

5:00 p.m.

The Suwannee County Board of County Commissioners met on the above date and time for a regular meeting and the following were present: Chairman Len Stapleton; Commissioner Don Hale; Commissioner Clyde Fleming; Commissioner Travis Land; and Commissioner Franklin White. Keith Gentry, Chief Finance Director; Eric Musgrove, Deputy Clerk; Randy Harris, County Administrator; and James W. Prevatt, Jr., County Attorney, were also present.

Chairman Stapleton called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**The first item on the agenda** was to hold the election of Chairman for FY 2021-2022. (New Chairman will begin presiding over meetings on November 15<sup>th</sup>, or sooner in case of an emergency).

Commissioner Fleming nominated Commissioner White.

**Commissioner Land moved to elect Commissioner White as Chairman for FY 2021-2022.**

**Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

**The second item on the agenda** was to hold the election of Vice-Chairman for FY 2021-2022.

Commissioner Hale nominated Commissioner Stapleton.

**Commissioner Hale moved to elect Commissioner Stapleton as Vice-Chairman for FY 2021-2022.**

**Commissioner Land seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

**MINUTES:**

**The third item on the agenda** was to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2021 Grant Administrator and Engineering Tabulation Meeting; October 19, 2021 Regular Meeting; October 22, 2021 Special Meeting; and October 27, 2021 CDBG-CV Grant Public Hearing.

Commissioner Land asked for clarification on the tabulation meeting since none of the commissioners were present. County Attorney Prevatt replied that normally such meetings were not required to be approved by the Board, but because it was related to the CDBG grant administration process, it had been decided that it was necessary to approve them.

County Administrator Harris discussed the CDBG tabulation meeting in some detail.

**Commissioner Land moved to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2021 Grant Administrator and Engineering Tabulation Meeting; October 19, 2021 Regular Meeting; October 22, 2021 Special Meeting; and October 27, 2021 CDBG-CV Grant Public Hearing. Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

**CONSENT:**

**The fourth item on the agenda** was to approve payment of \$2,729,717.62 in processed invoices.

**The fifth item on the agenda** was adoption of a Resolution supporting the Florida Association of Counties' Access 67 Initiative for affordable and reliable high-speed internet. **(Resolution No. 2022-08)**

**The sixth item on the agenda** was approval of a Task Order with North Florida Professional Services, Inc. for engineering services associated with 80<sup>th</sup> Terrace and 139<sup>th</sup> Drive paving. Budget impact: funded by FDOT. **(Agreement No. 2022-08)**

**The seventh item on the agenda** was approval of Supplemental Agreement No. 2 with the Florida Department of Transportation for additional funding for the Branford Sidewalk project, and adoption of an enabling resolution. **(Agreement No. 2021-26-02 and Resolution No. 2022-09)**

**The eighth item on the agenda** was approval of an agreement with Engineering Solutions International for daily operations of County-owned facilities (water and wastewater utilities).

This item was pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

**The ninth item on the agenda** was to declare as surplus a +/- 6.30-acre parcel located on SR 51 and authorize sale of same. Parcel ID No. 24-04S-11E-12030-009000.

This item was pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

**Commissioner White moved to approve consent items 4-7. Commissioner Fleming seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

**The eighth item on the agenda** was approval of an agreement with Engineering Solutions International for daily operations of County-owned facilities (water and wastewater utilities).

Commissioner Land asked if this was the position that had previously been approved for an in-house employee. County Administrator Harris replied that it was, but the company would provide the position for a much lower price.

Discussion ensued on the prices and potential to combine the position with other communities.

County Administrator Harris noted the drastic difference in prices for the position and between the bids that had been received after public advertisement.

**Commissioner Fleming moved to approve an agreement with Engineering Solutions International for daily operations of County-owned facilities (water and wastewater utilities). Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (Agreement No. 2022-09)**

**The ninth item on the agenda** was to declare as surplus a +/- 6.30-acre parcel located on SR 51 and authorize sale of same. Parcel ID No. 24-04S-11E-12030-009000.

Commissioner Land asked if the adjoining property had been sold and if an appraisal had been done. County Administrator Harris replied that the adjoining property had been sold and the property would be declared surplus first, then appraised.

As there were some questions over the process, County Attorney Prevatt discussed the surplus process being handled through the brokerage firm (Poole Realty).

Much discussion ensued on the surplus process.

By Board consensus, it was agreed that surplus property bids would be received for 90 days from the listing date.

Mr. Bo Hancock, 6135 Wiggins Road, asked about who, how, and why property was declared surplus. County Administrator Harris replied that County administration reviewed properties and determined if there was a use for them, and if not, they went on a list that was ultimately approved by the Board.

**Commissioner White moved to declare as surplus a +/- 6.30-acre parcel located on SR 51 and authorize sale of same. Parcel ID No. 24-04S-11E-12030-009000. Commissioner Fleming seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

**COMMISSIONERS ITEMS:**

Chairman Stapleton asked for Mr. Jimmy Norris, Economic Development Director, to discuss several items.

Mr. Norris noted that by 2030, it was estimated that an additional 4 million people would move to Florida who would require an additional 2 million jobs. Florida was now the 15<sup>th</sup>-largest economy in the world, just above Mexico. Mr. Norris recognized Mrs. Charissa Setzer from his office for her graduation from marketing college as a Travel Marketing Professional and presented her with an award.

Chairman Stapleton called Mr. Wayne Hannaka to speak.

Mr. Wayne Hannaka, 11883 93<sup>rd</sup> Road, discussed the closing of internet cafes and thanked the Board for making the decision to do so. He noted that since the County had shut down the internet cafes, they were moving into the city limits until the City of Live Oak closed them as well.

Chairman Stapleton played an audio clip from a four-star admiral at a commencement ceremony regarding veterans and then asked Undersheriff Buddy Williams to speak.

Undersheriff Buddy Williams discussed the Crosses for Our Community Project to honor veterans for sponsorships of \$60 per cross.

Harry C. Gray, III, discussed his father's military service in World War II and then discussed the American Legion's support and recognition of veterans.

The Board thanked the American Legion and related service groups for their work with veterans, veterans for their service to their country, and then paused for pictures.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**The tenth item on the agenda** was to discuss, with possible Board action, appointment of a commissioner and staff member to serve on Access 67 County Champion.

County Administrator Harris stated that that the group was related to the extension of broadband throughout the State. He suggested Jimmy Norris as the staff member.

**Commissioner White moved to appoint Commissioner Land and Jimmy Norris to serve on Access 67 County Champion. Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

**The eleventh item on the agenda** was to discuss, with possible Board action, authorization to obtain a soil report for the soccer field on 72<sup>nd</sup> Trace.

County Administrator Harris stated that the soil report was necessary to assist with appraising the property for surplus, and the lowest quote was from Universal Engineering Services for \$2,957.00.

Commissioner White suggested that the Board spend no further money on the property and instead keep it for future use.

Commissioner Land agreed with Commissioner White's comments.

Commissioner Fleming agreed with previous members' comments and discussed the soil report.

Commissioner Hale had no problem keeping the property for now.

**By Board consensus, it was agreed to keep the property as County property for now and not perform a soil report.**

**The twelfth item on the agenda** was Additional Agenda Items.

There was one additional agenda item:

**The first additional agenda item** was to approve an LED lighting agreement with Florida Power and Light Company to install streetlights at the intersection of US 90 and CR 137.

County Administrator Harris noted that the Florida Department of Transportation would pay for the installation of the lights and the Board would be responsible for the light bill.

**Commissioner Land moved to approve an LED lighting agreement with Florida Power and Light Company to install streetlights at the intersection of US 90 and CR 137. Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (Agreement No. 2022-10)**

Commissioner Land stated that he had been working with FDOT for the intersection of CR 250 and Highway 51 that was the scene of several deadly accidents, and the State had approved the lighting.

Some discussion ensued on various lighting projects on roads.

**The thirteenth item on the agenda** was public concerns and comments. [Filling Comment Card required and forwarded to Chairman or County Administrator. Individual speakers from audience allowed three (3) minutes and a single representative or spokesperson allowed seven (7) minutes to speak following recognition by Chairman and must speak from the podium – one (1) trip to podium].

Mr. Bo Hancock was concerned with the issue of wage compression with County employees, especially with recent voting initiatives that would increase the minimum wage to \$15 over the next few years. He stated that the County would begin losing the older and more qualified employees because

they were only getting paid slightly more than new hires. Mr. Hancock suggested a plan approved by the Board to assist County employees.

Chairman Stapleton noted that there had been some discussion about holding quarterly workshops to discuss such issues.

Much discussion ensued on the issue, especially as it related to the drastic inflation that had been affecting the country lately in addition to the minimum wage increase.

County Administrator Harris stated that a workshop would be scheduled once additional information had been received.

Mr. Gray invited the Board and citizens to visit the American Legion.

Mr. Greg Scott, Recreation Director/Airport Manager, updated the Board on a flag repository at Veterans' Park for flags that are retired. He also discussed the recent rodeo held in Suwannee County and thanked the many sponsors for their work.

**The fourteenth item on the agenda** was Administrator's comments and information.

County Administrator Harris had nothing to discuss.

**The fifteenth item on the agenda** was Board Members' inquiries, requests, and comments.

Commissioner White noted that the Gwinn Brothers had been recognized by a national magazine for their work.

Commissioner Fleming thanked the Board, various employees, and citizens for their service.

Commissioner Land echoed the sentiments of the rest of the Board, thanked veterans for their service, those who were honoring veterans' memories, and for the commissioners.

Commissioner Hale echoed the sentiments of the rest of the Board and discussed the rodeo.

Chairman Stapleton thanked Chief Eddie Hand for Fire Rescue's work with the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park during their Hulaween Festival. He also noted that Wellborn would be holding its

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first annual Cornbread Festival over the weekend and expected a nice event. Chairman Stapleton discussed his time as chairman and thanked the Board for their support over the past two years.

**Commissioner Hale moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Fleming seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

ATTEST

  
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BARRY A. BAKER  
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

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FRANKLIN WHITE, CHAIRMAN  
SUWANNEE COUNTY BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS