






# JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April 14, 2026

## Jackson County BOCC Regular Meeting Highlights

Jackson County, FL. – On April 14, 2026, at 9:00 AM, 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: Adoption of Proclamation Recognizing April as Fair Housing Month**



The Board adopted a proclamation that was presented to Natalie Cayson and Jay Burkey of Central Panhandle Association of Realtors, recognizing April 2026 as Fair Housing Month in Jackson County, reaffirming the County's commitment to promoting equal housing opportunities for all residents. The proclamation reflects the principles of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which prohibits discrimination in housing and encourages communities to foster inclusive and equitable living environments.

Through this recognition, the Board emphasized the importance of continued awareness, education, and collaboration with public and private partners to support fair housing practices. The proclamation highlights the County's dedication to strengthening communities by promoting diversity, inclusion, and access to housing for current and future residents.



### **REQUEST: Ratification of a Proclamation Honoring Katrina Pittman Olds**

The Board ratified a proclamation honoring Katrina Pittman Olds on the occasion of her 100th birthday, recognizing a lifetime marked by strength, perseverance, and dedication to family and community. The proclamation highlights her enduring legacy, her commitment to faith, education, and service, and the lasting impact she has made on generations of family members and the broader community.

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Due to the timing of her birthday celebration, the proclamation was presented in advance of the April 14, 2026, Board meeting by Commissioner Dr. Willie Spires. The Board celebrates this remarkable milestone and honors her contributions to Jackson County.



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**REQUEST: Approval of Vertical Bridge Wireless Telecommunications Facility**

The Board approved a request to construct a 250-foot wireless telecommunications facility with a 5-foot lightning rod on property leased from Mary Catherine Braxton, Trustee, located on the north side of Peanut Road approximately one-half mile northwest of the intersection of Peanut Road and Highway 231 in unincorporated Jackson County. The Planning Commission reviewed the proposal on March 16, 2026, and recommended approval.



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**REQUEST: Set a Public Hearing for Second Reading and approval of Changes to Chapter 10 Buildings and Building Regulations**

The Board approved a request to schedule a public hearing on April 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. to consider proposed administrative updates to Chapter 10 – Buildings and Building Regulations. The proposed changes are intended to clarify local standards related to the Florida Building Code, including criteria for permanent electrical service approval and wind speed requirements for development, as well as minor renumbering and correction of a scrivener’s error. The public hearing will provide an opportunity for review and input prior to final consideration.



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**REQUEST: Board Discussion on FPU Public Concerns**

The Board held a discussion regarding ongoing concerns from residents related to Florida Public Utilities (FPU), including billing, rates, and customer service. Citizens addressed the Board during the meeting to share their experiences and concerns. Following the discussion, the Board voted to send a formal letter, along with a record of the meeting discussion, to the Florida Public Service Commission and the Florida House Committee on Communications, Energy, and Public Utilities. This action builds upon the Board’s previous engagement with the Public Service Commission last year and is intended to ensure continued awareness and consideration of local concerns.

Prior to the meeting, FPU shared information with the County about upcoming Customer Care Days scheduled for May 19–20 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the UF/IFAS Extension Office on Penn Avenue and provided informational materials to attendees outlining billing options and customer service resources.



**REQUEST: Ratification of Maile Ontiveros to fill the position of the HR Director for JCBOCC**

The Board ratified the County Administrator’s appointment of a new Human Resources Director, in accordance with County Code Section 2-51. This formal action confirms the Administrator’s selection and supports the continued leadership and oversight of the County’s human resources functions.

The Board welcomed the new Director to the organization and expressed confidence in her role supporting employees and County operations.



**REQUEST: Approval of Certificates of Substantial Completion for Indian Springs Phase 2B Sewer Extension and Indian Springs Phase 2 Water**

The Board approved the Certificates of Substantial Completion for the Indian Springs Phase 2B Sewer Extension and the Indian Springs Phase 2 Water Project, marking key milestones in the expansion of critical utility infrastructure. For the sewer extension project, a one-year general warranty applies to the full project, along with a five-year special warranty for the wayside lift station force main. The water project includes a one-year general warranty covering the completed work.



**REPORT: TDC Quarterly Report**

The Board received an update from Tourist Development Council (TDC) Director Kelsi Jackson highlighting strong tourism performance and continued momentum across Jackson County during the first quarter of 2026. Tourism Development Tax collections reflected a successful holiday season, with January and February revenues (representing peak travel months in November and December) showing notable strength, supported by high occupancy rates among local lodging partners. Activity at the Endeavor Convention Center also continued to grow, hosting a variety of events, including the highly successful NWFL Artifact & Fossil Show, which drew regional attendance and is being established as an annual signature event.

The report also highlighted ongoing strategic efforts to strengthen tourism infrastructure, community engagement, and marketing initiatives. Progress continues on the Jackson County Museum business plan, development of a long-term management strategy for Great Oaks, and expansion of programs such as the Tourism Ambassador Program. Marketing campaigns delivered strong results, including the Scenic Showdown Burger Competition, which significantly increased community engagement and visibility for local businesses. Paid advertising, event partnerships, and influencer collaborations further expanded the County’s reach to new audiences, while upcoming initiatives, including participation in the America 250 campaign and partnerships with local organizations, position Jackson County for continued growth in visitation and economic impact.



**REQUEST: Fire Rescue**

The Board approved several items supporting Jackson County Fire Rescue’s fleet and emergency response capabilities, including acceptance of a Florida Department of Health Bureau of EMS grant to fund a new ambulance at a total cost of \$399,400, with a 10% County match. The Board also approved a Memorandum of Agreement with the Florida Department of Health for Matching Grant Agreement #M2640, which will provide funding for the ambulance purchase and must be completed by June 2027. In addition, the Board authorized the purchase of one ambulance from Frazer Company through the HGAC cooperative contract in the amount of \$371,325, with funding provided through the state grant program.

These actions position Fire Rescue to enhance its emergency response fleet with modern equipment while leveraging grant funding to reduce local costs. The new ambulance will support continued delivery of high-quality emergency medical services to residents, with delivery expected within approximately 12 to 13 months.



**REQUEST: Agreement for Public Services for Ambulance Stand-by at Freedom Springs Triathlon**

The Board approved an agreement for ambulance standby services through Jackson County Fire Rescue to support the Freedom Springs Triathlon, scheduled for Saturday, July 4, 2026, at Blue Springs Park. Emergency medical personnel and equipment will be on site from 6:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. to help ensure a safe environment for participants and attendees during the event.



**REQUEST: Award Critical Facilities Generators and Delinquent Tax Newspaper Advertisement**

The Board approved the award of **2526-09 – Critical Facilities Generators** to Energy Systems Southeast (ESSE), supporting infrastructure improvements through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). The County received four bids, with ESSE identified as the lowest responsive bidder. Although the initial bid exceeded the grant budget, the County’s engineer, DHM, worked with ESSE to implement value engineering measures, resulting in a revised bid within budget and generating significant cost savings. This project will enhance the reliability and resilience of critical facilities throughout the County.



The Board also considered **2526-12 for Delinquent Tax Newspaper Advertisement**, for which quotes were received from The Jackson County Times and The Graceville News. Following discussion, the Board voted to table the item for further consideration at a future meeting.



**REQUEST: Approval of a Workshop on EMS/Fire Assessment**

The Board approved scheduling a workshop on April 28, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. (CST), prior to the regular 6:00 p.m. meeting, to review information related to a EMS/Fire Assessment for Jackson County. The workshop will provide an opportunity for the Board to receive detailed information, ask questions, and discuss considerations related to emergency services funding. This setting allows for a focused, in-depth discussion ahead of any future decisions.



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**LEGEND:**



**District 1**  
Dr. Willie Spires

**District 2**  
Edward Crutchfield

**District 3**  
Paul Donofro Jr.

**District 4**  
Donnie Branch

**District 5**  
Jamey Westbrook