

BUDGET WORKSHOP

JULY 14, 1988

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, met in a workshop session on July 14, 1988, at 9:00 A.M. to discuss the proposed 1988-89 budget.

The following Board Members were present: Chairman Joe R. Griffin, Vice-Chairman Sam Pridgen, Commissioner W.F. Miles, and Commissioner Robert G. Fleet. The County's Administrative Supervisor, Mr. Ronnie Bell, was also present. Commissioner Edward D. Ambruster was absent due to a previous commitment out of town.

Chairman Griffin opened the workshop by stating that its purpose is to further discuss the proposed 1988-89 budget and to hear justification from certain department heads regarding their budget requests.

Mr. William Fountain, Property Appraiser, appeared before the Board and explained that he was requesting a 4.22% pay increase for his employees. Mr. Fountain further explained that the requested increase is slightly less than the standard increase given by the State to its employees. Mr. Fountain reported that his budget request reflected a 19.75% increase from last year's budget, but the majority of that increase is due to the position of another field person. Mr. Fountain stated that he has been in dire need of another operative in the field for several years now. He also stated that the increase in the operating capital outlay was due to the imminent purchase of four IBM computer terminals. Chairman Griffin asked Mr. Fountain if there is no room for a new position in his office would he be willing to wait for the new employee. Mr. Fountain stated that he would be willing to wait but needs a letter from the Board to send to the State in order for the position to be held open. The State cancels approved positions after a certain number of years of unfulfilled requests. The Board agreed to give Mr. Fountain a letter stating that the position will be filled at a later date. Chairman Griffin asked Mr. Fountain to resubmit a budget with a half-position figured in. Chairman Griffin also advised Mr. Fountain that, while the Board would like to give all employees a 5% or 6% pay increase, the budget does not allow it. A 3% increase will be figured for all General Revenue positions.

Judge Clyde Wells appeared before the Board to advise them of plans to expand the courtroom facilities. Judge Wells stated that because of the substantial increase in case volume, an additional courtroom is needed. He stated that when the newer portion of the Courthouse was erected, the foundation was constructed so as to withstand the addition of a third floor. Judge Wells further stated that he is planning to do just that and has asked certain legislators to encourage the state to help fund the project. Judge Wells advised that there would be no changes made to the present courtroom and there would be no renovations to his own office in the next budget year except for the installation of new carpet and drapes. He suggested that if the plan for the additional floor is eventually approved and funded, the current Judges' offices could then be used for the Public Defender's and State's Attorney's offices, thereby alleviating the rent paid by the County for their current office space. The Board was agreeable to all Judge Wells' plans and explanations. Chairman Griffin advised Judge Wells that the installation of new carpet and drapes should be funded through the Courthouse Maintenance account rather than out of his own budget.

The Board thanked Judge Wells for the information.

Sheriff Quinn McMillian appeared before the Board to review his budget requests. He advised the Board that his department must pick up the cost of four additional people in the traffic unit. He further advised that the greatest increase in his budget comes from food and supplies for the jail. Sheriff McMillian stated that the County Jail has several federal prisoners who are bringing in substantial revenues to the County. He further stated that he is attempting to house more federal prisoners in the County Jail in order to increase the revenues for Walton County. Sheriff McMillian advised that he was requesting a 5% pay increase for all his employees, but if that is not possible he will gladly accept the 3% increase. He expressed his dismay over training young men to fill positions in the law enforcement field here in the County only to see them accept positions in State correctional facilities because of the higher pay. The Board agreed. Chairman Griffin requested Sheriff McMillian to resubmit a budget with a pay increase of 5% for deputies and 3% for administrative employees and to

also submit a budget with a 3% pay increase for all employees. Sheriff McMillian stated that he would resubmit as per the Board's request.

The Board recessed the Workshop at 10:20 A.M.

The Board reconvened the Workshop at 10:30 A.M.

Mrs. Nellie Thompson, Supervisor of Elections, appeared before the Board to explain her budget requests. She advised the Board that she had allowed for a 7% pay increase for her employees and added a part-time employee for the busy election times during the year. Mrs. Thompson stated that she had hoped for a computer for her office during the present budget year but, as of yet, had not obtained one. Commissioner Miles advised that the Board had approved the purchase of one if funds allowed. Chairman Griffin asked Mrs. Walden to determine the amount of funds remaining in the Federal Revenue Sharing fund. He then asked Mrs. Thompson if she had any idea of the cost of the system she required. Mrs. Thompson stated that for the entire system the cost will be \$18,000.00. Mrs. Walden reported that there is approximately \$25,000.00 remaining in the account. The Board gave Mrs. Thompson permission to contact the Purchasing Department and proceed with the purchase of her computer system.

Mr. Bruce Ward, County Extension Agent, appeared before the Board and explained that the most significant increase in his budget results from the expected acquisition of a phone system to increase the efficiency of the office. Mr. Ward also advised the Board that the County Extension office hopes to have a booth in the Florida State Fair to promote Walton County which accounts for the increase in "Operating Supplies." The Board suggested conferring with the Chamber of Commerce in Tallahassee for additional help in preparing a booth for the fair.

Mrs. Walden stated that Mrs. Catherine King, Comptroller, is out of town, but left her explanation of budget requests for the Board's review.

Mr. Phil MacMillian, Veterans' Services Officer, appeared before the Board to explain his budget requests. He advised the Board that a salary increase was requested for Miss Flora Brown, secretary and Deputy Officer. He further advised that \$2,000.00 can be deleted from the "Machinery and Equipment" account due to the fact that the copier had

been purchased out of the current budget year. The Board thanked Mr. MacMillian for his time.

Mrs. DeLois Carroll of the Walton County Health Department appeared before the Board to inform them of current programs offered to residents of the County. She advised that the State will be cutting back their aid to the Health Department and, if the Board offered no assistance, some vital services will no longer be offered. The offices of Environmental Health and Chronic Diseases are faced with employee lay-offs. The Board advised Mrs. Carroll that they do not wish to have any programs discontinued, but that all departments are having to "tighten their belts." Mrs. Carroll stated that upon Dr. Currie's arrival in town, she would ask him to appear before the Board to further explain the Health Department's needs. The Board stated that they appreciated her advising them of the status of the Health Department and would be glad to hear Dr. Currie's appraisal of its needs.

Mr. Bell advised the Board that the \$2,500.00 in Civil Defense's "Machinery and Equipment" account is for the upgrading of the old ambulance for emergency purposes (hurricane damage, flooding, etc.). The Board discussed offsetting the cost of utilities for Civil Defense by transferring some of the monies designated for the Section 8 utilities.

Mr. Dec Currie, Purchasing Agent, appeared before the Board to justify his budget requests. Mr. Currie advised the Board that the allocation for books and publications can be deleted. Mr. Currie took this opportunity to ask the Board's approval to purchase anti-freeze and stockpile it before the prices rise. There was discussion. The Board gave its approval.

Mr. Mack Baker, Supervisor for the Farmers Home Administration, appeared before the Board and advised them of the salary increase for the secretary at the Administration. Mr. Baker further advised the Board that having a secretary has enabled the Administration to process more loans for homes thereby generating more revenue for the County through new housing starts. Chairman Griffin asked why the federal government does not furnish his office with a secretary since it is a federally funded agency. Mr. Baker answered that approximately four

years ago the County provided his office with a secretary to increase the efficiency of the loan process. Chairman Griffin advised Mr. Baker that the 1988-89 budget year is extremely "tight" and that the County can not continue to fund the secretarial position. Commissioner Fleet suggested that Mr. Baker check with the federal government to determine if they might be willing to fund at least half of the position. The Board agreed and thanked Mr. Baker for his time.

Representatives from the Council on Aging appeared before the Board to request that the Board approve a budget request of \$54,730.00 for 1988-89. They went on to explain the various services the Council provides for the senior citizens of this area. The Board thanked them for appearing and advising the Board of the status of the Council.

Mr. Bell advised the Board that under the Building Inspections budget the amount for "Other Salaries and Wages" is to be transferred into the "Regular Salaries and Wages" account. He further advised that the amount for machinery and equipment reflected the anticipated purchase of one new vehicle, one used vehicle, and the upgrading of the computer system.

Motion by Commissioner Fleet, second by Commissioner Miles, to adjourn the workshop until Tuesday, July 19, 1988, at 9:00 A.M. Ayes 4, Nays 0. Fleet Aye, Miles Aye, Pridgen Aye, Griffin Aye.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

*Joe R. Griffin*  
Joe R. Griffin, Chairman

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

*Catherine King*  
Catherine King, Clerk