

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Washington County, Florida
Board Meeting
1331 South Blvd., Chipley, FL 32428

DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3	DISTRICT 4	DISTRICT 5
Alan Bush	Charles Kent	Tray Hawkins Chairman	Todd Abbott Vice-Chairman	Steve Joyner

I. PROCLAMATION

- A. Call to Order – Chairman Hawkins
- B. Invocation – Dustin Castells
- C. Pledge

The following persons were present: School Board - Vann Brock, Milton Brown, Lou Cleveland, Will Taylor, Joe Taylor, and Dewaye Geoghagan. BOCC - Tray Hawkins, Todd Abbott, Alan Bush, Charles Kent (via phone), Steve Joyner, Jeff Massey, Johnnie Pettis, and Lora C. Bell.

II. AGENDA ITEMS

- Broadband Discussion – Chairman Hawkins advised that the BOCC intends to advertise an RFP regarding broadband in Wednesday’s paper. The discussion today is regarding the funding for broadband. Items that need to be discussed include identifying the Washington County School Board needs to ensure the RFP fits that criteria and determining partnering funding sources.

County Administrator Massey informed that during COVID the strain of internet for school and telemed stood out. The plan is to have 100% connectivity in Washington County.

Commissioner Abbott suggested that after COVID some employees will remain working at home and there will be additional home school.

Joe Taylor, Washington County School Superintendent advised that the Department of Education has agreed to cover Washington County through the fall for distance learning. After that, a decision will be made.

The Department of Education agreed to give full funding for each student to Washington County if a new innovative learning program was created. Full credit will be given at the October count. They are holding the county harmless on this count as if it was the same as March 2020 as long as the students are in innovative learning. If they are in other virtual programs reduced funding will be received.

Chairman Hawkins commented that would support his argument for the use of the CARES Act funding.

Superintendent Taylor advised that the school's Cares Act funding goes through December 31, 2021.

Chairman Hawkins advised that the county funding goes through December 31, 2020.

The estimated cost for broadband is \$2,500,000.00.

The CARES Act funding for the county is \$4,400,000.00.

Chairman Hawkins advised that at this point it has not been confirmed that the CARES Act funding can be used for broadband. At this point, possible funding sources are being looked at. The need does not go away even if it is not approved under the CARES Act.

Superintendent Taylor advised per the current numbers that have been reported there are around 900 out of 3200 students that will not be returning.

Chairman Hawkins commented that one part of this meeting is for record purposes to show the need for broadband and that the Washington County School Board has been reached out to as a funding source.

Chairman Hawkins confirmed that the school is holding its numbers until February. That is how serious the Department of Education holds this.

Dewayne Geoghagan, Washington County Information Technology addressed the board. The school children were polled in March regarding internet access. 20% - 25% didn't have internet, however there were about 900 that didn't respond.

Chairman Hawkins requested the number of children who have internet that is paid for by the usage.

- Brickyard Road – Tray Hawkins, Chairman

County Engineer Knauer addressed the board. DOT has approved funding Brickyard Road and South Boulevard at the same time for resurfacing. When the county received the notice to proceed for designing the resurfacing projects the board directed him to figure out something with the school traffic.

Access management has been looked at to improve the traffic on both roads.

An eastbound left-turn lane at Kirkland Road will be a small fix to a large traffic issue.

Extending the turn-lane on South Boulevard has also been looked at.

He advised the board that he has met with Superintendent Joe Taylor regarding different scenarios.

Another option to try to control traffic is to dedicate the front of the school to the buses and allow the parents to drop off in the two loops. If there are improvements that need to be done where the existing loops are, that may be a scenario that could be considered.

Chairman Hawkins suggested to cut an additional lane out to have a flow for the buses to come in one side and drop off at one school and the same way on the other side; on the right-hand side at the other

loop at the middle school and come out and make another exit at the roadway.

Superintendent Taylor advised that the school design is to separate cars and buses. You can't encircle a school. A way out is mandatory. The Department of Education would rather have buses in the back. This is stated in the Florida Uniform Building Code.

11 years ago there was a plan to cut across. Every inch of that location had to be covered with concrete. This involved having to relocate a large transformer as well as other items. The cost at that time to do that was around \$1,000,000.00. That same thing would have been required on the Roulhac side.

Sgt. Green (directs traffic at Roulhac) addressed the board. He and Deputy Jarvis suggested that a right turn lane would assist with the traffic. Having no left turns would alleviate a lot of problems.

Deputy Jarvis suggested changing where buses come out from Kate Smith.

Chairman Hawkins advised County Engineer Knauer to look at the ideas provided by the officer on the county side and start to make plans while working with the state.

County Engineer Knauer advised that he could install a right in, right out with the roadway work, which would be a concrete island. 10' –

15' of the sidewalk would have to be taken up.

Dustin Castells updated the board. DOT funded Brickyard Road for \$808,742.00 for design, and CEI in the fiscal year 2022.

South Boulevard received \$1,637,812.00 which includes construction, design, and CEI.

DOT will entertain any request to modify the scopes.

County Engineer Knauer advised that he would put a conceptual plan together, which will focus on items discussed today.

Chairman Hawkins adjourned the meeting.

Deputy Clerk Brantley

Date Board Approved