

BUDGET WORKSHOP

JULY 25, 1997

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton county, Florida, held a Budget Workshop on Friday, July 25, 1997 at 8:30 a.m., in the Commission Boardroom of the Walton County Courthouse.

The following Board members were present: Chairman William A. Young, Vice-Chairman Van Ness Butler, Jr., Commissioner Joel Paul, Jr., Commissioner Randall Infinger and Commissioner Gordon Porter. George R. Miller, County Attorney, and Ronnie Bell, County Administrator, were also present.

Chairman Young called the meeting to order followed by pledging allegiance to the American Flag and prayer.

Jim Stokes appeared before the Board and advised that he has a vacancy in Nena's Business Center and the renter would like to grow plants in the rear of the building. The Board agreed that Mr. Stokes' building is grandfathered. No action is required.

Commissioner Porter advised of a situation in Villa Tasso where Ben Porter, no relation to Commissioner Porter, is building two houses and has obtained a septic tank permit from the Health Department and a building permit. Mr. Porter built the houses too close to the setback and now the Health Department has revoked his permit and will not issue another permit until the problem is resolved. The Board agreed to direct Attorney Miller to look into the matter.

Vice-Chairman Butler advised that the developer of the new condominium being constructed adjacent to Ed Wallene Park left only a small strip of vegetation next to the road and parking will be a problem. Vice-Chairman Butler stated that the project was approved for 24 units and the developer is advertising that an extra bedroom per unit will be available, this would allow 48 units. The Board directed Shirl Williams, Assistant Administrative Supervisor, to look into the matter.

Susan Haddock, representing the Medical Examiner's Office, appeared before the Board to discuss the Medical Examiner's 1997-98 budget request of \$129,671. The Board had previously agreed to reduce the requested 1997-98 budget amount by approximately \$27,000 and budget the amount allocated for the fiscal year 1996-97 in the amount of \$103,274. The amount spent thus far totals only \$54,400.

The Board recessed briefly.

July 25, 1997

Budget Workshop

2

Chairman Young stated that there have been negotiations between the Board and the Clerk regarding the issue of transferring certain Clerk employees and the creation of Office of Management and Budget. George R. Miller explained the Joint Stipulated Agreement and advised that the Judge has released the gag order for the purpose of allowing the Board to discuss this matter in an open meeting. Mr. Miller presented a Joint Stipulation that has been redrafted several times and stated that still a few changes need to be made. Mr. Miller explained what the Stipulation is seeking to accomplish. Mr. Miller stated that when the litigation was filed by the Clerk it sought to enjoin and seek to invalidate the action which the Board took in the motion creating the County Budget Officer and seeking to transfer certain employees. The County in turn filed a counter suit seeking a declaratory judgement validating those actions. The settlement will validate the County's efforts to remove from the Clerk of the Circuit Court those functions which he was performing on behalf of the County, a number of employees and the positions that they hold would be laterally transferred to the County. Those employees would be Lynda Robinson, Donna Weekley, Dori Cordle, Betty Hunt, Martha Ingle and Brenda Hunt. The Clerk would retain the positions held by Ingrid Burmeister, Tracey Marsh and Linda Harrison. It would be agreed that Tracey and Linda would perform duties on behalf of both the Clerk and the County for the time being. The Clerk's feeling was that for a relatively short period of time, at least one of those positions, and perhaps both, would simply transfer out and become County positions. The Clerk feels that when he streamlines the computer functions that the Clerk's responsibilities would become obsolete. In addition to those positions, those computer functions would be under the control of the Clerk and the two people who are there now and a programmer that would be created. Mr. Miller stated that the only position of significance would be the job held by Dede Hinote as the minute taker for the Clerk and on behalf of the Board depending on the Board's point of view. The Clerk has agreed that Dede could be laterally transferred to the County and would continue to perform the County functions in which she now does which, by mutual agreement, constitutes about ninety percent of her job. The remaining ten percent would be Clerk's functions which he contends are those of keeping the minutes. Mr. Miller stated that if the Board decided to go along with this Stipulation of recommendation the question of who would take the minutes is a concern. The

July 25, 1997

Budget Workshop

3

Clerk contends that it is his responsibility and he would have someone else come in and perform that narrow function. Dede would perform whatever function assigned her in addition to those that she is presently doing. Mr. Miller stated that if Dede is to continue to take minutes for the Board then the Board would simply duplicate the Clerk's minute taking responsibilities. Mr. Miller stated that he would hope in time that that would be sensibly worked out. Mr. Miller further stated that he has argued that a special appointment for Dede as Deputy Clerk as sole purpose for taking the minutes would be in everybody's best interest. The Clerk and his legal counsel feel that is a constitutional duty which could not be delegated to anyone that is not an employee of the Clerk. The Stipulation contains some language which the Chairman has some concern over which identifies the Clerk's responsibility as being Auditor, which technically would be limited to pre-audit as opposed to auditor; and Custodian of all County funds, that is true only as long as the Board wants it to be. Any surplus funds that the County has may be invested at the Board's direction, otherwise that duty does remain with the Clerk. If the Board wants to take over the responsibility of investing surplus funds then they have the right to do that and keep the interest earned off of the funds as opposed to the Clerk. The Clerk is also identified as Accountant to the Board, the Chairman objects to that term as well. Mr. Miller stated that that has been one of the County's bones of contention. When Florida Statute 129.025 was created, it identifies the Clerk as being Auditor, Recorder and Keeper of the Minutes but omits the word Accountant. Mr. Miller stated that he feels these few adjustments can be worked out. Mr. Miller advised that all of the County functions which were sought to have transferred have been agreed to. The Accounting Department will continue to have three people, but two of those will perform County functions, and as a practical matter, Mrs. Burmeister will continue to perform County functions as well because the County will reconcile the invoices and purchase orders before turning those over to the Clerk for payment. The Clerk and the County each recognize those transfers of duties and responsibilities may result in a period of disruption. In accomplishing the County's business, both parties therefore agree to work together to minimize any disruption and to work together to accomplish their goal of efficient County work. The status of these particular employees will be revisited for certain changes which may need to be made.

July 25, 1997

Budget Workshop

4

Motion by Commissioner Porter, second by Commissioner Infinger, to enter into Special Session. Ayes 5, Naves 0. Porter Aye, Infinger Aye, Paul Aye, Butler Aye, Young Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Porter, second by Vice-Chairman Butler, to approve the Joint Stipulated Agreement with the clarification of the three items of Custodian of Surplus Funds, Auditor and Accountant. The effective date for the transfer of employees will be August 4, 1997 if all parties agree. Ayes 5, Naves 0. Porter Aye, Infinger Aye, Paul Aye, Butler Aye, Young Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Infinger, second by Commissioner Porter, to close Special Session. Ayes 5, Naves 0. Porter Aye, Infinger Aye, Paul Aye, Butler Aye, Young Aye.

The Board agreed to deny the request by Bruce Ward, County Agent, to fund a new position in the amount of approximately \$38,000.

The Board agreed to include an office supply account for the District budgets.

Motion by Commissioner Porter, second by Commissioner Infinger, to enter into Emergency Session. Ayes 5, Naves 0. Porter Aye, Infinger Aye, Paul Aye, Butler Aye, Young Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Infinger, second by Vice-Chairman Butler, to waive the bid procedure and allow Commissioner Porter to purchase a Ford tractor from J.D. Swearingen Company in the amount of \$31,374. Ayes 5, Naves 0. Porter Aye, Infinger Aye, Paul Aye, Butler Aye, Young Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Infinger, second by Vice-Chairman Butler, to close Emergency Session. Ayes 5, Naves 0. Porter Aye, Infinger Aye, Paul Aye, Butler Aye, Young Aye.

There being no further business, Chairman Young adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED: _____

William A. Young, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Dan Bodiford, Clerk