

BUDGET HEARING – SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Budget Hearing on September 11, 2017 at 5:01 p.m. at the Walton County Courthouse Annex in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.

The following Board members were present: Commissioner Cecilia Jones, Chairwoman; Commissioner W. N. (Bill) Chapman, Vice-Chairman; Commissioner Tony Anderson; Commissioner Sara Comander; and Commissioner Melanie Nipper. Mr. Larry Jones, County Administrator; Attorney Sidney Noyes, County Attorney; and Mr. William Pennington, representing the Walton Clerk of Courts and County Comptroller's Office, were also present.

Chairwoman Jones called the meeting to order.

Ms. Melissa Thomason, County Finance Manager, read for the record the following statement:

The purpose of this meeting is to set a tentative millage rate and a tentative budget.

The proposed Walton County Board of County Commissioners county-wide millage rate is 3.6363 mills, and 0.4912 mills for the North Walton Mosquito Control District.

In aggregate, this is a 5.33% increase over the Rolled Back Rate. The Rolled Back Rate is the rate that would essentially generate the same ad valorem tax revenues as last year.

The county-wide 3.6363 mills (which are applied to the General, County Transportation, and Fine and Forfeiture funds) is the same as the fiscal year 2016-2017 rate, which was 3.6363 mills.

The 0.4912 millage rate for the North Walton Mosquito Control District is the same as fiscal year 2016-2017 rate, which was 0.4912.

Ms. Thomason reviewed the changes which have occurred since the Budget Workshop. She reported a cost of living increase (COLA) of 3% has been included for employees earning \$60,000.00 or less annually; and 2% for employees earning more than \$60,000.00 annually. Probationary employees will receive a 1.5% increase. The following additional positions were added: One FTE- Recreation Department; one FTE-Section 8 Housing; and one FTE-County Attorney's Office. Contributions to the Economic Development Alliance were increased to \$143,850.00; an increase of \$43,550.00 was added to the Sheriff's budget; the Tax Collector's budget increased 7.4%; and an increase of \$50,000.00 for the Building Department. Ms. Thomason explained they are working with the TDC regarding funding for gateway landscaping projects.

Motion by Commissioner Comander, second by Commissioner Chapman, to open the Public Hearing. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Chapman Aye, Jones Aye, Nipper Aye, Comander Aye, Anderson Aye.

There were no public comments.

Motion by Commissioner Comander, second by Commissioner Chapman, to adopt **Resolution 2017-76** setting a tentative county-wide millage rate of 3.6363 mills, and a tentative 0.4912 mills for the North Walton Mosquito Control District. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Chapman Aye, Jones Aye, Nipper Aye, Comander Aye, Anderson Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Chapman, second by Commissioner Anderson, to adopt **Resolution 2017-77** setting the tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 in the amount of \$150,903,077.00 for county government of which \$673,195 is for the North Walton Mosquito Control District.


Mr. Bob Hudson, Walton County Taxpayer Association Director, voiced concern with over 52% of the ad-valorem now going to the Walton County Sheriff and the possible lack of

transparency. He has tried to meet with the Sheriff but has been unable to meet with him. Ms. Thomason stated she would reach out to the Sheriff in an attempt to get answers for Mr. Hudson.

Ayes 5, Nays 0. Chapman Aye, Jones Aye, Nipper Aye, Comander Aye, Anderson Aye.

Motion by Commissioner Chapman, second by Commissioner Anderson, to close the Public Hearing. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Chapman Aye, Jones Aye, Nipper Aye, Comander Aye, Anderson Aye.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved: 
Cecilia Jones, Chairwoman

Attest: 
Alex Alford, Clerk of Court and County Comptroller