

## **BEACON HILL, FLORIDA**

**FEBRUARY 5, 2008**

### **EMERGENCY MEETING**

The Gulf County Board of County Commissioners met this date in emergency session at Beacon Hill Veterans' Memorial Park with the following members present: Chairman Billy E. Traylor, Vice Chairman Nathan Peters, Jr. and Commissioners Carmen L. McLemore, Bill Williams, and Jerry W. Barnes.

Others present were: County Attorney Timothy McFarland, Clerk Executive Administrator Towan Kopinsky, Chief Administrator Don Butler, Human Resources Director Denise Manuel, Mosquito Control Director Mark Cothran, Planner David Richardson, Public Works Director Gerald Shearer, Assistant Public Works Director Jake Lewis, Road Department Superintendent Bobby Knee, Assistant Road Department Superintendent Chris Wood and Sheriff Joe Nugent.

Chairman Traylor called the meeting to order at 8:12 a.m., E.T.

#### **FIRE - AMERICUS AVENUE DITCH PIPE / VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK**

Chairman Traylor discussed that the pipe for the Americus Avenue Ditch Project (that was stored on the ballfield at Beacon Hill Veterans' Memorial Park) was burned last night. He discussed the severity of the fire, and the need for D.E.P. to visit the sight, due to the pipe being hazardous material. County Attorney McFarland discussed that arson is suspected, and the County might receive restitution or insurance may cover the loss of the pipe. Chairman Traylor stated that the contractor (Bailey & Son Diversified, Inc.) and the engineers are taking inventory to get an estimate of the damages. Commissioner Williams discussed the exceptional job done by the firemen in extinguishing the fire. He also stated that John Arnold used the County's tractor to move pipe out of the way of the fire and saved not only the tractor but over \$100,000.00 worth of pipe. Commissioner Williams stated he is also going to contact Representative Patronis to see if there is funding available to assist the County. Commissioner Traylor discussed that the County has no Reserves for disasters such as this, due to the budget cuts forced on the Board by the State. Commissioner McLemore discussed the funds that will be required just for cleanup of the site, stating that the Board has no Reserves and they are short on manpower. After discussion regarding the hazardous materials issue, Commissioner Williams motioned to close Beacon Hill Veterans' Memorial Park until further notice. Commissioner Peters seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The Board agreed that the Contractor should continue work on the Americus Avenue ditch project with the pipe that was not damaged, and discussed obtaining copies of the invoices for purchase of the pipe from the Clerk's Office so they can get an accurate inventory of what was lost. Chief Administrator Butler discussed the possibility of obtaining funds from the State if this is a Hazardous Materials issue. Sheriff Nugent then discussed that this was arson, and they have suspects that they will be questioning, but he does not feel that the County will receive

restitution. Chairman Traylor reported that the Board will recess this meeting, and reconvene it when all of the damage assessments are ready.

There being no further business at this time, the meeting did then recess at 8:25 a.m., E.T.

**ATTEST:**

**BILLY E. TRAYLOR  
CHAIRMAN**

**REBECCA L. NORRIS  
CLERK**