

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Session

Wednesday, September 24th, 2025

5:01 PM

The Board met on this date in Regular Session. Chairman Austin Hosford, Commissioners JT Surles, Ben White, Jessica Gramling, and Gene Hall were present. County Manager Shannon Metty, Clerk of Court Trey Hightower, and County Attorney Evan Rosenthal were also present.

The meeting began with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. The Board of County Commissioners finalized the millage rate at 7.6529 mills and approved a budget of \$36,947,161 for fiscal year 2025-2026. The board discussed insurance payroll deduction errors, recovering \$10,000, and seeking legal funds from the Property Appraiser and Tax Collector. They also considered a splash pad project with installation costs ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000 and a restroom at Wacissa River Park with high construction costs. The board approved the appointment of Randy Gregory as planning commissioner and raised the fixed asset threshold to \$5,000.

- 1. 5:01 PM Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance (00:00:03)**
- 2. Public Hearing on Final Millage and Budget for FY 25/26 (00:01:09)**
 - a. Shannon Metty reads the final county-wide millage read of 7.6529 mills into the public record, equal to the rollback millage rate, as well as a total budget of \$36,947,161, including interfund transfers and transfers to constitutional officers.
 - b. Commissioner Surles motions to open the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.
 - c. Commissioner Surles motions to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously approved by the board.
 - d. Commissioner Surles motions to adopt the resolution presented today, approving the final county wide millage rate of 7.6529 mills, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.
 - e. Commissioner Surles motions to approve the final fiscal year 2025-2026 county wide budget as presented by the County Manager, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.
- 3. Approval of the Agenda (00:05:27)**
 - a. Commissioner Hall motions to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.
- 4. Public Announcements, Presentations & Awards (00:05:50)**
- 5. Citizens Request & Input on Non-Agenda Items (00:05:58)**
- 6. Consent Agenda (00:06:43)**
 - a. Commissioner Gramling motions to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.
 - b. Beth Young questions about the entrance to Deerwood Blvd.
- 7. General Business (00:08:40)**
 - a. Insurance Updates and Clarification

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- i. Counsel speaks to the county's insurance coverage of county employees, specifically payroll deductions.
 - ii. **Commissioner Surles motions to authorize the Property Appraiser and Tax Collector to utilize the funds as stated by Counsel, and to implement a standardized insurance policy as stated by option one, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**
- b. **Splashpad**
 - i. Shannon Metty introduces the Splashpad, including installation costs ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000, and maintenance costs ranging from \$20,000 to \$40,000 a year. She recommends partnering with the city on this project, as it needs to be compatible with their system.
 - ii. **Commissioner Hall motions to hear additional information, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.**
- c. **Wacissa River Park Restroom Discussion**
 - i. Shannon Metty states that the septic system ranges from \$25,000 to \$40,000. The construction could be up to \$100,000, considering ADA compliance. Her concern is that we would need to hire someone to ensure that it stays clean.
 - ii. Citizen to be Heard: Kristi Anderson
- d. **Ambulance and Stretcher Purchase**
 - i. **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the ambulance and stretcher purchase, waving procurement, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously approved by the board.**
 - ii. Shannon Metty states that the cost of the stretcher is above the threshold for the Manager's office to approve.
- e. **Appointment of District 4 Planning Commissioner**
 - i. Mr. Randy Gregory is the new District 4 Planning Commissioner, pending appointment.
 - ii. **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the appointment of the District 4 Planning Commissioner, Randy Gregory, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**
- f. **Fixed Assets**
 - i. Clerk of Court Trey Hightower states that this resolution raises the county's fixed asset application threshold from \$1,000 to \$5,000 retroactively to October 1, 2023.
 - ii. **Commissioner White motions to approve the fixed asset threshold increase, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.**

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8. Clerk of Court (00:33:02)

- a. Regarding the dependency audit for all the insurance deductions, we have two or three left that are still pending and then we will be in compliance by the start of the next fiscal year.

9. County Engineer (00:33:58)

- a. Shannon Metty provides updates on Waukeelah Highway Phase II and Boston Highway Phase I & II.

10. County Attorney (00:37:22)

- a. Speaks to the County's former HR Director Renee Long, who has been arrested and charged with one count insurance fraud, two counts of grand theft and one count organized scheme to fraud.

11. County Manager (00:35:10)

- a. Requests board direction for a 12-acre Natural Shrimp property appraisal. The Board recommends a third-party appraisal.

12. County Commissioners (00:38:07)

- a. Chairman Hosford asks for an update on the T-Mobile Grant and recycling costs.

13. Adjourn (00:38:58)

- a. **Commissioner Surles motions to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously approved by the board.**

ATTEST

Cecil Trey Hightower
Clerk of the Circuit Court

ATTEST

Austin Hosford
Chairman