

MINUTES OF THE GLADES COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2021, AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM, GLADES COUNTY COURTHOUSE,
MOORE HAVEN, FLORIDA

The Glades County Board of County Commissioners met on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. with the following Commissioners present:

Tim Stanley, Chairman
Donna Storter Long, Vice Chairman
John Ahern
Tony Whidden

Not present:
Jerry Sapp

Others present:

Bob Jones, County Manager
Tami Simmons, Clerk of Court
Brittany Heflin, Administrative Secretary
Tycee Prevatt, Ag Extension Agent
David Hardin, Glades County Sheriff
Charles Murphy, Lake Okeechobee News
Angela Colegrove, Glades County Public Safety Director
Marisa Shivers, Emergency Management Director
Tracy Whirls, Glades County Economic Development
Aletris Farnam, Supervisor of Elections
Donnie Watts, Glades County Sheriff's Security
10 citizens

Chairman Stanley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

PRAYER

Commissioner Storter Long gave the invocation.

PLEDGE

Commissioner Ahern led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Note: Unanimous Board Action is required to amend agenda for official vote.

Bob Jones, County Manager, stated there are two items; Cares Act Local Government Funding Notice of Program Close-Out and the discussion for Burma Spice Contract.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Ahern moved seconded by Commissioner Whidden the Board approved to have Cares Act Local Government Funding Notice of Program Close Out amended to agenda as item #9 and Burma Spice Contract discussion be added as #10.

No discussion.

Motion carried by 4 – 0 vote.

Chairman Stanley stated Commissioner Jerry Sapp was absent.

PRESENTATIONS / AWARDS

There were none.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Approve County Warrants**
- 2. Approve minutes of the January 25, 2021, Regular BOCC Meeting**

ON MOTION Commissioner Storter Long seconded by Commissioner Ahern the Board moved to approve the Consent Agenda.

No discussion.

Motion carried by 4 – 0 vote.

PUBLIC INPUT ON BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS

ANYONE WISHING TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT ON AN AGENDA ITEM PLEASE FILL OUT A COMMENT CARD ON THE TABLE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE COMMISSION CHAMBERS

BUSINESS AGENDA

- 3. Amendment to the Interlocal Agreement for the Agriculture Extension Agent.**

This amendment is to set forth for agents' salaries, benefits, and support which were in error. The remaining agreement remains unmodified.

Bob Jones, County Manager, stated there was an error in the funding and charges for the Agricultural Officer that works out of Hendry County. The University of Florida has rectified and added a change to what the charges are in Glades County. Glades County has almost a \$13,413.00 credit with them. Mr. Jones asked to change the amendment to rectify what the error was in the funding, adding that the rest will not change. Mr. Jones stated Glades County will keep using those funds until there is a zero-balance left of the credit.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Ahern seconded by Commissioner Whidden the Board approved to amend the Interlocal agreement for agricultural extension agent and authorize the chair to sign.

No discussion.

Motion carried by 4 – 0 vote.

- 4. Lien Relief Application for Vena Miller**

Ms. Vena Miller contacted the County Managers Office regarding her property at 1471 Lake Drive in Buckhead Ridge. It is approximately .149 acres in size and has the Parcel ID # S36-38-34-011-0000-0490 and requests that the fines incurred before she bought the property at public tax auction be reduced.

Bob Jones, County Manager, stated Vena Miller sold the property then later bought it back at a public tax deed auction. There were previous fines incurred on the property totaling approximately \$6,825.00. Ms. Miller did not realize these fines were in place when she purchased it at the tax deed auction. The property complies as of now. Mr. Jones suggested a reduction in fines to a cost of \$500.00 to Glades County plus additional Clerk of Court fees.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Whidden seconded by Commissioner Storter Long the Board approved to reduce all fines but the County administrative costs of \$500.00 and this reduction in fines does not include all Clerk Court fees and allow the chair to sign.

No discussion.

Motion carried 4 - 0 vote.

5. Hendry Glades Western County Public Safety Coverage

Further discussion was held on the joint meeting between Glades and Hendry County for public safety coverage. At the night meeting on April 26, staff was directed to see if Hendry County would move forward if the state funding was vetoed by the Governor. The County Administrator for Hendry County indicated that they would under the proposed agreement, assistance with funding for building construction. If call volume increased to point that the six unit in Hendry County was indicated, would it be staffed, again it was yes, they are looking at that now, and are committed o the success of this project.

Bob Jones, County Manager, stated this is further discussion on the joint effort between Glades and Hendry County. At the last meeting Mr. Jones was asked to check with Hendry County Administrator, Jennifer Davis, to see if they would be committed to help fund the building if funding from the state was vetoed. Mrs. Davis stated it would have to go back to the Board but yes, they are committed. Mr. Jones also asked if there was a need for the fourth Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance that is already budgeted to be manned, would they do that. Mrs. Davis stated they are committed to do that if the need is there based on the call volume. In summary, Mr. Jones stated yes, Hendry County is still in agreement to move forward as presented at the joint meeting that was held in April.

Chairman Stanley stated the plan is to do a joint operation on a fire station on the western side of Glades County with Hendry County. In the beginning, Glades County had in mind that we already have Paramedics there so if Hendry County could supply two firemen and the building is built the County would have fire service at no additional cost to the County. Glades County would have had full fledge fire service in the western side of the County. In the meantime, Hendry County came back and said they do not have paid firemen in their county; they would supply the ambulance and staff and do the medical side of it. Glades County would need to hire the firemen to go out there. If Glades County does this joint effort with Hendry County, right now Glades County has two ambulances running, one in the west and Central. Okeechobee County is paid to run calls on the Eastern half of the county near Buckhead Ridge. There is one full-time staffed fire department in the entire county, which is in the central district. Glades County would go from two ambulances and one staffed fire station to three ambulances operating 24/7 in the county and two full-time fire facilities staffed. That would relieve the County of the financial obligation that is due to Okeechobee County and supply an ambulance to the Eastern side of the county, which is needed.

The Board must decide if they will continue with the joint agreement with Hendry County and make the additions. If it does not go forward, the fire tax would be significantly increased, and it would only serve one side of the County.

Chairman Stanley stated there are a couple people who would like to speak on the issue.

Chairman Stanley called David Heflin to speak.

Commissioner Storter Long requested that she be able to address the questions that were submitted prior to Mr. Heflin speaking.

Commissioner Storter Long stated during one of the discussions with Hendry County Board of County Commissioners, Hendry County Board of County Commissioners said they would come up with half however, they cannot commit half. They said they would have to come up with dollars either way- but of course- it would have to be Board approved, which is understandable. Commissioner Storter Long stated she would like the commitment that they would pay half of the funding for the E-911 if it is not approved by the State. Second, if Hendry County has not enough call volume are they going to put the other ambulance over there? Commissioner Storter Long clarified that her previous question will Hendry County put in their fourth ambulance for Glades County. Right now, with three ambulances in LaBelle, they will take one of the Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances to Glades County and leave the Basic Life Support (BLS) in LaBelle. She has been told LaBelle has a shortage-as they find it hard to hire paramedics because the

beginning salary in Hendry County is at the bottom, as they are contracted with a Union and must start at a real low salary. Commissioner Storter Long questioned if they put their ALS unit in Glades County, wouldn't it be reasonable to think they will be sending that unit a lot more South than it would be made available to Glades County. When that happens, as far as mutual aid, who is going to back up the West district in Glades County?

County Manager Jones stated it would be the same as it is now. Two calls were running in Hendry County yesterday out of LaBelle. If another call came out of that district, the back-up unit comes out of Moore Haven, as it does now, unless one of the units that is on the West, be it Hendry or Glades County, has cleared and is close enough and heading back into Hendry or Glades County would get the call.

Bob Jones confirmed that Glades County is offering mutual aid to Hendry County. Commissioner Storter Long expressed her concern that Glades County is already giving Hendry County mutual aid while Hendry County already has three units adding if Hendry County only had two units, it is reasonable to assume there will be a lot more use for mutual aid from Glades County. Commissioner Storter Long questioned who will determine what the threshold is. Mr. Jones stated it would be determined by volume of calls. Commissioner Storter Long questioned what level of volume, if we are constantly having to bring units from Moore Haven to that area, we are not serving the Moore Haven area as it is doing back-up over there.

County Manager Jones stated Hendry County is in the process of eliminating the BLS truck and making it ALS. It is difficult, State and Nation wide to hire paramedics. Depending on experience, beginning salary for Glades County paramedics is around \$13.00 per hour.

Chairman Stanley called for public comment.

David Heflin, 1012 Ortona Locks Road, stated that he has spent most of his life in Glades County. He has been a paramedic for 26 years. Spent the last several years working for Glades County EMS. One of the biggest reasons why he came to work for Glades County was to slow down a little before the years proceeding his retirement. He has been very happy with the employment and is less stressed. He asked the Board to please think carefully and proceed cautiously when deciding the fate of Western Glades County EMS. Also, to please give some thought into what this change means to me, my fellow employees and county residents. Some of the employees that you have live in the communities where we work. Some of the things for you to consider: what safe parts does Glades County have when Hendry County moves in? What if they can't hold up their end of the bargain? Does Hendry County have enough employees to man a new station? Do you want your employees living in a redone station when Hendry County employees get a brand new one? Thank you.

Chairman Stanley thanked Mr. Heflin.

D.J. McGlothern, 1311 Krisdale Ave, stated I had the very fortune of sitting here two weeks ago and listening to a good, healthy discussion about this opportunity with Hendry County. He wanted to listen to more discussion today, but in the meantime out in his area, he had visited with a good many of my neighbors and so far, no one, has shown any resistance to what is being proposed. He stated that the residents he has talked to seem to be in full support of whatever it takes to get fire coverage in his area and in addition there be adequate EMS service. So, as we voice that this morning, to take it a step further, we see it as an opportunity to achieve something out there at the minimum impact to the possibility of raising our taxes. I am a relatively new resident of Glades County after having just moved into my new house about seven months ago. He stated that he doesn't know that he would have built a new house in Glades County had he known how high the Ad-valorem tax was for someone just living out in a rural area. It was quite a shock! So, anything that you all can do as a Board to keep the taxes down, and in this case, provide a service that is absolutely needed without raising our taxes as I understand it is what I am showing support for this morning. Thank you very much.

Chairman Stanley thanked Mr. McGlothern.

Chairman Stanley stated nobody else has signed up for public comment.

Chairman Stanley stated that if it went through with Hendry County, Glades County Attorney Richard Pringle would have to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hendry County and will have to guarantee in there that there will be an ambulance there on-site in that fire station, 24/7 just like Glades County does now. The cost sharing as well as the operations of the station would be shared as it was the initial intent.

Attorney Pringle stated the action by the Board today as he understands it is whether the Board would like to direct himself and County Manager Jones to negotiate the terms of an Interlocal Agreement with Hendry County that would be brought back to the Board for final approval in the future. Attorney Pringle stated this is an interim decision to direct staff to proceed to that formal negotiating stage of getting the Interlocal Agreement done. The Interlocal Agreement will not only address the construction of the structure and cost sharing for that but as well as the future maintenance, cost of the operation, responses and who will be provide them as well as mutual aid.

Commissioner Whidden asked if there was a way out of the Agreement if either Hendry or Glades County felt the service was not beneficial. Attorney Pringle stated that typically in Interlocal Agreements between government agencies that he has written in the past, he provided a termination provision that essentially authorizes either party to terminate the agreement unilaterally upon adequate notice so the other party can implement their own services.

Commissioner Storter Long questioned if the employees that will be moved to Buckhead Ridge be rotated with the ones in Moore Haven? Angela Colegrove, Public Safety Director, agreed that the lieutenants make up the schedules and as of now, the employees from Muse rotate and work in Moore Haven about one month out of the year.

Commissioner Storter Long asked if there was any idea what the costs of remodeling the Buckhead Ridge Fire Department would be to bring it up to par? County Manager Jones stated between \$75,000 - \$100,000 would be within a reasonable range.

Attorney Pringle stated there will be competitive selection process needed, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for an architect. One RFQ could be done for both the new station and the Buckhead Ridge Fire Department remodeling.

The zone for the Eastern ambulance will be just North of Harney Pond and they will go to Raulerson Hospital.

County Manager Bob Jones stated there are 3-4 that are dual certified now. Single certified, 3-4 that are in Paramedic school. The single certified employees will mainly be stationed in Moore Haven.

Commissioner Storter Long stated there has only been 206 fire calls in the County. She stated there needs to be terms in place for dispatch if it goes through. Bob stated the dispatchers are asking for mutual aid today. For example, Port LaBelle is automatically being sent to Hendry County.

Commissioner Storter Long stated that the taxpayers will have to pay for fire service. Planning for the future, she hopes that the services would benefit the growth that is coming to Glades County.

Commissioner Storter Long questioned what is the time frame? Is this going to be a reimbursable grant? We will know if we get the money by end of June.

County Manager, Jones, met with Jennifer, and she stated Hendry County Board of County Commissioners is committed.

Chairman Stanley stated the benefits are extra fire truck and an extra ambulance

Josh Rimes, Chief, stated Hendry County has different rates for Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU). East and West is different. City of LaBelle, based upon their budget is different. He stated this is a great plan especially if Hendry County will commit to the additional ambulance. There are things to consider with renovation costs and other aspects, sprinkler systems, venting.

Commissioner Whidden stated he would like to see a non-compete provision included. Employees will leave in a heartbeat for higher pay. He does not want to see our employees go to Hendry and Hendry to go to Glades. Attorney Pringle stated that would be a hard provision to write.

Commissioner Storter Long stated this needs to be more sharply tuned,

Mr. McGlothorn stated he understands that the fire tax rate would go from \$90.00 to \$121.00. He appreciates what the Board is trying to do and does not want to see services diminish. Commissioner Ahern stated that the Ad-valorem taxes are higher. As a new homeowner, you would subsidize.

Commissioner Storter Long stated they (Hendry County) are going to demand more from us. We are to do the fire and Hendry County to do the EMS.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Whidden seconded by Commissioner Ahern for the Board to move to go forward with the joint agreement for providing EMS and ALS Fire Service, with Hendry County for the western portion of both counties as proposed and direct the County Manager and Attorney to work with Hendry County Administrator and their County Attorney on the agreement.

No discussion.

One Comment by Commissioner Storter Long that it will not get any better than it is right now. We are taking their word.

Motion carried by 3 – 1 vote.

Commissioner Storter Long opposed on the floor.

6. County Fire Services Assessment (MSBU)

If the Board want to move forward with a Fire Assessment Ordinance for adoption, Services Assessment, Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) we need to notify Government Services Group the County's intention to move forward and the assessment rate. We need to have the County Attorney draft a Fire Assessment Ordinance at least 10 days prior to a public hearing.

Commissioner Ahern stated the city would probably be onboard with a master ordinance to provide for other vehicles for us to modernize Glades County. They seem to favor \$121.00.

Commissioner Storter Long stated that it is preferable to keep it singular ordinance and direct our staff to be in the process for this non-ad valorem Fire Services Assessment. The rates should be a separated motion.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Storter Long moved for the Board to approve the county moving forward with fire service assessment under a singular ordinance and directing our staff to begin the process for this non-ad valorem Fire Services Assessment Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU).

Motion died due to lack of support.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Ahern seconded by Commissioner Whidden the Board approved to approve a master ordinance that would provide for Municipal Service Benefit

Unit (MSBU) to be used by Glades County for fire and any further endeavors we may pursue.

Chairman Stanley questioned was another study be required? Attorney Pringle- Stated for the service – yes. And you would have to have another hearing to adopt the assessment. He also discussed the requirements of a master ordinance.

David Heflin already left the meeting but wrote that he is in support of Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU).

ON MOTION of Commissioner Storter Long seconded by Commissioner Ahern for the Board to approve and go forward with preparing fire assessment under the master ordinance at the maximum rate of \$121.00 for residential, \$0.04 non-residential and \$17.55 parcel of vacant land as described in GSG study.

No discussion.

Motion carried by 4 – 0 vote.

7. Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for US 27 Utility Corridor

There were two respondents for the advertisement for RFQ 2021-01 US27 utility corridor Infrastructure design and engineer. Craig A. Smith, Associates and Johnson Engineering. The scope of the work consists of design/engineering, permitting, bidding, and construction administration service. Both proposals were reviewed, scored by the Moore Haven City Manager and Glades County Manager, with Craig A. Smith being awarded 81 points and Johnson Engineering awarded 58 points.

Bob Jones, County Manager, stated that David Miller and Jones met and reviewed both applicants. They did a score sheet on both applicants. It is their recommendation to select Craig A Smith as the most qualified respondent. Also, City/County Public Works Authority (CCPWA) was notified.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Storter Long stated that normally those packets are requested and included. And has Steve reviewed it?

Bob Jones stated Dave Miller will present the recommendation to his Board. Then come back to CCPWA.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Ahern seconded by Commissioner Whidden the Board approved Craig A Smith, Associates, as most qualified respondent for RFQ 2021-01 U.S. 27 utility corridor infrastructure design and engineering service and directed staff to attain a cost proposal.

Motion carried 3 – 0 vote

Commissioner Storter Long abstained on the floor

County Attorney, Richard Pringle, stated that notice of conflict of Commissioner Storter Long for the record.

8. The Old Motel Property

Discussion was held about the county owned property that the old motel was on, located west of 10th street on highway 27.

Commissioner Ahern stated that he had been in meetings with a committee representing Hitchcock Markets and is waiting to hear back from them.

Chairman Stanley asked County Manager Bob Jones to get with a realtor to get a price of what the property is worth.

Commissioner Whidden voiced his concerns that he did not want an undesirable business in the center of town but would like to see something more desirable such as a grocery store. Attorney Pringle stated there could be deed restrictions included.

Attorney Pringle stated the County so far- with surplus property-, there has been exchange of several pieces of property, as allowed by Chapter 125. In the past, as with the Hotel property, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was published in the newspaper. If the County adopts an ordinance (local law), there is an alternative method to sell County property, for the economic growth.

Commissioner Storter Long questioned if a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is needed for a realtor.

Tracy Whirls, Executive Director Glades County Economic Development Council, stated since the old U-Save closed, EDC is in the pursuit of grocery store. Company owns 13 stores, established in 1935. Their intent is to build a 21,000 sq ft building. She strongly encourages the economic development route. Property according to Lori Wards Office that the vacant land is worth \$253,834.00.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Storter Long seconded by Commissioner Ahern that the Board direct the staff to prepare an ordinance so that in the future to utilize the services of a commercial realtor.

Chairman Stanley called for discussion.

Commissioner Whidden reiterated his concerns.

Motion carried by 4 – 0 vote.

9. CARES Act Local Government Funding Notice of Program Closeout

(Funding Agreement Y2311 with Glades County, Corona Virus Relief Fund CARES ACT)

The county's allocation including interest earned report has been fully substantiated and approved by FDEM.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Ahern seconded by Commissioner Whidden that the Board approve the close out report provided by Florida Department of Emergency Management on the CARES Act funding Y2311 and authorize the Chair to sign.

No discussion.

Motion carried by 4 – 0 vote.

Chairman Stanley stated he received letter indicating that from the stimulus that the government is allotting of 65 billion to counties in the United States. Counties with Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) would get the larger portion. It is unknown what the county would get. Bob Jones believe it was 2.6 million.

10. Burma Spice

Richard Pringle, County Attorney, stated he has continued to negotiation items and have taken a hard line on certain items. Final agreement is not complete yet. Meeting with Susan BuChans, Community Development Director, to be sure things are lined up. Very close to completing negotiations.

Commissioner Whidden thanked Attorney Pringle.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Aletris Farnam, Supervisor of Elections spoke to Glades County School Board, taking paperwork from Ken Tozier for redistricting to move forward. Director of the Division has

released new grant funding. The Governor signed the new election law into effect and the next day all 67 Supervisors, secretaries and Governor have been included in a lawsuit. If a person has not been active in voting they need to sign a new card to update info by calling office or signing card received in mail and return.

David Hardin, Glades County Sheriff stated there are 141 inmates in jail, 62 ICE, 51 local, 28 U.S. Marshalls. Jail captain, met Friday, with Project Manager Robert Doman. Finance Director, reference an option of building a pod. Initially it was partnership with Hendry County.

There has been some ICE movement in the last two weeks, coming from Texas.

Commissioner Whidden questioned roughly how many jobs would be lost if we lose the ICE contract. Sheriff Hardin stated at least 100 employees could lose their jobs.

Commissioner Ahern spoke with Terri Burroughs, Okeechobee County Commissioner, and extended an invitation to house inmates.

Sheriff Hardin stated there was a shooting Friday, in Moore Haven two arrested and that 2 were arrested and looking for another.

Tami Simmons, Clerk of Court, had no comments.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Richard Pringle had no comments.

Commissioner Storter Long questioned if concerning the Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) that the City is agreeable to adopt it and do we need to get in writing.

Chairman Stanley questioned about the Center of Dieses Control (CDC) proposal.

Tracy Whirls stated to remember to do Request for Proposal (RFP), for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), consultant for Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

COUNTY MANAGER

Bob Jones stated that Sam Palma's trailer at Alvin Ward boat ramp has been moved.

Jack Woods has consented to work for Code Enforcement part time. There is a back log getting anyone certified. Due to COVID, classes have been stopped.

Bob Jones will be leaving this Friday until June 1, 2021, on vacation.

PUBLIC INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

ANYONE WISHING TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT PLEASE FILL OUT A COMMENT CARD ON THE TABLE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE COMMISSION CHAMBERS.

There were none.

COMMISSIONERS ITEMS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Storter Long questioned if Mrs. Perkins has been hired as Librarian. Bob Jones, County Manager, stated yes and she accepted the position.

The Muse Community Association building is hosting a music jam session every Friday.

Commissioner Whidden stated he received calls from Brian Mast in reference to algae blooms in the Lake.

He expressed his condolences to all the families who lost a loved one.

Commissioner Ahern expressed his condolences to the families as well. He also spoke to Congressman Stuebe's aid and requested he support Glades County's point of view on the lake levels.

Chairman Stanley stated he will be attending a meeting with South Florida Water Thursday.

Someone moved a Conex box (large metal container) and is using it as a shed. He confirmed with Susan BuChans, it is legal. This issue may be something we need to make some kind of stipulation.

ADJOURN

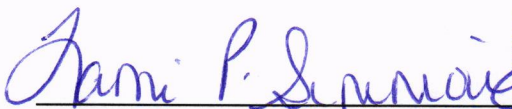
ON MOTION of Commissioner Whidden seconded by Commissioner Ahern the Board moved to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Stanley adjourned the meeting at 12:03 p.m.



Timothy Stanley, Chairman

ATTEST:



Tami P. Simmons, Clerk of the Circuit Court



Approved: May 23, 2022

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD. AN AUDIO IS AVAILABLE FOR ANYONE INTERESTED IN LISTENING TO THE ENTIRE MEETING ACCORDING TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES.