

Board of County Commissioners

Minutes of
March 09, 2003

1:05 P.M.

The Board of County Commissioners assembled in an **emergency meeting** in the Columbia County Emergency Operations Center to discuss flooding conditions within their districts. The Press was notified of this meeting.

Commissioners in Attendance: James Montgomery,
Dewey Weaver, George Skinner, Jennifer Flinn, Ronald Williams.

Others Present: County Manager Dale Williams, County Attorney
Marilyn Feagle, Assistant County Manager Lisa Roberts, and others
representing the Fire Department, Rescue, Road Department,
911 Department, Sheriff and Police Departments.

Chairman Williams called the Emergency Meeting to order.

Heavy rains have created serious threat to the residents of Columbia County. Portions of the Columbia County are severely **flooded** and many roads and bridges have been impacted and are now impassible. The latest weather report indicates there will be minimal rainfall the remainder of the day, and isolated showers are expected.

Mr. Dale Williams advised that Damage Report is being compiled. A partial list of impacted roads was provided to the commissioners. The current road needs identified are those in a situation where money will have to be expended in excess of the budget.

In addition, there have been numerous pleas by citizens to assist with damages to private property. Unfortunately, the County is not able to assist with those private requests unless **Local State of Emergency** is declared. Mr. Dale Williams advised there is an obvious need to waive the **Purchasing Policy** since there is no time in many cases to obtain quotes in many situations.

Having provided the foregoing information, the Board was asked to declare Local State of Emergency in accordance with Florida Statute 252. A

Declaration of Local State of Emergency was read and presented for the Commissions consideration.

Motion by Commissioner Weaver to declare Local State of Emergency. Second by Commissioner Skinner. The motion carried unanimously.

Having passed the Local State of Emergency declaration, Mr. Dale Williams advised that there is no way to be certain whether or not the State of Florida will declare Columbia County in state of emergency, or whether any expenditure will be reimbursable at future date. Nonetheless, the situation warrants the County proceeding forward as if it were reimbursable.

In accordance with emergency rules and procedures, the Damage Assessment Team will review the impacted road list and make inspections of the roads.

The landfill is inaccessible and garbage disposal is uncertain. If alternative methods for disposing of garbage become necessary, the Public Information Officer will notify the public. The Waste Management Contract provides specific procedures for **impassible roads**. The County will contact Waste Management right away for direction.

Currently, no shelters have been authorized, but the flooding will be monitored closely and shelters will be made available if necessary.

The Public Library has been closed for today. Employees were asked to stay off the streets for their own safety, and the surrounding streets leading to the library were flooded.

The damages will be dealt with in stages once the water recedes. Many conditions such as **sflooding** in houses, and water running over bridges cannot be corrected until the water retreats. Once this happens, commissioners will have the responsibility of prioritizing the work that needs to be done in their district. The Road Department will need to handle the worst situations first.

Copies of the declaration will be distributed to all local agencies, and a copy will be sent via facsimile to the State. The Columbia County School System has made a decision to keep schools in session. They will deal with the road/bus issue on a case-by-case basis.

Commissioner Williams expressed his primary concerns are with **Hill's dike** breking, which may cause serious conditions for Alligator Lake and the flooding at the southern portion of **Falling Creek** near **Cheshire Road**. Commissioner Flinn conveyed concern that **Peacock Road** is seriously flooded and **College Manor Subdivision** is also a large problem.

Commissioner Skinner relayed that there is no **Kirby Road**, that the road is now more of a ditch or canal. There are several families that are not able to get in or out of the property. Commissioner Weaver said he has several roads that are critical, but still passable by detour. **Three Rivers** is flooded and is not expected to crest until Tuesday. The commissioners were asked to report the damages to 752-8787, extension #237 for logging.

Public Works was asked to remain in attendance to review financial forms, and for discussing expenditure tracking.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:30 P.M.

ATTEST:

P. DeWitt Cason
Clerk of Circuit Court

Ronald Williams, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners