

## WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Location: Commission Board Room  
1331 South Blvd., Chipley, FL 32428

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

## 1. PROCLAMATION

- 1.1 Call to Order – Chairman Pettis
- 1.2 Invocation – Chairman Pettis
- 1.3 Pledge

Present – Commissioners Bush (via phone), Pettis, Hawkins, Griffin, and Corbin. Also attending – Deputy Clerk Brantley, Clerk of Court, Lora Bell, County Administrator, Jeff Massey, and County Attorney Fuqua and Milton, Fuqua & Milton, P.A.

## Agenda Amendments

- 2.4 – Remove
- 8.7 – Add One Florida Bank Letter of Acknowledgement for Ambulance Purchase – County Administrator Massey

## 2. AGENDA ITEMS

2.1 Washington County Historical Records Project – Trae Scism, Client Executive with Kofile spoke on a project that began over a year ago on behalf of Mrs. Bell, Clerk of Court to get records online and accessible to the constituents of Washington County. The project is moving in the right direction; however, more records are still to be digitized. Kofile scans and indexes records as well as preservation of paper by deacidifying.

A Creation of Counties Map has been framed for the board to display.

Clerk Bell included that the board previously approved a match from the ARPA Funds to be used for the Historical Preservation Project.

2.2 Circle P Enterprises, LLC DBA Legendary Lawn Maintenance Contract Renewal – Kimberly Powell, Owner of Circle P Enterprises, LLC requested their current contract be renewed, which does not include an increase.

County Administrator Massey said that he confirmed with legal counsel that the board has the choice to renew the contract. The annual contract has been extended once.

Commissioner Hawkins questioned the contract for the Washington

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County Clerk being included.

Clerk Bell said that the contract for the courthouse is separate and went on to express her satisfaction with their work.

County Administrator Massey said that he has not received any complaints.

Commissioner Pettis asked Mr. Massey if he would like to discuss the new EMS Station in Wausau.

Kimberly Powell said Randy Truette, EMS Director asked if the new EMS location in Wausau can be added to the contract. It can be added. He was advised that the renewal would be brought before the board at the next meeting, however, he has not provided a schedule for the request. A biweekly schedule from April to October with 17 cuts would be \$1,615.00. Monthly from November to March with 5 cuts would be \$475.00. If they would like weekly done during the others it would be double, but it is not thought to be needed that much.

Commissioner Hawkins asked Mr. Massey to follow up with Randy to see what his preference is.

This will be listed on the regular agenda.

- 2.3 Discussion Regarding Strickland Road and Highway 20 Intersection – Tray Hawkins, Commissioner said that Byron and Johnny plan to mow along the state right-of-way to clear the intersection. There have been multiple wrecks. Jane Dellwo has written a letter on his behalf to FDOT asking for streetlights at the intersection. If FDOT does not agree to install them, board approval is requested to seek a price from FPL to install lighting at the intersection, like what has been done at Clayton Road and other major intersections. This item is for informational purposes.

County Administrator Massey said that he could have that added to the Rural Regional Traffic Committee for the in-person meeting next month, which will put it on FDOT's radar.

- 2.4 Ordinance for Hartford Boulevard for TRIP Scoring – Candace Thames, Grants/Procurement Specialist – This item was removed.

### 3. FEMA COORDINATOR

- 3.1 FEMA Update – Commissioner Pettis confirmed with Mr. Massey that per Monday's phone call, there have been no updates or any determinations for the release of funds.

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Commissioner Hawkins said that he had spoken with Kevin Guthrie and Melissa Foggy on Tuesday. Melissa plans to express the concerns to FEMA's leadership. If there has been no added update a follow-up call will be made on Friday.

4. MSBU ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE – Gary Hartman said the next MSBU meeting is May 8, when the new members will be welcomed, and reorganization will be done.
5. PUBLIC WORKS SUPERVISOR – None
6. PARKS UPDATE – George Swauger addressed the board. One of the biggest issues has been the drastic lack of inmate help, however, that changed on Monday. There has been a decent number of inmate labor help per crew.

In the past, there were around eight inmates between five inmate crews, which would not be split evenly between the crews. It costs time and fuel and the number of inmates being received daily is unknown. One inmate supervisor has transferred to maintenance in public works and another one received another job offer.

It was hard for the officer crews and the county crews to keep a schedule on the county yards. There are no complaints about the current county mowing contract. When there has been a special event outside of Circle P's normal schedule, they have adjusted to accommodate. It would be nice to see the sides of the roads look as nice as the location included in the contract. Help is needed in the parks, therefore, soon an FTE will be requested to add solely for parks. There are a lot of parks and landings the county handles.

Commissioner Griffin expressed his pleasure with the work being done.

Commissioner Hawkins expressed thanks for the BJ Collins sign. He is the one who dedicated the park. Something underneath the park sign to say presented by BJ Collins would be an idea.

Dewberry oversaw the floating deck at Culpepper and the status is unknown. If permits are received it would be nice to see the work done by the end of the summer.

George Swauger said that he has had contractors look at Gap Pond for the cost of a floating dock but has not received the numbers.

County Administrator Massey will follow up on this.

Commissioner Hawkins said that he has district funds for the splash pad at Hunter Park if it falls out of budget.

County Attorney Milton said they were waiting on a title opinion for the FRDAP Grant, which was done this week. A survey must be done as well.

Brent Melvin said they are working on the commencement documents for the FRDAP Grant, which are needed before construction can begin. They have also been working on updated pricing from some of the vendors for the splash pad.

George Swauger told the board that Mr. Healis has received some information from Playmore to replace some of the playground equipment there. Replacing outdated items or dangerous it would cost just as much to fix them as replacing them. By replacing it there will be a warranty.

## 7. ENGINEERING PROJECTS UPDATE

Brent Melvin updated the board.

- Worley Road – FEMA obligated the funds for the project yesterday. The construction contract is ready for Chairman Pettis to sign, which will be followed by a notice to proceed.
- Ag Center Drainage Improvements – Bids are out for this project, which will come back next month. Updating the drainage system is part of the mitigation project. After the rain last week, as part of the pavilion project they installed some new piping and one had gotten clogged, which was opened by the contractor. The existing yard drains in front of the ag center were not functioning well, which will be replaced as part of the drainage project. The floodwall has already been bought. A pump is also included to address any floodwater.
- FRDAP – They are working through the commencement documents. Attorney Milton has provided them with the title work and associated paperwork that FRDAP must sign off on, which is the stage before designing. It is their release of funds before moving forward with the project.

Commissioner Hawkins said that Keen Kutter has been submitted for the Resilient Florida Grant, but it was not selected. Could everyone think of a way that it could tie back to; there being environmental concerns/it falls into a Florida Pristine Waterway?

Brent Melvin said they would look at whether it is spring protection and water quality improvement. There are Rural Infrastructure Grants that are not tied to jobs that relate to tourism. They will continue to work with the Water Management District to see if there are any other qualifying programs.

County Administrator Massey said there is funding coming out in July that would pertain to that project. He went on to inform the board that he would

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follow up with Water Management.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if it is the board's pleasure they will use Melvin Engineering to look for any additional.

Commissioner Corbin said if they cannot get a grant, they must do something in-house. It is bad.

County Administrator Massey said that it is a worthy project. It will cause water to be backed up to Highway 79.

## 8. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Jeff Massey addressed the board.

8.1 Lobbyist Discussion – The board has been in a contract with Gray Robinson for a couple of years. They have been responsive when contacted but it does not feel like the services match the payments. It would behoove the county to go back out for a bid(s) to look for a more hands-on lobbyist and better communication. There is an active contract with a 30-day out attached. A reviewing committee would review the bids and bring the top three candidates before the board.

Issuing an RFQ for lobbyists will be listed on the consent agenda.

8.2 Mowing Contract Discussion – This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

8.3 Building Official Discussion - The building department is busier than ever. The building inspector will retire in June. This is not the time to not have a building official. It has been hard with an employed building official and a contractual building official. Before knowledge of the current building inspector leaving, a job advertisement was put out for a deputy building inspector, and there were no qualified applicants or there was a lack of applicants responding. Some of that is due to salary limitations. Other building officials in the state are making more than Washington County's. The options must be looked at and it needs to be ensured that the office is not without representation. Options include a company or an interim building official as his company has an employee who is a licensed building official. Board direction is requested to seek the most viable option to handle this situation until the county can afford to hire a permanent building official and stabilize the department.

The job requires a licensed building official, 10 years of experience in the construction industry, and references from construction companies, and the individual must send an application to the state, and the state will decide whether to invite the applicant to take the test. There is a provisional license that can be applied for through the state. The individual would work as an

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inspector, but he must work under the direction of a building official. The provisional license gives a year to take the test.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if a new contractor would be willing to sign plans, letting him work through the provisional status until they come to a point where they are invited to take the test. If two are done that way, there would be a readily available supply of building officials. They are going to have to train from within.

County Administrator Massey said that is a possibility in response to letting him work through a provision status until the test is taken.

County Administrator Massey said that he would like to be able to move forward and have those conversations. Legal advice will be needed since this is a different look than what has been done.

County Attorney Fuqua said Calhoun County has struggled with this for 15 – 20 years and had 2 – 3 that were going to be provisional. There have been a couple that have not passed the test.

Commissioner Hawkins suggested there should be a clause in the contract that the employee would have 1 year to reach it.

County Administrator Massey said that he would work on this, but it may not be ready by the meeting next week. Something needs to be in place by next month.

County Attorney Fuqua said the name of the contract group that his firm has worked with has been provided to Mr. Massey's (EPCI). They provide contract building official services.

Commissioner Griffin said they must get ahold of their building department regarding making the process easier. It is horrible; the feedback received from the citizens in the county trying to do business here. The process of getting something done.

County Administrator Massey suggested much of the issue has been the volume. The employees at the window are good at what they do. That is not to say some things cannot be streamlined.

Commissioner Hawkins commented that when he was recently at the building department an applicant bragged about the service. There will be good and bad. The customers that had a good experience are not going to typically call and tell you how good their experience was.

Commissioner Corbin said you typically hear the bad.

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County Administrator Massey said that he will not say there are no issues. They are working hard and there is a lot of volume. As part of this process, they will see if they cannot fix that as well.

Commissioner Hawkins said more manpower would help with that.

Commissioner Griffin addressed Commissioner Hawkins saying he recently mentioned how horrible his recent experience was in getting a pole barn. There is room for improvement.

8.4 Grants Administration – This is a similar conversation. Washington County is an ad valorem county. Many things get done through grants. The county has been without a grants manager which would make it two staff there. There is currently one. The position has been advertised multiple times to no avail. Some companies will write and manage grants, however, there will still need to be a presence in the grants department.

The county has a continuing service contract for PA with Metric, who have grants management. They are willing to help, however, they bill by the hour. Some companies bill 5% of the grant.

Until there are some issues resolved concerning the future with FEMA, the thought was not to come before the board to try to amass debt on grants without uncertainty. There is enough money with salary and benefits since the position has not been filled that would fund this type of activity temporarily until a permanent decision is made.

If this route is taken, they would need to advertise and go through that process. This has not been verified by the county attorney, but the continuing services contract through Metric may be a possibility to expedite things.

Now the thought process is not about how many new things can be brought it. It is on how to manage what the county has and hold on to it. Unless there are funds upfront to meet matches or to fund the project to submit for reimbursement there is no point.

Commissioner Hawkins said in most cases the grants are answered by a grant writer and there is a certain percentage to offset administration, which is normally 5%. Fred Fox is an example that works from a percentage of the grant. Issuing an RFP for grant writing for a particular thing may be a possibility.

County Administrator Massey said that his concern is some companies do that but depending on the cost of the project the procurement process is in place to correctly seek someone.

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County Attorney Milton addressed the board. The county has continuing services contracts with David Melvin, Metric, and Alday Howell, which offer grant writing. Depending on the funding source an RFP may have to be issued for grant administration. Depending on the grant there may be a requirement to competitively solicit a grant administrator to administer the funds of the grant and put together the documents during the administration of the grant. Grant administration, obtaining grants, and broadband items are three different things.

County Administrator Massey said they are not staffed to have a person to do every little thing. If there is an opportunity to go out and seek services, there needs to be someone to help with each part.

County Attorney Milton said some things may already be available to the board through a task order under the continued contracts without having to do a separate RFP/RFQ. Guidance is needed from the board on what to do.

County Administrator Massey said the grant writing is not completely helping because the management is more important than getting the grant. Keeping the grant and making the deliverables in the grant is key to being successful.

Commissioner Corbin asked if the board could give Mr. Massey approval to begin discussions with the continuing services contractors to ask the questions.

Commissioner Hawkins said a 5% administration fee was included in the past with a CDBG or FRDAP grant. There was no RFP issued.

Brent Melvin spoke on the grant writing process. County staff is key for a point of contact, obtaining signatures for reports, pay request submission and other internal items.

County Administrator Massey said with House Bill 1209 they can pursue larger grants that they never had access to because they could not afford the match. Matches are paid for by the state for fiscally constrained counties.

Should the existing engineers be contacted?

County Attorney Fuqua said to make sure the continuing services contracts/agreements/RFP included grants.

County Administrator Massey will come back before the board on this item.

Recess

8.5 Professional Real Estate Broker Services Discussion - There are properties the county may consider selling that were amassed through tax



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deeds. Regarding real estate, there are so many legalities that must be done properly that there are many opportunities to get hooked. The county is not set up for that. There needs to be help with this to make sure things are being done correctly.

County Attorney Fuqua said there is a statute related to counties about buying and selling real property.

County Attorney Milton said that he does not believe the county ordinance allows for the process being mentioned.

The board expressed approval for Mr. Massey to research this item.

8.6 Inmate Supervisor Full-Time Equivalent Request – This item was discussed during item 6. A lot of George's time is spent on repairs and does not leave much time for upkeep. One extra employee would allow for a county inmate crew. The sheriff said that he would likely have inmates for the inmate park crew.

Commissioner Hawkins expressed his support if the revenue is available to cover it.

Commissioner Griffin said that he is aware that many people are retiring. Are the positions planned to be filled in the future?

County Administrator Massey said that if an FTE position is open, they are looking at and have been filling those positions.

Commissioner Griffin mentioned Susan Williams and another employee retiring at Road and Bridge.

County Administrator Massey confirmed Susan William's retirement and went on to say the position will be looked at for 30 days instead of at once filling it. A public works director's position has been advertised and the thought process is to wait until that person is hired, allowing them to have a part in the process. Work has dwindled some since FEMA work has not been going. Therefore, it was viewed as a time to take a step back and re-evaluate things.

Commissioner Griffin questioned the number of positions open at Road and Bridge.

County Administrator Massey said one.

Wendy White, Human Resources said they have the pool for that position, and based on the decision at the next regular board meeting two applicants can fill an added FTE in this inmate supervisor position.

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Commissioner Hawkins asked if the person filling Susan William's position would work directly for the public works director being his/her administrative assistant or secretary.

Wendy White, Human Resources said the individual would report directly to the public works director.

County Administrator Massey said they have received 3 applications for the position and will be pursuing it quickly. The position carries a lot of responsibility.

Wendy White, Human Resources added the position closed yesterday.

Commissioner Griffin asked what is the grader rotation?

County Administrator Massey said that he has received a couple of calls that he normally does not receive when it comes to the roads being graded, which have been addressed. At the point where they felt enough roads had been paved the decision was made to park a grader, however, some remained, which caused some things to be spread out.

Commissioner Griffin asked if they should look at getting another grader and operator since there are 400/500 miles of dirt roads and 80 miles of paved. Purchasing another grader may need to be looked at. That is a lot on Johnny Evans.

County Administrator Massey said the thought process was that the paving plan would allow for graders to be parked without affecting anything. There is an area where not everything was paved, therefore it had to be spread out which changed the pattern of the graders around it, which are now doing those roads.

Commissioner Griffin said that he is not taking anything from the grader operators. It seems the decision to sell graders was made too soon before seeing where they were with paving and the circumstances with what is going on now.

Commissioner Griffin asked what the role of the inmate supervisor would be.

County Administrator Massey the position would supervise inmates working at the parks. The inmates would clean the bathrooms, make sure supplies are stocked, check for vandalism, pick up litter, and weed eating/mowing.

Commissioner Hawkins said that it was his understanding that it would be what George Swauger's prior position was. George's position will lean more

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toward a maintenance and facilitation position, making sure the parks are at the standard they should be.

County Administrator Massey said the other inmate supervisors can do that as well, but they are needed on the road. It is the same work that all of them are expected to do if needed. Painting and changing operating equipment would fall under George and building maintenance. The position would allow for a regular schedule.

Commissioner Griffin said that he supports the position if the funding is available.

The FTE will be added to the consent agenda.

Commissioner Corbin asked if it was in addition to the two, they were losing.

Wendy White, Human Resources said it is one new FTE and one existing one, making the total six.

George Swauger told the board as of today another position is open, making two existing ones that will need to be filled and the addition of another. The added position would help with the aesthetics of the parks, allowing him to focus on the functionality part.

County Administrator Massey said the county inmates will not have the same restrictions as the state inmates. Pick-up for state inmates can be a 2-hour process, they get an hour lunch and must be back at 3:00 p.m. The county workers can be picked up at 6:30 a.m. and taken back at 4:00 p.m.

8.7 One Florida Bank Letter of Acknowledgement – This is about the EMS ambulance the board approved. It is an acknowledgment letter about the structure of the loan. He informed the board that he did not want to sign it for the bank's files without the board reviewing it.

There was no opposition to Mr. Massey signing the letter and sending it to Mr. Lovering, One Florida Bank.

Commissioner Griffin told Mr. Massey that he would like for him to follow up with Byron Western and Johnny Evans to see what it will take/see if another grader needs to be added to help them out. 2/3 pieces of equipment were sold; therefore, money should be available to buy another one.

County Administrator Massey said he believes the funds generated from that were used to buy trucks, however, he would check on this. The roads do not need to suffer because of it.

9. CLERK – None

10. COUNTY ATTORNEY

10.1 Value Adjustment Board Attorney – Attorney Milton told them they need to retain an attorney for the Value Adjustment Board if any requests are received. Mr. Massey/Staff has spoken with Martha Eskuchen from Marianna, who is willing to accept the job. She serves as Jackson and Calhoun Counties VAB Attorney as well; therefore, she is familiar with the process. No one else is known of in the local vicinity that does this.

County Attorney Fuqua said the attorney cannot work for any local government.

This item will be listed on the consent agenda.

11. ADJOURN