

# Hernando County's new administrator gets glowing six-month review

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BROOKSVILLE — Hernando County commissioners have given new County Administrator Len Sossamon a six-month performance review, and they seem quite pleased with the job he has done so far.

They say he has met and, in some cases, even exceeded expectations.

Overall, the commission scored Sossamon at a 3.93 average on a scale of 5, well above the standard for "meets expectations" and nearly to the standard of "exceeds expectations."

Commission Chairman Wayne Dukes gave Sossamon the highest ranking, marking him "excellent/proficient" in every one of the 14 measurements, which range from fiscal responsibility to decision making.

"Strong leadership. Displays professionalism," were the comments Dukes wrote under strengths. He called for "more of the same" under new objectives, and under general comments "a welcome addition to the team."

The next-highest score came from Commissioner Dave Russell, who marked Sossamon "excellent/proficient" in communications, interpersonal skills, customer service, and dependability and punctuality. In other categories, Russell gave him marks of "exceeds expectations." That totaled up to a score of 4.29.

Jim Adkins, who gave the administrator a 3.93 score, listed Sossamon's strengths as "management skills. Strong support for economic development."

Commissioner John Druzbeck rated Sossamon an overall 3.29 and noted under strengths: "Listens. Able to think outside the box."

Sossamon's lowest score, 3.14, came from Commissioner Jeff Stabins. He marked "meets expectations" in every category, except for one. In dependability and punctuality, Stabins gave him an "excellent/proficient."

Sossamon's self-evaluation score landed him just slightly below the commission's average. He graded himself at 3.79, giving himself three scores of "meets expectations" and 11 of "exceeds expectations."

Among those, Sossamon notes under interpersonal skills that he has "worked diligently to build trust within the organization and with the public and the media."

Under the category of builds effective teams, Sossamon wrote, "communicates well with public and staff."

In commenting on his management of staff, he explained, "I have worked to manage the conflicts/problems that were existing prior to my being hired. These include Animal Services, lack of revenue, flood control, etc."

Sossamon also notes that he has worked to find new revenue sources as part of his fiscal responsibility.

He lists as accomplishments to date his reorganization of storm water management, Animal Services and Code Enforcement.

As for the future, he lists goals that include developing a smoother budget process, developing new revenue sources, completing a strategic plan and working on a plan for the money the county expects to receive from the BP oil spill settlement.

Sossamon began work in Hernando in May after the commission fired its previous administrator of 3 1/2 years, David Hamilton.

Sossamon previously worked as a private developer, county administrator in Newberry County, S.C., and city manager in Concord, N.C. His annual salary is \$125,000.