

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
APRIL 21, 2020
8:30 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 Wednesday, April 16, 2020, via media, website, and social media postings.

Present: Jeb S. Smith, 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
 Crystal Smith, Deputy Clerk

Also present: Joy Andrews, Assistant County Administrator

(04/21/20 - 1 - 8:30 a.m.)
CALL TO ORDER

Smith called the meeting to order. He made opening comments regarding remote public participation.

(04/21/20 - 1 - 8:31 a.m.)
ROLL CALL

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

(04/21/20 - 1 - 8:33 a.m.)
INVOCATION

Chaplin Kelly Kemp, St. Johns County Sherriff's Office, gave the invocation.

(04/21/20 - 1 - 8:34 a.m.)
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(04/21/20 - 1 - 8:36 a.m.)
1. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Hunter S. Conrad, County Administrator, provided an update on St. Johns County's response to COVID-19, and referenced a copy of the dashboard from the Florida Department of Health's website, *Exhibit A*. He stated that the Resident Assistance Hotline was launched and provided the phone number, 904-209-1250; and provided the Business Assistance Hotline phone number, 904-209-6050. He presented information on a Community Development Block Grant Funded Small Business Recovery Program, via

PowerPoint. Additionally, he stated there would be an update on fee waivers at the next scheduled meeting.

(8:48 a.m.) Blocker commended Conrad and staff on their hard work and verified that the Small Business Recovery Program funding would not come from St. Johns County taxpayers. Johns questioned if staff had spoken with the Chamber or the Economic Development Council to determine what the County's needs looked like. Conrad stated he had spoken with the President of the Chamber to discuss details of the program. Additionally, he explained the program would be based on the number of employees, not just the employer, and explained the program would not be available for all businesses. Johns requested staff to bring back information that would show the amount of businesses that would qualify for the program. Discussion continued after public comment.

(8:57 a.m.) Dr. Dawn Allicock, Medical Director of the St. Johns County Health Department, provided a COVID-19 update. She reviewed testing statistics; the Florida COVID-19 Data Surveillance Dashboard; hospitalization rates; mortality rates; transmission statistics; mitigation strategies (social distancing); immunity to the virus; and St. Johns County's monitoring and contact tracing procedures.

(9:02 a.m.) Johns questioned the testing requirements for health and safety responders, who were frequently in contact with others, to prevent the spread of the virus; and if there were multiple strains of the virus. Dr. Allicock explained it was currently being studied and explained COVID-19 was not similar to the flu; therefore, would not result in various strains.

(9:07 a.m.) Linda Stoughton, Emergency Management Director, provided an update on the Emergency Operations Center's (EOC) response to COVID-19. She reported an improvement in the distribution of medical supplies; the distribution and need for shelf-stable meals; and the EOC's response planning, including the daily COVID-19 Situation Report.

(9:12 a.m.) Tom Reynold, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke on his concerns with state representatives Stevenson, Renner, and Huston not providing updates on COVID-19 and unemployment; and questioned who in St. Johns County was on the State's task force. He spoke on his concerns with testing statistics, including testing of the homeless population; tests that were being provided from China; and requested that the beaches be open 24/7.

(9:15 a.m.) Peter Busichio, 880 Ocean Palm Way, spoke on his concerns with St. Johns County Sherriff's Office patrolling the beaches at 11:30 a.m., and requested that beaches open 24/7.

(9:18 a.m.) Maggie Coska, 570 A1A Beach Blvd., commended the community, St. Augustine Beach law enforcement, health officials, Chief Hardwick and St. Johns County's Beach Police Department, and the commissioners and their staff for their efforts. She requested that the beaches be open additional hours.

(9:20 a.m.) Mark Heeley, 1578 Drury Court, participating remotely, spoke on a petition that was submitted requesting that the County be reopened, considering evidence that showed a decrease in [virus] cases in the county.

(9:23 a.m.) Luis Miguel, 175 Great Harbor Way, Ponte Vedra Beach, participating remotely, spoke on the partial reopening of the beaches and requested that they be opened for 24/7 access. He spoke on the focus of immunity regarding the virus and

individuals with underlying health issues, including the elderly and with weakened immune systems.

(9:27 a.m.) John Reardon, 3560 C.R. 214, participating remotely, spoke on reopening the County and recommended opening the beach for extended hours.

(9:32 a.m.) Discussion resumed on the Community Development Block Grant Funding for the Small Business Recovery Program, including when funding would be available and the different funding options. Smith summarized that all Board members were in support of moving forward with the funding grant.

(9:38 a.m.) Motion by Johns, seconded by Waldron, carried 5/0, via roll call vote, with Dean and Blocker participating remotely, to authorize the County Administrator to move forward with the Community Development Block Grant Funded Small Business Recovery Program.

(9:39 a.m.) Waldron clarified that the County had not closed any businesses; that decision was made at the state level. McCormack stated that Executive Order 2020-91, issued by the governor, had identified essential services and essential activities.

(04/21/20 - 3 - 9:39 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.

(9:41 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke in support of the extension and requested amending that the beaches be opened 24/7.

(9:43 a.m.) Motion by Johns, seconded by Waldron, carried 5/0, via roll call vote, with Blocker and Dean participating remotely, to approve Emergency Proclamation 2020-9, to extend the local state of emergency.

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION NO. 2020-9

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

(04/21/20 - 3 - 9:44 a.m.)

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

McCormack provided details on the need for an additional emergency proclamation that would address the erosion of structures near 407 to 431 Porpoise Point Drive.

(9:46 a.m.) Dwayne Kent, Director of Public Works, provided an update on the erosion of Porpoise Point, and referenced an aerial map that showed the impacted areas, *Exhibit A*.

(9:49 a.m.) Dean stated he received a phone call from a homeowner regarding the issue. Conrad stated staff had observed the areas and referenced photos of the impacts to 413 Porpoise Point Drive, *Exhibit B*.

(9:51 a.m.) McCormack questioned Kent if it was his understanding that severe weather had caused the damage to the structures; and verified that there was erosion impacts from 407 to 431 Porpoise Point Drive. Kent responded. McCormack verified that both Dean and Blocker received a copy of the proposed proclamation.

(9:55 a.m.) Motion by Dean, seconded by Johns, carried 5/0, via roll call vote, with Dean and Blocker participating remotely, to approve Emergency Proclamation 2020-10, to declare a state of emergency in certain coastal areas.

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION NO. 2020-10

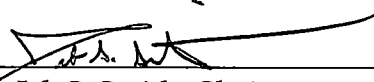
A PROCLAMATION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN CERTAIN COASTAL AREAS

(04/21/20 - 4 - 9:57 a.m.)
ADJOURN

With there being no further business to come before the Board, Smith adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.m.

Approved _____ May 19 _____, 2020

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Jeb S. Smith, Chair

ATTEST: BRANDON PATTY, CLERK

By: 
Deputy Clerk

