

## APRIL 28, 2009 – WORKSHOP

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a workshop on Tuesday, April 28, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., at the Walton County Courthouse to discuss the Fiscal Year 2009-2010 budget.

The following Board members were present: Commissioner Sara Comander, Chairman; Commissioner Scott Brannon, Vice-Chair; Commissioner Larry Jones; Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen; and Commissioner Cecilia Jones. Mr. Bobby Beasley, Supervisor of Elections; Ms. Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court; Mr. Mike Adkinson, Sheriff; Ms. Rhonda Skipper, Tax Collector; Mr. Patrick Pilcher, Property Appraiser; and Mr. Ronnie Bell, County Administrator, were also present.

Chairman Comander commented that all the Constitutional Officers share the current economic issues and they are working together to find a solution for the shortfall in funds.

Mr. Bobby Beasley, Supervisor of Elections, led the invocation.

Mr. Ronnie Bell, County Administrator, commented that Mr. Patrick Pilcher, Property Appraiser, still has two months until the 2009 taxable values are finalized. Another ¼ mill or ½ mill could equal an additional \$200,000-300,000 reduction of funds. At the last meeting held on February 24, 2009 to discuss the 2009-2010 budget, there was a shortfall of \$7.1 million. That has increased to an overall shortfall of approximately \$7.5 million.

Mr. Patrick Pilcher briefly discussed information provided regarding the millage rates, taxable values, and the current situation compared to past years. The 2009 totals

will be provided after the July 1<sup>st</sup> tax role submission, but those totals should be closer to those in 2005 because of the reduction in taxable property value.

Chairman Comander stated that she discussed with Mr. Bill Imfeld, Finance Director, that the gas tax revenue is low. Mr. Imfeld stated that the sales tax freefall has leveled off and that projection of loss has been reduced, but the gas tax freefall is continuing. The combined number will stay the same, but the ad valorem taxes will also have an effect.

Mr. Bell stated that there were 16 unfilled positions at the last meeting. There has been a reduction of workforce on the Board side increasing the number to 33.5 unfilled positions, ranging from public safety to secretarial duties. Several of the unfilled positions are funded, but they still remain open.

Chairman Comander questioned the shortfall for this year. Mr. Imfeld stated that those numbers have decreased slightly because of the increase in sales tax revenue. Some unfilled vacancies from this year will help cover that shortfall. Chairman Comander questioned the amount. Mr. Imfeld answered about \$750,000.

Commissioner Brannon questioned the number of building permits pulled per month. Mr. Bell stated that information could be provided at a later time.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the number of issued building permits.

Commissioner Brannon questioned if there is any indication where the 2009 taxable values may level off. Mr. Pilcher answered between \$12.8-16 billion.

Mr. Bell provided information regarding how much it would take to meet the roll back rate and the break even rates.

Commissioner Brannon questioned the roll back rate. Mr. Bell stated that the roll back rate is the amount it would take to generate the same amount of money they did in the past year. He stated that the millage could possibly be higher than 3.8110. The break even rate for millage will fall between 3.9691 and 3.8731. Brief discussion continued regarding the roll back rates, break even rates, and millage rates.

Chairman Comander stated that a major concern for the Board is reducing employees. There will be no annual or COLA raises. An option that has been reviewed is sharing a cost for health insurance. Ms. Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court, questioned that amount. Mr. Imfeld stated that amount would be approximately \$10 per pay period, but more information is needed. He stated that there are a number of expenditure areas they are looking to eliminate and de-obligating some incomplete programs. Chairman Comander stated that it is prudent to look at all possibilities and the results.

Mr. Imfeld briefly discussed some additional possibilities to save money for the county.

Lengthy discussion ensued between the Constitutional Officers regarding their efforts and ideas to help with the shortfall.

Chairman Comander stated that the Constitutional Officers have to work together to attempt to diminish the shortfall in the budget.

Chairman Comander stated that an Executive Session would be held at 3:15 p.m. in the County Administration Office. Therefore, the regular meeting was called to order and will be recessed until 4:00 p.m.

Chairman Comander called role.

Chairman Comander, Commissioner L. Jones, Commissioner Brannon, Commissioner Pridgen, and Commissioner C. Jones were in attendance.

Mr. Mike Burke, County Attorney, announced those to be in attendance during the Executive Session: The Board of County Commissioners, Attorney Harry Chiles, Attorney Lynn Hoshihara, and the County Administrator.

The Public Meeting was recessed at 2:50 p.m. and an Executive Session was called to order at 3:15 p.m. to discuss Richard C. and Joan Langford vs. Walton County (Case No.: 03-CA-122). This meeting was not open to the public pursuant to Florida Statute 286.011(8).

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_  
Sara Comander, Chairman

ATTEST \_\_\_\_\_  
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Courts