

JANUARY 28, 2003 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 at 8:00 a.m. in the Boardroom of the Walton County Courthouse.

The following Board members were present: Larry Jones, Chair, Tim Pauls, Vice-Chair, Commissioner Lane Rees, Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen, and Commissioner Ro Cuchens. Mr. Michael Underwood, County Administrator, Attorney Gary Vorbeck, Director of Legal Services and Ms. Martha Ingle, Clerk of Courts, were also present.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to approve the consent agenda consisting of the following items. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

1. EAL Approval	
General Fund	\$ 677,802.40
County Transportation	\$ 287,843.00
Fine & Forfeiture	\$ -
Section 8 Housing	\$ 118,176.45
N.W. Mosquito Control	\$ 3,420.46
W. Co. Library	\$ 24,593.47
Recreation Plat Fee	\$ 118.36
Solid Waste Enterprise	\$ 318,085.89
Mossy Head VFD	\$ 1,995.22
Glendale VFD	\$ 2,009.80
Darlington VFD	\$ 3,072.76
Liberty VFD	\$ 779.97
Red Bay VFD	\$ 1,822.34
Local Option Gas Tax	\$ 21,383.60
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 62,217.67
SHIP	\$ 34,335.07
Tourist Dev. Council	\$ 63,865.41
Mott Sign Grant	\$ -
Debt Service Hospital	

Spec. Law Enforcement	\$	-
Driftwood Debt Serv.	\$	9,000.00

2. Resolution to Amend the Budget
3. Surplus Property Request

Mr. Ron Book, Lobbyist, appeared before the commissioners with an update on his lobbying efforts. He stated that he feels Walton County has faired well, although having some items vetoed. Mr. Book stated that Governor Bush commented that Florida is in its worst economic state ever. He stated that Walton County needs to be thankful for Senator Clary and Senator Peaden who have been a tremendous help to Walton County. He does not believe that very many of this year’s projects will be funded as there will be many budget cuts. Mr. Book stated that Walton County must be prepared to present the projects that have the highest chance of being approved. Issues relating to water are of high priority to the Governor. The Governor feels that water is an appropriate issue to fund.

Mr. Book spoke about transportation issues, economic development, and emergency management. Mr. Book does not feel economic development is a leading priority to the House and Senate. He anticipates the Legislature taking Emergency Management monies away from the Department of Community Affairs and giving it to the Regional Planning Council, which will award grants to the local governments. In closing, Mr. Book stated that he has worked hard to represent Walton County.

Mr. Underwood questioned Mr. Book regarding the changes that will affect Walton County on the local level. Mr. Book stated that he is very concerned about the future of local government. He stated that the commissioners have been very effective in

Tallahassee in the past and encouraged them to continue to visit and be familiar with the issues.

Mr. Underwood spoke about the need for widening Highway 98. He explained that all the traffic concurrency is used near the Okaloosa-Walton County line and stated that the improvements are not part of the five-year plan. Mr. Book stated that a new DOT Secretary is soon to be appointed and he will arrange a meeting to discuss the issue. Mr. Book stated that speaking with the Delegation is very important.

Commissioner Pauls questioned how the Department of Community Affairs is being divided and where it is going. Mr. Book stated that the majority of the Department would be moved to the Department of State. Ms. Ingle questioned if the funds would also be transferred. Mr. Book stated that that funds would be taken from DCA and given to the Regional Planning Council.

Chairman Jones welcomed Ms. Deborah Thatcher, Walton County's new Public Information Officer.

Mr. Jim Brewer, Healthmark Regional Hospital, appeared before the Board with an update on the hospital. He spoke about their facility and the new modern technology they are using. He also explained how well the new CAT Scan and MRI equipment works. Mr. Brewer stated that they are currently building a Medical Arts Building to house the physicians. Statistics show that they have had a 32% growth rate. He explained that they are working with employers in Walton County to help determine what the health care needs are in order to provide better service.

Mr. Brewer spoke about the costs of health care and stated that they have not increased their charges since opening the hospital in 1999. He said they have experienced

staff that can assist patients with insurance. Mr. Brewer asked the commissioners to encourage their employees to utilize the services at Healthmark Hospital.

Ms. Mary King, Public Relations Person for Healthmark Hospital, addressed the commissioners regarding the services provided at Healthmark. She stated that she has been speaking with people in the community trying to determine what type of services the hospital needs to provide.

Commissioner Pauls questioned Mr. Brewer about the possibility of providing maternity services. Mr. Brewer stated that there are currently about 380 births in Walton County. It would require about 680 births and two Obstetricians to provide maternity services.

Chairman Jones called to order the advertised public hearing to consider a modification to the CDBG contract with the Department of Community Affairs.

Mrs. Angie Biddle, Grants Coordinator, explained that the contract was for the paving of ten (10) roads, eight of which have been completed. The county was unsuccessful in obtaining right-of-way for the other two and therefore they cannot be paved. Ms. Biddle stated that the contract needs to be closed out in order to allow the county to apply for future grants.

Mr. Underwood stated that extensive efforts were made to obtain the right of way, however, the property owners would not agree. Commissioner Rees questioned if it could be taken by eminent domain. Mr. Barry stated that it is the county's policy not to take property by eminent domain. He also stated that there is sufficient paving width, however, there is not sufficient space for drainage.

Ms. Estelle Harrell commented that no one should be made to give up their personal property.

Mr. Don Crim questioned if any other roads would replace these two. Mrs. Biddle explained that the roads cannot be changed or substituted. She further explained that in the future they would obtain signatures of those willing to give property for right of way, in order to have their road paved, before proceeding with the grant process.

There was no further discussion and the public hearing was closed.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve the request to amend the contract with the Department of Community Affairs and close the contract. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. William Imfeld, Financial Director, appeared before the Board with a request to roll forward \$186,690.00 of unspent grant monies into the current fiscal year. He also requested to transfer \$209,610.00 from Reserves into the current budget for economic development.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pauls to adopt a resolution (2003-04) amending the budget to roll forward \$186,690 for SHIP funds and \$209,610 for economic development. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. James Robbins, District 2 resident, appeared before the Board requesting that the District 2 commissioner's office not be relocated. He felt that the money could be used better on something else. Mr. Robbins also commented that the new location is in a wetland area. Commissioner Pridgen commented that he will be able to serve his constituents better from the new location. Mr. Underwood commented that the

commissioners are policy makers and don't need to be directly involved with the day-to-day operations of the road crews. Mr. Barry stated that the location is not in a wetland.

Chairman Jones welcomed Herman Walker and Gene Ryan, former commissioners.

Mr. Walker commented that the districts have now been divided into three zones and agreed that a commissioner should have their own office location separate from the Zone Office.

Mr. Fred Thompson addressed the Board regarding serious problems on CR 1883. He stated that he had contacted Mr. Barry several times, however, he has not received any help. Mr. Thompson explained that the road has major cracks across the width of the road that are very dangerous.

Mr. Barry stated that he contacted Koch Paving Solutions regarding the problem, who then went and inspected the road. He stated that the road was paved with no base. Mr. Barry stated that there is no way to patch the road and it would cost about \$1 million to repair it. The Board directed Mr. Barry to make an attempt at temporarily filling the cracks.

Mr. Bill Dorsey, resident of the Blue Pond community, felt that the county is aware of the dangerous situation and stated that they need to make an attempt to repair it for safety reasons.

Mr. J.D. Brown suggested the county completely strip the road and place a dolomite surface on it until it can be paved.

Discussion was held regarding what could be done to correct the problem. Suggestions were made that the criteria of the road-paving list could be changed or

monies could be taken from reserves. Commissioner Pauls commented that all county roads are of equal importance and the list should not be continually changed because of another emergency. The Board directed Mr. Barry to look into various options in order to improve the problem on CR 1883 until a long-term solution can be made.

Ms. Erica Teets, Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Board, appeared before the Board with their recommendations for the following appointments to serve as Ex-Officio members.

Bill Horn, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Rick Holden, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Crystal Steele, Florida Department of Health
John Bente, Florida DEP, Division of Recreation and Parks

Commissioner Pauls commented on the county's difficulties in obtaining permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He felt that Mr. Holden would not have time to serve on the Board.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Rees to appoint Mr. Bill Horn, Ms. Crystal Steele, and Mr. John Bente to serve on the Coastal Dune Land Advisory Board. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Rees felt that it would be important to have someone from the Army Corps of Engineers to serve on the Board, if not Mr. Holden, then someone else that has time to serve. Chairman Jones asked Ms. Teets to bring another name back to the Board at a later date.

Mr. Brad Pickles, South Walton Tourist Development Council, requested approval to advertise for bids for the 2003 Dune Vegetation Project. The Beach

Management Feasibility Study recommended planting native vegetation for dune recovery. The project will be funded through the tourist tax.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Cuchens to approve for the TDC to advertise bids to engage a firm for the Dune Vegetation Project. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Pickle also requested that the Board approve a contract with Floridian Construction in the amount of \$44,223.00 for the St. Joe Dune Walkover. He stated that the walkover is on county owned property.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pauls to approve the low bid to Floridian Construction in the amount of \$44,223.00 for construction of the St. Joe Dune Walkover. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Ms. Camille Tharpe, Governmental Services Group, appeared before the Board regarding the possible MSBU for Lake Tantara and Imperial Lakes. She stated that her firm is prepared to assist the county with implementing the assessment programs upon receipt of Notice to Proceed.

Commissioner Cuchens questioned the flexibility in collecting the assessments from the property owners. Ms. Tharpe stated that there are several collection methods that could be implemented once the amount is determined. Commissioner Cuchens voiced concern for those property owners who live on a fixed income and their ability to pay the assessment. Ms. Tharpe stated that a hardship program could also be set up.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pauls to approve a contract with Governmental Service Group for implementing the MSBU assessments for

Lake Tantara and Imperial Lakes. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

The commissioners recessed briefly.

Mr. William Imfeld, Financial Director, appeared before the Board with his division update. He stated that they are beginning the preparations for the fiscal year 2004 budget. He presented a handout showing the amount of reserves in each budget for a total of \$13 million. This reflects about three months worth of operating budget.

Mr. Ronnie Bell, Emergency Response Director, presented the proposed contract with Paxton for animal control services. He explained that Paxton will provide pick-up of the animals and hold them for Walton County. Commissioner Cuchens advised that he had been contacted and asked to postpone adopting the agreement. Mr. Bell was unaware and stated that he would research the issue further. No action was taken.

Mr. Bell presented his division update for the commissioner's review. Mr. Bell also presented information relating to the Small County EMS Grant, which is projected to bring in \$21,000.00. The funding is divided between South Walton and Walton County EMS. Walton County is requesting approval to utilize the funds to purchase three (3) Dual Channel IV Pumps and South Walton would like to purchase a cardiac monitor.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pauls to approve the recommendation to purchase new equipment as stated using funding from the Small County Grant. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Russ Barry, Public Works Director, updated the commissioners on activities in his division. He stated that the landfill remediation project is complete. He also

advised that they are still collecting costs for the Camp Creek Bridge replacement and advised that they will be about \$200,000 under the contract price by performing the work in-house. Turkey Creek Bridge is progressing well and the road should be reopened in February. Mr. Barry stated that he is awaiting permits from DEP for Nelson Bridge. He expects work to begin soon and be completed within 90 days as agreed upon with Eglin AFB. Davidson Road has been completed and work is continuing on Springhill. Work will begin immediately on Thompson Road.

Mr. Walker questioned the progress on Collinsworth Road. Mr. Barry stated that it is on the schedule following J.D. Miller Road.

Mr. Barry presented information to the commissioners regarding road paving capabilities. Paving is based upon the crews preparing the roads for paving, which is the most time consuming. He stated that he is looking for ways to increase the amount of paving throughout the county. Mr. Barry presented several options available to address the situation.

Mr. Walker commented that some of the delays are caused by DEP while waiting to obtain necessary permits for paving of certain road. Mr. Ryan also commented on problems that impact paving.

Chairman Jones stated that he would like to see staff look at the scheduled road-paving list to determine how the roads on the list can be paved in a timely manner.

Commissioner Pauls stated that a commitment was made to pave the roads on the list and the county needs to find a way to get them paved. He voiced his appreciation to Mr. Barry for his work and stated that it is critical to move forward. A suggestion was

made to hold a workshop to discuss road paving issues as well as the necessary funding mechanism.

The commissioners asked Mr. Barry to bring back a cost estimate for all of the roads on the list. Commissioner Cuchens stated that it might be beneficial to the county to bid out some of the projects in order to move forward. Mr. Walker suggested adopting a procedure for obtaining right-of-way before advertising for any paving bids. Commissioner Pauls stated that the paving schedule needs to be updated so that everyone is aware of which roads are currently on the list for paving. Commissioner Cuchens again requested that cost estimates be provided for paving to determine what funding is needed. The Board directed Mr. Barry to prepare a report with the estimated costs and various options for paving the roads on the current road paving list to be presented to the Board within 30 days.

Mr. Barry presented a request on behalf of the New Harmony Hunting Club. The club is sponsoring a special deer hunt for handicap people. They are requesting the use of a backhoe for the weekend to prepare the site for wheelchairs. A county employee will operate the equipment.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve the request by the New Harmony Hunting Club for the use of a backhoe and allow the county employee to operate it. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Attorney Vorbeck advised that it would be best to consider him on duty while operating the equipment and allow him to receive compensation for it. The use of the equipment is serving a public purpose.

Mr. Barry requested approval to purchase an Aqua Barrier. Funding will be taken from the Public Works Budget to cover the cost.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to authorize the purchase of an Aqua Barrier in the amount of \$18,000.00. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Barry presented the following three bids for the rebuild of CR 3280: Glenn T. Warren - \$1,974,967; C.W. Roberts - \$1,538,586; APAC - \$1,743.371 and recommended the low bid.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Cuchens to allow Mr. Barry to begin negotiations with C.W. Roberts, low bidder, not to exceed the bid amount. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Barry reported problems to the Board regarding Church Street Bridge, which is under water. Parts needed to repair the bridge amount to approximately \$54,250.00.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to approve the purchase of bridge materials in the amount of \$54,250.00. from Contech Construction Materials for Church Street Bridge. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Michael Bomar, Hartman & Associates, appeared before the Board regarding the flooding in Hidden Harbor Subdivision. Mr. Barry stated that Hartman & Associates had previously assisted the county in applying to the Department of Environmental Protection for an Urban Stormwater Retrofit Project for that area. The project grant was awarded in the amount of \$265,000.00 of which \$60,000.00 would be in-kind services provided by the county. Mr. Bomar stated that \$30,000.00 of the in-kind service is

wetland mitigation property credits from the Bunker site. Mrs. Biddle is currently working on the contract with DEP.

Commissioner Pauls stated that the residents of Bayshore Drive have notified him that the bridge on their road is falling in. He also questioned Mr. Barry about the contract with Bullard for the bike path. Mr. Barry stated that he has a meeting on January 29th to negotiate that contract.

Commissioner Rees commented that he wants to know that the county is doing everything possible to provide road safety. He wants to make sure that there is adequate lighting at necessary intersections, appropriate signage, and turn lanes in order to provide safety. Commissioner Pauls suggested that the Community Traffic Safety Team could address this issue.

Mr. Bell reported back to the commissioners regarding the proposed Animal Control Contract with the City of Paxton. He advised the commissioners that he contacted the Mayor and he has requested the issue be tabled pending further review on their part. No further action was taken.

Mr. Ken Little, Citizens Service Director, requested an amendment to the Section 8 Administrative Plan. The plan currently states that Tuesday is the application acceptance day. Mr. Little requested the plan be amended to allow applications to be accepted on the following business day when the office is closed on Tuesdays.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve an amendment to the Section 8 Administrative Plan allowing an alternate day for accepting applications. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Little explained that due to the implementation of the automated library system it has slowed down the county's intranet system. He stated that the MIS Department has recommended installing a wireless system. The estimated cost is \$32,000.00 and there is still \$18,000.00 remaining in grant funding to cover a portion of the expenses. The remaining amount could be taken from the library budget.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to approve the installation of a wireless system for the library at an estimated cost of \$32,000.00. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Little advised the commissioners that the Flowersview Library is requesting assistance to replace their climate control system for an estimated \$5,000.00. He explained that the library is operating out of a private building. They would be willing to lease the building to the county on a long-term basis.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to enter into a 10-year lease agreement for use of the Gladys Milton Library in Flowersview. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to approve the expenditure of \$5,000.00 for the installation of the climate control system at the Flowersview Library. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye. Mr. Little stated that the repairs would begin as soon as the county can obtain a signed lease agreement.

Attorney Vorbeck questioned the commissioners regarding the desire to appeal the Inlet Beach Capital Corporation versus Walton County case. Commissioner Rees recommended appealing the case.

Commissioner Pauls voiced concern with statements by Mr. Harry Chiles regarding the commissioners visiting the site. Commissioner Pauls felt that he should be able to visit any site so that he can be informed on any issue that he would be voting on. Mr. Chiles comments are to the contrary. Another important issue addressed by Mr. Chiles is that there was no standards for compatibility. Commissioner Pauls felt that the county has put forth much effort to develop standards.

Commissioner Cuchens felt that the county should not spend tax dollars to appeal the case. Although, he did agree that commissioners should be able to visit a project site.

Chairman Jones stated that their decisions are based on personal testimony. Attorney Vorbeck advised that the Board can stop a hearing at any time to hear more testimony in a certain area. He stated that they could even convene the hearing on site, or ask for further expert testimony. Mr. Vorbeck stated that the courts want fair and impartial testimony. Attorney Vorbeck stated that it would cost about \$7-\$12,000.00 to appeal.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pauls to approve to appeal the Inlet Beach Capital Corporation versus Walton County case. Ayes 2, Nayes 3. Rees Aye, Pridgen Naye, Jones Naye, Cuchens Naye, Pauls Aye. Motion failed.

Mr. Underwood advised that the in-house Impact Fee Committee met and discussed the possible adoption of impact fees to pay for the cost of infrastructure necessary to accommodate new growth. It was the consensus of the committee that the following types of infrastructure in south Walton be financed with impact fees: streets/thoroughfares; traffic control facilities; bridges; storm drainage facilities; underground utilities; street lighting; parks and recreation facilities; and law enforcement

facilities. He stated that they have negotiated a contract with Dr. Nicholas to perform a study. It was recommended that a task force of not more than 15 be established. Commissioner Pauls questioned if the task force should actually be the commissioners to prevent duplication of work. He stated that he would like to know what duties the task force is going to be tasked with. The commissioners agreed to review the list further and each appoint three individuals to serve. Commissioner Pauls also agreed to serve on the committee to represent the Board.

Mr. Underwood requested the Board to set a date to hold another Strategic Planning Session. The Board agreed to hold a workshop at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 4, 2003 at the Emergency Operations Center.

Commissioner Pridgen presented a request on behalf of the Walton County ARC. ARC is requesting the donation of a F350 one-ton truck. The truck is a county vehicle that will be auctioned. Attorney Vorbeck stated that he would need to check the legal aspect of transferring the equipment to a private non-profit corporation.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Cuchens to transfer the requested truck to the Walton County ARC if legally feasible and to determine if the truck they are requesting is surplus property. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Pridgen stated that he spoke with Ms. Elaine Tucker, Okaloosa County Commissioner, and she said that they would like to hold a meeting between the Walton County and Okaloosa County Commissioners without the attorneys present. The commissioners suggested having the attorneys available if needed.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Cuchens to agree to hold a meeting with the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners to discuss the current lawsuit, with no attorneys present, but available. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye. The commissioners commented that they have put forth every effort to resolve the problem, however, they have not received any cooperation from Okaloosa County.

Commissioner Pridgen requested to see information relating to cost estimates for the jail for both onsite and offsite facilities. Commissioner Pauls stated that he would provide information to Commissioner Pridgen if he was unable to get the information from 2WR.

Chairman Jones presented a letter from the Walton County School District requesting the Board adopt an ordinance to provide for the assessment of an additional \$3.00 on civil traffic penalties. The penalty would be enacted according to the Dori Slosberg Driver Education Safety Act to support the driver's education program. Attorney Vorbeck will research the issue further.

Commissioner Cuchens asked the Board to consider upgrading the sound system in the Boardroom. He also requested that the Purchasing Department make their purchases from vendors within the county whenever possible. He spoke about the small savings that is sometimes accomplished by purchasing outside of the county resulting in additional costs for personnel and travel to pick the items up.

Mr. Imfeld advised that this issue was discussed in the past and the Haas Center advised against any policy requiring in-county purchases. The commissioners requested

Mr. Imfeld to research the issue further. He also stated that they do attempt to purchase from within the county when possible.

Commissioner Pauls requested approval to submit an application for an Artificial Reef Grant.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Rees to authorize the submission of the grant application for the artificial reef. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Pauls presented a letter addressed to the Division of Forestry regarding a 10-acre tract of land on their disposal list. If a lease could be obtained for the property it would allow the expansion of the Helen McCall Park. This would provide additional space for youth activities. Commissioner Pauls requested approval for the Chairman to sign the letter.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve the Chairman's signature on the letter requesting the Division of Forestry to consider leasing the 10-acre tract of land to Walton County. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Pauls requested to schedule a workshop to discuss the Right-of-Way Policy. The Board agreed to hold a workshop on Tuesday, February 4, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. at the South Walton Courthouse Annex.

Ms. Vergie Thompson, President of Friends of Eden's Garden State Park, stated that they have been approached by the Apalachicola Maritime Museum regarding their interest in accepting a donation of the Governor Stone, an authentic, fully restored Gulf Coast Schooner built in 1877. Ms. Thompson stated that the boat is on the National

Historic Registry. She told about the history of the boat and the proposed uses if they are able to secure it for Eden State Park. She explained the reason for approaching the county is that a channel would need to be cut into Tucker Bayou in order to get the boat into it. She stated that they do not have the capabilities and are in need of help to make this happen.

Mr. Barry explained that the county does not have any way to haul the spoil from the dredging. Ms. Thompson explained that the boat would belong to the Friends of Eden. They also realize that this is not a small task they are requesting and stated that they would have to go out into the community to ask for funding assistance for annual maintenance and upkeep. It was the general consensus of the commissioners to proceed with looking at ways to locate the boat here.

Chairman Jones opened the floor for public comment. Mr. Don Crim suggested creating a bike tag system for those individuals who want to ride a bike on the bike path. This would help pay for maintenance of the bike path.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Larry D. Jones, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court