

May 6, 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 Wilmer Stafford, Mitch Johnson, Brandon Newsom (late) 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 6:00 p.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 E) Holmes County Development Commission Appointment – deleted
- County Coordinator Item C) Government Efficiency Center – added
- County Coordinator Item D) FAC Annual Conference – added
- County Attorney Item A) LifeLock Quote - added

Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to adopt the amended agenda with Commissioner Johnson offering the second. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Johnson offered a motion to adopt the minutes from the April 11, 2025 Special Session and the April 15, 2025 Regular Session. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

The following property owners at Possum Trot and Fox Trot Trail campsites complained about the vehicles racing up the roads near their property and the parties held at the boat ramp. Discussion included the litter, damage to the roads and danger to the residents. Each person requested the Board's assistance with enforcing the posted signs:

- Allison Pitts
- Houston Harris
- Nancy Pitts

Richard Willsey, Happy Hollow Road resident, discussed the Board's responsibility to hold each commissioner accountable for their actions. He stated that disciplining a county employee during a Board meeting is unprofessional and should be done in private. Mr. Willsey also discussed actions County employees can take to protect their private information.

Angela Dockery, Vortex Springs owner, requested clarification on the number of days the County has to respond to a public records request. Nate Nolin, County Attorney, advised that the statute states that a response must be submitted in a "reasonable amount of time" and discussed the definition of the term.

Angela Dockery, Vortex Springs owner, requested that the Board grandfather in the Vortex Springs annual rodeo as exempt from the Outdoor Event Ordinance requirements. Discussion of this matter included:

- Pre-sold tickets are not offered for this event making the attendance number uncertain
- Ordinance does not allow grandfathering in events
- Effect of grandfathering in the rodeo on other events held in the County
- Amending the ordinance to include a notification for minor events
- Work and effort that went into creating the current ordinance
- Granting a one-time exception rather than grandfathering in the rodeo

The following citizen discussed this matter:

- John Feeney, Contracted Planner
- Megan Newsom
- Richard Willsey

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, advised that if the property owner states in good faith that the attendance has not exceeded 500 for the previous five years, then the event does not qualify for the Outdoor Event Ordinance requirements. The Board took no action on Ms. Dockery's request.

Alfred Sellers, Pittman Volunteer Fire Department, presented a statement that filling swimming pools for citizens in the community will no longer be offered. He advised that the department has never charged for the service but accepted donations. The donations have not covered the costs associated with filling the pools. Mr. Sellers requested guidance from the Board on how to handle the matter. The Board directed Mr. Sellers to talk with the Ponce de Leon Fire Department about the charges their department imposes for the service.

(Statement)

Keith Bennett, Holmes County Building Official, stated that a local air conditioning contractor was able to temporarily repair the Holmes County Library's two units. The cost to permanently repair the units will be approximately \$3,000. Mr. Bennett advised that he has the specifications should the Board wish to purchase two new units. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to pay for the repair using Board Contingencies. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Keith Bennett, Holmes County Building Official, presented a proclamation that Holmes County will partner with the International Code Council to declare May 2025 as *Building Safety Month*. He discussed the importance of promoting building safety and the activities planned for the month. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to adopt the proclamation with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Proclamation)

David Corbin, Project Director, presented the updated permit requirements for Lake Cassidy as approved by the Board at the last Regular Session. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford rescinded his second to the motion to charge Florida residents \$5 per year and out-of-state residents \$500 per year for a decal. Discussion of this matter included the following:

- Permit fee amount for Florida residents
- Reduced fees for senior citizens
- Litter complaints and efforts to keep the property clean
- 150 decals to be sold annually
- Gate to purchase for the entrance
- Obligation to deliver dirt
- Ordinance for Lake Cassidy
- Key card option versus gate code

Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to charge Florida residents \$100 per year and out-of-state residents \$500 per year for a decal providing access to Lake Cassidy. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously. The Board directed Project Director David Corbin to talk with the Fountain of Youth Ranch owners about cutting the existing dirt mounds in such a way to make walls in lieu of delivering more dirt. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to place a porta potty at Lake Cassidy for the quoted \$225.00 per month. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Permit Process)

David Corbin, Project Director, advised that the Department of Juvenile Justice is requesting a Holmes County representative to serve on the Circuit Advisory Board (CAB). Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to appoint Commissioner Johnson as the Holmes County member of the CAB. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer Green, Liberty Partners, advised that approval of the extension for the Government Efficiency Center (GEC) project to June 30, 2026 is still pending. She stated that a contract amendment is needed for GEC Ag Center building to confirm the completion date. Discussion included that the contract requires the building to be completed 240 days from the date on the Notice to Proceed. Trey Cook, Contracting Unlimited, explained that the metal building could not be ordered until the drawings were approved which delayed the project. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to have September 30, 2025 as the completion date. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer Green, Liberty Partners, stated that the Board previously approved using stone on the front of the GEC Ag Center building. She recommended that the Board revisit utilizing brick for the building based on new information provided by the contractor. Keith Bennett, Holmes County Building Official, and Trey Cook, Contracting Unlimited, discussed the potential problem with water damage when adhering

stone to the building. Kalyn Waters, Extension Service Director, requested that the plan for stone remain in place. Ms. Green advised that the design for the building was completed by Dewberry Engineering. The Board tabled this matter to the next meeting so that the engineer can advise on the best way to proceed.

Jennifer Green, Liberty Partners, stated that the budget for the GEC EMS building is \$740,000 from appropriations and obligated ARPA funds. Ms. Green presented the proposed floorplan for the new EMS building which has been approved by Sheriff John Tate. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion approving the EMS floorplan. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Floorplan)

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented a letter from Trey Cook of Contracting Unlimited requesting to terminate the contract addendum to construct the Government Efficiency Center EMS building. Jennifer Green, Liberty Partners, stated that Sheriff John Tate has agreed to manage the construction of the EMS building. Sheriff Tate discussed his plans to purchase a metal building and complete the project for less money than obligated. Commissioner Johnson offered a motion to terminate the contract addendum with Contracting Unlimited for the construction of the EMS building portion of the GEC project. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously. Ms. Green recommended hiring a construction manager to oversee completion of the project. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to advertise an RFP for a construction manager with Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Letter)

David Corbin, Project Director, recommended appointing a county representative to attend the Florida Association of Counties Annual Conference in June. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion to appoint Commissioner Erickson as the County's representative to attend the conference. Commissioner Johnson offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, presented a proposed subdivision application from John Bird for Parcel ID Number 0519.00-000-000-004.200. The subdivision will create seven new parcels totaling 46.53 acres and meets all requirements. Mr. Feeney recommended approval of the application. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to approve the subdivision application with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Application)

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, proposed implementing a Memorial Marker Permit process that mirrors the Florida Department of Transportation's process. Discussion of this matter included the following:

John Feeney, Contracted Planner, proposed implementing a Memorial Marker Permit process that mirrors the Florida Department of Transportation's process. Discussion of this matter included the following:

- Markers would be placed in the County's maintained road right-of-way
- Infringement on property owners' rights
- Possible interference with road maintenance
- Permit fees to impose
- Road Department's ability to build the signs

The Board agreed by consensus to table this matter until the next Board meeting.

Jake Mathis, Melvin Engineering, presented the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Holmes County, Pilot Travel Centers, the Town of Ponce de Leon, and Dockery Land Holding LLC outlining the obligations of each party to ensure the successful completion of the Ponce de Leon Pilot Travel Center. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the MOU with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(MOU)

Jake Mathis, Melvin Engineering, presented the Agreement with Southeast Construction to complete Part A of the Pilot Travel Center infrastructure grant project. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the agreement with Commissioner Johnson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Agreement)

Jake Mathis, Melvin Engineering, presented the Agreement with Extreme Land Restoration to complete Parts B, C and D of the Pilot Travel Center infrastructure grant project. Commissioner Newsom offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the agreement with Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Agreement)

Jake Mathis, Melvin Engineering, advised that the contractors are currently installing base rock on the Bonifay Gritney Road SCOP project. A request for supplemental funds has been submitted to DOT to repair problems areas in the road.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented a quote received from LifeLock due to the recent release of public records containing unredacted private information on current and former County employees. He advised that the County has a cyber risk policy through Public Risk Management (PRM) that will cover the cost for each affected employee to obtain the identity theft protection if it is determined there was a

security breach. PRM is calling it a “security incident”, but not a breach. Mr. Nolin advised that he is working with local law enforcement on the matter and is working to obtain signed affidavits from each party that obtained the flash drive with the unredacted information. Mr. Nolin will discuss the matter further at the next meeting.

(Quote)


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. Nate Nolin, County Attorney, will return to the next Board meeting to clarify the issue.

Commissioner Newsom requested an update on Waste Pro and Waste Management paying the County’s garbage franchise fee. Nate Nolin, County Attorney, advised that each company has agreed to pay the franchise fee upon receipt of an invoice. The Board directed Board Secretary Judi White to send both companies a franchise packet.

Commissioner Newsom discussed the policy update that allows hiring one Road Department employee per district without having a CDL. Discussion included that the employee has 24 months to obtain a CDL.

Commissioner Newsom discussed the efforts to establish a Holmes County Aerospace Advancement Committee. He stated that there is funding out there for small counties to develop a strategy to attract aerospace and advanced manufacturing enterprises. Discussion included reaching out to the Tri-County Airport Authority about their interest in this opportunity. This matter was tabled until the next meeting so that Brittany Brown can explain this venture further.

There being no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.


Clerk


Chairman