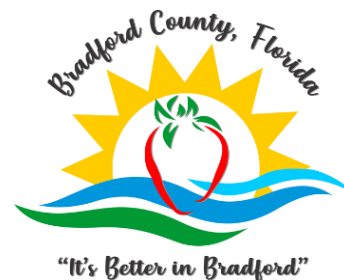


**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES**

September 8, 2020
Gov. Charley E. Johns Conference Center
1610 N. Temple Avenue
Starke, FL 32091

**IN-PERSON AND TELEPHONIC
(Due to COVID-19)**



Special Called Meeting
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Commissioner District 3 Chairman Chris Dougherty
Commissioner District 2 Vice-Chairman Kenny Thompson
Commissioner District 1 Commissioner Ross Chandler
Commissioner District 4 Commissioner Danny Riddick
Commissioner District 5 Commissioner Frank Durrance

ALSO PRESENT: Rachel Rhoden, County Manager; Alyssa Winston, Administrative Assistant; Will Sexton, County Attorney; Ray Norman, Clerk of Courts; Dana LaFollette, Accountant, Finance Department; Marlene Stafford, Deputy Clerk; Sheriff Smith; Ben Riggs, I.T. Systems Administrator; Andrew Morris, I.T. Support Specialist; Wendy Russell, Emergency Management Deputy Director; Allen Parrish, Emergency Medical Services Director; Major Brad Smith; Jason Dodds, Public Works Director; Sgt. Brad Witt, Emergency Management Director; Dylan Rodgers, EMS Division Chief; Capt. Konkel; Ben Carter, EMS Capt.; Chris Thurow, I.T. Director; and Ian Waters, I.T. Manager.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dougherty called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Chairman Dougherty introduced Alyssa Winston, Administrative Assistant in the County Manager's Office.

County Manager Rachel Rhoden presented opening comments specific to the format of the meeting being held both in-person and telephonically, due to COVID-19.

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Public Comment Cards):

Ms. Rhoden announced there were no call-in participants for public comments.

Chairman Dougherty recognized the following individual who presented comments on the subject matter(s) noted:

John Robinson:

- Expressed appreciation to law enforcement, EMS, and Fire Department.
- Appreciation to the Road Department for performing an excellent job under Mr. Dodds' leadership.
- Commended Commissioner Thompson for his work ethic, not only for District II, but the entire county.

2. APPROVAL AND/OR ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. PAYMENT OF BILLS—Reviewed by Vice-Chairman Thompson** (The Distribution List is on file in the Finance Department of the Office of the Clerk of Courts.)
- B. RESOLUTION – Confirming Proclamations of a Local State of Emergency ([Resolution No. 2020-34.](#))**
- C. STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND BRADFORD COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS [GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 20-04-20. AMENDMENT NO. 1](#)**
- D. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF [AGREEMENT](#) BETWEEN BRADFORD COUNTY AND NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA PLANNING COUNCIL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT OF \$23,500.00 FOR FISCAL-YEAR 2020-2021**

*Vice-Chairman Thompson **MOVED to approve the Consent Agenda.** Commissioner Durrance **SECONDED** the motion.*

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.***

3. COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORTS—Will Sexton:

- A. AUTHORIZATION TO SEEK APPLICABLE ATTORNEY’S FEES AND COSTS FROM PETITIONER PAUL STILL IN CASE NUMBER 20-000091, CURRENTLY PENDING BEFORE THE STATE OF FLORIDA, DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS**

Mr. Sexton requested authorization to seek reimbursement from the Petitioner, Paul Still, for attorney’s fees and costs incurred in the litigation of this case.

*Commissioner Durrance **MOVED to approve [the request.](#)** Vice-Chairman Thompson **SECONDED** the motion.*

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.***

4. COUNTY MANAGER REPORTS—Rachel Rhoden:

A. REQUEST PERMISSION TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR MITIGATION OF WATER OAK CREEK THROUGH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY – REBUILD FLORIDA – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Ms. Rhoden presented [the request](#) for consideration. She gave a brief review of the project scope of work. The proposed budget for the project is \$3,000,070.00 with no county match. The application deadline is September 14, 2020.

*Vice-Chairman Thompson **MOVED to approve the grant application.** Commissioner Riddick **SECONDED** the motion.*

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.***

B. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A PROPOSED PLAN FOR FIRE/RESCUE OPERATIONS IN FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021

Ms. Rhoden reviewed the [FY20-21 Fire Rescue Operations and Action Plan](#).

Ms. Rhoden asked the Board to approve the following three items:

- Create a Fire Rescue Department under the umbrella of the Emergency Medical Services Department.
- Appoint EMS Director Allen Parrish as Director over Bradford County Fire Rescue.
- Approve a combined Fire Rescue Budget of \$5,975,147.00 for FY2020-2021 (\$4,139,376.00 already approved by the Board for EMS operations and \$1,835,771.00 for fire operations).

The \$524,064.00 currently budgeted in the General Fund for the old VFD, leaves a balance of \$1,311,707.00 needed to fund fire operations. Ms. Rhoden recommended that the Board fund the need with unassigned fund balance in FY20-21. Ms. Rhoden pointed out that the unassigned fund balance is not a reliable revenue source. The unassigned fund balance is used to help balance the budget at the end of each fiscal year. The Board will need to consider a reliable revenue source to fund fire operations in FY21-22. Discussion will need to take place as soon as January 2021 to begin the necessary steps to secure future revenue. It will take approximately a year to a year and a half to collect the revenue needed to fund fire operations as proposed.

At the request of Ms. Rhoden, Mr. Parrish addressed the Commission. He stated that over the last 12 to 14 months the Sheriff's Office has put together a good frame work that the county can build on. The plan before the Commission is the best opportunity moving forward and it has been well vetted. The plan is being looked at as a long term solution, not a short-term patch. The County has done a tremendous job of investing in equipment and in infrastructure; the missing piece is people. In order to have a quality department you have to invest in people.

Commissioner Durrance, Chairman Dougherty and Commissioner Riddick presented comments.

Mr. Parrish presented additional comments supporting a combined Fire Rescue Department.

Chairman Dougherty presented comments regarding the FY20-21 budget cuts, the cost of providing services to the citizens and the additional funding needed for fire services.

There being no further discussion: *Commissioner Riddick **MOVED to create a Fire Rescue Department.** Commissioner Durrance **SECONDED** the motion.*

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED: 5-0***

*Vice-Chairman Thompson **MOVED to appoint Allen Parrish as Director over Bradford County Fire Rescue.** Commissioner Riddick **SECONDED** the motion.*

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED: 5-0***

*Vice-Chairman Thompson **MOVED to approve a combined Fire Rescue budget of \$5,975,147.00 for FY20-21.** Commissioner Riddick **SECONDED** the motion.*

Chairman Dougherty presented comments regarding the close similarity between the prior fire budget, the fire budget presented by Sheriff Smith and the proposed budget before the Commission.

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.***

5. SHERIFF REPORTS—Sheriff Smith:

A. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDED APPOINTMENT OF SGT. BRAD WITT AS BRADFORD COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR – EFFECTIVE AUGUST 27, 2020.

Sheriff Smith presented [the request](#) for consideration.

Sgt. Witt addressed the Board. He gave a brief overview of his performance history and his priorities and goals regarding Emergency Management.

*Commissioner Durrance **MOVED to appoint Sgt. Witt as Bradford County Emergency Management Director.** Vice-Chairman Thompson **SECONDED** the motion.
Second: Thompson*

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.***

B. REQUEST FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$67,752.00 TO CLOSEOUT FISCAL-YEAR 2019-2020 FIRE OPERATIONS

Sheriff Smith [requested \\$67,752.00 to closeout FY19-20 fire operations](#). Funding is available in Jail Set-Aside funds.

*Commissioner Riddick **MOVED to approve the \$67,752.00 to closeout FY2019-2020 fire operations.** Vice-Chairman Thompson **SECONDED** the motion.*

Chairman Dougherty conducted a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Chandler: Aye

Vice-Chairman Thompson: Aye

Commissioner Durrance: Aye

Commissioner Riddick: Aye

Chairman Dougherty: Aye

*The **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.***

Sheriff Smith then presented an item not on the agenda and relating to Jail Set Aside Funds ([letter to the Commission](#)). In response to an audit recommendation and in preparation for the FY20-21 budget, his Finance Department estimated revenue of \$800,000.00 in Jail Set Aside monies. As per the agreement with the Board, Sheriff Smith requested \$400,000.00 (50%) to supplement the Sheriff's budget for non-discretionary funding.

Incited by inquiry of Chairman Dougherty, Sheriff Smith briefly reviewed anticipated expenses the Set-Aside funds would be used for and stated that any major project would be presented to the Commission.

Following some discussion and for clarification purposes, Mr. Sexton stated that Mr. Farrell will show \$800,000.00 in Jail Set Aside revenue and an expenditure of \$400,000.00 from the Jail Set Aside Fund to the Sheriff. No vote is necessary as this will be reflected in the FY20-21 budget that will be voted on and approved by the Commission at its public hearings. If the Commission wishes to vote today, that would require a motion to declare an emergency.

With no objection from the other Commissioners, Chairman Dougherty recommended waiting to vote at the public hearings when the budget is approved as a whole.

Sheriff Smith announced the receipt of a check for \$750,000.00 for reimbursement of the COM Center grant project and presented the check to Clerk Norman.

6. CLERK REPORTS—Clerk Norman:

Clerk Norman reported that Finance staff worked with County staff providing budgeting and finance support for the proposed plan for Fire Rescue Operations presented to the Commission.

7. CHAIRMAN COMMENTS—Chairman Dougherty:

The Director of the Health Department, Ms. Amie Johns' mother passed away yesterday. Please remember Ms. Johns and her family in prayer.

8. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

Commissioner Riddick:

- In light of several decisions made this morning, he is looking forward to the future and great things for Bradford County.

Commissioner Durrance: Echoed Commissioner Riddick's comments.

Chairman Dougherty commended those involved with working on the Fire Rescue proposal. The Board has decisions to make to fund and provide the level of service the citizens deserve.

(09-08-2020 Special Called Meeting)

ADJOURN: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

These Minutes approved by BoCC at the Regular Scheduled Meeting of October 5, 2020.