

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
MARCH 31, 2020
9:00 A.M.**

Proceedings of a special meeting of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) of St. Johns County, Florida, held in the auditorium at the County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida.

Proof of notice of a special meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, communicated on Thursday, March 26, 2020, via media, website, and social media postings.

Present: Jeb S. Smith, District 2, District 2, Chair
 Jeremiah R. Blocker, District 4, Vice Chair
 James K. Johns, District 1
 Paul M. Waldron, District 3
 Henry Dean, District 5
 Hunter S. Conrad, County Administrator
 Patrick McCormack, County Attorney
 Natasha McGee, Deputy Clerk

Also present: Florida Congressmen Michael Waltz and John Rutherford

(03/31/20 - 1 - 9:00 a.m.)
CALL TO ORDER

Smith called the meeting to order. He read a meeting script that included information on remote public participation and meeting materials, *Exhibit A*.

(9:03 a.m.) McCormack presented the proposed Agenda for the record, *Exhibit B*.

(03/31/20 - 1 - 9:05 a.m.)
ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll, and all Board members were present, with Blocker and Dean participating remotely.

(03/31/20 - 1 - 9:06 a.m.)
INVOCATION

Hunter S. Conrad, County Administrator, gave the invocation.

(03/31/20 - 1 - 9:06 a.m.)
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Johns led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(03/31/20 - 1 - 9:07 a.m.)
LEGISLATION UPDATES FROM CONGRESSMEN WALTZ AND RUTHERFORD

Congressman Waltz, presented details of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, including details on individual economic relief rebates, the small business protection program, suspension of required minimum distributions from retirement accounts for

2020, early retirement account withdrawals, and Florida emergency aid. He also announced a telephonic townhall meeting on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 3:30 p.m.

(9:18 a.m.) Congressman John Rutherford presented details of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) enacted under the CARES Act. He also spoke on flattening the Florida COVID-19 (Coronavirus) curve and urged the public to stay home.

(03/31/20 - 2 - 9:29 a.m.)

1. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Hunter S. Conrad, County Administrator, presented an update on St. Johns County's response to COVID-19. He reviewed St. Johns County COVID-19 statistics, including testing statistics; hospital capacity; accessible COVID-19 test collection sites; Governors Executive Orders No. 20-86 and 20-87; and the current and anticipated actions/protective measures, including closures, for our local government, schools, and hospital.

Conrad stated that post-COVID-19 response teams would be created.

Conrad highlighted the internal cost containment plan: 1) reduction to the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) contribution; 2) month-to-month reduction to the employer insurance contribution; 3) staffing repurposing projects; and 4) proactive measures regarding the decline of sales and tourism taxes. Discussion ensued on visitor responsibilities, and minimizing and/or deferring fees, taxes, or expenses that are incurred by residents or business owners.

(9:45 a.m.) Dr. Dawn Allicock, Director of the St. Johns County Health Department, provided a COVID-19 status update. She urged the public to stay informed by monitoring COVID-19 at flhealth.gov or by calling the Department of Health at 1-866-779-6121. Discussion ensued on COVID-19 testing, with Allicock recommending floridahealthcovid19.gov as a data source; opening a St. Johns County COVID-19 shelter; quarantine enforcement of out-of-state residents, including the Governor's Executive Order No. 20-82, Individuals Traveling to Florida; the Governor's Executive Order No. 20-87, suspension of vacation rentals of less than 30 days; and the transmission of COVID-19 regarding higher temperature and humidity.

(10:07 a.m.) Linda Stoughton, Director of Emergency Management, provided an update on the Emergency Operations Center's (EOC) response to COVID-19. She spoke on personal protective equipment resources and information management. She provided the following contact numbers: 1) St. Johns County Department of Health, 904-209-3250, and 2) EOC, 904-824-5550; and a severe weather alert for the afternoon of March 31, 2020. Additionally, she placed a community request for personal protective equipment.

Public Comment

(10:13 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, questioned whether the County had a temporary hospital plan; whether the local homeless population were being tested, and whether there was special shelter in place for the homeless population. Additionally, he requested an official reason for the absence of Commissioners Blocker and Dean. (10:35 a.m.) Subsequently, McCormack stated that Blocker and Dean were self-quarantined.

(10:16 a.m.) Maggie Kostka, 570 A1A Beach Boulevard, spoke on her concerns with out-of-state residents regarding self-isolation and self-quarantine.

(10:18 a.m.) Bill DeFeo, 113 9th Street, questioned the following: 1) how often the commissioners were meeting with the EOC; 2) available ventilators; and 3) hospital capacity. He addressed his concerns regarding out-of-state resident transmission's.

Additionally, he requested Board consideration for limited public access to St. Johns County beaches; and for St. Johns County press conferences.

(10:21 a.m.) Howard McGaffney, 162 South Prairie Lakes Drive, District Manager for Julington Creek Plantation Community Development District (CDD), informed the Board that the CDD could potentially be used by the EOC or County for a staging area. Additionally, he spoke on mutual aid regarding donations by the CDD.

(10:24 a.m.) Guy Rasch, 2803 South Ponte Vedra Boulevard, spoke on his concerns with individual property rights regarding beach access.

(10:27 a.m.) Margaret England, 425 Ocean Drive, spoke in support of the beach parking and public beach access closures.

(10:29 a.m.) Linda Bayles, 2 1st Lane, spoke in opposition of the beach closures and Emergency Order No. 2020-2, suspending occupancy and bookings of vacation rentals, in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order No. 2020-87.

(10:31 a.m.) Paul Wilkson, 2539 South Ponte Vedra Boulevard, referenced Beach Code 2008, Section 1, for the record, and spoke on his concerns with individual property rights regarding beach access.

(10:45 a.m.) Subsequently, Kealey West, 217 North Churchill Drive, via remote participation, questioned the cost of testing, and public participation for Regular Agenda Items on the April 7, 2020, Regular BCC meeting Agenda.

Response to Public Comment Questions

(10:35 a.m.) Conrad and Stoughton spoke on the temporary hospital plan. Conrad responded to the beach closure questions and concerns. Stoughton responded to how often the commissioners were meeting with the EOC. Allicock provided the definitions of self-isolation and self-quarantine. Barry Fox, Chief of Police, St. Augustine Police Department, responded to the questions regarding the local homeless population. Discussion ensued on self-isolation and St. Johns County press conferences.

(03/31/20 - 3 - 10:52 a.m.)

2. EXTENSION OF LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY

Patrick McCormack, County Attorney, presented the details of the extension. He recommended an extension for a seven-day period.

(10:54 a.m.) **Motion by Waldron, seconded by Johns, carried 5/0, via roll call vote, to approve Emergency Proclamation No. 2020-4, to extend the local state of emergency.**

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION NO. 2020-4

A PROCLAMATION EXTENDING THE DECLARATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY AS PROVIDED BY CHAPTER 252, PART I, FLORIDA STATUTES AND BY ST. JOHNS COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 2019-40

(03/31/20 - 4 - 10:55 a.m.)

3. AUTHORIZE CONTRACTOR LICENSES PROCEDURE

Patrick McCormack, County Attorney, presented details of the request. He stated that the approval of the proclamation would allow the Contractor Review Board (CRB) to approve licenses without requiring contractor's to personally appear prior to approval.

(10:57 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, expressed his appreciation to Congressman Rutherford and Conrad for their presentations.

(10:58 a.m.) **Motion by Waldron, seconded by Johns, carried 5/0, via roll call vote, to approve Emergency Proclamation No. 2020-5, waiving certain procedures and formalities pertaining to the review and approval of authorized contractor licenses pursuant to Ordinance No. 2002-48.**

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION NO. 2020-5

**A PROCLAMATION WAIVING CERTAIN PROCEDURES
AND FORMALITIES PERTAINING TO THE REVIEW AND
APPROVAL OF AUTHORIZED CONTRACTOR LICENSES
PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE NO. 2002-48**

(03/31/20 - 4 - 11:00 a.m.)

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Patrick McCormack, County Attorney, on behalf of Dennis Hollingsworth, St. Johns County Tax Collector, read an informational statement for the record, *Exhibit A*. The statement included information on the following: 1) an extension on 2019 property tax payments, 2) anticipated revenues for the current budgets based on the St. Johns County certified tax toll, 3) an extension on Tourist Development Tax, 4) an extension on driver license and identification cards with expiration dates of March 16 - April 15, 2020, 5) an extension on the Department of Homeland Security's real ID enforcement for driver license and identification cards, 6) branch office closures and operation status, 7) suspension of concealed weapon applications and renewals, and 8) the cancellation of road tests.

(11:02 a.m.) Conrad, on behalf of Blocker, stated that Blocker appeared remotely, due to self-isolation.

Conrad, on behalf of Dean, requested Board discussion on the postponement of April 7, 2020, BCC regular meeting land use hearings, due to communication difficulties. Discussion ensued. Additional comments were provided by Michael Ryan, Communications Director; and Wylie Thibault, MIS Director, on improving the communication difficulties for future meetings.

(11:16 a.m.) Guy Rasch, 2803 South Ponte Vedra Boulevard, stated that three members of the public were unsuccessful with participating remotely for the March 31, 2020, BCC special meeting.

(11:18 a.m.) **Motion by Waldron, seconded by Johns, carried 5/0, via roll call vote, to remove quasi-judicial land use items from the agenda, until communication difficulties were worked out.**

(11:18 a.m.) McCormack provided a list of land use items that would be removed on the April 7, 2020, regular meeting agenda: 1) Regular Agenda Item 1 - PLNAPPL 2020-02 and ARC APPEAL 2020-01, Gate C-Store/Gas Station and Carwash, 2) Regular Agenda Item 2 - REZ 2019-16, Stratton Boulevard Rezoning, 3) Regular Agenda Item 3 - PUD2019-14,

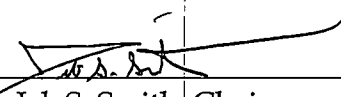
Benchip Commercial, 4) Regular Agenda Item 4 - PUD 2019-13, Fountains North, 5) Regular Agenda Item 5 - REZ 2019-18, Stokes Industrial, 6) Regular Agenda Item 11 - LMA 2019-05, County Landmark Application, and 7) Regular Agenda Item 12 - LMA 2019-06, County Landmark Application - Hastings Hotel.

(03/31/20 - 5 - 11:22 a.m.)
ADJOURN

With there being no further business to come before the Board, Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:22 a.m.

Approved _____ May 5 _____, 2020

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By:  _____
Jeb S. Smith, Chair

ATTEST: BRANDON PATTY, CLERK

By:  _____
Deputy Clerk

