



**COLUMBIA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

**971 W Duval St, Suite 150**

**Lake City, FL 32055**

**AGENDA**

**April 17, 2025 8:30 A.M.**

**Opportunity for public comment shall be in accordance with Rule 4.704. Each person who wishes to address the Economic Development Advisory Board or any discussion and action agenda item shall complete one comment card for each item and submit the card or cards to County Economic Development staff in the front of the meeting room. Cards shall be submitted before the meeting is called to order.**

**Rules of decorum and rules for public participation are attached to the agenda handouts.**

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1. Call to order: Commissioner Rocky Ford
  2. Pledge to U.S. Flag
  3. Roll call
  4. Request for additions or deletions to agenda
  5. Discussion and action items
    - a. Discussion items
      - i. **“Celebrating Connection: The Business of Building Community”**; Economic Development Week May 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>
        1. Monday: **“Fiesta of Opportunity”**
          - a. Invitation only – 4:30pm
          - b. Public welcome - 5:30pm-6:30pm
        2. Tuesday: Alligator Lake Trail – **“A Taste of Tourism”**
          - a. Meet at main pavilion – 9:30am
        3. Wednesday: Townplace Suites – – **“Growing Together; A Celebration of Community Business Partnerships”**
          - a. Host presentation followed by guided tour – 9:30am
        4. Thursday: Wastewater Plant Ribbon Cutting – **“Confluence of Commerce, Partnerships, and Growth”**
          - a. North Florida Mega Industrial Park WWTP
            - i. Begin arriving - 9:30am
            - ii. Ceremony begins - 10am
        5. Friday: **“Celebrating Connection: The Business of Building Community”**
          - a. Luncheon at the Blanche Hotel – keynote speaker: Shellie Phelps, Executive Director, Wetumpka Area Chamber of Commerce

- b. Action items
    - i. Approve minutes from Board Meeting held September 11, 2024
    - ii. Approve minutes from Board Meeting held February 25, 2025
    - iii. EDAB Board Appointment(s)
      - 1. Chani Walker
- 6. Economic Development Specialist report
  - a. BRE Networking event: April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2pm – Cyber Security
  - b. Small Business Administration (SBA) Update
- 7. Economic Development Director report
  - a. Rural Counties Day Review
  - b. New website
  - c. SEDC 2025 #AmericanSouth Site Selection Summit: April 28-30
  - d. FEDC 2025 Annual Conference: May 14-16
  - e. NFEDP Quarterly Board of Directors and Business Meeting: June 6<sup>th</sup>
- 8. Legislative Update
- 9. Open public comments to the Board: 3-minute limit
- 10. Next advertised meeting: May 15, 2025 \*\*Conflict with FEDC\*\*
- 11. Adjournment

**Columbia County Economic**  
**Advisory Board**

September 11, 2024 8:30 AM

The Columbia County Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) met in a regularly scheduled meeting held at 971 West Duval Street, in the Tourism Development Council Conference room. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Ronald Williams followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**Board Members Present:**

Ron Williams, Chairman

Charlie Keith, Co-Chair

Randy Thomas, (Florida Gateway College)

Marc Vann

Jeff Simmons

Terry Dicks

Joey O'Hern (Chamber of Commerce)

Don Rosenthal, (City of Lake City Manager)

**Other Attendees:**

Jennifer Daniels, Eco Development Director

David Kraus, Columbia County Manager

Van Brown, Eco Development Specialist

Amber Taylor, Deputy Clerk

**Additions & Deletions:**

Additions – None

Deletions – None

### **Discussion & Action Items:**

**Motion** to approve minutes from August 21, 2024 meeting by Jeff Simmons. **Seconded** by Randy Thomas. Motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer Daniels gave reminder to Board of CTE Program Tour. This is so that the Board can see first-hand the benefits that these specialization programs bring, to Columbia County, as well as surrounding Counties.

The groundbreaking for the North Florida Mega Industrial Park is scheduled for October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025 at 3 PM. All Board members are invited to attend this event.

Farm to Table Event to take place in Columbia County on October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30. The Board and public are invited to attend. This is an annual event, and is in its third year.

Legislative Breakfast will take place after rescheduling due to Hurricane, October 9<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Discussion ensued.

Jeff Simmons spoke on New Millennium and concerns about traffic, noise, dust and 24hr a day operations being a complaint for potential residents near this facility.

Lengthy discussion took place.

### **Directors Report:**

Mrs. Daniels provided the Board with an update on Bell Road Distribution Corridor Project. Currently the correct marketing information is not ready. Marketing is set to begin for the Florida First Sites, in the coming week. When the marketing information is available, Mrs. Daniels will forward on to Board members. Team members from FPL will be in attendance to answer questions and provide an update at November 2024 Board of County Commissioner Meeting.

Rail Crossing elimination Grant, which focuses on the safety aspect of rail crossing, will allow for usage of funds to fill the funding gap needed to complete the Bell Road Extension. Along with Legislative appropriations of \$1 Million dollars, this grant should bring the project to completion.

Mr. Kraus (CM) provided the Board with an update on Ellisville projects. The need for an industrial sewer plant for the Ellisville, was expressed by Mr. Kraus. This is imperative for commercial growth in this area of the County.

Lengthy discussion ensued.

### **Presentation Guest Speaker:**

#### **Joseph Davis, SBA Public Affairs Specialist**

Mr. Davis is the Liaison for Columbia County disaster relief for Hurricane Debbie disaster declarations. Mr. Davis informed the Board of services offered to Columbia County residents, who were uninsured OR underinsured. Home and Business loans are available through programs offered and Mr. Davis can assist any citizens interested in these options.

**Open Comment:**

None

**Staff Comments:**

Mr. Kraus updated the Board as to the approval of the Rail Agreement for the Industrial Park, by the Columbia County Board of Commissioners.

Jennifer Daniels provided additional information to the Board, as to the details of this venture.

**Next Meeting:**

~~The next scheduled meeting is to be held October 9, 2024.~~

Meeting has been cancelled, due to Legislative Breakfast scheduling conflict.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:14 AM.

ATTEST:

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Chairman, Ron Williams

Columbia County Commissioner

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James M. Swisher, Jr.

Clerk of Court and County Comptroller

# Shellie Phelps

**Executive Director**  
*Wetumpka Area Chamber of Commerce*



In her professional life, Shellie Phelps Whitfield is an unparalleled force in the realm of community and economic development. As the Executive Director of the Wetumpka Area Chamber of Commerce and as a passionate community change-maker, she has played a pivotal role in revitalizing Wetumpka, Alabama.

In her personal life, Shellie has faced a multitude of challenges that have taught her to have the courage and faith to step into the dark unknown, regardless of how terrifying it may seem. She is an adoptive mother and creative business owner who believes in the power of serendipity and constantly strives to be her most authentic and unique self.

Shellie's expertise in fostering community growth through the arts is truly remarkable. She has become a recognized authority on the subject, and her speaking engagements have taken her all across the United States. Her talks inspire and empower audiences with insights into the transformative power of art in revitalizing small towns and creating stronger, more vibrant communities. Her message of "What makes you different is actually your superpower" resonates with every age group, organization, and community that hears her.

As a community development cheerleader, Shellie's dedication to her work has left an enduring impact on Wetumpka, Elmore County, and the state of Alabama. Her ability to seamlessly blend artistry and leadership has made her a beacon of hope for communities seeking revitalization and growth.

Shellie Phelps Whitfield's journey is an inspiring testament to the boundless potential of individuals who dare to dream and act on their passions. Her legacy is one of creativity, growth, and inspiration, both in the realm of art and in the field of community development and public speaking.





# BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

## APPLICATION FOR BOARD OR COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

*Thank you for expressing interest to be considered for appointment to a committee, board, commission, or advisory group of the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners. The County Commission appreciates your willingness to serve your County in a volunteer capacity. Please complete this application to the best of your knowledge. You may attach a resume and any additional information you believe would assist the Board in evaluating your application.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you resided in Columbia County? \_\_\_\_\_

Name your most recent occupation and employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you registered to vote in Columbia County? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

List all active professional licenses or certifications you hold: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please summarize your educational background: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please summarize your work experience: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list civic clubs, professional organizations, public interest groups and other not-for-profit organizations of which you are a member or in which you have been active in the last three years, particularly those in Columbia County.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

Other than your home, please list and indicate the acreage of any parcels of property in Columbia County in which you have any ownership interest:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list all corporate entities doing business in or with Columbia County in which you have any financial interest, including but not limited to ownership, employment, or any contractual relationship:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Over)

Please indicate in order of preference the committee, board, or council in which you have an interest\*:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

\* Applicants may be appointed to no more than one board at any given time.

List three (3) personal or professional references:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

You may use this space for a brief biographical sketch or to list other skills you possess that you believe are relevant to the appointment you are seeking. Please indicate in the space below if you have attached your resume or any other supporting documents.

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NOTICE:

Florida has very broad public records laws. All information provided with this application shall become a matter of public record upon submission, and will be open to public inspection. If you require special accommodations because of a disability to participate in the application/selection process, please notify the Board of County Commissioners in advance to allow for your reasonable accommodation. This application will be active for one year, after which time you must notify the Board of County Commissioners of your wish to remain an active applicant. You may be required to update any application more than one year old.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND CERTIFICATION

I hereby acknowledge that Columbia County or its representatives may verify any information provided herein. I further authorize the release of any information by those in possession of such information, which may be requested by the County. I certify that all information provided herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a volunteer position provides for no compensation except that as may be provided by Florida Statutes or other enabling legislation. If appointed, I understand that I shall serve at all times at the pleasure of the Board of County Commissioners.

Chani Walker  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please return completed application to:**  
**Columbia County Board of County Commissioners**  
**Attn: Human Resources**  
**PO Box 1529**  
**Lake City, FL 32084**  
**Phone: (386) 755-4100**  
**Fax: (386) 758-2182**

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Received by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date received

***Thank you for your interest!***



# Thank You for Supporting and Attending Rural Counties Day! March 19-20, 2025 Florida State Capitol | Tallahassee, FL

*Thank you to everyone who joined us to make Rural Counties Day at the Florida Capitol a resounding success in 2025. As a proud advocate for rural Florida, I've seen the strength and spirit of our rural communities, and it's an honor to carry their voices here in Tallahassee. This event shines a spotlight on the vital role our rural counties play in Florida's prosperity, showcasing their unique contributions and unwavering resilience. From just a handful of counties years ago to the incredible turnout we see today, we're proving that rural Florida is not just the backbone of our state, it's the heartbeat. I'm committed to ensuring these communities thrive, preserving their legacy for generations to come, and I'm grateful to everyone who helps make that vision a reality.*

~ Senator Corey Simon (D-3)

# Thank You for Supporting and Attending Rural Counties Day!

On behalf of Senator Corey Simon, thank you for participating in and supporting 2025 Rural Counties Day events!

This year's celebration saw record-breaking attendance and sponsorship, highlighting the growing impact and visibility of Florida's rural communities. From our kickoff reception on Wednesday, March 19, to the culminating networking event on the Capitol Plaza on Thursday, March 20, we were proud to feature 29 of Florida's 31 rural counties.

## Event Highlights Included:

- Senator Simon presented the inaugural **Bobby Payne Florida Rural Counties Advocacy Award** to **Senate President Ben Albritton**
- Remarks from Former **Representative Bobby Payne** and **Senator Corey Simon**
- Legislative guests in attendance included: **Senate President Ben Albritton**, Senators **Jennifer Bradley**, **Stan McClain**, **Corey Simon**, **Keith Truenow**, and Representatives **Shane Abbott**, **Yvette Benarroch**, **Omar Blanco**, **Chuck Brannan**, **Berny Jacques**, **Chad Johnson**, **Kim Kendall**, **Judson Sapp**, **John Paul Temple**, and **Meg Weinberger**.
- **29 rural counties showcased booths on the Capitol Plaza, offering unique giveaways, local flavors, and insights into the richness of rural Florida**
- A press conference was held on the 4th Floor (moved indoors due to inclement weather) drawing coverage from multiple statewide news outlets, and featured remarks from **Senate President Albritton**, **Senator Simon**, and RCD visionary and Former House Member **Payne**.
- A delicious **catfish lunch for over 1,000 attendees**, generously provided by **Posey's**

We hope you had the opportunity to network, connect, and join us in celebrating the strength, diversity, and promise of Florida's rural communities.



**COLUMBIA COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
Economic Development Advisory Board**

The Columbia County Board of County Commissioners welcomes you to our Economic Development Advisory Board Meeting. Below you will find the Rules of Decorum and the Rules of Public Participation, which we request be followed if you choose to participate. Attached is the agenda for this meeting.

**RULES OF DECORUM**

1. Commissioners, county staff, members of the public, and any other person speaking during any meeting shall be respectful to the Board and all others and shall refrain from making personal attacks of any kind. Any person who becomes disorderly or fails to confine remarks to the identified subject or business at hand shall be cautioned by the Chair and given the opportunity to conclude remarks on the subject in a decorous manner within the designated time limit. Any person failing to comply as cautioned may be found to be out of order. An individual found to be out of order shall not address the Board for the remainder of the meeting unless permission is granted by a majority vote of the Commissioners present.
2. If an individual is found to be out of order, he or she shall immediately relinquish the podium. If the person does not do so, he or she may be subject to removal from the meeting room.
3. Order shall be observed while meetings are in session. Clapping, cheering, heckling, or verbal outbursts in support of or opposition to a speaker or his or her remarks are discouraged. Interruptions of any kind will not be permitted. All attendees shall come to order when called upon to do so by the Chair. Failure to come to order may result in removal of the individual or individuals determined by the Chair to be disrupting the meeting. Persons exiting the meeting while in session shall do so in a quiet and courteous manner.
4. In the interest of public safety, no signs or placards shall be mounted on sticks, posts, poles or similar structures. Any other signs, placards, or banners shall be displayed so as not to disrupt meetings or interfere with public view of board business.

Adopted by Resolution 2017R-23

## **RULES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Board of County Commissioners recognizes the value and benefit of orderly participation of citizens during public meetings. To ensure a fair opportunity for all citizens to participate, the following rules and procedures shall apply to all citizen participation during meetings, public hearings, and workshops. These rules are supplemental to the Board's rules regarding decorum.

**Public Comment at Economic Development Advisory Board Meetings.** Time shall be allotted at the conclusion of each EDAB Meeting item for public comment. When called upon by the Chair and prior to making comment, the speaker shall approach the podium, identify him- or herself, state a place of residence, and state whether the speaker represents anyone other than him- or herself. The remarks of each speaker may be up to two (2) minutes. The Chair shall have discretion to afford additional time to any speaker.

**Public Comment on Regular Agenda Items.** Each person who wishes to address the Chair, Economic Development Director, Advisory Board member or other invited guests regarding a Regular Agenda Item shall complete one comment card for each item and submit the card or cards to County staff in the front of the meeting room. Cards shall be submitted before the meeting is called to order. When called upon by the Chair and prior to making comment, the speaker shall approach the podium, identify him- or herself, state a place of residence, and state whether the speaker represents anyone other than him- or herself. Speakers should speak clearly into the microphone. Although free to ask questions of the Advisory Board and staff, speakers are reminded that meetings are not a forum for debate between the Board Members and/or staff and the public and that responses, if any, shall be directed through the Chair. **The remarks of each speaker may be up to two (2) minutes per item.** The Chair shall have discretion to afford additional time to any speaker.

**Citizen Comment.** Each person who wishes to address the Commission during the Citizen Comment portion of the Agenda shall complete a comment card and submit the card to County staff in the front of the meeting room. Cards shall be submitted before the meeting is called to order. When called upon by the Chair and prior to making comment, the speaker shall approach the podium, identify him- or herself, state a place of residence, and state whether the speaker represents anyone other than him- or herself. The remarks of each speaker may be up to two (2) minutes. The Chair shall have discretion to afford additional time to any speaker.

Adopted by Resolution 2017R-23