

JULY 22, 2003-REGULAR MEETING

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, July 22, 2003 at 8:00 a.m. at the South Walton Courthouse Annex.

The following Board members were present: Larry Jones, Chairman, Tim Pauls, Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Lane Rees, Commissioner Ro Cuchens, and Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen. Mr. Mike Underwood, County Administrator, Mr. Gary Vorbeck, Legal Services Director, and Mrs. Rhonda Skipper, Administrative Supervisor to the Clerk of Courts, were also present.

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

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Rees, to approve the consent agenda consisting of the following items. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

1. Expenditure Approval List	
General Fund	\$ 372,366.51
County Transportation	\$ 117,843.27
Fine & Forfeiture	\$ -
Section 8 Housing	\$ 27,071.35
Mosquito Control State	\$ -
N.W. Mosquito Control	\$ 497.18
W. Co. Library	\$ 6,988.27
Recreation Plat Fee	\$ -
Solid Waste Enterprise	\$ 224,442.12
Mossy Head VFD	\$ 28.65
Glendale VFD	\$ 1,506.12
Darlington VFD	\$ 277.50
Liberty VFD	\$ 86.77
Red Bay VFD	\$ 1,517.12
Local Option Gas Tax	\$ 22,475.00
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 10,115.45

SHIP	\$	5,000.00
Tourist Dev. Council	\$	3,288.37
Mott Sign Grant	\$	-
Debt Service Hospital	\$	-
Spec. Law Enforcement	\$	-
Criminal Justice Ed Fund		
Driftwood Debt Service	\$	-
2. Approve Minutes of July 1, 2003-Land Use Hearing		
July 2, 2003-Budget Workshop		
July 8, 2003-Regular Meeting		
3. Modification #2 for the Flood Mitigation Assistance Agreement		
4. Local Mitigation Strategy Grant Agreement		
5. Resolution (2003-49) to amend the budget for damage to the E911 system		

Commissioner Rees expressed his appreciation to the Division Directors for the time and efforts put into the Division Activity Updates. He suggested that time lines be used for information purposes.

Mr. Russ Barry, Public Works Director, addressed the Board concerning acceptance of a right-of-way located in the Hewitt Bayou Subdivision. Mr. Mark Hurt and Mr. & Mrs. James Halbrooks have each granted a right of way for Walton County to construct and maintain a drainage culvert. Public Works recommended that the Board accept the right-of-way dedication of both parties.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to accept the right-of-way dedication of Mr. Mark Hurt and Mr. & Mrs. James Halbrooks. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Mr. Barry presented a map of Dunaway Road and requested that it be filed in the Walton County Clerk's Office. The map locates and shows the lands and recites on it that Dunaway Road has vested in Walton County by the means listed in Florida Statute. Dunaway Road was constructed by Walton County and has been maintained

continuously without interruption by Walton County in excess of four years as prescribed by FS 95.361.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Rees, to approve recording of the map of Dunaway Road in the Walton County Clerk's Office. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Mr. Gary Mattison, Human Resources Director, addressed the Board concerning a Promotions Policy Addendum for the Compensation Plan. Mr. Mattison stated that the proposed policy would be further discussed at a later date, therefore, no action was needed at this time. Chairman Jones suggested a change to the new language of the Compensation Plan.

Mr. Ken Little, Citizens Service Director, addressed the Board. Mr. Little presented a revised version of the Walton County Strategic Plan. He stated that all concerns from the previous meeting have been addressed and have been incorporated in the Strategic Plan. Commissioner Rees expressed appreciation to Mr. Little for his time and effort in preparing the Strategic Plan.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Cuchens, to approve the Walton County Strategic Plan as presented. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Mr. Little made the recommendation that Mr. Hermon Chrishon and Ms. Willa Hertwig be appointed to fill the vacancies on the SHIP Committee.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Cuchens, to accept the recommendation of Mr. Ken Little and appoint Mr. Hermon Chrishon and Ms. Willa

Hertwig to the SHIP Committee. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Mr. Lamar Sikes addressed the Board concerning a proposal to establish a ferry service at 580 Chochee Road, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. Mr. Sikes explained his request to the Board and reviewed the proposed hours of operation. He stated that all requirements of the Florida State Statutes have been met. Mr. Sikes requested the Board's approval of the proposed establishment. Further discussion was held regarding the road on the south side of the proposed establishment. Mr. Barry stated that the road exceeds county expectations. Commissioner Rees requested that the issue be deferred until residents surrounding the proposed establishment appear at the meeting.

Chairman Jones called to order the public hearing to consider the Preliminary Rate Resolution for Fire Protection. Ms. Heather Encinosa, GSG/Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson, P.A., reviewed the proposed resolution. There were no public comments concerning this matter.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Cuchens, to adopt a resolution (2003-50) for preliminary rates for fire protection. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Ms. Kris Titus, Executive Director of the South Walton Tourist Development Council, addressed the Board concerning a recommendation to approve the appointment of Mr. John Gillis for the position of "Interest in Tourist Development". The term will end in 2004.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to accept the recommendation of the TDC and appoint Mr. John Gillis to the TDC Council. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Ms. Titus submitted a request for the Board's approval of the Bohan Marketing Agency Contract for the TDC. The TDC reviewed presentations from two Marketing Agencies and unanimously selected Bohan.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to approve the Bohan Marketing Agency Contract for the TDC. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Ms. Titus requested that the Board approve a single lane closure for the National Clean Beaches Council's Trek for the Coast Event from the post at Seaside along 30A west for three miles.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Rees, to approve a single lane closure for the event from the post office at Seaside along 30A west for three miles. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye.

Mr. Mike Judkins appeared before the Board and expressed concern regarding the scheduled times on the BCC Meeting Agendas and the approved minutes taken for the Board of Adjustments. Mr. Judkins stated that these items were inaccurate. The Board explained that times are approximate and may not be strictly adhered to. Mr. Judkins also expressed concern in regards to problems within the Code Enforcement Department. He requested more professionalism in Walton County. Mr. Judkins was asked to submit his request in written form to the Board.

Vice-Chairman Pauls arrived. Chairman Jones called to order the advertised public hearing to consider the Master Capital Improvement Ordinance. Ms. Camille Tharpe addressed the Board representing GSG/Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson, P.A. Ms. Tharpe presented and reviewed information regarding the Imperial Lakes Area Impoundment Improvements Program. Ms. Encinosa discussed the option of “unity of title”. She stated that GSG, Inc., recommended a pay-as-you-go plan over a period of seven years because of the benefit requirements.

Mr. Tim Roberts, Imperial Lakes Homeowners’ Association, addressed the Board. Mr. Roberts stated that the community opposes any payment method under a ten-year period. He also voiced concern regarding the option of “unity of title”. Ms. Encinosa stated that the resolution could be adopted without the option of “unity of title”. Further discussion was held regarding the issue. The public comments portion of the hearing was closed.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to approve the Master Capital Improvement Ordinance as it is written. Ayes 5, Nayes 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Ms. Tharpe reviewed the initial Rate Resolution for Imperial Lakes. It was the general consensus of the Board to strike the ‘unity of title’ provision from the resolution.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Cuchens, to approve the resolution, extending the pay-as-you-go plan over a ten-year period.

Further discussion was held regarding the pay-as-you-go method. Commissioner Pridgen withdrew his motion.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Cuchens, to approve the resolution (2003-51) as presented, for a seven-year pay-as-you-plan. Ayes 5, Nayes 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Mr. Sikes addressed the Board to further discuss his request regarding the ferry. Mr. Jimmy Carter, resident of Bunker, stated that he felt that the residents of Bunker should be able to ride the ferry at no cost. Mr. Carter expressed concern regarding damage to the road caused by large trucks. Mr. Mike Brown, property owner, voiced concern in regards to traffic. Mr. Brown requested that Mr. Sikes present site plans at the next meeting. The Board requested that Mr. Sikes meet with Mr. Brown and the community to discuss their concerns. It was the general consensus of the Board to discuss the matter at a later date.

Mr. Bill Lucas presented a power-point presentation concerning a drainage problem in Choctaw Beach. Mr. Barry stated that he has spoke to Mr. Dan Arner, County Engineer, and that the issue would be seen to. Mr. Waylon Davis, resident of Choctaw Beach, voiced concern regarding the drainage problem. Mr. Randy Lingerfelt, Road Foreman, District, spoke about the drainage system that was previously installed to address the issue. Mr. Richard Whitaker voiced the need for reservoirs.

Mr. Harold and Mrs. Gay Owens, Hidden Harbor Homeowner's Association, addressed the Board. Mrs. Owens questioned the time frame to correct the drainage problem within the Hidden Harbor subdivision. Mr. Barry stated that the money has been obtained and that the work is in progress. A public meeting will be held when the project is 30% complete. Mrs. Owens also voiced concern in regards to not receiving any response to her phone calls and letters. Vice-Chairman Pauls raised concern regarding

private property issues. Mr. and Mrs. Owens also expressed opposition to the decision made by the County to allow the developer, Mr. Mike Smith, to construct the subdivision.

Mr. Underwood, County Administrator, announced the dates of the Department of Environmental Protection Public Workshop and Advisory Group Meeting that will be held for the Ponce De Leon Recreational Area Management Plan. Mr. Underwood also made an announcement that the appointees of the Old Hospital Advisory Board would be notified of the date and time for the future meeting.

Chairman Jones recognized Mr. Frank Anderson. Mr. Anderson addressed the Board concerning a request from the All Star Little League baseball team. The team has won the District and Sectional Championships and request that Walton County donate \$2,000.00 for travel expenses to allow them to participate in the State Playoffs, which will be held in Ocean City, Florida.

Chairman Jones recused himself from the decision to be made because of his relationship with one of the players on the All Star team. Mr. Jones stepped down and turned the Chair over to Vice-Chairman Pauls. Chairman Jones stated for the record that the team is made up of a great group of children and that they represent Walton County tremendously well.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to approve the contribution of \$2,000.00 to the All Star Little League baseball team for travel expenses. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Rees expressed appreciation to Mr. William Imfeld, Financial Director, and his Staff and Mr. Russ Barry, Public Works Director, and his Staff for the time and efforts put into budget process. Mr. Rees requested that Mr. Mattison review

the vacancies in the County in terms of looking at the budget. He suggested that outsourcing certain services might be an alternative. Commissioner Rees updated the Board on several of the issues covered at the NACO Conference. Mr. Rees spoke about the possible north/south connector road from CR 30A to Highway 98. The connector initiative came from many sources. Locals and constituents have expressed the need for additional connectors between 30A and Hwy 98. Ease of access for fire, EMS, and law enforcement were the key reasons cited and hurricane evacuation was also stated. The SWFD unanimously passed a Resolution in October 2002 “imploing” the BCC to address this need and the Resolution was strongly supported by Dr. Susan Turner, Chair of Traffic Safety Committee.

In addition to requesting permission from the State for a study, considering all options available was a key part of the motion that was passed by the Board and they feel that it is critical that all alternative be considered. Other issues discussed were the availability of pubic safety services. In working together, the Board feels they must find ways to address the needs of public safety, health and transportation.

Commissioner Pridgen submitted a request from Reverend Wayne White stating that TV-24, located in DeFuniak Springs, desires to broadcast the Walton County Commissioners’ meetings live on their station. To facilitate this endeavor, a small microwave antenna on the roof of the courthouse would need to be installed. The request was for the Board’s permission to mount the small antenna and broadcast the meetings on TV-24.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Cuchens, to grant permission to mount a small microwave antenna on the roof of the courthouse and to broadcast the BCC meetings on TV-24.

Various concerns were voiced regarding this matter. Vice-Chairman Pauls expressed concern regarding the storage and means of reproduction of the tapes. Mrs. Skipper stated that storage space at the Clerk's Office is extremely limited. Mr. Little stated that he is reviewing the costs for the reproduction of the tapes for public record. It was the general consensus of the Board to review the issue further. Commissioner Pridgen withdrew his motion.

Chairman Jones spoke about the budget in Walton County. He stated the importance of an efficient operation in the County and requested that the Directors carefully consider when hiring new employees.

Chairman Jones encouraged that, as the County moves forward into a new budget year, the hiring of more local vendors be considered when awarding contracts and purchasing goods and services. He requested that Mr. Imfeld and Mr. Barry work together to make sure that a policy is in place that deals with the local vendors. Mr. Jones also suggested that a specified time be set to meet with the local vendors and inform them of the County's business needs. Commissioner Cuchens concurred with the Chairman.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to request for proposals for the janitorial services of Walton County. It is the County's right to accept or reject any proposal. Ayes 5, Nayes 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Cuchens questioned the request for new personnel for the next budget year. Mr. Mattison stated that there are currently approximately eight to ten vacant positions.

Motion by Commissioner Cuchens to place a six-month “freeze” on the hiring of new employees in order to conduct a study concerning reorganization and restructuring of the current Walton County staff. The “freeze” excludes the current budgeted vacant positions.

Mr. Underwood questioned if the “freeze” would affect Public Works’ plan for road improvements that would be made during the six-month time period. Mr. Barry stated that the “freeze” would not affect the asphaltting portion of the roads, but would affect the surveying. There is currently one County Surveyor, which has recently submitted his resignation. Mr. Barry stated that the Professional Services funds used for contracting the surveying service is extremely limited.

Commissioner Rees voiced concern with the use of the word “freeze” and the six-month time period. Chairman Jones suggested allowing the Directors to work at the direction of the Board and review ways to minimize the need for the large amount of requested additional staff.

Vice-Chairman Pauls suggested that contract services for surveying, construction, and ground maintenance be reviewed. Mr. Pauls voiced concern with the communication process and suggested that the Board be more responsive to the constituencies.

Commissioner Cuchens amended his motion to include reviewing contract services for surveying and ground maintenance. Further discussion was held regarding the matter.

The motion made by Commissioner Cuchens died for lack of a second.

Motion by Commissioner Pauls, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to request for proposals for surveying and ground maintenance services. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

Commissioner Cuchens stated that he would like to be aware of the hiring and termination process as it occurs in the County. Mr. Mattison agreed to include the requested information in the Activity reports. Discussion followed in regards to the number of County vehicles.

Vice Chairman Pauls presented photographs and voiced safety concerns regarding the roadway improvements taking place on Highway 98. He expressed disappointment towards the current roadway conditions. Commissioner Rees concurred with Mr. Pauls and requested that the public be informed when a new lane becomes open on Hwy 98. Mr. Underwood stated that he has spoke with the Department of Transportation and some improvements have been made to the roadway.

Members of the audience expressed various concerns in regards to the roadway. Ms. Barbara Grimaldi, resident of Miramar Beach, stated that one problem is speeding vehicles in the area. She also was voiced the need for more signs in the area. Another member addressed a parking issue on the south side of Hwy 98.

Commissioner Pauls addressed the stormwater issue in Hidden Highlands Subdivision. He commended Mr. Dan Arner and the staff of Public Works for the work that has been done in the subdivision. Mr. Pauls stated that he had received phone calls to inform him that a road in the subdivision was under water and that children were playing in the water. He stated that Hidden Highlands is a private subdivision, which

creates various concerns, because the County doesn't have the right to go onto private property. (Chairman Jones excused himself from the meeting).

Mr. Underwood stated that Engineers have reviewed the Hidden Highlands project and have determined that the reason for the flooding is generated from outside sources. He explained that approval of the stormwater plan is based on the information that is presented at the meetings.

Mr. Walt Rousing, property owner, expressed gratitude and appreciation to Vice Chairman Pauls and Mr. Arner for their help and cooperation in the matter. Mr. Rousing stated that the developer and the County Engineer have had conflicting outlooks on the situation. He stated that the developer has suggested building a berm to surround the area. Mr. Rousing asked for suggestions from the Board on how to obtain a building permit in order to construct his home.

Mr. Dean Burgess, Design Engineer with Emerald Coast Associates, submitted and reviewed an aerial and topographic map of the site in regards to the connection between the School Lake and Stallworth Lake. Mr. Burgess stated that the flooding of the lake was not caused by the development. He also spoke about short-term and long-term solutions to the problem.

Mr. Dan Arner, County Engineer, spoke about a possible 33-foot easement that may be available. Mr. Arner stated that the proper solution would be to correct the control elevation at the pond to result in drainage into Stallworth Lake. Mr. Arner suggested that the County work with Emerald Coast Associates to determine a long-term solution.

Ms. Celeste Cobina presented information and discussed several types of soil in the area. She stated that, according to public records, a large amount of the property in the area is not suited for development. Ms. Cobina also stated that a connection between the lake on the school property and Stallworth Lake would result in jurisdictional wetlands. Vice-Chairman Pauls stated that the matter would be reviewed in order to determine whether or not there is an easement on the property.

Ms. Lillie Skippy, Century 21 Beach Realty, stated that Mr. Rousing had performed an in-depth search before purchasing his property and had obtained a letter by the County stating that the property was suitable for development.

Mr. Don Boyce, neighbor, spoke in opposition to a connection between the lake on the school property and Stallworth Lake.

Mr. Jim Crawford, adjacent property owner, spoke about previous times that the area has flooded.

Mr. Ken Wilde, Beach Activities Director, spoke about the flooding of Coastal Lake in the Shipwatch area on Scenic Gulf Drive. Commissioner Pauls stated that the County is addressing the issue.

Commissioner Pauls stated that the County has been working with an improvement plan for Scenic Gulf Drive. He requested approval to pursue an application for designation of Scenic Byway Status for Scenic Gulf Drive jointly with the City of Destin.

Motion by Commissioner Rees, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to approve to move forward with an application with the City of Destin for Scenic Corridor status for

Scenic Gulf Drive. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Rees Aye, Pridgen Aye, Jones Aye, Cuchens Aye, Pauls Aye.

One member of the audience questioned the difference between the ordinance pertaining to the east side of San Destin and the ordinance that pertains to the west side of San Destin. (Commissioner Rees excused himself from the meeting). Commissioner Pauls explained that several ordinances are different in certain areas of the County.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Larry D. Jones, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court