

Regular Council Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2023
6:00 PM Central Standard Time

Present: Steve Cozart, Jane Hayes, Josh Holloway, Gretchen McPherson, Shon Owens, Eric Seib, David Tillar, April Watson, Elijah Bell, Nathan Boyles, Nat Mize

Meeting Call to Order: Eric Seib

Prayer: Josh Holloway

Pledge: Shon Owens

Approve Minutes: Councilwoman Hayes made a motion to accept the regular meeting minutes as written from December 4, 2023. Seconded by Mayor Owens. 3 yeas, 0 nays. Motion carried.

1. Town of Jay Report

Engineering Report: Mr. Tillar presented the engineering report. Discussion followed. Bids are out for the community center renovation. The pre-bid meeting will be Jan. 5, 2023.

Operations Report: Mr. Seib presented the operations report (attached). Discussion followed.

2. Old Business

Town Clean Up: Mr. Seib is continuing to work on town cleanup.

3. New Business

North Santa Rosa Utility Authority Bill: Mayor Owens stated that after speaking with other utility companies in the area regarding Senator Broxson's bill to join all north Santa Rosa utility companies into one, he feels that this bill is not best for us or other companies in the county. Elijah Bell with Moore Creek Mount Carmel Utilities presented the council with an article (attached) regarding this bill. He felt that the affected companies are unaware of exactly what Broxson's plan entails and this proposed bill gives all power to the county to do whatever they would like regarding utility services. This could include raising rates. Discussion followed. Councilwoman Hayes made a motion that the Town of Jay stand with the other affected utility companies to reject Senator Broxson's bill. Seconded by Councilman Holloway. 3 yeas, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Adams Sanitation Pricing Adjustment: Nathan Boyles and Nat Mize of Adams Sanitation presented the council with the rate increase schedule for service for 2024 (attached). The proposed increase is inline with the Town's contract with Adams. Discussion followed.

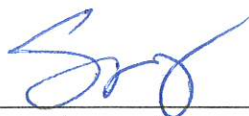
Joy in Jay Recap: Mr. Seib spoke to council about the Joy in Jay events. Discussion followed. He would like to have a meeting to discuss budgeting for next year and what events worked and what could be changed to remain within this budget for 2024. Mayor Owens asked Mr. Seib approximate percentages of time that employees spent preparing for these events. Mr. Seib stated that maintenance staff spent about 20% and office staff spent about 60% of their time during working hours. The office staff also works overtime hours for the events. Mr. Seib stated that overtime hours need to be considered when preparing a budget.

Employee Update: Mayor Owens made a motion to give maintenance employees a \$250 bonus and to give office employees a \$500 bonus based on their work for the Joy in Jay events. Seconded by Councilman Holloway. 3 yeas, 0 nays. Motion carried.

4.Visitor Comments: None

Motion by Mayor Owens to adjourn. Seconded by Councilwoman Hayes. 3 yeas, 0 nays. Motion carried.


Donna Bullock, Town Clerk


Shon Owens, Mayor

Town of Jay Project Tracker

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	OUTCOME	FOLLOW UP
Park Master Plan	Create a Master Plan for the Bray-Hendricks Park for long term planning.		Architects working final building plans. Florida Commerce Contract here for signature. Electrical layout under final review and then to EREC for electrical supply plan. Working wetlands notification.
COVID CDBG Grant	Senior Center Renovation.	Upgraded Building	Out for bids. Pre-bid meeting January 5. Bids due January 19. PARSCO and Bear Construction has already requested copies of bids.
State Street	Create a more useable road for local agriculture suppliers and farmers.	Passable Road	Doggett property easement agreed to. Awaiting Ms. Cotton's response to paperwork.
Jay Clean Up	Clean up select residences within the Town Limits to assist in the overall look of Jay.	Improved Neighborhoods	Review of top five residences. Harrison Avenue property taxes overdue.
Highway 89 and Highway 4 Intersection	Create a safer intersection.	Reduce Accidents	Road is owned and maintained by Santa Rosa County.
Wastewater Treatment Plant Drying Bed #3	Build a third drying bed.	WWTP Efficiency	Request engineering plan from Dewberry. Legislative Appropriation project submitted.
Well #4	Create a new water well. Overall \$1.5 Mil cost.	Quality Water	
Volunteer Fire Department	Partner with the Jay Fire Department to find a new building for them.	Fire Protection	
Industrial Park	Work on Improving the Site to Promote New Businesses and Industry.	Economic Development	Rural Infrastructure Grant application submitted.
Lead and Copper Lines	Identify and Replace homes with lead and copper lines from distribution line to house.	Quality Water	Grant awarded for \$6,000. Dewberry drafting a contract.
Sewer Line Replacement	Replace Sewer Lines on Highway 4 and Highway 89.	Increased Capacity	

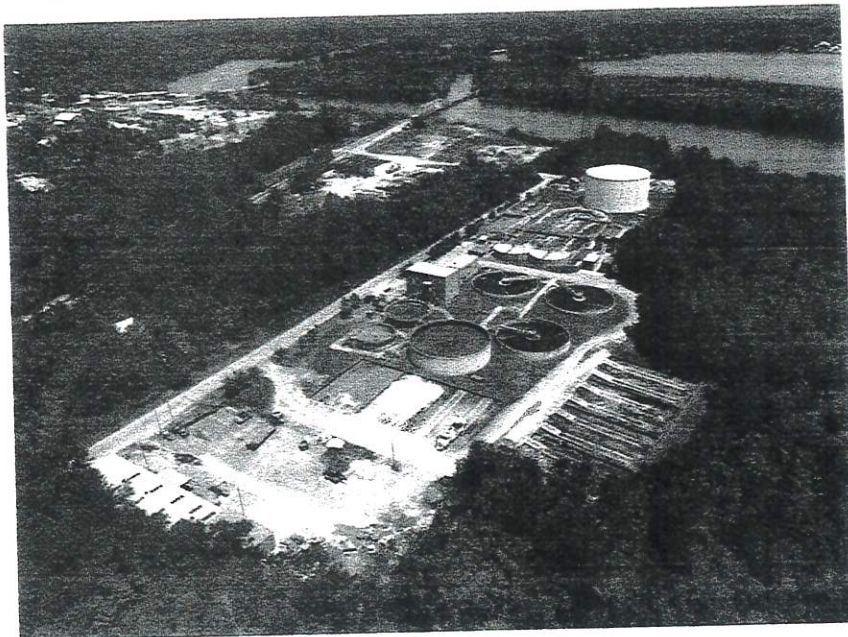
Sen. Broxson says it's time for Santa Rosa County to 'grow up' with new utilities authority

WUWF | By Sandra Averhart



Published October 30, 2023 at 3:51 PM CDT

LISTEN • 5:49



A 2021 photo of the City of Milton's current Wastewater Treatment Plant located approximately 400 feet from the Blackwater River. A new \$28 million facility broke ground in June.

A new bill from District 1 state Sen. Doug Broxson would create a new entity to govern and expand water and sewer service in the central and northern parts of Santa Rosa County.

"Frankly, it's just time for us to grow up and be the county that we're going to be in the next ten years," said Broxson, referring to the establishment of a North Santa Rosa County Utilities Authority as a logical next step in a county that has grown to about

200,000 people and counting. "And, to do that, you've got to provide dependable, reliable, affordable infrastructure, and that's exactly what this bill intends to do."

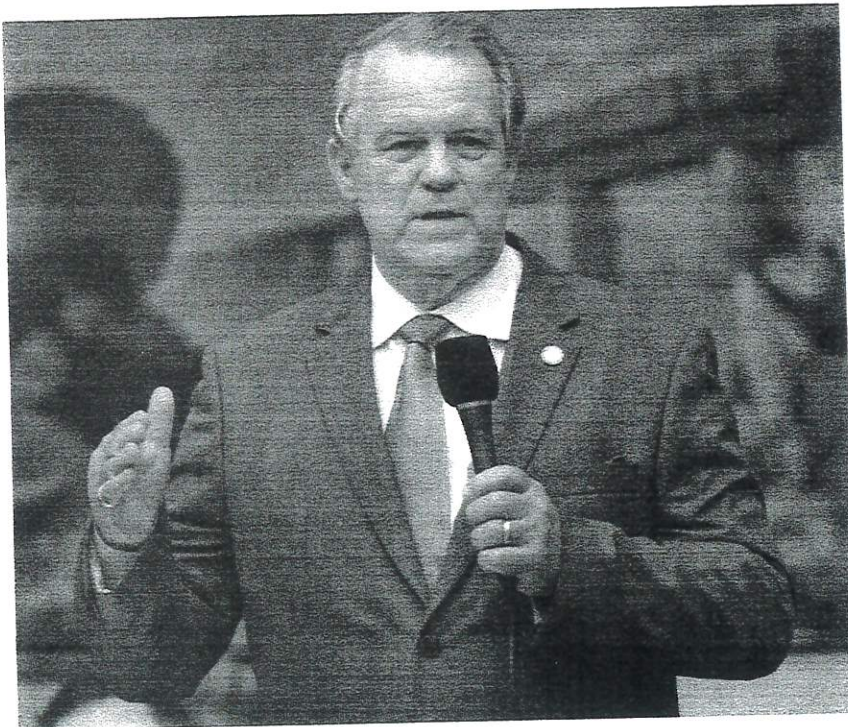
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The local bill was presented by Sen. Broxson and approved to move forward at the Santa Rosa County Legislative Delegation public hearing last week.

He says a single governmental entity could streamline what is now a hodgepodge approach to utility services in the county.

"We have three, wastewater utilities in the north end: Milton, Pace, and Jay," he began. "And we have more than 10 water-distribution co-ops. They work independently of each other, and there's really no oversight. The county could oversee them, but they choose not to because it's just been a tradition in Santa Rosa."

In a county divided by water, a centralized authority would be established in part for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, expanding, operating, and providing water, sewer, and additional utilities within Santa Rosa north of the Yellow River, Escambia Bay, and East Bay, and adjacent areas. At this point, south Santa Rosa communities are not included.



Sen. David Broxson

State of Florida - Tallahassee

Theme for Jobim

If signed into law, the measure would establish an initial governing body consisting of seven members to include representatives of local city and county governmental entities such as the Santa Rosa Board of Commissioners, City of Milton, and City of Jay. Additionally, Pace Water System, Northwest Florida Water Management District, the UF-IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center, and the Homebuilders Association of West Florida would be represented.

“Well, the authority will really be a study initially to see how we could incorporate services into one accounting (mechanism),” said Broxson in reference to the smaller, community-level utilities now in operation. “Whether they’ll all be owned by the authority is yet to be determined, but certainly there should be some accountability of how these services are being delivered.”

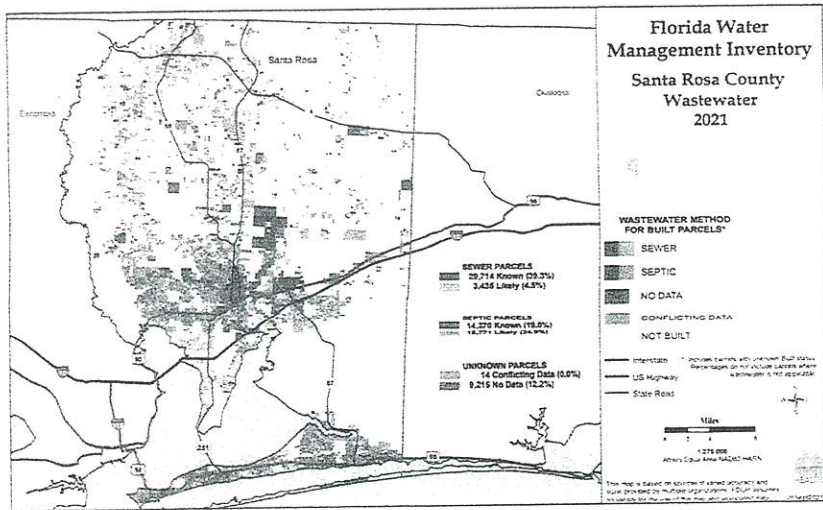
Duties of the initial authority will include an assessment of current and future water and wastewater needs for the proposed service area and to develop a 10-year plan.

Those members would serve for about two years, then make way for an elected board starting in 2026.

“We would elect five permanent board members that would be subject to a four-year term, and we’d have a director very similar to what we have in Escambia County,” he explained. “It would be a way that we begin to manage this enormous challenge that we’re going to have for the next 20 or 30 years.”

Over time, the establishment of a North Santa Rosa County Utilities Authority is expected to provide the capacity for more homes to tap into a sewer system, which would reduce the number of septic tanks in the county.

“There was a bill that was proposed in 2012, that would have said every septic tank had to have some kind of an inspection every ten years that failed; it actually passed, and it was repealed the next year because the pushback was so great,” Broxson said. “But Santa Rosa, at that point, per capita, had more septic tanks than any county in the state.”



According to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, a 2021 Florida Water Management Inventory of wastewater in Santa Rosa County showed nearly 44% of parcels were known or likely to have septic tanks, with a virtually even percentage of parcels built for sewer.

By comparison, Escambia County had nearly 73% of parcels on sewer and about 22% on septic. The breakdown in Okaloosa County was about 66% sewer compared to 15.4% septic. The 2021 data showed Walton County behind on both fronts with 38% septic parcels and nearly 35% sewer parcels.

“So, it’s an issue,” declared Broxson, pointing to septic tanks as a significant source of groundwater pollution. “It’s not as big an issue when you’re dealing with farmland, but when you’re dealing around, creeks and streams, and rivers and aquifers, it’s a big issue, especially if they’re not being maintained.”

In putting forth the legislation, Broxson said people should have the right and privilege to connect to a sewer utility. And, he believes the creation of a governmental authority that covers most of the county will go a long way toward making that happen.

“Right now, we depend on very small local governments to try to leverage the tremendous expense of pipes and lift stations and, all the infrastructure it requires to do that,” began the senator. “When you have a larger footprint, you can draw down monies that you could not otherwise draw down, from not only the state, but we have the federal component. We have Restore, which is a part of the BP settlement. And, we have Turnback (Gulf Coast)”

Now that the Santa Rosa County Legislative Delegation has signed off on the local bill, the next step is for the measure to be introduced in the House, by delegation members Alex Andrade or Joel Rudman. From there, it will be heard in committee, and then go on to the Senate, which approves local bills with a blanket vote, unless there's opposition.

Tags

Local News

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Santa Rosa County



Sandra Averhart

Sandra Averhart has been News Director at WUWF since 1996. Her first job in broadcasting was with (then) Pensacola radio station WOWW107-FM, where she worked 11 years. Sandra, who is a native of Pensacola, earned her B.S. in Communication from Florida State University.

[See stories by Sandra Averhart](#)



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Mr. Eric Seib,
Operations Manager
Town of Jay
via email: EricSeibTOJ@Bellsouth.net

December 12, 2023

Re: 2024 Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Rates

Eric,

I hope all is well with you and the Town of Jay and that our team continues to meet your expectations. It is again time to adjust garbage service rates pursuant to the franchise agreement. The CPI indicator referenced in the franchise agreement increased by 4.41% while the fuel index reduced by a surprising 35%. Though this number doesn't show the true story of diesel prices over the last year as June of 2022 was a historic high point and June of 2023 was a temporary low. Applying the equation within the franchise agreements results in a capped increase of 4%.

In addition, we also experienced an increase of landfill disposal fees by \$3 to \$45/ton. This increase came in the first quarter of the year and was a surprise increase as the County had initially indicated there would be no increase in disposal fees in 2023. The County adopted a rate increase schedule which will include \$2 per ton increases in 2024 and again in 2025.

Here are the links to the three indicators should you be interested in reviewing them:

[Consumer Price Index for Trash Collection](#)

[U.S. Energy Information Administration - Fuel Prices](#)

[Santa Rosa County Landfill Increase](#)

Applying the contract language, the standard residential customer rate will rise by \$1.47 for a monthly rate of \$30.09. I have enclosed the proposed 2024 fee schedule which includes all the fees covered by the franchise. We continue to be grateful for the great relationship we have with the Town and look forward to serving your residents and businesses in the year ahead.

Sincerely,



Nathan Boyles
Adams Sanitation

2024 Solid Waste Fee Schedule- the Town of Jay

Residential Fee Schedule:

Twice Weekly Cost per Month per Residence:	\$30.09
Second Collection Bin per Month, per Residence:	\$5.96
Twice Weekly Low Use Customer per Month, per Residence:	\$27.21

Commercial Fee Schedule:

Dumpsters

2-Yard

Weekly:	\$77.95
Twice Weekly:	\$134.52

4-Yard

Weekly:	\$122.15
Twice Weekly:	\$221.80

6-Yard

Weekly:	\$165.22
Twice Weekly:	\$303.46

8-Yard

Weekly:	\$227.43
Twice Weekly:	\$424.47

95-Gallon Residential Style Rolling Cart for commercial use (approx. ½ yard):

Twice Weekly:	\$50.36
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**Additional commercial collections to be made on request at \$28.12 per cubic yard.*