

Liberty County, FL

Liberty County Board of County Commissioners

Minutes

Thursday, January 9, 2025 at 6:00 pm

**AGENDAS ARE POSTED ON THE BOARD'S WEBSITE AT
WWW.LIBERTYCOUNTYFL.ORG; ATTACHMENTS ARE PROVIDED TO
THE BOARD MEMBERS ONLY AND ARE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC
UPON REQUEST.**

Meeting Location

Liberty County Courthouse - 10818 NW SR 20; Bristol, Florida 32321

Zoom link and Call in numbers

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83442415227?pwd=3CgPVX16Q9BY67Fh6esX776uBmqISO.1>

Meeting ID: 834 4241 5227

Passcode: 432189

Dial by your phone: (305) 224-1968

1. Call to Order

Minutes:

- Chairman Dewayne Branch called the meeting to order in person and via zoom at 6:00 P.M. Present at the meeting were Commissioners Hannah Causseaux, Jim Johnson, Doyle Brown, Derrick Arnold, County Attorney Ken Hosford, Clerk Jace Ford, Finance Officer & HR Director Shaula Jerkins, and Deputy Clerk Jessica Conyers.

2. Invocation

Minutes:

- Invocation led by Attorney Hosford.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes:

- Pledge of Allegiance led by Sheriff Arnold.

4. Audience Concerns

Minutes:

- Chairman Branch advised that there are audience concerns from Rachel Bryant, Fran Davis, and Mike Stewart.

5. Awards and Recognitions

Minutes:

- There were no awards and recognitions.

COUNTY DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Monthly Department Briefing

- Brian Eddins – Fire Control Coordinator
 - ** Brian had no business to discuss.
 - ** Commissioner Branch asked for an update on Sumatra.
 - ** Brian advised that things are going well, he has people back in place and they are meeting once a month. They are redoing bilaws. He also advised that he like to talk to the Board about putting him over the Fire Departments. It is not on this agenda. He will get with Clerk Ford about being on the agenda for the February meeting.
- Marie Arick – Extension Director
 - ** Marie advised that they will be closed tomorrow. They are going to Panama City for a 4H event Friday and Saturday.
- Tommy Duggar Jr – Recreation Director
 - ** Tommy thanked the Sheriff's Department for catching the individual who tried to set fire to the Hosford Park.
 - ** Next week they will start leveling land.
 - ** Commissioner Branch asked if cameras are at parks.
 - ** Tommy advised that Sherriff Arnold is in the process of speaking with someone to get them to come look at parks and tell them how much it would be.
- Melissa Peddie – Ambulance Director
 - ** Melissa was not present at meeting.
- Cole Maloy – Solid Waste Director
 - ** Cole had no business to discuss.
- Boo Bryant – Road and Bridge Superintendent
 - Boo had no business to discuss.
- Monica Welles – Transit Director
 - ** Monica had no business to discuss.
- Katie Kellett – Housing Director
 - ** Katie had no business to discuss.
- Ben Guthrie – Emergency Management Director
 - ** Ben is on the agenda under item number 18.
- Teresa Stossel – Grants and Special Projects Coordinator
 - ** Teresa had no business to discuss.

ACTION ITEMS

6. Motion to Amend Agenda

Minutes:

- Motion to amend the agenda to add Rachel Bryant, Fran Davis, Mike Stewart to discuss audience concerns and Ben Guthrie to address the Board to discuss DEP Agreement Modification made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Causseaux, motion carried.

7. Adoption of the Agenda

Minutes:

- Motion to adopt the agenda as amended made by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Causseaux, motion carried.

8. Motion to Approve Board Minutes

Minutes:

- Motion to approve Board minutes made by Commissioner Arnold, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion carried.

9. Motion for the Clerk to pay the bills

Minutes:

- Motion for the Clerk to pay the bills made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold, motion carried.
- December 03, 2024 - January 01, 2025

Warrant List: Warrant Numbers: General 33560 - 33690 Ship 5104 - 5107 HHRP - Account Closed Bank EFT Payments: December 03, 2024 - January 01, 2025

10. Letters of Support

Minutes:

- There were no letters of support.
- Chairman Branch advised that the Board would address audience concerns.
- Rachel Bryant addressed the Board to discuss Health Department storage facility. There is a retention pond near it, and they would like to put up a fence. They have quotes and funds; they just need Board approval.
- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold, motion carried.
- Rachel advised that the Chamber of Commerce will be attending the Rural Day at the Capital on March 20 from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM. They would like to Commissioners to attend and participate. The Chamber will have a booth representing Liberty County. She also asked the Board to make donations in the future for handouts at Rural Days.
- Rachel advised that the Chamber of Commerce annual Banquet will be on April 10, 2025. They have reserved the Civic Center for April 9-10 and is asking the Board to waive fees.
- Motion to waive Civic Center fees made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by

Commissioner Brown, motion carried.

- Fran Davis addressed the Board to discuss Estiffanulga and Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition. She is the Liberty County Representative to the Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition; Scott Phillips was the second was the second person representing Liberty County. Since he is no longer on the Board, that second person needs to be identified.
- Motion to appoint Commissioner Arnold made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Causseaux, motion carried.
- The Board discussed erosion and water flow at Estiffanulga.
- Fran advised that she is a representative from Liberty County to the Bay County Library Board and they meet six times yearly.
- Fran also gave an update on the sign that the community has put up in Estiffanulga.
- Fran discussed the settling pond at the boat landing. She is worried about the pond not being fenced.
- Noah advised that is part of the DEP requirement for a possible consent order. This was promised to be done twenty years ago and paved a parking lot, so the sand filter is for catching the runoff from the asphalt and goes back into the river. He didn't know about it being clogged but they will go take a look at it.
- Mike Stewart addressed the Board to discuss Legislative list of needs and property in Liberty County. He spoke on new ways to bring growth, jobs, and funding into the county.
- Mike also spoke about Florida Great Northwest Organization. This is an organization that you join, pay a fee of around \$2,500.00 and is asking that the Board pay either some or all of the fee. He also asked to have a Workshop to discuss this and some other items that the Chamber has.
- Ben addressed the Board to discuss the DEP agreement. This is Resilient Florida Grant that was received from DEP and it had Liberty County and the City of Bristol as one entity. This is separating the two out and in order to do that, the contract will need to be amended.
- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Causseaux, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion carried.

11. Human Resource Management

Minutes:

- Shaula Jerkins addressed the Board to discuss Human Resources. There is one termination of Joshua Biggs with the Ambulance Department for his inactivity over 6 months per request by Melissa Peddie with an effective date of 12/31/2024. There is one retirement of Coleen "Leida" Shiver with an effective date of 12/20/2024.
- Motion to approve termination made by Commissioner Causseaux, seconded by Commissioner Brown, motion carried.

12. Next month meeting schedule

Minutes:

- There will be a Liberty County Legislative Delegation Meeting on January 29, 2025, at 11:00 AM at the Courthouse.
- Clerk Ford asked if the Board would like to have a Super Council meeting before the

meeting on January 29.

- The Board advised that the jail is the main focus and if the City of Bristol and the School Board would be willing to use their request to ask for money for the jail then they would like to have a Super Council Meeting.
- Clerk Ford will have discussions with Superintendent Peddie and the City of Bristol to see if they would be willing to use requests for the jail complex.

13. Bid Awards

Minutes:

- Tommy and Noah addressed the Board to discuss Bid Awards. This is for the ballfield lighting repair at the Veterans Park to furnish and install new wiring with conduit to 6 light poles along outside of concrete pole and to install control box at the bottom of each pole. There is one bid that was recieved Culpepper in the amount of \$38,215.20.
- Tommy advised that they are going to do away with the control boxes on the outside so this will cut around \$1,200.00. They are still having a problem with bats and asked for the lights to be fixed. There is a person coming to give quotes on LED lights.
- Noah advised that the BID was \$38,215.20 and they will take away \$1,207.20 for those control boxes.
- Tommy advised that there will be a control box at the bottom of each pipe when they dig it up. He advised that the money is not in the Recreation budget to do this project.
- Clerk Ford advised that the Board would need to pull money from Maintenance of other Buildings to pay for this project.
- Motion to approve bid to Culpepper made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Brown.
- The Board discussed wiring on the poles.
- Noah advised that he has a guy that would be willing to stop by and give thoughts on wiring.
- Commissioner Branch discussed the budget.
- Motion carried.

14. Calhoun Correctional Institution to present check to Board

Minutes:

- Clerk Ford advised that Calhoun CI was not present at the meeting due to a scheduling conflict. They would like to present at next month's meeting.
- Motion to table discussion to next month's meeting made by Commissioner Causseaux, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion carried.

15. Board to designate persons for county title and registrations

Minutes:

- Shaula advised that this is to request permission from the Board for Clerk Ford and herself to make transactions with the Tax Collectors Office for titles, fees, and licenses for the Board.
- Motion to designate Clerk Ford and Shaula made by Commissioner Causseaux, seconded by Commissioner Arnold, motion carried.

16. Board to designate Bank Account Access

Minutes:

- Shaula advised that this is request permission to remove Daniel Stanley, Maggie Holland, Wendy Doyal, Hannah Causseaux, and Jim Johnson from having any signature authority on the Boards account and to add Clerk Jace Ford, Chairman Dewayne Branch, Vice Chairman Doyle Brown, and Melissa Potter as Clerk Finance Officer. Shaula advised they are adding Melissa for checks and balances; she cuts the checks and so she does not wish to be a signature on the account.
- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold, motion carried.

17. Board to consider City of Bristol 2025 appointments to the Apalachee Regional Planning Council

Minutes:

- Clerk Ford advised that the at the last meeting the Board designated a new member to the ARPC. The City of Bristol has selected Jennifer Hudgins with an alternate of Mayor James Kersey to be their Representatives.
- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Brown, motion carried.

18. Board to consider Hurricane Helene Grant Agreement with the Florida Division of Emergency Management

Minutes:

- Ben addressed the Board to discuss Grant Agreement. This Grant Agreement is between them and the State of Florida, and it allows them to access funds when they become available through the State.
- Motion to approve Agreement with Agreement Number Z4925 made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold, motion carried.
- Ben advised that Dewberry applied for more funds for Resilient Florida and with that they have been awarded \$412,500.00 and part of this money will go toward Estiffanulga.
- Justin Ford advised that they were awarded funding to do a vulnerability assessment. This next phase of funding is they want them to go in and identify specific projects and start drilling down into those projects.

19. Board to consider agreement with MuniCreative for website maintenance

Minutes:

- Clerk Ford addressed the Board to discuss agreement. This is for the BOCC website through a company called MuniCreative. The contract for the maintenance of that website expired on 12/31/2024. Clerk Ford went over the details of the contract. The total price will be \$5,200.00.
- Motion to renew contract contingent upon Attorney Hosford's approval made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Causseaux, motion carried.

20. Board to consider SCOP Agreement for CR 379 with the Florida Department of

Transportation

Minutes:

- Noah addressed the Board to discuss agreement. This is for the Bridge Repair Program with FDOT and it includes some new signage, resplicing one of the piles, and cleaning and repainting the steel beams in the amount of \$130,000.00. This will go toward construction, inspection, and design permitting. There is a Resolution associated with the Agreement.
- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Brown, motion carried.

21. Dewberry to provide update to Board regarding status of County Borrow Pit

Minutes:

- Noah advised that they ran into some snags. They have finalized this in the Fall and applied for permitting. This went to FWC for endangered species as well. There's not a particular type of fence they are looking for.
- Chairman Branch discussed inmates doing the labor for putting up the fence.
- Chairman Branch discussed the pit on Sandridge Road. He asked Attorney Hosford for his direction regarding liability of the fence.
- Attorney Hosford advised that the fence is to protect against lawsuits.
- Noah advised that they are going to send in some additional answers.
- Noah advised that the FDOT applications are due in March. Last year they did give some money for design on some roads that were applied for. They have approved sign on some roads but not the construction.
- Noah will discuss this with Clerk Ford and bring the Resolutions to next month's meeting.

22. Board to consider renewal of Medical Director Agreement with Dr. Daniel Perkins

Minutes:

- Clerk Ford advised that as required by law, there has to be a Medical Director for the EMS service. The Board has a contract with Dr. Daniel Brett Perkins, and it expires at the end of this month. Melissa Peddie has asked that the Board renew the contract, the new contract will be a 3-year contract with the monthly payment of \$1,000.00.
- Attorney Hosford advised that there are some changes he would like to add to the contract.
- Motion to approve contract contingent upon changes of Attorney Hosford made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold, motion carried.

23. Commissioner Johnson to address Board regarding property purchase request from ACE Hardware

Minutes:

- Commissioner Johnson advised that Ace Hardware is interested in purchasing the property that is right by the building. he advised them that he didn't think the Board would sell it, but he would bring it before the Board for a decision.
- The Board is in agreement to not sell the property.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

24. Dewayne Branch, Chairman, Commissioner - District 1

Minutes:

- Chairman Branch had no business to discuss.

25. Hannah Causseaux, Commissioner - District 2

Minutes:

- Commissioner Causseaux advised that she hasn't heard anything further on the Alleyways.
- Attorney Hosford has not received any further phone calls either.

26. Jim Johnson, Commissioner - District 3

Minutes:

- Commissioner Johnson had no business to discuss.

27. Doyle Brown, Vice-Chairman, Commissioner - District 4

Minutes:

- Commissioner Brown had no business to discuss.

28. Derrick Arnold, Commissioner - District 5

Minutes:

- Commissioner Arnold had no business to discuss.

29. Ken Hosford, County Attorney

Minutes:

- Attorney Hosford had no business to discuss.

30. Jace Ford, Liberty County Clerk of Court and Clerk to the Board

Minutes:

- Clerk Ford advised that he has started the process of meeting with the Department Heads to discuss any way he can be helpful to them and any changes that might need to be made. He asked the Board for any input on how they would like him to work with the Department Heads.
- Commissioner Branch spoke about the personnel policy. He wants to be sure that all Department Heads are under the understanding that the Clerk enforces Board decisions and acts as a manager that the Board designates.
- Clerk Ford discussed seeking a line of credit to help with the cashflow of projects. Once reimbursement come, they can pay off that line of credit.
- The Board is in agreement for Clerk Ford to contact banks to get information regarding a line of credit.
- The Board also discussed interest rates.

31. Motion to Adjourn

Minutes:

- Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Causseaux.

32. Signature

Florida Statute 125.001 requires that due public notice be given of all regular meetings of the Board of County Commissioners of a County in the State of Florida. Florida Statute 286.0105 requires that notices of any meeting or hearing, if a meeting or hearing is required, must include the following language, "if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, agency or commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing he will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based."

Contact: Jace Ford (jford@libertyclerk.com (850) 643-2215) | Minutes published on 02/12/2025, adopted on 02/06/2025