

December 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, Wilmer Stafford, Mitch Johnson, Brandon Newsom and Commissioner Earl Stafford, 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 Stafford 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 posted agenda:

- Commissioner Item A) Governor Holidays - added
- Commissioner Item B) Letter to Development Commission - added
- County Coordinator Item B) Audit Findings – deleted
- County Coordinator Item C) SCRAP & SCOP Update – added

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

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

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt the minutes from the December 9, 2024 Special Session. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Jon Creamer, Regional Director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation, requested approval for targeted surveillance and sampling for chronic wasting disease (CWD) in white-tail deer within a one-mile radius of the County property on Moss Road. Discussion included that no new cases of CWD have been identified since the initial positive finding in 2023. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to approve the targeted surveillance plan with Commissioner Newsom offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Plan)

Ashley Helmes, Holmes County 911 Coordinator, requested holding NGA 911, LLC in breach of contract for failure to install an operable transfer system as contracted. Ms. Helmes advised that all testing of NGA 911 systems have failed, other counties have already withdrawn their contracts and Holmes County 911 will continue to use the current system until another system can be procured. Nate Nolin, County Attorney, advised that finding NGA 911 in breach of contract is permissible. Commissioner

Newsom offered a motion finding NGA 911, LLC in breach of contract and to rescind Holmes County's contract. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, stated that the Legislative Delegation meeting will be hosted by Holmes County on Tuesday, January 7th, and that a legislative priorities list is needed for the 2025 appropriations by February. Discussion included the expectation of local assistance from the State and projects within the County to submit. John Tate, Holmes County Sheriff, discussed the need to expand the Holmes County Jail due to the inmate population consistently exceeding capacity. Jim King, a private citizen, discussed the need for improvements to the County's parks and boat ramps. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to request appropriations for improvements to the County's recreational facilities and an expansion to the Holmes County Jail. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, advised that the Rural Days at the Capitol are scheduled for March 19th and 20th. Discussion included the County displaying a booth at the event. The Board agreed by consensus for hotel reservations to be made for all five Commissioners and Mr. Corbin to attend the event.

Whitney Milburn, Board Administrative Assistant, advised that SCRAP and SCOP road improvement applications are due to the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) by March 14th. Discussion included dividing previously rejected projects into smaller phases and requesting completion of partially funded roads. The Board agreed by consensus for Project Director David Corbin to meet with DOT to discuss potential projects and past rejections.

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, presented an application for a lot split from Four Hills Woodlands LLC for parcel number 0913.00-000-000-005.000. He stated that the proposed split will divide the original 166-acre tract into two 83-acre parcels. Mr. Feeney recommended approval of the application as it meets all the requirements. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion approving the lot split with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Application)

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, presented an application for a lot split from Four Hills Woodlands LLC for parcel number 1302.00-000-000-001.000. He stated that the proposed split will separate an 83.38-acre parcel from the original 108-acre tract. Mr. Feeney recommended approval of the application as it meets all the requirements. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion approving the lot split with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Application)

John Feeney, Contract Planner, requested authority to approve lot splits for parcels no less than five acres. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to give Mr. Feeney the requested authority with the

stipulation that Project Director David Corbin sign off on the qualifying lot splits. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Erickson discussed the need to reconvene the Holmes County Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST). Discussion included the extra funding available by having an active team and the need to replace some of the team members. The Board agreed by consensus for Project Director David Corbin to reach out to DOT to coordinate hosting a CTST meeting.

Jon Sims, Dewberry Engineers, gave an update on the following projects:

- Peak Road Bridge and Roping Road Bridge – Projects are currently in the design phase
- Bonifay Gritney Road Phase 2 – Army Corps of Engineers permits expected to be approved early next year
- Government Efficiency Center – Conducting inspection services for the new Ag Center and the EMS building with more progress expected next year
- John Clark Road – Improvements have started and should be completed by May
- Ammons Road Culvert Project – Construction is complete on the FEMA project and a meeting will be scheduled with the FEMA Coordinator to close out the project

Rod Adams, Melvin Engineering, gave an update on the following projects:

- Busy Bee/Project Gateway – Road design is mostly complete but waiting on site design to finish
 - Construction of Busy Bee is slated to begin around December 2025
 - Busy Bee is the only business committed to Project Gateway at this time
- Ponce de Leon Pilot Travel Center – Design for road improvements is 30% complete
 - Final design plans to be completed by March with construction to begin in June
 - Permit to drill water lines under the railroad track could cost \$90,000
 - Additional property may be needed for the road
 - Pilot wants grant funding to pay for the retention pond; a MOU with the County or municipality will be needed for continued road and pond maintenance
- SCRAP and SCOP submittals – Recommend submitting County Road 173 for DOT grant funding and discussed finding other funding options for SCRAP and SCOP rejections
- Northdale Subdivision – RIF grant funding was not awarded for the drainage project

Jake Mathis, Melvin Engineering, gave an update on the following projects:

- Bonifay Chipley Road – Construction proceeding on schedule but have run into problems with existing utilities

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to submit Bonifay Chipley Road Phase 2 for SCOP funding. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

John Feeney, Alday-Howell Engineering, gave an update on the following projects:

- Dogwood Lake Dam #2 – Designed an emergency repair that involves a permanent structure that will allow the lake to be drawn down in an emergency
 - Project has been submitted for permitting
 - Discussed obtaining easements or shifting property lines with property owners to give the County full access to the structure
- Resilient Florida Vulnerability Study Grant – The study is identifying areas within the County prone to flooding and the next step will be modeling to identify threatened assets
- County Road 185 – The design is complete and construction funding is available July 2025
- County Road 181 Phase 1 & 2 – Project is in construction phase
- Old Mill Road – Design to be completed by April with construction to begin immediately upon completion of the design

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, advised that the Holmes County Land Development Regulations (LDR) update will begin after the first of the year.

Brian Lemieux, Hanson Professionals, gave an update on the following projects:

- Spring Valley/Turbeville Rd Bridge Replacement – The plans are 90% complete with permit applications submitted
 - Work to obtain temporary easements from effected property owners are in progress
- John Clark Road – Design work completed, and project is now in construction.

Brian Lemieux, Hanson Professionals, advised the Board to get involved in the Emerald Coast Regional Council's Regional Rural Transportation Committee for an increased probability of grant funding and appropriations approval. He discussed appropriations versus DOT SCRAP/SCOP for road improvements.

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, discussed submitting Highway 10A and County Road 177A for appropriations as those projects have been rejected for SCRAP/SCOP funding. Discussion included using LOGT funds to supplement the projects and updating the County's Five-Year Capital Improvement list. The Board agreed by consensus to schedule a workshop on this matter for January 7th at 5:00 p.m.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, advised that the property lines at Lake Cassidy have been re-flagged to include the swimming area. Mr. Nolin will meet with the property owners for final approval of the legal description.

Commissioner Erickson discussed closing the County offices Monday, December 23rd and Tuesday, December 31st and giving all County employees administrative leave in response to Governor DeSantis closing the state offices those days for Christmas and New Year's. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to give all County employees administrative leave Monday, December 23rd and Tuesday,


December 31st for their regularly scheduled work hours. EMS administrative personnel are to be given eight hours of leave and EMS first responders who are unable to take the time off will be paid for ten hours of administrative leave for that day. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Erickson discussed sending a letter to the Development Commission to express appreciation of their work to bring the Busy Bee to Holmes County. The letter will also request the Development Commission's plan to reimburse the County for the loan interest payments and property clearing expenses. Discussion included the options available to the County should the Development Commission fail to reimburse those expenditures. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion for the County to send the letter to the Development Commission with Commissioner Newsom offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Stafford advised that the Chatman Home Assistant Living Facility is having a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house on December 22nd.

There being no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m.


Clerk


Chairman