



PUTNAM COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
2509 Crill Avenue, Suite 200
Palatka, FL 32177
386-329-0205

Terry K. Suggs
County Administrator

Press Release:

In response to concerns expressed by citizens.

County Administration & staff have been diligently working with law enforcement agencies for months, as reported in the Palatka Daily News on September 13, 2019 in an article including statements from County Administrator Suggs and Sheriff DeLoach:

‘When asked about some of the irregularities at Public Works dating back to mid-August, Putnam County Sherriff Gator DeLoach said there had been preliminary discussions with Suggs about launching an investigation. “There were conversations (in mid-August) with the county administrator regarding the potential for an investigation, but Hurricane Dorian delayed it,” DeLoach said. DeLoach did not say what allegations had been discussed or who the target of such investigation might be but said this week the discussions were ongoing....”

As insinuated, by a County Commissioner, that County Administration, staff and elected officials are not doing their due diligence with respect to ‘potential malfeasance’ is factually inaccurate, to allude that the county is being negligent in its actions, or lack thereof, is erroneous. A concern was reported to the County’s Human Resources Department on July 22, 2019. Staff immediately launched a review of the concern, and related matter(s). Staff’s initial review found grounds to engage law enforcement to determine if a full law enforcement investigation was warranted. As supported by the article reported in The Palatka Daily News, on September 13, 2019 the Putnam County Sherriff’s office was engaged in August. County Administration & staff have been working diligently to support law enforcement agencies during their investigative review.

County Commissioners & County Administration eagerly await the outcome of the investigative review and the opportunity to share the results with constituents. However, during the launch of and throughout the investigative review FDLE agents have asked County Administration, County Commissioners & Staff for their utmost discretion in dissemination of any and all information. Relevant information leaked or discussed has the potential to impede FDLE’s ability to investigate. This could result in impairment of the investigation, case and diminish their ability to charge or prosecute. County Administration, Commissioners and staff who *have* remained silent have done so in the spirit of cooperation with FDLE agents to allow our law enforcement agencies every opportunity to do their job. Again, we fervently await the results and opportunity to share them with the public.

Lastly, with respect to the agenda item ultimately approved at Tuesday’s BOCC meeting which authorized retroactive approval of a change order for \$87,905.05. The SR 207 project is a stand-alone, independent project. It is not being reviewed as part of any investigation, at this time, nor do we have any indication it will be. In short, the then Public Works Director, authorized work to be done by a contractor and an engineer. The engineer and contractor performed the work as directed by the Director of Public Works. The matter was reviewed with legal counsel and county administration was advised it was in the best interest of the county to pay for work completed. The work completed, although done so outside of standard protocol, has (and will) afford commercial and residential patrons increased services.