

**WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BOARD WORKSHOP**

**September 18, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Commission Board Room
1331 South Blvd., Chipley, FL 32428**

DISTRICT 1 Alan T Bush	DISTRICT 2 David Pettis, Jr.	DISTRICT 3 Tray Hawkins	DISTRICT 4 Wesley Griffin	DISTRICT 5 David Corbin
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I. PROCLAMATION

- A. Call to Order – Chairman Hawkins
- B. Invocation – Commissioner Pettis
- C. Pledge

Agenda Additions

- Appointment of Ted Everett – Seat 7 of the Tourist Development Council-H. Lopez (6 B)
- Reappointment of David Pettis – Seat 1 of the Tourist Development Council-H. Lopez
- Appointment of David Doughtry – Seat 4 of the Tourist Development Council-H. Lopez
- Resilient Florida Vulnerability Assessment Award Approval – S. Arroyo (10 B)

II. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Hospital Lease and North Florida Community Hospital Facts—Michael Kozar, Chief Executive Officer requested the board amend their current lease to a 99-year lease. The current lease is for 50 years, with 20 years being expired. A longer-term lease helps with financing and other purchases that will need to be made in the future.

Last year 2,358 surgeries were done in the operating suites, and they are currently on track to do over 2,700. The standard is 1,200 procedures per operating room and that number has been exceeded. The increase in surgeries is the reason for the surgical expansion.

Commissioner Hawkins confirmed that Attorney Fuqua had reviewed the amended lease.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

2. Proposed Amendment to the WC Animal Control Ordinance (No. 2011-4) - Lynne Abel, Public Safety Director requested consideration of an amendment to the Washington County Animal Control Ordinance. With additional requirements for keeping a dog after it has been declared dangerous and to eliminate the use of a dangerous dog ward using instead a special master for an appeal hearing. Florida Statute 767 provides definitions and guidance to deal with dangerous dogs but does not limit a local government from adopting an ordinance placing further restrictions or added requirements on owners of dogs that have bitten or attacked persons or domestic animals. The statute supplies leeway for counties to decide how to conduct the owner's appeal process if requested.

Approval of advertising for the amended ordinance will be listed on the consent agenda.

3. Planning Commission Appointments and Reappointments - Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner told the board that they received a reappointment for the Washington County School Board representative. The deadline is September 30.

Commissioner Griffin said that he would like to change his representative. The board agreed to keep the others the same.

Commissioner Griffin's recommendation for the planning commission appointment will be listed as a regular agenda item.

Dawn McDonald requested the 2024 Planning Commission schedule be listed on the consent agenda for approval. The board agreed.

4. Resignation of Bill Maphis, Maphis Tree Farm TDC Seat 7 - Heather Lopez, TDC Director requested Ted Everett, Hard Labor Creek Plantation fill the seat Bill Maphis is vacating. It is an industry seat, and he is qualified.
5. Appointment of Carlie Gilbert to Seat 9 - Heather Lopez, TDC Director told the board that Carlie is the manager of Holmes Creek RV Resort, Vernon. The requested term appointment is for 4 years and would end on September 30, 2027.

The reappointment of David Pettis is requested for the county commission seat #1 for a 4-year term.

The appointment of David Dougherty, owner of the Sullivan House Bed and Breakfast is requested for seat #4 for a 4-year term.

All the TDC seat appointments/reappointments will be listed on the consent agenda.

6. Request for Approval to Rebid RFP for Old Spanish Trail Printed Guide - Heather Lopez, TDC Director requested permission to readvertise the RFP for the OST printer guide based on no bids being received by the deadline.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

7. Termination Resolution for Beautification Grants - Samantha Arroyo, Grants Coordinator requested board approval to terminate the resolution of the Florida Beautification Grant and Landscaping Construction and Maintenance Agreements for projects with contract numbers G2G52, G2G47, and G2G46. The reason for the request is the grant required a match of stamped landscaping engineer plans for each contract, which was not foreseen.

County Attorney Milton clarified with Samantha that the grants were accepted and awarded but no funding has been expended.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

Samantha Arroyo said under Karen Shaw's leadership, who is no longer with the county, they reached out to Wilson McBurney, FDOT District Landscaping Architect and he is going to investigate ways for counties like Washington County to work around that requirement in the future. He and grant manager Kristi Patterson recommended termination.

8. FDOT Grant Agreement Approval for Dumajack Road - Samantha Arroyo, Grants Coordinator said that Washington County was awarded \$2.5 million for paving Dumajack Road through

appropriations. The recommendation is to approve the funding resolution and the FDOT agreement.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

Dumajack Road Task Order for Engineering and Survey Services - Samantha Arroyo, Grants Coordinator addressed the board. This task order is for HMB to go ahead with the project on the county's behalf.

County Attorney Milton asked if HMB was awarded the project because of a continuing service contract with the county. Is it on a rotation?

County Administrator Massey said that HMB did the original cost estimates and designs when it was sent for appropriations. They are one of the continuing service engineers.

Commissioner Griffin asked if everyone had the same opportunity to design it at the beginning.

County Administrator Massey said that it depends on the project; and what work they have done on it.

9. Resilience Grant – Samantha Arroyo, Grants requested board approval of the Resilience Grant for the vulnerability assessment, which is something that FDAP is going to require for all grantees to pursue to get other grants from the agency.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

10. Reallocation of FY23 Budgeted Funds - Steve Healis, MSBU Coordinator requested approval to transfer \$10,500.00 from the contingency line item to road repair. This is not an increase to the budget.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

III. FEMA COORDINATOR – Kevan Parker addressed the board.

- ITB 2023-13 Project 170723 Hurricane Sally Road Zone 3.3 – FEMA had issues with some of the project's costs. One project was put out for bid, in which three bids were received. They are not ready right now. They are okay with the rock and installation price. The issue is with mobilization, MOT, ditch work, and grade work. FEMA also questioned why all the projects for Hurricane Sally were not bid out.

Commissioner Hawkins confirmed with Kevan that it was bid with the direction they gave them.

Commissioner Griffin questioned if they have brought up drainage improvements/drainage assessment.

Kevan said they have added and replaced many pipes. They are not doing a full drainage design due to retention pond(s) and right-of-way. They are trying to stay in the right-of-way and do things.

Commissioner Griffin said that he rode in his district after 2 inches of rain and there was a foot to a foot and a half of water coming over the road in places. This may need to be brought up to FEMA. Money is being spent; however, a 100% product is not being produced.

- ITB 2023 – 14 Installation of Generators at Five Critical Facilities – The projects are in Wausau, at the county annex, the health department, Mud Hill Tower, and the sheriff's office. Three bids were received with the lowest being \$637,645.00.

An addendum was made to a couple of the projects by downsizing a couple of the generators. The low bidder bid on the larger generator and his price was \$100,000.00 under the next bidder. Board approval is requested to accept the low bid. It has been approved, but the final pricing must be approved by DEO and DEM.

Commissioner Hawkins confirmed that the county's responsibility was 25% of the annex and the Town of Wausau's responsibility was 25%.

The bidders were TCS Electric, Rainbow Tech, and Culpepper Construction.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

The contractor cannot be contacted about pricing until the project is awarded.

If Wausau does not approve their match, that generator will be removed from the bid.

- ITB 2023-10 Rebid: Jewel Road, Kent Mill Pond Road, and Porter Road – This item will be covered under the engineer's section.
- ITB 2023-15 Hardening of EMS Building – One bid was received, which was not opened. The request before the board is to rebid. The bid includes a standing seam roof, doors, windows, and seal.

In response to Commissioner Griffin, Kimberly Birge-Gorman said that Paul was the sole bidder.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda to readvertise.

- RFP 2023-01 EOC Food and Catering Services During Emergencies – This item was rebid. There were no bids received. Direction is asked.

Commissioner Griffin said to send it out one more time.

Commissioner Bush said when it is sent back out it does not need to be for the rest of this year.

Kevan said that he believes the contract would be five years; three years, with two one-year renewals.

County Attorney Milton asked what the process would be if a disaster hits and there is no pre-disaster contract in place.

Kevan said that the county would have to reach out to locals. It would not be a true procured contract. It would compound questions because it is already hard to get food through.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda to readvertise.

- Task Work Order for Drainage/Site Improvement at Ag Center – The county has been awarded a mitigation project there. A stand-up panel to go around it has been approved. Approval is requested for a task order for Melvin Engineering to do the drainage design to connect around the building. They also approved a 6-inch pump. The state bid will be looked at for a price. Johnny Evans will be contacted for input.

Board approval will be needed for a bid to be issued for the flood panel.

Both items will be listed on the consent agenda.

- Worley Road Update – Currently there is no resolution on this. FEMA, CRC, and local DEM staff are trying to agree on what has been done. They still have questions about some of the items that were bid on.

Commissioner Griffin asked if they are not close to a resolution, how much longer are they going to make the people drive around and it is a hindrance for them?

Kevan responded that he did not have an answer. He will accept the board's direction. Small items are the issue. For example, they are having an issue with 8 – 10-inch side drains and driveways. They say that is private property and not our responsibility. It is not but it is part of the county's road drainage system.

Commissioner Hawkins asked what if they pulled the small items out and awarded it as is. He asked if he felt comfortable awarding it to the mitigation side.

Kevan said once he knew that he could make a recommendation before the board.

By Thursday, he hopes to be able to report with state input.

This item will be added to the regular agenda for Thursday and from there a determination can be made after the call.

- Wheeler Emergency Management Task Orders for the Fourth Quarter – Hurricane Michael, Hazard Mitigation, Michael Roadwork, American Rescue Plan, COVID-19, HMGP Buyouts, Hurricane Sally, PA, and Hazard Mitigation Long-term Support

This item will be added to the consent agenda.

- FEMA Projects Update
 - 77 roads under contract
 - 70 miles paved.
 - 39 roads are complete.
 - Working on 10 roads at a time with 3 contractors
 - \$3.1 million advances in step 7 – State Comptroller's Office

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- \$288,000 was approved this morning.
 - \$1.7 million in step 2 validation
 - \$3.3 million in advances waiting on the approval step to move forward.
 - Time extensions have been being pushed since April.
 - Category Z should hit 50% this month on road projects (Mrs. Bell said this amount should be around \$2 million)

Commissioner Griffin asked how the roads were selected. Some roads that have been paved have residents and some do not.

Kevan said to go back to the first projects if it was on their list, every road was put out for contract. What occurred was the contract price was doubling. They then looked at what they call a major road; typically, one that goes somewhere; not a connector road. They tried to get those, and they could come back and do the connector roads.

Commissioner Griffin asked if he considered a main road, one that nobody lives on. Duncan Community is an example. Several phone calls have been received about it.

Kevan said Duncan Community was one of those first ones.

Commissioner Griffin asked if a traffic study was done before the roads were paved. Who does it?

Kevan said yes. The engineers do. They look at the road length, and number of houses and figure an estimate from that. They use the Institute of Transportation Engineering.

Commissioner Griffin said that he would like to see those.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if the original question was how FEMA selects them.

Commissioner Griffin confirmed that it was. Is there a traffic count done?

Kevan said not on the FEMA approval side.

He told the board that he was approached by a citizen asking why his road was not on the list and he went on to say that they have been repairing their road. He told him if his road was not on the list, it was not approved by FEMA for damages. Roads are identified that are damaged in the initial stage. The state and FEMA do site inspections and they approve it. If the road was repaired before damage was documented, then Wheeler Emergency Management is not able to document damage.

Commissioner Griffin asked what FEMA covers on the paved roads. If another hurricane comes in and wipes them out, what is covered?

Kevan said what the road was like when it was damaged.

Commissioner Griffin responded if it is 25' of road counting shoulders. There is 14' of asphalt there now.

Kevan said everything would be brought back.

Commissioner Griffin said in a meeting with Dr. Dunn and Nicole it was said that FEMA is only covering what is underneath on the edge of asphalt. If it is 14' that is what is covered. Nothing outside of the asphalt.

Kevan said that is the damage description.

Commissioner Griffin asked County Administrator Massey what his understanding was.

County Administrator Massey responded that is what she said, however, he has not verified any of that.

Commissioner Griffin said they are having some issues in Walton County that they cannot get reimbursement for.

A meeting should be held with all of them.

If the county is paving 14 feet and must cover outside the shoulder, that will cost the county a lot of money.

County Administrator Massey clarified the process as, after the storm, there was damage to the roads. FEMA deployed and road every road and said what roads were eligible and which were not based on damage. They agreed to reimburse through this project to pave the existing width of the road. The maximum standard was 20'. If it was an 18-foot road, that is what they did. They set the program up.

Commissioner Griffin said that is not happening either. The width of the roads; the roads are not being put back as they were. Some stuff needs to be measured.

County Administrator Massey said that he has measured some because of the same thing. The way it looks. That is his understanding of how they pave the roads.

It was his understanding from Dr. Dunn's assistant is everything outside of that paving. The entire thing stands on what the road width was before the storm.

Commissioner Griffin said that it is wider than they are now. On some of the roads, a vehicle must get off the road to allow another car to pass. A semi and a car cannot pass each other on Gainer Road. In the past, two dump trucks could pass one another.

Kevan said they are 16' with a grass shoulder except the road Commissioner Bush is on, which is 14'. There may be some other small roads.

Commissioner Griffin expressed the concern for clarification saying that somebody is wrong.

- IV. **MSBU ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN** – Gary Hartman, MSBU committee member addressed the board. He is not the chairman but based on the letter the county wrote the chairman deferred to him and the committee accepted that they would like for him to represent them. Deltona, the county administrator, and MSBU have the same general outlook. The committee

decided on putting up 48 x 40 signs for the three locations. After a discussion with the attorney and the county administrator, it was suggested that they ask Deltona if they would get the permits and put the signs on their property. The request was presented to Deltona, and they agreed to pay for them, maintain them, and put them up.

The one on Elkcam Boulevard will be in the county's right of way which is contrary to the sign ordinance.

Commissioner Hawkins confirmed with County Administrator Massey that he would help with expediting that.

Gary Hartman informed the board that Deltona requested to take back the maintenance of the fountain. They plan to rebuild it. The county will need to do what is legally necessary to make that happen.

The committee is asking that the county replace the sign on the Makenna Annex. The county uses it as a rental facility and library; therefore, the committee does not think that it is proper to spend its funds repairing it.

Commissioner Hawkins said that sounds reasonable and he believes Mr. Massey will work on that.

County Attorney Milton addressed Chairman Hawkins saying that action will need to be taken on the lease termination/authorize the county manager to execute a release to end the lease.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

V. COUNTY ENGINEER

Donald Stanley asked for approval of the following change orders, which are based on over and under runs.

- Change Order 5 Final for ITB 2021 – 09 – C.W. Roberts Contracting – This is the final change order, which is a decrease of \$727,233.10.
- Change Order 5 – Final for ITB 2021 – 11 – The change order is for a decrease of \$510,744.85.
- Change Order 3 Final for ITB 2021 – 12 - C.W. Roberts Contracting – The change order is for a decrease of 486,200.94.
- Change Order 1 – Final for ITB 2022 – 24 – C.W. Roberts Contracting – The change order will close out the contract with a decrease of \$95,957.87.
- Change Order 2 – ITB 2022 – 25 – C.W. Roberts Contracting – This change order is to add a contract ditch paving from Pine Log Road. The change order is for \$21,451.06.
- Change Order 6 – Final for ITB 2021 – 08 – C.W. Roberts Contracting – This is the final change order for a decrease of \$578,407.94.

All the above change orders will be listed on the consent agenda.

- ITB 2023 – 10 Rebid: Road Zone 4.3 Jewel Road, Kent Road, and Porter Pond Road:
Recommendation for Award

Jason Crenshaw addressed the board. Bids have been received on ITB 2023 – 10, which is a rebid for road zone 4.3. The road zone includes Jewel Road, Kent Mill Pond Road, and Porter Road. The lowest bidder was Anderson Columbia at \$2,693,617.00. After reviewing the bids,

the committee requests to award the project to Anderson Columbia.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

- ITB 2023 – 11 Rebid: Countywide Pavement Maintenance & Rehabilitation Continuing Services had three bidders with the low bidder being American Sand and Asphalt Paving for \$2,219,715.63. The recommendation is to award the project to American Sand and Asphalt Paving.

Commissioner Hawkins clarified that this will be worked from task orders.

Commissioner Griffin asked when the county is going to put something in place.

Commissioner Corbin asked what it would take for the county to begin paving. That is a minimum of 5 extra people.

County Administrator Massey said that it would be a minimum upfront cost of \$700,000.00 to get started and that would have to be recurring funds. With more asphalt on the roads, washouts will not be repaired with graders. They will be undermining asphalt. If squares must be cut out, they do need to be fixed immediately because it is a public safety hazard.

Commissioner Griffin asked if any graders had been sold.

County Administrator Massey said no.

Others mentioned that they thought one had been sold.

Commissioner Griffin asked how much it sold for.

County Administrator Massey said that he does not have the figures for this month.

Commissioner Griffin said they need to begin preparing. It needs to continue to be brought up since things get pushed to the wayside.

Jason Crenshaw said they took the original bid for Pine Bluff. The low bid that was received at that time was \$92,000.00, which was over a year ago. If this contract is used to facilitate improvements the cost will be about \$65,000.00. The bid prices did come down on this. It would be helpful to use this contract. The bid included groups within a 10-mile radius. The more projects that can be grouped, the better the price will be. There is a \$15,000.00 minimum for MOT and mobilization or 15% of the contract amount.

Awarding ITB 2023 – 11 to American Sand will be listed on the consent agenda.

Pine Bluff Drive Const Discussion

Pine Bluff – American Sand and Paving – Using this contract the bid unit prices that they bid to what was previously bid out, came to \$65,000.00. It would have to be awarded first before it can be brought back. This is for discussion since it was mentioned at the last meeting. A recommendation is not being made currently to give that to them. Award it to American Sand and Paving and then

they will talk to them about the project to make sure the number is correct.

After that, it will be brought back before the board for approval.

Commissioner Hawkins said this item will be listed on the October workshop agenda since they must figure out if they are going to hold the price.

Headwall Bid – Jason Crenshaw told the board that Johnny Evans requested their help to prepare a bid for headwalls, mitered end sections, and miscellaneous concrete work.

Commissioner Griffin asked if they did not already have a contract in place.

Jason Crenshaw said that he was advised that it was expiring soon.

Commissioner Griffin asked who had the contract before.

County Administrator Massey said, Sammy Hayes.

Jason Crenshaw said that he could have the advertisement ready by Friday. Approval is requested for the issuance of the advertisement.

Commissioner Griffin questioned if it was a continuing contract.

Jason Crenshaw said that it is his understanding that the county was outside of the extension and in the last year of the extension. It expired in May.

Commissioner Bush said that seeding and grassing need to be added.

Jason Crenshaw agreed.

Commissioner Griffin included erosion control. Silk fence around it until it gets established.

Approval to advertise a continuing service contract for concrete, structures, and headwalls will be added to the consent agenda.

Commissioner Griffin asked again if the one that they have is a continuing service contract. Grimes Truck had a continuing service contract, and he was given an extension.

Wendy White said that it was, but it has expired. Grimes had one extension left.

Commissioner Hawkins confirmed that he did not have any left.

Commissioner Griffin requested a copy of the Sammy Hayes contract by tomorrow.

Jason Crenshaw said the contract would be for three years with two added-year extensions.

County Administrator Massey said that Mr. Evan's motivation was he felt that they could get a cheaper price.

VI. **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

- RFP 2023-02 Emergency Management Contractual Services – Attorney Fuqua addressed the board. Eight proposals were received and have been ranked. Wheeler Emergency Management was ranked first, two others tied and one that was ranked fourth was close and the others were further apart. The others were further apart.

Regarding the elephant in the room, there is an FBI investigation going on with Wheeler Emergency Management or some of the people involved with it. The thought is to select more than one contractor. There is an existing contract with Wheeler. In the event something happens with Wheeler, and they are unable to complete the contract there would be somebody else that new contracts could be awarded to or take over the Wheeler contracts.

Commissioner Griffin asked if they could continue working with them while being under investigation.

After discussions with the FBI and FDLE, the process was identified as an investigation occurs, it is presented to the grand jury and the grand jury decides whether to issue a formal accusation. There has been no finding of probable cause yet, and no charge yet. A period for the decision has not been given.

Commissioner Griffin asked if that does occur, how would reimbursements be affected. Who will take over the billing and paperwork side?

Clerk Bell said there would be that would have to be taken over. It is something they would have to continue working toward. It would help to have a backup to step in.

County Attorney Fuqua said that would be if Wheeler Emergency Management was shut down as opposed to certain individuals with them. In discussions with them, they make it a point that may be the case, however, he does not know.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if the recommendation is to award them in the ranking.

County Attorney Fuqua said that is a board decision. His suggestion is to award more than one.

County Attorney Milton said for purposes of the ranking/score, Wheeler's was the highest at 79.3, True North Emergency Management and Metric Consulting both were at 77, and Whit O'Brien was at 76.33 as far as the average from the committee. If the board is going to award more than one, it would be to award three because there is a tie for second and third.

County Administrator Massey said that is not necessarily true. The board deserves the consideration to hire; how well are we going to be served by a company from Texas?

Commissioner Griffin asked what about the local companies. If Metric is a local entity in Chipley, shouldn't that put them a little higher?

County Attorney Fuqua said as he recalls there are preferences in doing federal awards with local preference given a point for that. Whichever works the best. There will be more than one.

Commissioner Hawkins asked what it be awarding to the top three awards and Metric would be

second, giving them local preference.

Commissioner Griffin said for sure. They can respond quickly.

Commissioner Pettis said that he does not think that Wheeler should be in this process. The entire intention was to have somebody to work alongside Wheeler. They would continue the contract that they have now and somebody completely different for the other contract to work. If Wheeler gets both contracts and something happens where they decide to leave the county would have none.

In response to Attorney Fuqua, Commissioner Corbin said the contracts are three years with two extensions.

Commissioner Hawkins said that would mean they would have three for five years, which would be Wheeler, Metric, and True North.

Commissioner Corbin said they would not be under the last one-year extension if the bid was awarded today. It would be two or three five-year/ three-year contracts with two possible extensions.

Commissioner Pettis said that he misunderstood. He thought that Wheeler's contract that is currently in place would not be changed in any way and the new contract was going to be the one that would work beside them.

Commissioner Griffin added and took on any other new storms.

Commissioner Corbin said he is also seeking clarification.

County Attorney Fuqua said that it can be done either way. If you keep Wheeler's one-year contract in place and they are not awarded the new contracts, and nothing occurs with Wheeler at the end of next May the board will automatically be going with someone new.

Lynne Abel, Emergency Management Director addressed the board with information that she had received after reaching out to FDEM to see if there would be any concerns if there was a secondary contract. After speaking with Becky Moring, FDEM Compliance Unit Manager, with the Recovery Bureau, she was not aware of another county having more than one active contract. After consulting with Melissa Shiver, Bureau Chief, their biggest concern is having more than one active contract for emergency management services would likely pose issues with duplication of eligible claims. A shelf-ready contract that is not being used would not likely pose issues.

With Hurricane Sally and Michael, there was one contractor who knew what roads had been worked on and what work had been done. They could keep everything separate. Bringing another contractor in actively working could cause a duplication of benefits, which would throw up red flags.

If a secondary contractor was waiting to come in if it is necessary or for whatever reason, that would not likely pose a problem. They would likely need to take over everything.

Commissioner Griffin asked who does the ranking. Who is the committee?

Commissioner Hawkins and Bush said the names are on the sheet.

Commissioner Hawkins read the names, Renae Rountree, Lynne Abel, and Lora C. Bell.

Commissioner Griffin said that he thought the bid was for a secondary contractor.

Commissioner Griffin asked Attorney Fuqua what his recommendation was to move forward with Wheeler.

County Attorney Fuqua said to have Wheeler and somebody else. Whether it is 2,3, or 4 is the board's decision. The cleanest way to go ahead is with the new three-year contracts with a two-year extension for whoever is selected.

Commissioner Pettis asked what if the 2 or 3 do not want to be the fallback. What happens then?

County Attorney Milton said with any RFQ if a contract cannot be negotiated with them, then there is no contract no matter what the ranking.

County Attorney Fuqua said that when Hurricane Michael occurred Washington County was ahead of the curve because they already had an active contract with Wheeler Emergency Management. The surrounding areas did not have active contracts.

Commissioner Griffin recommended that Metric be awarded the contract. They are a local company which would mean a quick response.

Commissioner Hawkins confirmed that he meant as the shelf-ready project/2.

Commissioner Griffin said that he would like them as 1.

Commissioner Hawkins said that he has Metric as 2, True North as 3, and Whit O'Brien to set on the shelf.

A representative from Metric in the audience said that she wanted to do whatever she could to help her hometown.

Commissioner Bush said that he did not want to speak about anything. He was not expecting it to be on the consent agenda. He has not worked with Metric within the last 2 – 3, however, he would be reluctant to say that he is not listed on contract somewhere. They have called him during the last two events, and he does not want to put himself in a position where someone could say that he was not working with them, but he was still on contract. He would like to recuse himself.

This item will be listed on the regular agenda.

VII. **CLERK** - None

VIII. **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

- County Administrator Contract – County Attorney Milton said per the board's earlier direction

he and Attorney Fuqua reviewed the proposed contract that Mr. Massey provided. Revisions have been made and sent to Mr. Massey and have been provided to the board for consideration.

A Severance package is included if he is terminated without cause. A Severance package, which includes a five-month severance payment equal to his salary, annual and sick leave pursuant to the personnel policy, health insurance (COBRA or a lump sum equivalent to what COBRA would cost for the same period. If he is terminated for cause, there is no requirement for payment of a severance package. The annual and sick leave that is addressed in the policy is there regardless, which would not be considered severance. There is no requirement for a severance payment for being terminated for cause. The board can approve this later. There is language that says the board may but shall not be bound to pay any severance or for the health insurance element. If he were to voluntarily resign, it would be the same thing. A truck and cell phone will be provided, which he is already receiving. These are the main items.

This item will be listed on the regular agenda.

- Volunteer Fire Departments – A couple of the volunteer fire departments want to become county fire departments, like Sunny Hills. Does the board want to entertain this? This is not something that Mr. Massey has put an ultimatum on. Each situation will be different. Mr. Pettis' involvement in the process would be welcomed based on his history.

Commissioner Griffin asked who does the test on the fire equipment.

County Administrator Massey said there are different people. Ten-8 from DeFuniak is one. The county does not do its own pump testing.

Commissioner Griffin asked if all of that is caught up.

County Administrator Massey said as far as he knows.

Commissioner Bush said since the position of the fire coordinator he has taken the role to help them keep up with their deadlines on their testing.

Lynne Abel, Emergency Management Director said that is her understanding.

Commissioner Corbin said that he does not think that is completely happening, however, it is being worked toward.

The consensus of the board is for Attorney Milton to go ahead with further information.

- New Market Tax Credit Program – Attorney Fuqua told the board this is a new funding mechanism that started under President Clinton. It is a tax credit program that was originally designed to have companies invest money in economically struggling areas. 90% of Washington County fits in that. It is made up of a census tract.

CDE's get distributed new market tax credits by the Treasury. The CDE's find banks that buy up the tax credits. The bank will buy the tax credits at a discount. When the project goes through, there is a 7-year window where the tax credits are forgiven.

The benefit to the county is after the process takes place, there is money remaining, which is free unrestricted money as long as compliance is met within the 7-year window. Since it started, none have failed.

The project that has been brought to attention for this is Project Gantry to help with construction funding. The county must make infrastructure improvements to go along with that. There is \$7/8 million of CDBG funding and DEO funding that will be used for the infrastructure, which could count as the county's funding mechanism to start the new market tax credits rolling. There are a lot of fees involved but that is contingent upon its closing.

County Attorney Milton said once the funds come into the county, they are unencumbered funds that are not tied to anything.

County Attorney Fuqua said if the board is interested, he will have someone come before the board personally or via Zoom for more information.

The board expressed interest.

County Attorney Fuqua said they would wait until Project Gantry is further in. There is an unofficial commitment from the state for the funds. It will not be done unless it comes to fruition.

IX. **ADJOURN**