

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP OF
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

MAY 1, 2025

Present: Commissioner Michael S. Kohler, Chair, District 2
Commissioner Ashlee M. Hofberger, Vice Chair, District 4
Commissioner Steven L. Barry, District 5
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3
Commissioner Steven R. Stroberger, District 1
Honorable Pam Childers, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
Codey Leigh, General Counsel, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Wesley J. Moreno, County Administrator
Alison Rogers, County Attorney
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Operations Supervisor, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Jose Gochez, Program Manager, County Administrator's Office

Location: Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, Board Chambers, First Floor
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida

Report prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, called the Committee of the Whole (C/W) Workshop to order at 9:25 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Commissioner Kohler led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag during the Agenda Review Session.

3. Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

The meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on April 24, 2025, in the Board's weekly meeting schedule.

AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

4. Board Items

I. Discussion Concerning the Pensacola Bay Center Upgrades/Renovations

- A. Commissioner Hofberger reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, which was also attached as agenda backup, titled *Building a Safer Future: Four New Fire Stations for Escambia County*;
- B. Commissioner Hofberger advised that there are five fire stations that need either to be built, replaced, or expanded, and also reviewed the estimated costs associated with each, for a total budget of approximately \$34 million. She explained why this budget is practical, and provided examples of similar budgets for improvements for fire stations in other municipalities. Commissioner Hofberger also reviewed benefits to the community and the positive economic impact the projects would have, and outlined her call to action with proposed next steps toward implementation, including an ambitious timeline;
- C. Commissioner Kohler advised that the Board is committed to public safety as its first priority. He also explained that timeliness has a major impact on survivability of citizens, and the probability of a positive outcome in an emergency event is greatly impacted by the proximity to a fire station;
- D. Commissioner May expressed the importance of advanced life support (ALS) capabilities, as well as his support for investing in training and schools, which could generate revenue. He recommended looking at call volume in certain areas and the greater health needs of particular pockets in the county, as well as the value of reviewing a forecast of operations and upkeep;
- E. Commissioner Barry advised that, though he thinks the timeline is aggressive, he feels that it is a conversation worth having and that he is supportive of moving the idea forward;
- F. Commissioner Stroberger expressed his passion for public safety and addressed how the loss of the Paradise Beach firehouse has impacted residents in that area. He also reviewed the current progress being made on the station's replacement, and his support for the proposal and timeline;
- G. The Board discussed priorities and the importance of training, as well as a training facility for growing our own team and next generation of public safety personnel;

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

4. Continued...

I. Continued...

- H. Fire Chief Adam Harrison and Eric Gilmore, Public Safety Director, spoke regarding the shared vision of the training facility, the variety of certifications needed, each with their own required training hours, and their vision for what the facility and operations will look like for Escambia County's future, including a central facility with north and south satellite locations; and
- I. The Board discussed the need for paramedics, requirements for trainers, the importance of ALS and CPR devices, and their unanimous support for advancing public safety in the county.

5. Adjourn

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, declared the C/W Workshop adjourned at 9:59 a.m.