

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Session Agenda Thursday, February 20th, 2025 6 PM

The Board met on this date in Regular Session. Chairman Austin Hosford, Commissioners Ben White, JT Surles, Jessica Gramling, and Gene Hall were present. Clerk Trey Hightower, County Manager Shannon Metty, HR Director Renee Long, County Attorney Heather Encinosa, Assistant County Attorney Evan Rosenthal, and County Budget Officer Gus Rojas were also present.

The meeting on February 20th covered several key items. The board approved the consent agenda and a private road contract with CW Roberts. They discussed the Jefferson Arts Building lease, with concerns about utility costs and maintenance. The board also considered a culvert replacement on Nursery Road at \$29,750 and playground improvements at Hall Park. Public comments highlighted concerns about a proposed truck stop, citing increased traffic, noise, and potential environmental impacts. Legal arguments emphasized the comprehensive plan's specific authorization for truck stops in interchange business zones. The board was urged to deny the application to preserve the county's rural character. The meeting discussed the proposed truck stop development, with concerns raised about its impact on local air and water quality, noise pollution, and the potential displacement of existing businesses. The board voted to deny the application, citing incompatibility with the land development code and community values. Additionally, the board discussed the need for better coordination with the Clerk's Office on code updates and the potential reopening of a mine for county benefits. The meeting concluded with updates on various county projects and budget issues.

- 1. 6 PM Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
 - **Commissioner Hall motions to move items 5b and 5d to the next meeting, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved.**
- 3. Public Announcements, Presentations & Awards**
 - Restored Glory Church/Pastor Yon Proclamation- Proclamation read by Renee Long.
- 4. Citizens Request & Input on Non-Agenda Items**
 - Mark Winchester will not comment.
 - Bill Snyder would like to add how each commissioner votes on the resolutions.
- 5. Consent Agenda**
 - **Commissioner White motions to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**
- 6. General Business**
 - a. Private Road Contractor Award**
 - CW Roberts is the lowest bidder.
 - **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the Private Road Contractor Award, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously passed by the board.**
 - b. SHIP**
 - **Commissioner White motions to approve, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously passed by the board.**

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c. **Jefferson Arts Lease**

- County acquired the Art building and would like to renegotiate the monthly lease with the Art Gallery.
- Commissioner Hall wants to know the amount of the lease that is proposing.
- Commissioner Surles asked the property appraiser for her input.
- Citizens to be Heard: Steven Bentz, Penny Hatchett, Susan Rissman, Sammy Gray (did not speak), Brenda Wirick.
- A letter from the Art Gallery asking for more time to renegotiate the lease. Discussion between board and public.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to extend the current lease for one month and bring a revised version to one of the Regular Session meetings in March, including negotiated terms between the county and Jefferson Arts to continue modifications of the building, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously passed by the board.**

d. **Culvert Replacement, Nursery Road**

- Culvert is in irreplaceable damage. Quote is given.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to approve Culvert Replacement, Nursery Road, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously passed by the board.**

e. **Hall Park Playground**

- Shannon Metty explains that playground equipment at Hall Park is falling apart, and improvements are needed. They have received three bids—they are recommending going with pro playground due to more equipment and lower labor costs.
- Chairman Hosford clarifies if this is coming out of general funds or parks and rec, to which Shannon Metty responds that it is an additional cost so it would be coming out of contingency.
- **Commissioner White motions to approve Hall Park Playground, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously passed by the board.**

f. **Power Breeze Big Bend Health Care Coalition Award Agreement**

- Kristy Anderson- EOC Director- Submitted a Grant for Power Breezers to help with heat related issues. It will be housed at the EOC Warehouse.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the Award Agreement, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**

g. **Weather STEM Memorandum of Agreement**

- Asked for an agreement for a weather stem program to be placed at the EOC, Aucilla Shores, Lloyd Fire Department.

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- **Commissioner White motions to approve the Memorandum, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously passed by the board.**

7. Quasi-Judicial Hearing: Lamont Gas Station

a. TA Truck Stop

- Exparte Communications- Commissioners Surles, White, and Hosford spoke with several citizens prior to this hearing. Commissioner Hosford recuses himself as a gas station owner.
- Commissioner Gramling spoke with several citizens regarding the hearing and the property appraiser for some maps; she also did research on her own.
- Commissioner Hall states that he was contacted by several citizens.
- Commissioners are asked if they can remain impartial, to which they all respond yes except for Commissioner Hosford who recused himself.
- County staff and speakers are sworn in.
- Tina Eckle, a certified land use planner, presents the applicant's case for the truck stop development.
- Community benefits are discussed, which include onsite remediation and improved groundwater quality, as well as employment opportunities and increasing sales/gas tax revenues.
- In terms of code compliance, the property is across two different land use districts. The high-intense commercial use category is permitted across both of those districts. It is an appropriate use of the property.
- Questions for Shannon Metty regarding her background and qualifications. She is asked to explain her recommendation via the staff report to the Board of County Commissioners. She replies that they found that application met the standards laid out in the comprehensive plan and the land development code; the recommendation was ultimately for approval.
- The additional condition would be to include a more detailed site plan to include the berm and the eight foot fence, so it is more evident.
- Citizens who spoke in opposition: Ashley May, Stephanie Stiles, Cay Curtis, John Broadway, Gaynell Purvis, Allisa Lamar, Lynn McGrady, Sue Smith, Steve Bentz, BJ Nelson.
- Attorney David Theariac submits a 3-ring binder and details issues with the comprehensive plan.
- Tina Eckle offers a rebuttal, defending the truck stop proposal and citing the comprehensive plan and land development code as supporting the project.
- Commissioner Gramling state inconsistencies with the application. She gives a presentation of why she believes the applicant does not follow the land development code.

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- She argues that this application includes two land uses, and by neglecting to file for a change in land use, the applicant has not allowed for the board of county commissioners to adequately represent the people that elected them.
- Commissioner Surles lists several reasons why he is against the truck stop, including the loss of middle-wage jobs, lack of accommodation, potential crime increases, and the lack of emphasis on the mission statement.
- Evan Rosenthal explains that the county needs to provide a reason why the applicant did not meet criteria.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to deny the TA Truck Stop and contract Mr. Theraic as counsel for any future litigation, seconded by Commissioner Gramling. Commissioner White votes in favor of the motion to deny, and Commissioner Hall votes in opposition. Commissioner Hosford refrained from voting.**

8. Clerk of Court

- Provides an update on the status of the audit. He reached out to the auditors to confirm they would present in the March meeting and to each of the commissioners individually.

9. County Engineer

- Provides an update on the DOT project, Waukeelah, and Old Lloyd.

10. County Attorney

- Provides an update regarding the Homestead Barn.

11. County Manager

- Provides updates on debris pickup, the A building project, and the need for additional funding for pickleball courts.
- Requests direction on reopening the mine and providing security upgrades for the tax collector's office.
- Pickleball courts- the initial estimate was \$115,000, but the actual cost is \$145,000.

12. County Commissioners

- Chairman Hosford would like to know why the company that created the comp plan did not present a plan to the board requests. He expresses issues with adopted ordinances in previous years not being recorded to Muni-code. He believes the board and taxpayers deserve an explanation as to why the money spent did not provide an appropriate return on investment.
- Shannon Metty explains that they had to collect a lot of data, and there is additional material that he did not see. Documents being recorded to Muni-code is a job of the Clerk's Office, not the planning department. She states that the current land development code has numerous holes in it. She states that they could have met more frequently to understand the issues.

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- Chairman Hosford expresses dissatisfaction with the quality of the comprehensive plan and the cost of the project.
- Commissioner Surles concludes that the board's stance on this issue is now reflected in the record.

13. Adjourn

- **Commissioner Surles motions to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**

FORM 8B MEMORANDUM OF VOTING CONFLICT FOR COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICERS

LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE NAME Austin Hosford		NAME OF BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY, OR COMMITTEE Jefferson Board of County Commissioners	
MAILING ADDRESS 422 Whitehouse Road		THE BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY OR COMMITTEE ON WHICH I SERVE IS A UNIT OF:	
CITY Monticello, FL 32344		<input type="checkbox"/> CITY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COUNTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER LOCAL AGENCY	
COUNTY Jefferson		NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION:	
DATE ON WHICH VOTE OCCURRED February 20, 2025		MY POSITION IS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ELECTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> APPOINTIVE	

WHO MUST FILE FORM 8B

This form is for use by any person serving at the county, city, or other local level of government on an appointed or elected board, council, commission, authority, or committee. It applies to members of advisory and non-advisory bodies who are presented with a voting conflict of interest under Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes.

Your responsibilities under the law when faced with voting on a measure in which you have a conflict of interest will vary greatly depending on whether you hold an elective or appointive position. For this reason, please pay close attention to the instructions on this form before completing and filing the form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 112.3143, FLORIDA STATUTES

A person holding elective or appointive county, municipal, or other local public office **MUST ABSTAIN** from voting on a measure which would inure to his or her special private gain or loss. Each elected or appointed local officer also **MUST ABSTAIN** from knowingly voting on a measure which would inure to the special gain or loss of a principal (other than a government agency) by whom he or she is retained (including the parent, subsidiary, or sibling organization of a principal by which he or she is retained); to the special private gain or loss of a relative; or to the special private gain or loss of a business associate. Commissioners of community redevelopment agencies (CRAs) under Sec. 163.356 or 163.357, F.S., and officers of independent special tax districts elected on a one-acre, one-vote basis are not prohibited from voting in that capacity.

For purposes of this law, a "relative" includes only the officer's father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law. A "business associate" means any person or entity engaged in or carrying on a business enterprise with the officer as a partner, joint venturer, coowner of property, or corporate shareholder (where the shares of the corporation are not listed on any national or regional stock exchange).

ELECTED OFFICERS:

In addition to abstaining from voting in the situations described above, you must disclose the conflict:

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN by publicly stating to the assembly the nature of your interest in the measure on which you are abstaining from voting; *and*

WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE VOTE OCCURS by completing and filing this form with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who should incorporate the form in the minutes.

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Although you must abstain from voting in the situations described above, you are not prohibited by Section 112.3143 from otherwise participating in these matters. However, you must disclose the nature of the conflict before making any attempt to influence the decision, whether orally or in writing and whether made by you or at your direction.

IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION PRIOR TO THE MEETING AT WHICH THE VOTE WILL BE TAKEN:

- You must complete and file this form (before making any attempt to influence the decision) with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who will incorporate the form in the minutes. (Continued on page 2)

APPOINTED OFFICERS (continued)

- A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency.
- The form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

IF YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION EXCEPT BY DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING:

- You must disclose orally the nature of your conflict in the measure before participating.
- You must complete the form and file it within 15 days after the vote occurs with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who must incorporate the form in the minutes. A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency, and the form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

DISCLOSURE OF LOCAL OFFICER'S INTEREST

I, Austin Hosford, hereby disclose that on February 20, 20 25 :

(a) A measure came or will come before my agency which (check one or more)

- ☒ inured to my special private gain or loss;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of my business associate, _____ ;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of my relative, _____ ;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of _____, by
whom I am retained; or
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of _____, which
is the parent subsidiary, or sibling organization or subsidiary of a principal which has retained me.

(b) The measure before my agency and the nature of my conflicting interest in the measure is as follows:

If disclosure of specific information would violate confidentiality or privilege pursuant to law or rules governing attorneys, a public officer, who is also an attorney, may comply with the disclosure requirements of this section by disclosing the nature of the interest in such a way as to provide the public with notice of the conflict.

March 20, 2025

Date Filed



Signature

NOTICE: UNDER PROVISIONS OF FLORIDA STATUTES §112.317, A FAILURE TO MAKE ANY REQUIRED DISCLOSURE CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR AND MAY BE PUNISHED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: IMPEACHMENT, REMOVAL OR SUSPENSION FROM OFFICE OR EMPLOYMENT, DEMOTION, REDUCTION IN SALARY, REPRIMAND, OR A CIVIL PENALTY NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000.