

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DECEMBER 29, 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.

Notice of a special meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, was communicated on December 22, 2020, via media, website, and social media postings.

Present: Jeremiah R. Blocker, District 4, Chair
Henry Dean, District 5, Vice Chair
Christian Whitehurst, District 1
Jeb S. Smith, District 2
Paul M. Waldron, District 3
Hunter S. Conrad, County Administrator
Patrick McCormack, County Attorney
Pam Halterman, Deputy Clerk

Also present: Brad Bradley, Deputy County Administrator Chief of Staff; Joy Andrews, Deputy County Administrator of Strategic Affairs

Absent: None

(12/29/20 - 1 - 8:30 a.m.)
CALL TO ORDER

Blocker called the meeting to order. He provided opening comments regarding remote public participation.

(12/29/20 - 1 - 8:32 a.m.)
ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll, and all Board members were present.

(12/29/20 - 1 - 8:32 a.m.)
INVOCATION

Smith led the invocation.

(12/29/20 - 1 - 8:33 a.m.)
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Whitehurst led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(12/29/20 - 1 - 8:33 a.m.)
1. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Joseph Giammanco, St. Johns County Emergency Management Interim Director, reported on Flagler Hospital's Covid-19 testing statistics in the county and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) availability in St. Johns County. Discussion ensued regarding vaccines, phone calls, Fire Rescue, staff and the Department of Health vaccine roll-out program.

(8:46 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke about public ride-share operators, tourist town, mask mandate and repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on the county.

(12/29/20 - 2 - 8:49 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.

(8:49 a.m.) **Motion by Waldon, seconded by Whitehurst, carried 5/0, to adopt St. Johns County Emergency Proclamation 2020-49, extending the local state of emergency for an additional seven-day period.**

Yea: Blocker, Dean, Whitehurst, Smith and Waldron

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION NO. 2020-49

**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**

(12/29/20 - 2 - 8:50 a.m.)

3. FLORIDA HUMANITIES COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANT APPLICATION
REQUEST

Michael Ryan, Director of Communications, presented details of the request, via PowerPoint. He stated that the BCC asked staff for options for the 200th Anniversary celebration to be held July 21, 2021, which would include such elements as an educational symposium, local artists, a capsule buried above ground for visitors, etc. He explained that he was before the BCC to request a \$5,000 one-to-one funding match for the anniversary celebration, which had been previously allocated in the budget by the BCC. He spoke on internal and outside community efforts with the project. He noted that plans were in development stages for a dedication logo and website.

Whitehurst questioned whether the request amount of fund would be enough and voiced that he did not want to spend tax dollars for the anniversary event. Ryan offered details of the previous direction by the board on the 200th Anniversary celebration and noted that he was requesting to expand the scope in which the board had approved regarding efforts to find outside community funding partnership. McCormack explained that the county must consider business conflicts when utilizing outside partnerships (contributions), in which Dean agreed.

Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, voiced that \$5,000 funding should be increased and also should involve a tourism element in the 200th Anniversary celebration. He suggested that the county did not plan far enough ahead, nor have they emphasized the importance of the 200th Anniversary celebration.

(9:04 a.m.) **Motion by Dean, seconded by Smith, carried 5/0, to adopt Resolution No. 2020-499, authorizing the county administrator, or his designee, to submit and execute an application for a Florida Humanities Council, Community Project Grant; if awarded, authorizing the county administrator, or his designee, to execute the grant agreement on behalf of the County; if awarded, recognizing the grant award, not to exceed \$5,000 as unanticipated revenue; and approving allocation of the funds for use toward the costs of the St. Johns County 200th Anniversary Celebration.**

Yea: Blocker, Dean, Whitehurst, Smith and Waldron

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-499

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, OR DESIGNEE, TO SUBMIT AND EXECUTE AN APPLICATION TO THE FLORIDA HUMANITIES COUNCIL FOR A COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANT ON BEHALF OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA; IF AWARDED, AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET TO RECEIVE UNANTICIPATED REVENUE, NOT TO EXCEED \$5,000; AND AUTHORIZING THE GRANT'S APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE ST. JOHNS COUNTY 200TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION.

(12/29/20 - 3 - 9:05 a.m.)

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Whitehurst asked the board to consider the question he had raised at the last meeting, which was to delegate the responsibility to the Chairman for the Emergency Proclamation extensions.

(9:06 a.m.) **Motion by Whitehurst, seconded by Smith, approved 5/0, to approve allowing the Chair to extend the emergency order every seven days.** McCormack explained that under the existing ordinance, the Chair had the first authority to extend the emergency order, then the Vice-Chair, and finally the County Administrator. He added that if all persons noted were not available then the Director of Emergency Management would have the responsibility of the extensions. He said the language on the existing ordinance could be changed by board direction.

(9:08 a.m.) Waldon questioned whether items such as No. 4 on the special agenda would be considered time sensitive matters. Conrad affirmed that items placed on a special agenda would be time sensitive. Waldron voiced concern regarding items being placed on the special meeting agenda that could possibly be heard at a regular meeting. After an inquiry by Whitehurst, Blocker said he would recommend changing ordinance language for emergency declarations only. Whitehurst asked if the language change would prevent the BCC from holding weekly special meetings. Smith suggested that the intent of the ordinance was never to deal with a week to week meeting, which has occurred because of the pandemic. Discussion ensued regarding the emergency extensions and responsibility of the County Administrator with the current pandemic.

(9:17 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke about the public and citizens relying on the Board to make decisions and not delegate the emergency extensions to the county administrator. He asked the board to vote down the motion.

(9:19 a.m.) McCormack recommended that any change to the language as well as the advertisement could be set for the January 19th, 2021 meeting. Blocker voiced that he was willing to review new language to help retain the level of public participation. In reply to a question, Ryan affirmed that the county had logistics for public remote participation.

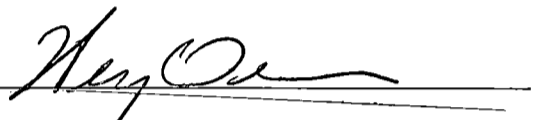
(9:23 a.m.) Blocker thanked those who attended the meeting and offered holiday greetings to all.

(12/29/20 - 4 - 9:24 a.m.)
ADJOURN

With there being no further business to come before the Board, Blocker adjourned the meeting at 9:24 a.m.

Approved _____ January 19 _____, 2021

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Henry Dean, Vice Chairman

ATTEST: BRANDON J. PATTY,
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER

By: 
Deputy Clerk

