

September 17, 2024
Regular Session
Bonifay, Florida

The Holmes County Board of Commissioners met for a Regular Session on the above date with the following members present: Commissioners Clint Erickson, Brandon Newsom, Phillip Music and Commissioner Jeff Good, Chairman of the Board.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, and David Corbin, Project Director, were present.

Angie Purvee, Finance Director, was present and kept the minutes.

Chairman Good called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. David Corbin, Project Director, led the prayer and pledge.

The first agenda item was Agenda Additions and Deletions. The following changes were made to the agenda:

- County Coordinator Item A) Permits for Bonifay Gritney Road – deleted
- Commissioner Item A) Live Stream - added

Commissioner Music offered a motion to accept the amended agenda with Commissioner Erickson offering the second. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Music offered a motion to adopt the minutes from the September 3, 2024 Tentative Budget Hearing. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt the minutes from the September 3, 2024 Regular Session. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Connell, EMS Director, discussed requests from the Pine Log and Ponce de Leon Fire Department for financial assistance with the cost of equipment repairs. The Board agreed by consensus to table this matter until the next meeting.

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, presented Ordinance 24-04 for the second public hearing. Chairman Good opened the public hearing. Mr. Feeney advised that this ordinance is amending the future land use category for four parcels on Joe Manning Road and North Highway 71 to commercial. He stated that this is for the Ponce de Leon Pilot Travel Center and that the first public hearing was conducted by the Holmes County Planning Board. Chairman Good closed the public meeting with no comments from the public. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt Ordinance 24-04 with Commissioner Music offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Ordinance 24-04)

Allara Mills Gutcher, The Planning Collaborative, presented Ordinance 24-02 for the second public hearing. Ms. Gutcher advised that the ordinance is to update the Holmes County Comprehensive

Plan and that the State has no objections to the update. Chairman Good opened the public hearing. Chairman Good closed the hearing with no comments from the public. Commissioner Music offered a motion to adopt Ordinance 24-02 with Commissioner Newsom offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Ordinance 24-02)

Clint Bruner, Florida Forest Service, presented the 2023-2024 Florida Forest Annual Report. He discussed the number of local forest fires and the fire control activities during the year.

(Report)

Melinda Gates, Interim Executive Director of the Choctawhatchee Estuary Program, presented proposed Resolution 24-24 designating the week of September 21 through September 28, 2024 as "National Estuaries Week" locally. She discussed the history and activities of the Estuary Board. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion for the Chairman to sign Resolution 24-24 with Commissioner Music offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 24-24)

Traci Corbin, Health Department Director, presented the 2024-2025 Health Department Contract and Fee Schedule for approval. She advised that no changes were made from the previous contract. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the contract and fee schedule with Commissioner Newsom offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Contract and Fee Schedule)

Traci Corbin, Health Department Director, stated that new legislation has moved septic permitting from the Health Department to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). She discussed the transition and how some local enforcement duties will remain with the Health Department.

Cliff Kimble, Esto Fire Department Chief, presented a request to increase Esto Fire Department's 2024-2025 appropriation from \$11,250 to \$15,000. He discussed the decision by the City of Esto to cut funding to the department, the department's response to County fire calls and the money needed for equipment repairs. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to increase the 2024-2025 funding to the Esto Fire Department to \$15,000 using next year's Board Contingencies. Commissioner Music offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Request)

Cliff Kimble, Esto Fire Department Chief, discussed the advantages of implementing a Fire Assessment Fee on citizens' annual property taxes. Discussion included that the fee is a tax on the citizens and that the fee was approved by voters in 1990 but never imposed. Rusty Williams, Supervisor of Elections, discussed the process to place the issue on a General Election ballot. No action was taken by on the Board on this matter.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented a draft of the Project Gateway Joint Venture Settlement Agreement which addresses the reimbursement of the County's expenses before annual appropriations to the Development Commission commence. Discussion included whether there is a conflict with Mr. Nolin representing the County in this issue while his law partner represents the Development Commission. Attorney Nolin recused himself from this matter. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion for a letter of engagement to be presented to Attorney Leonard Dietzen of Rumberger, Kirk & Caldwell authorizing him to handle this matter for the Board. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Letter)

David Corbin, Project Director, presented Resolution 24-25 approving the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) Traffic Signal Maintenance and Compensation Agreement. County Attorney Nate Nolin read Resolution 24-25 onto the record. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the resolution and agreement. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 24-25 & Agreement)

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, requested guidance for creating an exemption for a property owner placing a mobile home on their property for a family member. Discussion of this matter included the following:

- Current code only allows for one residence per parcel
- Additional dwelling could affect property owner's insurance, mortgage, and taxes
- Hiring a land-use attorney to offer a legal opinion on the matter
- Creating a waiver for the property owner to execute
- Legal requirements for multiple dwellings to be placed on one parcel
- Family Exception Law is only applicable if the property is being parceled and deeded
- Board deciding the matter on a case-by-case basis
- Revisiting the issue while updating the Land Development Regulations (LDR)
- Setting parameters and rules for the exception so decisions are not arbitrary

The following citizens discussed this matter:

- Allara Mills Gutcher, The Planning Collaborative
- Nate Nolin, County Attorney

- Sam Bailey, Holmes County Clerk

The Board tabled this matter until later in the meeting.

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, advised that the Government Efficiency Center (GEC) Ag Center groundbreaking is still scheduled for Wednesday, October 2nd at 3:30 p.m.

Jon Sims, Dewberry Engineers, stated that the surrounding counties do not have a policy for clearing tree limbs from county roads but simply follows the standard set by Florida statutes. Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented a proposed Holmes County Policy and Procedures for Maintenance of County Roads based on the Florida statutes. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt the policy with Commissioner Newsom offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Policy)

Rod Adams, Melvin Engineering, presented Resolution 24-26 and Supplemental Agreement No. 1 for the CR 181 Phase 1 SCOP project. He advised that the supplemental agreement reduces the grant amount by \$477,918 due to the lower construction bids received from contractors. County Attorney Nate Nolin read Resolution 24-26 onto the record. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the resolution and agreement with Commissioner Music offering a second. Commissioners Newsom, Music and Good voted yes with Commissioner Erickson voting no. The motion passed.

(Resolution 24-26 & Supplemental Agreement)

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, advised that the Government Efficiency Center (GEC) Ag Center groundbreaking may need to be rescheduled due to a conflict with Representative Shane Abbott's schedule.

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, requested that the Board advance the \$75,000 deposit due on the GEC Ag Center metal building. He stated that the building cannot be ordered until the deposit is received and that the advance payment process through the Department of Commerce is delaying progress. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to pay the building deposit using Board Contingencies. Commissioner Music offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Newsom discussed awarding an exception to the property owners at 1700 North Highway 81 to allow family member, Forrest Somerset, to place a mobile home on the property. County Attorney Nate Nolin advised that the property owners and Mr. Somerset will need to sign a waiver as to the potential problems with placing an additional dwelling on the parcel. John Feeney, Contracted Planner, stated that the services of a land-use attorney is still recommended. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to award to an exception for 1700 North Highway 81 contingent on receiving the signed waivers. Commissioner Music offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, stated that four proposals were received in response to the Disaster Recovery Administration Services RFP 24-03. The four proposals received were from The Integrity Group, Wheeler Emergency Management Consulting, Solix and Kent Smith Group. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to award the contract to Wheeler Emergency Management Consulting. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Proposal Available Upon Request)

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented Resolution 24-23 and the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) agreement authorizing the replacement of the bridge on County Road 183A over Sandy Creek. County Attorney Nate Nolin read Resolution 24-23 onto the record. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the resolution and agreement. Commissioner Erickson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

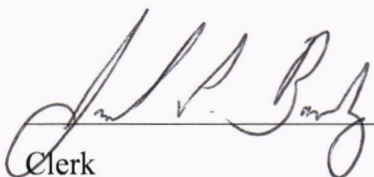
(Resolution 24-23 & Agreement)

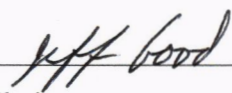
Nate Nolin, County Attorney, advised that the appeals process has not yet been added to the Outdoor Special Event Ordinance and that the required Business Impact Estimate will be posted on the County's website upon completion. The Board directed Attorney Nolin to move forward with the public hearings to adopt the ordinance contingent on adding the language that appeals will be heard by the Special Event Committee.

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to begin live streaming meetings on the Board's Facebook page. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Donnell Davidson, a private citizen, discussed House Bill 403 that regulates home businesses. Mr. Davidson stated that he was initially denied permits to add a home business to his property. John Feeney, Contracted Planner, explained the matter has been settled.

There being no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 10:24 a.m.


Clerk


Chairman