

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET WORKSHOP
COURTHOUSE ANNEX – COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
JULY 19, 2016
1:30 PM
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: William Massey – Chairman, Joseph Parrish – Vice Chairman, Noah Lockley, Cheryl Sanders, Rick Watson

Others Present: Michael Morón – County Coordinator, Michael Shuler – County Attorney, Marcia M. Johnson-Clerk of Court, Lori P. Hines-Deputy Clerk to the Board.

Call to Order

Chairman Massey called the Workshop to Order.

Mrs. Erin Griffith, Finance Office, stated the Board has been presented with copies of the budget requests and other budget materials pertaining to the tentative budget for fiscal year 2016-2017. She reported the millage rate set for the tentative budget is 6.3065. Mrs. Griffith read the following statement:

The Property Appraiser is required to certify to the County Commission the taxable value of real property by July 1st of each year. The certified value is the basis for calculating a proposed millage rate. I am very pleased to announce, for the third year in a row since 2007, Franklin County has an increase in taxable value, 4.26% over the prior year. The proposed millage rate represents the amount of ad valorem tax proceeds per \$1000 of taxable property value. In 2016 one mill will generate \$1,762,445; in 2015 one mill generated \$1,690,427.

In the current budget, the millage rate of 6.3065 generated \$10,660,682. In the preliminary budget for 2016/2017, the millage rate of 6.3065 would generate \$11,114,864. The rolled-back millage rate is the rate that nets the same ad valorem proceeds that a taxing authority operated on in the prior budget year (takes into account the effect of amounts transferred to a tax increment district in the prior year). The rolled-back rate is also reflected in column 2 of the TRIM notice 'Your Property Taxes if No Budget Change Is Made'. The rolled-back rate is 6.0987 and would generate \$10,748,628 in ad valorem proceeds – the preliminary budget is currently 3.41% over the rolled-back rate, which equates to \$366,236 over in ad valorem proceeds. Excluding the effect of the tax increment transfers, property tax proceeds are \$454,182 over the budgeted proceeds in the prior year.

The Commission asked that all requests be turned in at the same level as last year, if there were any increases they were to be justified to the board.

Mr. Moron said the first budget is Court Administration for the Circuit and Court Judges. Mrs. Elizabeth Garber, Budget Services Manager for Court Administration, said she is here on behalf of Judge Jonathan Sjostrom to answer any questions. She stated their budget has not changed since last year and they are 81% funded through other services. The Board tentatively approved this budget.

Mr. Joe Whitley, Executive Director of the State Attorney's Office, stated their budget is \$24,150 which is the same as last year and the lowest it has been in 10 years. He thanked the Board for their support and offered to answer any questions. Commissioner Watson asked if the caseload has increased or decreased. Mr. Whitley reported the caseload in almost all their counties is on the decline but there has been a spike in serious crimes in one or two counties. He reported the national crime rate is the lowest they have seen in 47 years although serious crimes in some metropolitan areas are up. The Board tentatively approved the budget of the State Attorney's Office.

Mr. Moron said the next budget is the Public Defender's Office. No one was present from their office. Mrs. Griffith reported this budget is the same. The Board tentatively approved the Public Defender's budget.

Ms. Deborah Moore, Guardian Ad Litem Program, reported they are glad to be managing the Franklin County caseload again. She said their request is \$2,834.00 which is a fairly significant decrease. She explained the number of cases have dropped over the past year but recently there has been a surge in all their counties so it may be different next year. Ms. Moore stated their goal is to have more advocates in the community. She reported they have certified several individuals in the community since the training was offered in Sopchoppy. She asked for any suggestions for recruiting more advocates. Commissioner Parrish reported advocates are the voices of abused and neglected children and people need to get involved and represent these children. He asked the media to try and get this information out to get more advocates for the children. Ms. Moore presented bracelets to the Board members with their contact information and motto. Commissioner Watson asked how many children are served, how many advocates there are and how many children are assigned to each advocate. Ms. Moore stated they have served 100% of the children and made sure each one has an advocate. She said there are 7 advocates and they served 15 children in the last year. The Board tentatively approved the Guardian Ad Litem budget.

At this time the Board addressed the Soil & Water Conservation budget. The Board tentatively approved this budget. Mrs. Griffith said their request is the same except the retirement rate went up \$21.00 and that is part of a shared employee.

The Board discussed the Dog Island Conservation District budget. Mrs. Griffith stated this budget is the same. The Board tentatively approved his budget. Commissioner Sanders

explained because the people from Dog Island do not get any services from the County, they get a credit for tipping fees in the amount of \$10,000 so they get some benefit from their tax dollars.

Ms. Ginger Kelley, CFO for the Apalachee Center, appeared before the Board. She reminded the Board this funding request of \$24,400 is the required match to the DCF money that funds the Crisis/Stabilization and Detox Unit in Tallahassee that serves the 8 counties. She stated this is not funding for the local Apalachee Center on 12th Street. The Board tentatively approved this budget. Commissioner Watson inquired about the number of individuals that have been served from Franklin County. Ms. Kelley answered about 100 individuals have been served at the outpatient facility. She explained the Crisis/Stabilization Unit had 66 days for Franklin County and the Detox Unit had 54 days for Franklin County.

Mrs. Helen Cook, Nursing Director and Nurse Practitioner at the Franklin County Health Department, appeared before the Board. She said the money given by the Board provides direct public health core services. She highlighted the services provided by the Health Department. She said their budget request is the same at \$49,000. She stated Ms. Sandy Martin, Health Department, is here to answer any budget questions. Commissioner Watson asked if the Health Department also handles septic tank permits. Mrs. Cook answered yes, and listed the services provided by the Health Department. She advised the Board they also provide disaster preparedness and evacuation services. She explained their nurses help to staff the special needs shelter in Tallahassee in the event the citizens here have to be evacuated. The Board tentatively approved the Health Department's budget.

Mr. Moron brought into discussion the line items for the Franklin County Senior Citizens Council, Apalachicola Senior Citizens Council and Meals on Wheels. He said the Board asked him to find one agency to fund and that agency would then fund everyone else that provides senior services to the County. He recommended the Board take these line items for Franklin County Senior Citizens Center \$17,683.00, Apalachicola Senior Citizens Council \$17,683.00 and Meals on Wheels \$16,250.00 and run these funds through the Area Agency on Aging. He explained each one of these groups would then have an agreement with the Area Agency on Aging to get their funds and provide services. Mr. Moron reported the Board will then get quarterly reports from the Area Agency on Aging informing them of how their money and state funds were spent. He stated in addition the Area Agency on Aging said the rental money for space could come out of the state funds so all of the local funds would go directly to services for seniors, including those who are homebound and cannot come to the centers. The Board tentatively approved this recommendation. Commissioner Watson inquired about the RFP. Mr. Moron explained the Area Agency on Aging will now act as the lead agency until the RFP process is completed and a permanent lead agency is selected, hopefully by the first of the year. Commissioner Sanders asked if the Franklin County Senior Center, the Apalachicola Senior Citizens and Elder Care, who provides Meals on Wheels, will no longer receive supplements from Franklin County but can apply to be funded through the Area Agency on

Aging. Mr. Moron agreed that will be the procedure. Commissioner Parrish asked if once the lead agency is selected, they will follow the same process as the Area Agency on Aging is following and take applications for funding. Mr. Moron answered yes; the process will be the same for applying for funds. Commissioner Parrish stated they will get more for the money and there will be more accountability. Commissioner Watson stated there were also some programs available the County was not taking advantage of so a single coordinator makes a lot of sense. Commissioner Sanders thanked Mr. Moron for his work on this matter.

Mr. Joe Taylor, Franklin's Promise, appeared before the Board. Mrs. Griffith said this budget is the same as last year. The Board tentatively approved the budget of Franklin's Promise. Commissioner Watson asked the number of individuals served and whether the numbers have increased or decreased. Mr. Taylor stated their numbers are consistent and they provide 300-325 bags of food per distribution but the number goes up through the holidays. Commissioner Watson asked where the food comes from. Mr. Taylor said America's Second Harvest, Farmshare and wonderful support from area churches, both monetarily and with food drives.

The Board discussed the Carrabelle Food Pantry. Mrs. Griffith said this budget is the same as last year. The Board tentatively approved the budget of the Carrabelle Food Pantry. Ms. Tamara Allen, Secretary of the Carrabelle Food Pantry, was present to answer any questions. Ms. Allen said they serve about 150 individuals a week. She reported 12,791 people were served last calendar year and most were elderly. Commissioner Lockley asked if the number is going up. Ms. Allen said it is gradually going up and the money never goes far enough so sometimes they struggle to fill up a bag of groceries. Ms. Allen discussed the agencies providing food. Commissioner Watson questioned if Farmshare sometimes make special distributions. Ms. Allen said Second Harvest has one a year. Mr. Taylor stated Farmshare sometimes does it twice a year. Ms. Allen discussed the requirements of the agencies who provide the food. Commissioner Watson asked if Farmshare is run by Department of Agriculture (DOA). Mr. Taylor said it is supported by DOA but is a non-profit out of Quincy. Ms. Allen reported there is a USDA program from the DOA that comes through Second Harvest and that food is free but it does not come very often.

The Board addressed the budget for the Humane Society. Mrs. Griffith said this request is unchanged. The Board tentatively approved the budget. Mrs. Karen Martin, Humane Society, appeared before the Board. Commissioner Watson inquired about the number of animals they handled this year. Mrs. Martin stated 580 dogs and cats. She explained 200 cats and 380 dogs were adopted, reclaimed or transferred. She reported they have a 94% release rate and no kill status is 90%. Mrs. Martin stated they have given out over 700 vouchers and the neediest in the community can come for \$25 and have their animal altered and a rabies vaccination. Commissioner Watson asked if animals are transferred out to another facility if they are not adopted. Ms. Martin answered yes, and said they work with other organizations to transfer the animals out. She explained the area is so rural and cannot absorb all the animals. Mrs. Martin

stated they transfer out about 55%. She reminded the Board the Humane Society is the last stop to get the animals out.

Ms. Emily Mitchum, Refuge House, appeared before the Board. She explained their state certifying entity has opened up their ability to provide services to children. She reported they will offer free counseling to abused children and victims of domestic violence. Mrs. Griffith said their budget is the same as last year. The Board tentatively approved the budget for Refuge House. Commissioner Watson asked the number of individuals served. Ms. Mitchum stated they are seeing a small increase in Franklin County people coming in for domestic violence counseling. She reported they are located in Apalachicola and looking for space in Carrabelle to help with the transportation barriers.

Ms. Kathy Ballentine, Gulf County ARC & Transportation, said they are serving as the community transportation coordinator at this time. She explained they provide transportation to residents who have no other means of transportation. Mrs. Griffith stated this request is the same as last year. Commissioner Watson asked how many individuals are served and if the numbers are up or down. Ms. Ballentine reported they started as the emergency provider for the Disadvantaged Transportation Program and there has been a tremendous increase in the volume. She explained right now they are serving about 100 residents and they are adding more every week. Commissioner Lockley asked if they are out of Gulf County. Ms. Ballentine answered yes. Commissioner Lockley stated they are doing a good job but he questioned the 3 days notice for transportation. He asked what will happen if the person does not know 3 days in advance. Ms. Ballentine reported they are trying to accommodate everyone but the problem occurs if they are already full and do not have another driver or vehicle. She reported they ask for notice so they can effectively schedule the trips to maximum the money they have been given. She said if there is a problem, please give the person her name and number and she will try to resolve it. Commissioner Watson questioned if they will continue as the provider through the fiscal year. Ms. Ballentine stated their contract is until the end of November and they are in the process of renewing the 5 year Memorandum of Agreement for Franklin County's Community Transportation Coordinator. Commissioner Parrish said there are also 2-3 new vans. Ms. Ballentine stated they have 5 vans that are specific to Franklin County. She explained 3 were provided by DOT and 2 through the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Mr. Moron reminded the Board several meetings ago they gave her permission to apply for a DOT grant to put cameras in all the vehicles. Ms. Ballentine reported they have also requested operating funds and additional vehicles for Franklin County through DOT. She stated they have tentative approval for the operating funds to expand the service. Commissioner Parrish asked if this request is at the same level. Mr. Moron answered yes. The Board tentatively approved the budget.

The meeting recessed at 2:19 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:30 p.m.

Mrs. Griffith stated the Auditor's Fee is \$93,050 which is unchanged. The Board tentatively approved the budget for the Auditor's Fees.

Mrs. Griffith discussed the budget for the County health insurance policy. She explained they estimated the renewal rates to be a 9% increase based on information received from Capital Health Plan (CHP) but the actual renewal rate was a 9.5% increase. She stated the cost of the 9% increase was \$108,478 and the increase for 9.5% is \$113,395.00. She reported the 9.5% is still below average in a time with double digit increases. Commissioner Sanders asked how much the increase will be to employees that pay. Mrs. Griffith answered it will still be a 9.5% increase for dependant coverage but it is still much more affordable than it was with Blue Cross. Commissioner Watson asked if the program is working well. Mrs. Griffith reported at first the transition was difficult but now there are a lot of positive comments. She stated people are very pleased with the co-pays and it is a good program. She explained the only obstacle is there is no network in Bay County. Mr. Moron stated Weems Memorial Hospital is going with Capital Health Plan also. Commissioner Parrish said the out of pocket costs are a lot less and it is making the transition easier. Commissioner Watson asked if Weems is providing more services. Mrs. Griffith did not think they were approved for planned inpatient stays but said they are approved for radiology, blood work and primary care physician visits. Commissioner Watson questioned if the School Board and Sheriff are also on this plan. Mrs. Griffith said the School Board is on CHP and the Sheriff is also under the County plan. She explained the premium is still less than the County was paying to Blue Cross before they switched which was three years ago. The Board tentatively approved this budget.

Commissioner Sanders said the Clerk has received bad news on the court budget. Mrs. Marcia Johnson, Clerk of Court, stated the revenues are not coming in to cover the budgets. She explained a lot of money is being collected but is being redirected to the state general revenue fund. She reported they cannot get the Legislature to understand that the money going to the State is court money and should be supporting court clerks. Clerk Johnson stated her office is in a pier group with 13-14 small counties and the budgets were cut for every county. She reported there was an across the board cut of 5.2% and then some Clerks were cut an additional percentage based on weighted workload measures. Clerk Johnson said there was a study done last year that shows even though the case load is down in certain areas; the work load is not down. She stated clerks had to provide more information this year on their budgets. Commissioner Sanders asked if there is a reason why this is happening. Clerk Johnson explained back in 2007 the economy was affected badly and there were so many foreclosures that Clerks had a lot of money coming in from foreclosure actions. She stated they kept telling the Legislature this money was going down and would end at some point. Clerk Johnson reported even though the number of new cases has gone down, there are still a lot of workload cases that are still pending foreclosures but those numbers are coming down also. She pointed out a lot of counties were affected by traffic revenues but our county does not rely heavily on traffic revenues as there is not an interstate running through the County. Clerk Johnson reported you cannot collect on most felony cases and 75% of people are indigent.

Commissioner Sanders discussed Article 5 and said it was bad for clerks. She said she wonders if the Legislature wants to give this responsibility to someone else but they can't. Clerk Johnson reported the courts have also been cut. Commissioner Sanders said the Clerk and Board work together closely so if the Clerk is hurting on her money then the Board is hurting on their money. Clerk Johnson reported there were suggestions about clerks asking the Legislature to let them go back into the county budgets. She said all the small county clerks said no because their counties could not afford it. She reported they do not feel this is an option for small counties but she may need some help from the Board as this goes along. Commissioner Sanders stated this affects the Clerk's budget and how she operates her office. Clerk Johnson said she appreciates the Board's concern. Commissioner Watson reported this fight has been going on in the Legislature for years and hopefully there will be a resolution now that the economy is better.

Mrs. Griffith discussed the Carrabelle Tax Increment District and said their base year was 1996. She reported their 2016 current year taxable value in the tax increment district is \$20,794,292.00 for the Carrabelle waterfront area. She explained the 1996 base year was \$7,423,025.00 which is a tax increment value of \$13,371,267.00. Mrs. Griffith said based on the estimated millage rate of the current year millage, it would be a transfer to the Carrabelle Redevelopment Trust of \$80,110.00 next year. She explained the way the redevelopment areas works is basically the growth money goes directly to the Tax Increment Districts for those regions. Mrs. Griffith said the base year for the Apalachicola Tax Increment District was 2014 and their base year taxable value was \$31,376,822.00. She reported their 2016 current year taxable value is \$34,595,427.00. Mrs. Griffith stated the current year tax increment value is \$3,218,605.00. She said this will result in an estimated payment to Apalachicola of \$19,283.00 next year. The Board tentatively approved both of these budgets.

Mrs. Griffith read the grants programs, as follows:

Airport Rehabilitate Airfield Pavements-State Grant Balance Forward of \$25,848.00, the FAA portion of the grant is \$94,724.00

Upgrading Airfield Lighting Systems-State Grant Balance Forward is \$991,150.00

Design & Construct North/South Taxiway at the Airport-State Grant Balance Forward is over \$1 million

Airport Stormwater Sewer Upgrade Phase 6-State Grant Balance Forward is over \$2 million

CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Grant for \$700,000

D.W. Wilson Park Basketball Court and Soccer Field for \$50,000 through FRDAP

Gulf Shore Blvd. Relocation on Alligator Point-\$378,000 is remaining on the grant

S.C.O.P. -Bald Point Road Resurfacing-\$1.3 million remaining

Mrs. Griffith said there is large growth of a little over \$50 million in the County budget but the grants are a large part. She stated \$6 million is mainly attributed to an increase in grant funded projects and other funds in the budget year.

The Board tentatively approved the budget for Grants.

Mrs. Griffith discussed the items under Other Funds in the budget.

Mrs. Griffith brought into discussion the Health Care Trust Fund (HCTF). She explained the Franklin County discretionary sales surtax of 1% was passed by voters, took effect on January 1, 2008 and the estimated proceeds this year are \$2,110,157.00. She stated this is the first time the proceeds are estimated to be over \$2 million. She explained 50% of the sales tax proceeds each year acts to defray operating costs at Weems Memorial Hospital. She reported \$120,000.00 goes to support clinical operations and the balance of the sales tax proceeds as well as 100% of the interest earnings go to Capital Outlay Projects.

Mrs. Griffith stated Fund 139-Bald Point Trust Fund has been in existence since 1999 when the state purchased a large tract of land on Alligator Point. She explained the County received approximately \$500,000.00 per the agreement dated 10-20-98. She reported \$50,000 was used to asphalt the re-aligned main road along the right-of-way and the \$450,000 balance was placed into a county trust fund where the principal and interest can only be used for expenditures in the Bald Point/Alligator Point area. She said this fund has been utilized over the years for a grant match for FEMA funds and the County is currently working on FEMA mitigation projects.

Mrs. Griffith explained Fund 141-Local Option Gas Tax Road Paving and the history of this fund. Mrs. Griffith asked if the Board has implemented the additional \$.01. Mr. Moron reported the Board has not conducted the public hearing yet. Mrs. Griffith stated that will be pending for next year. She stated the state revenue estimate of sales tax collections for next fiscal year is \$256,791.00. Mrs. Griffith reported the additional \$.01 will net about \$50,000 more. She explained the expenditures provided for by these sales tax proceeds are governed by F.S. 336.025 for authorized transportation expenditures. She stated there is approximately \$1.44 million remaining in the current county road paving project. She reported at the end of the upcoming fiscal year an additional \$531,106.00 will have accumulated toward the next paving project.

Mrs. Griffith addressed the Boating Improvement Fund. She said the estimated annual fees deposited into the fund are around \$14,054.00 per year. She reported grant projects funded by the FWC Boating Improvements Grant Program are run through this fund and the County uses this fund for the grant match requirement. Mrs. Griffith stated in the upcoming budget there is approximately \$110,988.00 that can be used as grant match toward future applications. She commented this money will go a long way because typically these applications fund 97%.

Mrs. Griffith discussed Fund 144-St. George Island Fishing Pier Maintenance Fund and provided the history of this fund. Mrs. Griffith said at this time there is \$1.577 million available in the St. George Island Fishing Pier Maintenance Fund. She explained the County assumed full responsibility for maintenance for the portions of the bridge that were transferred and sole liability for those sections. She went on to say Franklin County is now responsible for those portions of the old bridge and in the event the fishing piers are damaged in a storm, the repair or demolition of the old bridge would be the responsibility of the county.

Mrs. Griffith addressed Fund 151- Revolving Loan Fund and provided a history of this fund for the Board. She explained the idea behind the grant was for the County to set up a revolving loan fund to use in future emergency situations. She stated many loans have been repaid however ARPC has turned the administration of the loan program back over to the County and the County has been unable to recoup some of the loans due to insufficient collateral. Mrs. Griffith reported DCA inquires on the delinquencies of these loans when they conduct their annual monitoring visit. She stated the loan fund has a balance of \$283,321.00.

Mrs. Griffith said the total estimated operating revenues for the MSBU Fund for next year is \$538,878.00. She reported the volunteer firefighters of each district, with the exception of the cities, are covered by the workers' compensation policy of the County.

Mrs. Griffith reported the Board already addressed the Airport Fund by reviewing the grants.

Mrs. Griffith addressed the Affordable Housing Assistant Trust Fund. She stated Franklin County will receive \$350,000 for rehabilitation or down payment assistance for residents.

Mrs. Griffith stated Fund 301-Capital Outlay Reserve Fund has \$25,000 remaining in the Fund to be used to do the grant required reforestation of the Ell's Court Property pursuant to the grant agreement. She said \$61,431.00 is available in the fund for mandated future GIS Mapping updates for the Property Appraiser's Office and \$105,286.00 is available for infrastructure or other capital improvements.

Mrs. Griffith said Fund 302-Landfill Management Escrow is money the County is required to set aside in case the landfill is closed.

The Board tentatively approved these budgets.

Commissioner Watson asked what fees are generated by 911 funds. Mrs. Griffith said it is \$.50 per month per each service identifier. Commissioner Watson stated some of the firemen on St. George Island were complaining about having trouble finding houses because the houses were not marked. He questioned if 911 funds can be used to address this issue. Mrs. Phillips stated they would have to go through the Sheriff's Program as these funds cannot buy house numbers. Chairman Massey reported individuals have to buy their own house numbers. Mr. Moron said the City of Apalachicola required everyone to have their house marked. Chairman Massey reported in Franklin County there is a requirement to have the number on the house. Mrs. Phillips said the E911 will provide the number of the house.

Commissioner Watson asked if the Community Redevelopment Funds go to the City of Apalachicola and the City of Carrabelle and they use the funds as match for improvements. Mrs. Griffith said yes, for their plan. Mrs. Griffith said the County receives the taxable value estimate from the Property Appraiser and gets a final estimate in December but that is the only reporting the County has access to. She explained the cities are responsible for all the reporting requirements from then on. Commissioner Parrish stated they both have a plan and specify what the money can be used for and it has to pertain to redevelopment. Commissioner Parrish stated these funds are used for community revitalization projects. Mr. Moron explained each city has a committee to address these funds. Commissioner Sanders reported right now the City of Carrabelle has a project repaving all the roads in that area. Commissioner Sanders said the CRA for Carrabelle has been in place since 1996. Chairman Massey reported the Veterans' Wall has also been redone.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

William Massey - Chairman

Attest:

Marcia M. Johnson - Clerk of Courts