

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**Regular Session
December 17, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

The Board met this date in regular session. Present were Chairman Stephen Walker, Commissioners Betsy Barfield, Eugene Hall, JT Surles and Chris Tuten. Also present were County Attorneys Buck Bird and Scott Shirley and Clerk of Court Kirk Reams.

1. Chairman Walker called the meeting order. Chairman Walker then led the invocation and pledge of allegiance.
2. **Chairman Walker requested that item C be moved to the first item under General Business. On motion by Commissioner Surles, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously carried, the consent agenda—consisting of the approval of the agenda as amended, General Fund/Transportation/CARES Act Vouchers, BOCC Regular Session Minutes for 11/5/2020 and 11/19/2020 and Notice of Jefferson County featured in 2021 FAC Calendar—was approved.**
3. Commissioner Tuten introduced the revised resolution provided in the agenda packet regarding a “No Build” option for the Suncoast Connector to or through Jefferson County. He discussed significant modifications to the original no build resolution. **Commissioner Surles made a motion to approve Resolution #2020-121720-01 for the No Build Option, which Commissioner Tuten seconded for discussion.** Commissioner Barfield stated her desire to pare down the language, with nothing that could potentially offend or be seen as an affront to FDOT or the Florida Legislature. Commissioner Surles stated he has received far more calls and emails from people against the toll road. **The motion carried 4 to 1 (Hall opposed).** Commissioner Barfield stated she did not vote against the resolution, but still was not happy with the wording.
4. Commissioner Hall introduced the request for bonus checks for county employees item. He stated there were approximately 75 employees under the Board of County Commissioners and suggested each employee get a \$1000 bonus to assist with COVID relief. **Commissioner Hall made a motion for the \$1000 bonus for county employees which died for lack of a second.**
5. Attorney Scott Shirley introduced the Valley View Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessment item and introduced the resolution of intent (Resolution #2020-121720-02). He stated the need to call for public comment via a public hearing and that this would go into effect in 2021. Chairman Walker opened the public hearing. There was no comment from the public. **On motion by Commissioner Surles, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously carried, the Board approved Resolution #2020-121720-02.**
6. Clerk of Court Kirk Reams introduced the Legislative Priorities item and requested that the Board consider any priorities outside of the normal requests of SCRAP, SCOP, Amendment 1 & 4 offsets. He stated these priorities would be presented at the March session. Commissioner Hall suggested funding for the memorial monument for Veterans as one possibility. Commissioner Walker if the Board could provide its priorities by the first meeting in January, to which Clerk Reams responded in the affirmative. Commissioner Tuten noted an RFP for a lobbyist might be a good idea. Clerk of Court Reams stated the County usually relied on Chris Doolin with the Small County Coalition. Attorney Shirley noted that the county would have more success is a lobbyist were hired

early in the year. Commissioner Tuten requested that the RFQ for a lobbyist be placed on the next agenda for further discussion. Commissioner Barfield stated she was not sure a lobbyist would be worth the money unless it was for a specific item or cause. Commissioner Surles stated if the county did the same thing, they would keep getting the same results.

7. Courtney Cone, newly hired Director of the Wilderness Coast Public Libraries, introduced herself to the Board and requested the Board appoint a representative to serve on the Wilderness Coast Board. Commissioner Tuten volunteered to serve short-term until an appointment was made by the Board.
8. Planning Official Shannon Metty stated that—since the Recreation Park was mentioned for the Legislative Priorities—a workshop for the building/equipment be held in January. The workshop was scheduled for January 7th at 4 pm (preceding the regular session on the same evening at 6 pm).
9. Planning Official Shannon Metty introduced the solar panels fee resolution (resolution #2020-121720-03) and stated the ordinance was passed in September but this resolution would be adding small scale solar fee at \$50 and the large scale fee at \$1500. **On motion by Commissioner Barfield, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously carried, the solar panel fee resolution referenced above was passed.**
10. Dave Jahosky, consulting with GSG, provided an update on the CARES Act and stated the County was in the final stages of providing documentation for reimbursement. Renee Long, County CARES Act Coordinator, stated mortgage/rent/utility assistance went directly to the companies and not the individuals and that the businesses that received money had to prove the need and also attest to allowing future audits. Property Appraiser Angela Gray stated that \$970,000 worth of assistance had been provided to local businesses and non-profits. She also noted a late grant request was received from the Health Department for \$12,617 for a freezer at the Health Department to store the vaccine. **On motion by Commissioner Barfield, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously carried, the Board approved this request.** Mrs. Gray stated her desire that any leftover CARES funds be put towards improving broadband/repeaters to fill the gap/shortfall. Mrs. Gray also informed the Board she would be resigning from the Legislative Committee and Economic Development Committee.
11. Clerk of Court Kirk Reams stated the Board had approved Christmas Eve (Thursday) and Christmas Day (Friday) and was scheduled to have New Year's Day (Friday) off as well. He stated he had received multiple questions about New Year's Eve (Thursday). It was the consensus of the Board to grant County employees the additional holiday of New Year's Eve.
12. Clerk of Court Kirk Reams informed the Board of a premium refund from Capital Health Plan for a little over \$40,000 due to the pandemic's impact on claims utilization.
13. Clerk of Court Reams also informed the Board that new grant cycle for SCRAP, SCOP and CIGP was beginning. He stated that as soon as the County knows what it was awarded in the last cycle, we can begin preparing for what to ask for by the March 12, 2021 deadline.
14. Commissioner Surles inquired if there was any update on the illegal dumping. Sheriff Mac McNeill stated he would get with County Coordinator Parrish Barwick and Solid Waste Director Beth Letchworth to see how he and his department can assist.

15. Commissioner Hall stated he missed receiving the monthly report from the Building Department and stated that he would like to see those reports from time to time in the agenda packet. County Coordinator Barwick stated he would email the report to the Commissioners.
16. Commissioner Walker stated the County is still looking for another dump site location in the Lamont area.
17. **On motion by Commissioner Surles, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.**

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

Stephen Walker, Chairman

ATTEST:

Kirk Reams, Clerk of Court