

Citizen Comments for the
September 15, 2020 Meeting Agenda

(Received as of 8:00 p.m. September 14, 2020)

The following Citizen Comments
were received for Non-Agendaed Items

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Drew McLeod
	Address: 6619 Pisgah Church Road
	Date Submitted: 8/26/2020 1:07:55 PM

When will the commission reconsider the ordinance regarding the mask mandate?

By what standard will the commission repeal the mask mandate.?

Why isn't this item on the agenda? We were told it would be reviewed on a weekly basis and yet has not been reviewed at all. The citizens deserve a response.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Stephanie Pohler
	Address: 6064 Thackeray Drive
	Date Submitted: 8/30/2020 2:33:03 PM

Thank you, commissioners, for your care for and dedication to the community. Can we revisit the county-wide approach to Covid-19 and take a look at the most recent data published by the CDC on August 26, 2020? As we are about 7 months into this novel virus and 7 months further into research, treatment and facts based on cases, can we please examine the data presented in Table 3 as to the number of deaths attributed to Covid-19 alone? 6% as stated by the CDC.

https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid_weekly/index.htm?fbclid=IwAR2PcFrRYmWibcz886GrQnZPmJqSswsIV9mXkhTkip14YaTRC-8qSfGLxpw#ExcessDeaths

Covid-19 looks much different than it did back in February when we first started learning about it in our country. And it looks much different than 2 months ago when the Commission voted on the county-wide mask mandate. Covid-19 has a 97% recovery rate based on the data presented by the CDC, the governing body we have used to guide decision making on public health. The data shows that we are not dealing with the type of outbreak that was feared back in the Spring and that the percentages and CDC provided data no longer validate the mask mandate. Let's let our community make decisions for themselves as to their health and remove the mask mandate.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of the CDC updated information & moving our community forward.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Linda Deaton
	Address: 9601 Miccosukee Rd #25
	Date Submitted: 9/7/2020 7:31:46 PM

Dear Commissioner:

In regards to vetting of the Welaunee Arch Master Plan (WAMP) Comprehensive Plan amendments, please hold a joint workshop to hear a summary and analysis of the public input provided by the public during the planning charrettes. Your encouragement for a workshop will be vital to ensure that the public's requests are included in the master plan amendments.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Kelly McGrath
	Address: 9601 Miccosukee Road Lot 41 (11010 Black Creek Lane)
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 6:34:54 PM

I am requesting that you instruct staff to provide a summary and analysis of the public feedback provided during the charrettes conducted on the Welaunee Arch Master Plan (WAMP) Comprehensive Plan amendments. We are asking that you receive this feedback along with staff's analysis and recommendations for revisions during a Joint City-County workshop where an opportunity for real-time virtual public comment is provided, and subsequently that you as policy makers provide staff with policy guidance on what type of changes should be made to the WAMP and corresponding map based on public feedback. Subsequent to this step staff should then prepare text and map revisions to reflect the City and County Commission's policy direction, and an opportunity for public comment on the revised draft be provided.

The City Commission will be asked during their September 9, 2020 meeting starting at 3:00 PM to vote to conduct the Joint City-County Commission Comprehensive Plan amendments adoption hearing (the final step) on October 13, 2020. The County Commission will be asked to take the same vote during their September 15, 2020 meeting starting at 3:00 PM.

There is not sufficient time to properly review, evaluate, and vet the proposed changes to the WAMP with the public or with you the commissioners between now and October 13, especially since to date no one has seen the changes or the compiled public feedback from the charrettes. We are recommending that the October 13, 2020 Joint City-County Commission public hearing be bifurcated into a workshop on the Welaunee Arch amendments, and an adoption hearing for all of the other proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments.

We are requesting that you vote to hold the Joint workshop prior to scheduling an adoption hearing for the proposed Welaunee Arch amendments.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Jeff Gilbert
	Address: 9601 miccosukee rd, 49, Tallahassee, fl
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 8:04:15 PM

Dear Commissioner:

I am requesting that you instruct staff to provide a summary and analysis of the public feedback provided during the charrettes conducted on the Welaunee Arch Master Plan (WAMP) Comprehensive Plan amendments. We are asking that you receive this feedback along with staff's analysis and recommendations for revisions during a Joint City-County workshop where an opportunity for real-time virtual public comment is provided, and subsequently that you as policy makers provide staff with policy guidance on what type of changes should be made to the WAMP and corresponding map based on public feedback. Subsequent to this step staff should then prepare text and map revisions to reflect the City and County Commission's policy direction, and an opportunity for public comment on the revised draft be provided.

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There is not sufficient time to properly review, evaluate, and vet the proposed changes to the WAMP with the public or with you the commissioners between now and October 13, especially since to date no one has seen the changes or the compiled public feedback from the charrettes. We are recommending that the October 13, 2020 Joint City-County Commission public hearing be bifurcated into a workshop on the Welaunee Arch amendments, and an adoption hearing for all of the other proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments.

We are requesting that you vote to hold the Joint workshop prior to scheduling an adoption hearing for the proposed Welaunee Arch amendments.
Sincerely,
Jeff Gilbert, LCPC

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Alesha Waller
	Address: 8701 Freedom Road Tallahassee Florida 32305
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 1:54:40 PM

During the H1N1 Flu Pandemic of '09-10 upwards of 575,400 people worldwide died. 70% to 90% of these deaths were people UNDER the age of 65. This virus still circulates yearly adding countless deaths to this already high rate. During that time there was no mass panic. No mass lock downs. No mask mandates. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/2009-h1n1-pandemic.html?fbclid=IwAR01XiQacM6ylTBe1rIYbX1PPBdLFLQ8zxUc74WkxmX-uzRf0pev7yyG0QI>

Fast forward to 2020. Mass panic, mass lock downs, and mask mandates are implemented due to the COVID-19 Virus. As of Sept. 9, 2020, this virus has a 95.68% survival rate. 70% of deaths due to the Covid-19 virus are among people who are OVER 70 years of age. This decreasing their life expectancy to just under 3 years. <https://www.pnas.org/content/117/36/22035?fbclid=IwAR01XiQacM6ylTBe1rIYbX1PPBdLFLQ8zxUc74WkxmX-uzRf0pev7yyG0QI>

<https://www.iii.org/fact-statistic/facts-statistics-mortality-risk>

You have 1 in 67 chance of death from accidental poisoning by exposure to a noxious substance. 1 in 71 chance of dying of drug poisoning. 1 in 541 chance of dying as a pedestrian. 1 in 106 chance of dying in a car accident. With all of that said you may be asking yourself, why do all these statistics matter? Good question. As we go about our lives everyone of use takes on a certain level of risk. Though these risks are all around us each and every day this does not give the government the right to “mandate” unnecessary or unwanted rules or regulations without the consent of the people and not allow us the opportunity “to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

<https://www.aclu.org/united-states-bill-rights-first-10-amendments-constitution>

During the previous Leon County Commissioner meeting, not one person outside of the commission was given an opportunity to voice their opinion, present data, or express any grievance with the local government’s decision to mandate masks. We now face yet another meeting where the people are not allowed to be present to voice any concerns. The only venue for allowing one’s voice to be heard is to submit their apprehensions via a website for “review” prior to said meeting. These comments can easily be silence and/or censored infringing yet again on our constitutional rights.

With that said I am submitting my concerns in the hope that the voice of the people will not fall on deaf ears and each person’s concerns will be heard and elevated without censorship.

As the Leon County Commissioners decide further action regarding the mask mandate please considering the following:

- 1) Most people do not wear, clean, or dispose of masks properly potentially increasing risk to themselves, others, and the environment.
- 2) Wearing masks can give people a false sense of security. In addition, it often makes it hard to hear the wearer. This will cause people to be in closer contact than necessary.
- 3) “Face masks restrict the elimination of the virus, recirculating the virus into the nasal/sinus and upper respiratory passages” and potentially causing worse reactions.
- 4) Wearing masks increases the desire to touch one’s face and can potentially reduce people’s adherence to other important hygiene protocol.
- 5) Along with lock downs, mask mandates are unconstitutional. Requiring churches to worship or gather in certain ways instituted by the government is actively undermining first amendment rights of your constituents.

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

https://childrenshealthdefense.org/news/the-risks-vs-benefits-of-face-masks-is-there-an-agenda/?cn-reloaded=1&fbclid=IwAR0BmlrSiy0ctZ8DdZk88WdYWod-0oXeCnP3aO_MXZgWiiU671SFFcX8Owg

<https://theconversation.com/four-potential-consequences-of-wearing-face-masks-we-need-to-be-wary-of->

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Cynthia Ham
	Address: 961 Towhee Rd
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 3:04:52 PM

Please lift the mask mandate. Those who choose to wear them are protected. Those of us that passed biology in high school know how viruses work and choose to build up our immunity.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Stephanie Henningsen
	Address: 408 Meridian Ride
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 3:36:20 PM

County Commissioners,

I'm begging you to please end your mask mandate. The wearing of masks increases unnecessary fear, gives a false sense of security, and really sends a message of filth and germs, which in the restaurant business, is lethal. Our downtown restaurant has suffered greatly and we cannot survive under these conditions. While we can survive limited seating and social distancing, the masks send an entirely different message. Folks either refuse to wear them and make the choice not to go out to eat because it's just not worth the hassle, or they are so fearful, particularly of the food industry, that they choose not to go out to eat. There are few people who fall somewhere in between and will patronize restaurants with a mask mandate in place. We are watching the numbers. We understand how viruses work. This one has pretty much run its course. You must look at the number of deaths rather than positive cases which is a moving target, given the number of false positives and asymptomatic cases. You said this would be evaluated weekly. Has it been? It's not even on the agenda for a regularly scheduled meeting. Please end this mask mandate. In all my research, I have not been able to find where it's the responsibility of a county commissioner to impose medical mandates to protect our health. It is your job to protect our rights. Please end the mask mandate.

Thank you,

Stephanie Henningsen

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Jeff Blair
	Address: 1803 Old Fort Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 8:06:50 AM

Hello Commissioners:

During the September 15, 2020 meeting vote to support the Tallahassee City Commission's unanimous vote on the Welaunee Arch Comp Plan amendments schedule with additional specific direction as follows:

- Vote to conduct a Joint City-County Commission public workshop on the Welaunee Arch Master Plan (WAMP) prior to finalizing language and scheduling an adoption hearing.
- Schedule the workshop for October 13, 2020 with sufficient time to allow commissioners to evaluate staff's analysis.
- In preparation for the workshop direct staff to provide an analysis of the public feedback provided during the charrettes (not staff proposed text changes) and to recommend how to prioritize the public's recommendations.
- At the workshop commissioners should discuss and provide staff with explicit direction on how to revise the WAMP's policies and corresponding map based on public feedback.
- Seek a six-month extension from the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for adopting the Welaunee Arch Comprehensive Plan amendments.
- Conduct a second public Joint City-County Commission "meeting" with an agenda item on the WAMP to evaluate and decide on staff's revisions, and provide for real-time virtual public comment during the meeting.
- Then schedule a public adoption hearing with real-time virtual public comment (likely in February of 2021).

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Debbie Lightsey
	Address: 2340 Cypress Cove Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 12:42:03 PM

Please join the City in seeking a 6 month extension from the State DEO on the Welaunee Amendments. The current timeline doesn't expire until late December so the extension would put final adoption after the first of the year.

Join them in scheduling a Joint Workshop (possibly Oct. 13th will work) at which staff would present a summary of the Major Issues identified during the Charettes. The summary should include a staff analysis of the major recommendations (likely 6 or 7 maximum) and their suggestions about which should be included in the next draft. Citizens did not just raise general topics, they made specific and detailed recommendations which are not recorded anywhere as yet. The staff item recently posted is not sufficient.

At the workshop the public will get to hear the staff summary and recommendations and also hear you give your direction. This would be followed by a new draft, public input, possibly another Workshop, then Adoption.

I appreciate the opportunity to make these additional comments.

Debbie Lightsey

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Deborah Lawson
	Address: 1803 Old Fort Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 1:31:21 PM

Commissioners,

During the September 15, 2020 Commission meeting, please vote to support the Tallahassee City Commission's unanimous vote which revises the schedule for the Welaunee Arch Comp Plan amendments completion and adoption.

This revised schedule is necessary in order to incorporate meaningful changes to the WAMP before it is finalized for adoption.

Thank you in advance!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Kristen Phillips
	Address: 3208 Whitman Way, Tallahassee, FL
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:18:09 PM

As a mom of 2 elementary aged boys, I'm asking you to open the parks for fall sports.

Sports have proven to have a positive impact on children's mental and physical health and gives them valuable social experiences, that they are so desperately craving right now.

Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene ("Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, "Mayo Clinic).

I recognize the work of our city and county officials to continue undertaking ways to keep our citizens safe and appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy that sports can bring.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Robert Apgar
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbyist	Address: 510 Frank Shaw Rd
The Buckhead Homeowners Association of Tallahassee, Inc.	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:33:56 PM

The Buckhead Neighborhood Association of Tallahassee, Inc., respectfully requests that the BOCC join the City of Tallahassee's request to the Department of Economic Opportunity for a six month extension of the deadline to adopt the Welaunee Arch Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and participate with the City in additional workshops and meetings to allow public participation, to include in-person, real-time public comments wherever possible.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Laura Newton
	Address: 4541 Pecan Br
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:27:03 PM

Joint Commission workshop on the Welaunee Arch Development

Dear Commissioners,

I hope you will vote to support the Joint Commission workshop on the Welaunee Arch Development that the City Commission voted (unanimously) to hold on October 13th. Before the Welaunee Arch Comp Plan is adopted there should be an exchange of ideas between the Commissioners and direction should be given to the staff about how to proceed with the public input they have received.

Also, please vote to schedule a subsequent joint City-County Commission meeting that allows for real-time citizen input and the sharing of ideas between the Commissioners and their and your constituents regarding proposed changes. I look forward to working toward a more thoughtful and comprehensive development plan for Welaunee.

Sincerely,

Laura Newton

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Armani Arellano
	Address: 500 Chapel Drive Unit 231, Tallahassee, FL 32304
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:49:57 PM

Please vote to support the City Commission’s action on the Welaunee Arch Comp Plan amendments schedule. Please adopt the following schedule: September 15, 2020 Meeting (Joint Workshop on Welaunee Comp Plan Amendments). During the September 15, 2020 meeting vote to support the Tallahassee City Commission’s unanimous vote on the Welaunee Arch Comp Plan amendments schedule with additional specific direction as follows:

- Vote to conduct a Joint City-County Commission public workshop on the Welaunee Arch Master Plan (WAMP) prior to finalizing language and scheduling an adoption hearing.
- Schedule the workshop for October 13, 2020 with sufficient time to allow commissioners to evaluate staff’s analysis.
- In preparation for the workshop direct staff to provide an analysis of the public feedback provided during the charrettes (not staff proposed text changes) and to recommend how to prioritize the public’s recommendations.
- At the workshop commissioners should discuss and provide staff with explicit direction on how to revise the WAMP’s policies and corresponding map based on public feedback.
- Seek a six-month extension from the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for adopting the Welaunee Arch Comprehensive Plan amendments.
- Conduct a second public Joint City-County Commission “meeting” with an agenda item on the WAMP to evaluate and decide on staff’s revisions, and provide for real-time virtual public comment during the meeting.
- Then schedule a public adoption hearing with real-time virtual public comment (likely in February of 2021).

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Brian Tease
	Address: 2111 Monticello Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:12:04 PM

Would like to discuss the importance of Bus Passes for the Kearney Center Clients. I work with H3lp Florida with Chuck White. Every day we are getting our homeless clients FLORIDA ID's, SS Cards, Birth Certificates and jobs. The clients transportation evolves around Star Metro. We need to be able to give them a way to get to tinterviews and jobs.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Ashley Crosby
	Address: 2612 Manassas Way, Tallahassee, FL 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 8:00:05 PM

I would like to voice my concern over the length of time that the “mandatory mask mandate” has occurred. I was under the impression that this mandate would be re-evaluated weekly, and it’s been months now, with no word on when we can expect to move on from this. From the beginning, I believed that it should be up to each individual family to choose what’s best for their loved ones, and I think it is a massive government over reach to mandate these restrictions on healthy people. I implore you to consider doing away with the mandatory mask ordinance, and leave it up to citizens to protect themselves how they see fit. If someone wants to wear a mask, fine; but if others choose not to, they shouldn’t be penalized. If masks work, which we’re not even sure they do, but IF they do, then someone who feels the need to wear one should have no fear about contracting anything if someone else is not wearing one. This has gone on long enough, and with the data/numbers/facts being what they are, I don’t see the need to enforce such regimented ordinances on the city. At least consider children, who are trying to learn and grow after not being able to finish out the school year in the Spring of this year. My daughter is in first grade and these are such formative years for learning language, how to pronounce words, and develop in those ares, so wearing a mask is a huge hinderance to her (not to mention I’m concerned of the health ramifications of her having to wear a mask all day at school). I know these are unprecedented times, but we’ve quarantined, followed the rules, etc. since March, and I think it’s time to begin moving on, consider the data as a whole and for our county, and give the people back their rights to make the best decisions for themselves and their loved ones. Thank you for your time, for your consideration, and for representing your constituents; I hope this request is met with thoughtfulness and addressed accordingly.

The following Citizen Comments
were received for Agenda Item #21

Status Report on the Use of County Parks for Organized
Outdoor Sports and Athletic Events During COVID-19

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kathy Hedrick
	Address: 3711 HOMESTEAD RD
	Date Submitted: 8/25/2020 1:55:54 PM

**** COUNTY/CITY YOUTH SPORTS**** (not an option on drop down menu

We are requesting that city/county youth sports start as soon as possible. Our children need to be safe and at the same time need to have athletics & social activities. We do understand the risk. This may not be for all children, but should be an option and parents sign a release of liability if choose to participate. Implement safety precautions that make sense and are truly feasible for children. Anyone not complying will be kicked out until pandemic is over.

Kathy & Jason Hedrick

3711 Homestead Rd 32309

Both Registered Voters

kathy@kathyhedrick.com

229-869-2520

jasonahedrick@hotmail.com

229-291-1848

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jennifer Kilinski
	Address: 1815 OLD FORT Dr
	Date Submitted: 8/27/2020 6:05:24 AM

I am writing to you as a parent of a cross country/track/swim athlete. We find ourselves in an untenable situation. My son is one of several hundred cross country athletes in the county and one of several hundred swimmers, each with no facility access. These kids have put years of work, time, set lofty goals that are significantly impaired right now by COVID, yes, and by living in Leon County. I collected data and information on Florida's 67 other counties and what they are doing with HS sports. I am hopeful that through collaboration, reliable data and science there may be a reasonable conclusion to reopen facilities to allow our athletes to compete locally, or alternatively for our representative governments to work together to allow our athletes to travel outside of the County to compete at other facilities that are currently hosting meets. There are several "best practices" proposed by the FHSAA medical advisory Board, by facilities that have successfully hosted meets in the state without issue, etc, that the County (and/or City) could implement and I am happy to be part of a solution, including showing waivers we have used at other facilities, to mitigate any perceived risk. If there is anything I can do to help find a way forward, I stand ready as a citizen of Leon County. I appreciate all the hard work you all have at the present and ahead of you - this in no way minimizes the recognition of those efforts. I hope the County will, if time and energy strapped as I can imagine, look to a group of us that have a keen interest, significant background in sports, and a willingness to dig in to help figure out a reasonable, fact based solution while not dominating your staff's time and efforts. For your reference, I am also including the communication I sent to the school district on the same issue: I am writing to implore Leon County schools to consider allowing at least select sports with special considerations to travel out of the County, with restrictions (i.e. limit overnights, travel only with parents, use of masks, etc), and sooner than September 18. I compiled a list of counties and their FHSAA declared status. If you look around the state, the vast majority of schools are resuming practices and meets/games consistent with FHSAA's 8/24 and 9/4 provision for return to practice and meets/games, respectively. Further, even those few school districts that have put a limit on out of County travel have made provision for individual sports or sports that lack local facilities to participate to leave the county. For example, cross country is an individual sport. There are several impacts to our runners with the current restrictions: a. Runners are far more successful running against other athletes their speed or faster to excel. Club race categories are not competitive, if they exist at all – they exist at this moment until schools resume HS status and can start competing with their schools on 9/4/20. Thereafter, it is VERY difficult to find a high school club in state race; b. Limiting travel even after that date to in the county is problematic because the trail facilities are not available for races; c. Cross country has a short window to run times and make college recruiting (fall only). d. Even the medical advisory report from FHSAA acknowledged the low risks associated with cross country. These kids have been running together all summer with NO incident. Even when a couple of athletes on various teams were COVID positive, having contracted it through work or family in the cases of which I am aware, it did NOT spread to other teammates. We have several months of data now available to us – this is not a high risk sport; e. Leon County positive rate is now under 5%, lower than even the very conservative SMAC recommendation for full return to ALL sports, which was 5% even for football travel – and is well below the 10% recommendation from the WHO.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kevin Forsthoefel
	Address: 1737 Copperfield Circle
	Date Submitted: 8/27/2020 8:25:46 AM

Dear Board Members-

I am writing to implore you to allow our Cross Country(XC) runners to have a strong, competitive season with at minimum local meet options. My son is a senior at Chiles and this is his last season to earn any potential athletic college scholarships. Since Track was taken away in the Spring this current season is all he has left. He trains hard and loves the sport. His dream is to run for a competitive team in college. He has been working for this dream his entire high school career. I believe he can earn one of those scholarships if given the change in this XC season.

All of our XC athletes work hard, train in the Florida heat, do very well in academics and stay out of trouble. There are numerous ways, even science approved ways for them to participate in XC safely. This sport cannot be lumped in with football. This is not a contact sport. It is unfair to consider all sports in the same fashion. Leon County has one of the lowest COVID counts in the state and is trending downward.

As a parent I see how hard these kids train, how badly they want to run, and how important sports and this season will be, especially for my son who only has this season left. I also know how expensive college is where a scholarship would definitely help decrease that financial burden on our family. Please give our kids options. Let them run, play sports. Their lives have been turned upside down as have everyone's. They need social interaction and sports for growth and development. Please do not rob these kids of XC season. Please do not rob my son of his last season to earn a spot on a college team and an athletic scholarship.

Respectfully,
Katrina Reffitt

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tommy Kristian
	Address: 3245 Cranleigh Dr. Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 8/27/2020 10:48:11 AM

I am writing to ask the Commission to strongly consider opening the county parks and trails for high school cross country competition. Our athletes are being hamstrung by a draconian edict by LCS that does not allow them to travel outside the county for competition; by limiting our teams to in-county meets only, while no county facilities are available to host meets, the County and LCS are effectively ending the cross country season before it begins. There is very little empirical evidence that shows that COVID-19 has an increased transmission rate during in-competition interaction. Student-athletes from across our county participated in AAU or on travel teams most of the summer, and going by the lack of reporting across our various news outlets in Leon County, there was very little in the way of infection.

Lastly, I urge the Commission to consider opening for high school meets using the rationale that opening for use by FSU and for the FHSAA State Series is already under consideration. It might be a tad hypocritical to allow cross country runners from the other 66 Florida counties to compete at the ARP in November while having kept it and other county facilities closed to our local athletes in the months leading up to that event.

Thank you for your consideration.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Richard Davis
	Address: 5995 Colonel Scott Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 8/27/2020 4:33:55 PM

I would like to request the board approve the opening of county parks to allow Leon County's cross country teams to be able to run and compete this year. The county has set a policy that the schools cannot travel outside of the county and compete and if they compete in county then no schools from outside of the county can be present. To top this off, the facilities that all cross country meets take place on, Phipps Park, Apalachee Regional Park, etc. are closed to cross country meets and owned/managed by either the county or city. I'm sure that a high school foot ball stadium will be open for football games. Please don't punish our kids. Every parent is ultimately responsible for deciding if it is safe or not for our children to compete. Cross country is a much lower risk sport than football. Please let us move forward. Please be aware the State Championship and Pre-State are held at ARP. Please don't punish our kids and block them from competing in these events just because other schools from outside county are present.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: L Moore
	Address: p.o. Box 12517
	Date Submitted: 8/28/2020 3:31:02 PM

Good afternoon!

I am writing to requests that the County Commisioners please place on their agenda the possiblilty of reopening the Elinor-Klapp Phipps Park and the Apalachee Regional Park to allow our Cross country athletes to have a place to compete. We appreciate the fact that Mr. Hansen and Mr. Bell are allowing Fall sports to have an abbrviated schedule, but Cross country is the only Fall sport without a venue to compete since we are not allowed to go out of county(which also can be done safely) . We were told to create our on course- thats like telling the golf team to make their on golf course or a swim team to hurry and build their own pool. Plus it takes money to create a course-time we don't have to fund raise before the season will end. These athletes need you! They need to run!! It is going to be a difficult school year- give them something to look forward to. Thank you for your time and considering this request. Stay healthy and thank you all for what you do for our county.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Sarah Aulph
	Address: 4325 Oakmount rd. Tallahassee Fl. 32303
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 10:00:27 AM

If these children a b go to school and play travel ball there is no reason why these parks cannot open back up. The city has opened their parks back up. Stop taking things away from the kids and let them be kids and let them play. There is no reason why the parks should not be opened. Not every kid is at the travel ball level of talent, but they still love to play sports. You are taking away from these kids bu not opening the parks so they can play. Please consider opening the parks so the kids can play. Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Sam Mast
	Address: 17 Whitney Drive w
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 11:08:41 AM

I believe sports a crucial part of children's upbringing. My son has played at chaires LL for 3 years now, and it is literally the light of his life. Everyone is family. Everyone is respectful. It teaches him the value of hard work and team work. I'm 100% in favor of allowing Chaires to open for Fall ball with COVID precautions. The same way that other travel leagues have been playing for months now. Require masks when social distancing is not an option. Request only families group together to watch. Provide sanitizing equipment and cleaners in the dugout. But please let our kids play ball. I think following COVID precautions is just second nature to most of us now, and we could have a safe and fun season.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Laura Revis
	Address: 5685 Rustic Drive Tallahassee Fl 32303
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 12:08:10 PM

Our children are in school all day. This league is voluntary, which means anyone who doesn't feel that it is safe does not have to participate. It is the responsibility of the commission to listen to the people and be our voice. If you aren't willing, then we will vote you out and find people who **WILL** do their job (to represent their constituents), not promote their own personal beliefs. This is ridiculous.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tracy Tang
	Address: 1344 Conservancy Drive East
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 12:45:20 PM

I am the parent of a high school cross country runner and very disappointed in the shortsighted decisions made by Leon County officials - decisions that prevent our high school cross country teams from leaving the county to compete in meets, while at the same time do not provide access to any resources for them to compete within Leon County.

As you may be aware, a decision was made by the Leon County Athletic Director to require all fall athletes to only compete in county. While this decision may be reasonable for fall sports that have access to facilities (like football and volleyball), cross country is in a very different situation. With this decision, in order for our Leon County high school cross country teams to have any kind of season, the teams must have access to County Parks (if they are not permitted to travel outside of the County). Since the County Parks are closed for any organized outdoor sports and athletic events, the decision made by the Leon County Athletic Director provides our high school cross country runners with no season.

Please do not penalize our student cross country athletes for living in Tallahassee. Please make an exception to the current closures of County Parks for organized athletic events that would allow our Leon County high school athletes to use County Park facilities.

To help you understand the importance of this request, please realize that cross country is not like swimming or many other sports where an athlete may enter state, regional or national tournaments – the chance to have times and make college recruitment and scholarship opportunities is only available to our kids in this short season - our kids need to be able to compete in official meets, and we need our County Parks to be available for use to do this. If our kids can't compete this season then their opportunities, and for many of them their college and life trajectories, irreparably will change. I have confirmed that other Florida counties have handled this in a more equitable manner -making sure that cross country athletes have access to trails/parks, or making exceptions that allow individual high school fall sport athletes to leave the county.

Running is not a simple hobby for many high school cross country athletes. My child, like many other runner athletes, has made sacrifices to train long hours while achieving a high GPA in school to achieve future goals of college cross country scholarships or to earn a spot on college cross country teams. Many cross country athletes across all of our Leon County schools have been up in the early morning hours and training six days a week consistently since their track season was canceled in mid-March. They have been 'unofficially' and successfully doing this TOGETHER during this entire time frame with NO incident. I have witnessed their discipline and determination to be ready for their fall season as they trained and led healthy lifestyles, taking every precaution to stay clear of COVID-19. Even when a couple of athletes on various teams were COVID positive, having contracted it through work or family in the cases of which I am aware, it did NOT spread to other teammates or those they were training with. We have several months of data now available to us – cross country is not a high risk sport. Also please know that the early Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) report from FHSAA acknowledged the low risks associated with cross country. In fact, the SMAC recommended to allow cross country (as well as swimming and golf) to maintain the current FHSAA calendar with safety measures in place (masking while not running, and staggered starts at meets).

It is ironic that at this time in Leon County, cross country - confirmed to be one of the lowest risk sports - is the fall high school sport that is not being provided with any season. The decisions that have been made in Leon County regarding high school athletics do not appear to be in line with research and science.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Renee Taylor
	Address: 4488 Cool Emerald Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 2:37:15 PM

This comment is regarding children being allowed to play sports with a county organization. The way I see it, is if schools can reopen, & the city is being allowed to play...then why can't the county programs? Our season was cut short during the spring, we barely got in 3 games. Our kiddos have had no sense or "normalcy" in months. And many children have not been around other kids outside of their own families. Now that schools are open, there's no reason why sports cannot start back as well. Surely there's a way to play safely. Some suggestions: kids do not have to sit on the batting bench together. They can sit with their families during games/practices while social distancing. Other than that, baseball is a pretty spread out game in itself. Coaches can wear masks, I would not recommend it for kids while running in Florida weather. But that's where the social distancing comes into play. If parents don't feel comfortable allowing their kids to play...that's perfectly fine, that's their prerogative, no one is forcing them to play. But, for those of us who want to have our children play, should also have that choice.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Brian Garber
	Address: 5522 Pedrick Plantation Circle
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 3:22:39 PM

Please, please, please open the parks for league sports. Let the parents make the choice that is best for them. Some parents will choose to not let them play and most will sign up. It should be a choice.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Charlie Usina
	Address: 3507 Westford dr
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 6:32:30 PM

Open the parks up. We pay for the use of these parks. Do not hide behind covid for the reason.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Amber Stallings
	Address: 11966 Woodville Hwy
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 8:22:03 PM

If the City Parks and Recreation is opening their fields, you really don't have a leg to stand on to not open the county fields. These children are too young to play on teams at school. Their only outlet is county sports. I understand that you are concerned about the physical health of the community, but what about the mental health of these young kids.

If you do not open the fields for youth sports several things will happen. First, parents and community members will see that you are taking the parenting and decision making out of their hands and show how the commissioners have become a dictatorship. It is not your choice how we parent our children and allow them to take part in. Second, the county parks and recreation department will diminish. The community members will find other places and ways to allow their children to have an outlet even if we go out of town. Then you risk even more "infection" if we travel more to find games.

Remember, you are our voice. Listen to your constituents and the number of people voicing their concern through this forum as well as the number of emails I know you have received.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Lindsay Calabro
	Address: 1039 Baum Rd Tallahassee FL 32317
	Date Submitted: 9/9/2020 9:52:18 AM

As a parent of a competitive cross country runner I have attended many sporting events at the beautiful Leon County parks. Unfortunately this year due to COVID-19, our runners are not able to compete because these parks are closed to events. While I understand the need to be cautious to avoid unnecessary spread of the virus, I would like to encourage our county leaders to allow the use of such property for sporting events. I'm not asking to allow events without rules for social distancing. Of course we still need to take proper precautions, but cross country is not a contact sport. Limits can be placed on the number of spectators allowed, runners can be appropriately spaced out at the start line, and ticket sales can be online to avoid exchanging cash. These are just a few examples of ways to make such events possible. The same parks that are currently closed to events are the parks where many Leon County athletes (as well as many other residents) spent hours each day running, biking and walking when all other options for exercise shut down. Sports and exercise are very important to the livelihood of many people. Our student athletes have missed out on many important events due to this pandemic, but missing a full season of a sport they have continued to train for during a global pandemic does not have to happen. Our schools have found a way to move forward as have most restaurants, gyms and other businesses. I am kindly asking that Leon County please allow sporting events to be held at their properties. Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Hope Carrasquilla
	Address: 1901 Ty Ty Court
	Date Submitted: 9/9/2020 10:05:06 AM

My son is a freshmen at Leon High School this year. He is looking forward to beginning the cross country season this year as a high school student. A few weeks ago he was able to run as an independent runner at his first high school meet that was held outside Jacksonville. I was very impressed with how the organizers were able to keep everyone safely distanced and/or masked in order to allow the runners to compete. I can easily envision this same format being followed by our local high schools, parks, and green spaces in order to allow our students the ability to compete this season. I would also like to propose that our students be allowed to travel outside the district and compete as a school team. Please consider allowing our students to compete and have a "regular" cross country season this year.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: l. moore
	Address: p.o. box 12517
	Date Submitted: 9/9/2020 10:33:53 AM

Thank you to all of you for the jobs you do for Leon County.

Please add to the AGENDA for discussion the possiblilty of opening the Elinor Klapp and Apalachee Regional Park XC courses so that our local public MS and HS students have courses to compete. Without the use of these courses they essential will have no season and very little race prep in order to best perform at districts, regionals and state. If you have any alternate suggestions for courses other than us creating one(not enough time or funding) pls send suggestions. Thank you all for your time and for considering our request.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Lisa Unger
	Address: 4122 Wiggington Rd
	Date Submitted: 9/9/2020 2:38:29 PM

Thank you for your dedication to the best interest of the citizens of Leon county. Phases of re-opening based on verified data seem very reasonable. Currently, Leon county is in “phase 2” of the reopening plan, which means no recreational events are permitted. Recreational events may resume in phase 3. LCSS Athletic Department has implemented a precaution that will help allow high school athletics to resume. Leon County School District teams are permitted to compete in only local events held in Leon county. This eliminates the risk of athletes, parents, or coaches accidentally contracting the virus while traveling. Leon County is fortunate to have many athletic sites within its boundaries. We have the Phipps Property/Miller Landing Road trails, the Miccosukee and Alford Greenways, Tom Brown Park, and Piney Z, just to name a few running locations. There are top-notch swimming and golf facilities as well. Further, each of the activities of cross country, swimming, and golf can be modified to be contested in limited groups. Electronic timing and scoring systems eliminate the need for all athletes to “start” at the same time.

But these mitigating factors are not being implemented, and these enviable local facilities and locations are not being used for high school athletics, because recreational events cannot be held while still in phase 2. Impeding integral athletic achievements by classifying high school cross country, swimming, and golf as “recreational” seems unfair to the student athletes who have worked so hard for the past seven or more years to get to their senior year of competition.

We need Leon County to allow our athletes to use these facilities for athletic competitions for athletes only, not recreational events open to the public. Many sports are conducted by individual efforts aggregated into team scores. In other words, in cross country, golf, and swimming, all of the athletes do not need to be on or in the field/course/pool at the same time. Waves or heats of athletes can compete over a period of time to avoid the congregation of either athletes/coaches or parents/spectators. As the parent of a senior athlete who has state level ambitions, I would gladly forfeit watching her compete if eliminating spectators makes the difference between having a season or not. Please consider how hard this year’s seniors have worked to make it to this season, the culmination of their prep school athletic endeavors.

Please allow the county properties and facilities to be used, in limited capacity if necessary, for cross country, swimming, and golf high school athletic competitions.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Callie Griffin
	Address: 8144 Viburnum Court
	Date Submitted: 9/9/2020 3:08:29 PM

Leon County needs to fully open fall sports and ALL the venues, including the parks. This is huge for the kids. They are back in school doing the work, they should also be able to do what they enjoy!! We have been playing travel ball all summer and no uptick in cases in our players. To open only for FSU/TCC track is questionable on many levels. This is about all our kids, not just college athletes. Unfortunately, covid 19 isn't going anywhere. We have to learn to live with it by utilizing safety precautions. Living with it does not mean hiding from it!! Please let our kids play!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Calvin Melton
	Address: 451 Cedar Hill Road
	Date Submitted: 9/9/2020 5:09:48 PM

Leon County needs to open all fall sports for the athletes. The students should be allowed to play fall sports as they have in the past and the parks should open back up to accommodate students who wish to play extracurricular activities outside of school. It's time to let the children have some normalcy back. For the benefit of our kids and grandkids they need to get back into the activities they have grown to depend on.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Ramona Brookins
	Address: 4728 Pimlico Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/9/2020 7:49:51 PM

I am the Association Cheer and Dance Commissioner and Head Cheer Coach for Woodville Jaguars Pop Warner; the largest association in the Big Bend Pop Warner league. With regard to re-opening county parks for youth sports, staff recommends that high-contact, team-based sports like football and baseball do not support the reopening of county parks as these sports were deemed to have elevated or high risks associated with COVID-19. Staff then further recommends that cheerleading, which is organized by Pop Warner in the county, although among the lowest risk sports as outlined in their own background research, also not be authorized as “cheerleading is associated with supporting (cheering on) youth football”. This recommendation is wholly dismissive and insulting as it relates to an entire group of athletes who are proud to dedicate themselves to a SPORT that showcases their athletic and scholastic abilities as equally as others. It is also erroneous to insinuate that cheerleaders exist solely for the benefit of the football team through this recommendation.

Over the last decade, more recognition has been placed on cheerleading as the sport that is and its participants as the athletes they are. So much so, that cheerleading has been recognized by the Olympic Committee as a sport and is set to make its debut at the 2024 Olympics. Pop Warner has always recognized cheerleading as a separate program from football, but it has recently affirmed this by making cheerleading a year-round activity within the program. During the year, cheerleaders act as ambassadors for the entire program and compete in several competitions that lead to year-end competitions that equate to the Super Bowl. The global pandemic changed how cheer programs facilitated these activities. Per staff’s research, cheerleading (classified as a non-contact sport) modeled its high modification potential to mitigate the low risks associated with the sport by adapting in-person competitions to virtual, developing and implementing procedures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 during cheer practices and created or modified competition categories that took into consideration social distancing guidelines like non-stunting divisions. Consequently, there have been no reports of spread events within the industry as most have resumed practices to some degree since the COVID-19 restrictions across the country have slowly been relaxed.

Staff’s background research thoroughly supports that cheerleading could begin practices at county parks due to the lower risks associated with the spread of COVID-19. Staff also lays out detailed recommendations for opening county parks for the purposes of cross-country racing; an activity that has similar risk levels as cheerleading. So, staff shows its willingness to allow certain sports activities with certain precautions and guidelines in place. Big Bend Pop Warner Cheer and Football programs are required to abide by the Return To Play guidelines established by Pop Warner Nationals not to supersede any local, state or federal mandates. Other Pop Warner Associations around the Leon county area have safely started their seasons under these guidelines. We are confident BBPW can do the same. However, what is problematic is with cheerleading being a primarily female dominated sport, staff’s recommendation to not authorize cheerleading at because football is higher risk is illogical and sends a message that cheerleading is only validated by football or other primarily male dominated sports.

We must learn to adapt to this new normal, keep ourselves and others safe but also live our lives. We cannot do that in fear or isolation. Therefore, I respectfully ask that the Commission wholly reject Option #1 of staff’s recommendation and reopen county parks and facilities by expanding Option #2 to include cheerleading and other sports with appropriate precautions as defined by each league’s return to play protocols.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kevin Rudd
	Address: 3384 Micanopy Trail
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 1:25:52 PM

There has to be a way! Most counties in Florida are allowing recreational sports. Kids need it and you are letting your county and its citizens down. If Fall sports are canceled, it will be almost a year since these kids have had the opportunity to participate. You all should allow sports to resume immediately. Most counties in Florida are allowing recreational sports, there proven safe ways to do so. this board is forcing Families to seek opportunities outside this county to play. These families are traveling into counties with larger and much "hotter" with many more cases, to afford their kids the opportunity to play. Will this approach make you feel safer??

Put safe play rules in effect and LET THEM PLAY! Its the right thing to do.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kimberly Ritchie
	Address: 9101 Old Chemonie Rd
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 2:20:57 PM

Please reopen county parks and allow the kids to play organized outdoor sports! Many local kids (including my own) have been safely playing travel baseball, softball and lacrosse for months now. I have seen some tournaments close off bleachers so that spectators must bring chairs to social distance. If we can allow our kids to go back to school with safety precautions in place, we should be able to do the same for outdoor sports!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Robert Vos
	Address: 2122 Drayton Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 2:56:38 PM

It's time to open our fields and let our kids play sports! Despite what one of the commissioners believe, we parents Do Know What's Best For Our Children, not a county commissioner.

Our schools are open, restaurants are open, movie theaters are open, big box stores are open, all of which are in enclosed ares and not outside in the FRESH AIR.

High School Sports have begun, College Sports have begun, Professional Sports have begun, why not Youth Sports??

Leon County is one of only a few counties in the state of Florida not allowing youth sports! Why are you handcuffing our children? It's time for you to stop thinking what YOU think is best and look at the data that surrounds you.

The city of has begun opening up Youth Sports, including gymnastics which is Inside. Baseball is by far one of the easiest sports to social distance.

Stop the ridiculousness and let our kids play sports.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Carrie Woodson
	Address: 959 Poser Court
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 3:13:46 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

We have two children who actively play travel baseball and softball, our baseball team being out of Leon County. Our travel ball teams have been actively playing since May of 2020. Please let our kids use facilities in town to play the sports they love. It is an outside event, and our kids need their teams right now. Please let them get back to normalcy and passion about something! I see a rise in suicides right now in young males since March in our community and it is unsettling. Let them play ball! All the parents know the consequences and will sign waivers I'm sure, we've been signing waivers since May. This is needed for our kids gradual move towards normalcy. We are traveling to Marianna and other counties to practice which is ridiculous! Please hear our cries and open the fields back up for our kids to enjoy the outdoors.

Respectfully,

Joe and Carrie Woodson

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: glenn bedonie
	Address: 7524 preservation rd
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 3:45:20 PM

Please allow youth sports activities to occur this fall

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jeff Bedonie
	Address: 9127 Foxwood Dr S, Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 4:53:16 PM

Please allow youth sports this Fall. Thank you for your consideration.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Mandi Dyal
	Address: 5623 Burnside Circle
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 8:24:48 PM

Please open sports for our kids! Schools are open and sports should be too. There are safe effective ways to open sports for our kids. Let you s try!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Anna Pawelczyk
	Address: 7040 Sawley Ct tallahassee Florida 32317
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 11:12:36 PM

Please consider the reopening of the baseball fields for organized sports. As a parent, we understand the risk. It is OPTIONAL, just like me sending my kids to brick and mortar for school. If you ride by the Chaires fields most nights, there are teams practicing. This is an obvious indication that the parents/children want to play. In May, we didn't have one parent on our team that objected from letting their child finish out with a late season, but the county decided that wasn't going to happen. These kids have already had almost 7 months of whirlwind. Their normal lives have been turned upside down. Please take into consideration that as parents, we want our kids out there. We want to start heading back to normal. We have to start somewhere. If it's a liability issue, make the parents sign a waiver. Open the fields up with stipulations that we have to follow! Have guidelines for social distancing, etc. Do something!!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Ian Mott-Smith
	Address: 3841 Longford Dr. 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 10:27:36 AM

The use of county parks for organized outdoor sports and athletics can and has been successfully performed safely during the Covid-19 at many parks that we have attended for travel baseball.

We started playing organized travel baseball in other Florida counties as soon as Phase II started and all teams and families that we communicate with have demonstrated and put a priority on following safety measures to ensure that ourselves and others are not put at higher risk of infection. Same can be said for our other kids and their sporting activities.

Awareness has been at the forefront of our community's daily activities and now includes schools opening with stringent safety guidelines. My kids have not complained at all of mask use, additional hand washing, and repetitive reminders from teachers on the need for health and hand hygiene.

These messages from school and home are becoming standards of care that are carried out on the field of play as well as parents on the sideline cheering their kids on.

Organized sports for our community are one of the attributes that makes our community exceptional. Guidelines and behaviors are recognized now for us to proceed with letting our kids play and play safely!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Katrina Reffitt
	Address: 1737 Copperfield Circle, Tallahassee FL 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 10:33:20 AM

Good day,

I am writing in as a parent of a XC/Track athlete. I implore you to reopen parks for XC competition for our high school athletes. My son is a senior who already lost this past Spring track season. This Fall XC season is his last chance to work for and possibly earn an athletic college scholarship. He and his team have worked hard all summer. Please allow them to compete locally and elsewhere. XC is a sport that can be done very safely. This is not a contact sport or held indoors. This sport cannot and should not be lumped into football. While training all summer together there have been zero issues and no illnesses. It is also unfair that being in a public school limits opportunity to compete while private schools carry on. We are back at brick and mortar school indoors, there is no valid reason we cannot compete outdoors. Allow the athletes some normalcy and show them their hard work has not been in vain. Please let them compete and open the parks. They should not be punished while there are safe ways to make these sports happen.

Respectfully,

Katrina Reffitt

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Katrina Reffitt
	Address: 1737 Copperfield Circle, Tallahassee FL 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 10:36:24 AM

Good day,

I am writing in as a parent of a XC/Track athlete. I implore you to reopen parks for XC competition for our high school athletes. My son is a senior who already lost this past Spring track season. This Fall XC season is his last chance to work for and possibly earn an athletic college scholarship. He and his team have worked hard all summer. Please allow them to compete locally and elsewhere. XC is a sport that can be done very safely. This is not a contact sport or held indoors. This sport cannot and should not be lumped into football. While training all summer together there have been zero issues and no illnesses. It is also unfair that being in a public school limits opportunity to compete while private schools carry on. We are back at brick and mortar school indoors, there is no valid reason we cannot compete outdoors. Allow the athletes some normalcy and show them their hard work has not been in vain. Please let them compete and open the parks. They should not be punished while there are safe ways to make these sports happen.

Respectfully,

Katrina Reffitt

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tim Unger
	Address: 1527 Pullen Rd. Tallahassee, Fl. 32303
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 12:17:58 PM

Good Day Commissioners,

Leon County Schools System Athletics made accommodations for the more dangerous high school contact sports and have not made any recent progress with getting the less hazardous to be transmitted COVID19 sports running. We need your help to get cross country, golf, and swimming going ASAP! These non contact sports are far less likely to transmit the virus with social distancing guidelines in place for them to compete than the already scheduled contact sports. My daughter's Senior year at Leon High School is already a full-blown disaster because of the LCSS 's temporary competitive rules. Lilli Unger has worked hard for seven years @ Raa MS & Leon HS to finally be able to lead her team to the FHSAA 3A State Finals as the pre-season #1 ranked ladies team in the state of Florida. Almost all other Florida counties are already holding meets that will put our athletes behind in their athletic quests. Please allow our athletes to compete in at least one of the county parks.

We have already been to Jacksonville for a pre-season meet held with social distance guidelines in place on August 21, 2020 and NO COVID 19 cases have been linked to any cross country meets. Our tests have all come back negative from that August experience.

I was tested because I donate my time as a volunteer mentor cross country & track & field coach at Raa MS for 7 years now. I wanted to make sure I wasn't an asymptomatic carrier before I engaged the team today, We only have 6 children signed up now to run when we would normally have 40-50. When we do open the parks for running competitions, we will not have huge crowds because of so many folks already being fully withdrawn from any of the sports options currently available at Leon County schools.

LCSS Athletics has implemented a precaution that will help allow high school athletics to resume. Leon County School District teams are permitted to compete in only local events held in Leon county. This eliminates the risk of athletes, parents, or coaches accidentally contracting the virus while traveling. Leon County is fortunate to have many athletic sites within its boundaries. We have the Phipps Property/Miller Landing Road trails, the Miccosukee and Alford Greenways, Tom Brown Park, and Piney Z, just to name a few running locations. There are top-notch swimming and golf facilities as well. Further, each of the activities of cross county, swimming, and golf can be modified to be contested in limited groups. Electronic timing and scoring systems eliminate the need for all athletes to “start” at the same time.

But these mitigating factors are not being implemented, and these enviable local facilities and locations are not being used for high school athletics, because recreational events cannot be held while still in phase 2. Impeding integral athletic achievements by classifying high school cross country, swimming, and golf as “recreational” seems unfair to the student athletes who have worked so hard for the past seven or more years to get to their senior year of competition.

We need Leon County to allow our athletes to use these facilities for athletic competitions for athletes only, not recreational events open to the public. As the parent of a senior athlete who has state level ambitions, I would gladly forfeit watching her compete if eliminating spectators makes the difference between having a season or not. Please consider how hard this year’s seniors have worked to make it to this season, the culmination of their prep school athletic endeavors.

Please allow the county properties and facilities to be used, in limited capacity if necessary, for cross country, swimming, and golf high school athletic competitions.

Thank you for your time & dedication to the best interest of the citizens of Leon county.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Rachel Perrin Rogers
	Address: 1281 Penny Lane
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 12:49:08 PM

Commissioners & Staff,

Please allow for our school aged student athletes to use county facilities for meets and practices.

Our kids have been practicing together (as together as you can be in a no contact sport) for months, and I am not aware of a single case of covid amongst any of them or their families.

Please take into consideration that the local schools don't own facilities for our kids to use. They are at a disadvantage for this reason. Especially athletes from low income families. Running is a very low cost sport, which is what draws some kids to it. Please think of them especially as you consider this item. It is not their fault that the school board doesn't own land for practices and meets.

There are many precautions that can be taken to make meets safer in the time of covid. I submitted examples of this to Mr. Long. Please allow these athletes access. We are all committed to taking appropriate precautions and behaving responsibly so the children can compete.

Thank you for all you do.

Rachel Perrin Rogers

Jake's mom

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: John and Angela Schwenkler
	Address: 1608 Laguna Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 12:58:45 PM

To the members of the Leon County Commission:

We write as the parents of a child who is a freshman at Leon High School. He has run cross-country each season since elementary school, and this is his first opportunity to do so as a high-schooler. The activity of running cross-country benefits his mental and physical health, and provides a vital opportunity for socialization.

For these reasons and others, we believe that the refusal to allow county parks to host organized cross-country meets is detrimental to the health of our local children. This is especially so given the demonstrably low risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission through competing in the sport of cross-country, as explained in the FHSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (“SMAC”)’s report to the FHSAA Board on July 20, 2020:

>>In addition, as the SMAC values the importance of sports participation in a safe environment, at this time, we feel it is there is an acceptable low risk for participation in the remainder of the Fall sports that are considered “low risk” as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of physical distancing (>6 feet), face coverings when not actively exercising, and hand hygiene. These sports include Golf, Cross country, Bowling, Swimming & Diving. The risk transmission of SARS-CoV-2 increases with duration of exposure, therefore the FHSAA SMAC recommends several mitigation factors for Cross Country including: a staggered start for the race to avoid running in groups unmasked, and special care to avoid congregating unmasked at the start or finish of the race.<<

There are numerous guidelines promulgated by organizations successfully operating cross country and swimming programs currently, both in the State of Florida and across the United States, along with a wide array of golf tournaments. One suggestion is to formulate a group of parent volunteers with knowledge and expertise in health, law and the affected sports, to recommend ways to implement SMAC’s recommendations. Speaking for ourselves, we would absolutely volunteer in any capacity requested of the Leon County school district. We recommend this consideration only because we all acknowledge the hard and arduous work you all are undertaking in other areas and want to offer any support we can offer in making the process easier and more easily digestible as information and circumstances change week to week.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John and Angela Schwenkler

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tristan LaNasa
	Address: 133 OAK ST APT 9
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 1:19:13 PM

Let the kids run.

There are numerous guidelines promulgated by organizations successfully operating cross country and swimming programs currently, both in the State of Florida and across the United States, along with a wide array of golf tournaments.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Bryan Koon
	Address: 3665 Mossy Creek Lane, Tallahassee, FL 32311
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 1:26:43 PM

I encourage the board to do everything within their power to allow the use of county property for Cross Country practice and competitions this fall. I have three sons - a senior at Rickards, a freshman at Leon, and a sixth-grader at Fairview. My wife is an assistant principal at the School of Arts and Sciences on Thomasville Road.

All three boys have participated in Cross Country, and I have been an active volunteer with the Fairview program. I have always been amazed with how many boys and girls participate in this sport, and how much self-confidence they gain throughout their involvement. It is an egalitarian sport, especially at the middle school level, and allows those students who might not make any other team the feeling of being part of something bigger than themselves. If you are able, read David Yon's article about the Fairview Team in the October 30, 2019 edition of the Tallahassee Democrat for additional insight.

Thanks,
Bryan Koon

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Ronald Harrison
	Address: 3035 Bay Shore Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 1:48:10 PM

Numbers are increasing locally and will only continue to increase once Labor Day Weekend numbers are back AND after the local, FSU game undoubtedly creates a spike in numbers. As a healthcare worker, we already dread "flu season" with a passion and the impacts of COVID are only going to double or triple that dread and the workloads on already tired staff. Public spaces are already being severely restricted to other worthwhile groups/events, so high school athletics should be no different. Please vote to continue to protect the most at-risk among us. We cannot attempt to woo a retiring population and attract retirees to our fair city and then make policy decisions that will put them at risk. Do NOT open our parks to organized athletics. Thank you for your consideration!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Alesha Waller
	Address: 8701 Freedom Road Tallahassee Florida 32305
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 2:08:13 PM

Athletics plays a positive role in the upbringing of children through out our community. It not only promotes physical health, but mental and emotional as well. Please allow county parks to remain open so fall sports can move forward as scheduled. Most of these sports take place outside where Covid is least likely to be transmitted. Additionally, social distancing and health precautions can easily be implemented if necessary. As we all know this virus is not a threat to young healthy children who need these types of activities to maintain their overall health.

Thank you for considering this matter.

Alesha Waller

<https://novakdjokovicfoundation.org/the-importance-of-sports-for-children/>

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Trey Black
	Address: 2312 Cleburn Lane
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 2:26:40 PM

PLEASE LET US RUN

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jake Rogers
	Address: 1281 Penny Lane
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 2:27:06 PM

Please let me run.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Stuart Poage
	Address: 7207 Sleepy Hollow Circle
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 2:36:39 PM

Please open the parks and allow outdoor organized sporting events including school events and club teams. The children have been punished enough. Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: JA Colasanti
	Address: 1801 NW 80th Blvd., Gainesville, FL
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 4:12:19 PM

While the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) offers its support to open Apalachee Regional Park with new event protocols in light of COVID-19 like temperature screening(s) and face coverings, mandating a negative testing requirement for participants at the high school level in preparation for the event is extremely problematic and just not feasible. If this requirement is to be instituted, the FHSAA would have no other choice than to move the Florida High School Cross Country State Championships to another host site/venue.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Lily Moore
	Address: p.o. box 12517
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 4:12:33 PM

Please consider opening up the county parks to allow the xc teams to compete with the other high schools within the county. By not opening them for competition, my team and I, as well as the other high school teams here, have no where to compete. At this time, we are the only sport not having a season. Thank you for considering my request.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Terri Poore
	Address: 715 Red Fern Road
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 4:53:19 PM

I am the mother of a sophomore at Leon High School who is on the cross country team. I appreciate all of your efforts to keep kids safe. Our son is in the Digital Academy. We do feel strongly about safety measures, however, I do think it would be safe to allow local high schools to have cross country competitions at our local parks. Please allow our students in Leon County to use county parks for purposes of meets so that they can continue to compete. Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tamara Poucher
	Address: 3013 Corrib Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 5:14:25 PM

I am writing to you today as the parent of a Montford Middle School 6th grader who loves running. My son has run for school groups and in events since the first grade, starting in the Roberts Elementary Mileage Club. He has run countless community races since he was three years old. He has watched and cheered on me and all of our Moms Run This Town members for as long as he can remember. He loves running and it is a huge part of our lives. This will be his first year having the opportunity to run as a middle schooler with a cross-country team. He spent his entire summer running every morning, Monday through Friday, to prepare for this cross-country season and is excited to continue his journey. Running cross-country for these children benefits mental and physical health, offers a connection to nature and provides an incredible, safe opportunity for socialization with peers that meets guidelines developed by local, state and federal leadership. This is even more important now that many of them, including my son, are Digital Academy students learning from home.

The following was not written by me, but expresses my feelings and the feelings of our running community regarding our children being able to run cross-county in our beautiful parks this season:

“We believe that the refusal to allow county parks to host organized cross-country meets is detrimental to the health of our local children. This is especially so given the demonstrably low risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission through competing in the sport of cross-country, as explained in the FHSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (“SMAC”)’s report to the FHSAA Board on July 20, 2020:

>>In addition, as the SMAC values the importance of sports participation in a safe environment, at this time, we feel there is an acceptable low risk for participation in the remainder of the Fall sports that are considered “low risk” as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of physical distancing (>6 feet), face coverings when not actively exercising, and hand hygiene. These sports include Golf, Cross country, Bowling, Swimming & Diving. The risk transmission of SARS-CoV-2 increases with duration of exposure, therefore the FHSAA SMAC recommends several mitigation factors for Cross Country including: a staggered start for the race to avoid running in groups unmasked, and special care to avoid congregating unmasked at the start or finish of the race.<<

There are numerous guidelines promulgated by organizations successfully operating cross country and swimming programs currently, both in the State of Florida and across the United States, along with a wide array of golf tournaments. One suggestion is to formulate a group of parent volunteers with knowledge and expertise in health, law and the affected sports, to recommend ways to implement SMAC’s recommendations. Speaking for ourselves, we would absolutely volunteer in any capacity requested of the Leon County school district. We recommend this consideration only because we all acknowledge the hard and arduous work you all are undertaking in other areas and want to offer any support we can offer in making the process easier and more easily digestible as information and circumstances change week to week.”

Thank you for your consideration and for allowing our community to advocate for our children.

Sincerely,

Tammy Poucher

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Mikaela Tang
	Address: 1344 Conservancy Drive East
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 5:29:43 PM

Please make an exception to the park closures for high school cross country teams. These athletes depend on the County Parks in order to continue their running and to have a safe Fall Season, especially this Fall Season since our Leon County athletes in public high schools are not allowed to compete with any high school outside of Leon County.

You have the ability to take the action that can enable our high school cross country athletes to have their safe 'in-county' Fall Season. Please take this action and modify Phase 2 of the Leon County COVID-19 Response and Re-opening Plan to authorize organized cross country practices and events at County facilities.

Your ability to make this happen is integral to the futures of many talented high school cross country athletes in Leon County's public school. One of these athletes is my younger sister, a high school sophomore at Leon. I graduated from Chiles in 2018 and in college now - I was not an athlete, so in the past I would not have fully understood the significance of this issue about allowing teams to have a season. But during the many months I was home during this pandemic I personally witnessed the dedication of my sister, and the other high school cross country runners she trains with. They are the most committed group of high school students I have known! These high school kids did not take a break - they trained six days a week in early morning hours and through intense heat and sometimes heavy rain. They motivated each other to keep working towards their goals - both for their school teams and personal goals for college recruitment. They did this despite the cancellation of their track season and the many unknowns ahead of them, but they held onto the hope of a Fall Season. Some of our Leon County runners are juniors and seniors. To them, this Fall Season is critical to be able to compete for the college scholarships they have worked so hard for - they need a chance at this season in order to reach their goals. Please take action so that they can have that chance by making an exception to the current closures of County Parks for organized athletic events that would allow our Leon County high school athletes to use County Park facilities.

Thank you for taking your time to read this and to understand the significance of this decision.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Herb Wills
	Address: 3475 Daylily Lane
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 5:37:57 PM

I would like to see the parks opened at least to cross-country running events.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we've actually encouraged people to get outside and use the parks. It's good for physical and mental health, and when conducted responsibly poses little risk of disease transmission. Running events would be an extension of this.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kathan Tang
	Address: 1001 Ocala Road
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 5:40:29 PM

I appreciate that the reason for closing county parks to organized sports and athletic events is in the interest of safety for our community, but please consider making an exception to this closure for high school cross country teams.

These teams, like all high school fall athletic teams, are required to only compete within Leon County, and only with other Leon County schools, in order to minimize risk of spreading COVID-19. Cross country is very different from other high school sport teams, because cross country needs to use county parks. If an exception is not made to open these parks up to high school cross country, then Leon County public school cross country athletes will be the only fall sport athletes that are not permitted to have a fall season.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Denise Howard
	Address: 3790 Piney Grove Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 7:04:03 PM

Please allow cross country meets, with proper physical distancing and safety requirements as outlined by FHSAA's medical advisors.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: To-Ha' Tang
	Address: 1344 Conservancy Drive East
	Date Submitted: 9/11/2020 8:04:18 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I understand your concern about opening the County parks to organized sports and athletics. Health and safety is also always my first priority also. However, I am writing to ask you for a special consideration. Although cross country is an organized event, it is a non-contact sport and performed 100 percent outdoors across large fields of land that provide ample room for social distancing. Furthermore, the actual event (running) has a very short duration. In fact, the early Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) report from FHSAA acknowledged the low risks associated with cross country and recommended to allow cross country (as well as swimming and golf) to maintain the current FHSAA calendar with safety measures in place (masking while not running, and staggered starts at meets).

These young athletes have been working extremely hard and many have long term college goals that are dependent upon their ability to have official events to compete at during this Fall season. If we do not provide them with access to resources that will enable them to compete this Fall then it will be devastating to them not only in terms of continually improving their skill sets to pursue future goals, but may also bring long term mental impacts that are irreversible.

As a parent of one of the public high school cross country athletes, I'm respectfully asking you to take a brief moment to read and carefully consider my comments, and make the most sound decision that reduces the long-term impact to these talented high school athletes.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: David Yon
	Address: 3324 Charleston Rd
	Date Submitted: 9/12/2020 1:20:50 PM

I wish to join the parents and students who are asking that the commission to permit middle schools and high schools to use county parks for cross country races

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tommy Kristian
	Address: 3245 Cranleigh Dr Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/12/2020 1:59:09 PM

After reviewing Agenda Item 21 regarding the reopening of parks, including the ARP, for use for cross country meets and practices, I strongly urge the Commission to vote to reopen.

As the parent of a high school cross country runner, I think it is important that our kids have the opportunity to compete in their sport this fall. For the seniors, this is their last opportunity to be noticed by colleges or to run with their team.

It was noted several times in Item 21 that there are concerns that cross country might be a sport that is higher risk of transmission of COVID-19. While the CDC guidance certainly hypothesizes that, that is all that it is, a hypothesis. In reality, if there is a sport that is designed with social distancing in mind, it is cross country. The courses themselves are spread out over hundreds of acres or more, leaving plenty of room for spectators to spread out. During a meet, the runners generally do not run right on top of each other.

As of this comment, there have been approximately 21 cross country meets completed in the state of Florida since the beginning of August, including one in Tallahassee September 5. With 21 meets completed, there has not been one news report of an outbreak related to transmission in-competition or among spectators; had there been an outbreak, it would have been covered extensively on any number of news reports and websites.

I strongly urge the Commission to reopen parks for cross country practice and competition. I urge the Commission to do so with spectators being allowed at meets as well. Currently, the FHSAA has the State Meet scheduled for November at the ARP, and while it is noted in Item 21 that parents could "drop their runner off" and then go enjoy our area, the fact of the matter is a senior parent from the Tampa area is not going to accept that they paid for a hotel room but cannot support their child in what is likely their last competition. That is unreasonable. I will also point to an incident at the opening meet of the middle school season in 2018 at the ARP where the girls race was just about completed when a nasty thunderstorm tore through the area, leaving runners and parents alike scrambling to get to their vehicles; if parents are forced to drop off their runner and leave the area, who is then responsible for their safety if a similar situation occurs?

Upon reopening, it would of course be wise to do so with COVID-related safety measures in place, such as the recommendation that spectators wear a mask and social distance.

Respectfully submitted,
Tommy Kristian

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kaitlyn Kristian
	Address: 3245 Cranleigh Dr Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/12/2020 2:03:39 PM

I am a freshman cross country runner this year, and I would really like to have a full season this year. Opening the parks would be extremely beneficial to many athletes, both physically and mentally. Reopening the parks would give athletes a chance to go out and actually do a physical activity they enjoy doing, as many, including myself, don't have any other activities. Cross country has also helped me make more friends and do more things with them, and as a more introverted person, this has helped me so much. Cross country has helped me come out of my shell and showed me what I'm really capable of. I want to have that feeling again this season.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Amber Kristian
	Address: 3245 Cranleigh Drive Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/12/2020 2:21:41 PM

As the parent of a freshman cross country runner I strongly urge you to consider reopening the parks for meets and spectator viewing. The science has clearly shown that there is a low transmission rate of the virus outdoors and little to no effects among individuals who are active and healthy. These kids need to be out and active and involved with their fellow teammates engaging in competition and athletic events, however that may look this year. My daughter's mental health and self confidence has increased dramatically simply by being around her coach and teammates in a controlled and safe environment. As her parent, I have never felt she has been unsafe or the conditions harmful in any way. I also believe that as her parent, I know what is best for her, not you, so if I choose to let her compete in competition, I strongly believe it is my right to do so.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kimberly Reams
	Address: 4361 Rockingham rd
	Date Submitted: 9/12/2020 4:26:54 PM

I fully support County Parks being open so our children can look forward to upcoming local races and games.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jennifer Kilinski
	Address: 1815 OLD FORT Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/12/2020 6:36:08 PM

I am writing to implore Leon County to opening up county parks for organized outdoor sports and athletics.

First, from a defensible position standpoint, if you do a survey around the state, the vast majority of counties have reopened facilities for outdoor sports use. Second, the sport I am especially knowledgeable about and concerned about is cross country. All around the state races are being hosted, practices are resuming and meets/games are being held consistent with FHSAA's recommendations on how to carry out cross country meets safely and consistent with FHSAA's Sports Medicine Advisory Counsel ("SMAC") recommendations. I personally have been to two out of county meets, one in Tampa and one in Ocala, and saw first hand how the races can be successfully run. I have been monitoring county statuses across the state on reopening facilities for similar uses and we stand in a significant minority. I have also monitored any COVID related impacts from hosting XC races and have heard no issues in spread. Third, FHSAA put out a recommended waiver that the County could use for participation in such events, recognizing participation is 100% voluntary and with parent engagement.

Fourth, the SMAC report, comprised of Mayo clinic doctors and other medical professionals, concluded that cross country a low risk sport and could resume safely, with certain parameters in place.

Fifth, the school district is currently prohibiting our runners (and swimmers) to leave the County for races but with the county and city facilities closed, our runners have no where to race. Meanwhile, football will proceed WITH FANS, on our school campuses but non football athletes of swimming and cross country are in purgatory, stuck between mandated county races and no where to race in county. The only option to race, then, is to do so as an unattached athlete and travel the state.

Sixth, these kids and their parents are hungry for an opportunity to race. They have already had their track season cancelled, many are mentally struggling with school changes and stress, leaving options for college scholarships few and far between with sports because while the REST OF THE STATE races, our kids are stuck, not having a chance to obtain times makes college recruiting nearly impossible in this short season. If our kids can't compete, particularly against the other top runners in the state, their opportunities, and potentially their college and life trajectories, are irreparably changed.

Finally, to reiterate, the SMAC report from FHSAA acknowledged the low risks associated with cross country. These kids have been running together all summer with NO incident. Even when a couple of athletes on various teams were COVID positive, having contracted it through work or family in the cases of which I am aware, it did NOT spread to other teammates. We have several months of data now available to us – this is not a high risk sport. Please consider allowing the Leon County HS cross country runners to host races at County facilities. Please do not penalize our student athletes for living in Tallahassee. Please use the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee's data, recommendations and those of FHSAA to adapt individual sports to the reality these student athletes, coaches and parents face. Please do not impair the work, minds, bodies and futures of these young adults.

Jennifer

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Chris Kuhn
	Address: 1815 Old Fort Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/12/2020 6:45:42 PM

Good evening,

I am writing as a parent of an athlete who is eager to return to sports in Leon County. Our kids are in multiple sports and we have resumed traveling with various clubs to facilities in Orlando, Ocala, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Fort Myers and other areas and they are all opened with some COVID-related best practices in place. We would much rather be here locally, not having to travel all across the state, and seeing some of the income from these events coming to the Tallahassee market. I am not advocating for carte blanche reopening so to speak - rather, for sports like cross country, I have personally witnessed successful races where:

- spectators were temperature checked on the way in and required to wear masks if they could not be at least 6' away from others.
- athletes warmed up only with their teammates
- races were set up with wide starting boxes and not allowed to congregate in those boxes until just before the race start.
- finish lines were staffed with masked volunteers and long finishing chutes and chip timed so that finishers just kept moving through the finish to their respective team areas.
- no awards ceremony for congregation purposes, awards just picked up by winning team/athletes.
- multiple waves - limiting varsity wave to 7-10 runners per team and limit to 40 teams; then JV done the same. With the big meet we attended, they did three waves - and ordered them by entry time so that the fastest 50 kids were spread out in wave 1, then 50 next fastest in wave 2, etc.
- tent area for teams were marked for spacing and masks required if social distancing couldn't be accomplished.

There is a lot of science now on many of these sports and closing facilities just because it feels like the conservative thing to do should be reevaluated based on science.

Respectfully,
Chris

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Dan Manausa
	Address: 2003 Dogwood Hill
	Date Submitted: 9/13/2020 2:32:28 PM

Please open up county parks for organized outdoor sports and athletics. The harm of closing the parks at this time is far greater to our community than the minimal risk of spreading covid while exercising in the outdoors.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Benjamin Reams
	Address: 4361 Rockingham Rd
	Date Submitted: 9/13/2020 6:11:47 PM

I support the use of Leon county parks for high school athletics.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Allen Blay
	Address: 6253 Buck Run Circle
	Date Submitted: 9/13/2020 11:30:02 PM

I am going to address two issues I have not seen addressed adequately in other comment letters I have seen circulated. First, and by far most importantly, is the issue of equity for all youth. In my opinion, the most important reason for why we MUST reopen ARP for middle and high school XC meets is that the individuals most affected by this are our most at-risk youth – the ones whose parents cannot afford them opportunities outside of what is offered through public opportunities. One of the foundational principles of public school education and athletics is equal opportunity for all. This principle is largely the purpose of public education and many aspects of government in general. In Leon County, we are blessed with one of the most diverse populations in the state. When I attend cross country meets, I am excited to see that all the Middle Schools in Tallahassee field full teams, including many kids from less-privileged families. Without the possibility of public school cross country competition, these kids are left out, and this can have horrendous long-term consequences for kids where running is an outlet to better physical and mental health. With the LCSB moratorium on out of county meets and the county/city lockdowns on facilities, cross country has been singled out despite being arguably the safest sport. Most children of financially sound families have been competing (and will continue to compete regardless, because they can afford to do so). As a champion of running as an outstanding outlet for both exercise and mental release, I am sad to see the poorer kids in Tallahassee who love to run completely left out, and honestly to the detriment of their health, not protection. The scientific safety of running (and most non-contact outdoor activities) during the pandemic is well documented. All the cross country athletes from the underprivileged areas of Tallahassee will fall farther behind, and this honestly breaks my heart because I’ve watched the joy on the middle school runners’ faces as they experience the accomplishment of finishing a cross country race. My kids will continue to experience this joy regardless of what the county does, but the same is not true for less fortunate kids who are relying on public opportunities.

Second, I am confused by the rationale behind restriction a. in Option #2. Why include a restriction that says, “Prohibit spectators and nonessential personnel at cross country races”? I have tried hard to understand the scientific rationale behind this, but I can’t find any. I watched the FSU football game on TV this past weekend shortly after reading the county proposal for cross country, and I saw 17,000 fans packed together, drinking beer, and practicing no social distancing right here in Leon County. Jam-packed restaurants are open, and bars just opened throughout the state on Monday. Yet it is somehow unsafe for a few hundred spectators to watch a race outside, with masks, in a 52 acre park? Wearing masks, keeping adequate distance from each other, and staggering race starts are all very smart rules, and I see a very high degree of compliance at the meets I’ve gone to. Cross country runners and parents are a disciplined group who understand safety and rules. Most importantly, I have never seen a single documented case of COVID spreading on a trail, running, or watching a race. The science of the virus and empirical observation indicate that it would be safer to watch two dozen cross country meets than go one time to a restaurant. Yet somehow, bars and restaurants are open, yet the county is listing “no spectators” as a reasonable restriction to have at cross country meets. I strongly suggest the county remove restriction a. from Option #2 because it is completely inconsistent with the rest of the state, all other restrictions within the county, and frankly there is just no scientific reason to include it.

I appreciate your time, and I hope my comments are useful.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jeffrey Springer
	Address: 1310 Silver Moon Ct
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 8:06:27 AM

Leon County Commission,

I am writing in regard to Item 21. I would like to ask that the commission to modify Phase 2 to allow for Cross Country practices and meets. Other counties and venues show that these outdoor events can be conducted safely.

A special consideration about Cross Country is that has participants from across the spectrum of income, color and sex. Many "at risk" teens find an avenue for self-discipline and inclusion into our sports programs. Please consider that many of our athletes come from families who probably can't afford to pay for travel outside of Leon county. It would be a disservice to our community to exclude them from Leon County facilities.

Please modify your stance to allow for cross country in Leon County.

Thank you.

Dr. Jeffrey Springer

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: J. Terry Ryan
	Address: 2538 Stonegate Dr.
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 8:34:46 AM

I wish to express my approval of opening recreational venues, parks etc to sporting and other recreational activities.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kristen and Joe Knapp
	Address: 9805 Thunder Hill Trail, 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 9:26:52 AM

We write as parents of a Chiles High School [junior] who has played baseball since he was in elementary school. Baseball benefits his mental and physical health and gives him valuable social experiences, as he has made friends through this sport that will last a lifetime

We believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized baseball games will have a negative affect on our local children.

COVID-19 has shown lower risk transmission through outdoor activities and in fact, our elected officials have encouraged, even during the April stay at home order, that individuals continue to exercise outside during this pandemic.

Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene (“Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, ”Mayo Clinic).

We recognize the work of our city and county officials to continue undertaking ways to keep our citizens safe

As parents of an athlete we are willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment.

We appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy that sports can bring.

Kristen and Joe Knapp

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Nicole Gerteisen
	Address: 1422 Silver Pine Lane, 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 10:41:45 AM

We write as parents of a Chiles High School SENIOR who has played baseball since he was in elementary school. Baseball benefits his mental and physical health and gives him valuable social experiences, as he has made friends through this sport that will last a lifetime.

We believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized baseball games will have a negative effect on our local children. COVID-19 has shown lower risk transmission through outdoor activities and in fact, our elected officials have encouraged, even during the April stay at home order, that individuals continue to exercise outside during this pandemic.

Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene (“Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, ”Mayo Clinic). We recognize the work of our city and county officials to continue undertaking ways to keep our citizens safe. As parents of an athlete we are willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment. We appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy that sports can bring.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Sherry Rudd
	Address: 3384 Micanopy Trail
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 10:48:39 AM

County Commissioners,

I am writing to you in hopes that you will strongly consider allowing Fall Sports to happen. I have 3 children who have played city sports for the past 11 years. I believe the value of sports and exercise far exceeds the risk of COVID. With safety measures in place, I believe city sports can safely occur just like travel ball, high school, college, and professional sports have done. Our children's lives have been greatly affected the past 6 months. Please give them some sense of normalcy.

Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Doug Butler
	Address: 2730 Village Park Dr Melbourne Fl 32934
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 11:31:31 AM

My name is Doug Butler and I am the Cross Country and Track Coach at Satellite High School. It has come to my attention that we may not have the State Cross Country meet at ARP in Leon County in November. I am also a member of the FACA cross country advisory panel and in my 21st season as a head cross country coach. When I began in 2000 the state meet was in Titusville, and then moved to Tampa, and then to Dade City, and now at ARP. This is by far the best venue we have had and I have had the honor of sharing the podium with many of my teams at ARP. One thing I know for certain is when the state meet moves venues, it does not move back. It would be tragic to lose the best venue in the state for the best meet in the state. All the money that has poured into making your course the best should not be wasted. Our student athletes lost their track season last year and this cross season has been less than what it should be. I beg of you to all these kids to have the state meet they have earned on the course they all prefer to run.

Thank you
Coach Butler

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tanner Collins
	Address: 3094 Obrien Drive, Tallahassee, Florida, 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 11:43:36 AM

Good afternoon,

I wanted to take the time to express my concerns about halting fall sports this year. Aside from all of the positive benefits sports bring to our children, as we are all aware, it is difficult for me to understand how we can shut down fall sports when schools are still open, and almost all other parks and recreation sport facilities across the state are open. I understand that those areas are not under your jurisdiction, however I have to believe they are taking into account the same or similar information that you are in order to make their decisions. My child plays at Levy park for baseball and the meadows for soccer. He looks forward to this every year and loved completing with and against his friends. Closing the parks and rec will not keep our kids from playing with each other as they will continue that as we have seen over the last 6 months. However keeping the parks open will allow them to have contact and play sports in a controlled environment with protocols in place. Speaking as a husband whose wife is on the board and someone who coaches these kids, we welcome any measures necessary in order to play. I have to believe that parents would also be willing to sign a waiver, holding the city and county harmless in the unfortunate event that someone does fall ill, in order to let their children play. Thank you for your consideration and your hard work. Please contact me if I may be of further assistance. Tanner Collins.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Samantha Oven
	Address: 6501 wildemeade place
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 12:09:03 PM

We need sports,playgrounds, & parks open!!!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Natalie Colon
	Address: 1325 Stone Rd
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 12:17:11 PM

I realize that COVID-19 is an issue however I am wondering if you have considered the amount of destruction that COVID-19 is having on our youth. Depression, anxiety, obesity, (among a few things) have all significantly increased but it has yet to be accounted for when making decisions that DIRECTLY affects them. Why is that? After all they are our future.. Right?! Some will even sit in your chair one day. How can they successfully make decisions in their life or for 100,000+ people when they have been taught to react with fear and not rationalization. I ask that you to please not take sports and the fields they are allowed to play in away from them. Their minds and bodies desperately need this. It is all they have left right now. Many schools are making kids sit for 2 hours at P.E. six feet apart from each other with mask on. FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION! I ask that you think of them and their fragile mindset when making your decision. I ask that you stick with the facts that have been given to you and not base your decision on what the others are doing for their community. I ask that you make the best decision for OUR kids. Give them hope and freedom and endorphins!!! Remember you are responsible for our kids future right now and you will also be responsible for what's left of it when COVID-19 is gone, if it ever leaves. If they can go to school they can play sports. Period.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Betsy Mcdonald
	Address: 7132 sleepy hollow circle Tallahassee FL 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 12:40:35 PM

I am the parent of a Junior and Freshmen at a local high school. I am writing in hopes that you will vote to allow public parks to be used for recreation. Currently, there is not a high school field in town that my boys can even practice or train on. Yet these kids can play ball almost every other county in Florida, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. On our boys travel ball teams, they are the only kids that don't have a place to train or practice. They can't take ground balls and hitting in a cage doesn't work the same. The kids in the other cities are getting stronger and better and it isn't for a lack of effort. They are hoping to get scholarships to their favorite schools and "the playing field" isn't the same with kids in other towns because they have been able to practice and play for months. Simply traveling in 30-45 minutes in any direction, a field is available (Wakulla, Thomasville, Madison, Bainbridge, Panama City). There are tournaments that have been held all summer in other cities.

Outdoor sports are needed for these kids ability to exercise, socially grow and honestly just get fresh air in a virtual world. Please open the fields and put the choice back in the parents hands as to whether their kids play or not. Implement mandatory mask, social distancing and sanitizing lotion next to facilities. Please, please, please, help these kids find some sort of normalcy in this virtual environment.

Thank you for reading these comments and considering all points when making this decision.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Cari Miller
	Address: 3337 Dry Creek Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 12:54:02 PM

We need an option 3 to be considered. This option would allow Leon County to follow the governor's orders and allow our youth to participate in sports. Why? I believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized events will have a massive negative effect on our local children. Organized sports provide the following:

- Social and emotional well-being of our county children
- beneficial to children's mental and physical health and gives them valuable social experiences
- Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene ("Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, "Mayo Clinic)

As a parent of an athlete I'm willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment. I appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy and support our children's mental well-being and physical health that sports bring!

Thanks in advance for your consideration,

Cari Miller

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: D. Beener
	Address: 3049 Banks Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 12:54:40 PM

Please consider allowing the use of County parks for organized sports. My son has a deep passion for running and has really been looking forward to being able to participate on the Cross Country team for his middle school.

We have always encouraged him to run because of the physical health benefits it provides, but this period of quarantine over the Spring/Summer has shown us that it impacts so much more. Our child begged us to let him train for this season in the hopes that it would take place, because he said it is so important for his mental health. This is from the mouth of an 11 year old child.

Our children have already endured so much isolation with this pandemic. If we can send them to school, and adults can now visit bars, please allow the kids to compete in the their XC season, which is hosted safely outdoors.

For some, it is the only bit of normalcy that they may experience this year.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Sean Shanks
	Address: 2812 ROSCOMMON DRIVE
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 1:04:31 PM

We need an option 3 to be considered. This option would allow Leon County to follow the governor's orders and allow our youth to participate in sports. Why? I believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized events will have a massive negative effect on our local children. Organized sports provide the following:

- Social and emotional well-being of our county children
- beneficial to children's mental and physical health and gives them valuable social experiences
- Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene ("Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, "Mayo Clinic)

As a parent of an athlete I'm willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment. I appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy and support our children's mental well-being and physical health that sports bring!

Thank You,

Sean Shanks

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Molly Assantes
	Address: 4027 roscrea dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 1:07:19 PM

As a mother of 2 elementary/middle school boys that have played city football since they were of age, I am asking the commission to consider allowing the play of fall sports. Fall sports (football / soccer) provides kids with a safe outlet to build strong mental and physical fundamentals. Since the shut down, my 12 year old gained 12 lbs and has lost his excitement for daily activists. He is desperate for the mental challenges that come with playing team sports and the life lessons learns on the field. This issue is much larger than the simple question of do we allow kids to play organized sportS- it is a matter of creating a healthy safe environment for our children to thrive . Sports drive success at home and in the classroom- please consider this option. Thank you

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Nicole Trafton
	Address: 418 Holly Hill Court 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 1:13:52 PM

Please consider reopening the parks and Rec sports department for school age children. I do agree that proper precautions should be made to keep all safe but sports, in some way, are needed for the kids to return to in a safe manner.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kip West
	Address: 3069 Carlow Circle
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 1:28:33 PM

As a parent, participant, volunteer and small business owner directly involved in Leon County Youth Sports I would ask that you not consider the options put before you in this agenda item.

We have over 90% of our state currently allowing youth sports. The Leon County youth sports is vital to the mental, cultural and community growth of our youth. To not allow involvement in athletic activities will directly affect all of our children in all parts of Leon County. Please see your way to consider an option that follows the Governor's directive and the direction of the majority of the Counties in the State.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Amy Powell
	Address: 6990 Napa Ct
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 1:34:26 PM

As a parent to 2 young boys the no use of county parks has taken a huge effect on my children and their mental health. There needs to be an option 3 to open up fall sports and to follow the governors guidelines. You are voted in official who are to do what is best for our children and that is not what you are doing. Almost every county in Florida has opened up but Leon and that is not right. The suicide rate of children has gone up from isolation and not having organized sports. Please do the right thing and offer an option 3 and open up parks for the fall.
The city can do it why can't you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jessica Spinosa
	Address: 154 Drayton Dr, Tallahassee FL 32301
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 1:49:08 PM

We need an option 3 to be considered. This option would allow Leon County to follow the governor's orders and allow our youth to participate in sports. Why? I believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized events will have a massive negative effect on our local children. Organized sports provide the following:

- Social and emotional well-being of our county children
- beneficial to children's mental and physical health and gives them valuable social experiences
- Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene ("Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, "Mayo Clinic)

As a parent of an athlete I'm willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment. I appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy and support our children's mental well-being and physical health that sports bring!

Thanks in advance for your consideration

Thank you,

J. Spinosa

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Stephanie Humphrey
	Address: 5712 Sumter hill lane
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:04:34 PM

Please open our recreation areas for all but especially for our communities children!

- Sports benefits their mental and physical health and gives them valuable social experiences, as they have made friends through this sport that will last a lifetime
- We believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized events will have a negative effect on our local children
- COVID-19 has shown lower risk transmission through outdoor activities and in fact, our elected officials have encouraged, even during the April stay at home order, that individuals continue to exercise outside during this pandemic
- Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene (“Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, ”Mayo Clinic)
- We recognize the work of our city and county officials to continue undertaking ways to keep our citizens safe
- As parents of an athlete we are willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment
- We appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy that sports provide

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Eddie Fristoe
	Address: 5145 Grandview ct
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:04:45 PM

Hello, the parks need to be opened so the kids can play in fall sports. How is it okay that schools are open but opened air parks aren't. If people are concerned about the possibility of getting COVID-19 or they have underlining issues then they don't have to sign their kid up. It's that simple, don't punish the ones that want to get outside and back into sports for the small number of people who don't. There are large number of counties in Florida and Georgia that have been playing sports as well as communities all over holding travel baseball tournaments. Thanks

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Russel Bruce
	Address: 2128 E Park Ave Tallahassee, FL 32301
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:05:08 PM

This is pretty simple. There have been several travel baseball events around the state and region, a handful that have been attended by my nephew. He hasn't contracted the virus nor have any of his teammates. And this is travel baseball, where kids and their families are coming from all over the region to participate. Yet somehow we aren't allowed to have our own kids, within our own community, play sports together? How does that make any sense? I've also been monitoring the school district. My wife and I made the decision to have our son go through digital learning first. A way to test the waters if you will to see if the spread of the virus really attacks the schools. It hasn't. Very minimal infection rate and not single case at the school my son would be attending.

As a father and member of this community I believe that this has gone on long enough. People know the risks. People are aware of their personal situations. We should be able to make the decisions for ourselves without the government deciding things for us. That is not why you were elected. You were elected to enact the will of the people. I certainly would like for my son to be able play sports with his friends and peers.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jessica Compton
	Address: 1809 Miccosukkee Commons Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:07:27 PM

Please allow parks to reopen for youth sports. We play travel soccer and are having to travel more often than normal because Leon County hasn't allowed their parks open for tournaments or playdates.... or even practice. We have traveled to Pensacola and Thomasville with no Covid issues. We would like to be able to play in Leon County again.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Chet Allen
	Address: 2947 Whirlaway Trail, Tallahassee Fl 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:13:19 PM

PLEASE LET US HAVE FALL SPORTS FOR THE KIDS! LET THE KIDS PLAY!!!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: DawnLynn Tentz
	Address: 16021 Bob Ellis Road, Tallahassee, FL 32310
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:38:27 PM

As a parent of a student athlete in Leon County, I would like to ask that you consider opening up all sports in Leon County immediately. For the social well-being of our counties children, this is a necessity for their continual growth.

Outdoor physical activity, with social distancing, can work quite well for some sports, such as baseball. There is minimal contact involved, unlike football, which has been approved to move forward with playing time.

Please consider opening all sports in Leon County immediately.

Thanks!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Kayse Hammond
	Address: 1211 Commercial Park Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32303
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 3:19:29 PM

County Commissioners - Please hear our plea...

Maybe some of you don't realize this but we, the sports community, in Tallahassee are a tight-knit group of people who all know each other very well and support each other. Not only are these kids already in school together and hanging out on the weekends, but they are just playing in every other league that is not run or played in the county or city. Such as travel baseball and travel soccer, i9, etc. You're not keeping our kids/adults safe from COVID-19 or from playing the game, your really just suggesting we spend our money elsewhere.

Please sincerely reconsider opening the county/city parks for organized outdoor sports.

Thank you,

Kayse Hammond

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Donnie Westcott
	Address: 3033 Tipperary dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 3:33:02 PM

Open up the parks for organized youth sports. Lose the mask mandate.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Anne Springer
	Address: 2986 Saint Stevens Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 3:51:55 PM

Please open the High school and recreational fields to allow kids to play variety of sports - baseball, pop warner football, flag football, soccer, babe Ruth baseball, etc...These fields provide children with an outlet of fun and exercise. The fields should be open and then parents can decide whether or not their individual child should play. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Wyatt Townsend
	Address: 1815 OLD FORT Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:10:12 PM

I am a sophomore at Chiles HS and I run cross country, I swim, and I run track. It is my life in many ways. While I love school and work hard at it, my passion is sports. I train 16-20 hours a week for running and swimming and have been doing both sports since I was 5 - actually before that if you count fun runs. I was so disappointed after track was cancelled and our state swim meet this summer in July - but I kept training, all the way through the spring and summer, to ready myself for cross country season. NCAA contact can happen now at the end of my sophomore year and the opportunity to run (or swim) for a D1 college has literally been my goal as far back as I can remember and motivates me to earn high school marks in school as well.

Closing county parks, especially ARP, without options to race locally, could be devastating to our teams chances - we have all run so hard and trained so hard for so long for this opportunity. I am sad for myself but even more sad for our seniors who already missed track too. We desperately want to run in big meets, with COVID safety measures. The state meet and pre-state meet are both at ARP. I have been with my mom to two meets in the state already this year, when I ran unattached in order to have some race times and experience, and I felt very safe. There were spectators but they were required to wear masks and were spaced on the race course - which was great because we saw people cheering for us the whole way and not in just one area. There were temperature checks as you entered the main area. But to require testing I know would really hurt a number of my teammates - and also people that my family has worked with before at other school who can't afford running shoes. I don't know how they can afford testing before they run. And I have two working parents, I know it would be hard for them to miss work to take me for testing before every race we have.

I really hope, for our mental sanity and for our season, that the county will allow us to race at county facilities - using the ARP is a huge deal and advantage to us as citizens. Please save our season. It means so much to me.

Wyatt Townsend

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Ryan Lawson
	Address: 6274 Pine Fair Way, Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:10:52 PM

Hi, please vote to open our county parks for fall sports. The parks are outdoors and kids need activities to stay active, happy, and healthy. My kids and so many others I know would appreciate it.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jeffrey Del Fuoco
	Address: 3036 Godfrey Place, Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:23:54 PM

As a tax paying citizen of Tallahassee and Leon County with a 14 year old son, I implore you all to allow the use of Leon County facilities for the resumption of youth sports for the Fall 2020 season and beyond. In this regard, I believe that Governor's positions with regard to the resumption of outdoor youth sports is a sound one.

Especially with all that has traumatized us during the past 6 months, the resuming of active sport activity will provide much needed stress relief to our youth and serve as an outlet for relief from the stressors that affect us all. Many studies have shown that outdoor sports and recreation presents a significantly low risk for transmission of the COVID-19 virus, particularly when conducted outdoors with appropriate safety measures, including distancing, face coverings and sanitizing techniques.

Given all of this and more, I respectfully petition this Honorable Board to fully resume sports and recreation activities as almost every other county in the State of Florida has done.

I thank you all for your time.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey J. Del Fuoco

3036 Godfrey Place

Tallahassee, FL. 32309

850/320-4177

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jonathan Rudd
	Address: 3384 Micanopy Trail
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:41:49 PM

Vote for a 3rd option, allow the Governor to allow sports to open. Sports are being played all over the state. Kids playing sports are the least of concern.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: David WILLIAMS
	Address: 7413 CANDLEWOOD LN
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:51:16 PM

Would like the county to reopen all parks for the High School cross country season. All schools are open and therefore the students should be allowed to compete in cross country meets at the ARP. This is very important to our Senior class members.

We all enjoyed watching FSU play there season opener this past weekend with all precautions in place. The same should be done for our county cross country runners. There were also 19k spectators on hand for the FSU game.

Have everyone sign waivers if needed. Students as well as spectators. Its time to reopen the parks. They are outside!!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Tony Guillen
	Address: 3432 Clifden Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:53:01 PM

I support the opening of the County facilities for the use of organized Cross Country Practices and events. I know that you have heard from several parents who have expressed the benefits of allowing this to happen for our local teams and I wholeheartedly agree with their comments.

However I request that you reconsider the need for the following protocols:

A. Prohibit spectators and nonessential personnel at cross country races.

I am unaware of any other sporting event that this is being required for. If any event could be managed with spectators it is cross country events. The events are outside and are attended primarily by adult family members who have typically proven to follow the required protocols of distancing and mask wearing. This would truly be a partial measure that would exclusively treat these athletes and their families to more restrictive rules than anybody else.

D. Require all competitors, coaches, and their essential personnel to test negative for COVID-19 within 72 hours of a cross country race with competitors from outside the four-county region (Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, and Jefferson Counties).

Is this being done for any other type of event that brings in people from outside? This would be costly and prohibitive for many families and again would be treating these families to more restrictive rules than anybody else.

I want to thank the commission for the hard work that you do and for giving me the opportunity to provide my input.

Thank you,
Tony Guillen

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Michele Garber
	Address: 1101 Sandler Ridge
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:55:13 PM

According to the #21 Agenda Item, based on National survey results, 82% of outdoor sports fields are fully open. In Florida, the four counties studied are all open. Locally, Wakulla County has resumed organized sports. Travel ball leagues have been playing ball since the Governor opened up in late May in counties all over the State and surrounding States. I am not aware of any "outbreaks" associated with youth playing outdoor sports. If this were such as high-risk activity, as indicated by the CDC, I would suspect there to be evidence of such. There is no empirical data that shows this.

In Leon County, the City plans to allow Fall sports registration on September 19th with practices beginning on September 28, 2020. Levy baseball has plans to start Fall tryouts on September 26th. The Meadows will open on September 28th, allowing many private soccer programs to start play. The private schools in Leon County are playing football. The LCS HS's are playing football, volleyball, cheerleading, and golf. LCS middle schools are opening cross country and softball.

Keeping the county parks closed to youth sports is going to continue to hurt the local programs that take place at these county locations. Please do the right thing and consider an Option 3 to allow youth sports to take place in the Fall.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Mike LePorin
	Address: 7829 Jared Way Tallahassee, FL
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:59:32 PM

Please, please, please allow Fall sports to play. This is my sons junior year in high school and baseball is his greatest focus and drives his behavior and performance at school. Cancelling fall sports would have a dramatic affect on him. I hope you'll consider allowing parents to care for their childrens' best interest at all times and neither put them in harms way nor put harm on others.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Wesley White
	Address: 317 Thornberg Dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:03:47 PM

It is too ambiguous of a recommendation. The County is saying no spectators/parents should be allowed at any cross country event.

This is totally unfair when you allow parents at football games, etc. In many cases, parents will drive hundreds of miles to take their child to a meet. But now we have to drop them off, and tell them "love you, good luck, call me when you are done."

How ridiculous can you get.

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For example, page 24, their conclusion is based on a broad statement, "consistent with"

Page 26 is even more so by stating "would lead the way in its efforts to stop the spread", with no proof.

And yet TMH releases a statement on April 7 saying "our projections show a significant surge up to several hundred hospital admissions each day."

We know that was a false conclusion and this was even before there was a mask mandate!

I would support the various provisions of item number 21 but to allow parents and spectators if they all wear mask. Look at Table 6 submitted by staff, other venues required masks, so can we for parents.

Please consider supporting item#21 only if you make these changes please.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Brandon Williams
	Address: 5008 SW 155 Terrace Miramar, Florida 33027
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:05:09 PM

I believe that making the decision at this point in time to restrict the use of public parks would be poor and possibly crushing for athletes across the state. Cases are going down throughout all of Florida, and many venues have already made plans for the safety of their events. In addition, Tallahassee has many big events that children across the state look forward to such as the FSU prestate cross country meet at Appalachee Regional Park. I coach a high school XC team in Miami, and many of my athletes have registered for said race as a club, and they would be crushed if they couldn't go. Ultimately I feel that this decision will not add much to COVID safety and have a large negative effect on the many athletes across the state.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Greysen Rudd
	Address: 2216 Tallahassee drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:06:08 PM

Dear Liberals,

Parks and Recreation are an enormous part of our child's childhood, as we all can agree. Restricting your kids and your fellow Americans kids from playing sports is just a shame. Y'all have bought into this media propaganda that COVID-19 is the worst thing this country has almost ever seen. Well, it is time for you all to wake up and see the facts. The COVID death rate in The United States is .0092 percent for healthy people that have no prior major health conditions. 67% of deaths in the United States have come from people 65+ and in nursing homes. Only a handful of children have caught COVID, let alone pass away from it. Are you really going to try to and take away these rights kids have earned and deserve. I thought this was America? I thought this was a free country and we deserve to "LET THEM PLAY." It is a shame that I have to go onto this platform and remind you we as American have the right to play. Our kids are only with us for 18 short years and we need to cherish the memories we get to watch our kids grow up and play the sports they love. If any of you have kids you would understand this completely and would agree with me. Don't waste these short precious years.

Thanks,
G Rudd

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Richard Davis
	Address: 5995 Colonel Scott Dr, Tallahassee Fl 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:14:50 PM

The county is currently pursuing a policy punitive to high school cross country athletes. Private schools in the county as well as Florida High are competing on their campuses. Football is scheduled to take place on county high school campuses with parents in the stadium. Open ARP and other facilities for the schools to use. Give a warning to those who are at risk from severe Covid outcomes and have them take personal responsibility and stay away. End the nanny state and let parents, students and coaches determine if kids will compete. Cross Country competitions have been happening for weeks across the state and numbers at a state level continue to fall. Also do not penalize high school students based up the behavior of FSU students in one area of town.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Mark Williams
	Address: 5008 SW 155 Terrace
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:15:57 PM

Regarding this agenda item, I hope the committee takes into account the impact any limitation on the use of Apalachee for cross country has on the whold XC community.

Many kids look forward to the pre-state and state meets held there on the best course in Florida.

The amount of hotel rooms, food has to have a material impact on businesses during those two weekends.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Nancy Copa
	Address: 3238 SALINGER WAY
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:17:12 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I am brokenhearted to hear that you will most likely not be reopening the parks for Little League baseball this fall. I am the incoming President for Chaires-Capitola Little League and have been excited about the upcoming season. Fall Ball offers children ages 4-16 the opportunity to play baseball in a nurturing, learning environment. This is a great time for children who are interested in baseball, but have never played before, to learn the mechanics of baseball.

During Fall Ball, coaches use practice drills and encouraging coaching on and off the field to instill in children a love for this longstanding pastime.

I certainly understand your desire to protect the community and I applaud you for considering implications for the community. But, I ask you, who exactly are you protecting? Restaurants and businesses are open. Schools are open with brick and mortar classes and athletic events. Community pools are open.

Even the county parks are open. And all of these are opening safely with people exercising precautions and social distancing. You are even planning to allow for cross-country track meets. There are ways to make baseball safely occur. Be our partners. Work closely with us to open safely for the community while simultaneously supporting our youth athletic teams.

I encourage you to reconsider and to allow Little League to use your parks beginning immediately.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Copa

President-Elect, Chaires-Capitola Little League

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: John Baughman
	Address: 2305 Hampshire Way
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:25:58 PM

I'm the parent of a runner on a LCS Cross Country team.

I'm not a scientist, but I've been to a lot of cross country races both as a parent and athlete. Cross Country gives both athletes and spectators the greatest opportunity for social distancing. High School Cross Country courses are 3.1 miles long - which affords spectators and athletes a lot of room to spread out quite a bit during the event. It would be very unusual for a runner to be within "close contact (6') for a prolonged period" of another runner during a race. And there is no reason why spectators would need to be within close contact at all.

The psychological toll on these student athletes to not be allowed to compete at their sport is real and heavy. This is clearly not a contact sport.

In Leon County, Cross Country races traditionally occur in county parks.

Please allow Leon County Parks to be opened to high school cross county races. These athletes and the spectators at these events can be trusted to behave responsibly and safely.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Claudia Bailly
	Address: 9990 NW 51 Lane, Doral, FL 33178
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:31:02 PM

Good afternoon,

Please allow XC teams to race at your beautiful Apalachee park! The races held in Tallahassee are the pinnacle of Florida's XC runners. Please note that the positivity rates for COVID-19 in Miami Dade County Please note that the positivity rates are under 5%. We ALL wear masks, keep social distancing at all meets we have thus far attended, and no cases have been credited to such.

You have an incredible venue and you must see a positive economic impact the XC community brings in every year to Leon county.

Considering all the work and investment made at Apalachee it would be a travesty not to have meets there this season. The XC teams will abide by all rules.

Thank you for your consideration!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Andy Holmes
	Address: 4601 Charro Ln Plant City, FL 33565
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:36:13 PM

Hello,

Our cross country teams have been attending meets at Apalachee Regional Park since 2012. It's the best venue in the state for high school and college cross country. I believe that cross country meets can be safely held with the risk mitigation procedures both the FHSAA and Visit Tallahassee have in place with the FSU Invitational and the FHSAA State Cross Country Meet. They are doing a great job limiting teams, and thus spectators at the meet. Please help in keeping cross country a part of high school and college meets at Apalachee Regional Park this fall

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Lillee Tang
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbyist	Address: 1344 Conservancy Drive East
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:37:57 PM

Dear Commissioners,

Please help us cross country runners who attend public high schools in Leon County. We respectfully ask that you make an exception to closure of parks for organized outdoor sports and athletic events that will allow the parks to open for organized high school cross country events for Leon County high schools.

I am a high school cross country runner at Leon High School and currently my fall sport season is not able able to happen because we (all cross country runners attending Leon County public high schools) have nowhere to hold meets. This is because we depend on County park trails in order to hold local meets.

This Fall Season we are not allowed to leave Leon County, and we also can't even compete locally if schools outside of Leon County are in attendance. This means that even if a meet is held by Florida High, JP2, Maclay, or FSU in Tallahassee, we cannot attend and compete because those meets have schools attending from other counties.

The inability for us to compete at meets, especially while other schools and sports are competing, is detrimental to our well-being as well as futures. Because we attend a public school in Leon County, if the parks do not open for our use, then we are being robbed of the single activity we have worked so hard to excel at, and that is very demoralizing. The worse part is that some of my teammates are also losing opportunities to win college scholarships and a chance at achieving their future goals - this fall season is the only opportunity for seniors and some juniors to accomplish this critical goal that will provided the framework for their entire future. Please help us have our chance by making sure the parks can be used for local high school cross country events.

Thank you,
Lillee Tang

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Raul Fernandez
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbyist	Address: 15423 sw 115 st
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:44:22 PM

Dear Commissioners...

I urge you to approve the use of Leon County facilities for organized sports during covid-19. As a parent of cross-country Runners, we have enjoyed going to Appalachian State Park every year for 7 years for races. It is an incredible venue that has a positive economic impact the XC community brings in every year to Leon county. Thank you for your consideration.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Michael Gallagher
	Address: 6103 Ox Bottom Manor dr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:45:59 PM

Hi!

These are unprecedented times. Now we have more information than when this virus arrived to make informed decisions. Please let the children play and the parks be open. The science is clear on this, the kids are at low risk of sickness and of passing the virus on to other people. Children need activity and sense of belonging. Outdoor activity is a must for physical and mental health. This virus is over in Florida there is no need to prolong the mental suffering that these kids are forced to endure. They need to get back to some semblance of normalcy. Do the difficult(crazy that it has to be difficult) but right thing and let the kids play. This is a time in a child's life cannot be replayed, once it passes them by it is gone forever.

Where are all of the child advocate voices in government when we need them. Very strange. No child advocates fighting and speaking for whats best for our children. Keeping children and society locked down is cruel and inhuman...

Have a great evening...

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Jan Scheff
	Address: 2134 La Rochelle Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:57:38 PM

Dear Commission Members, Please consider an option 3 for Agenda Item 21, which would allow for our parks to be opened up for organized sports. Outdoor sports offer a way for our children to exert themselves mentally and physically in an organized fashion. As senior citizens who have been socially distancing since March, not going into restaurants or stores, and wearing masks on the rare occasions we are around people, we felt safe attending several baseball tournaments in other towns this summer to watch our grandsons play. Many kids from Tallahassee played in such tournaments throughout the summer. Safety measures were in place, and fans sat in lawnchairs with families social distanced from other fans. I believe other sports can be safely played, as well, and I ask that you consider as an option opening our parks for organized sports. Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Pedro San Juan
	Address: 8751 SW 85th street
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:05:41 PM

Greetings,

This message is to encourage the Board to allow the the Apalachee Reginal Park to continue to serve as the host site for the Pre-State and State Cross Country championships.

This venue has served as the inspirational backdrop to thousands of young boys and girls who work tremendously hard to get to the peak of their sport. Making it to "States" has meant running on this course for a long time and we want it to remain that way. Although getting large contingents of runners and families up to Tallahassee is never easy, it is worth the trip due to the stellar course and many hospitality amenities.

It also has been proven that cross country is a safe sport and one that can be conducted without any problems. Our team has already participated in several large meets with no reported cases and our team, one of the largest in the state, also has had zero cases.

Hosting these championship meets is also key for your economy. Around the time we travel to Leon county we often find that most hotels are booked and this also brings a massive influx of business to your economy.

This is not like one of those Trump rallies where nobody wears a mask nor cares about spread. Most people at these meets do wear masks or at least have enough space to socially distance. There can be adjustments to allow more time between the different classifications and other precautions taken to prevent spread. So far we have seen great success and hope that you will allow statewide races to continue at your facilities. If not, some other venue will step up and steal this precious honor away from you and this is not something we prefer. Please let us Run!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Danielle Sparkman
	Address: 2617 Manassas Way
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:13:00 PM

Option 3 to allow Leon Co to follow the Governor's order and allow our youth to participate in sports. I'm writing as a parent of a Chiles High School sophomore who has played baseball since he was five years old. Baseball benefits his mental and physical health. He loves baseball and wants to be able to play this fall for the Babe Ruth league. There should be this 3rd option to provide parents and local officials an opportunity to develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment. Fall sports are considered low risk and outdoor activities such as the fall sports was even encouraged by our elected officials so why change that around now. Our youth need these activities to help keep them accountable and engaged in school. I appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy that sports brings to them individually but also for our schools and community. Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Carmen Williams
	Address: 5008 sw 155 terr
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:18:39 PM

I hope when the county meets they don't exclude counties outside of Leon as that would have a hugh negative impact on the high school cross country community. All the kids love running and look forward every year to running the FSU course.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: James Wilkinson
	Address: 520 Champion Oaks Circle Havana FL
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:40:38 PM

Commissioners, it's time to resume activities as normal. Clearly we can see COVID was overblown in response in how to deal with it. Now that we know, it's safe to say that things should have kept on going as normal. The level of fear being cultivated with mask mandates, parks being closed, curfews, and capacities has got to stop. What ever happened to be a leader? The last person you want to follow is someone peddling the doom and gloom. Instead you want someone that will be real, someone you can follow. Just think what these restrictions are doing to the kids? All they are being fed is to be scared and cower in the corner. What is needed is some intestinal fortitude. I'm not sure the athletic careers of all the commissioners on the board, but Commissioner Maddox I watched you play football at FSU growing up. You played in the NFL. I'm sure you played through sickness and injuries during your career. What are we teaching these kids? If you have the sniffles you need to be a shut in for two weeks? The kids have it had enough these days with social media bombarding them with this and that, and now they are being told to be afraid of a virus that has a 99% plus recovery rate? Navy SEALs go through "hell week" where they get about two hours of sleep, are fed small rations, are constantly cold, covered in sand, and yelled at. Ask yourself if the body can endure that, don't you think that we can make it through a cold? It's time, you know it's the right thing to do.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Lori Sytsma
	Address: 7413 Candlewood Ln, Tallahassee, FL 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:46:55 PM

Please reopen Leon County Parks for organized sports and athletic events. Our athletes are having to travel outside the county in order to participate in their sports. It is putting our athletes at a disadvantage when they have to travel to other cross country courses. We have the best course in the State of Florida which the Leon County runners know well. Cross country runners are some of the most committed athletes. They have been training since the beginning of summer. They would like to represent and wear their school colors. Open up their backyard. It's the last chance for some of the seniors to be recruited for college.

I've also read that Covid testing may be required for the athletes to play/run. Will vaccination be required when the vaccines are ready? And if so, could we start immunity identification cards for those that have already had the virus? There is no need for more testing for anyone that has already had it.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Francisco Ruiz
	Address: 5500 SW 147 pl, Miami, Fl 33185
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:50:25 PM

Board of Leon County Commissioners,

I would like to strongly urge you to allow other County Cross Country Teams to come to the Apalachee Regional Park for competitions.

Our school, Belen Jesuit Prep is a Miami School that has been going to your County for years for competitions. Please, please do not take this away from our athletes. We have taken all necessary precautions to protect our athletes during the summer from the Covid-19, and not one has gotten it.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Francisco Ruiz Alvarez

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Michelle May-Knowles
	Address: 1237 Sandler Ridge Road
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:55:13 PM

It is my sons last season of eligibility at Chaires park and we would greatly appreciate him being able to play this fall. If we are allowing kids to go to school together and allowing high school football that has much more physical contact, then we should allow our kids to play baseball.

Plases, please, please!

Thank you!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Grace Bigelow
	Address: 1825 Winery Way
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 6:57:18 PM

In a year that our children are reporting to schools and have little, if any social interaction as far as physical fitness goes I ask that you not cancel Fall youth sports. As an educator, I see first hand the impact of the last five months on our children. They are mentally, physically and emotionally different. There are no correct answers and we cannot promise safety, but let parents decide if they want their child to play a fall sport. They spend their days in classrooms or at home and are craving interaction. Some kids are playing travel or organized sports already, and with parks closed we are basically only denying some of our lowest socially economic children access to these activities. Have you driven to a park lately? Groups are using them. At least if it was an organized fall season there could be safety measures put in place and parents could decide if they want their children involved. If a parent wavier is needed, let's add one. But let them play ball!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Alia Vincent
	Address: 7241 Old Chemonie Ct. Tallahassee 32308
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:05:58 PM

My son played his last baseball game on March 12, 2020 the night before his 12th birthday. That day will be forever etched in my mind as possibly the day he might have lost the momentum to keep playing. He had goals of making an All-Star team and advancing after playing fall ball in 2019 as well as spring and fall of the year before. We tried to keep him ready for the season to start at any given moment throughout the rest of March and April as well as in to me by having him practice on the tea pitching catching whatever it would take. It's possible we may have even snuck onto one of the fields at Miccosukee with his older sister so they could also play together as she is also a softball player that had her Tallahassee Fastpitch season canceled as she was getting ready to play the senior league. However she plays on a travel team so we traveled to Jackson County most of the spring and summer for her to get some playing time but unfortunately my son may have missed his window of opportunity. I encourage you please please please open up our parks and rec program soon.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Bob Thomas
	Address: 2756 Royal Oaks Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:15:54 PM

Leon County Board of County Commissioners Agenda Item #21
Commissioners,

Thank you for allowing this forum. With regard to the opening of Leon County Parks, specifically for the purpose of restarting youth sports in the wake of the pandemic, I ask that you carefully weigh the following positives, when considering what is potentially a far-reaching decision.

- By denying the opportunity of youth and high school sports to be played on our outstanding facilities, we are jeopardizing the physical and mental health and well-being of the next generation. The physical benefits are obvious, and it should be pointed out that the risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus in this age group are significantly reduced. However, the mental health of our youth is an issue that does not get addressed nearly enough. In many cases your decision will impact a group that has endured six-plus months of isolation and inactivity.
- Being a member of a team has benefits far greater than wins and losses. Learning to work together – across races, religions, and a multitude of other differences – has never been more important in our country. Not having an outlet for that to take place could further impact our community and country as these young people represent our future.
- Given the wealth of athletic talent in our community, opportunities for college scholarships (or building toward that) may well be denied without the opportunity to compete. Many, nearing the conclusion of their high school careers, have already lost a spring season as a result of the pandemic. Some, especially those in the year-round, distance-running events, will be severely impacted without the chance to compete in cross country this fall on our elite local facilities.
- I would be remiss in not pointing out that many of our local youth have been competing outside the area with their respective club teams, as other counties have been open throughout the summer for travel baseball, softball and soccer. Our children are leaving every weekend and returning to their normal activities now that the schools have been open. And it should be noted that our school-age positive COVID results have been minimal.
- By closing our parks to competition we have further hindered our local economy as it relates to heads-in-beds and businesses (restaurants, retailers), while other counties are reaping the benefits of open facilities.
- Leon County’s parks are second-to-none as a result of the commitment this county has made to not only take care of its own, but turn the Tallahassee area into viable destination for sporting events of all types. It is why Apalachee Regional Park – thanks to your substantial investment and the outstanding work of Visit Tallahassee – has been the long-time home to the Florida High School Athletic Association State Cross Country Championships, will host the 2020 AAU National Cross Country Championships in December and the 2021 NCAA Cross Country Championships in November of next year. Those are all contracted events, just like the 2020 FHSAA State Football Championships at Cox Stadium. If we are unable to host those events this year, we run the risk of losing perhaps the most significant financial niche our community has outside of Florida State University and Florida A&M athletics.

These are just a few reasons why I’d like you to open our parks and allow for the resumption of competition, with appropriate screening and safety precautions in place. As a 26-year member of this community who has worked for and with Leon County Parks & Recreation, Florida State University athletics and been a parent to three children who have greatly benefited from our rich resources, I am asking you make the right decision for the long-term health and well-being of not only our next generation, but the fiscal well-being of community as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Bob Thomas
Tallahassee, Fla.
Robertb.thomas614@gmail.com

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Elizabeth Garber
	Address: 5522 Pedrick Plantation Circle
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:16:56 PM

Please reconsider and allow for youth sports to resume along with playgrounds and parks. As a parent, I feel it is in my child's best interest to be allowed the option to sign my child up to play sports. If I feel uncomfortable with the current state of things, I would opt to not have my child participate. We have been playing soccer and baseball since June through private leagues. Before schools opened it was one of the only ways the kids were socializing with their friends which was critical for their mental health, and the mental health for the parents. But not all families can afford to pay to play and will only have the opportunity to play sports through local leagues.

As a board member of Chaires Little League, I am very concerned that we are going to lose so many families to travel ball and will not be able to get them back if we do not have any sort of fall league. That is a HUGE loss to our park, families and community.

At this point I am afraid that our spring season is in jeopardy which will completely kill little league for Leon County!

Please let parents decide what is best for their children by opening youth sports.

Thanks for your consideration.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Wyatt Knowles
	Address: 1237 Sandler Ridge Road
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:23:05 PM

Little boys like my son love baseball. They spend as many waking hours as they can practicing, throwing balls, running bases and various other drills to make them better and better. The window of opportunity for many of them to play baseball is very small, and every season that gets eliminated reduces that window even more. Please give these boys, including my son, the opportunity to once again play the game that they all love. It is time for them to once again hear those two magical word "PLAY BALL!"

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Paul Colombo
	Address: 2404 royal oaks drive Tallahassee FL 32308
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:27:24 PM

I believe that it is vital to begin to allow parents/ kids the opportunity to decide If they are ready to begin playing organized sports again. This does not mean that everyone has to play right now but it does give everyone the opportunity to make that decision instead of having the decision made for us by completely shutting down the fields. I am a parent, coach, and game official that knows there are enough people in each of those categories that are ready, willing, and able to begin organized sports again.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Andrew Branch
	Address: 2724 Masterson Lane
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:34:12 PM

I have been trying for weeks to get in contact with my representative, Kristen Dozier, and she continues to ignore repeated requests to discuss this impactful situation on our youth programs in the community.

Let's use some common sense and the factual data to make decisions versus telling parents that they don't know what is in the best interest of their own children.

1. According to the #21 Agenda Item, 82% of outdoor sports fields are fully open at a National level.
2. In Florida, the four counties studied are all open.
3. Locally, Wakulla County has resumed organized sports.
4. Travel ball leagues have been playing ball since the Governor opened up in late May in counties all over the State and surrounding States.
5. In Leon County, the City plans to allow Fall sports registration on September 19th and practices beginning on September 28, 2020.
6. Levy baseball has plans to start Fall tryouts on September 26th.
7. The Meadows will open on September 28th, allowing many private soccer programs to start play.
8. The private schools in Leon County are playing football.
9. The LCS high schools are playing football, volleyball, cheerleading, and golf.
10. LCS middle schools are opening cross country track and softball.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Pennie Douglas
	Address: 2102 Merrifield Ln
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:36:55 PM

Please open the parks our kids need to play and have some normal in their lives

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Cecilia Ortiz
	Address: 13301 Old Cutler Road Pinecrest, Fl 33156
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:39:27 PM

Dear Leon County Commissioners,

Please allow outside high schools to compete in cross country meets at your facility

This upcoming fall season.

Your venue is amazing and our team is so eagerly looking forward to being there with you all in a safe manner.

Our team has enjoyed your venue immensely in the past.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mrs Ortiz

(Parent of a cross country runner)

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Elizabeth Thorp
	Address: 1021 Mohican Trail
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:42:12 PM

Good Evening,

I'm writing to urge the commission to NOT cancel fall sports in Leon County. As a parent of 3 children that have all played (and still play) organized sports, I can speak to the value it brings to their health - both mental and physical. It gives them valuable social skills and lifelong lessons in teamwork and responsibility. By not allowing the children of Leon County the opportunity to stay involved in organized sports would have a negative impact on their health. Two of my three children are currently playing college sports and have been able to participate with proper guidelines. The third is a current high school student athlete and the FHSAA and local school districts are allowing play. Further, travel baseball tournaments (for all ages) in Florida have been held this summer - again using proper guidelines. Schools and day cares are open. Fall sports are considered low risk, and team sports such as baseball and softball pose less risk because the players can maintain physical distance.

A lot of kids use sports as an outlet. They need to be part of a team. They need to be physically active. Having sports stripped away in March with little to no notice was detrimental to many kids and their mental health suffered immensely. I have seen it firsthand.

I understand the need to keep everyone safe, but this can be done. The kids will gladly maintain distance, wear masks, wash hands, etc. if given the opportunity to be back on the field.

Thank you for your time,

Elizabeth Thorp

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Stefanie Briscoe
	Address: 3566 Strolling way, Tallahassee 32311
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:42:51 PM

As parents of a Child who has played Baseball, since they were in elementary school:

- Sports benefits their mental and physical health and gives them valuable social experiences, as they have made friends through this sport that will last a lifetime
- We believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized events will have a negative effect on our local children
- COVID-19 has shown lower risk transmission through outdoor activities and in fact, our elected officials have encouraged, even during the April stay at home order, that individuals continue to exercise outside during this pandemic
- Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene (“Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, ”Mayo Clinic)
- We recognize the work of our city and county officials to continue undertaking ways to keep our citizens safe
- As parents of an athlete we are willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment

Finally, this should be a choice made by parents and families, not by our elected officials. Our kids need normalcy and healthy activities for their well being. We cannot just be worried about their physical health but their mental health as well. Thank you!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Lauren Kendall
	Address: 3528 Oak Hill Trl Tallahassee FL 32312
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:44:13 PM

Good Evening,

As parents of a Child who has played Baseball, Basketball, and soccer occersince they were in elementary school I am humbling requesting you allow our children to play sports!

- Sports benefits their mental and physical health and gives them valuable social experiences, as they have made friends through this sport that will last a lifetime
- We believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized events will have a negative effect on our local children
- COVID-19 has shown lower risk transmission through outdoor activities and in fact, our elected officials have encouraged, even during the April stay at home order, that individuals continue to exercise outside during this pandemic
- Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene (“Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, ”Mayo Clinic)
- We recognize the work of our city and county officials to continue undertaking ways to keep our citizens safe
- As parents of an athlete we are willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment
- We appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy that sports can bring

Thank you!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Daniel Timiraos
	Address: 9660 Kendale Blvd.
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:58:03 PM

Over the last four years, our family, like many other Cross Country families across the state, has made multiple trips throughout the year to support our runner at the Pre-State and State meets at Leon County. While this year stands out in history for so many reasons, canceling so many athletes' dreams should not be one of them. Over the last few months our entire state has worked diligently to ensure proper hygiene and safety protocols are followed so that the number of cases drop sufficiently to return to as much of the life we knew before COVID as possible. It's hard to imagine that while hotels, restaurants, stadiums and other public venues are opening, an event in an open air park has to become so limited in accepting athletes for the rest of the state. I implore you to please reconsider and not shatter the dreams that so many have been working toward since the close down in March. Please let them ALL run!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Gene Stillman
	Address: 1312 Avondale Way, Tallahassee FL 32317
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 7:59:19 PM

Please consider an alternative to open baseball fields throughout the county. We have played on County parks for several years. We would ask you to respectfully consider this request, as we have played all summer in various locations socially distanced in a safe respectful manner. We believe this can be accomplished at the local level with everyone's agreement to follow the rules.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Carlos Bailly
	Address: 9990 NW 51 lane Doral, Florida
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 8:00:51 PM

Good evening,

Please allow XC teams to race at your beautiful Apalachee park! The races held in Tallahassee are the pinnacle of Florida's XC runners. Please note that the positivity rates for COVID-19 in Miami Dade County Please note that the positivity rates are under 5%. We ALL wear masks, keep social distancing at all meets we have thus far attended, and no cases have been credited to such.

You have an incredible venue and you must see a positive economic impact the XC community brings in every year to Leon county.

Considering all the work and investment made at Apalachee it would be a travesty not to have meets there this season. The XC teams will abide by all rules.

Thank you for your consideration!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 21	Name: Aaron Gerteisen
	Address: 1422 Silver Pine Lane
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 8:01:36 PM

We write as parents of a Chiles High School [junior] who has played baseball since he was in elementary school. Baseball benefits his mental and physical health and gives him valuable social experiences, as he has made friends through this sport that will last a lifetime

We believe refusing to allow county parks to host organized baseball games will have a negative effect on our local children. COVID-19 has shown lower risk transmission through outdoor activities and in fact, our elected officials have encouraged, even during the April stay at home order, that individuals continue to exercise outside during this pandemic.

Fall sports are considered low risk as long as they are able to follow the universal guidelines of social distancing (6 feet apart), face coverings and hand hygiene (“Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer, pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance, ”Mayo Clinic). We recognize the work of our city and county officials to continue undertaking ways to keep our citizens safe. As parents of an athlete we are willing to be part of discussions to help develop the recommendations that would allow our youth athletes to play fall sports in a safe environment. We appreciate your consideration and hope you will support these student athletes and give them a way to return to some sense of normalcy that sports can bring.

The following Citizen Comments
were received for Agenda Item #28

Status Update on Virtual County Commission Meetings
and Options for Public Participation

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Laura Newton
	Address: 4541 Pecan Br
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 12:43:24 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I'm delighted that you are considering allowing real-time virtual participation in County Commission meetings. I wholeheartedly support option #2 on this agenda item.

Sincerely,

Laura Newton

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Jeff Blair
	Address: 1803 Old Fort Drive; Tallahassee, FL 32301
	Date Submitted: 9/8/2020 2:55:40 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to comment on Agenda Item #28 (“Status Update on Virtual County Commission Meetings and Options for Public Participation”) for consideration during the September 15, 2020 BOCC meeting. We have been advocating that the Commission authorize the use of real-time virtual public comment at all Commission meetings, workshops, and hearings in numerous comments we have provided since the Commission began to meet virtually in March of 2020 pursuant to Executive Order 20-69, suspending the requirement for a physical quorum and allowing the use of communications media technology (CMT) for meetings. As you likely know, in addition to numerous local governments in Florida, the City of Tallahassee is now providing this option at their meetings.

Real-time public comment and the possibility of commissioners asking questions during a meeting are critical to good decision-making. It is important that our elected policy-setting officials make public policy with meaningful public participation. This means that at a minimum, opportunities for public engagement and comment should be well publicized, easily accessible and transparent. In addition, public comments submitted in writing or in real-time should be reviewed and evaluated by all commissioners prior to making decisions. In fact, if a citizen takes the time to submit a written comment it is only fair that they receive some acknowledgement from our elected officials in return. The Commission should take every step to ensure that it is easy and safe for citizens to provide real-time feedback by providing an option for real-time virtual public comment at all Commission meetings going forward.

In Summary, please vote in favor of a revised Option #2 for Agenda Item #28 on the County Commission’s September 15, 2020 meeting. Option #2 is to modify the current procedure to allow for real-time citizen participation on all agenda items beginning with the September 29, 2020 meeting. In addition, please include in the motion to approve Option #2 direction to staff to revise the Commission’s Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Leon County BOCC (Policy No. 01-05) to include a requirement with corresponding procedures for virtual real-time public comment at all future Commission meetings going forward, even after it is safe to attend in-person meetings and Executive Order No. 20-193, or its successor, expires.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Darwin Gamble
	Address: 1248 HALIFAX CT, Tallahassee, FL 32308
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 3:38:13 PM

While the Governor's Executive Orders did not waive public participation requirements in Chapter 200, Florida Statutes, they also did not waive any requirements in Chapter 286. Section 286.0114 says boards and commissions must give the public a "reasonable opportunity to be heard." When the Legislature enacted this language in 2013 (Senate Bill 50), it clearly intended that local governments allow citizens to speak and be heard, not to write and be read. Written comments don't count! That's why you should comply with the law and allow the public to speak and be heard during ALL meetings, including public hearings.

"Public hearings" during which the public is not heard are not public hearings. This includes every "public hearing" the Leon County Commission has conducted since the pandemic began, and means that public hearing requirements for ordinances and Comprehensive Plan amendments have not been met. Because you didn't do it right, you need to do it over. Otherwise, you could face legal challenges.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Rob Lombardo
	Address: 9704 Abbey Road, Tallahassee, FL 32309
	Date Submitted: 9/13/2020 8:33:40 PM

Dear Commissioners, the City Commission has voted unanimously to hold a Joint Commission workshop on the Welaunee Arch Development on October 13th. I am asking you to vote to support this workshop and encourage the exchange of ideas and direction between the Commissions that the workshop would allow. In addition, I am asking you to support a subsequent joint City-County Commission meeting that allows for real-time citizen input and the sharing of ideas between you and your constituents. Thank you for taking this opportunity to give all citizens a chance to work toward a more thoughtful and comprehensive development plan for Welaunee.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Kelly McGrath
	Address: 9601 Miccosukee Road, Lot 41
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 10:04:08 AM

Dear Commissioners, the City Commission has voted unanimously to hold a Joint Commission workshop on the Welaunee Arch Development on October 13th. I am asking you to vote to support this workshop and encourage the exchange of ideas and direction between the Commissions that the workshop would allow. In addition, I am asking you to support a subsequent joint City-County Commission meeting that allows for real-time citizen input and the sharing of ideas between you and your constituents. Thank you for taking this opportunity to give all citizens a chance to work toward a more thoughtful and comprehensive development plan for Welaunee.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Julie Hauserman
	Address: 9516 SUN HAWK LN
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 10:29:47 AM

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to please ask you to hold a Joint Commission workshop on the Welaunee Arch Development on October 13th. The City Commission has voted to do this, and it's my hope the county commission will follow suit. Also, with a worldwide pandemic raging and people having to care for sick loved ones, home school, deal with online learning, etc. we should take every opportunity to expand public comment. Also please I am asking you to ALSO schedule a joint City-County Commission meeting on Welaunee Arch and the latest plans and community input. This development will forever change our county. I appreciated the charettes and the work everyone put into those informative meetings - even if they had to be virtual, I think we all learned from them. Please give citizens the maximum amount of input on Welaunee Arch. Thank you.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Deborah Lawson
	Address: 1011 Shalimar Drive
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 11:11:37 AM

Dear Commissioners,

Please support real-time public participation and comments for your virtual meetings. This is a critical issue and I believe the public has expressed substantial support for this and hope you will give it your full consideration.

Thank you in advance!

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Robert Apgar
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbyist	Address: 510 Frank Shaw Rd
The Buckhead Homeowners Association of Tallahassee, Inc.	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 2:09:07 PM

I represent the Buckhead Homeowners Association of Tallahassee, Inc. This is to advise you that the Association respectfully requests that the BOCC amend the procedure for virtual meetings to allow real-time comments from citizens and their representatives.

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Mike Rychlik
	Address: 9601-68 Miccosukee Rd.
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 3:01:17 PM

Dear Commissioners,

As a board member of Keep it Rural and a concerned citizen, I implore you to allow virtual comments during public hearings. Ironically, the last real time commission meeting my wife and I attended was when COCA funding was being threatened, and we wanted to physically show our support. The chamber was full, the citizens were engaged and the commissioners were listening and responding. That is what democracy looks and sounds like. When we left that meeting, I reminded my wife that this was what KIR had to do when the Welaunee Arch issue came up the following month—activate our members and pack the house.

Sadly, the COVID virus changed all of that. Virtual meetings became the standard for both the City and County, and the public comment was taken out of the mix. Granted, citizens were allowed and encouraged to send their comments for the public record, and we were assured that the officials would read them all. But that is not the same as officials facing the public in real time. When that happens not only are fellow citizens and the press tuning in and listening, but the commissioners, facing their public detractors and supporters, are more apt to discuss, explain, defend and fully debate the issues in real time with each other on camera in the public arena. That's what democracy looks like.

Last week the City of Tallahassee began allowing public comments. The result was a fascinating and dynamic interchange that allowed citizens and public officials to work together to address problems and concerns in our community regarding city policing issues as well as the Welaunee Master Plan. As a result of that meeting, their commission voted 5-0 to slow down the process for the Welaunee Master Plan so both commissions, the staff and the public could work together to fine tune this massive project. City and Police Officials and Citizens also began to attempt to mend the broken fences stemming from the police intervention at a recent Black Lives Matter protest.

For democracy to work, it's important for public officials to remember that they are elected to do the public's bidding. The charrettes for the Welaunee Arch were a step in the right direction. Hopefully, each City and County Commissioner will take the time to listen to these sessions before the proposed workshop on October 14th. The key to having a workable and enforceable Master Plan is having our elected officials involved with the well informed decision making by listening and interacting in good faith with both staff and citizens. Here is the link.
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLn5WDwYgw5DA_PMBG1Ibzb9hCes5ygkPw

The Welaunee Project marks a sweeping change in this county that is causing concern for a lot of Tallahassee folks. Many were shocked when they found out that the City was the applicant for altering the Comp Plan to accommodate what is basically an estate plan for the landowners. Add to that the reality that this massive influx of development borders two of our county's uniquely beloved canopy roads and this tenuous situation becomes even more provocative. Even worse, the egregious penalties incurred by the Canopy developers during Phase 1 of the Toe development that led to record fines of over \$200,000 to DEP, along with other infractions regarding the blatant removal of trees in the canopy zone on Centerville Road have not done much to earn public trust in this project. And finally by not allowing real time comments during these unsettling times both the City and the County have been remiss in their duties to better serve their public.

I encourage and implore you to follow the City's lead. Allow virtual comment immediately, and well into the future until this pandemic is in our history books. Your senior citizens and folks of all ages with health concerns should not have to put themselves at risk by packing the county and city chambers.

Respectfully,
Mike Rychlik

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Sarah Rychlik
	Address: 9601-68 Miccosukee Road
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 4:14:09 PM

Dear Commissioners- I am writing to appeal to the Leon County Commission to take actions necessary to enable real time public comment during County Commission, Blueprint and Joint City-County Commission meetings. I want to emphasize the value of both in person and virtual meeting type input being allowed, permanently. There have been many examples of effective digital communication during this pandemic. The technology is available. I ask that the commission wholeheartedly embrace facilitation of public comment. As far as staff recommendations, I would like to see modification of Option #2 that would affect both virtual and in person meetings and would allow citizens to make written submission, in person presentation, and virtual presentation. The benefits to our community of open access for citizen input would far outweigh the minor aggravations of electronic glitches that would occur on occasion. Thank you. Sarah Rychlik

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 28	Name: Laura Newton
	Address: 4541 Pecan Br
	Date Submitted: 9/14/2020 5:01:54 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I hope you will vote to support the Joint Commission workshop on the Welaunee Arch Development that the City Commission has voted unanimously to hold on October 13th. Before the Welaunee Arch Comp Plan is adopted there should be an exchange of ideas between the Commissions and direction should be given to the staff about how to proceed with the public input they have received. Also, please vote to schedule a subsequent joint City-County Commission meeting that allows for real-time citizen input and the sharing of ideas between you and your constituents regarding proposed changes. I look forward to working toward a more thoughtful and comprehensive development plan for Welaunee.

The following Citizen Comments
were received for Agenda Item #30

First and Only Public Hearing to Approve the Resolution Adopting
the Fire Rescue Services Non-Ad Valorem Assessment Roll and
Certification of the Entire Roll to the Tax Collector

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 30	Name: Kenisha Lockhart
	Address: 4429 Rivers Landing Drive Tallahassee, FL 32303
	Date Submitted: 8/24/2020 6:55:10 PM

Hello! I received an letter in the mail stating that an assessment will be added to my tax bill for a time period that I did not even own the home. I just moved into the home on June 26, 2020. It states that" the assessment will appear on my annual tax notice because billing efforts previously made to collect the assessment, have been unsuccessful or because you have voluntarily opted to utilize the tax bill for payment". This information should have been included in the disclosure when I purchased the property, and it should not be my responsibility to pay for something that was charged to the initial owners. Furthermore, my taxes have been calculated in my mortgage payment and \$185 for each of the years I was not dwelling in the home is not in my budget. Please consider charging this to the previous owners, as it was their responsibility. When my title search and liens search were completed, this information did not come up, and I should not be penalized for it. Thank you!

Kenisha Lockhart

Board of County Commissioners, September 15, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 30	Name: Doris Lee
	Address: 6400 Williams Road; Tallahassee, Florida 32311
	Date Submitted: 9/10/2020 2:28:46 PM

I object to having the fire assessment added to the tax bill as I believe this to be a bad idea in light of the pandemic. An addition to the tax bill will cause some, if not a lot of property owners who have their taxes paid via their mortgage company, an increase in their monthly payments. This could cause even more of a problem for a property owner who is already struggling to pay their mortgage.

I suggest a separate bill similar to the tax bill be sent to property owners. I, myself, would rather pay the one time fee for the year.

Residence: 6400 Williams Road; Tallahassee, Florida 32311

Mailing: PO Box 5453; Tallahassee, Florida 32314-5453