



**RICK WELLS, Sheriff**  
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA



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September 19, 2017

Manatee County Board of County Commissioners  
Manatee County Administrator

RE: Helicopter Pricing for Infrastructure Sales Tax Expenditure

Commissioners:

At the September 18, 2017 public hearing on Infrastructure Sales Tax Modifications, it was directed that we provide a written response as to why the helicopter pricing has gone from the original estimate of \$4 million to the current estimated price of \$4.9 million. This information was provided to the Commission at a June budget workshop for the CIP and Infrastructure Sales Tax, but I will reiterate the information for you below.

When the sales tax infrastructure issue was being discussed, the Sheriff was asked to provide a listing of potential infrastructure needs for the Agency as well as the Jail. In formulating that listing, the Agency developed a listing of twelve projects for Law Enforcement Facilities and Equipment and thirteen projects for Criminal Justice and Public Safety Facilities Upgrades (jail renovations and improvements).

The costs were estimated by staff's best guess at the time the list was put together. These were not fully researched with final costs quoted from any vendor or engineers. The helicopter estimate was simply a call to our current supplier of the OH58 helicopter, Bell Helicopters, to determine if we were to order a helicopter, what would that estimated price be. There were no general or specifics requested or required of Bell at the time of this estimate. In fact, it was not even determined at that time the size of aircraft that the Agency would obtain.

After the passage of the Infrastructure Sales Tax by the voters, the Agency proceeded to get more information on the cost of a helicopter from Bell, but still with no detailed specifics. Around April of the year, we informed you that the cost may be upwards of \$4.6 million for the helicopter. This was due to better information from a potential vendor, Bell Helicopter, and the determination that the Agency would desire a larger aircraft than the current OH58 and Eurocopter that the Agency currently owns.

Shortly after that, the Agency determined the best route to proceed with the purchase of the helicopter would be to perform a Request for Proposal (RFP). We then provided an exhaustive detail specifications listing in terms of General Specifications and Technical Specifications for the desired helicopter. Details were gathered from our Aviation team, as well as other RFP's from across the nation that had requested helicopters, to determine what the best fit and needs of our Agency would be. The RFP process is in its final stages. We have provided a notice of intent to award to Bell Helicopter, and are in negotiations to the final terms of the contract currently. We hope to wrap this process up in the next week or two. The

proposed price to all of our specifications provided, as well as equipment that we are purchasing to go on or used by the helicopter, including an imaging system, cockpit displays, search beam systems, radio systems to interface with our dispatchers, and a handler to maneuver the aircraft on the ground, approached \$4.9 million dollars. The equipment just listed is included in that price and those are approximately \$575,000. With negotiations, we are hopeful of lowering the price quoted by final determination of all required items for the helicopter.

If you are in need of any more information regarding this purchase, please let us know and we will do our best to answer the questions.

In terms of the overall allotment provided for the Law Enforcement Facilities and Equipment, we fully understand that the increase in the price of this item, our most highly prioritized project, will impact a future project later on during the life span of the Infrastructure Sales Tax. If we would be asked to lower a cost of a project at this current time, the Agency will review the projects and determine which projects costs should be reduced, so that the Commission is able to see an increase and a decrease in the total cost of the projects in a like amount. We anticipate that annually we will be reviewing the listed projects and affirming or changing our priorities to ensure that the Agency's top needs in infrastructure will be taken care of.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you this information.



Neil Unruh, Comptroller

cc: Rick Wells, Sheriff



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Thank you for the opportunity to provide you this information.



Neil Unruh, Comptroller

cc: Rick Wells, Sheriff

**From:** [Jan Brewer](#)  
**To:** [Robin Toth](#)  
**Cc:** [Lauren Grimsley](#); [Jamie Pelletier](#)  
**Subject:** RE: BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter  
**Date:** Sunday, October 29, 2017 12:21:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)  
[Helicopter Memo to BOCC 9-19-17.pdf](#)

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Robin,

Can you tell the moment on the BCC meeting 10/10/17 where Mr. Hunzeker refers to a letter? This is the letter I have within my file. This letter was given to the Board as an attachment to the September 25, 2017 Infrastructure Sales Tax Public Hearing. It is within the attachment : Infr Sales Tax Suggested Changes. You can find it here:

<http://www.mymanatee.org/published/September%2025,%202017%20-%20Public%20Hearing%20on%20Infrastructure%20Sales%20Tax%20Modifications%20on%20Monday,%20September%2025,%202017/2F97632A-BDDE-4FDC-B14F-CF72C3429346Agenda.htm>

Sorry for the delay Robin

Jan

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**From:** Lauren Grimsley  
**Sent:** Friday, October 27, 2017 3:14 PM  
**To:** Jan Brewer  
**Subject:** FW: BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter  
**Importance:** High

Hi Jan :)

Will you send her the letter?

Thank you,

*Lauren*

**Lauren N. Grimsley**  
Executive Assistant to the County Administrator  
Manatee County Administrator's Office  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, FL 34205  
(941) 745-3725  
[lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org](mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org)



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**From:** Robin Toth [<mailto:robin.toth@ManateeClerk.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 27, 2017 3:02 PM  
**To:** Lauren Grimsley <[lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org](mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter  
**Importance:** High

Hi Lauren,

Having not heard from Jan Brewer regarding the letter I requested from Mr. Hunzeker as referenced in the subject line above, I emailed Ms. Brewer to request the letter. She responded back to me that this past Monday and Tuesday, she was at a conference, but that she would forward the letter when she returned to her office.

Since I have not heard back from Ms. Brewer, do you or Mr. Hunzeker have the name of the contact person that I can contact, to get this letter? I will be glad to contact this person directly myself. I do need this letter for the record of the October 10th County Commission meeting.

*Thank you,*

*Robin Toth*

Board Records Deputy Clerk  
for Angelina Colonnese  
Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller  
[www.manateeclerk.com](http://www.manateeclerk.com)  
[robin.toth@manateeclerk.com](mailto:robin.toth@manateeclerk.com)  
941-741-4018, Ext. 4018

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Florida has a very broad Public Records Law. This agency is a public entity and is subject to Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, concerning public records. E-mail communications are covered under such laws & therefore e-mail sent or received on this entity's computer system, including your e-mail address, may be disclosed to the public or media upon request.

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**From:** Lauren Grimsley [<mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org>]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 20, 2017 9:47 AM  
**To:** Robin Toth; Ed Hunzeker  
**Subject:** RE: BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter

I have sent this request to Jan Brewer. She has a copy of the letter.

Thank you,

*Lauren*

Lauren N. Grimsley  
Executive Assistant to the County Administrator  
Manatee County Administrator's Office  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, FL 34205  
(941) 745-3725  
[lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org](mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org)



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**From:** Robin Toth [<mailto:robin.toth@ManateeClerk.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 20, 2017 9:39 AM  
**To:** Ed Hunzeker <[ed.hunzeker@mymanatee.org](mailto:ed.hunzeker@mymanatee.org)>  
**Cc:** Lauren Grimsley <[lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org](mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org)>  
**Subject:** FW: BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter  
**Importance:** High

Good Morning Mr. Hunzeker,

From the October 10th BCC meeting during Commissioners' Comments, Commissioner DiSabatino stated that Katherine Edwards (citizen), asked for a full report on the cost of the Sheriff helicopter. You responded that you would send Ms. Edwards a copy of the letter from **Mr. Enrue** (? Spelling).

Please forward me this letter. Below, I requested this letter through Lauren; however, she indicated back that she would be out of the office.

*Thank you.*

*Robin Toth*

Board Records Deputy Clerk  
for Angelina Colonnese  
Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller  
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**From:** Robin Toth  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 18, 2017 3:04 PM  
**To:** 'Lauren Grimsley'  
**Subject:** RE: BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter

Hi Lauren,

Please see my request below highlighted in Yellow.

Robin

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**From:** Lauren Grimsley [<mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 11, 2017 3:02 PM  
**To:** Robin Toth  
**Subject:** RE: BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter

I will leave Ed a note. I am leaving now and will return Monday.

Thank you,

*Lauren*

Lauren N. Grimsley  
Executive Assistant to the County Administrator  
Manatee County Administrator's Office  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, FL 34205  
(941) 745-3725  
[lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org](mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org)



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**From:** Robin Toth [<mailto:robin.toth@ManateeClerk.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 11, 2017 11:00 AM  
**To:** Lauren Grimsley <[lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org](mailto:lauren.grimsley@mymanatee.org)>  
**Subject:** BCC Mtg 10/10/17: Letter referenced by Ed Hunzeker regarding the cost of the Sheriff helicopter

Hi Lauren,

In yesterday's BCC meeting during Commissioners' Comments, Commissioner DiSabatino stated that Katherine Edwards (citizen), asked for a full report on the cost of the Sheriff helicopter. Mr. Hunzeker responded that he would send Ms. Edwards a copy of the letter from **Mr. Enrue** (? Spelling).

Please check with Ed and please forward me this letter.

*Thank you.*

*Robin Toth*  
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