

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
JANUARY 12, 2021
7:30 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 January 7, 2021, 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
Sindy Wiseman, Deputy Clerk

Also present: Brad Bradley, Deputy County Administrator Chief of Staff; Joy Andrews, Deputy County Administrator of Strategic Affairs; and Rebecca Lavie, Senior Assistant County Attorney

(01/12/21 - 1 - 7:30 a.m.)
CALL TO ORDER

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

(01/12/21 - 1 - 7:31 a.m.)
ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll, Commissioners Smith, Dean, and Waldron were present. Commissioner's Blocker and Whitehurst participated remotely.

(01/12/21 - 1 - 7:32 a.m.)
INVOCATION

Smith led the invocation.

(01/12/21 - 1 - 7:32 a.m.)
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Conrad led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(01/12/21 - 1 - 7:33 a.m.)
1. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Hunter Conrad, County Administrator, provided an update on the vaccine distribution and the County's ability to administer more vaccines. Additionally, he spoke on the vaccines not being limited to county residents; the issues with using a waiting-list system; creating a workable registration system; and the lack of resources.

(7:42 a.m.) Dean questioned the assignment of distribution for the vaccine for Florida. Joseph Giammanco, Director of Emergency Management, spoke on the vaccine allocations. Dr. Dawn Allicock, Medical Director of the St. Johns County Health Department, said she had no additional information.

(7:46 a.m.) Whitehurst questioned whether there was anything that the Board could do to advocate for more vaccines and whether residents could go to other counties to receive the vaccine. Conrad stated that sending a letter to the Governor regarding the ability to administer more vaccines would support staff's efforts. McCormack spoke on the legal basis for restricting vaccines to specific counties.

Whitehurst questioned whether phone numbers were secured for scheduling the second dose of the vaccine. Discussion ensued on scheduling for second doses, the strain on staff resources working from a waiting list, and insufficient contact information for scheduling the second dose.

(7:57 a.m.) Waldron questioned where Flagler Hospital received their vaccines allocations and whether the staff had offered to support the hospital in administering the vaccine, if they could get more doses. Conrad responded.

(7:59 a.m.) Motion by Dean, seconded by Waldron, carried 5/0, to send a letter to Governor DeSantis, for additional doses for St. Johns County.

Yea: Smith, Waldron, Dean, Whitehurst, and Blocker

Nay: None

(8:01 a.m.) Blocker stated that he had spoken to staff regarding a letter to the Governor.

(8:06 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, spoke in support of sending a letter. Additionally, she said that Governor DeSantis and the Florida Health Department should be made aware of the violation of federal law by the mayor of Duval County.

(8:09 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, voiced his concerns with the lack of vaccines for St. Johns County and suggested that the letter be stern.

(8:12 a.m.) Discussion ensued on the criteria for the letter.

(8:13 a.m.) Blocker questioned the status of the volunteer program and suggested over communicating to the public, regarding COVID-19 related information. Conrad responded that they were over communicating as much as possible. Giammanco spoke on the volunteer program.

(8:18 a.m.) Dean spoke on the number of low wage residents without health insurance and requested that the Board to consider reinstating the testing program. *Consensus was given to revisit the testing program at the January 19, 2021, BCC meeting.*

(8:22 a.m.) Whitehurst questioned whether staff had the resources to sustain vaccination sites, as well as, free testing sites. Conrad responded on available resources and funding.

(8:25 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke on using CARES Act funding for all COVID-19 related items.

(8:27 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, spoke on a possible available testing site.

(8:28 a.m.) Conrad spoke on addressing the testing for the non-insured residents at the January 19, 2021, BCC meeting.

(8:28 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, requested to rescind the mask requirement in County facilities and requested the number of County employees that tested positive for COVID-19. She also provided the following information, 1) the address for the Solomon Calhoun Center was 1300 Duval Street, 2) the phone number for the Florida Department of Health was 866-779-6121, 3) the phone number for Governor DeSantis was 850-488-7146, and 4) noted that WOKV in Jacksonville, stated that as of January 11, 2021, there were no vaccines for the County. Additionally, she provided copies of the requirements for the COVID-19 vaccines, *Exhibit A*.

(01/12/21 - 3 - 8:32 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.

(8:34 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, spoke on extending the emergency proclamation for two weeks.

(8:35 a.m.) **Motion by Waldron, seconded by Whitehurst, carried 5/0, to adopt St. Johns County Emergency Proclamation No. 2021-2, extending the local state of emergency for an additional seven-day period.**

Yea: Smith, Waldron, Dean, Whitehurst, and Blocker

Nay: None

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION NO. 2021-2

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

(01/12/21 - 3 - 8:35 a.m.)

3. AMENDMENT TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

Rebecca Lavie, Senior Assistant County Attorney, provided the details of the proposed amendment, including the proposed changes.

(8:37 a.m.) *Consensus was given to acknowledge January 12, 2021, as the first meeting and schedule the second meeting for the January 19, 2021, BCC meeting.*

(8:38 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke in opposition to the amendment, stating that an emergency extension should be decided by a complete Board.

(01/12/21 - 3 - 8:40 a.m.)

4. US DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM. ON DECEMBER 21, 2020, CONGRESS APPROVED A \$2.3 TRILLION LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE, INCLUDING A \$25 BILLION EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, AUTHORIZED UNDER THE YEAR-END COVID-19 RELIEF AND OMNIBUS SPENDING PACKAGE. UNDER THE LEGISLATION, COUNTIES WITH POPULATIONS ABOVE 200,000 RESIDENTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE DIRECT PAYMENTS FROM THE U.S. TREASURY. PER THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES, THE CURRENT APPROPRIATION ESTIMATE FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY TOTALS \$7,929,906

Joseph Cone, Assistant Director of Health and Human Services, provided the details of the grant program, via PowerPoint, and noted that all payments would be made directly to the utility companies or landlords.

(8:43 a.m.) Whitehurst questioned how many St. Johns County applicants would be considered "at risk", whether the relief had to be directly COVID-19 related, and the process to determine whether it was COVID-19 related. Cone responded.

(8:46 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke in support of the request.

(8:48 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, voiced her concerns with the loopholes in the program. Additionally, she spoke in opposition of moving the general public comment to the end of the regular BCC meetings.

(8:52 a.m.) Smith questioned whether Cone had the time and staff to administer the program. Cone stated that the needs and concerns were being evaluated.

(8:52 a.m.) Motion by Dean, seconded by Waldron, carried 4/1, to adopt Resolution 2021-1, approving and authorizing the county administrator, or his designee, to submit a completed application through US Department of the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program; and to recognize and appropriate within the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.

Yea: Smith, Waldron, Dean, and Blocker

Nay: Whitehurst

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-1

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, OR DESIGNEE, TO SUBMIT A COMPLETED APPLICATION THROUGH THE US DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM; AND TO RECOGNIZE AND APPROPRIATE WITHIN THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET

(01/12/21 - 4 - 8:53 a.m.)

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

McCormack stated that staff would provide a Summerhaven update on the February 2, 2021, agenda.

(8:54 a.m.) Whitehurst spoke on the issues associated with administering the initial vaccine doses and motioned to pass a vote of no confidence toward Dr. Allicock.

(8:55 a.m.) Motion by Whitehurst, seconded by Smith, failed 1/4, to issue a vote of no confidence on Dr. Allicock.

Yea: Whitehurst

Nay: Smith, Waldron, Dean, and Blocker

(8:55 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke in support of the request to issue a vote of no confidence on Dr. Allicock.

(8:57 a.m.) Ed Slavin, P. O. Box 3084, suggested to table the request until the January 19, 2021, BCC meeting; and spoke on the violation of due process.

(9:00 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, spoke in opposition of the request to issue a vote of no confidence on Dr. Allicock.

(9:03 a.m.) Dean stated that he would vote no on the request and suggested moving it to January 19, 2021, to give Dr. Allicock a chance to respond.

(9:05 a.m.) Whitehurst provided the reasons for his motion. Discussion ensued on the responsibilities of the Department of Health and the lack of planning prior to receiving the COVID-19 vaccines.

General Public Comment:

(9:10 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, voiced her concern with the change in time of the emergency meetings.

(9:13 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 50 Brigantine Court, spoke on the actions of the people in Washington, D.C., and locally.

(9:16 a.m.) Ed Slavin, P.O. Box 3084, concurred with Reynolds and was pleased with the failure of the vote of no confidence on Dr. Allicock.

(9:19 a.m.) Teresa Doyle, thanked staff for being available on New Year's Day for phone calls regarding COVID-19 vaccines.

(01/12/21 - 5 - 9:22 a.m.)
ADJOURN

With there being no further business to come before the Board, Blocker adjourned the meeting at 9:22 a.m.

Approved _____ February 2 _____, 2021

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: Jeremiah R. Blocker
Jeremiah R. Blocker, Chair

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

By: Pam Halterman
Deputy Clerk

