

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Regular Session
Thursday, November 20, 2025
6:00 PM

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

The meeting began with the approval of the agenda, which included adding a Resolution for a Burn Ban to General Business, and proceeded to address Citizens' Requests, where two individuals expressed concerns and requested a cessation of work by a propane company until a resolution is reached. Key General Business actions included the appointment of Ben White as Chairman and Jessica Gramling as Vice Chair. A significant Broadband Discussion highlighted that Tri County has completed installations for their customers and some Duke customers, but an estimated \$17 million is needed to complete the rest of the county. The board also unanimously approved option one of the Aucilla Shores resolution, two tax deed properties, the T-Mobile Artist Award and Contract for a mural, and a State of Emergency Resolution enacting a Burn Ban due to extreme drought conditions. Additionally, the County Manager's request to grant employees the day before Thanksgiving and the Friday after Christmas as days off was approved.

- 1. 6PM Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Approval of the Agenda**
 - a. Resolution for Burn Ban added to General Business Item H.
 - b. **Commissioner Gramling motions to approve, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.**
- 3. Public Announcements, Presentations & Awards**
- 4. Citizens Request & Input and Non-Agenda Items (00:00:11)**
 - a. Anita Howard asks that the board have propane company cease all work until the situation is resolved.
 - b. Patricia Howard voices her concerns regarding the propane company and requests that all work be paused until the board reaches a resolution.
- 5. Consent Agenda (00:12:43)**
 - a. **Commissioner Surles motions to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**
- 6. General Business (00:13:04)**
 - a. **Passing of the Gavel (00:13:13)**
 - i. **Commissioner Surles motions to appoint Ben White as Chairman and Jessica Gramling as Vice Chairman, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously approved by the board.**
 - b. **Broadband Discussion (00:13:57)**
 - i. Julius Hackett with Tri County states that they have finished installing all Tri County customers as well as some Duke customers who were within range. They are waiting for FEMA reimbursement and grants to be awarded

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to finish the rest. It will take approximately \$17 million to finish the rest of the county.

- ii. Citizens to be Heard: Arun Kundra, Alex Kantor, Cindy Forehand, Lynn McGrady
 - iii. Commissioner Surles asks about FEMA contingency planning if another hurricane were to come through.
 - iv. Property Appraiser Angela Gray reminds the board that the updated non ad valorem assessment allows us to finance broadband for certain areas where no grant monies are available if neighborhoods partner to take on that assessment.
- c. Aucilla Shores (00:53:31)**
- i. Counsel details the stipulations of the resolution and the options before the board. The estimated amount of the assessment revenue to be collected is approximately \$4,710, which will be collected by a separate bill.
 - ii. **Commissioner Surles motions to accept option one of the Resolution, seconded by Commissioner Hosford and unanimously approved by the board.**
- d. Tax Deed Surplus (00:55:51)**
- i. Shannon Metty explains two properties that constituents have asked to be surplus.
 - ii. **Commissioner Gramling motions to surplus properties under option one, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.**
- e. Surplus of Natural Shrimp (00:58:40)**
- i. **Commissioner Gramling motions to approve option one, seconded by Commissioner Surles. Commissioner Hosford votes in opposition; motion passes 4-1.**
- f. FY 24-25 Interest Earnings Summary (00:59:58)**
- i. Clerk Hightower provides an annual report to the board for the 24/25 fiscal year. The total interest earned was \$518,812.76. He thanks his finance staff and the board.
- g. T-Mobile Artist Award and Contract (01:02:25)**
- i. Shannon Metty states that the T-Mobile grant mural has been put out for RFP, and we only received one bid for the mural from Tetlac LLC.
 - ii. **Commissioner Hosford motions to approve the bid, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously approved by the board.**
- h. Burn Ban Resolution (01:04:25)**
- i. Kristy Anderson, EOC Director, reports on the extreme drought in our area from the National Weather Service.

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- ii. Commissioner Surles motions to approve the state of emergency resolution, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**

7. Clerk of Court (01:07:40)

8. County Engineer (01:07:54)

- a. Shannon Metty states the Wolf Creek Bridge bid is complete. They are still waiting on the Waukeenah bid approval form from Dewberry. Boston Highway is expected to move forward within the next couple weeks.**

9. County Attorney (01:07:48)

10. County Manager (01:08:56)

- a. Shannon Metty seeks directions from the board regarding gift cards. She requests that County employees be off the day before Thanksgiving and the Friday after Christmas and New Year's Day.**
- b. Commissioner Gramling motions to approve Shannon Metty's request, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.**

11. County Commissioners (01:10:49)

- a. Commissioner Hall asks if there is any progress with the portable toilets at Wacissa River. Shannon Metty assures him she will make the phone call.**
- b. Commissioner Hosford asks if there is anything that can be done regarding the signage being posted at the Lloyd caution light. Dusty McCoy, Code Enforcement, will review the code and see what can be done.**
- c. Commissioner Surles states that the Big Bend Transit contract will expire in January. He wants to bring it to everyone's awareness and see how to continue this much-needed service.**

12. Adjourn (01:16:13)

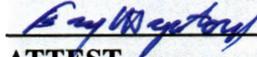
- a. Commissioner Surles motions to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Hosford and unanimously approved by the board.**

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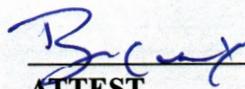
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ATTEST
Cecil Trey Hightower
Clerk of the Circuit Court



ATTEST
Ben White
Chairman