






JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jackson County BOCC Regular Meeting Highlights

Jackson County, FL. – On September 10, 2024, 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.

REQUEST: Approval of Land Development Projects

The Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing for the following projects:

- **Eastgate Mobile Home Park Expansion:**



Mobile Home Park Development order to expand an existing mobile home park known as Eastgate park. The expansion request for 83 new lots will bring the total number of approved lots to 126. Expansion will include new vehicular use areas, improvements to the existing stormwater facilities, and new connections to Jackson County water and sewer. The project is located at 5194 Hwy 90, approximately 3,000 feet east of the intersection of Highways 90 and 71 south, in unincorporated Jackson County.

At the regularly scheduled meeting on August 19, 2024, the Planning Commission recommended denial of Eastgate Mobile Home Park Expansion to the Board of County Commissioners based on two potential safety concerns. Both concerns have been resolved. The Board approved the development order.

- **Bethlehem Ridge Subdivision:**



A 10-lot minor residential subdivision with lots ranging from 5 acres to 16.52 acres to be known as Bethlehem Ridge Subdivision. The proposed subdivision is situated south of Coley Road, east of Mutual Road and west of Bethlehem Road in unincorporated Jackson County.

At the regularly scheduled meeting on September 3, 2024, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the final plat for Bethlehem Ridge minor subdivision. The Board voted to table the item until environmental concerns were addressed.

CONTINUED 

The hearings for the above projects provided an opportunity for community members to engage and offer feedback on the proposed projects, ensuring transparency and community involvement in the development and land use process.



REQUEST: Approval to Appoint Garrett Caudill to TDC Board

The Board of County Commissioners is pleased to announce the appointment of Garrett Caudill to the Tourist Development Council (TDC) Board. During its August meeting, the TDC reviewed applicants for the vacant seat and recommended appointing a hotelier to bring valuable industry expertise to the council. Mr. Caudill, the General Manager of the Hampton Inn, has demonstrated a strong interest in serving and actively engaging with the TDC. His appointment fills a critical gap on the board, as there were no hotels previously represented. The BOCC is confident that Mr. Caudill's experience and dedication will significantly enhance tourism efforts and benefit the Jackson County community.



REQUEST: Approval to Initiate RFP for Museum Planning Services

The Board has given the green light to initiate the RFP process for museum planning services for the Jackson County Endeavor Museum. This planning phase will cover key aspects like organizational structure, funding sources, and exhibit planning, providing a solid foundation for the engineering and architectural design of the museum's interior. Following an August meeting, the Endeavor Museum Steering Committee recommended taking this crucial step to move the project forward, and the Board is excited to see the museum take shape.



REQUEST: Acceptance of FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant

The Board has approved accepting a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) in the amount of \$485,000 for Jackson County Fire Rescue. This grant will be used to purchase a new 2,000-gallon fire rescue tanker truck. The funding includes \$440,909.09 from FEMA, with a required County match of \$44,090.91. Once the purchase is finalized, the truck is estimated to take about 20 months to build and deliver. The County's matching funds will be allocated in the FY 25-26 budget. This new tanker will greatly enhance our emergency response capabilities in Jackson County.



REQUEST: Approval of Tornado Debris Removal Grant Agreement

The Board has approved an agreement with Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) that will allow the County to be reimbursed up to \$1,333,160.35 for expenses incurred during debris removal after the January 2024 tornado. This funding helps cover the costs of cleanup efforts and support our community's recovery from the storm's impact.



REQUEST: Approval of Florida Job Growth Grant for Pooser Road

The Board has approved the Florida Job Growth Grant agreement. The grant awarded to Jackson County in the amount of \$4,680,059 will be used to pave approximately 1.29 miles of Pooser Road and install related infrastructure, creating a two-lane roadway from State Road 276 to Old Airbase Road. This project will enhance local connectivity to workforce housing and support economic growth in the area.



REQUEST: Approval of HMGP Match Agreement for Pooser Road Drainage Improvements

The Board approved Agreement M0082 with the Department of Commerce to provide the matching funds of \$244,768.25 for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)- Pooser Road Drainage Phase II Project, with a total estimated cost of \$979,073. This project aims to improve the drainage system in the Pooser Road neighborhood by elevating the road above the flood elevation and installing enhanced stormwater infrastructure. The plan includes raising the driving surface by two feet or more, resurfacing approximately 1,523 linear feet of roadway with improved materials, upgrading the intersection at Pooser and Wynn Road, restoring driveways, and installing upgraded culverts and roadside ditches.



REQUEST: Approval of TDC Strategic Plan Agreement with Kimley-Horn

The Jackson County Board of County Commissioners has approved an agreement with Kimley-Horn to lead the development of a comprehensive Strategic Plan for the County's Tourism Department. After a thorough selection process and evaluation of proposals, Kimley-Horn emerged as the top-ranked firm for RFQ 2324-27. The agreement, negotiated at a cost of \$50,000 and approved by the County Attorney, marks a significant step forward in enhancing the county's tourism efforts. The Board is excited to work with Kimley-Horn to create a forward-thinking Strategic Plan that will drive Jackson County's tourism sector towards greater success and sustainability.



REQUEST: Approval for Renewal of Agreement 2122-19 Lobbying Services with Shumaker

Advisors

The Board is thrilled to announce the renewal of its agreement with Shumaker Advisors for lobbying services, marking the final renewal year of this successful partnership. At a cost of \$60,000 per year, this agreement continues to deliver tremendous value to Jackson County. The Board highly appreciates the outstanding work of Shumaker Advisors in representing the County before the Florida Legislature and the Executive Branch of state government. Their commitment to advancing the County's legislative agenda and closely monitoring legislation of interest has been invaluable. Their diligent advocacy and consistent updates have made a significant impact, and the Board is confident in their continued efforts to champion Jackson County's interests at the state level.



REQUEST: Approval for Renewal of Agreement 2223-20 Special Magistrate Services with John McDaniel

The Board is pleased to announce the renewal of its contract for Special Magistrate services with John McDaniel, Esq., marking the first of two possible one-year renewals. The Board is highly satisfied with the exceptional work provided by Mr. McDaniel in helping staff bring code enforcement cases into compliance. His efforts have been instrumental in maintaining a safe, healthy, and visually appealing community. The Board looks forward to continuing this productive partnership to support the well-being and standards of Jackson County.



REQUEST: Approval to Request Bids for Renovation of Great Oaks

The Board has given the green light to move forward with renovations for the beloved Great Oaks property in Greenwood, signaling a hopeful new chapter for this historic venue! After previously exploring options for a concessionaire, it became clear that some essential updates are needed to bring Great Oaks back to its full charm and potential. With the decision to seek bids from contractors, the County aims to restore Great Oaks to its former glory through comprehensive renovations. Planned updates include fresh interior and exterior paint, shutter restoration, addressing water damage, refinishing wood floors, updating the kitchen and other flooring, refinishing porches, and more. These renovations will not only honor the history of Great Oaks but also provide a refreshed space for the community to enjoy for years to come. The Board is excited about this next step and looks forward to seeing the transformation unfold.



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