

## **JUNE 21, 2016 – WORKSHOP**

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Workshop on June 21, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. at the Walton County Courthouse in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.

The following Board members were present: Commissioner Cecilia Jones, Acting Chairman; Commissioner W. N. (Bill) Chapman; Commissioner Bill Imfeld; and Commissioner Cindy Meadows. Mr. Larry Jones, County Administrator; and Attorney Sidney Noyes, County Attorney; were also present.

Vice-Chairman Jones announced Chairman Comander was recuperating from an accident and would not be in attendance. She recognized the city officials and media who were present.

Chairman Jones called to order the Workshop to discuss the Triumph Funding and Initial County Project Identification.

Mr. Larry Jones, County Administrator, said the goal was to get started early to insure a better presentation of projects to the State and Federal Legislatures.

Mr. Billy Williams, Local RESTORE Act Coordinator, briefly discussed the need to begin the process of seeking funding for RESTORE projects. He recommended coordinating with the Walton County School Board and municipalities regarding projects to be submitted. He asked the Board to submit their project priorities. The recommendations will be reviewed for the following components: environmental, economic, and infrastructure. The goal is to have a solid legislative package by October 1, 2016. He asked each commissioner to discuss their prospective projects.

Mr. Jones presented a preliminary list of projects: 1. U.S. 331 water and sewer projects; 2. paving dirt roads which have an environmental impact on water ways; 3. storm water projects. He requested direction on which projects to move forward.

Chairman Jones suggested seeking grant funding to help the RESTORE funding go further. She briefly discussed the possibility of connector roads to the industrial parks and the need to get the most from the county's portion of the money. She voiced the need to pave the dirt roads affecting the county waterways.

Commissioner Chapman discussed the need to connect existing homes adjoining the Choctawhatchee Bay to sewer systems and the possibility of using the funding to off-set the connection costs. He said new construction would be required to pay. He expressed the importance of developing the U.S. 331 corridor for economic development.

Commissioner Imfeld voiced a need to provide quality clean water and sewer services to the rural areas of the county. He said the provision would have both environmental and economic benefits.

Commissioner Meadows discussed how all the projects tie-in together. She said she would like to see the following projects considered: 1. U.S. 331 corridor; 2. paving of dirt roads leading to the bay; 3. storm water projects which are already lined up and ready to go; 4. the extension of the broadband for economic development; and 5. interconnectivity of bike paths and sidewalks throughout the county. She voiced the importance of infrastructure and the development of training facilities which would train people for future businesses.

Mr. Jones reported there has been success over the past three years in procuring funding for replacing Coastal Dune Lake bridges and would want to continue the effort.

Commissioner Imfeld asked Mr. Williams to coordinate with the school system to train students for the jobs and industries the county hopes to attract.

Commissioner Chapman discussed the need to pave the roads impacting the waterways. He also suggested a need to expand the opportunities for eco-tourism throughout the county by providing amenities and facilities along the Choctawhatchee River.

Chairman Jones voiced a need to address transportation issues.

Mr. Williams said all the projects work together and staff will work to compartmentalize the projects so that all the details can be seen. He reported the funding can be leveraged and interconnected. He said staff would also continue their dialogue with the municipalities and the school board to present a comprehensive plan.

Mr. Jones said the reason for the early start was to enable all those involved to work together to create a better presentation to the Federal and State legislators.

Mr. Williams reported part one of the multi-year plan is being closed out and will keep the public fully informed on the vetting of potential projects.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Jones said the information received during the workshop will be reviewed and compared to determine which projects work best together. He reported that a meeting is scheduled with in-house and consulting engineers to discuss how each of the projects can be moved forward and presented in the legislative packet.

There being no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved: Cecilia Jones  
Cecilia Jones, Vice-Chairman

Attest: Alex Alford  
Alex Alford, Clerk of Court and County Comptroller