

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**Regular Session
Courthouse Annex
April 2, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

The Board met this date in regular session. Present via videoconference/telephonically were Chairman JT Surles, Commissioners Betsy Barfield, Stephen Fulford, Eugene Hall and Stephen Walker. Also present were County Attorney Scott Shirley and Chief Deputy Clerk Tyler McNeill.

1. Chairman Surles called the meeting order. County Coordinator Parrish Barwick led the invocation.
2. **On motion by Commissioner Hall, seconded by Commissioner Walker and unanimously carried, the Board approved the consent agenda, consisting of: Approval of the Agenda, General Fund/Transportation Vouchers and Minutes for the 3/5/2020 Regular Session.**
3. County Attorney Scott Shirley introduced the SCRAP project Waukeelah Highway item and stated the shoulders were not approved by FDOT or part of the original bid order. His recommendation was to have the Board reject all bids and have this project put out for bid again. Capital Asphalt's attorney, Mr. Guilday, stated this undermined the competitive bid process and recommended the Board award to his client. **Commissioner Barfield made a motion to approve Attorney Shirley's recommendation of rejecting all bids and re-bidding the project, to which Commissioner Walker seconded for discussion.** Commissioner Walker stated that Marc Mitchell, with Capital Asphalt, had previously stated his belief that he could negotiate with FDOT. Mr. Mitchell stated that is also what the County Engineer had recommended. Commissioner Walker asked Mr. Mitchell if he was willing to take on the financial liability (approximately \$500,000) if FDOT did not fund the project, to which Mr. Mitchell responded in the negative but he felt confident that would not be the case. Attorney Shirley stated that FDOT's counsel had been very clear that they would not approve of the additional work as a change order. He further added that it was not inappropriate for the county to reject all bids when it receives information that significantly changes the project. Chairman Surles stated he hated it for Capital Asphalt, but that the county could not take a chance of losing the funding. **The motion was unanimously carried.**
4. Commissioner Barfield introduced the RESTORE ACT state grant award item. She stated that this was continuing the discussion of the pot 3 money, which includes the acquisition of property. She stated the intent to look into the feasibility of acquiring the 40 acres owned by the Bolands at the head of the Wacissa River. Attorney Shirley stated he had looked this over and it was a necessary step to proceed. **On motion by Commissioner Barfield, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously carried, the Board approved moving forward as discussed.**
5. County Coordinator Parrish Barwick stated that—related to the above item—the Board needed to take action provide the Sheriff with direction on how to proceed with the County's boat ramp (whether to close it entirely, only allow Jefferson County residents to use it or leave completely open). Commissioner Walker stated his desire to keep the ramp open to local residents only. **On motion by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Barfield and unanimously carried, the Board ruled the boat ramp accessible/open for county residents only.** Commissioner Barfield inquired if this was effective all week long or just for the weekends, to which Commissioner Walker stated it would be all week. Chairman Surles asked how long this would be in effect, to which County Attorney Shirley recommended it run concurrent with the Governor's order.
6. County Coordinator Parrish Barwick introduced the SHIP Housing Project bids for Anderson, Ford and Hankins. **On motion by Commissioner Barfield, seconded by Commissioner Walker and unanimously carried, the Board approved the low bidders for the above referenced SHIP housing projects.**

7. Citizen Doug Darling stated that the issue with the Waukeelah Highway SCRAP bids would ultimately result in legal action that will cost the county more money.
8. Chief Deputy Clerk Tyler McNeill gave an update on the Courthouse operations in light of the novel Corona virus, stating the Courthouse is closed to the public per Chief Judge of the Second Circuit but were still answering phones, responding to email and processing eFilings/eRecordings.
9. County Coordinator Parrish Barwick stated he would be providing departmental reports to the Commissioners tomorrow.
10. Chairman Surles stated a Commissioner had recently traveled out of state on county business, despite the Board's requirement for any out of state travel to be brought before the entire Board. Commissioner Barfield requested that travel policies be updated and distributed to Commissioners and that this item had already been addressed and voted on 4 to 1.
11. County Coordinator Parrish Barwick recommended the Board only hold meetings once per month during the Corona pandemic, unless special or emergency meetings were necessary. It was the consensus of the Board to meet once per month, with the next meeting being held on the first Thursday in May. The consensus of the Board was also to give the Chairman and County Coordinator signature authority for items during this time.
12. County Attorney Scott Shirley congratulated Chairman Surles on the addition to his family. He also stated his office was open but with no client visits at this time.
13. Commissioner Barfield stated many people are filing for unemployment due to COVID-19 and that some of our citizens are not able to file due to no internet service. She stated that anyone having trouble could contact Representative Bill Montford's office to help.
14. Commissioner Fulford inquired about RESTORE grant money for broadband, to which Commissioner Barfield stated it was at treasury awaiting a signature.
15. Chairman Surles stated some citizens would like an alternative meeting format in lieu of Zoom or videoconferencing and suggested possibly holding the next meeting outdoors.
16. Commission Hall thanked everyone for their efforts to make this meeting happen. He stated the recent NACo meeting addressed items such as the pharmacy cards, cybersecurity and broadband.
17. **On motion by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Barfield and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.**

**Board of County Commissioners
Jefferson County, Florida**

J.T. Surles, Chairman

ATTEST:

Kirk Reams, Clerk of Court