

Bishop: No charge to represent other entities

REFERENDUM SUIT Continued from page 1

The issue before the commission was whether to approve Bishop’s request to waive any potential conflicts of interest that might arise from his representing the county, the supervisor and the canvassing board in the same case.

The commission voted 3-1 to approve the request, with Commissioner Pam Feagle voting against. Commissioner Jim Moody was absent.

Meanwhile, the school board, which would receive the proceeds of the sales tax if voters approve the referendum and it survives the legal challenge, voted 4-1 on Monday to hire Tallahassee law firm Ausley McMullen to defend its position in court.

The plaintiffs are represented by Tallahassee attorney Leonard M. Collins of the GrayRobinson law firm.

New judge assigned
Circuit Judge Fred L. Koberlein Jr. of Lake City was assigned to the case Wednesday by the chief judge of the Third Judicial Circuit.

The assignment followed the recusals of Circuit Judges Cary A. “Bo” Hardee III of Madison and Greg Parker of Perry, both of whom stepped aside without explanation. The case was then assigned to County Judge Bill Blue, serving as acting circuit judge.

On Oct. 20, Blue issued an “Order and Notice of Disclosure” on his own motion, informing the parties that, in his capacity as county judge, he chairs the Taylor County Canvassing Board -- “thus a party to the case.” The order said the court “will not take offense” if either side sought his disqualification and gave the parties 20 days to file such a motion. The plaintiffs filed a motion

to disqualify Blue the same day.

Koberlein, who took office in January 2023, primarily handles circuit civil, family and juvenile cases in Columbia and Dixie counties. He is the son of retired Senior Judge Fred L. Koberlein Sr.

“I would say to you that I don’t think there’s any conflict with me representing all three (entities). “And, if there was one, I would ask you all to vote to waive it, because we are in the same position that we’re going to let the court decide whether in fact the deficiencies were something that would stop that particular (referendum).”

– County Attorney Conrad Bishop

Two alleged flaws

The lawsuit claims the ballot question has two separate flaws, either of which, the plaintiffs argue, should be enough to throw out the referendum.

First, the suit says the ballot summary is too long: it runs 90 words, while Florida law limits a summary to 75 words.

The second alleged flaw is the title printed above the question: “Referendum Regarding the Authority of the School Board to Levy for School Operational

Purposes.”

State law says money from this type of sales tax cannot be used for operating expenses -- a restriction the ballot summary itself correctly states.

Although the school board spearheaded the referendum, it could not place the measure on the ballot itself. Instead, it had to ask the commission to do so, which the commission did by ordinance in April.

Bishop explains request

At Tuesday’s meeting, Bishop said Southerland had agreed to have him represent her in the case, and the canvassing board had voted unanimously for him to represent it as well.

“What they’ve sued for is an injunction to stop, for lack of a better term, the vote on the half-cent sales tax referendum that’s on the ballot, naming some deficiencies in the ballot,” Bishop said.

“The resolution that the school board sent to us, meaning the board of county commissioners -- the statute provided that if they do send you a resolution, then you have to pass an ordinance,” Bishop said. “‘Shall’ means you do it, and that’s what we did. We passed the ordinance to put it on the ballot.”

“I would say to you that I don’t think there’s any conflict with me representing all three (entities),” he continued. “And, if there was one, I would ask you all to vote to waive it, because we are in the same position that we’re going to let the court decide whether in fact the deficiencies were something that would stop that particular (referendum).”

Bishop noted that the canvassing board has no funding to hire its own attorney, and while Southerland has a budget, she does not have extra money to hire a separate attorney for the case.

“I’m willing to do that because I feel like it’s my job to try and do the best I can for the entire county,” Bishop said. “I have no way of knowing how far this is going to go. I don’t know what the court will do, but I’ll keep you informed if you will make a motion to waive any conflict.”

‘Ninety is bigger than 75’

Commission Chair Jamie English was about to ask for a motion on Bishop’s request when Simmons asked to address the board.

English asked Bishop whether that was appropriate given the pending suit, and Bishop said he did not have an issue with it. Feagle added that she wanted to hear what Simmons had to say.

“I speak to discourage the county commission from wasting taxpayer dollars in legal fees to defend the indefensible,” Simmons said. “I am speaking about a legal complaint over the county’s unfortunate decision to pass an ordinance with a ballot summary containing 90 words instead of the legal 75 words. Ninety is bigger than 75.

“And, because 90 is bigger than 75, a judge this week, next week or in coming days is going to rule that the tax hike referendum on the Nov. 3 ballot is infirm and fatally flawed.

“If legal maneuvering delays the judge’s ruling, the school board’s battery of attorneys will make more money, the county’s attorneys will make more money and the plaintiffs’ attorney will make more money. And Taylor County taxpayers are going to lose money -- a lot of money. All because government officials have directed their attorneys to go into court to argue 90 is not larger than 75,” Simmons continued.

“That will be a waste of tax dollars, but the real damage will be the

reputational cost that occurs if local government officials insist on appearing on WCTV news and claiming not one person in local government can count past 75. I urge you: Don’t do this thing,” Simmons said.

“A better course of action is to admit there was a hiccup, take leadership responsibility and commit to making this thing right. Anyone with the courage to admit a mistake and commit to fixing the problem will look like a hero -- because they will be a hero.”

– Referendum Lawsuit Plaintiff Dan Simmons

“A better course of action is to admit there was a hiccup, take leadership responsibility and commit to making this thing right. Anyone with the courage to admit a mistake and commit to fixing the problem will look like a hero -- because they will be a hero,” he added.

Feagle asked Simmons what he was suggesting the commission do. He replied that the county should not spend money defending the referendum and should leave that to others, such as the school board.

“The school board has one of the biggest law firms in Tallahassee,” Simmons said. “They’re going to fight this, I think. They’ve committed to doing that. Let them defend their language and what they’ve done. If they want to waste

dollars, you can’t stop that. What you have control over is what you and your attorneys do. I just urge you not to waste tax dollars on this.”

Commission debates, votes

Commissioner Thomas Demps asked Bishop whether there was a fee attached to his representing Southerland and the canvassing board. Bishop said he would not charge the county anything beyond his usual hourly rate for representing the commission in the litigation.

“So, help me understand, why would we want to go ahead with this, Conrad?” Feagle asked.

“I’m not going to give anything away with regard to what the strategy is from a defensive standpoint,” Bishop said. “Of course, it should be up to the citizens of Taylor County to decide whether, in fact, there’s a half-cent sales tax increase.”

“If we vote this (Bishop’s request) down, what are we supposed to do?” Demps asked. “It’s not our fight.”

“We’ve been included in a lawsuit,” English replied.

“I don’t want to just fall back and just let somebody run over us,” Demps said.

“I don’t want to cost our citizens any more money,” Feagle said.

English asked for a motion on Bishop’s request, and Commissioner Michael Newman asked Bishop to confirm that the request was solely to waive any potential conflicts in his representing the commission, Southerland and the canvassing board at the same time. Bishop said that was correct.

Demps made a motion to approve the request, Newman seconded it, and the measure passed 3-1, with Feagle voting against.

LEGALS

(Continued from page 14)

Any interested person on whom a copy of the Notice of Administration is served who challenges the validity of the will or any codicils, venue, or jurisdiction of the court is required to file any objection with the court in the manner provided in the Florida Probate Rules WITHIN THE TIME REQUIRED BY LAW, which is on or before the date that is 3 months after the date of service of a copy of the Notice of Administration on that person, or those objections are forever barred. The 3-month time period may only be extended for estoppel based upon a misstatement by the personal representative regarding the time period within which an objection must be filed. The time period may not be extended for any other reason, including affirmative representation, failure to disclose information, or misconduct by the personal representative or any other person. Unless sooner barred by section 733.212(3), all objections to the validity of a will or any codicils, venue, or the jurisdiction of the court must be filed no later than the earlier of the entry of an Order of Final Discharge of the Personal Representative or 1 year after service of the notice of administration.

A petition for determination of exempt property is required to be filed by or on behalf of any person entitled to exempt property under Section 732.402 WITHIN THE TIME REQUIRED BY LAW, which is on or before the later of the date that is 4 months after the date of service of a copy of the Notice of Administration on such person or the date that is 40 days after the date of termination of any proceeding involving the construction, admission to probate, or validity of the will or involving any other matter affecting any part of the exempt property, or the right of such person to exempt property is deemed waived.

An election to take an elective share must be filed by or on behalf of the surviving spouse entitled to an elective share under Sections 732.201–732.2155 WITHIN THE TIME REQUIRED BY LAW, which is on or before the earlier of the date that is 6 months after the date of service of a copy of the Notice of Administration on the surviving spouse, or an attorney in fact or a guardian of the property of the surviving spouse, or the date that is 2 years after the date of the decedent’s death. The time for filing an election to take an elective share may be extended as provided in the Florida Probate Rules.

The date of first publication of this

notice is October 16, 2026.

Personal Representative: /s/ Faith Lorraine Davis
Faith Lorraine Davis
Attorney for Personal Representative: /s/ Alexis B. Diaz
Alexis Bucelo Diaz, Esq.
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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR TAYLOR COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO. 2026-CA-000046
HONORABLE JUDGE: GREGORY STUART PARKER
PLANET HOME LENDING, LLC, Plaintiff, vs.
KEVIN ROW; CYNTHIA ROW; UNKNOWN TENANT OCCUPANT #1; UNKNOWN TENANT OCCUPANT #2; Defendants,

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER F.S. CHAPTER 45

NOTICE IS GIVEN that, in accordance with the Final Judgment of Foreclosure entered on October 10, 2026, in the above-styled cause, Gary Knowles, as the Clerk of the Circuit Court, will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash online on the east steps of the Taylor County Courthouse at 108 North Jefferson Street, Perry, Florida at 11:00 a.m. on December 10, 2026, the following described property: LOT 8 AND THE NORTH 21.07 FEET OF LOT 9, BLOCK G, THE SPRING LAKE HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 79, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF TAYLOR COUNTY, FLORIDA. Parcel/Account ID # R05158-300 COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 301 Sandra St. Perry, FL 32348
Any person claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the lis pendens must file a claim before the clerk reports the surplus as unclaimed.
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
If you are a person with a disability who needs an accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact Court Administration, 173 NE Hernando Avenue, Room 408, Lake City, Florida 32055; (386)758-2163 or complete the ADA Request form located at https://thirdcircuitfla.org/

ada-accommodation-request/ at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired call 711.
Dated this October 13, 2026
Gary Knowles,
Clerk of Circuit Court
By: Kathryn Lago
Deputy Clerk of Court

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
The undersigned hereby certifies that on October 13, 2026 all counsel and parties of record are being served a true and correct copy of the foregoing document using via email or regular U.S. Mail.
KEVIN ROW
1879 SE HIGHWAY 55A,
OLD TOWN, FL 32680
CYNTHIA ROW
5144 WESTCHASE COURT, APT. 4
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32210
/s/ Matthew T. Wasinger
Matthew T. Wasinger, Esquire
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605 E. Robinson, Suite 730
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Fla. Bar No.: 0057873
Attorney for Plaintiff
Service: mattw@wasingerlawoffice.com

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REGISTER FICTITIOUS NAME

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: Notice is hereby given that Lisa M Copeland DBA Kimball’s Legacy LLC, owner(s), desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of Rocking K RV Sites, intends to register said name in Taylor County with the Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations, pursuant to the fictitious name statute (Chapter 20953 or Section 865.09). Upon receipt of proof of publication of this notice, I/we expect to engage in business at our address: 203 13th St. SE Steinhatchee, Fla., 32359. The extent of ownership is: Lisa M Copeland DBA Kimball’s Legacy LLC (owner) (100%).

TAYLOR COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PERRY, FLORIDA
ADVERTISEMENT - REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
TAYLOR COUNTY SPECIAL NEEDS EMERGENCY SHELTER PROJECT
CDBG-DR AGREEMENT NO. MS047
The Taylor County Board of County

Commissioners is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and soliciting sealed RFQ responses from qualified professional firms interested in providing professional architectural, engineering, and related design services for the Taylor County Special Needs Emergency Shelter Project. The project is funded with Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds awarded to Taylor County by the Florida Department of Commerce under Agreement No. MS047. Applicable Federal Register notices include 90 FR 4759 (January 16, 2025) and 90 FR 1754 (January 8, 2025), as amended.

The total CDBG-DR project award is \$4,969,425.00. This professional-services procurement is qualifications-based under the Consultants’ Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA), Section 287.055, Florida Statutes, applicable requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, Taylor County procurement requirements, and the executed CDBG-DR agreement. Price is not an evaluation factor. Respondents shall not include a fee proposal, hourly rates, multiplier, or other pricing information with the RFQ response.

Anticipated services under this RFQ include programming; multidisciplinary architectural and engineering design; surveys, geotechnical and other supporting investigations; site/civil coordination; permitting; signed and sealed multidisciplinary plans and specifications; construction cost estimating; construction bid-document preparation and procurement support; grant-related engineering/labor-compliance support required by Agreement No. MS047; and documentation supporting the Engineering Services design deliverables for a hardened special-needs emergency shelter. Construction Engineering and Inspection (CEI), construction-phase field inspection/observation, contractor payment review, and construction-phase commissioning services are not included in this RFQ and will be procured separately by Taylor County.

Qualified firms must submit RFQ response packages in a sealed envelope or similar package marked “Sealed RFQ Response for Taylor County Special Needs Emergency Shelter Project” to the Clerk of Court, 1st Floor Courthouse, 108 North Jefferson Street, Suite 102, Perry, Florida 32347, to arrive no later than December 4, 2026, 4:00 P.M., local time. RFQ responses will be publicly opened and respondents announced at December 7, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. local time or as soon

thereafter at the Taylor County Administrative Complex, 201 East Green Street, Perry, Florida 32347, or as otherwise noticed by the County.

The full solicitation and related documents may be obtained from the Taylor County website at https://www.taylorcountygov.com or by contacting the Taylor County Grants Department, Attn: Melody Cox, 201 East Green Street, Perry, Florida 32347, (850) 371-0377, melody.cox@taylorcountygov.com.

Qualified minority-owned, women-owned, disadvantaged, small, and veteran-owned businesses are encouraged to participate as prime consultants or subconsultants. Taylor County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with applicable federal, state, and local nondiscrimination requirements.

The County reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, waive minor irregularities, request clarification, and take other action permitted by applicable law, grant requirements, and County procurement policy.

TAYLOR COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PERRY, FLORIDA
ADVERTISEMENT - REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
STEINHATCHEE ROADS RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT - FOURTH AND FIFTH AVENUES NW
CDBG-DR AGREEMENT NO. MS045

The Taylor County Board of County Commissioners is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and soliciting sealed RFQ responses from qualified professional firms interested in providing engineering/design and related services for the Steinhatchee Roads Reconstruction Project - Fourth and Fifth Avenues NW. The project is funded with Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds awarded to Taylor County by the Florida Department of Commerce under Agreement No. MS045. Applicable Federal Register notices include 90 FR 4759 (January 16, 2025) and 90 FR 1754 (January 8, 2025), as amended.

The total CDBG-DR project award is \$1,050,000.00. This professional-services procurement is qualifications-based under the Consultants’ Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA), Section 287.055, Florida Statutes, applicable requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, Taylor County procurement requirements, and the executed CDBG-DR agreement.

Price is not an evaluation factor. Respondents shall not include a fee proposal, hourly rates, multiplier, or other pricing information with the RFQ response. Taylor County will rank responsive firms based on the stated qualifications criteria and negotiate a detailed scope and fair and reasonable compensation with the highest-ranked qualified firm.

Anticipated services include roadway and drainage engineering, surveys and field investigations, permitting, signed and sealed plans and specifications, construction cost estimating, construction procurement support, grant-related engineering/labor-compliance support required by Agreement No. MS045, and documentation supporting the Engineering Services design milestones. Construction Engineering and Inspection (CEI) services are not included in this RFQ and will be procured separately by Taylor County.

Qualified firms must submit RFQ response packages in a sealed envelope or similar package marked “Sealed RFQ Response for Steinhatchee Roads Reconstruction Project - Fourth and Fifth Avenues NW” to the Clerk of Court, 1st Floor Courthouse, 108 North Jefferson Street, Suite 102, Perry, Florida 32347, to arrive no later than December 4, 2026], 4:00 P.M., local time. RFQ responses will be publicly opened and respondents announced at December 7, 2026 at 6:05 p.m. or as soon thereafter at the Taylor County Administrative Complex, 201 East Green Street, Perry, Florida 32347, or as otherwise noticed by the County.

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BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, TAYLOR COUNTY, FLORIDA