

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Regular Session
Thursday, March 5, 2026
9:00 AM

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

The Board approved the agenda with the addition of two general business items and welcomed the county's new library director. During public comments, citizens raised concerns about a proposed truck stop development and requested improvements to the tax collector's office. The Board approved the consent agenda and addressed several general business items. Actions included directing staff to prepare a RESTORE funding amendment for a new Emergency Operations Center and exploring eligibility for other projects. The Board also approved the county manager job advertisement and recruitment services, adopted a cybersecurity policy, waived procurement for extension office repairs, and approved transportation program resolutions, an inmate work agreement for county departments, and a grant amendment for the sheriff's office. Staff provided updates on planning activities, road projects, and potential grant opportunities. Commissioners also discussed communication and transparency, the future procurement of county attorney services, and concerns related to litter control and the Veterans Affairs Office before adjourning.

- 1. 9 AM Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance (00:00:09)**
- 2. Approval of the Agenda (00:01:01)**
 - a. Shannon Metty introduces two agenda items: an interlocal agreement with the Florida Department of Corrections and an amendment to the DMS grant with the sheriff's office.
 - b. Evan Rosenthal advises the Chairman that the items need to be added to General Business.
 - c. **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**
- 3. Public Announcements, Presentations & Awards (00:02:36)**
 - a. Shannon Metty introduces Emily Grosskopf, the new library director, who briefly introduces herself.
- 4. Citizens Request & Input on Non-Agenda Items (00:03:43)**
 - a. John Broadway raises concerns about a truck stop development, citing legal arguments and appeals. He discusses the legal theory behind denying the truck stop and the ongoing appeals, suggesting that the board consult a land use attorney to avoid setting a dangerous precedent.
 - b. Shanna Boutwell requests updates and improvements for the tax collector's office, including better locks, panel repairs, and a concealed weapons permit space.
 - c. Shannon Metty mentions ongoing renovations and the need for a full RFP for the tax collector's office improvements.
- 5. Consent Agenda (00:21:59)**

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- a. **Commissioner Hosford motions to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Hall, and unanimously approved by the board.**

6. General Business

a. **RESTORE Pot 3 (00:22:16)**

- i. Commissioner Gramling proposes amending the Restore funds to include a new EOC, jail refurbishing, courthouse renovations, and a trade school.
- ii. Sheriff Mac McNeil wants to explore using the Restore funds for our jail and courthouse, lessening the burden on the taxpayer.
- iii. Clerk Trey Hightower echoes the sentiments of Commissioner Gramling and Sheriff McNeil.
- iv. Evan Rosenthal clarifies that the motion is to prepare the SEP amendment for the new EOC and to report back to the board whether the three other uses are allowed.
- v. **Commissioner Gramling motions to approve, seconded by Commissioner Surles.**
- vi. **Commissioner Gramling amends her motion to include broadband, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.**
- vii. Shannon Metty asks the board who they would like to handle this project. The County Manager's office will work on the SEP amendment.

b. **County Manager Advertisement (00:37:15)**

- i. Evan Rosenthal prepared an advertisement for the county manager's position, directing focus to the salary range, which has been adjusted for inflation (\$87,400 to \$131,000).
- ii. **Commissioner Hosford motions to approve the County Manager advertisement, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously approved by the board.**

c. **County Manager Recruitment (00:39:14)**

- i. Evan Rosenthal obtained a proposal from the Florida Association of County Managers Recruitment Services. The cost is a flat fee of \$5,000, the same as in 2022.
- ii. **Commissioner Hosford motions to approve, seconded by Commissioner Surles and unanimously approved by the board.**
- iii. Clerk of Court Trey Hightower asks for clarification regarding the application process since he will be receiving them.
- iv. Evan Rosenthal replies that Clerk Hightower will only be collecting the applications, not answering any questions.
- v. Commissioner Gramling asks how the transition will work, suggesting that Shannon Metty prepare a list of open projects.

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d. County Attorney Contract Extension (00:42:20)

- i. Evan Rosenthal explains that the county's contract with NGN for county attorney services is set to expire at the end of June. The board has previously elected to extend the contract on a year-to-year basis, or it may extend it for a term of two or three years.
- ii. Commissioner Hall asks if another attorney will be assisting Evan should the contract be renewed.
- iii. Citizens to be Heard: Kim Odom
- iv. Evan Rosenthal states that if there is no motion, the board needs to make plans to reprocur county attorney services.
- v. **Commissioner Hall motions to renew the contract extension for one year. No second motion is made, and no board vote is taken.**

e. Cyber Security (00:45:38)

- i. Shannon Metty explains that the state requires local governments to implement cybersecurity standards, training, and risk management practices. It will define the roles and responsibilities of the IT department.
- ii. **Commissioner Surles motions to approve the cybersecurity policy, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**

f. Waive Procurement for Extension Office Repairs (00:46:32)

- i. Shannon Metty reports that she received some quotes for the extension office annex building. She has a quote from a contractor for \$15,998.86 to replace two doors and repair wood rot.
- ii. **Commissioner Surles motions to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**
- iii. Citizens to be Heard: Lisa Bretc, Heather Herman
- iv. Board discussion as to the status of the Senior Center.

g. SCOP/SCRAP/CGIP Resolutions (00:55:18)

- i. Shannon Metty explains the resolutions before the board.
- ii. **Commissioner Surles motions to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gramling and unanimously approved by the board.**

h. Planning Department Monthly Update (00:56:44)

- i. David Wheeler provides the planning department update, noting an upcoming informational meeting and developments with the Solero application. He urges citizens to attend and ask questions.
- ii. Commissioner Gramling states that the board was not properly notified of this meeting since it was not organized by the county. She mentions the need for more social media advertising.

i. FDOC Interagency/Public Works Agreement (01:02:58)

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responses from the County Manager's Office to ensure that the public is informed about county decisions and projects.

- c. Commissioner Surles highlights the issue of litter control, noting that their county is the only one without a four-wheeler crew to pick up litter along roadways. He suggests bringing the issue back as an agenda item to gather public input and discuss creating such a position.

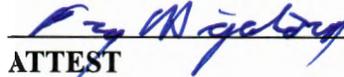
12. Adjourn (01:26:15)

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



ATTEST

Benjamin White, Chairman



ATTEST

Cecil "Trey" Hightower, Clerk of Court