

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
M.S.B.U. INCREASE
FEBRUARY 19, 2002 5:30 P.M.**

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE: Eddie Creamer, Chairman; Clarence Williams, Cheryl Sanders, Bevin Putnal, and Jimmy Mosconis, Commissioners; Kendall Wade, Clerk; Amelia Varnes, Deputy Clerk; Alfred Shuler, County Attorney.

5:30 P.M. Chairman Creamer called the meeting to order.

(Tape 1-40) Chairman Creamer opened the meeting and stated the following: "I would like to address the audience first...if someone makes a statement and instead of it being repetitious every time someone gets up to speak...if you feel comfortable by saying whether you are for or against raising the M.S.B.U. I would appreciate it. It would cut out a lot of time tonight." He asked anyone who would like to speak to fill out a speakers card. He said he would allow two minutes per person to speak so everyone would have an opportunity to express his or her opinions.

(Tape 1-66) Steve Fling, representing the Franklin County Fire Fighter Association and as Chief of the Alligator Point Volunteer Fire Department, said he thought they had a lot of good support here tonight. He informed the Board of all of the benefits the local Volunteer Fire Departments (VFD) provide for the citizens of Franklin County. He said they have also saved many, many lives by providing their First Responder Services throughout the County. He said the current M.S.B.U. assessment of \$28.00 per single-family residence was just not enough to fund these departments and their First Responder Units. He asked the Board to consider their proposal of raising the M.S.B.U. assessments as follows; Single Family Residences from \$28.00 to \$70.00; Multi-Family Rental Units from \$28.00 to a maximum of \$250.00 to \$70.00 per unit with no maximum; Mobile Home Park Rental Spaces from \$10.00 per unit-minimum \$100.00, maximum \$250.00 to \$20.00 per space-minimum \$200.00, maximum \$500.00; Travel Trailer and Recreational Vehicle Rental Spaces from \$50.00 minimum, \$3.00 per space over 10 spaces, \$250.00 maximum to \$100.00 minimum, \$6.00 per space over 16 spaces, \$500.00 maximum; Motels, Hotels, Inns from \$5.00 per unit, minimum \$50.00, maximum \$250.00 to include Bed & Breakfast \$10.00 per unit, minimum \$100.00, maximum \$500.00; Commercial Establishments from \$50.00 per building, maximum \$150.00 to \$100.00 per building, maximum \$300.00; Multiple Business Activities from \$250.00 to \$500.00; Platted Vacant Lots Accessible by Roads with no assessment to being assessed \$20.00 per platted vacant lot accessible by roads due to residences adjacent to vacant lots being at risk-lot brush fires calls are numerous. Jay Abbot, Chief St. George Island VFD, Bud Evans, Chief Lanark Village-St. James VFD, Becker Boatenreiter, Chief Dog Island VFD, and George Pruett, Eastpoint VFD also spoke in favor of raising the M.S.B.U. assessment rates as submitted by the Franklin County Fire Fighter's Association (listed above). Various members of the Emergency Medical Services; Charlie Schultz, Aimee Lemcke, and C. Fred Heitzman, said they too agreed with the M.S.B.U. assessment being raised. They informed the Board of numerous instances of the First Responder Unit's of

the VFD's saving or sustaining people's lives until they could get to them. The explained the County is so wide spread out that it is hard to get from one end to the other when they are needed. Marilyn Johnson, Ursula Stratton, and Jean Lane, Eastpoint; Earl and Elaine Morton, Alligator Point; and Roy Shields of Carrabelle all agreed the M.S.B.U.

Assessment needed to be raised. Dave Webb, Bill Bouington, Jack Depriest, Travis Millender, Frank Venable, Buford Flowers, Bobby Taylor and Hank Garrett all spoke against raising the assessment. They said if the Board does decide to raise the assessment to please not raise them as high as the rates submitted by the FCFE Association. They discussed the problem with trailers being assessed the same fee as large homes, people being on fixed incomes, the problem of purchasing medications and food, etc. Alfred Pitts, who lives on Highway 65, said he is cannot afford this increase. He stated he lives eighteen miles from the nearest VFD and does not have any fire hydrants anywhere near him. He said his and his wife's medications are expensive. He stated he has doctor bills, hospital bills, and informed the Board one of his medications cost \$115.00. The Commissioners informed Mr. Pitts he could come in each year and sign an exemption form so he would not have to pay the M.S.B.U. assessment. They explained there would be an exemption clause in the newest resolution if they did decide to raise the assessments. Commissioner Mosconis and the other Commissioners discussed implementing a one-cent sales tax for the entire County. They said this way everyone who buys something would be paying for Fire, First Responders, etc. services.

Commissioner Mosconis said this one-cent sales tax could also fund the County's ambulance service since there are some problems with funding it. (Tape 2) Chairman Creamer said he has been contacted by a lot of people in his District who are adamantly opposed to any increase. Commissioner Putnal said he also has had a lot of telephone calls, one by a 92-year old lady who told him she simply cannot afford to pay any more taxes. Most of the citizens agreed that if the assessment was raised it should not be raised as much as proposed. After further discussion Commissioner Mosconis made the following **motion to increase the M.S.B.U. Assessments as follows: Single Family**

Residence from \$28.00 to \$42.00; Multi-Family Rental Units from \$28.00 to maximum of \$250.00 to \$42.00 per unit with no maximum; Mobile Home Park Rental Spaces from \$10.00 per unit, minimum of \$100.00, maximum of \$250.00 to \$12.00 per space, minimum of \$125.00, maximum of \$300.00; Travel Trailer and Recreational Vehicle Rental Spaces from \$50.00 minimum, \$3.00 per space over 10 spaces, \$250.00 maximum to \$75.00 minimum, \$5.00 per space over 16 spaces, \$300.00 maximum; Motels-Hotels-Inn from \$5.00 per unit, minimum \$50.00, maximum \$250.00 to Include Bed and Breakfast and increase to \$7.00 per unit, minimum \$75.00, maximum \$300.00; Commercial Establishments from \$50.00 per building, maximum \$150.00 to \$75.00 per building, maximum \$200.00; Multiple Business Activities from \$250.00 to \$300.00; and no assessment on Platted Vacant Lots Accessible By Roads and authorizing the Chairman's signature on the Resolution implementing these new assessments; and to include in the Resolution the exemption from assessment for persons certified to be indigent by the Franklin County Tax Collector or his designee. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion.

Chairman Creamer, Commissioners Mosconis, Williams, and Sanders for.

Commissioner Putnal opposed. 4-1 MOTION CARRIED.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD
THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.

Eddie Creamer EDDIE CREAMER, CHAIRMAN

Kendall Wade KENDALL WADE, CLERK

**RESOLUTION
FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION AMENDING THE MUNICIPAL SERVICE BENEFIT UNIT
ORDINANCE 87-2**

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners, in its Ordinance 87-2, provided a Municipal Service Benefit Unit in Franklin County, and

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Municipal Service Benefit Unit provides vital fire and rescue services throughout Franklin County, and

WHEREAS, the heroic Volunteer Firefighters and First Responders of Franklin County save and improve lives and property, and

WHEREAS, since the rates of assessment set in 1987 are no longer adequate to pay the costs of such services, and

WHEREAS, the rates of assessment hereinafter set out are hereby found, determined and declared reasonable and in such amounts as not to exceed the benefits accruing to such property within the unit.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners has determined that the following amounts shall be assessed for fire and rescue protection:

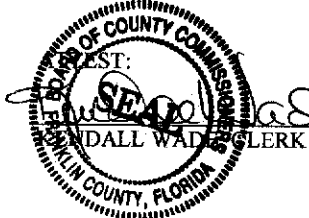
<u>TYPE OF PROPERTY</u>	<u>ANNUAL ASSESSMENT</u>
A. SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE	\$42.00
B. MULTI FAMILY RENTAL UNITS (DUPEX, APARTMENTS, ETC.)	\$42.00 PER UNIT NO MAXIMUM
C. MOBILE HOME PARK RENTAL SPACES	\$12.00 PER SPACE \$125.00 MINIMUM \$300.00 MAXIMUM
D. TRAVEL TRAILER-RECREATIONAL VEHICLE RENTAL SPACES	\$5.00 PER SPACE OVER 16 \$75.00 MINIMUM \$300.00 MAXIMUM
E. MOTELS, HOTELS, INNS, BED AND BREAKFAST	\$7.00 PER UNIT \$75.00 MINIMUM \$300.00 MAXIMUM
F. COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS	\$75.00 PER BUILDING \$300.00 MAXIMUM
G. MULTIPLE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES	\$300.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following shall be exempt from assessment of their principal residences:

Persons certified to be exempt and/or indigent by the Franklin County Tax Collector or his designee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This Resolution shall apply to assessments for the year beginning January 1, 2002 and subsequent years.

This Resolution duly adopted by the FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS this 19th day of February 2002.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FRANKLIN COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY: Eddie Creamer
EDDIE CREAMER, CHAIRMAN