

JULY 30, 2009

The Board of County Commissioners, Manatee County, Florida, met in REGULAR SESSION in the Administrative Center, 1112 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton, Florida, at 1:36 p.m.

Present were Commissioners:

Gwendolyn Y. Brown, Chairman (entered during meeting)
Carol Whitmore, First Vice-Chairman (participated via speaker phone)
Donna Hayes, Second Vice-Chairman
Lawrence E. Bustle, Jr., Third Vice-Chairman
John R. Chappie
Ron Getman
Joe McClash

Also present were:

Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator
Susan G. Romine, Board Records Manager,
representing R. B. Shore, Clerk of Circuit Court

Invocation by Mrs. Hayes.

(Mrs. Hayes presiding)

AGENDA

Agenda of July 30, 2009.

[BC20090730DOC001](#)

FY2009-10 BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator, discussed the budget reconciliation and reviewed the budget process, which began in June. The objective is to establish the maximum millage rate for ad valorem taxes in the FY 2009-10 Proposed Budget as required by State law. He recommended maintaining the millage rates as adopted in prior years, except those relating to debt service. The Capital Improvements Program will also be reviewed; however, it will not be adopted until September.

[BC20090730DOC002](#)

(Enter Dr. Brown, presiding)

REVIEW/RECONCILE FUNDING FOR FLAGGED ITEMS

Jim Seuffert, Financial Management Director, discussed the \$3.3 million deficit and explained the proposed method to rebalance the budget. County reserves, as well as the budget stabilization fund, are being explored in lieu of cutting more programs and/or eliminating positions. \$1.6 million was set aside for adjustments due to oversights or reductions in taxable value and can be used toward the deficit. In addition, as valuations decrease other decreases automatically occur such as payments to Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs) and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) (\$90,000). The impact is spread throughout all County funds that levy a millage; therefore, that additional amount would be appropriated from the budget stabilization fund (\$1,025,000). All other funds that get property taxes would obtain \$686,000 in reserves to offset that difference. These efforts allow the deficit to be met without increasing the tax rate or reducing programs.

Discussion: Will there be an additional increase from June through October; 95 percent of property tax revenue is budgeted and usually 96-97 percent is collected; there is still some leeway; etc.

Veterans Services

No veteran's services have been reduced, and the same level of service will be provided next year.

Discussion: Additional services that should be provided; extraordinary circumstances with veterans returning from war; facility in Ellenton; mental health services are provided by Manatee Glens; VA system is separate from County as far as treatment; be proactive; fill positions expeditiously; transportation services; etc.

Fred Loveland, Community Services Director, noted there are four staff positions in the division (two vacancies); however, the workload is being maintained. There is not a current influx of Gulf War veterans in this immediate area; however, this is not the case in Tampa and other areas. There is always more that could be done but not with the limited staff. Regarding the transportation issue, Mr. Loveland noted due to the demand for service there is one driver dedicated to Hillsborough and Pinellas County, as well as a standby driver.

Discussion: New hires should be introduced to the Board; expedite hiring staff; meetings will be held with new hires and service level issues; reserve for contingency can be considered; survey other VA office services; etc.

Transit and Paratransit (Trolley)

The trolley system funding will remain status quo for one more year to allow island communities to execute plans to raise \$100,000. It was recommended the budget be amended to include the \$50,000 from general reserves, \$26,000 from Tourist Development Council (TDC) funds, and \$8,000 contribution from each of the cities.

Discussion: Commend public fundraising; provide transit to Lakewood Ranch where riders will pay their fair share; employees/students need transportation to Lakewood Ranch; island trolley is not free it is paid through tourism; signage in trolleys; objection to using County funds for this service; etc.

Lakewood Ranch Bus Service

Mr. Hunzeker indicated a partnership with Sarasota County is being explored regarding bus service. The lowest level of service would be \$258,000 with the upper level requiring \$974,000 per year. Ridership must be studied as well as hours of operation.

Discussion: Lakewood Ranch is a revenue producer and should be included; work with Sarasota; grants; bus service ends at 7:00 p.m.; could current bus service on S.R. 64 loop to S.R. 70; dependent upon receipt of grant; grants are difficult as the State is also working under tight constraints; apply for the grant with matching funds allotted; etc.

Ralf Heseler, Transit Division Manager, stated service hours would have to be extended to provide adequate student transportation. He noted Sarasota would only serve the Sarasota County portion of Lakewood Ranch not the Manatee County portion; however, a joint effort will be explored. The \$258,000 is based on one-hour of service, six days per week in the currently provided service area. The State grant (50/50) is for new services for a three-year period and, therefore after that period, the County will be fully responsible for services.

Discussion: Economic status of ridership; ridership need; grant application factors; focus discussions in planning sessions; when is mass transit triggered in a community; Lakewood Ranch is not the only area with mass transit needs; develop plan for transit service triggers; regional map to show connective counties; riders will not wait an hour to catch a bus, maybe 20-30 minute headways; helping business; etc.

Information Outreach

Mr. Hunzeker discussed staff levels noting no recommended changes due to the challenge of communicating with 330,000 County residents through MGA, the website, and telephone, as well as coordination of legislative efforts (State and Federal). He noted that County activity has been privatized with METV.

Discussion: MGA is doing a great job; provide a detailed breakdown; why can this service not be conducted with County staff as it was previously; wants vs. needs; difficult economic times; public information is important; cannot rely on newspaper to educate citizens, constituents and employees; valuable tool to serve the community; etc.

Neighborhood Services

Mr. Hunzeker indicated one additional position in **Repetitive Crime** services was approved in FY 2008-09 and is currently filled. A written report was provided regarding **Economic Development** issues.

Planning Department

Regarding **Impact Fees**, Mr. Hunzeker stated the question: "Could we use the amount of money accumulated in the Administrative Fee fund for projects?" is under review.

Tedd Williams, County Attorney, indicated upon review the answer is "no" the funds cannot be used for impact fee purposes. There may be some previous administrative fees that were paid with other funds that could be paid by these, but funds cannot be used to supplement impact fees. If funds are not used for administrative purposes they must be refunded.

Discussion: Is this due to the structure of the ordinance as far as setting funds aside for administration; ordinance drives the fees; will bring back as an agenda item with a report; etc.

Property Management

Construction Services – the Air Conditioning filter maintenance issue was resolved.

Public Works

Field Operations - current levels of funding are sufficient to continue current levels of activity regarding **pipe repair**. There is no service level change recommended for **sidewalk and curb** replacement/repair.

Ron Schulhofer, Public Works, indicated staff is able to maintain those half-inch or more gaps in sidewalks. Contracts are utilized for some sidewalk projects, but repair projects are less costly if completed by County crews.

Discussion: Capital improvement type of function; not property tax decision unit issue; sidewalk fund is \$250,000; contracts are utilized; repairs are less costly if completed by County crews; etc.

Sheriff – Law Enforcement

Mr. Hunzeker noted each Constitutional Officer was requested to reduce funding by five percent and all were willing and able to do so. The Sheriff's Office reduction was \$4.5 million with the commitment the Board will re-appropriate money saved from this year's budget to mitigate the \$4.5 million reduction in funding.

The Sheriff has been able to secure Federal Economic Stimulus funds which will help expand staffing. At this time there is no recommendation for additional funding for Public Safety, and the Sheriff has scheduled a presentation to the Board on August 18, 2009, to report on the estimated funds available on September 30, 2009.

Discussion: Budget will be increased by the amount of the stimulus dollars (\$1.6 million); vehicle needs must be addressed; etc.

Tom Salisbury, Sheriff's Office, indicated the stimulus funds are for nine positions (five for gang unit, four for homicide) at 100 percent salaries for three years. Funds are required for vehicles, radios, and equipment. Stimulus funds are dedicated to the investigative area. [BC20090730DOC003](#)

CERTIFICATES OF TAXABLE VALUE (DR 420 FORMS)

Motion was made by Mr. McClash to authorize the County Administrator to take all action necessary to certify millage rates approved herewith to the Property Appraiser. The motion was seconded by Mr. Getman.

Discussion: Hesitant to support without dialogue; consider the Sheriff's request for more funds; what is the increased tax dollars that would be represented by increasing the current millage rate to the rollback rate; proposed millage is 9.64 percent below the rollback rate; the rollback rate would gain \$19.6 million; prudent to set some millage rate that reserves flexibility; cannot support millage increase; opposed to any increase to the taxpayers; fair budget process has taken place and there are contingencies for the unknown; no public outcry at the June hearings; taxes have been reduced over \$50 million in the last three years; those with Homestead and Save Our Homes exemptions will be hit with millage increase due to the three percent recapture rate; public mandate to reduce taxes; etc.

Following Mr. Hunzeker's clarification of the motion, the motion carried 7 to 0. [BC20090730DOC004](#)

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) UPDATE

PUBLIC WORKS

44th Avenue East (15th Street East to 19th Street Court East)

Discussion: Expedite project; coordinate utility work and roadway construction; Public Works handles everything horizontal; Property Management handles everything vertical; provide update on the plan; include property owners in the design work and explore if additional property is required; consider relocation of MTI to 44th Avenue and not Caruso Road; coordinate efforts in the community; etc.

Steve Serbaty, Public Works, reported the plan segment from 19th Street Court East is at 30 percent, and negotiations are occurring with property owners. Sixty percent is estimated in two months.

Palmetto (7th Street to Haben Boulevard)

Mr. Hunzeker noted continued work with the City of Palmetto and project design.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

EMS Station Location

Relocation of EMS station continues with the objective to configure EMS service delivery to be paramount with a cost effective station, and locations are being explored for consideration. Reports will be provided to the Board.

Discussion: Staff report was requested regarding conditions at the current locations; etc.

Geraldson Farms

Mr. Hunzeker noted the caretaker residence at Geraldson Farms will be deleted from the CIP.

Discussion: Will work with Geraldson Farms to meet their needs; security concerns; examine allowing law enforcement officers to locate mobile homes to the area and live there to provide security; there would be no cost to the County; consider the same action at other locations with security issues; etc.

Jiggs Landing

Mr. Hunzeker indicated no changes are planned at this time, and plans will be brought to the Board to include a "natural-looking" facility.

Discussion: Camouflage of restroom facilities; Braden River Historical Society involvement with Jiggs Landing; issues will be addressed; etc.

Neal Preserve

Mr. Hunzeker discussed costs for the parking area and restroom and noted a report will be brought back to the Board to include options.

Discussion: Consider the area for a night time teenager hangout; explore the possibility of a teen area as it is a public area with no residents or homes; consider discussion; explore security and two gates; could be an area for teens to self-maintain and show responsibility; County and communities need to think about this issue as it has been a problem for years; location is close to the bridge and water and will require safety warnings and signage; same concern for East County teen area; consider gathering places for youth at all public facilities; include this issue in all future planning; etc.

Conservatory Park

Mr. Hunzeker stated expenditures will be kept to the minimum requirements for the grant. The Board voted (April 21, 2009) to move forward with the final conceptual site plan.

Discussion: Request for a report with a breakdown of details to include Florida Communities Trust (FCT) grant requirements; note FCT requirements for other projects such as Bennett Park and Hidden Harbour; etc.

Civic Center

Mr. Hunzeker indicated staff is in the process of preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to determine if there is interest from the hotel industry to locate a facility at the Civic Center. The RFP will be provided to the Board for review. He stated that due to the current configuration and condition of items, the renovations to the Civic Center are necessary. If hotel interest is achieved, it is reasonable to assume it would be three to five years before a facility would be constructed. The County must proceed with the required renovations in order to make the community proud of the facility.

Discussion: Proposed RFP; most vendors would demand an upscale convention center; clause to maintain the Civic Center through 2013; etc.

Park Restroom Maintenance

Discussion: Park area restroom maintenance responsibility; restrooms were deplorable at the S.R. 70 park area during a baseball tournament; provide additional services during events; additional parking space is needed at S.R. 70; long-term lease to the State for the Highway Patrol station; the rear section of the that station is located in the middle of the park and could be utilized for additional parking or a playground area; area is an old landfill prohibiting any building; State is willing to return the property to the County in turn for some maintenance; staff to explore the land possibility; etc.

Cindy Turner, Parks and Recreation Director, stated restroom maintenance is a contracted service once each day. She agreed that the S.R. 70 Park is at capacity, and noted staff will explore the possibility of additional service during scheduled events. [BC20090730DOC005](#)

PARKS AND RECREATION PROJECTS

A handout was distributed summarizing FY 2010-14 CIP Parks and Recreation Projects.

[BC20090730DOC006](#)

CIP CROSSWALK

A CIP Crosswalk report was distributed summarizing current projects in comparison with the CIP adopted September 2008. The report details all projects with schedule changes and adjustments.

Mr. Seuffert indicated the report contains all projects that changed more than ten percent in cost (increase or decrease), as well as projects with changes in timing and/or completion dates and their current status. [BC20090730DOC007](#)

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Adj: 3:23 p.m.
/njh

Minutes Approved: August 25, 2009