

JULY 9, 2009 – BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a budget workshop on Thursday, July 9, 2009, at 10:05 a.m., at the Walton County Courthouse.

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. Ronnie Bell, County Administrator; Mr. Bill Imfeld, Finance Director; Mr. W.C. Henry, County Attorney; and Ms. Martha Ingle, Clerk of Courts, were also present.

Commissioner Pridgen led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Chairman Comander called the meeting to order regarding the 2009-2010 Fiscal Year Budget.

Mr. Ronnie Bell, County Administrator, stated that action would need to be taken on the county wide proposed millage and a North Walton Mosquito Control millage. He expressed his appreciation to all the Constitutional Officers and departments efforts to work together. He stated that the beginning number to reduce the budget by was \$8.29 million; it has increased up to \$8.60 million. Hopefully, the final number to reduce in order to remain at the current millage will be approximately \$8.666 million.

Mr. Bell discussed the following department proposed budgets:

Clerk of Court: \$1,970,983 a reduction of \$33,831 and 2 FTE's.

Tax Collector: Subtotal of \$1,914,908, BCC funded postage of \$54,225, and BCC funded communications of \$8,500, totaling \$1,977,633 a reduction of \$41,481.

Property Appraiser: \$1,892,482 a reduction of \$32,242 and 1 FTE.

Supervisor of Elections: \$642,293 a reduction of \$34,495.

Sheriff's Office: \$16,737,757 an increase of \$1,501,435. Mr. Bell explained that in May the Board approved for the Sheriff's Office to take over operations of Emergency Management and E911. There was an overall increase from 202 FTE's to 224. Twenty-one of the FTE's came from Emergency Management and E911. The overall increase to the Sheriff's budget was \$9,627. He explained that the recommended budget for the Sheriff was due to the transfer of Emergency Management and E911 services. Mr. Bell stated that the sheriff had requested a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for renovations to the Sheriff's Administration Office to have all the employees located in one building. The CIP would renovate the building to two stories and house all the E911, dispatchers, and EOC personnel. He recommended having \$1 million de-obligated from the Landfill CIP to move forward with renovations. Mr. Bell briefly explained the process of car purchases and also stated that money could be de-obligated from the Landfill CIP. The total amount to be de-obligated from the Landfill CIP would be approximately \$1.3 million. Those funds could be transferred to the Sheriff's budget at the first meeting in October by a budget amendment.

Sheriff Mike Adkinson briefly explained the statutory compliance issues that have to be followed for the renovations.

Chairman Comander asked for public comment regarding the information provided.

There were no public comments.

Tourist Development Council (TDC): \$12,130,881 a reduction of \$1,017,110 with a total of 31 funded FTE positions.

The Board of County Commissioners (BCC): \$4,275,574 a reduction of \$568,137 with a total of 14 funded and 1 unfunded FTE positions. Some positions have been eliminated and unfunded. Mr. Bell stated that if the funding was not available, the position remains, but it is unfunded. If at some time during the year those funds become available to pay for the employee then it can be filled.

- **County Administration:** \$402,556 a reduction of \$6,030 with a total of 4 funded FTE positions.
- **Public Information Officer:** \$112,721 an increase of \$31,986 due to an employee transfer from a different office.
- **GIS:** \$440,094 a reduction of \$17,873 with a total of 7 funded FTE positions.
- **Corrections:** \$5,163,830 a reduction of \$131,321 with a total of 67 funded FTE positions.
- **Transfer Out:** \$3,756,565 an increase of \$290,366.
- **Building:** \$961,819 a reduction of \$811,796 with a total of 13 funded and 11 eliminated FTE positions.
 - **Totals:** \$15,572,159 a reduction of \$1,212,805 with a total of 1 unfunded, 11 eliminated, and 107 funded FTE positions.

Parks and Recreation: \$882,653 a reduction of \$53,188 with a total of 14 funded and 1 eliminated FTE positions.

- **Recreation Board:** \$122,974 a reduction of \$137,226. Mr. Bell stated that last year this fund was decreased from \$10,000 to \$5,000. This year it has been decreased from \$5,000 to \$1,000.

- **Totals:** \$1,059,410 a reduction of \$190,414 with a total of 14 funded and 1 eliminated FTE positions.

Commissioner Brannon questioned the addition of Morrison Springs Park and if the requirements for the park are adequately met. Mr. Bell answered that Mr. Brad Alford, Parks and Recreation Director, has changed the schedule to have an employee work on Saturdays and Sundays to meet those requirements.

Planning: \$643,092 a reduction of \$3,208 with a total of 7.75 funded FTE positions.

- **Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA):** a reduction of \$100,000.
 - **Totals:** \$643,092 a reduction of \$103,208 with a total of 7.75 funded FTE positions.

Development Services Division: \$1,128,144 a reduction of \$108,163 with a total of 16 funded FTE positions.

- **Code Enforcement:** \$396,466 a reduction of \$123,804 with a total of 6 funded FTE positions.
 - **Totals:** \$1,524,610 a reduction of \$231,967 with a total of 22 funded FTE positions.

Public Works: \$19,339,133 a reduction of \$2,096,494 with a total of 157.25 funded, 10 unfunded, and 2 eliminated FTE positions.

- **Landfill:** \$11,957,500 a reduction of \$319,303 with a total of 14 funded FTE positions.
 - **Totals:** \$31,296,633 a reduction of \$1,777,191 with a total of 171.25 funded, 10 unfunded, and 2 eliminated FTE positions.

Emergency Services: \$209,632 a reduction of \$37,607 with a total of 3 funded FTE positions. In the Emergency Management E911 transfer, one of the positions was transferred to Emergency Response Services.

- **Paramedics Firefighters:** \$7,771,991 a reduction of \$230,775 with a total of 78 funded and 3 unfunded FTE positions. The unfunded positions were approved two years ago but have never been filled due to budget issues.
- **Animal Control:** \$391,073 a reduction of \$6,200 with a total of 3 funded FTE positions.
- **Fire Control:** \$32,791 with no changes.
- **Aid to other Fire Departments:** \$368,329 a reduction of \$10,271.
 - **Totals:** \$8,773,816 a reduction of \$209,639 with a total of 84 funded and 3 unfunded FTE positions. Mr. Bell briefly discussed the reduction to the Aid to other Fire Departments (Argyle-\$1,930, DeFuniak Springs-\$2,458, Liberty-\$2,025, and Freeport-\$3,858).

Mayor J.M. Marse, City of Freeport, stated that equipment for the Fire Department was asked for several years ago. As of now, there is a total of \$138,644 left in payment for that equipment. He asked for the Board to forgive that loan payment. Commissioner L. Jones suggested looking at similar situations with the other Fire Departments and find the best way to help all the departments.

Construction Management

- **Facilities Maintenance:** \$1,539,210 a reduction of \$111,272 with a total of 16 funded and 3 unfunded FTE positions.

- **Custodial:** \$420,625 a reduction of \$148,114 with a total of 10 funded and 4 eliminated FTE positions. One position was transferred to the Sheriff's Department.
- **Construction Management:** \$238,638 a reduction of \$54,849 with a total of 2 funded and 1 eliminated FTE positions.
 - **Totals:** \$2,198,473 a reduction of \$314,235 with a total of 28 funded, 3 unfunded, and 5 eliminated FTE positions.

County Attorney's Office: \$266,881 a reduction of \$16,825 with a total of 3 FTE's.

Citizen Services: \$158,549 a reduction of \$4,800 with a total of 2 funded FTE positions.

- **Statutory Required Organizations:** \$686,500 with no changes.
- **Discretionary Organizations:** \$161,775 a reduction of \$89,605.
- **Health Department:** \$797,960 with no changes.
- **Veterans Services:** \$160,962 a reduction of \$1,450 with a total of 3 funded FTE positions.
- **Soil Conservation:** \$98,795 a reduction of \$2,300 with a total of 2 funded FTE positions.
- **Agriculture Center:** \$301,438 a reduction of \$10,572 with a total of 8.5 funded FTE positions.
- **Probation:** \$318,849 a reduction of \$3,750 with a total of 5 funded FTE positions.

- **Library:** \$760,110 a reduction of \$252,186 with a total of 15.5 funded and 1.5 unfunded FTE positions. Mr. Bell stated that all the libraries are open in Walton County, but the hours for some of the locations will be reduced.
 - **Subtotals:** \$3,444,938 a reduction of \$364,663.
 - **HUD:** \$1,756,522 a reduction of \$117,000 with a total of 3 funded FTE positions.
 - **Totals:** \$5,201,460 a reduction of \$481,663 with a total of 39 funded and 1.5 unfunded FTE positions.

S.H.I.P: \$519,763 with no changes.

Human Resources: \$536,582 a reduction of \$41,830 with a total of 7 funded FTE positions.

Courts

- **Circuit Court:** \$388,305 a reduction of \$18,750 with a total of 6 funded FTE positions. The funded positions are the bailiffs. The Judges and their Judicial Assistants are paid by the State Courts.
- **Guardian Ad Litem (GAL):** \$1,000 with no changes.
- **County Court:** \$73,926 a reduction of \$2,100 with a total of 1 funded FTE positions. This position is a bailiff.
- **Medical Examiner:** \$200,645 a reduction of \$1,189.
- **State Attorney:** \$81,500 with no changes.
- **Public Defender:** \$16,490 with no changes.
- **Court Technology:** \$201,000 a reduction of \$237,022.

- **Totals:** \$962,866 a reduction of \$259,061 with a total of 7 funded FTE positions.

Finance Division

- **OMB:** \$336,568 a reduction of \$5,800 with a total of 4 funded FTE positions.
- **Purchasing:** \$478,137 a reduction of \$21,500 with a total of 9 funded FTE positions.
- **Grants:** \$100,954 a reduction of \$1,450 with a total of 1.5 funded FTE positions.
- **Contracts:** \$27,079 a reduction of \$300 with a total of .5 funded FTE positions.
- **Telecommunications:** \$67,409 a reduction of \$70 with a total of 1 funded FTE position.
- **Ambulance Billing:** \$60,000 an increase of \$9,205 with a total of 1 transferred FTE position to the Public Information Officer (PIO).
 - **Totals:** \$1,070,147 a reduction of \$19,915 with a total of 16 funded, 1 eliminated, and 1 transferred FTE positions.

Debt Service: \$247,450 regarding the hospital. In 2010 the escrow account balance is adequate to redeem the remainder of the debt, and no ad valorem assessment will be done.

Recreation Plat Fee: \$50,000 along with the remainder of the 2009 budget will be brought forward.

Sidewalk Fees: \$10,000 with a balance brought forward of \$56,000, totaling \$66,000.

Local Option Gas Tax: \$1,862,000 to be transferred to the County Transportation Trust (CTT) Fund.

Inmate Canteen Fund: \$151,177 a reduction of \$140,951 with a total of 1 FTE.

MSBU

- **Daughette MSBU:** \$22,365 to be paid by the neighborhood.
- **Imperial Lakes MSBU:** \$36,941.

Capital Projects: Principal - \$1,830,032, Interest - \$938,237, Totaling - \$2,768,269.

Mr. Bell stated that the taxable value for the current year is \$16.325 billion. The 2009-2010 taxable value is \$13.989 billion. The current year's millage rate is 3.3563 mills. The rollback rate is 4.000 mills. The rollback rate plus the 2.5% is 4.0736 mills. The current year's rate will generate \$7.5 million less. The rollback rate will generate the same amount of money but about half a mill higher. The rollback rate plus the 2.5% will generate about \$1.3 million more. Mr. Bell briefly discussed the departments FTE's on pages 105-106 in the information provided.

Commissioner Brannon clarified that a tentative millage rate will be set at this time and then after it is set, it can be decreased but not increased. Mr. Bell confirmed.

Mr. Bell stated that the North Walton Mosquito Control is requesting no change which is a millage of 0.4912.

Chairman Comander asked for public comment.

Ms. Bonnie McQuiston questioned who pays for the Recreation Plat Fees and Sidewalk Fees. Mr. Bell answered that the developer pays for those fees and briefly explained how those fees are used for future projects. Ms. McQuiston questioned if the unfunded employee positions will remain open but no funds are available. Mr. Bell explained that they did keep the FTE position, it is not funded, but if at some time during the year that funding is available then they can fill that position. Ms. McQuiston questioned how the 11 positions from the Building Department were eliminated. Mr. Bell answered that some of those positions were not filled, some were transferred to other departments within the county, and some were laid off. He explained that they were funded for the 2009 year, but part of the reduction for the 2010 year.

Mr. Dan Scupin questioned the percentage decrease in the taxable value and the increase to the roll back rate. Mr. Imfeld stated that the tax rate changed, but it is not necessarily an increase in the number of tax revenue. It is actually the same or lower than the tax revenue that was accumulated in the current year. Commissioner L. Jones briefly discussed the tax revenue increases and decreases. Mr. Scupin expressed his anticipation for a decrease in government expenses as well.

Mr. Bell commented that the total budget for the current year is \$111,409,645. The proposed budget for 2009-2010 is \$100,966,540, a reduction of \$10,443,105.

Discussion continued regarding the current budget, millage rates, and additional revenue reductions that could affect the budget.

Mr. J.B. Hillard commented on the fact that the Library branches will remain open. He questioned where the reductions came from. Mr. Imfeld stated that the books

and supplies will be limited to grant funds and the reductions will be from the hour decrease for two of the branches.

Mr. Scupin stated that he would like for the Board to have some leadership and remain at the current millage rate.

Ms. Sara Kalinoski, Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA), questioned the amount of funds allocated. Mr. Bell answered \$25,000. Ms. Kalinoski commented that if the current financial situation does not change then the organization will cease to exist. She urged the Board to consider more funding for the CBA to fulfill their duties.

Commissioner Pridgen suggested looking for a solution to eliminate the employees \$5 contribution to their insurance coverage since there will be no raises. Commissioner C. Jones agreed.

Ms. McQuiston questioned the increase of employee health insurance. Commissioner Pridgen commented that the additional cost will be \$5 per pay period. Chairman Comander commented that there have been a number of recommendations from Mr. Imfeld and Mr. Bell about ways to cut the budget. Ms. McQuiston suggested eliminating the Commissioner's paid insurance family coverage to contribute to those costs. Brief discussion continued regarding the contributions to reduce the costs to employees.

There were no further comments.

Chairman Comander commented that a tentative millage rate does need to be set at this time.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner Brannon, to approve 0.4912 millage rate for North Walton Mosquito Control. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Comander Aye, Brannon Aye, L. Jones Aye, Pridgen Aye, C. Jones Aye.

Commissioner L. Jones commented that it is the Board's intent to bring the budget in as low as possible. He stated it would be prudent to establish a millage rate in between the current rate and the roll back rate. Commissioner Brannon agreed. He stated that they will have an option to decrease but not increase at the meetings in September. Chairman Comander expressed concern for the taxpayers during this difficult time.

Motion by Commissioner L. Jones, second by Commissioner Brannon, to approve a tentative millage rate of 3.6763 and the current millage rate can be kept in September that will be supported. Ayes 2, Nays 3. Comander Nay, Brannon Aye, L. Jones Aye, Pridgen Nay, C. Jones Nay.

Motion by Commissioner C. Jones, second by Commissioner Pridgen, to approve a tentative millage rate of 3.3563. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Comander Aye, Brannon Aye, L. Jones Aye, Pridgen Aye, C. Jones Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Pridgen, second by Commissioner C. Jones, to adjourn the meeting at 11:18 a.m. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Comander Aye, Brannon Aye, L. Jones Aye, Pridgen Aye, C. Jones Aye.

APPROVED _____
Sara Comander, Chairman

ATTEST _____
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Courts