

## JULY 9, 2003 – BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Budget Workshop on Wednesday, July 9, 2003 at 10:30 a.m. in Courtroom B at the Walton County Courthouse.

The following Board members were present: Tim Pauls, Vice-Chair, Commissioner Lane Rees, Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen, and Commissioner Ro Cuchens. Mr. Michael Underwood, County Administrator, Attorney Gary Vorbeck, Director of Legal Services and Ms. Martha Ingle, Clerk of Courts, were also present.

Vice-Chairman Pauls led with prayer followed by the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag and he then called the meeting to order.

Mr. William Imfeld, Financial Director, presented the budget for the Finance Division, which includes OMB, Central Purchasing, Grants Department, Contracts, Telecommunications, and Central Ambulance Billing. The budget for these departments total \$830,577 and is a 15.41% decrease over last year's budget. He discussed the proposed fleet management program that will provide better support for tracking all parts. An individual from Purchasing will be designated to an in-house parts shop to help prevent down time at the shop. Discussion followed regarding the fleet management program and what steps are being taken to enhance repair and maintenance of vehicles and equipment.

Commissioner Pauls asked Mr. Imfeld to explain the purchasing process regarding making purchases in the county versus outside the county. Mr. Imfeld explained that 75% of purchases are made within the county. Commissioner Pauls also asked that the county's phone directory be updated on a semi-annual basis. Mr. Imfeld

explained that the directory is currently being updated and can also be added on-line. Commissioner Pauls commented on the need to support the Grants Department by being pro-active in order to continue obtaining new grants.

Mr. Powerdermaker questioned where the funding is reflected in the budget for Economic Development. Mr. Imfeld explained that funding is set aside for economic development and would be amended into the budget at the appropriate time.

Mr. Imfeld also presented the following budgets:

Debt Service	\$249,380
Recreation Plat Fee	\$554,669
Local Option Gas Tax	\$2,000,000
Driftwood MSBU (pass-through)	\$256,188
Capital Projects (Courthouse-DFS, Jail/Sheriff's Office/records, Old Hospital)	\$13,000,000

The proposed budget for the Courts Division reflect a 16.56% increase, total \$889,672 and include the County and Circuit Court's budgets, Public Defender, States Attorney, Court Reporter, and Medical Examiner.

Mr. Imfeld explained that Article IV is being implemented by the State and the funding structure for the Clerk's Office will be changing. The Clerk's Office will become a fee office and will be required to fund itself through revenues collected. The Board will still fund the Comptroller's Office. Ms. Ingle further explained the new fee structure and stated that all court related issues would be based on fees. The Civil Office will have to collect enough in fees to cover the Criminal Division; therefore, there will be some increase in filing fees. Ms. Ingle stated that some fine and forfeiture funds have been retained to operate the courts system. Any surplus at the end of the year will be submitted

to the State and no longer retained by the Board. The Recording Department is not included in Article IV.

Commissioner Rees questioned the increase in the Medical Examiner and Public Defender's budgets. Mr. Imfeld explained that it is due to the need for additional personnel.

Mr. Ken Little, Citizens Service Director, presented the following budgets. The budgets total \$4,396,878 and reflect a decrease of 2.78%.

Citizens Services	\$107,868
Extension Service	\$272,290
Library	\$653,576
Library Grants	\$175,000
Probation & Parole	\$244,106
Soil Conservation	\$ 87,987
Walton County Health Dept	\$603,373
Veterans Services	\$128,557
Section 8 Housing	\$1,756,286
SHIP	\$367,835

Mr. Powdermaker and Commissioner Pauls commended Mr. Little for his work on the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Little also presented the proposed budgets for each of the discretionary organizations. Representatives from each organization were present to answer questions and explain the reason for the funding.

Ms. Bonnie McQuiston commented that she would like to see a time frame and a plan for how these organizations plan on becoming self-sufficient. Commissioner Pauls stated that he too would like them to become self-sufficient if possible. Commissioner Rees commented that some of them might be able to, but felt that not all of them can.

Mr. Little explained why he made the recommendations that were made. He stated that some of the organizations did not present any reports showing their

expenditures and therefore was recommended not to receive any funding. The Board concurred with the recommended budget amounts for most of the organizations; however, discussion was held regarding those who were recommended for less than the requested amounts. After discussion, there was general consensus from the commissioners to increase the recommended funding for the following organizations:

Grit and Grace Inc.	\$15,000
Muscogee Nation of FL	\$20,000 in-kind
Walton County Art League	\$10,000
C.O.P.E. Center	\$83,100
Resource for Human Development	\$26,000

Mr. Russ Barry, Public Works Director, appeared before the commissioners and presented a breakdown of the proposed budget for Public Works. He presented the calculations for road paving including labor and materials for the cost per mile. Mr. Barry stated that he is proposing to hire eight (8) additional individuals for the Public Works Department.

Discussion was held regarding the costs of in-house paving versus contracted paving. Mr. Barry spoke about new software that would be installed that would provide capabilities to track all project costs.

Commissioner Pauls suggested that a maintenance list be created for all county roads showing how they would be maintained.

Discussion was also held regarding the total headcount of all county personnel, right-of-way issues, building maintenance and storm water issues. Commissioner Pauls responded to the storm water issue. Mr. Barry stated that the funds have been added to the budget to address certain storm water issues. Mr. Powdermaker questioned why storm water was not budgeted as a separate line item. Commissioner Pauls spoke about the

storm water study performed by Hartman & Associates and further stated that funding needs to be set aside for storm water utility issues. Commissioner Rees stated that he would like to continue reviewing and refining the Public Works budget. Commissioner Cuchens stated that he would like to see a response from each district regarding their recommendations for the preparation of roads.

Mr. Gary Mattison, Human Resources Director, appeared before the Board to explain the proposed budget for Human Resources, which includes the Custodial Services Division. The total budget is \$293,542 and reflects a 14.21% increase in the HR Department.

Mr. Mattison stated that there are a total of 28 new positions being added into the upcoming budget. These positions do not include the other constitutional offices. Commissioner Cuchens cautioned against over hiring. Mr. Mattison explained that the study performed by Cody & Associates shows that 400 to 450 are the number of employees that a county of this size should have. He stated that we are within those guidelines. Commissioner Rees commented that there should be enough people on staff to carry out the required tasks, but also cautioned about hiring too many stating that some services could be outsourced if necessary. Commissioner Pauls spoke about efficiency and wanted assurance that the services are being provided to the public.

Mr. Scupin thanked Mr. Mattison for providing a total employee count and stated that it allows the commissioners to see an overall picture of the county's operations.

Mr. Powdermaker addressed the commissioners and felt that a review on the status of the road-paving program needs to be performed before the second \$8 million is borrowed. He also voiced concern with the increased amount of personnel, the number of

vehicles, and the additional responsibilities being added to the Construction Manager. Mr. Powdermaker also voiced concern regarding the custodial services and felt that this department should be outsourced. He recommended that the commissioners go back to zero based budgeting for the next budget cycle and asked that a budget committee be established to review the overall objectives and goals of the county.

Mr. Scupin voiced opposition to borrowing the \$14 million for the road paving projects. He asked that the budget be thoroughly tracked before obtaining the loan. Commissioner Pauls agreed that a review should be done before the second \$8 million is borrowed.

Commissioner Rees commented on the progress that has taken place in the county. He spoke about the need to watch the expenditures relating to personnel, equipment and vehicles. He stated that the Board should consider the citizen's comments.

Commissioner Pauls voiced appreciation for the public input. He stated that he would like to see the documents become user friendly to the public. He spoke about public trust and stated that it is the intentions of the Board to provide information to the public in order to create trust.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Larry D. Jones, Chairman

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court