



# JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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May 23, 2023

## **Jackson County BOCC Regular Meeting Highlights**

*Jackson County, FL. – On May 23, 2023, at 6:00 Pm, the Jackson County Board of County Commissioners held a Regular Meeting. This is a recap of some of the reports and requests included in that meeting.*

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### **REQUEST: Approval of General Development Order/Ellianos**

On April 12, 2023, a request was submitted for a General Development Order for Ellianos to construct an 800 square foot building to be used as a coffee shop and 15,583 square foot vehicular use area. The proposed project will be located approximately .2 miles south of the I-10 corridor on the west side of Hwy 71 South in unincorporated Jackson County.

On May 15, 2023, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the General Development Order to the Board of County Commissioners.



### **REQUEST: Approval and Appointment/2023 AHAC Committee**

Jackson County Board of County Commissioners has recently been seeking invested and engaged citizens to serve on various Boards and Committees. One of which is the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC). At the last meeting, the Board approved two new members to the AHAC.

The AHAC is an integral part of the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program. The AHAC reviews county policies, procedures, ordinances, land development regulations, the Comprehensive Plan, and is established under F. S. 420.9076, and the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 28, Article II. Triennially, the AHAC makes recommendations for the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP). An annual report and recommendations for the LHAP are submitted to the Board of County Commissioners.

At this meeting, Director of Community Development, Wendy Schlesinger, requested Board approval and appointment of the filled 2023 Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.



**COMMITTEE** 

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**REQUEST: Board Review and Consideration/Florida Statute/Medical Marijuana Use**

The Community Development Planning Division has received requests from several companies interested in bringing dispensaries to Jackson County. As a result, the Board was requested to review and consider allowing Medical Marijuana Dispensaries and Cultivation within our county, based on Florida Statute 381.986. This consideration is driven by the County’s commitment to improving public health, expanding patient access to approved treatments, and stimulating economic growth in our community.

Florida Statute 381.986 outlines a framework that permits the use, dispensing, and cultivation of medical marijuana for qualifying patients with certain medical conditions. It provides necessary regulations, ensuring safety and control over the production, distribution, and consumption of medical cannabis.

On 5/15/23 the Planning Commission reviewed FL Statute 381.986 and recommended allowance of medical marijuana dispensaries and cultivation for Jackson County.

The Board of County Commissioners believes in the importance of comprehensive healthcare services and economic development. By considering the allowance of Medical Marijuana Dispensaries and Cultivation as per Florida Statute 381.986, we are working to combine these two aspects for the betterment of our county.



**REQUEST: Consideration of Raises for Licensed Practical Nurses/Correctional Facility**

It has come to the County’s attention that prevailing rates for LPNs have increased in our area. Due to the competitive nature of this position, County Staff are recommending an increase to the three LPN positions at the Jackson County Correctional Facility. Based on area analysis, the range appears to be \$21-23 an hour. Staff recommends going with the \$22 an hour rate, which will be a \$17,628.83 total impact for all three positions. This would be a \$4,994.71 increase for each LPN position. Other licensed personnel (Corrections, Fire Rescue) have all received raises within the past year to ensure the County is paying competitive wages. This would go into effect immediately and would be part of the annual budgeting process moving forward.



**REQUEST: Approval of RIF Grant Agreement/Project TAP Roadway & Utility Infrastructure**

A request was made for Board approval of an RIF Grant Agreement (D0232) for Project Tap Roadway and Utility Infrastructure. Jackson County has been awarded a \$982,850.00 grant from the Department of Economic Opportunity through its Rural Infrastructure Fund. The grant funds will be used for the design, permitting, and construction of public roadway and utility infrastructure for Project TAP-Dilmore Road.



**REQUEST: Approval to Declare Asphalt Paving Systems in Default of D2 Chip Seal Bond**

Previously, "Asphalt Paving Systems" was awarded the contract for District 2 Chip Seal Bond. They have submitted their final pay request. The County's in-house inspector had concerns about the project while work was being completed, and addressed his concerns to the contractor, but no adjustments were made. The work has been completed, and there are already significant issues with the roadwork. The gravel is loose, the fog seal is breaking apart, and many areas along the roads are already showing base rock. As a result, Staff are requesting board approval to declare the contractor to be in default as they have not met the conditions of their contract. Road & Bridge has since attempted to work with Asphalt Paving Systems to rectify the situation without necessitating litigation actions. The company has been unresponsive for 9 months.

The County Attorney requested the Board to consider granting approval to negotiate with an outside firm that specializes in construction litigation. The Board instructed staff to reach out to the company one final time in hopes of a response to organize a meeting in which we can come to a joint agreement to rectify the situation. They also granted the County Attorney permission to consult with an outside firm.



**REQUEST: Approval to Initiate Legal Action/Public Nuisance on Butler Road**

On January 24, 2023, the BOCC found and declared the property located at 7130 Butler Road, Grand Ridge, Florida (the "Property") to be a public nuisance and required the Property to be cleaned up, removing the trash and debris, within thirty (30) days of the Order dated February 22, 2023.

The property owner failed to abate the violation and instead erected a barrier on the Property in an attempt to block the view of the public nuisance. Through outside legal counsel, the Property Owner was made aware that the Property was still in violation of the Order and the Property Owner failed to comply. The Order permits the County to go on the property in the event that the Property Owner fails to abate the public nuisance; however, the erection of the barrier renders the property as a public safety hazard for County contractors to abate the public nuisance without a court order.

At this point, State Law requires that County utilizes separate council to handle this type of case. The request at this meeting is for the Board to authorize the outside council to initiate the actions necessary to enforce the Board's order. This will state that removal of trash, debris, and overgrowth is not optional, and that erecting a makeshift barrier for the purpose of hiding the trash, debris, and overgrowth from view does not remedy the public health and safety issues.



**LEGEND:**

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COMMISSIONERS

DISTRICT 1                      DISTRICT 2                      DISTRICT 3                      DISTRICT 4                      DISTRICT 5  
ALEX B. MCKINNIE    EDWARD CRUTCHFIELD    PAUL DONOFRO JR.    DONNIE BRANCH    JIM PEACOCK