Resolution # 2020-012

WHEREAS, the Gadsden County Board of Commissioners have met and considered the substantial likelihood of an emergency condition being caused by Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), and the fact that there is a likelihood of potential injury to the population beginning March 13, 2020;

WHEREAS, Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that can spread among humans through respiratory transmission and presents with symptoms similar to those of influenza; and

WHEREAS, in late 2019, a new and significant outbreak of COVID-19 emerged in China; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization previously declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern; and

WHEREAS, in response to the recent COVID-19 outbreak in China, Iran, Italy, Japan and South Korea, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") has deemed it necessary to prohibit or restrict non-essential travel to or from those countries; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order number 20-51 directing the Florida Department of Health to issue a Public Health Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2020, the State Surgeon General and State Health Officer Public Health Emergency exists in the State of Florida as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 7, 2020, Governor DeSantis directed the Director of the Division of Emergency Management to activate the State Emergency Operations Center to Level 2 to provide coordination and response to the COVID-19 emergency; and

WHEREAS, as of March 9, 2020, eight counties in Florida have positive cases for COVID-19, and COVID-19 poses a risk to the entire state of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the CDC currently recommends community preparedness and everyday prevention measures be taken by all individuals and families in the United States, including voluntary home isolation when individuals are sick with respiratory symptoms, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue and disposal of the tissue immediately thereafter, washing hands often with soap and water for at least twenty (20) seconds, using of alcohol-based hand sanitizers with 60%-95% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available and routinely cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects to increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak; and

WHEREAS, the CDC currently recommends mitigation measures for communities experiencing an outbreak including staying at home when sick, keeping away from others who are sick, limiting face-to-face contact with others as much as possible, consulting with your

healthcare provider if individuals or members of a household are at high risk for COVID-19 complications, wearing a facemask if advised to do so by a healthcare provider or by a public health official, staying home when a household member is sick with respiratory disease symptoms if instructed to do so by public health officials or a health care provider; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that Gadsden County, Florida is hereby declared to be in a State of Emergency. Due to the rapid escalation of this situation, and the requirement for rapid action, notice of the special meeting of the Board of County Commissioners at which this Resolution was adopted could not be published in the local newspapers. However, reasonable notice under the circumstances was provided in accordance with the Gadsden County Code of Ordinances ("the Code"), as notice was posted on the County's website, at the County's offices, and in all City Halls within the County, and was sent by electronic mail to all addresses on the County's list serve. Further, the Board of County Commissioners hereby exercises its authority and waives the procedures and formalities required by law of a political subdivision pursuant to the provisions enumerated in Florida Statutes § 252.38; and

While the State of Emergency continues to exist, the County shall have the power and authority to carry on those activities set forth in Fla. Stat. § 252.38, including but not limited to: appropriate and expend funds; make contracts; obtain and distribute equipment, materials, and supplies for emergency management purposes; provide for the health and safety of persons and property, including emergency assistance to the victim of any emergency; to limit the size of gatherings taking place within the County for a period during this State of Emergency to a maximum of two hundred and fifty (250); and direct and coordinate the development of the emergency management plans and protocols in accordance with the plans and policies set forth by the Federal and State Emergency Management agencies; and

During this State of Emergency, pursuant to Chapter 2, Article II, Division 2, Section 2-42(f) of the Code the County may call emergency meetings which bypass the notice conditions required by the Code. Such emergency meetings shall not be required to be held at the normal meeting times as set forth in the Code; and

During this State of Emergency, the County hereby empower the Chairman of the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners (or his designated representative) with the following powers:

To appoint, employ, remove, or provide, with or without compensation, coordinators, rescue teams, fire and police personel, and other emergency management workers; and

To establish, as necessary, a primary and one or more secondary emergency operating centers to provide continuity of government and direction and control of emergency operations; and

To assign and make available for duty the offices and agencies of Gadsden County, including the employees, the property or equipment thereof relating to firefighting, engineering, rescue, health, medical and related services for emergency operation services, as the primary

emergency management forces of the political subdivision for employment within or outside the political limits of the subdivision; and

To request State assistance or invoke emergency-related mutual-aid assistance by declaring a local State of Emergency in the event of an emergency affecting only one political subdivision. The duration of this State of Emergency declared locally is limited to seven (7) days; it may be extended (or terminated) as necessary by the Chairman of the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners, in seven-day increments, without further affirmative action from the Board.

By special order of the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners on this 13th day of March, 2020.

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS GADSDEN COUNTY FLORIDA CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

Nicholas Thomas
Clerk of the Circuit Court

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIOENRS
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____

Anthony O. Viegbesie, Ph.D.
Chairman