and they are also employing people in your community. So, there is a benefit to the whole community when you have people running businesses that are from the community. So not everything that comes up is a developer. Not everything that comes up is, you know, somebody else sitting here trying to come in here and run everything. Some businesses being opened by local people. And you know, it is not up for us to say, well, you know, we have got enough of those. You really need to open this. Do not work that way. I just, I keep hearing enough, I keep being asked enough by different people. And I do not, it seems simple, but I guess people just do not know that is the way it actually works. We do not dictate what is built on somebody's property. We cannot do that, Commissioner Ward speaking, especially if it is zoned that way. Chairman Jones speaking, well, I mean, but like I am saying, so we got that dollar store at East Point. There was already dollar store when they bought the property, the county did not tell them this one, I am trying. The county did not say, okay, you are going to be dollar store. They decided that is what they want to do. That is what they bought the property for. The county cannot say, you cannot be dollar store, right? Our goal, let me, let me clarify this. Commission's whole purpose is not to put people in business or keep them out of business. We are supposed to be neutral and provide an even playing field for everybody and a standard of how things should be done and how they should be approached, from Florida building codes to everything else. So, everybody is playing by the same set of rules that is our sole focus.

Adjournment

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

Ricky Jones – Chairman

Attest:

Michele Maxwell – Clerk of Courts

The audio is available upon request. Please e-mail jgay@franklinclerk.com, call 850-653-8861 to speak with the Administrative Assistant, or submit a request in writing to obtain audio of this meeting.