

## 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 – Rick Hodge, Local Outreach Coordinator for Grace Assembly
- 1.3 Pledge

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

## 1.4 Audit Report – Tyler Dunaway, Carr, Riggs, and Ingram

## Highlights for Audit Report for Fiscal Year End September 30, 2023

- Audit Issuance deadline has been met for the last two years, which is a good indicator. The audit was complete as of June.
- Unmodified Opinion issued by the CPA Firm – The belief that everything in the financial statements is materially correct is the highest opinion they can offer.
- Prior Issue with Property and Equipment in 2021 – This has been taken care of with the aid of John Hamilton, along with Mrs. Bell and her office, which contributed to a clean audit opinion.
- Page 15 – Assets and Liabilities by Fund – The major funds are the General, Transportation, Hurricane Michael, American Rescue Act, and the other funds are combined. The main indicator for any government entity is the General Fund. Most of the other funds have many restrictions. All the assets minus the liabilities gives the fund balance. The fund balance equaled around nine and a half months of expenses. The best practice is to have three to six months, and the county is on the high end of that. There is around \$10 Million due from the FEMA project. As of yesterday, around \$7 Million has been received. The audited numbers, there as about \$9 Million to be received from them/that was a receivable from them which inflates the number some. It is on the good side of what you want to see when you take away the liabilities from the assets.
- Page 17 - Revenues and the Expenditures – The tax revenue increased \$1 Million +/- for year ending 2023 compared to the prior year. The revenue

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consist of the ad valorem taxes, gas taxes, and sales taxes. The recurring expenditures, not the capital projects were even with the prior year. Those did not continue increases at the same level.

- Page 19 – Budget – The revenues were around \$800,000.00 below budget and the expenditures were around \$1.2 Million of what was budgeted, for a net of around \$400,000.00. Most of that is due to grants that were not funded but budgeted and did not come to fruition.
- Financial Notes – Page 45 – Capital Assets – Money can be inflated by not investing in capital projects, however, the county invested around \$45 Million in capital assets.
- Page 48 – County Debt – \$600,000.00 +/- was paid off in the fiscal year ending 9/30/2023. A \$4 Million line of credit was taken out due to some of the FEMA funding. Debt increased by around \$3.5 Million for the year ending 9/30/2023, leaving about \$7.7 Million in debt at year end.
- Single Audit – If a county spends more than \$750,000.00 in federal funds or state grant funds a federal or state single audit is required. The federal government provides a checklist where they figure out which programs must be tested, and guidance is given on how the testing should be done. On the state side, SCOP and SCRAP projects were tested which produced no findings. On the federal side, the ARPA funding, Corona Virus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, and FEMA were included. There was one finding related to ARPA which was related to suspension and debarment. No vendors were suspended and debarred. There is a control that should be in place that says that should be checked, which was likely checked but there was no documentation. The finding repeated because the grants were signed several years ago. A process has been put in place moving forward.
- Financial Statement Audit – There were the same findings as last year except for one of the material weaknesses. The audit being issued on time is a huge undertaking for accounting. The auditors work with the Supervisor of Elections, Property Appraiser, Tax Collector, Sheriff, Clerk, and the Board, which is a significant amount of moving parts. The Supervisor of Elections historically has not closed out and remitted back to the Board until around March. The state statute directs for that to be done annually in October. Everyone met the end of October timeline. That was a finding that did not repeat this year.

## 2. PUBLIC HEARING

- 2.1 – Development Order Extension Request – Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner presented a request by Kris Mitchell. The applicant intends to build four added units on his property. At the staff level they can grant an extension for one year. Anything beyond that requires board approval per code. Staff is requesting approval of a two-year extension.

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- 2.2 Sasser/Hodges Small Scale Future Land Use Map Amendment – Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner presented a FLUM amendment submitted for two parcels found at 1220 MayHaw Lane for 10.20-acres. The request is to change the land use category from general commercial to residential low. Most of the surrounding areas are residential. The public noticing requirements were met, with no opposition. The planning commission met on the fifth and voted seven to zero in favor of the FLUM amendment. The final decision is before the board today.
- 2.3 Crane Small Scale Future Land Map Amendment – Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner presented the request before the board, which is found at the southern end of the county, next to the airpark. The request is for 1.5-acres. The applicant would like to build a home on the property. Residential low was decided as the proper classification for the location. The area is mainly residential/single family detached homes. The public noticing requirements were met. There was no opposition to the FLUM amendment. Planning staff recommended approval seven to zero. Staff also recommended approval. A final determination is before the board today.
- 2.4 Vertical Bridge/Hooper Tower Special Exception, Major Development Review Application with Variance – Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner presented the request before the board. The agent represents the Hoopers and AT&T. The request is for a special exception and the major development review has been combined with the variance associated with the development. The tower will be found at the southern part of the county on 49.18-acres found next to Carter Circle, which is where the access would be. The property is named as agriculture/silviculture. The request before the board today is the use of the tower and the development review application. The public noticing requirements were met.

Concerns expressed include the height of the tower. The variance is for a tower to be more than two hundred feet in height. Other concerns include property value, noise levels, and whether the tower would be 5G.

The applicant's representative addressed noise levels. The tower will not be 5G. The property line to the base of the tower is more than one thousand feet. The planning commission met on the fifth and recommended approval seven to zero. Staff recommended approval. A final determination about the use and the development plans is before the board today. The development review committee did not have any comments or concerns.

Mike Pringle, Leisure Lakes addressed the board in support of the tower due to the need for better service in Greenhead. Will the tower be expanded to other carriers in the future?

Dawn McDonald responded, yes.

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2.5 Zlotea RV Park Major Development Review Application (with variance request) – Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner presented the application request to the board. Several years ago, Dr. Zlotea requested a special use for an RV Park on his agriculture/silviculture property and it was granted. The next step was for the major development review application to be reviewed and approved, which is the reason this is before the board today. The park is found at 3523 Highway 79, west of the City of Vernon. The property size is five acres. The request before the board is to approve the major development review application for a ten space RV Park with a variance request. The variance is to allow for the driveway/internal road to be found within the vegetative buffer. The development review has been completed by the Development Review Committee which had no comments or concerns. From there the case moved to the planning commission. There are issues with the park as far as the internal driveway. There is some floodplain. There needs to be an internal driveway to allow for circulation within the park. Staff recommends approval with the thought process to move the driveway away from the floodplain and it is mostly an existing road. The planning commission has concerns about moving the driveway into the vegetative buffer because there is a residential neighborhood in the area. There are concerns about the neighbors and being able to have more of a vegetative buffer between the uses. The planning commission feels like this could be a precedent to be set.

Commissioner Hawkins clarified that there are ten spots on five acres. That would be a half-acre RV lot. This is a RV lot, not a mobile home park? Will strictly adhere to the development order, or could the lots vary in diameter, shape, and size once it is approved.

Dawn McDonald said the code requires a minimum of twelve hundred square feet.

Commissioner Hawkins expressed concern about a temporary structure turning into a mobile home park.

Dawn McDonald said that the request is to approve an RV Park with ten spaces. Any change would have to undergo the same process.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if the space size could be increased inside the five-acre development.

Dawn McDonald said they would still have to come through another review because of the storm water calculations and report. They must keep their stormwater on the side.

The public noticing requirements were met. When the application was submitted the new requirements were not in place. Now developments must have signage, letters mailed out and newspaper advertisements. At the time, a neighborhood meeting was

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not required of the development.

At the February 5 meeting when the plans were brought to the planning commission for a recommendation the planning commission tabled the case until June due to a code enforcement case related to the park. The owner of the property had been operating an RV park without approval. The planning commission tabled for the property owner to get in compliance with the code enforcement office. Full compliance would be through the development order. At the time, the planning commission thought that should be resolved first. The first available meeting to resolve the case was August 5 because there were no meetings in June and July. The park is now unoccupied. There is one vehicle remaining to be removed. The property owner has been working with code enforcement to resolve any violations. At the planning meeting on August 5, the planning commission asked that the plans be revised to move the driveway out of the vegetative buffer area and build a new driveway. The property owner questioned the need to revise the plans. There was a motion to table which did not materialize. The planning commission recommended denial five to one. A final determination is before the board today.

Commissioner Hawkins asked why the developer would not move the driveway.

Dawn McDonald said there is an existing driveway there. The thought process was why not use the existing driveway that is on the property if that can meet code. If the driveway needs to be moved, the property owner was questioning why he would have to cut down good trees to create a new driveway.

The property was an aquaculture property used for fish.

Commissioner Hawkins confirmed that it has been a catfish farm as long as he could remember.

Dawn McDonald said her recommendation for approval was based on many development order conditions. There are some other hurdles they would have to overcome. A neighbor next to the property was concerned about the existing home on the property. There was a discrepancy at the planning commission meeting as to how many feet would be encroached upon the neighbor's property. Once this becomes an RV park, the adjacent property owner was concerned about any liabilities that he may incur related to the park operating on some of his property. There is some shared infrastructure there; some water or a well that was used when the property was one piece. The existing home on the property was going to be reused and rehabilitated as part of the future development. There is an encroachment onto the neighbor's property. This would be a commercial building that would have restrooms and a possible office, where visitor would have access.

Commissioner Hawkins questioned plans for major use of septic. There is no water and sewer provided by the city. The area was a catfish pond because it was a low-lying area.

Dawn McDonald said they would have to apply for a septic permit that would accommodate everything. The water would more than likely be a commercial potable water well license by FDEP.

Chairman Pettis said that he attended the planning and zoning meeting. The board wanted to table it to allow the applicant an opportunity to update his plans, however, he wanted to forgo changing the plans and they decide at that meeting.

Dawn McDonald said that it was explained to the applicant if the project was denied there is a two-year period before he could reapply. At the planning commission meeting, Dr. Zlotea told them there was roofline encroachment. The property owner said there was around one hundred square feet encroaching on his property.

John Gay, Planning Commission Chairman addressed the board. The applicant was not willing to make any changes and forced them to vote. The planning commission gave the applicant the choice to table it and he said no he wanted them to vote on it. There are more problems with this than what is shown on the map. The applicant was issued a cease-and-desist order in January 2022, and he did nothing about it. In 2023, the planning commission would not listen to the case because they knew that there were code violations and he had not addressed the cease-and-desist order, which was their reason for tabling it at that meeting. He spent thirteen months operating under a cease-and-desist order. Once he realized the planning commission would not do anything he cleaned it up, hired an engineer, and provided them plans. Issues on the property include the shared well, building encroachment, driveway being right next to the property line, etc. There was a discrepancy in the encroachment distance given by the applicant and the adjacent property owner. It is not the right location for an RV park. The board is urged to review the case carefully and uphold the planning commission's decision. A roll call vote is requested of the board.

Commissioner Hawkins said per the drawing/survey the applicant is admitting that he has engineered over the property line.

John Gay said the planning commission had a small set of plans. The engineer brought the full set of plans before them. The engineer was asked if it was his opinion that the location was the correct one for an RV park.

The engineer did not answer directly but eluded that it was not.

### 3. ADOPT THE AGENDA

- EMS Station Holmes Valley Road/New Hope Community – Randy Truette – Commissioner Hawkins said that it may require a vote.
- Ebro Fire Department – 7.13 – Commissioner Hawkins

Commissioner Griffin offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Corbin, and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda as amended.

### 4. ADOPT PREVIOUS MINUTES

4.1 Workshop for July 11, 2024

4.2 Regular Board Meeting for July 18, 2024

Commissioner Hawkins offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Corbin, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes listed above.

### 5. NON-AGENDA AUDIENCE/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Effective October 1, 2013, Florida Statute 286.0114 mandates that “members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a proposition before a Board or Commission.”

- The Washington County Board of County Commissioners has expanded this provision to allow members of the community to speak on a topic which is not currently before the Board/Agenda. To do so the community members should, prior to the start of the meeting, sign the public participation form provided at the door of the commission room, and shall state their name and the topic on which they wish to speak. During the Non-Agenda Audience portion of the meeting, the individual shall be given up to three (3) minutes to speak.
- Each individual shall have three (3) minutes to speak about a proposition before the Board. Prior to the time a meeting has been called to order, should an individual or group wish to address an item which is on the agenda for consideration, the individual or group shall obtain, from the Commission Secretary or Clerk, a public comment form and may write on the form their name and the agenda matter which they wish to address. The completed form(s) shall be returned to the Commission Secretary/Clerk, who shall provide the form(s) to the Chairperson. Should a particular group wish to address an item, they shall nominate a spokesperson to voice their ideas, comments, and concerns. In the event an individual wishes to speak on an item and has not signed up in advance, those who have signed shall be given priority.
- Any public comment before the board shall be directed to the Chairperson of the Board. It is not a question-and-answer period. Public comments concerning individual employees (other than those hired directly by the Board (County Administrator/County Attorney) shall not be entertained. Any comment, pros, or cons, regarding a county employee who does not report directly to the Board shall be addressed to the Human Relations Department or the County Administrator.

1. Benita Crittendon addressed the board for audit clarifications.

- County exhausted six-million-dollar Line of credit in September for FEMA contractor payments. The use of the funds was not discussed in a board meeting.
- October 2023 twelve-million-dollar line of credit approved which included the exhausted six million.
- Summary of audit report included approximately ten million due from FEMA and the county had received seven million. Were the numbers flip flopped. Clarification is requested as to the amount of debt.

## 6. CONSENT AGENDA

6.1 Approval of Amendment No. 2 to Agreement No. 23PLN71 Between FDEP and Washington County

6.2 Approval of Small County Consolidated Solid Waste Management Agreement

6.3 Approval of Public Works Supervisor Position to Non-Exempt

6.4 Approval of Sunny Hills Mowing Contract, Addendum No. 1

6.5 Approval of County Administrator to Sign Highway 79 Grant Reassignment Letter

6.6 Approval of Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Hazard Mitigation Grant Match Program M0132

Commissioner Bush offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hawkins, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda.

Recess 9:51 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Pettis clarified that the audit report summary was through September 2023.

## 7. AGENDA ITEMS

7.1 Chipley Animal Shelter Condition Discussion – Sylvia Jones, Citizen addressed the board with concerns about the local shelter where she had volunteered.

- Shelter needs to be upgraded and new management strategies need to be implemented.
- Conditions are not conducive to provide a high standard of care.
- Outdated infrastructure.
- Insufficient resources.
- Lack of management oversight.
- Modernizing the shelter would offer a more humane environment.
- Staff should have a proven record of accomplishment in shelter management with a deep commitment to the mission.

Chairman Pettis responded to Sylvia Jones saying that as they began discussions about this her input would be welcome and she would be contacted. What could be done to make it better?

Sylvia Jones provided the following suggestions.



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- Air conditioning.
  - Address the deteriorating metal which she has seen animals cutting themselves on.
  - County run as opposed to a private.
  - New management.
  - Resources that could help provide medical care.
  - Provide spay and neuter services. Florida statute requires this.
  - Verbal abuse has been seen from the manager toward the animals.
  - Title 40 Chapter 823 Section 1 – The shelter should be open one day per week on a weekend to 5:00 p.m. Their hours are 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
  - Upon intake there should be public notice. People are rarely united with their pets.

Chairman Pettis asked for an itemized list to be emailed.

Sylvia Jones responded yes and included that she has a list of every encounter she had with Saudra, shelter manager.

Commissioner Hawkins suggested a committee be composed who may be able to find a funding source.

Commissioner Bush asked Renea Rountree, Library Director and Candace Thames, Grants to keep an eye out for grant opportunities for a shelter.

Addressing the county attorney. Is there a difference between a shelter and a county animal control unit. The county is basically making a five-day commitment to take care of the animals until someone claims them. That is basically established to seek out adoptions. They have one but not necessarily the other.

County Attorney Fuqua will research and provide an update at the next meeting.

Sylvia Jones said that it is a privately owned shelter, which should still adhere to Florida statutes.

Georgia Evans, Founder of Dusty Trails said Bay County has a shelter. It is animal control. The Chipley shelter is doing the same thing. It is not a rescue. Chipley and Bay County shelters are high kill. There is an over population in this area. There are no spay and neuter laws. Rescuers are unable to keep up. Shelters need oversight. The Chipley Shelter has contracts with three counties and several cities. The counties coming together may be a choice. Spay and neuter laws being enforced is the key.

7.2 Washington County EMS Update and Holmes Valley Road EMS Discussion – Randy Truette provided a summary of recent statistics and achievements of the department.

- Projected call volume for year end is 4,600 – 4,700 which is an increase over 2023 calls of 4,353. There are more out of county.
- Ambulance station added to Wausau.
- Twelve-hour ambulance running from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Mutual aid has decreased since 2020 from forty-four to current twenty-eight, however, it has increased to other counties.
- Updated ambulance fleet.
- Internet cradle points have been added to all the ambulances, which allows them to transport EKG's to receiving hospitals.
- Mechanical CPR devices have been added.
- Equipment bought with opioid funds to use in overdose cases.
- Four new medicines added to the truck.
- Increased community outreach, which includes opioid outreach.
- Monthly inhouse training.
- Further education on managing difficult airways.
- Opioid training with local first responders on the administration of Narcan.
- Airheart training.

The support from the Washington County Board of County Commissioner and Sheriff Crews has been instrumental in the achievements.

Plans – Purchase another ambulance, continue to expand public outreach, and education, and add an EMS station on Holmes Valley/south of New Hope.

7.3 Request to Purchase Extrication Equipment and Cardiac Monitor for EMS with Impact Fees – Approval is requested to use impact fee funds of \$48,684.35 to purchase equipment.

Commissioner Hawkins offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bush, and unanimously carried to approve of EMS using impact fees to buy equipment.

Commissioner Hawkins said per Randy Truette's inquiry about property on the south end of the county. The five acres on Holmes Valley Road where the sheriff's tower was put could accommodate an ambulance station. Holmes Valley Road is not a hard surfaced road; however, it has been submitted as a SCOP project. A letter of recommendation from the board reflecting the potential of an EMS Station being put there would be beneficial to the application.

Randy Truette added that the Vernon truck stays busy, but the one for Wausau is

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helping.

Chairman Pettis told Randy Truette that he would like to see the plan for a station on Holmes Valley Road.

Commissioner Corbin offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bush, and unanimously carried to send a letter with the SCOP application saying that Washington County is looking to put an EMS Station on Holmes Valley.

Development Order Extension Request – Commissioner Bush offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hawkins, and unanimously carried to approve agenda items 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, and 7.7 as recommended by the planning commission.

7.4 Development Order Extension Request – Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner

7.5 Sasser/Hodges Small Scale Future Land Use Map Amendment – Dawn McDonald, Senior Planner

7.6 Crane Small Scale Future Land Map Amendment

7.7 Vertical Bridge/Hooper Tower Special Exception, Major Development Review Application with Variance

7.8 Zlotea RV Park Major Development Review Application – Commissioner Corbin offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hawkins, and carried 5–0 by roll call vote to deny the Development Review Application as recommended by the Zoning and Planning Committee.

7.9 23PLN71 Scope of Services and Task Order – Candace Thames, Grants/Procurement Specialist requested approval of the scope of work and task order between the county and Michael Baker International. The goal is for the consultant to administer the support coordination efforts and acquire background data, develop H & H storm water models, vulnerability assessment, and for FDEP approved and grant funded vulnerability assessment. The consultant will provide the items required by FDEP within the allotted granted time. This does not change the amount of the grant. It only changes a line item for administrative fees.

Commissioner Corbin offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Griffin, and unanimously carried to approve the scope of services and task order for 23PLN71 for Michael Baker International.

7.10 RFPs for Chipley Library Expansion – Renae Rountree, Library Director requested

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approval to issue RFPs for professional engineering services and grant administration.

Commissioner Corbin offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hawkins, and unanimously carried to approve the issuance of the RFPs as requested by Renae Rountree.

- 7.11 Updated 2024 Board Schedule – David Pettis, Jr., Chairman confirmed the update is due to statute requirements for swearing in incoming commissioners. The meeting will be held November 19.

Commissioner Bush offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hawkins, and unanimously carried to approve the updated 2024 board schedule.

- 7.12 Selection of State Lobbying Services (RFQ 2024 – 01) – The board discussed the lobbying firms.

Commissioner Hawkins said they all have great reputations in Tallahassee. The decision hinges upon what you are looking for.

Renae Rountree, Library Director said that she was on the selection committee to score the RFPs. You are looking at what you want on the federal and state levels. Gray Robinson is the lobbying firm for the Florida Library Associations, and they work state and federal. The Southern Group is large as well. The cost for services ranged from \$36,000.00 – to \$45,000.00.

Commissioner Hawkins said the board does not have an issue getting in to local delegation and he went on to suggest someone that could get them into difficult to access places.

Chairman Pettis went over the scoring.

- Gray Robinson – 255
- JEJ and Associates – 254
- Pinpoint Results – 226
- Southern Group of Florida – 226

County Administrator Massey said the communication and results with Gray Robinson is better than ever.

Commissioner Bush said there was a time they were not satisfied with them. He went on to ask County Administrator Massey if that would be his recommendation.

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County Administrator Massey said that he is only familiar with Gray Robinson and Pinpoint. They need to be aware that working the state is one thing but having the ability on a federal level is important. Gray Robinson has improved, and things will be better moving forward. An effective lobbyist at the state or federal level will be important moving forward with the incoming growth of the county. Gray Robinson would likely be the best choice at this point.

Commissioner Griffin offered a motion to re-enter an agreement with Gray Robinson for lobbying services. Commissioner Corbin seconded the motion for discussion.

Commissioner Corbin said he did not get a bad impression about any of the companies. Do they keep the company they have? There have been mixed feelings about Gray Robinson at times. There has been an experience with them where the focus was on them and another time, not so much.

County Administrator Massey said they are communicating better with them now. There is a difference in somebody going in on their behalf and saying this is what they want and getting into the door. The real value is when there is passion and understanding the needs to the county and fighting for them. It was thought at a point that the county was missing that, which was the reason for bringing this up, however, that has changed.

Commissioner Griffin said there is a 30-day out and if they do not perform, you move to the next one.

Commissioner Corbin said that he is not against them. He just wants to make the right decision.

The motion to continue with Gray Robinson as the lobbyist carried four to one with Commissioner Pettis opposed.

Commissioner Pettis said that he favored JEJ & Associates, Inc. He plans to work with the boards pleasure and is okay with that decision.

- 7.13 Ebro Fire Department Discussion for Campbell Park – Commissioner Hawkins said that he was contacted by Chief Wade Moon who is planning a community event fund raiser for the Ebro VFD and would like to use Campbell Park around the second week of October to the second week of November range.

Chairman Pettis confirmed Chief Moon was seeking use of the park with the fee being waived.

Commissioner Bush offered the motion above, seconded by Commissioner Hawkins and unanimously carried.

8. FEMA COORDINATOR – Kevan Parker updated the board.
  - Worley Road Project – The project is progressing well.
  - Hurricane Sally – All funding has been received for Hurricane Sally projects. The work is being done by Road and Bridge on the weekends.
  - Williams Road Bridge – The project is progressing. Approval of the last \$370,000.00 of the advance funding was given yesterday.
  - FEMA Correspondence – Questions they had on the roads have been answered and submitted back to them. They tried to schedule a meeting with DEM and FEMA at 2:30, however, that has not been confirmed. Most of them are deployed in connection to the Debbie disaster.
  - Ag Center – The contractors worked around early voting. They also had to order more materials. They should begin working within the next seven to ten days. Brent Melvin said that they are looking at a spot in the parking lot, which they believe is a sewer lateral going out. The area has been marked by a cone and will be addressed during construction.
  - Monroe Sheffield Park – Revised plans have submitted to FEMA for review to remove the retaining wall.
  - Buyout Programs – September 5 has been set for the final inspection. The hope is that it will be closed out in September.
  - Legacy Projects Rock – They have been working on this to show that this is something that has been done for ten to twelve years in specific PWs.
  
9. MSBU ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE – Gary Hartman told the board instead of a quarterly meeting their next meeting will be September 11 at 6:00 p.m. at the community center.
  
10. PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR – Chairman Pettis added that the public works director and staff will have some equipment at the Touch a Truck Event tonight.

Commissioner Griffin asked about Gilberts Mill.

Trey Barbee responded they continue to have trouble finding milled asphalt.

Commissioner Griffin recommended reaching out to Anderson Columbia because they are milling Highway 231 and Alford at this time.

Trey Barbee responded that they had sold most of the pile they had to Jackson County, however, he would reach out them.

#### 11. PARKS UPDATE – George Swauger updated the board.

- Culpepper Landing Floating Dock – Gator Docks proposal goes up to \$22,480.00, which can be supported by his budget during this cycle. This includes the 10 x 10 dock, gangway, and fifteen-foot extension. Installation is not included. The county would be responsible to have the pilings driven to hold the floating dock system and the fifteen-foot extension to get out into that zone to be able to build the gangway to the floating dock.

It does not look like the original drawing would work based on measurements. Within twenty-five feet you would run into the patch of cypress trees. It would have to go west (northwest) or extreme left to begin the system there to have any clearance which would still be downstream.

Commissioner Hawkins expressed concern about the route going passed their property line. The engineer's design was to leave the cypress trees in between the middle of the two structures, allowing them to stay within their property line.

Commissioner Griffin suggested coming off the end of the dock to the west, off fifteen feet and let that hang off in the creek.

Commissioner Hawkins expressed concern about that scenario placing it in front of somebody else's property, which may impede their ability to get in and out the creek. The engineer had it designed and staked the trees.

George Swauger said that it is pending approval from DEP and the state level.

Commissioner Pettis said that he spoke with Mr. Sims and the update is that it is in permitting.

Deputy Clerk Brantley clarified with George Swauger that he mentioned his budget covering the expense this year and went on to ask if the work would be done by September 30.

George Swauger responded yes. Approval is imperative to get it done in that time. Installation will be the slowest part of it.

Commissioner Griffin said per the ariel the county owns approximately two 250-feet to the west passed the end of the dock.

George Swauger said if there is a difference it is forty feet.

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Commissioner Griffin suggested that it would be better to put them on the side so the boat can tie up there and get on and off and the kayaks and canoes could be.

George Swauger added being further west would mean less congestion.

Commissioner Griffin said there is always trouble at that landing.

George Swauger said the solar lights are operational. There is also a larger spotlight on the post. There is a single camera there and another may be installed closer to the dock.

- Wilder Park – The project is ongoing. There has been a delay which seems to be due to the manufacturer, which occurs during this time of year with that product.
- Wilder Park Restrooms – Years ago a septic tank was approved. The translation was lost prior to the position change. There was an option to run a line down to a sewer system with US Waters package system. The idea is to use the modular restroom that was at the sod farm for the immunization process. It can be secured to the ground closer to the sewer system omitting the use of a macerator pump. This choice would be more economical, and the restroom would be closer to the playground area. The bathroom will be put on a concrete pad with a lean to shed. \$10,000.00 should be the maximum cost for the bathroom which can be covered by the parks budget.

Commissioner Corbin added that some of District 2 budget funds can be used for the restrooms.

- Campbell Park – Sunshades are ready to be installed at the park.
- St. Joseph Park – The exercise equipment has not been installed yet. Some excavation will be needed to pour the anchors. Sunshades will be put around that area as well.
- Blue Lake – A water line was damaged during the sewer tie in, which is being repaired. Replacing that will allow water in more areas. The sidewalk has been completed.
- Gap Pond – Commissioner Bush recommended that George Swauger keep Gap Pond in mind. George responded that he has been working on it.

## 12. ENGINEERING PROJECTS UPDATE



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Jason Crenshaw updated the board on Dumajack Road. The plans are close to 90% and should be complete by the end of the month. The plans will be sent to the Department of Transportation for review, which will be two to three weeks. They should be ready to advertise for construction the middle of November and bids will be due in December with construction beginning February 2025. A time extension has been requested for the project to October 2025.

Commissioner Hawkins asked County Administrator Massey to seek an update from Dewberry on the appropriations for Davidson Road and Crystal Lake.

13. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – Jeff Massey suggested they began now naming and prioritize projects for appropriations.

Commissioner Bush said that he would like for Creek Road to stay at the forefront. Pioneer Road is also coming apart.

Commissioner Griffin asked about the cameras for the building.

Wendy White, Human Resources said they have received three quotes and are looking at getting those implemented in the coming weeks.

County Administrator Massey said they would begin with the front door out, building out and the back door.

The property that the county owns behind Burger King has been a topic of discussion with those with economic development as well as some other things. The property has been surveyed. Next week the technical college will be doing some clearing there. The plan is to get the property shovel ready for a potential company.

#### 14. CLERK

14.1 July Vouchers Totaling \$3,596,705.52

14.2 ARPA Funds Response Discussion – Clerk Bell said they would pick up the discussion where it left off last week with Commissioner Griffin having some questions.

Commissioner Griffin said that he seen a couple of things related to parks and recreation. What are the obstacles for using it for some of that.

Clerk Bell said there must be a plan for how the funds will be used by the end of December 2024. Based on discussions and recommendations of how the funds are being used in other municipalities and counties this was a way to recoup funds that have already been spent. In going into the upcoming budget there would be available funds to look at non reoccurring expenditures. The auditor recommended to proceed

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with closing the funds out in the current fiscal year and reimburse general for government services.

Commissioner Bush offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hawkins to reimburse the general fund with the available ARPA Funds of \$2,690,439.52 for government services payroll that has been provided within this fiscal year and move those funds through moving into the upcoming budget year.

Benita Crittendon addressed the board. In an earlier meeting, Commissioner Hawkins proposed to pay off a \$1 million +/- loan. It is assumed the funds cannot be used for that. In part of that discussion, it was mentioned from Commissioner Hawkins that they could get a letter from Wheeler Emergency Management saying what it covers. Commissioner Corbin suggested to obtain a formal letter from the Department of Treasury. Has a formal statement been obtained that specifies what the funds can be used for instead of assumptions or self-interpretations.

Clerk Bell said that she provided part of the direction from the Department of Treasury to each commissioner last week.

Benita Crittendon asked if that was direct communication from the Department of Treasury to Washington County or was it on the website, which is likely the information she pulled.

Clerk Bell said that it is guidelines that were provided to each person that they discussed the issue with.

Benita Crittendon responded, general guidelines from the website where it gives the guidelines.

Clerk Bell responded, the Department of Treasury's website is the research that was done and was acceptable.

Benita Crittendon asked if there was a specific line of communication that would be a public record that would show somebody from the county requested validation from the Department of Treasury that it would be okay to use it for the use mentioned, with the Department of Treasury directly responding to that giving their approval.

Clerk Bell responded that they do not have direct communication.

Benita Crittendon said, it was a self-interpretation.

Clerk Bell responded that was provided by the Department of Treasury.

The motion carried four to one with Commissioner Griffin opposed.

Commissioner Hawkins clarified that the audit report is always for the budget fiscal year.

15. COUNTY ATTORNEY - None

16. ADJOURN