

RESOLUTION NO. 2026- 01

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, FLORIDA, MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS; DECLARING A LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY; IMPOSING A BURN BAN; PROVIDING FOR EXEMPTIONS, ENFORCEMENT, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, multiple brush fires have been reported over the last few weeks, and weather conditions over the next seven (7) days are expected to continue promoting rapid fire growth; and

WHEREAS, current conditions and potential fires have the capacity to pose a significant, imminent, and dangerous threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Jefferson County, Florida; and

WHEREAS, due to dry, drought-stricken, and windy conditions—and the resulting threat of wildfires within Jefferson County—emergency measures are required to protect the health, safety, welfare, and property of Jefferson County citizens and visitors; and

WHEREAS, these conditions recently resulted in a large brush fire within the County; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, Jefferson County is authorized to take whatever prudent action that is necessary to ensure health, safety, and welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 31-16 of the Code, in the unavailability of a quorum of the Board, the Chairman of the Board ("Chairman") is authorized to declare a local state of emergency whenever that person shall determine that a natural, technological, or manmade disaster or emergency has occurred or that the occurrence or threat of one is imminent and requires immediate and expeditious action; and

WHEREAS, the Chairman has determined that the conditions described herein require immediate and expeditious action, there are no imminent scheduled meetings of the Board of County Commissioners ("Board") and a quorum of the Board is not currently available to meet in time to take the necessary action to respond to the emergency conditions, and in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community, it is in the best interests of the County for the Chairman to declare a local state of emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED by the Board of County Commissioners of Jefferson County, Florida:

SECTION 1. RECITALS. The above recitals are true and correct and incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2. LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY. A local state of emergency is hereby declared pursuant to Section 252.38(3), Florida Statutes, and Section 31-16 of the Code.

Such declaration is made by the Chairman, pursuant to his authority under Section 31-16 of the Code. Subsequently, this Resolution shall be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for ratification and approval.

SECTION 3. BURN BAN. During the local state of emergency, the following activities are prohibited in all of Jefferson County:

(A) A person violates this order if he/she burns any combustible material in an outdoor area, including but not limited to, any outdoor burning of yard waste, household paper products, bonfires, campfires, warming fires, outdoor fireplaces, and cooking fires.

(B) A person violates this order if he/she engages in any outdoor activity which creates flames or sparks that could ignite a fire, including but not limited to, the lighting of fireworks, sparklers, or other incendiary devices.

SECTION 3. EXEMPTIONS. The following activities are exempt from the prohibition proscribed in Section 3: (1) The cooking of food completely contained within an enclosed gas or charcoal grill continuously attended by a responsible adult; (2) Agricultural, silvicultural, or land-clearing burns conducted pursuant to burning authorization issued by the Florida Forest Service with adequate fire suppression equipment and personnel on site; (3) Properly permitted fireworks displays conducted by a municipality or the County, with appropriate fire suppression measures in place; (4) Emergency flares discharged on navigable waters, lakes, or rivers; and (5) Firefighter training conducted by Jefferson County or any municipality within its geographic boundaries or the state or federal governments.

SECTION 5. ENFORCEMENT. A violation of this Declaration constitutes a second-degree misdemeanor under Sections 775.082 or 775.083, Florida Statutes, as provided by Section 252.50, Florida Statutes, and is subject to applicable penalties set forth in Section 31-23 of the Code. Upon notification of a suspected unauthorized outdoor fire, Jefferson County Fire Rescue shall respond to the scene and take immediate measures to contain and extinguish the fire. Violators shall reimburse Jefferson County and any responding agencies for all response and fire suppression costs.

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this Resolution is deemed invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

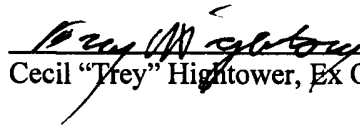
SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption. This declared Local State of Emergency shall continue to be in effect for seven (7) days and may be extended by the designated county official as set forth in Section 31-16 of the Code in 7-day increments as necessary.

PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED, on this the 22 day of January, 2026.


**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, FLORIDA**


By: Benjamin White
Its: Chairman BOCC

ATTEST:


Cecil "Trey" Hightower, Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Evan Rosenthal, County Attorney