

Columbia County  
**Board of County Commissioners**

DATE: April 05, 2007  
TIME: 7:00 P.M.  
LOCATION: School Board Administration Building  
TYPE: Regularly Scheduled Meeting

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**In Attendance:**

Commissioner Ronald Williams	Dist. 1	Commissioner Stephen Bailey	Dist. 4
Commissioner Dewey Weaver	Dist. 2	Commissioner Elizabeth Porter	Dist. 5
Commissioner George Skinner	Dist. 3		

**Others in Attendance:**

County Manager Dale Williams	County Attorney Marlin Feagle
Deputy Clerk Sandy Markham	Administrative Secretary Penny Stanley

Commissioner Weaver opened with prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America followed.

**Eutaw Utilities – Ellisville Interchange Water/Wastewater Utility Project** Per Department of Environmental Protection requirements, this public meeting is being held for the purpose of informing the public of the nature, cost and benefit of the Project. Mr. Tom Bryant of Eutaw Utilities gave the presentation explaining the system is designed for a 20 year plan. This design will eliminate private septic tanks, and address current water quality issues with benzene and coliform in the Ellisville area. Mr. Bryant explained this advance treatment system exceeds minimum requirements.

The production treatment facility will be located on county owned property just southeast of the interchange. The planning area is a three mile radius with the focal point being one mile from the center of the I-75 and Highway 441 interchange. The Phase 1 service area is the highest density area and is zoned primarily commercial. The facility may be expanded as growth occurs.

Options explored for wastewater were: Collection system, grinder pumps, vacuum systems, and gravity systems. Options explored for wastewater treatment and disposal were: Connect to the City of Lake City for wastewater treatment. A spray field and a Rapid Infiltration Basin (“RIB”) System were considered for disposal. Consideration was also given to connecting with the City of Lake City for water. There continues to be possible options available for water/wastewater with the City of Lake City, but the City and the County have not been able to reach a suitable agreement to date. While negotiations continue, the Commission presses on in its endeavors to place water wells at the Ellisville Interchange.

**Recommendations**

**Wastewater:** The selected alternate is to construct a gravity system with minimal use of grinder pumps, and to construct a 160,000 gallon per day wastewater treatment plant with advanced wastewater treatment (“AWT”) standards, and construct a RIB System. The cost of this system is approximately \$5,500,000.

Drinking Water: The selected alternative is to construct two wells (410 gallons per minute) to meet the demand, two ground storage tanks, a hydromantic tank, and liquid chlorine for the disinfection, and a piping network (6-10") throughout the distribution system.

Water Treatment: Hyper Chloride gas was selected. Mr. Bryant said that only the immediate service area (1 mile radius) at the interchange has been addressed, which is now zoned for business and commercial residential. The original plan was to service a three mile radius, but due to low density, that will not be possible at this time. The cost for the drinking water and wastewater treatment is approximately \$2,200,000.

Funding: This is approximately an \$8,000,000 Project. Possible repayment may come through legislative appropriations, Community Development Block Grant funds, and future legislative appropriations. Funding would also come by way of customer utility connect-on fees, which would apply toward the enterprise fund.

Support: The County will generate supporting revenue from this project through utility rates (renewal, replacement, operations, and maintenance). Currently the projected wastewater customer costs would be \$3.46 per thousand gallons, and drinking water projections would be \$1.77 per thousand gallons used. The customer's connection fees would fund the capital costs. Sewer connection for a residence will be approximately \$3,850, and the residential connection fee for water will be approximately \$1,900. Tap fees (the physical connection to the system) and other fees such as "turn-on and turn-off" fees will also fund the program. The commercial connection fees will be higher, but are not set at a particular rate due to variables.

Timing: The County is approximately one-third of the way into the Project's timing schedule. The County has drinking water on the "fast-track" for the interchange alone at the southwest corner. All indications are that the April 2008 deadline will be met. It will take approximately two more years for the balance of the entire distribution system project to be in place at the interchange. An updated timeline will be provided to the county.

Environmental considerations: This will immediately eliminate the problems with drinking water at the Ellisville Interchange for a one mile radius. As growth occurs and the system is expanded the residences will hook on and the private septic systems will be eliminated altogether.

Commissioner Williams asked the County Manager if the potential client/business that is considering going in at the Ellisville interchange was aware and comfortable with the fact that sewer service would not be in place until a later date. The County Manager responded, "yes."

Commissioner Weaver asked what the sludge disposal plan would be. Mr. Bryant replied bids would be taken to have the sludge hauled out of the county.

Commissioner Bailey asked for further clarification on the RIB system. Mr. Bryant clarified that three to nine inches of effluent per day can be applied into the RIB System and that the RIB systems are rotated (similar to retention ponds). This system would be opposed to spraying lands several inches per week. He noted the purchase of lands for spraying is very expensive. He explained the DOT has a RIB system nearby and has had good results with it.

Commissioner Bailey questioned why the chlorine method was selected to use over other methods. Mr. Bryant said chlorination is a tried and proven method. In his personal opinion there are

still issues with ozonation. Ozonation removes chlorine and other compounds. The disadvantage of Ozonation is that it is not a tried and proven method, it is very expensive, and the county may have a difficult time finding someone to operate a system such as this. Mr. Bryant explained ozonation is only good for approximately 30 minutes and the water would still need to be filtered and chlorinated after ozonation so that the distribution system remains free of bacteria. The chlorine method does not required the need for ozonation.

Commissioner Bailey asked about pending legislation that will make for new DEP Rules regarding the use of chlorination systems. He asked how that would affect the system to be constructed. Mr. Bryant responded the real issue is the method of using chlorine gas (he recommended the chlorine liquid). He said the chlorine gas is very dangerous and can be deadly. Mr. Bryant said that in his opinion the liquid is the simplest, easiest, and cheapest method. Should the Board elect to do so, they could change the type of system they want to use once the draft is approved. The hyper chloride system cost is approximately \$3000 for installation, and the chlorine gas system is roughly \$12,000 for installation. He said as the system is designed, operators will be identified and the operators can let everyone know what method they prefer to use. Then designing can be done with Board approval.

The public hearing opened.

Citizen Warren Godsmark asked where the drinking water would be in relation to the wastewater treatment plant. It was explained that the fresh water wells will be located at one end of the county owned property and wastewater treatment will be at the opposite end. The strip of county owned property is a long, narrow strip of property consisting of approximately 85 acres. The property is located on the West side of I-75 just South of Hwy. 441. It was noted that the DOT is evaluating each rest stop throughout the state and has expressed an interest in connecting to the county owned utility.

Citizen Stewart Lilker wanted to clarify that the County may change the draft plan to include ozonation. Mr. Tom Bryant replied that Mr. Lilker's understanding is correct. Mr. Lilker said, "Chlorine is not good for anybody. Chlorine will gasify out, which is why they ozinate."

Mr. Lilker said that he takes exception to the fact that the DEP has a letter dated, Thursday, February 15, 2007 posted to their website stating the resolution was already approved. Mr. Dale Dransfield explained the DEP received a copy of "this" on February 15th and that their copy, as is all copies, were marked "Draft." Mr. Dransfield said the facility plans do not lose their "draft" position until they are signed and sealed by an engineer. He further explained, "The DEP has an option of taking a hard copy and having to scan each page, and then put that document out on the website for the state clearinghouse, in our case, they said, "Do you have this in PDF format?" ...We supplied it that way. They put it out on the web. The PDF format doesn't have the hand-stamped "DRAFT" as do all printed copies. So, the DEP, they understand what's happening here. We've done dozens of these facility plans, this hasn't even been an issue." Mr. Lilker noted for the record that the copy supplied to each of the commissioners in the introduction regarding wastewater has "DRAFT" stamp on it. Mr. Lilker said, "And if that's scanned into PDF the "DRAFT" does come out."

Mr. Lilker said he also takes exception to the fact that he did not know about any of "this" until the 12<sup>th</sup> hour. He said the public meeting was supposed to be advertised and other citizens would have like to have commented had they had sufficient notice. County Manager Williams said the notice was submitted to the Lake City Reporter, but the County does not receive the proofs of publications

until the billing statements are received. Should the county find there was a snafu in the advertising, the meeting will be re-advertised.

Mr. Lilker said he is in favor of a regional utility. He said that these “things” that we’re getting has no affect on a single regional utility for the county, and that “they’re” subject to change even though the County may approve a draft document tonight. He asked if the County Manager agreed, that if an agreement is reached with the City that there will not be any problems in changing “this”. The County Manager said he has no objections with Mr. Lilker’s statement and said he would further clarify later in the meeting.

Mr. Lilker mentioned the need for an overhead projector telling the Board there was a couple of things that he would have liked to have projected. The Chair explained the Board cannot plan for an overhead projector to be used from people in the audience, because the Board does not know when the public may be bringing something they wish to display. Chairwoman Porter explained the Board can only plan for what they [the County] have on the agenda.

Mr. Lilker gave the commissioners a copy of the Lake City Columbia County Wastewater Service Zones, a map prepared by the City. The map shows the county being divided into three zones. He expressed concern that there would eventually be duplication and dual utilities in the County. He said a northern, central and southern utility did not make sense. He is of the opinion that working from the center of the county outward with one regional utility is by far a more pragmatic approach to utilities. Commissioner Weaver noted the map provided is the City’s proposal for future expansion of wastewater. The Commissioner agreed that if possible, a countywide utility would be in everyone’s best interest. Mr. Lilker agreed and asked the Board to consider in their deliberations the possibility of piping water into Ellisville by way of the City’s water pipe located in the Hwy. 41/441 area. He said this option would also spur managed growth in the area since fire hydrants could be put into place every 600 feet.

The City will meet tomorrow to address the issue of whether they will accept the County’s initial proposal for a regional utility.

The City’s Master Plan was provided for the record. Mr. Lilker said that should there be no agreement reached with the City, it’s time for the County to take public input regarding a Countywide Master Plan and it’s time to put that plan into writing. Mr. Tom Bryant pointed out the facility plan is a 20 year projection for the Ellisville area. Mr. Lilker responded he was referring to something countywide.

Finally, Mr. Lilker asked relating to the water supply side if hiring one part-time employee for \$15,000 per year was realistic with all that will be going on in the Ellisville area with the sewer and water. The County Manager said this is a contractual rate, the plan is to offer the contract to the City of Lake City for the operation of the Ellisville Utility, and there is not enough work for a fulltime employee. County Manager Williams explained the numbers are based on historical costs and the numbers can be reconsidered and adjusted if it needs to.

County Manager Dale Williams emphasized “planning” is the key word in the water/wastewater issue. Columbia County is growing outside of the designated urban development area (“DUDA”) at a faster rate than it is growing within the DUDA, which is a negative from a planning perspective. This is happening because of land values and the lack of a utility that that would make it possible to maximize land that will allow higher densities. That has brought the County to this

point. Along the way, other issues have surfaced relating to the protection of Ichtucknee River Basin, drainage and stream-to-sink issues. He recalled the original request to establish utilities as a corrective measure in the Ellisville area came from the FDEP out of concern for coliform and benzene found in the drinking water in the Ellisville area. In addition there are package treatment plants in that area that are not within the permit limits and need to be corrected. From the very beginning it was Columbia County's intent to form a regional utility. The County Manager said he hopes, and believes it is the commission's hope that a regional utility authority will still be possible. Building a utility in the Ellisville area will not hamper, but will enhance the relationship and effort to create a countywide regional utility and will add more assets to the utility. If a regional utility is created, the City will be paid for its assets as will Columbia County. Any debt that occurs with the County or City systems will be transferred to the Regional Utility Authority. Approximately two months ago the Board gave directions to precede post haste with the County Utility. Along with this utility, the County has also been working diligently on the Unnamed Unincorporated Area Utility, which will be a larger utility. He said if tomorrow when the City meets they allow the County to connect, he would recommend the County do so, and a new application would need to be put together. He pointed out the majority of the cost is in the distribution of the water. The County Manager said that to postpone or delay this project would be a mistake in his opinion. The County Manager said there have been recent discussions with a potential client in the Ellisville area who would require water being ahead of schedule. He said by proceeding, the County could meet it's obligations to have water in the area by April 2008. He said there are other businesses expressing interest in locating in the Ellisville area since the utility talk has commenced. He concluded by saying the Board does not want to be in the utility business and would like to see a regional utility authority in place. He said as the Board has directed, the County is moving forward, and that begins with the submission of the plans. He asked the Board to support the revolving loan fund resolution and to make application for both the water and wastewater facilities plans.

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to accept recommendation. Second by Commissioner Skinner. The motion carried unanimously.

**FELIX EADES** Mr. Felix Eades filed an application with the Addressing Department requesting a portion of Mount Carmel Road be changed back to Eades Road. The Addressing Department has recommended denial of the request, because the portion of the road formerly known as Eades Road has now been encompassed into Mount Carmel, which was done under the original ordinance and addresses for that area have been assigned accordingly. Mr. Eades offered the following:

There are no properties addressed on the strip formerly known as Eades Road.  
There is nothing to prevent the county from changing the name back to Eades Road.  
The history of the road relating to the donation can be found in the February 15, 2007 minutes.  
His elderly mother was never given written notice the road's name would change.  
E.D. Thomas Road (family) had the exact scenario. There road was changed back.  
His mother tried to get the road changed back for 10 years prior to dying in 2006.  
A memorial sign was erected on the property regarding the donation.  
The County expressed interest in purchasing the property for a public park in 2006.  
5 months after the Eades family presented a proposal to sell, a rejection letter was received.

Mr. Eades said that upon contacting Commissioner Skinner regarding the matter, he was told by Commissioner Skinner that he had been castrated by the charter and may be brought up on charges if he makes a motion to change the road name back to Eades Road, and that County Manager Williams was the only person that could have the name of the road changed back. According to Mr. Eades, Commissioner Skinner suggested he hire an attorney to deal with the County. Mr. Eades said that he

has a problem with the way the County is conducting its business. Mr. Eades asked that the road be deeded back if the name could not be changed.

In the Board's opinion, changing the road's name or giving it a dual name would present a public health and safety issue. Commissioner Weaver noted that SW Thomas Road was able to be changed back without a problem, because the request came during the addressing phase and prior to address assignments.

MOTION by Commissioner Skinner to uphold the recommendation of the Addressing Department. Second by Commissioner Skinner. The motion carried 4-1 with Commissioner Williams voting in opposition.

**Muscular Dystrophy** Mr. Katie Labauch from the Muscular Dystrophy Association and the Stone Family presented the Columbia County Fire Department with a plaque of appreciation for all they have done for the MDA in the past year such as volunteering at Summer Camp and participating with the local broadcast of the Jerry Lewis Telethon. The MDA was able to raise \$12,134 for families affected by MD in Columbia County.

### **Consent Agenda**

- (1) Invoice – Anderson Columbia Company, Inc. – County Road 242 – Project 2006-08 - \$511,744.86
- (2) Invoice – Darabi and Associates, Inc. – Closed Landfill Monitoring and Inspection - \$5,659.90
- (3) Invoice – Darabi and Associates, Inc. – Winfield Landfill Monitoring - \$2,817.11
- (4) Invoice – Ryan Companies US, Inc. – Project Sunshine – \$137,456.00
- (5) Human Resource – Custodian Position Description Revision
- (6) Purchasing – Nextel Phone Plan Change
- (7) UNIFI – Mutual Holding Company – Proxy Card
- (8) Proclamation – National Library Week – April 15-21, 2007
- (9) Agreement - Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc., Outdoor Lighting Services-SR 47 East Park and Ride
- (10) Columbia County Emergency Medical Services – Refund Request – Blue Cross and Blue Shield - \$297.94
- (11) Columbia County Emergency Medical Services – Refund Request – Continental Life - \$55.82
- (12) Columbia County Emergency Medical Services – Refund Request – Medicare Financial - \$163.33

- (13) (PULLED) EMS Billing – Eligible HCRA Applicant – Rosemary Ferguson – \$64,424.40
- (14) County Agreement – Florida Department of Transportation – Sidewalk on Dortch Street from US 27 to Holstein Avenue
- (15) Emergency Management – Award Letter – Federal Funds to our County – \$15,747.00
- (16) 9-1-1 Addressing – Naming of Unnamed Roads – NW Solitude Court, SW Leeville Court
- (17) 9-1-1 Addressing – Naming of Roadways with a New Subdivision – NW Taylor McGee Place, NW Ian Court
- (18) 9-1-1 Addressing – Approval of Street/Road Names – NE Katrina Glen
- (19) Agreement – Columbia County and Columbia County Health Department – Revised Summary of Attachment II, Part III
- (20) Maintenance Department – Declaration of Surplus Vehicles to be Sold at Auction (see attached list)
- (21) Indigent Burial – Mizell's Funeral Home – Harry Cooper, Deceased - \$500.00
- (22) Indigent Burial – Dees-Parrish Family Funeral Home – William Randall Jones, Deceased - \$500.00
- (23) Utility Permit – City of Lake City – NW Marco Terrace
- (24) Minute Approval – Board of County Commissioners – Regular Meeting – February 15, 2007
- (25) Minute Approval – Board of County Commissioners – Regular Meeting – February 1, 2007
- (26) Minute Approval – Board of County Commissioners – Workshop – February 7, 2007
- (27) Resolution – Child Abuse Prevention Month April 2007
- (28) Public Library – Staff Development Day Presenter – Carol Price, Presenter – \$2,950.00
- (29) Sheriff's Office – Recommendations for NW Combs Terrace – Traffic Sign Postings
- (30) County Agreement and Resolution – Department of Transportation – Sidewalk on Cullen Avenue from US 27 to SW Yulan Street

- (31) County Agreement and Resolution – Department of Transportation – Sidewalk on SW Yulan Street from Cullen Avenue to SR 47
- (32) Contract for Employment – Mosquito Control Operator – Ronald W. Hanks Sr. – \$7.87 per hour from April 2007 till October 2007
- (33) Contract for Employment – Mosquito Control Operator – Ronald O. Brooks - \$7.87 per hour from April 2007 till October 2007
- (34) Contract for Employment – Mosquito Control Operator – Robert L. Timmons – \$7.87 per hour from April 2007 till October 2007
- (35) Contract for Employment – Mosquito Control Operator – Jerry V. Ward - \$7.87 per hour from April 2007 till October 2007
- (36) Sheriff's Office – Requesting Release of Contraband Forfeiture Trust Funds - CD's - Interface Youth Program - \$1,000.00
- (37) Sheriff's Office – Requesting Release of Contraband Forfeiture Trust Funds – Law Enforcement Sponsorship for Florida Missing Children's Day - \$500.00
- (38) Purchasing – Fire Station Design and Construction of 2 Stations – Piggyback Columbia County School Board Contract for Professional Services of Craig Salley & Associates
- (39) Bid Award –Sale of Surplus Equipment – (see attached list)
- (40) Proclamation – Public Safety Appreciation Month – May 2007
- (41) County Manager – Request for Annual Leave – April 18, 2007 to April 20, 2007
- (40) Minute Approval – Board of County Commissioners – Regular Meeting – March 15, 2007

Item #13 was pulled per Commissioner Williams.

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to approve the Consent Agenda with exception to item #13. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

**Landscape Department** The County Manager recommended changing the name of the Landscape Department to "Landscape & Parks Department" and that two additional employees be placed in the department. The County Manager discussed that the current plan for recreation is for the County to assume the Southside Recreation Park from the City of Lake City. The County plans to assume more direct responsibility for recreation maintenance and to diminish the amount of money it contributes to recreation under the current interlocal agreement between the City and the County. He noted the Memorandum of Understanding relating to the Southside Recreation Complex is not complete, and there is not yet an agreement that will allow the County to discontinue funding recreation at the current



level. The monies to support this recommendation would come from already allocated dollars of a different program. In the meantime, the Landscaping Department needs additional help. This will be paid for from a portion of this year's budget. Next year this will become a recurring expense. He again stated that the money should come from the allocation currently being made to the City Recreation Department.

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to approve recommendation. Second by Commissioner Bailey.

There was a brief discussion that the County is trying to move more toward a facility based recreation role and leave the program responsibility to others, similar to that being done in Alachua County. It's easier for the County to provide facilities, which requires maintenance. There have been ongoing negotiations with the City regarding this and the County has placed a proposal on the table for them to consider that would curtail their participation in recreation. The County Manger said the proposal would not change the County's financial contribution, but would give the County more control over recreation.

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Old Newmanville Road**

Old Newmanville Road is a public easement located on the East side of U.S. 41/441 South, just beyond Rose Creek. This road leads from a main highway directly into the carport of the Brooks' home. The last repairs to this road was made under Commissioner Witt's reign, and were called into question. It was determined the repairs were legal and aboveboard. Another request has been made to perform maintenance on Old Newmanville Road. The County Manager said that he intends to honor the request to repair the road. Facts presented through Board discussion:

Attorney Feagle stated for the record that he is the attorney for the Brooks family.  
The Board has the option of petitioning to close the road.  
The County should be careful not to land lock anyone.  
Mr. Brooks owns all property surrounding the roadway.  
If the road is closed, the ownership of the road will go to the adjacent property owners.  
Currently there is no known legal description for the road.  
The road was never closed according to Florida Statute, but is believed to be abandoned.  
It is uncertain whether Mr. Brooks pays property taxes on the road.  
The road has no public purpose.

The Chair asked that aerial maps be obtained from the Property Appraiser and that the facts be researched. Once this has been done the Board will decide whether or not it wishes to advertise and bring the matter to public hearing. Commissioner Weaver would like for the road to be closed after repairs are so there are no future repair issues.

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to approve repairing the road. Second by Commissioner Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to research and move forward with closing. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

**Stormwater Enhancement Program** The County is in an interlocal agreement with SRWMD to create a Stormwater Enhancement Program. The pool of money can be used to mitigate the worst flooding problems the county experienced and has knowledge of. A list of engineering firms were ranked through a RFP process, approved by the Board, and have now been assigned to the various basins within the county. For budgetary purposes, the SRWMD needs a resolution stating that the county now has \$3,000,000 (the million dollars per year the County obligated itself ) to match SRWMD's contribution. The county is holding the \$3,000,000 in reserves. There is now \$6,000,000 in this particular pool, with the potential of reaching a maximum of \$10,000,000. The County Manager recommended honoring the SRWMD request and approving the resolution.

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to authorize Attorney Feagle to prepare the resolution. Second by Commissioner Weaver. The motion carried unanimously.

**Good Friday** Per court order, Good Friday is a holiday for many court related employees. The question has been asked whether or not Good Friday should be added to the list of holidays for all County Employees. The County Manager recommended to the Board that they allow him to do a financial impact study and look at the possibility of when Good Friday could be integrated into the county employee holiday schedule, with the first possibility for Declaring Good Friday a county holiday in 2008.

MOTION by Commissioner Williams, "So move." Second by Commissioner Weaver. The motion carried unanimously.

**Code Enforcement** Notice of Violations were issued under the County's *Dangerous Buildings and Hazardous Land Ordinance* for properties located behind the Oasis Bar (U.S.41/441 at CR242), but to no avail. The time has elapsed for the required cleanup. The County Manager recommended the County clean the properties and then place a lien against the property for the cost of cleanup. This has been an ongoing issue for 6 plus years. The zoning for this property is an A3 Zoning. Therefore, the County cannot legally deny another permit as long as the permit is for a mobile home that meets the minimum *Mobile Standards Ordinance* of the county, which would require newer mobile homes.

MOTION to approve by Commissioner Bailey. Second by Commissioner Skinner. The motion carried unanimously.

**Drought Index Number** The State Division of Forestry provided the latest drought index numbers. Commissioner Williams pointed out that Alachua County already has a burn ban in place. Commissioner Weaver said he has some reservations about the Board issuing a burn ban since the Division of Forestry has the authority to grant or deny requests to burn. Before making any decisions, the county was reminded their actions would affect the City according to the Columbia County Charter and it should be addressed with the City prior to enacting.

**Non-Agenda Items** Commissioner Skinner went to the podium and apologized to Commissioner Williams for standing in the way of his efforts to remove Patty Bridge and his efforts to close Cansa Road a few years ago. Commissioner Williams accepted his **apology**.

Regarding **utilities**, Commissioner Bailey would like to see the County and the City "give it one more try" by meeting to discuss utilities in a joint City/County meeting. He suggested the County hold one more meeting. Commissioner Williams said, "I think tomorrow [referring to the City's special called meeting] will answer that question." He said he did not see a reason to meet if the offer is rejected in

tomorrow's meeting. While on the subject of a joint meeting, the Chair pointed out the last **City/County meeting** was five months ago. She said there are several upcoming committee meetings (i.e. Fire and Recreation) and would like to see a joint meeting scheduled in the near future.

Commissioner Williams referred to a recent article in the Lake City Reporter. He said regarding the funding for the **Sheriff's fleet**, the paper quoted the Sheriff as saying the Board was going to spend the \$400,000 on something else if it didn't spend it on new cars. He told the Sheriff that he did not know if he [Sheriff] actually said that or if it was a misquote, but that it certainly was not a true statement. The **Sheriff** responded he would never have said anything like that and apologized if there was any misunderstanding.

### **Public Input**

Citizen Nicholas Hemes asked that Public Works be put on notice that the **illegal signage** along the road right-of-way, particularly on Hwy. 90 has increased. As the gateway into Florida he would like to see Columbia County strive to maintain a pristine appearance. He asked that the Board move to get the signage cleaned up and volunteered to assist them in the project.

Ms. Keona O'neal is the Program Supervisor for the **Children's Home Society** in Columbia County and a part of the Task Force Committee. She advised the month of April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. She noted the importance of this month by saying that in the 05-06 year 677 of Columbia County's children were abused. She invited the commissioners to become involved. The next meeting is June 20, 2007 at 11 a.m. in the Columbia County School Board Annex.

Citizen Stewart Lilker advised he would present the **Gateway Regional Utility Presentation** again at the Fort White Town Council Meeting on April 017, 2006. He also plans to make this presentation at the Lake City Utility Meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Board of County Commissioners

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P. DeWitt Cason  
Clerk of Circuit Court