

MARCH 11, 2003 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, March 11, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. at the South Walton Courthouse Annex.

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.

Commissioner Cuchens led with prayer followed by the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag. Chairman Jones called the meeting to order.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pauls 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	\$ 701,304.81
County Transportation	\$ 259,417.69
Fine & Forfeiture	\$ 737,322.02
Section 8 Housing	\$ 34,308.04
N.W. Mosquito Control	\$ 3,122.90
W. Co. Library	\$ 36,185.71
Recreation Plat Fee	\$ 591.58
Solid Waste Enterprise	\$ 207,011.88
Mossy Head VFD	\$ 3,154.85
Glendale VFD	\$ 798.94
Darlington VFD	\$ 875.39
Liberty VFD	\$ 338.29
Red Bay VFD	\$ 1,642.69
Local Option Gas Tax	\$ 122,019.00
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 109,152.93

SHIP	\$ 18,904.55
Tourist Dev. Council	\$ 122,947.92
Mott Sign Grant	\$ -
Debt Service Hospital	
Spec. Law Enforcement	\$ -
Driftwood Debt Service	\$ 530.00
Grand Total	\$ 2,359,099.19

2. Approve Minutes of February 18, 2003-Public Hearing
February 20, 2003-Town Hall Meeting
February 25, 2003-Regular Meeting
3. Surplus Equipment

Mr. William Imfeld, Financial Director, appeared before the Board to answer questions regarding the Sheriff's surplus vehicles being given to the fire departments. He stated that the Sheriff has sole authority for disposal of his vehicles, but can donate them to the fire departments if he chooses to. Commissioner Cuchens questioned if the fire department could trade vehicles with the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Imfeld stated that the Florida Statute would allow that if the Sheriff is willing.

Mrs. Angie Biddle, Grants Coordinator, advised the commissioners that the grant funding applied for from the Florida Communities Trust under the Florida Forever Program was denied. The funding request was to be utilized for the purchase of the Morrison Springs property. Mrs. Biddle advised that the Department of Environmental Protection is willing to purchase the property if they can find someone to manage it. They are asking if the county is willing to manage the property. The property would remain State owned. Mr. Underwood reminded the commissioners that they previously looked at the purchase of this property to utilize as a reservoir. However, DEP might want to turn it into preservation. If the county were to agree to manage the property they would have to write a management plan that states how the property would be preserved. Mrs. Biddle

felt that DEP wants a commitment from the county that they will agree to manage the property, however, there are still many issues that must be worked out. Commissioner Pauls stated that a letter could be written stating that Walton County would be interested in considering managing the property contingent upon the conditions. He stated that the property has valuable resources and would like to see the county in control of the property. Chairman Jones questioned if management of the property would require the dive shop to remain in operation. Mrs. Biddle stated that it would not be required, but if it remained in operation then the funding would have to be used for the daily operations.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to allow the Chairman to sign a letter of commitment for managing the Morrison Springs property contingent upon the management requirements. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Ms. Amber Thorn, Chamber of Commerce, addressed the commissioners regarding Community Days, which is sponsored by the Chamber. This event will be held March 29th through April 5th. The theme is “To Celebrate Walton County as Great Place to Work, Play and Stay.” The event is to bring the county together. Ms. Thorn asked the Board to sign a proclamation in support of the event. She also requested permission for the South Walton Courthouse Annex to remain open that day for public tours.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve for the Chairman to sign a proclamation supporting the Chamber’s “Community Days” and to approve for the Courthouse Annex to remain open that day. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Rees applauded Ms. Pam Tedesco and the Walton County Chamber of Commerce for reaching 1000 members.

Mr. Mike Lane, Planning Director, appeared before the commissioners regarding the South Walton Business Center. Mr. Lane requested that this public hearing be continued until March 25, 2003.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Pridgen to continue the public hearing until March 25, 2003 to consider the final plat for the South Walton Business Center. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Pridgen to hold a public hearing on April 8, 2003 at 5:30 p.m. to consider the Beach Activities Ordinance for final adoption. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Attorney Honse appeared before the Board regarding the adoption of an emergency Parasail Ordinance. The ordinance governing parasail permits needs to be extended for a period of 90 days or until June 15, 2003 to allow for the adoption of the new Beach Activities Ordinance. Ms Honse advised that there was not sufficient time to advertise this public hearing and therefore the adoption of this ordinance should be declared an emergency.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pauls to declare this an emergency and adopt an ordinance (2003-02) approving the extension of the Parasail Ordinance. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls

Aye. The commissioners requested that Mr. Ken Wilde contact the owners of parasail operations advising them that they must submit their applications for a parasail permit.

Mr. Don Crim questioned the extension of vehicle beach permits. Ms. Honse advised that the ordinance, which governs vehicle beach permits, is still in effect.

Mrs. Shari Judkins appeared before the Board to discuss problems regarding her property in Chaparral Estates, lots 5 and 6. She stated that there were no drainage plans when North Holiday Road was paved. The drainage now flows onto lot 6. She stated that she previously requested the commissioners to visit the site, however, she has not seen them. Mrs. Judkins stated that she has spoken with the department heads in an attempt to correct the problem. She said that Mr. Barry told her that the water drains onto her property because it does not have anywhere else to drain. She presented pictures of the lot and stated that the lot has now been wet since April 2002. She was advised that the county is working to obtain a grant to improve the drainage problem. However, she does not feel that it will correct the problem in her neighborhood because the grant is for a different neighborhood. Mrs. Judkins stated that the county is using her property for drainage and the county is aware of the situation. She stated that the standing water is causing a serious problem with mosquitoes, frogs, and snakes.

Mr. Barry, Public Works Director, presented a handout containing information relating to the site location and soil type. Mr. Barry also presented the Walton County Soil Survey showing that the property is located in Rutlege fine sand. He stated that the description shows that the property is in shallow depressions sometimes called ponds, bays, or sinks. It also states that the soil has severe limitations for urban uses and recreational development mainly because of wetness. Extensive drainage and large

amounts of fill material would be needed to make this soil suited to these uses. Mr. Barry stated that the Judkins' placed a large amount of fill on lot 5 when they constructed their home, which also creates additional drainage onto lot 6. He stated that there was a drainage structure on the paving plans and the project has been completed and received total acceptance from the Department of Environmental Protection. He further stated that the lot could have been dry a couple of years ago due to drought conditions at that time.

Commissioner Cuchens asked if the drainage easement shown between lots 8 and 9 is actually in place and if it is in working order. Mr. Barry stated that it is. He also stated that the drainage easement between lots 6 and 7 is also working. The Public Works Department does clean it out periodically to keep it draining.

Mr. Barry stated that when North Holiday Road was constructed that they put in the required swells. If it is still draining, it would be just a marginal amount, but the county is not dumping large amounts of water onto their property. Mr. Barry said that the county has done everything they can do. He stated that upon completion of the new drainage design for the northern part of the community that this area would receive some relief. Mr. Barry stated that the Judkins could put fill on the lot, but they would have to go through the DEP for approval. Mrs. Judkins stated that it should not be their responsibility.

Commissioner Pauls asked if there is somewhere for the water to drain once it drains onto lots 18 and 19. He stated that there are significant wetlands in the whole area. If any one area were filled, it would cause drainage problems next to it. He asked if there is something that could be done in the stormwater plan that would address the stormwater on lots 18 and 19. He stated that if the Judkins fill lot 6 there will still be an issue of

stormwater because it has to drain somewhere. Commissioner Pauls stated that he has been told repeatedly that the county followed all of the plans as approved and permitted by DEP.

Discussion followed regarding how long the drainage easement has been between lots 8 and 9 and how long the water has been draining to that location. Commissioner Cuchens stated that the easement has been there for years. Mr. Mike Judkins stated that a moratorium was previously put on that neighborhood. He further stated that they had swells on each side of their property for the water to drain into. However, the water has never remained like it does on lot 6. Mr. Judkins stated that he has paperwork from the DEP showing the deficiencies. Mr. Barry stated that the county has completed all of the necessary work and that the DEP has finalized their work through the County Engineer. Mrs. Judkins stated that lot 5 has been filled for approximately ten years and that is not the problem on lot 6.

Chairman Jones requested that the Engineers look into the situation to make sure the county is in compliance with the design of the road and the stormwater plan. Mrs. Judkins requested that Commissioner Pauls be included when this is reviewed. Commissioner Pauls agreed to be present for the review, but reminded the Judkins' of the disclosure of wetlands in the contract when he sold them the property. Mrs. Judkins commented that the property behind theirs is wetlands and questioned how the county is allowed to drain stormwater into wetlands. Chairman Jones asked Mr. Barry to review this information and report back to the Board.

Chairman Jones called to order the advertised public hearing to consider the Dori Slosberg Ordinance regarding motor vehicle fines. Attorney Honse advised that the funds

collected would be used to help fund driver's education through the school board. An additional fee of \$3.00 will be added to each moving violation. Mr. Coy Yates, Superintendent of Schools, and the School Board were also supportive of the ordinance. Chairman Jones opened the floor for public comments. No one voiced any comments.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Pridgen to adopt the Dori Slosberg Driver's Education Safety Trust Fund Ordinance (2003-03). Ayes 5, Naves 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Ms. Kris Titus, Executive Director of the South Walton Tourist Development Council, appeared before the commissioners regarding the countywide dune vegetation project. She advised that three bids were received and they are requesting approval to grant the bid award to Nautilus Environmental Services in the amount of \$34,950.00.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Rees to accept the recommendation and award the dune vegetation project to Nautilus Environmental Services in the amount of \$34,950.00. Ayes 5, Naves 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Mike Judkins appeared before the commissioners expressing problems relating to Code Enforcement. He stated that Code Enforcement removed his signs from his driveway. He stated that there were other signs in the neighborhood that were not removed. Mr. Judkins spoke about a dumpster that is located in the right-of-way. He previously requested that the dumpster be removed, but it has not been. He also stated that he has asked for Code Enforcement to remove other signs in violation and they will not remove them. Mr. Judkins feels that Mr. Green, Code Enforcement Officer, is not doing his job. He stated that the code needs to be enforced equally for everyone.

Mr. Phillip Green, Code Enforcement, stated that North Holiday Road is one of the most heavily traveled roads by Code Enforcement at the request of the Judkins. He feels that the Judkins have been treated fairly and that his department tries to treat everyone equally. Mr. Green stated that he is willing to meet with the Judkins if necessary or would refer them to someone who could address their needs. Mr. Green explained the process used by Code Enforcement when responding to any violation and the steps taken to enforce violations.

Ms. Lynda Morse appeared before the Board to follow up on previous discussion relating to the animal control website she created. She stated that the county has since brought their site online. Ms. Morse stated that she is impressed by the number of people who have visited her site. She feels that the site is an asset to the county and its citizens. Ms. Morse expressed her appreciation to all of the individuals involved with assisting her in getting the site up and going.

Ms. Morse spoke about the animal control operations, unwanted pets and large animals that cannot currently be picked up or housed by Walton County. She advised that Dr. Anderson has agreed to help if the county needs him to. Ms. Morse presented additional signatures of those individuals who would like to see animal control remain as it is.

Mr. Alex Alford, MIS Director for the Clerk of Courts, advised the commissioners that the county's web site contains various links for private businesses and requested direction regarding any limitations that should be placed on it. Mr. Alford voiced concern with content that other, non-governmental, sites may contain. Attorney Vorbeck advised that it should be determined if it serves a public purpose. Commissioner

Rees commented that there are several links on the county's website that he feels are beneficial for economic purposes, such as Grit and Grace. He requested that Mr. Underwood and Mr. Vorbeck work on a policy.

Mr. Barry requested direction regarding a request he received from the Walton County School Board for the county to provide fill dirt and the use of graders. The total will consist of about four or five days of work. Chairman Jones spoke about a request from the county that the School Board denied. He felt that the county should provide the help otherwise it is the children who are hindered. Commissioner Rees spoke about the importance of helping. Commissioner Pauls stated that he is in favor of helping. Furthermore, he requested that a joint meeting between the School Board and the commissioners be held to discuss objectives. He stated that he would like to see the school facilities available to the public for recreation and other uses. Commissioner Cuchens agreed with meeting, but does not want to delay providing the needed help on behalf of the children of the community. Commissioner Rees asked if Mr. Underwood could meet with Mr. Wayne Miller on a regular basis to discuss these types of issues.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Rees to request a meeting with the Walton County School Board and Mr. Coy Yates to discuss goals and objectives and approve for the Public Works Department to assist with the current requests. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. David Karmer commended the commissioners for standing up and providing assistance to the School Board even after they agreed to charge the county for using their facilities for recreation programs.

Mr. Barry presented an issue relating to safety on Driftwood Road and Ellis Road. He stated that Mr. Dan Arner, Engineer, drafted a possible plan modifying the direction of the roads to one-way traffic. Because of the narrow road width, limiting them to one-way will provide additional safety, drainage, and space for pedestrians. Mr. Barry stated that he would make Ellis Road one-way going south from Bradley Street to Old Highway 98. Driftwood Drive would become one-way north bound from Old Highway 98 to Bradley Street. This could be done on a trial basis for a period of 90 days.

Ms. Gail Stewart voiced opposition to making the streets one-way because of the increased traffic it would create on Bradley Street going east and west.

Mr. Perry Goodson also opposed the one-way streets. He stated that the drainage problems are localized problems on Payne Street. Mr. Goodson stated that there are currently problems with large trucks not being able to turn around and this would only add to the problem. He felt that one-way streets would not help.

Mr. Mike Meyer appeared before the commissioners stating that the neighborhood is opposed to the change. He presented a petition consisting of over 300 signatures from those individuals who also oppose the one-way streets. He stated that they are not opposed to progress, but opposed to the hardship it will cause them. Mr. Meyer stated that they are concerned with the dangers related to pedestrians, but felt that traffic should be slowed for their protection.

Mr. Benelovich stated that Ellis Road is not wide enough for two lanes and stated that he is in favor of one-way streets.

Mr. James Murphree read a letter of opposition from Ken and Judy Smith who were unable to attend. He stated that property owners were not properly notified of this

meeting. He spoke about problems with additional traffic created by the Sandprints Condominium. He said that a red light would be needed to get out onto Highway 98 if the roads are made one-way.

Mr. Tom Terrell stated that he owns a condominium on the corner of Payne Street and Driftwood. The issues of concern are pedestrian safety and drainage problems. He felt that county staff has offered an expert opinion to correct the problem and said that the commissioners should base their decision on safety.

Ms. Toni Smith, resident on Driftwood Road, stated that some of the residents have their fences in the right-of-way, which is creating some of the problem. She also stated that there are not severe drainage problems as discussed. She said that the only problems are where small amounts of water form small puddles.

Ms. Ann Hornstein, Hidden Villas Town Homes, stated that she is opposed to one-way streets. She too asked if the fences could be removed from the right-of-way, which she feels would help the situation.

Mr. Chuck Ervin, Director of the Oceanside RV Park, stated that drainage was discussed when the park was built. He stated that his sign is not in the right-of-way. He voiced his opposition to making the roads one-way stating that it would not help the situation.

Mr. David Kramer stated that emergency services need to be considered when making this decision. He said that emergency vehicles have difficulties entering and exiting the area.

Commissioner Pauls stated that he is attempting to respond to the concern of the people. It is the county's responsibility to look at the safety issue. He spoke about

problems with truck traffic and the need for truck routes and weight limits to prevent heavy trucks from traveling through neighborhoods. Commissioner Pauls stated that the county needs to perform a traffic analysis with their own equipment to be able to determine where traffic lights are needed. He stated that he would like to see a review of what is in the right-of-way in order to reclaim it. Commissioner Rees stated that everyone is interested in public safety. He stated that the right-of-way issue, as well as the drainage issue, needs to be reviewed further. Commissioner Cuchens questioned why this is being considered any further if the residents do not want it changed.

Commissioner Pauls requested that Public Works revisit this issue to determine if the safety issue can be improved while maintaining two-way traffic. Mr. Barry stated that he would review the issue further.

The commissioners recessed briefly.

Mr. Barry presented a request to purchase a trailer mounted vacuum excavator for the purpose of cleaning out culverts. He stated that two responsive bids were received. Mr. Barry recommended awarding the low bid to Vacuum Source, Inc. in the amount of \$38,735.00.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Cuchens to award the bid to Vacuum Source, Inc. in the amount of \$38,735.00 for the purchase of a vacuum excavator. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Barry presented a request to purchase bridge material for the Nelson Road Bridge in the amount of \$191,576.00 from Hansen Pipe, low bid. Mr. Barry stated that he has the funds in his budget for the necessary materials.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve the purchase of bridge materials in the amount of \$191,576.00 from Hansen Pipe. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Barry advised the Board that he has received permission from Eglin Air Force Base to utilize three of their roads as an emergency outlet while replacing the bridge on Nelson Road.

Mr. Barry presented a recommended road-paving plan for the period from April through June 2003 for the following roads: C.J. Laird Road, Christian Life Road, Bass Haven Road, Fire Department Road, North Long Road, By Scout Road, and Church Street-Churchill Bayou. The costs are estimated at \$2.9 million. He stated that he has the funding available if he were to reallocate the Public Works budget. Mr. Barry requested approval of the list.

Commissioner Rees asked Mr. Barry for a list of other upcoming roads in order to keep the public informed. Commissioner Cuchens questioned if the county is still looking for a funding mechanism to fund a larger amount of road paving. Mr. Barry stated that he is still researching the options. Commissioner Pauls reminded the Board that because they agreed to use the pay-as-you-go method that did not mean the county would not consider borrowing money. Mr. Barry agreed to research the issue in order to present a recommendation for a funding mechanism for the roads that are currently permitted and designed. Chairman Jones agreed that the county needs to move forward.

Mr. Bard Currington commented on staff being diverted to perform duties on other projects, which is delaying progress on getting roads paved.

Mr. Bill Julian stated that the paving of his road, Holly Point Road, has been postponed too many times.

Mr. Bill Bush stated that the tax paying citizens need support. He would like to see their roads paved.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to approve Mr. Barry's road paving program for the roads on the April to June 2003 list. Ayes 5, Nayes 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Rees questioned the status of Thompson Road. Mr. Barry stated that staff is attempting to clear up the right-of-way issue. He stated that they would begin preparing it for paving with the exception of the small area being contested. Commissioner Rees also questioned the status of stop signs and right-of-way issues on CR 30A. Mr. Barry stated that most of the right-of-way has been determined, but the stop sign issue has not yet been resolved. Commissioner Pauls commented that his office has been working on the Thompson Road issue. He stated that he is committed to getting the road paved while still addressing the residents concerns regarding right-of-ways. Commissioner Pauls stated that he has spoken with Mr. Arner regarding the stop sign issue while working through the Scenic Corridor application process to have 30A designated as a scenic highway. He stated that it is important to review the issues relating to the intersection. Commissioner Pauls stated that he is encouraging the Public Works Department to move forward.

Mr. Ken Little, Citizens Service Director, introduced Ms. Maria Milton who was present to speak about the proposed lease agreement for the Flowersview Community Center/Gladys Milton Library. Ms. Milton stated that the community met to review the

terms of the lease. Some were not in favor of leasing the building to the county and other individuals were not in favor of the language in the lease agreement. One concern was that a previous agreement stated that the building could not be leased.

Mr. Ulysses Wright stated that the community has not seen the revised lease and they are not being informed on the issue. He stated that the community wants to be involved in making the decisions.

Mr. Tariq Abdullah, Flowersview Industrial Corporation, read the Articles of Incorporation and Articles of bylaws. He stated that the building is leased by their organization. He said that an individual must pay dues before one can be a member. He said that many people are claiming to be members, but not paying dues and therefore they do not have a right to vote. The dues paying members have voted in favor of the lease with the county.

Attorney Vorbeck stated that the proposal is for the county to provide an air conditioning/heating unit for the building. He stated that it has been determined to serve a public purpose because the building is used as a polling place and a community library. Commissioner Pauls questioned if it has been determined if there is a deed restriction on that property that relates to a sublease. Mr. Little stated that he has not yet performed a title search.

Reverend Williams stated that they are trying to work together to provide something for the children of the community. He said that all of the dues paying members in the corporation are in agreement with the original lease provided by the county.

Mr. Jeffrey Wright stated that his concern is that the majority of the community did not have proper input and he would like to see this issue sent back for further review.

The Board directed Mr. Little to review this issue further and present it back to the Board at a later date.

Mr. Little presented a Joint Resolution to the commissioners for exploring the feasibility of building a branch library in DeFuniak Springs. A meeting has been held with representatives from Okaloosa Walton Community College, the City of DeFuniak Springs, and the Library Advisory Board Chair regarding the possibility of a branch library at the OWCC Campus. Mr. Little stated that the current DeFuniak Springs Library would remain open. He stated that the resolution is only for the purpose of providing a feasibility study.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Cuchens to adopt a resolution (2003-12) approving a feasibility study for a branch library at the OWCC campus. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye. Commissioner Rees stated that there needs to be a strong commitment to the current DeFuniak Library.

Mr. Little presented a request to apply for a LSTA grant for a new bookmobile. The current bookmobile needs to be replaced due to the age, mileage, and increasing maintenance. The cost of a new bookmobile is \$201,529.00. The grant requires a county match of \$65,550.00.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve to apply for a LSTA grant for a new bookmobile and to provide an in-kind match. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Little presented a resolution requesting support for preservation of the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Affordable Housing Trust Fund. He explained that the Governor's proposed budget would reduce the amount of funding received by counties for the SHIP Program.

Ms. Jackie Malone, Chairperson of the SHIP Program, explained that the Governor is proposing to take revenue dedicated for the SHIP Program. She stated that 605 Walton County Citizens have benefited from the program. Ms. Malone stated that the funding is used wisely. She stated that letters were submitted to Senator Durell Peaden and Representative Don Brown asking for support of the funding.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Cuchens to adopt a resolution (2003-13) in support of preserving the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Ronnie Bell, Emergency Response Director, appeared before the Board and introduced Ms. Anita Brown, Government Services Group, and Mr. Brian Coley, Fireboard Chairman, for Walton County. Mr. Bell presented a copy of a proposal from GSG to perform a fire services needs assessment. The cost of the assessment would be \$25,000.00. The Small County Technical Assistance Program is supporting this effort by providing \$15,000.00 toward the cost of the assessment. The remaining \$10,000.00 would be provided by the Fireboard. Mr. Bell recommended approval of the study.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve to proceed with the assessment. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Attorney Vorbeck presented the proposed final order for Grayton Grand. He presented the draft copy in addition to the changes as recommended by Attorney Goldberg. Mr. Vorbeck stated that the date on the last page (paragraph 28) needs to be corrected. Mr. Vorbeck recommended approval.

Attorney Goldberg voiced opposition to the final order. He stated that Counsel for Mr. Odom prepared the order and he has not had the opportunity to review it. Mr. Goldberg stated that he is opposed to the method used. Attorney Hall, Counsel for Mr. Odom, stated that he did not do anything improper. He prepared the order and presented it for consideration. Attorney Vorbeck stated that the order reflects the action taken by the commissioners at the last meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen to approve the final order with the amended date. Ayes 3, Nays 2. Rees Naye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Naye.

Mr. Tom Powell, Economic Development Council, appeared before the commissioners requesting a meeting between the EDC Board of Directors and the commissioners. The annual meeting is needed to further communications regarding the economic development. The Board asked Mr. Powell to work with Ms. Shirl Williams to set a date for the meeting.

Mr. Underwood stated that a purchase agreement was submitted to Legal Services for review for the purchase of the Covell tract. Concerns were voiced regarding the agreement. Attorney Vorbeck stated that one concern is that they want to give the county a special limited warranty deed, which means they are not warranting the title with their deed. He stated that the county could get title insurance for protection. Another issue is

that the purchase price will be based upon a survey. If there is a discrepancy in the survey there could be a problem. Plum Creek Timberlands stated that they would acquire their own survey if there is a dispute.

Ms. Lynda Morse stated that she opposes the purchase of the Covell tract. She does not feel that it is feasible to spend the money on this property. She asked the Board to reconsider because of the amount of money and the number of other projects currently underway.

Commissioner Pauls questioned the clause for the seller to reserve the mineral rights. Attorney Vorbeck stated that this clause was recently added. Attorney Vorbeck voiced concern with wording regarding the survey. He stated that the price will be determined on the number of acres, but there is not provision in the contract that the price is binding on the county's survey. He stated that a survey could be completed and the actual number of acres stated in the contract before signing it. Commissioner Pauls voiced concern regarding the mineral rights because it could preclude the county from using the property for its intended use. Vorbeck stated that a survey could be performed and the mineral rights clause removed. The Board agreed to having a survey performed and removing the minerals clause before signing the contract.

Mr. Underwood announced that the dips in Highway 331 South have been repaired by DOT.

Mr. Underwood also announced that Commissioner Cuchens has located a District 4 Office in Freeport. He presented the lease agreement for the office location and requested the commissioners approve it.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to approve a lease agreement for the District 4 Freeport Commissioner's Office. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye. The office will be located on Highway 20 across from Frank's Cash and Carry.

Discussion was held regarding the schedule for the Town Hall Meetings. The commissioners agreed to schedule two additional meetings, one in Freeport and one in DeFuniak Springs. These meetings will be scheduled for September and October.

Sheriff Johnson appeared before the Board with a proposal for temporary housing to alleviate the overcrowding at the jail. The modular trailers could be provided at an annual cost of \$68,000.00. An alternative option would be to provide housing at a more permanent site, which would cost \$3,725,000.00, which includes site preparation.

Chairman Jones stepped out and passed the Chair to Vice-Chairman Pauls.

Sheriff Johnson stated that option C is barricades that would house 256 inmates and provide kitchen facilities. Option C is a permanent structure that would be constructed off-site at a cost of \$4,883,000.00, which includes site preparation. The other option would be to transport the inmates and house them at other jail facilities at \$35.00 per day per inmate.

Commissioner Pauls stated that the county went through the bid process to select an architect and the site to construct the new jail. He felt that it would create a procedural problem for another location and architect to be selected at this point in time. He stated that the request is to provide a solution for a temporary facility, not to begin the construction process over. Commissioner Cuchens again requested cost comparisons for an on-site and off-site facility.

Chairman Jones returned. He reminded the Board that the county is currently under contract with an architectural firm. He stated that if consideration is going to be given to an off-site facility then it needs to be discussed with the current architect. Chairman Jones stated that the proper selection process was used to select the firm and they should be given the opportunity to provide the information being requested.

Mr. Marvin Collier presented the available options. The temporary structure he is recommending would house 50 inmates and is proposed to be located in the current recreation yard at a cost of \$100,000.00 for a period of two years. Option B would be modified trailers for housing, but there would be a problem with a place to locate them.

Discussion followed regarding the committee's decision to construct the new facility on-site. Many issues were taken into consideration such as costs and available space. Commissioner Rees commented that cost estimates were provided showing that an off-site facility would cost about \$3.5 million more than if it were constructed on site.

Mr. Gene Ryan spoke about his opposition to the jail construction at the current site location as well as renovations to the old hospital. He stated that it is not practical or logical to construct a new jail at the current location. Construction of an off-site facility would allow for future expansion. He stated that most of Walton County's inmates do not require tight security. Construction of a work camp would also provide the advantage of building a smaller jail. He felt that it is time to reconsider the plans. Chairman Jones commented that if the Board continues backing up to reconsider the issue then they will be in the same place in four more years.

Mr. Collier stated that he met with the bonding company for Watkins Constructors regarding the six projects they are currently contracted for with Walton

County. Watkins has agreed to release the contracts for the jobs they have not yet begun. Mr. Vorbeck will be discussing the issue with the bankruptcy court. Mr. Vorbeck stated that he spoke with Watkins bankruptcy attorney and they have agreed to release those contracts. Mr. Collier stated that the process now would be to advertise for a new contractor. He stated that he has reviewed the construction costs for the new jail as presented by Watkins and made some modifications. Construction would consist of repairs to the existing jail, remodeling of the jail administration, a new jail pod and kitchen addition, second floor sheriff's administration and a connector to the courthouse at a cost of \$12,324,000.00. The records center would be an additional \$995,000.00. Other items would include the east parking lot, impound yard/maintenance facility, and north parking lot for a total project cost of \$14,039,000.00. Mr. Collier stated that the county and city have approved the plans, however, a traffic study is needed, which will cost about \$15,000.00.

Mr. Collier stated that if an off-site facility/work camp were to be constructed that the large amount of costs involved would be for utilities. He advised that it would take several months to go through the permitting process because the pipes would have to be run through some wetlands. He estimated the total for an off-site facility to be about \$14 million. Chairman Jones reminded the Board that the immediate need that needs to be addressed is overcrowding at the jail. Mr. Collier recommended option A as the best way to address the current overcrowding problem. He stated that it is the quickest and most reasonable. Commissioner Rees also stated that he is in favor of option A.

Mr. J.B. Hillard, DeFuniak Springs resident, feels that the community has been overlooked. He recommended making the current jail into a Judicial Center because the

economic impact will be long-term. He stated that a new building is needed and staff deserves a new facility.

Ms. Ingle asked Mr. Collier if there are any of the newly purchased properties within the city where a temporary facility could be located. Mr. Collier stated that it would require approval by the city.

The Board directed Mr. Collier to proceed with obtaining a traffic study for the DeFuniak Springs area, relating to the jail facility.

Commissioner Pauls advised the Board that he met with Commissioner Bronson, Department of Forestry, regarding a possible connector road between CR30A and Highway 98. He stated that he would continue working on this issue. He also advised that he met with Secretary Prescott asking for funding to help with damages on CR 3280 by White Construction. Mr. Prescott stated that the county would have to take White Construction to court if they want to attempt to recover any damages. Commissioner Pauls stated that he also spoke with Secretary Prescott about obtaining additional federal funding.

Commissioner Cuchens requested approval of the shellfish resolution that was discussed at a previous meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees to adopt a resolution (2003-14) requesting support for the shellfish industry. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Cuchens questioned the requirement for Mr. Barry to sign off on all employee time sheets in his division. Ms. Ingle advised that the requirement came

from her office. She stated that all division heads are required to sign the time sheets for internal control purposes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Larry D. Jones, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court