

SPECIAL WORKSHOP

APRIL 18, 1995

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a public workshop on Tuesday, April 18, 1995 at 7:00 P.M., in the Red Bay Community Center to discuss the flood victims.

The following Board members were present: Chairman Gordon Porter, Vice-Chairman Sam Pridgen, Commissioner Charles C. Harris, Commissioner Johnnie Moore, and Commissioner Rosier E. Cuchens, Jr. The Board's Administrative Supervisor, Ronnie E. Bell, and the Public Safety Director, Mike Barker, were also present. Representatives from the West Florida Regional Planning Council and the Department of Community Affairs were present.

Chairman Porter called the meeting to order followed by a prayer from a member of the audience.

Mike Barker, Public Safety Director, informed the audience that federal monies were available to help with the flood disaster. Mr. Baker stated that 180 million dollars were to be distributed between Georgia, Alabama and Florida. Georgia's allocation is 130 million dollars out of the 180 million. Funds were allocated for Washington, Holmes and Calhoun Counties, but distributed to the cities as follows:

City of Carryville (Washington County)	\$11.8 million
City of Bonifay (Holmes County)	\$1,327,500.00
City of Blounstown (Calhoun County)	\$7,259,400.00

Walton County was not allocated funds. Mr. Barker stated that he and the Commissioners have attended many meetings regarding why Walton County was not allocated funds, but no one has been able to answer the question. It seems that HUD out of Washington D.C. created a Task Force in Tallahassee to distribute the funds, but no one in Tallahassee has answers as to why Walton County was not allocated funds. Mr. Barker stated that Florida submitted their applications first, but the City of Tallahassee, Leon County and Wakulla County received 20.7 million dollars. Mr. Barker urged everyone present to call and write the legislators regarding the non allocation of funds to Walton County.

Larry McDonald, representing the West Florida Regional Planning

Council, addressed the audience and urged everyone to fill out a survey form and send to the Pensacola Office. Mr. McDonald stated that the West Florida Regional Planning Council was contracted by the Department of Community Affairs to assist effected counties with applications to receive funds. The funds available are for buy-outs or the elevation of homes. Mr. McDonald advised that Farmer's Home Administration has a program for individuals over the age of 65 who are very low income to re-elevate their homes.

Buster Case, representing the Department of Community Affairs, encouraged everyone to participate in the survey. Mr. Case stated that Walton County should apply for the 404 Hazard Mitigation Grant. Five counties are competing for the grant, so Walton County has a good chance in receiving funds.

Several members of the audience asked questions and had concerns with future flooding due to the River not being dredged.

Chairman Porter assured the audience that every measure would be taken to have flood relief funds allocated to Walton County and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

There being no further business, Chairman Porter adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED: _____

Gordon Porter, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Catherine King, Clerk