

April 15, 2025
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 item was added to the posted agenda:

- Commissioner Item B) Call Out Procedures

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

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt the minutes from the April 1, 2025 Regular Session. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Cody Land, a private citizen, discussed the public records request he submitted for the Commissioners' cell phone records. Discussion included redaction of private cell phone records. Nate Nolin, County Attorney, stated that a private cell phone used for County business becomes subject to a public records request.

Danny Exum, Tri-County Airport Authority Board, extended an invitation for the Board to attend the Community Outreach meeting hosted by the Airport Authority on April 24th.

Chairman Stafford opened the second public hearing for Ordinance 25-02. John Feeney, Contracted Planner, stated that the ordinance is to amend the land development code for the property surrounding the Tri-County Airport to create an airport impact zone. He advised the ordinance affects approximately 200 parcels and protects the air space above those parcels to a certain elevation. Mr. Feeney read the ordinance onto the record and recommended approval of the ordinance. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt Ordinance 25-02. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Ordinance 25-02)

The Board recognized the 2024-2025 Holmes County High School Girls' Varsity Basketball Team for being crowned Runner Up State Champions for the 2024-2025 season in Rural Class.

(Recognition)

The Board recognized the achievements of the 2024-2025 Holmes County Lady Blue Devils Weightlifting Team and Coach Kevin Womble.

(Recognition)

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, read proposed Resolution 25-15 recognizing the achievement of Emma Meredith for winning the Florida Varsity Weightlifting Olympic Style Championship and the Traditional Style Championship and declaring Wednesday, April 16, 2025 as *Emma Meredith Weightlifting Day*. Coach Kevin Womble announced that Miss Meredith has won five State weightlifting championships. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to adopt Resolution 25-15 with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 25-15)

Angie Purvee, Finance Director, presented Budget Amendment #1 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year for approval. She advised that the amendment brought on grant revenue, transferred money for items approved by the Board and moved money within departments for overspent line items. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion approving the budget amendment. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Budget Amendment #1)

Becky Marsh, Holmes County Library Director, presented three quotes for two new air conditioning units for the Holmes County Library. She advised that two of the library's three units have stopped working and parts are hard to find for the 22-year-old units. Keith Bennett, Holmes County Building Inspector, advised that specific details for the needed units are a requirement to ensure the quotes are for comparable units. Discussion included whether it would qualify as an emergency purchase and that the library will place the expenditure for a new roof on next year's budget. The Board agreed by consensus for Mr. Bennett to collect the required specifications for the needed units and the Board will convene a special session to determine the source of funds for the purchase.

(Quotes)

David Corbin, Project Director, presented a proposed permit fee schedule and procedures for the public to have access to Lake Cassidy. He also presented quotes for gates and a porta potty. Discussion of this matter included the following:

- Fountain of Youth Ranch owners are open to the decal process but want the entrance gated
- Procedure to allow access with a gated entrance
- Florida resident and out-of-state permit fees
- Source of maintenance funds for park
- Envelop honor system with cameras

- Discounts for County employees and County residents
- Walton County and game wardens assisting with law enforcement services for the area
- Enforcement of Ordinance 19-01 or adopting a new ordinance for Lake Cassidy
- Signage about decal requirement, parking and fines that may apply
- Consultation with State Attorney's office regarding willingness to enforce the ordinance

The following citizens discussed this matter:

- Nate Nolin, County Attorney
- Lori Patterson, private citizen
- Anthony Register, private citizen
- John Feeney, Contracted Planner
- Angela Dockery, Vortex Springs owner
- Keith Bennett, Holmes County Building Official
- John Tate, Holmes County Sheriff

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to charge Florida residents \$5 per year and out-of-state residents \$500 per year for a decal providing access to Lake Cassidy. Project Director David Corbin to report back to the Board about the number of decals that will be allowed for a year. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second. Commissioners Erickson, Wimer Stafford and Chairman Stafford voted yes with Commissioners Johnson and Newsom voting no. The motion passed. The Board agreed by consensus for County Attorney Nate Nolin and Mr. Corbin to clarify the County dirt to be delivered to the Lake Cassidy property as part of the mediated agreement with The Fountain of Youth Ranch.

(Permit Procedures and Quotes)

David Corbin, Project Director, advised that an alternate to serve on the Public Risk Management of Florida Property/Casualty Board of Directors needs to be appointed. Mr. Corbin currently serves on the board with the previous Administrative Assistant Whitney Milburn acting as alternate. Mr. Corbin recommended that a commissioner serve on the Board. Two members representing Holmes County need to serve on the Board and attend the quarterly meetings. Commissioner Johnson offered a motion to designate Holmes County Clerk Sam Bailey as the County's representative with Commissioner Wilmer Stafford appointed as an alternate. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second. Commissioners Wilmer Stafford, Johnson and Chairman Stafford voted yes, and Commissioners Newsom and Erickson voted no. The motion passed.

David Corbin, Project Director, presented a \$300 proposal from Land Engineering Services to re-stake the existing corners of the Dogwood Lakes boat ramp. Discussion included how to ensure the stakes are not moved again. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to accept the \$300 proposal to re-stake the corners of the Dogwood Lakes boat ramp using Board Contingencies. Commissioner Newsom offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Proposal)

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, presented a proposed Secondary Residence Exemption Request from Mason Johnson for Parcel ID Number 1312.00-000-000-007.000. Mr. Feeney stated that the exemption would allow a permanent residence on the parcel for Mr. Johnson's son. He stated that the request met all the requirements and recommended approval. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion approving the exemption with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Exemption Request)

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, presented the following updates on the 2025 Florida Legislative Session:

- \$500,000 in appropriations currently being considered for the Holmes County Jail expansion
- Term limit bill for county commissioners and school board members is moving forward and may be on the ballot for voter approval
- Senate Bill 818 requires counties to pay for the utility relocation for providers of broadband internet, cable, and video services when the location interferes with public roads. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion for the Chairman to sign a letter of opposition to the bill due to the negative effect on the County's road expenditures. Commissioner Erickson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.
- Bill 695 privatizing building officials' inspection services has a legislative meeting today
- Rural Renaissance Bill is being considered by the House today

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, advised that Holmes County Sheriff John Tate is meeting with Engineer Cliff Knauer to discuss design modifications to the EMS building portion of the Government Efficiency Center.

Jon Sims, Dewberry Engineers, advised he had received a list of twelve county roads in needs of re-striping. He stated that the cost for re-striping road edge lines is \$1,250 per mile for painted lines and \$5,400 per mile for thermoplastic. The quote for centerlines is \$1,650 per mile for painted lines and \$5,800 per mile for thermoplastic. Mr. Sims stated that Guettler and Guettler requested a reduced list of two to five roads before submitting a total quote. Discussion included budgeting for the expenditure next fiscal year, only re-striping the center line and contracting with Guettler and Guettler for continuing services. Mr. Sims will get information for a contract together for the next budget year.

Jon Sims, Dewberry Engineers, advised that the Army Corps of Engineers should approve the permit for Bonifay Chipley Road Phase 2 soon and then the project is ready to put out for bids.

Rod Adams, Melvin Engineering, presented the following recommendation for awarding the bid for the Pilot Travel Center infrastructure grant project:

- Break the project into multiple contracts

- Reduce the water main scope of work
- Award Part A to Southeast Construction for the adjusted bid amount of \$1,718,376.40
- Award Parts B thru D to Extreme Land Restoration for the adjusted bid amount of \$1,672,023.67
- Total project costs will be \$3,390,400.07
- Pilot has agreed to pay the approximately \$220,000 amount over budget
- Pilot has agreed to maintain the retention pond

Jack Rymer, Pilot Travel Centers, advised that construction of the Pilot should be completed within 150 days of the groundbreaking and discussed the impact to the County's tax revenue. Angela Dockery, property owner, discussed whether the recommended option will allow for future growth around the Pilot facility. Mr. Adams stated that the option will handle potential growth. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to award the bids as recommended by Melvin Engineering with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Recommendation)

John Feeney, Alday-Howell Engineering, discussed the design of the siphon system for the Dogwood Lake Dam #2 that gives a water level control in cases of emergency. He advised this design was in response to the failing dam in the small lake and that the repair is required by Water Management. Mr. Feeney stated that the estimate for the materials to complete the siphon system is around \$43,000 and that the County must advertise the permit notification. He advised that after the 21-day period to appeal the permit has expired the project can be bid out. Lori Patterson, Dogwood Lakes resident, discussed the low water level and litter in the big lake. Mr. Feeney stated that the level of the big lake cannot be addressed until the dam in the small lake is repaired. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to reimburse Alday-Howell the \$250 permit fee and pay for the approximately \$250 in advertising costs using Board Contingencies. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second. The motion passed with Commissioner Erickson abstaining from the vote.

(Abstain from Voting Form)

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented the proposed Interlocal Agreement for Oversight Services assigning oversight of EMS, E911 and Emergency Management to the Holmes County Sheriff. Attorney Nolin advised that the agreement had been revised to leave staffing decisions for these departments to the Sheriff's discretion. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion approving the agreement with Commissioner Newsom offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Agreement)

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, stated that the letter of support for the DOGE audit will be sent out this week. He advised that the County had received a second letter from the Governor's Office requesting

more County data for the DOGE audit with a May 2nd deadline. Attorney Nolin advised that he would work with the Clerk's Finance office and the auditors to supply the information requested.

(Letter)

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, discussed Florida Statute 119 regarding public records requests. He suggested keeping a log of all public records requests. Attorney Nolin stated that the recent release of public records containing unredacted private information on current and former County employees was an inadvertent disclosure and not willful. Discussion of this matter included the following:

- Public officials and private individuals are subject to making public records request
- Inadvertent disclosure versus willful penalties
- Modern Tech provided a statement maintaining that his actions ensued from complying with a request from the County to download the information
- Phones records are subject to public record request when used for County business
- Cell phone stipend versus County-owned cell phones

Keith Bennett, Holmes County Building Official, discussed the County's responsibility for the breach of information.

Commissioner Wilmer Stafford discussed the overspent Road Department sign budget and the need for signs in District 1. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to move \$1,000 from Road Department Contingencies to the Road Department sign budget. Commissioner Erickson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Newsom discussed the definition of a "call out" in the Holmes County Employee Policy and Procedures Manual. He requested clarification of what constitutes a "call out" and how it is to be paid. The matter is to be discussed on the next Board meeting.

There being no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:24 a.m.


Clerk


Chairman