

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Session

Thursday, April 17th, 2025

5 PM

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

The April 17 BCC Meeting began with a prayer and a budget workshop. Gus Rojas discussed a 3% cost of living increase and a \$552,000 contingency fund. Don Esslinger and Becky Miller presented health insurance data, noting a 105.2% medical loss ratio and a 9.7379% increase last year. They proposed a 9-10% increase for the next year. The board approved a \$361,272.69 budget amendment for the Sheriff's Office and a \$9,154.53 amendment for EOC. They also passed a public camping ordinance and a tower ordinance amendment. The board approved renewing the county attorney services agreement with NGN for an additional year. An addendum to the CareerSource agreement was approved to align with the REACH Act. The board discussed amendments to the comprehensive plan, including a policy requiring paved roads in new subdivisions and changes to mixed-use business and residential districts. They also voted to seek legal representation from David Theriac for a land use case. Additionally, the board considered surplus property options, including the mosquito control building, and discussed the need for additional road department employees and equipment.

1. 5PM Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

Regular Session Agenda

2. Approval of the Agenda

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

3. Public Announcements

a. TDC Recognition of Appreciation

- Chairman Hosford introduces Theresa Sterling, the grants writer and director of the Tourist Development Council, to recognize Sam Gonzalez for his support of the Monticello Market.
- Theresa highlights the success of the Monticello Market, which has grown significantly since its inception and has attracted vendors from other counties.
- Sam Gonzalez is presented with an appreciation award for his unwavering generosity and support of the market.
- The conversation includes comments from vendors who have benefited from the market and the positive impact on the local economy.

b. Cindy Pyburn Presentation

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- Cindy Pyburn addresses the board, expressing concerns about House Bill 579, Senate Bill 118, and House Bill 1209, which she believes threaten the county's property rights and rural community.
- Chairman Hosford proposes drafting a resolution/letter to oppose these bills and any future bills with similar language.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to draft a letter and express their opposition to the bills, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**

c. Private Road Grant Update

- Shannon Metty provides updates on the private road projects, including the status of signatures and the progress of road improvements.
- Aucilla Shores is approximately halfway finished, we are moving to Crabapple next, and Oaklands plantation will come after that.
- The weather permitted us to work quickly, and CW has been great to work with.
- The discussion includes the importance of obtaining signatures from property owners to ensure the completion of road projects.
- Chairman Hosford inquires if we feel good about our timelines and whether checkpoints are going to be hit, to which Shannon Metty responds yes.
- The conversation highlights the positive impact of the road improvements on the community and the importance of continued collaboration.
- Citizens to be Heard: Cathy Lauder, Andy Ellis.

4. Citizens' Request and Input on Non-Agenda Items

5. Consent Agenda

- **Commissioner Hall motions to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**

6. General Business

a. JSCO and EOC Mid-Year Budget Amendment

- The Sheriff's Office and EOC present their mid-year budget amendments, explaining the need for carryover funds and reimbursements.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the budget amendments, with clarifications on the impact of reimbursements on the budget, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**
- The discussion includes the importance of accurate budgeting and the need for ongoing monitoring of financial allocations.
- Citizen to be Heard: Clayton Tolbert

b. Public Camping Ordinance

- **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the public camping ordinance, which prohibits public camping and sleeping in county buildings and**

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property, except in designated areas, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.

- The ordinance includes authorization for the sheriff's office to trespass and remove violators.

c. **Tower Ordinance**

- **Commissioner White motions to approve the tower ordinance amendment, which streamlines the process for replacing existing radio system towers and clarifies the definition of communication towers, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**
- The amendment aims to reduce red tape and ensure compliance with state laws while maintaining the county's control over tower placement.

d. **NGN Contract Renewal**

- Evan Rosenthal discusses the need for direction on renewing the county attorney services agreement with NGN, which is set to expire on June 30.
- The agreement allows for one-year extensions or longer, depending on the parties' agreement.
- Evan Rosenthal proposes redesignating himself as the County Attorney and designating Kirsten Mood as the Assistant County Attorney.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to renew the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**

e. **Career Source Capital Region**

- Shannon Metty introduced an addendum to the agreement with Career Source to align with the REACH Act and revised Florida commerce policies.
- **Commissioner Gramling motions to approve the addendum, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously passed by the board.**
- Commissioner Hall inquires about the application or priority recommendation for the Career Source board, but Chairman Hosford clarifies that no voting on board members is taking place.
- The addendum is related to language changes in the contract, not board appointments.

f. **Revised Comprehensive Plan**

- Evan Rosenthal provides an update on the Jefferson County comprehensive plan, which was updated at a public hearing in February.
- The board approved proposed plan amendments and directed the county attorney to address issues such as statutory changes and land use categories.
- Evan Rosenthal outlines the proposed amendments, including a new policy requiring paved roads in newly developed subdivisions.

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- Chairman Hosford and other commissioners discuss the practical impacts and potential exceptions to the paved road policy.
 - Evan Rosenthal discusses proposed changes to the mixed-use business and residential (MUBR) district, including updated density standards and percentage mix of uses.
 - The board debates whether to keep the percentage mix as aspirational or mandatory, and how to measure the percentage of commercial and residential uses.
 - Chairman Hosford and other commissioners agree on a hard cap of 60% commercial, with no cap on residential.
 - **Commissioner White motions to approve the changes to the MUBR district, seconded by Commissioner Surles. Commissioners Gramling and Hosford vote in favor. Commissioner Hall votes in opposition. Motion passes 4-1.**
- g. **Request to Waive Procurement-Art Gallery Roof Project**
- Shannon Metty discusses the need for a new roof in the arts gallery, which is estimated to cost \$21,000.
 - **Commissioner Gramling motions to approve the roof repair, seconded by Commissioner Surles. Commissioners White and Hall vote in favor. Chairman Hosford votes in opposition. Motion passes 4-1.**
 - The board discusses the source of funding for the roof repair, including a GoFundMe page started by the arts gallery.
- h. **Floodplain Ordinance**
- Shannon Metty informs the board about FEMA updating flood maps, which will affect 11 residents coming out of the floodplain and three going in.
 - **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the Floodplain Ordinance, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously passed by the board.**
- i. **Lamont Truck Stop Challenge Discussion**
- Update by Evan Rosenthal
 - Commissioner Surles discusses the need for legal representation, with options including hiring David Theriac or using insurance-appointed counsel.
 - Chairman Hosford recuses himself from the vote on legal representation, and the board votes to seek services from David Theriac.
 - The board also discusses the possibility of interviewing multiple insurance-approved attorneys if David Theriac is unavailable.
 - Citizen to be Heard: Byron Arceneau

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- **Commissioner Surles motions to appoint David Theriac as counsel, seconded by Commissioner Gramling. Commissioner White votes in favor. Commissioner Hall votes in opposition. Motion passes 3-1.**

j. **Public Notice for HMGP Boston HWY, Bonnett Pond Culvert Replacement**

- Update from County Manager.
- We received funding from Hurricane Sally to fix a Culvert on Boston Highway, and we are finally getting to the point where we can do construction on it. It is almost \$300,000 to fix, and it will be done at Bonnet Pond. There is no vote required.

k. **Request to Advertise- Surplus of the Mine**

- Shannon Metty introduces a resolution to surplus the mine and issue an RFP for proposals from interested companies to operate it.
- The board debates whether to lease or sell the mine, with some commissioners preferring to explore both options.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to amend the resolution to just surplus the mine and direct staff to come back with options for sale or lease, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously passed by the board.**
- Shannon Metty also discusses the possibility of continuing a services contract with a road company for larger projects, which the board supports.

7. **Clerk of Court**

- \$78,173 payback FY22/23.
- The elevator at the courthouse is out of compliance. It will cost \$14,000 for a temporary fix and \$79,000 for a permanent fix.
- **Commissioner Surles motions to use payback funds to fix the courthouse elevator, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**
- Payroll shifted to a biweekly schedule, and the Clerk's Office went live paying ACH.
- Courthouse cameras are being replaced by Sonitrol.

8. **County Engineer**

- Email update read by County Manager.
- Jack Husband met with CW on the final payment request for Waukeelah Highway. He is going to meet with Evan at CW to negotiate on behalf of the county to ensure we get the best deal possible. They also turned in 60% plans for Boston Highway phase I & II to FDOT for construction.
- She drove around with Chris Morris, the other County Engineer, and looked at the two culverts on Aucilla Highway. She suggests an RFP for a continuing services contract with a road company such as CW.
- County Attorney Evan Rosenthal clarifies that there is a specific monetary threshold to where you must publicly advertise construction projects.

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9. County Attorney

10. County Manager

- Commissioner Gramling raises concerns about surplusing the mosquito control building, citing a new appraisal of \$220,000 and the cost of building a new facility.
- Chairman Hosford and other commissioners discuss the potential benefits of keeping the property for future road department expansion.
- **Chairman Hosford passes the gavel to Commissioner White and motions to bring the issue back to a future agenda item for further discussion, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously passed by the board.**

11. County Commissioners

- Commissioner Hall suggests recognizing long-time employees with gifts or plaques to show appreciation for their service.
- Shannon Metty confirms that the county currently does not have a formal recognition program for long-term employees.
- The board agrees to explore options for employee recognition and appreciation.
- Commissioner Gramling wishes everyone a Happy Easter.
- Chairman Hosford provides updates on various ongoing projects, including the Boston highway culvert repair and the old Lloyd Street light replacement.
- The board discusses the need for additional road department employees and the impact of current staffing shortages.

12. Adjourn

- **Commissioner Surles motions to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner White 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	COUNTY Jefferson	<input type="checkbox"/> CITY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COUNTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER LOCAL AGENCY	
DATE ON WHICH VOTE OCCURRED April 17, 2025		NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION:	
		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 April 17, 2025

(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.

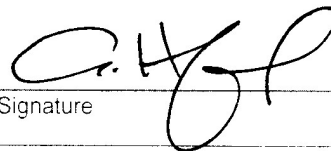
(b) The measure before my agency and the nature of my conflicting interest in the measure is as follows:

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.

April 28, 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.