

**Regular Meeting Draft Minutes**  
Commission Board Room  
Dixie County Courthouse  
214 NE Hwy 351, Cross City, FL 32628  
November 20, 2025 – 6:00 PM

**The Board meetings are audio recorded. The public can hear and participate in the meeting via conference call by dialing 1(917)900-1022 and enter code 32628.**

**COMMISSIONERS**

Mark Hatch, District 3, Chairman (via telephone)  
Jody Stephenson, District 1,  
Daniel Wood, District 2  
Jamie Storey, District 4, Vice Chairman  
David Osteen, District 5

**STAFF**

Martha McCaskill, Administrative Asst/Grant Coordinator  
Chana Watson, County Attorney  
Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court  
Brenda Royal, Chief Financial Officer  
Joannie Morse, Deputy Clerk  
Christie Zander, Deputy Clerk

**OVERVIEW**

The BOCC meeting on November 20, 2025, covered several key decisions and updates. The commissioners approved the minutes from previous meetings and vouchers. They denied a special land development application due to community concerns about RVs lowering property values. They also approved various special exceptions for recreational vehicles and a variance for a construction project. Updates included progress on fire stations, a working waterfront project, and a DDP permit. The commissioners discussed the potential purchase of a road section and the need for a new crusher. They also addressed the county's holiday schedule and upcoming events, including the Annual Turkey Trot.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman Jamie Storey called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG**

Vice Chairman Jamie Storey led the Invocation and the Pledge to the American Flag.

**APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES**

10/02/2025 Regular BOCC Meeting Minutes

**Commissioner Jamie Storey made a motion to approve 10/02/2025 Regular Meeting Minutes. Commissioner David Osteen seconded. Board approved.**

11/03/2025 Town Of Horseshoe Beach and Board Of County Commissioners Meeting Minutes

**Commissioner David Osteen made the motion to approve 11-03-2025 Town Of Horseshoe Beach and Board Of County Commissioners Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Daniel Wood seconded. Board approved.**

11/06/2025 Regular BOCC Meeting Minutes

**Commissioner David Osteen made the motion to approve 11/06/2025 Regular BOCC Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Jamie Storey seconded. Board approved.**

**VOUCHER APPROVAL**

**Commissioner David Osteen made the motion to approve the vouchers. Commissioner Daniel Wood seconded. Board approved.**

**CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS**

Not present

**DOUG SANDERS-CC COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Sanders cancelled presentation due to illness.

**LEON WRIGHT, BUILDING AND ZONING OFFICIAL**

See applications on the back page.

**KATRINA VANAERNAM AND SHEILA FRIERSON, DIXIE COUNTY ANTI-DRUG COALITION**

Mrs. VanAernam was not present at this meeting.

**KAY MCCALLISTER, TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

Mrs. McCallister was not present at this meeting.

**GREG BAILEY, NORTH FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Mr. Kellan Bailey gave some updates on ongoing projects which included:

- Fire Station Three - construction is progressing, with the foundation formed and ready to be poured soon, and storm drain installations underway.
- Fire Station Six - a grant has been prioritized, with further information expected after an upcoming meeting. The recommendation is for the Board to table any decisions on the Fire Station Six contract until more details are available.

**Commissioner Stephenson made a motion to table the Fire Station Six contract until after the grant meeting. Commissioner David Osteen seconded. Board approved.**

- Working Waterfront project at Horseshoe Beach has had its site plans sent to the County Manager's office. A meeting to review these plans will be scheduled within the next couple of weeks. Once the site plan is approved, the project will proceed with the permit application.

- CDBG 95th & 97<sup>th</sup> - The project discussed has received a notice to proceed, with a contract duration of around 200 days. Contractors are currently finishing other jobs and are expected to start soon, although there may be scheduling delays due to ongoing county projects and holiday work restrictions. The team is closely monitoring the timeline to ensure the project is completed within the allotted period.

**JOHN LOCKLEAR, LOCKLEAR AND ASSOCIATES**

Mr. Walker Wren shared the following updates:

- Shired Restoration has received the DEP permit, but progress is delayed as the Army Corps has requested further information and plans to conduct cultural and archaeological investigations; coordination has been difficult due to the government furlough. The team is pursuing a variance since the area has been reworked extensively.
- County Road 349, side drain installation has begun and paving is expected to start in a few weeks, though timeline changes are possible around the holidays. The airport canal correction drainage improvement meeting is scheduled for November 24.
- County Road 351, pipe work is nearly finished and milling and paving should start soon.

**CINDY BELLOT, LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Ms. Bellot shared:

- The library will close at noon on December 8 for a Safety Meeting—those wishing to attend should contact staff in advance, as the door will be locked.
- Suwannee Firehouse Bazaar will take place on Saturday, November 22 at the Suwannee Fire Station from 10am to 3pm.

**DIANN JONES, SUWANNEE WATER AND SEWER**

Mrs. Jones was not present at this meeting.

**STEVE FREMEN, CODE ENFORCEMENT & VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER**

Mr. Fremen was not present at this meeting.

**MICHAEL GAINEY, COUNTY ROAD SUPERINTENDENT**

Mr. Gainey and the Commissioners’ discussion focused on the high costs and ineffectiveness of repairing the county’s rock crusher, leading to consideration of alternative options like leasing or purchasing crushers that are easier to maintain and repair locally. The group also explored trading or buying used crushers at scrap prices, and Mr. Gainey identified a contact who will purchase scrap metal and equipment at favorable rates, providing free removal and on-site payment. Plans are to organize and round up surplus items to take advantage of these offers.

The proposed next steps and action items are:

- Contact the identified scrap metal buyer to arrange an assessment and possible purchase of surplus equipment and metals.
- Gather and organize all eligible scrap and surplus materials to maximize sale and removal value.
- Investigate offers to trade existing scrap for used crushers at scrap price, and explore purchasing additional used crushers if cost-effective.
- Continue to evaluate leasing versus purchasing reliable rock crushers with a preference for models that can be serviced locally.

- Coordinate among staff to obtain necessary contact details and facilitate timely follow-through on these actions.

**TIM JOHNSON, SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR**

Mr. Johnson's report centered on evaluating and purchasing refurbished compactors as a cost-effective way to upgrade waste operations, with one promising vendor offering fully reconditioned units at a competitive price. Financial review indicates these upgrades are feasible. Mr. Johnson and the Commissioners also discussed strategies used by other counties to increase revenue and improve waste handling efficiencies, such as charging for excess or bulky items. Additional site evaluations are planned to determine where more garbage cans are needed, aiming to address public complaints and improve service while keeping overall costs in check.

Action Plan for Solid Waste Management Improvements:

1. Equipment Upgrades:
  - Proceed with the purchase of a refurbished compactor from the identified vendor, ensuring specifications (size/capacity/paint) meet operational needs.
  - Consider scheduling additional purchases if financial reviews continue to be positive.
2. Financial & Operational Strategy:
  - Follow the example of other counties by reviewing potential revenue streams: charge for excess bags, bulky items, and special waste.
  - Track and analyze current and projected waste-related costs (hauling, labor, insurance, etc.) to optimize savings and assess investment value.
3. Site Evaluation & Service Enhancement:
  - Conduct detailed evaluations of current garbage locations to identify areas that need more cans or improved collection.
  - Address citizen complaints by strategically placing additional containers where necessary.
4. Benchmarking & Research:
  - Arrange meetings with operators in other counties to learn best practices in fee structures, cost control, and customer service.
5. Ongoing Review:
  - Report findings and progress to leadership, adjusting plans as needed for efficiency and fiscal responsibility.

**SCOTT PNDARVIS, 911 COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR & I.T. ADMINISTRATOR**

Mr. Pendarvis had nothing to present at this meeting.

**DARIAN BROWN, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Chief Ferguson presented the following:

- Dixie County Fire Rescue Christmas party will be held at 6pm on Dec. 12; it will be held at the EOC/New Fire Station and will feature a fish fry instead of the usual barbecue.
- Chief Brown and Chief Ferguson will miss the next meeting as they have been invited to speak at the Space Center about the Community's Paramedicine program and its role in natural disasters.
- Mrs. Alison Stevens will be receiving an award for her outstanding work with the VA and other representatives, helping develop a system to streamline veterans' medical sign-ups

**GAIL CARTER, INDIGENT CARE**

Mrs. Carter was not present at this meeting.

**HOLLY HOUGHTON, COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT**

Ms. Houghton had nothing to present at this meeting.

**ANGIE CROWLEY, HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR**

Ms. Crowley stated that there were no new Workman's Comp claims filed in the last 6 months.

**JOHN JENKINS, COUNTY MANAGER**

Action Items presented by Mrs. Martha McCallister:

1. Request Board approval of the WH Construction Contract for the Airport Canal and Correctional Institution Stormwater Improvements in the amount of \$196,755.00.

**Motion to request Board approval of the WH Construction Contract for the Airport Canal and Correctional Institution Stormwater Improvements in the amount of \$196,755.00 made by Commissioner Stephenson. Seconded by Commissioner Osteen. Board approved 4/0**

2. Request Board approval of the SHIP Repair Reimbursement for Vada Coleman in the amount of \$2,045.45.

**Motion to request Board approval of the SHIP Repair Reimbursement for Vada Coleman in the amount of \$2,045.45 made by Commissioner Wood. Seconded by Commissioner Osteen. Board approved 4/0**

3. Request Board approval of the Gray Construction Services, Inc contract for Fire Station No. 6 in the amount of \$2,546,219.00.

**Motion to request Board approval of the Gray Construction Services, Inc contract for Fire Station No. 6 in the amount of \$2,546,219.00 made by Commissioner Stephenson. Seconded by Commissioner Osteen. Board approved 4/0**

4. Request Board approval of the revised County Holiday Schedule for FY 2025-2026 as presented. The change is for Christmas Eve instead of the day after Christmas.

**Motion to request Board approval of the revised County Holiday Schedule for FY 2025-2026 as presented made by Commissioner Osteen. The change is for Christmas Eve instead of the day after Christmas. Seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Board approved 4/0**

**Information Items:**

1. Reminder County Offices will be closed Thursday, November 27, 2025 and Friday, November 28, 2025 in observance of Thanksgiving.

2. Reminder Cracker House Winery 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Christmas at the Ranch, Saturday, Dec 13, 2025, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.

### **CHANA WATSON, COUNTY ATTORNEY**

The RFP process for the new Auditors has been closed as of today. A review committee meeting is scheduled for 9:00 am on December 2 to open and review bids. The results will be presented at the next Commission Meeting, with the goal of hiring the selected firm and issuing a notice to proceed as soon as possible.

### **BARBIE HIGGINBOTHAM, CLERK OF COURT**

Clerk of Court Barbie Higginbotham reminded everyone that the Annual Turkey Trot and Silent Auction kicks off with a community prayer and fun run on Thanksgiving morning at 7:15 a.m. and the Walk/Run begins at 7:30 a.m. at the Dixie County Manager's Office.

### **COUNTY COMMISSION ITEMS**

**Commissioner Wood** had nothing to report.

#### **Commissioner Osteen**

- Encouraged everyone to come and participate in the Annual Turkey Trot with him.
- Jena/Steinhatchee has a new Mexican Restaurant – Old Mexico located in the old Grandpas Barnyard Café building.
- Johnson's Bakery will be opening soon in Cross City in the old 2 Sweets Building.

#### **Commissioner Storey**

- The commissioner discussed ongoing road and drainage maintenance in the district, noting challenges such as being down one grader operator for three years and only limited need for additional grading.
- Commissioner Storey emphasized collaborating with residents for local improvements, maintaining canal and ditch systems to reduce flooding, and explained the importance of preserving natural drainage paths despite requests to alter them.
- Past flood events and effective maintenance efforts to restore drainage and minimize future issues were highlighted.

#### **Commissioner Stephenson**

There were no new issues to report.

- The new committees are working effectively.
- Current wet conditions are presenting an opportunity to address certain clean-up or maintenance tasks that are usually difficult to complete because it's usually too wet.
- Commissioner Stephenson stated that there is a county employee recommending people from outside of the county to do county work instead of reaching out to our locals.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**

**Mrs. Amy Paras** spoke in support of William Talmadge who is requesting a Special Exception to put an RV on a lot in Jena/Steinhatchee. This conversation happened during Mr. Wrights presentation of Special Exceptions and Variances at the beginning of the Commission Meeting. Mr. Talmadge is a Lake City property owner who plans to eventually build on his land, emphasizing his positive character and commitment to keeping the property clean. However,

some commissioners expressed concerns about RVs potentially lowering property values, reflecting calls from local residents. It was noted that the property owner could have an RV on-site with an active building permit and that permit timelines can be extended. The area already allows RVs and includes an approved campground nearby. The group discussed the balance between property standards, community concerns, and flexibility in the permitting process.

**Mr. Hubert Arsenault** requested that the county consider closing or selling a section of dead-end road adjoining his property, which he and neighbors have maintained. Commissioners explained that for the county to assume maintenance, the road would need to be brought up to county standards at the property owner's expense. The situation is complicated by a legal reverter clause dating back to the original deed that could require the property to revert to original owners if not used as a public road. Before any action is taken, all affected landowners would need to be notified, and legal review is necessary. Commissioner Stevenson agreed to investigate further, talk to neighbors, and ensure any process would not involve county legal liability or costs. Public Record Notice: Under Florida law, e-mail addresses are public records. If you do not want your e-mail address released in response to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in person.

#### **ADJOURN**

**Commissioner Stephenson made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Osteen seconded. Board approved.**

**PLEASE BE ADVISED that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearings, he/ she will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, he/ she will need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.**

**“Persons with disabilities requesting reasonable accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact (352) 486-4931 (Voice & TDD) or via Florida Relay Service at (800) 955-8771.”**

**The Board meets the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM and the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM. Individuals that would like to be placed on the agenda should call Barbie Higginbotham, Clerk of Court, by 4:00 PM on the Friday Preceding the Board meeting, at (352) 498-1200.**

#### **APPLICATIONS for SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS**

**20250822** A petition by **William Talmadge** requesting a Special Exception to be granted, as provided in Section 4.7.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle (RSF/MH), in accordance with the petition dated 09/26/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel #26-09-09-0045-0002-0270 84 SW 273 Ave, Steinhatchee, FL 32659; .41 Acres.  
(COMMISSION DISTRICT 5 DAVID OSTEEN)

**LPA Recommended Denial (4-1)**

**Chris McKenzie voted “No”.**

**Motion to Table Special Exception for William Talmadge to the 12/18/2025 6 pm meeting made by Commissioner Osteen. Seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Board approved. (4-0)**

**20260002** A petition by **Shane Lamunion** requesting a Special Exception to be granted, as provided in Section 4.3.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle (ESA), in accordance with the petition dated 09/22/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel #35-09-13-4498-000C-0080 1135 NE 673 St, Old Town, FL 32680; 5.00 Acres.  
COMMISSION DISTRICT 2 DANIEL WOOD  
**LPA Recommended Approval (5-0)**

**Motion to approve Special Exception for Shane LaMunion made by Commissioner Wood. Seconded by Commissioner Osteen. Board approved. (4-0)**

**20260003** A petition by **Jared Curlin** requesting a Special Exception to be granted, as provided in Section 4.3.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle (ESA), in accordance with the petition dated 09/24/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel #16-13-12-2927-0000-0760 62 SE 352 St, Old Town (Suwannee), FL 32680; .49 Acres.  
COMMISSION DISTRICT 3 MARK HATCH  
**LPA Recommended Approval (5-0)**

**Motion to approve Special Exception for Jared Curlin made by Commissioner Stephenson. Seconded by Commissioner Wood. Board approved. (4-0)**

**20260004** A petition by **Nancy Heintschel** requesting a Special Exception to be granted, as provided in Section 4.7.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle (RSF/MH), in accordance with the petition dated 07/24/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel #19-13-12-2994-0002-2260 363 SE 241 St, Old Town (Suwannee), FL 32680; .14 Acres.  
COMMISSION DISTRICT 3 MARK HATCH  
**LPA Recommended Approval (5-0)**

**Motion to approve Special Exception for Nancy Heintschel made by Commissioner Stephenson. Seconded by Commissioner Osteen. Board approved. (4-0)**

**20260014** A petition by **Robert and Danita Lotspeich** requesting a Special Exception to be granted, as provided in Section 4.4.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle. ("AG" AGRICULTURE), in accordance with the petition dated 10/07/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel #29-10-13-5577-0000-0020 190 SE 636 St, Old Town, FL 32680; 1.00 Acres.  
COMMISSION DISTRICT 3 MARK HATCH  
**LPA Recommended Approval (4-1)**  
**Chris McKenzie voted "No"**

**Motion to Table Special Exception for Robert and Danita Lotspeich to the 12/04/2025 10 am meeting made by Commissioner Osteen. Seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Board approved. (4-0)**

**20260021** A petition by **William Canada** requesting a Special Exception to be granted, as provided in Section 4.4.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle. ("AG" AGRICULTURE), in accordance with the petition dated 10/07/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel #11-09-13-4003-0000-0050 8037 NE 349 HWY, Old Town, FL 32680; 9.69 Acres. COMMISSION DISTRICT 1 JODY STEPHENSON  
**LPA Recommended Approval (5-0)**

**Motion to approve Special Exception for William Canada made by Commissioner Stephenson. Seconded by Commissioner Osteen. Board approved. (4-0)**

**20260027** A petition by **Robert Purdy and Rebecca Gibson** requesting a Special Exception to be granted, as provided in Section 4.7.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations to permit one recreational vehicle (RSF/MH), in accordance with the petition dated 10/20/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel #30-09-10-0334- 0000-0110 48 SW 289 Ave, Steinhatchee, FL 32359; .14 Acres. COMMISSION DISTRICT 5 DAVID OSTEEN  
**LPA Recommended Approval (5-0)**

**Motion to approve Special Exception for Robert Purdy and Rebecca Gibson made by Commissioner Osteen. Seconded by Commissioner Wood. Board approved. (4-0)**

#### APPLICATIONS FOR VARIANCES

**20260029** A petition by **Circularity2LLC (Dammon Frecker)** requesting a variance for a Site plan height for three items: (1) Exhaust Stack: Requested height above ground level of 67' to provide adequate dispersion of process exhaust and not cause an adverse impact to ground level air (2) Pellet Production Building roof height of 40 feet above ground level to provide adequate indoor clearance for plant equipment and a bridge crane to service the equipment. (3) Pellet Storage and Truck Load Out Silo height of 77 feet above ground level to provide up to 3 days of pellet production storage capacity. (to provide for any disruptions in daily product shipping) and adequate clearance for trucks to drive under the silo and be loaded by gravity dropping of pellets into the truck bed (dust suppression equipment will be provided)., to be granted, as provided in 4.16.8 "I" INDUSTRIAL MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF STRUCTURES: NO PORTION SHALL EXCEED (See also Section 4.18) 35 feet. In accordance with section 12.3 VARIANCE PROCEDURES, in accordance with the petition dated 10/17/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel # 11-10-12-0000-2657-0100 40 NE 178 AVE; 47.75. COMMISSION DISTRICT 5 DAVID OSTEEN  
**LPA Recommended Approval (5-0)**

**Motion to approve Variance for Circularity2LLC (Dammon Frecker) made by Commissioner Osteen. Seconded by Commissioner Wood. Board approved. (4-0)**

**20260033** A petition by **Michael Osteen** - Agent requesting a variance for a reduction of setback on the rear of property (south) from 15' to 0' for the permitting of a Screen Room to be granted, as provided in 4.7.7 RSF/MH subparagraph (2) of the Dixie County Land Development Regulations in accordance with section 12.3 VARIANCE PROCEDURES., in accordance with the petition dated 10/24/2025 to be located on the property as described as follows: Dixie County Parcel # 19-13-12-2994-0003-3830 77 SE 894 AVE; .26.

COMMISSION DISTRICT 3 MARK HATCH

**LPA Recommended Approval (4-1)**

**Sarah Ross voted “No”**

**Motion to approve Variance for Michael Osteen – (Agent) made by Commissioner Wood. Seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Board approved. (4-0)**