

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
MAY 5, 2025

NOTE: If any person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made.

PRESIDING: Channing Dobbs, Chair

RECORDING: Reagan E. Robinson, Deputy Clerk

ATTENDING: Commissioner Mac Johns; Commissioner Donna Jackson; Commissioner Melissa McNeal; Commissioner Willie Croft; Kellie Hendricks Rhoades, Clerk of Courts & Comptroller; James Williams, County Coordinator; Russell A. Wade III, County Attorney

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Dobbs called the meeting to order at 4:32 P.M.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Commissioner McNeal offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Hearing no requests to speak, Chair Dobbs closed the floor to public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE FINANCE REPORT

Clerk Rhoades presented Resolution 25-03 and Budget Amendment 25-07. Commissioner Jackson questioned the need for the budget amendment. Clerk Rhoades explained that the funds were appropriated in a previous year but were not spent, and a late invoice was presented for grills and picnic tables for parks.

Commissioner Jackson then noted that a check for Tire Amnesty is being presented, and asked Clerk Rhoades why \$8,100 wasn't reimbursed. Clerk Rhoades shared that she didn't know why. Mr. Williams answered, explaining that it was from the previous year and that he is working to have it reimbursed with this year's funding.

Commissioner McNeal moved to adopt the Finance Report. Commissioner Croft seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jackson moved to adopt Resolution 25-03 and Budget Amendment 25-07. Commissioner Johns seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

REPORT FROM COUNTY COORIDNATOR, JIMMY WILLIAMS

Mr. Williams provided an update on the St. Jude Swine Show Fundraiser. He reported that the event garnered approximately 1,500 attendees. He also shared that fencing was needed at Palestine Park before the opening, which will cost around \$7,800. Commissioner Johns suggested exploring the option of hiring local contractors to potentially reduce costs. Mr. Williams then went on to explain that Mr. Jim DeValerio, UF/IFAS County Extension Director, needs to move \$2,400 to cover the hire of a temporary 4-H position. Commissioner McNeal indicated that Mrs. Daniel shared with her that they have that money in their budget. Clerk Rhoades confirmed that the funds could be reappropriated without causing any budgetary issues.

REPORT FROM RUSSELL A. WADE III, COUNTY ATTORNEY

Attorney Wade provided an update on the ongoing efforts to address road damage caused by heavy vehicles. He explained that Commissioner Croft had asked him to draft an ordinance, and he based one off of the one

implemented in Wakulla County, which operates under the principle of “If you break it, you fix it.” Commissioner Jackson raised questions regarding how to address damages that occurred before the ordinance is passed and whether the County has the legal standing to pursue repairs under state law. Attorney Wade went on to offer an option establishing weight limits and designating “no through truck” zones to prevent further damage. Commissioner Jackson stressed the importance of clearly defining the burden of proof in cases where responsibility for damage is disputed. Attorney Wade suggested a simple ordinance to help eliminate this issue in the future.

Discussion then moved to insurance matters. Commissioner McNeal expressed the need for thorough questioning when evaluating insurance proposals. Mr. Williams clarified that while the County is currently locked into an agreement with the broker, it is not necessarily committed to the current insurance plan for the next year. Commissioner Jackson emphasized the importance of allowing the insurance committee to review all options to ensure the best plan for County employees.

Discussion ensued regarding a potential land swap proposed with the City of Lake Butler by Mrs. Kim Hayes, who aims to exchange a piece of land with the County. Commissioner Jackson recommended obtaining legal advice to thoroughly assess the implications and possible consequences of such a swap.

REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Johns shared that Mrs. Hayes is actively pursuing a grant for building a pickleball facility, which would enhance recreational options within the community. Commissioner Jackson shared that the only inquiry she received was from a citizen interested in purchasing a County-owned property. Commissioner Johns also shared that he has been in communication with the new Recreation Board and that everything seems to be going well. He also shared that Mr. Chris Griffis is doing a fantastic job and needs a raise. Commissioner Jackson responded that he was given a 4% raise, which will be reevaluated at budget season.

Seeing no further business, Chair Dobbs adjourned the meeting by general consent at 5:15 P.M.

Approved by vote of the Board of County Commission on May 19, 2025