

**JULY 29, 2011**

The Board of County Commissioners, Manatee County, Florida, met in REGULAR SESSION in the Administrative Center, 1112 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton, Florida, at 9:04 a.m.

Present were Commissioners:

Carol Whitmore, Chairman  
John R. Chappie, First Vice-Chairman  
Lawrence E. Bustle, Jr., Second Vice-Chairman  
Michael Gallen, Third Vice-Chairman  
Robin DiSabatino  
Donna Hayes  
Joe McClash

Also present were:

Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator  
Tedd Williams, Jr., County Attorney  
Susan G. Romine, Board Records Director,  
representing R. B. Shore, Clerk of Circuit Court

### **AGENDA**

Agenda of July 29, 2011; letter from **Mary Lou McFate** and **Don Chab**; a chart outlining the Manatee County Fiscal Facts - FY 2011-12 Proposed Budget (updated 7/15/11); and the Proposed Budget Summary, Proposed Budget Revenues, and Proposed Budget Expenditures as of July 15, 2011. [BC20110729DOC001](#)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator, stated the purpose of this meeting is to review the items flagged by the Board during the budget process, and to establish the maximum millage rate that will go on the TRIM (Truth in Millage) Notice that will be sent out by the Property Appraiser in August. The final millage rate will be determined by the Board following the two public hearings to be held in September. [BC20110729DOC002](#)

### **TAXABLE VALUES**

Jim Seuffert, Financial Management Director, advised that taxable property values presented in June were estimates. When the certification of taxable values was presented to the County on July 1, 2011, the values were higher than expected. As a result, an additional \$838,000 has been added to the budget. Mr. Hunzeker is recommending that those funds be applied to the Sheriff's property and evidence storage needs. In addition, minor changes/corrections to the budget resulted in a \$700,000 reduction to the budget. The net effect on the total budget is \$138,000.

He referenced updated charts and graphs that show the new debt budget and a budget summary that shows the new totals for the budget. [BC20110729DOC003](#)

### **BUDGET STABILIZATION FUND UPDATE**

Mr. Seuffert reviewed a chart of the Planned Use of Budget Stabilization Funds. There is approximately \$50 million in budget stabilization funds, which would be used over the next four years. As this money decreases, and revenues from taxes and other sources increase, the County can stop using reserves and go back to using recurring revenues as they grow. According to this scenario, these funds will no longer be needed in FY 2016. It is projected that additional budget cuts will be needed next year, and the following year, in order to keep this sustainable. [BC20110729DOC004](#)

**FUNDING FOR THE SHERIFF**

Mr. Hunzeker stated he and Sheriff Brad Steube have discussed options for funding additional deputies without a tax increase. One scenario was to use one-time revenues to fund the additional deputies, with the requirement for the Board to raise taxes in the future to continue funding the deputies. The Sheriff does not want to hire deputies with the anticipation of a tax increase, and then have to lay off those deputies if the Board does not vote for an increase. The Sheriff is requesting a millage increase to fund 20 additional positions, ten for the jail and ten patrol deputies.

Mr. Seuffert stated an increase to the Sheriff's millage rate from 3.9340 to 4.0050 would result in an additional .0710 mills, and generate approximately \$1.6 million.

Mr. Hunzeker distributed a handout of the Millage Summary-FY12 Proposed Budget, which included **Option A** - No Operating Millage Increase, and **Option B** - .0710 Millage Increase for the Sheriff.

**Sheriff Steube** responded to comments regarding take-home cars. He addressed the Federal COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) Grant application process, noting COPS funding is due to be cut.

Discussion: Constituents do not want any tax increase; 60 percent of the budget goes to law enforcement; place the question of a tax increase on a ballot/referendum; take the money out of the general fund; not willing to risk public safety; even with the Sheriff's request for a millage increase, taxpayers would still enjoy a tax savings due to reductions in millage rates and property values since 2003; on a property valued \$100,000, the millage increase would result in an increase of \$7.00; no doubt the Sheriff needs the additional officers; increase in crime; make sure there are no other alternatives before raising taxes; etc.

Sheriff Steube stated he has cut almost \$6 million from his budget and more than 60 positions over four years. There has been a two percent increase in crime in the first six months of this year, a 3.8 percent increase in violent crime, and a 1.7 percent increase in other crimes.

Discussion: Sheriff needs funds for the camera system (in the Judicial Center); law enforcement impact fees for the vehicles for the additional deputies; impact fees cannot be used to fund positions; the Law Enforcement Trust Fund cannot be used for recurring funds; property and evidence storage needs; a 2008 Public Safety Coordinating Council study determined a need to expand the jail, or build a new one; need for corrections deputies goes beyond ten deputies; long-term solution; a referendum will not solve this year's problem; alternatives to curb the jail population; savings in the Florida Retirement System funds is part of the Sheriff's safety net; support the millage increase on the Form DR 420, but find an alternative; Manatee County has the 10th highest crime rate in the State, down from 5th in 2007; etc.

**Proposed Millage Rates - Form DR 420**

Motion was made by Mr. Bustle and seconded by Mr. Gallen to authorize the County Administrator to take all action necessary to certify the millage rates approved herewith to the Property Appraiser, and the herewith is the attached sheet that shows Option B, .0710 millage increase for the Sheriff, which would lead to a total millage of 4.0050.

**Joe Shea** opposed additional funding for the Sheriff.

**Joanne Klement** supported an increase for the Sheriff.

Mr. Hunzeker stated staff will report prior to the September budget public hearings to discuss funding for property and evidence storage, recording devices at the Judicial Center, and challenges at the jail, in addition to the 20 additional positions.

Following further discussion, the motion carried 5 to 2, with Mrs. DiSabatino and Mrs. Hayes voting nay. [BC20110729DOC005](#)

**Recess/Reconvene.** All members present.

**FLAGGED ITEMS WITH BUDGET IMPACT**

Mr. Hunzeker reviewed the flagged items, as follows: [BC20110729DOC006](#)

**Information Technology Department – Equipment Needs**

There is \$676,000 in the budget for replacement equipment, a reserve of \$500,000 for equipment needs, and staff is looking for new and innovative ways to conduct day-to-day operations at less cost. No additional dollars need to be appropriated. [BC20110729DOC007](#)

**Neighborhood Services Department – Repetitive Crime Position**

The duties of the Repetitive Crime position have been transferred to Nuisance Abatement in the Code Enforcement Division of the Building and Development Services Department. No additional positions need to be funded at this time.

Karen Windon, Deputy County Administrator, advised that Peyt Dewar is the Nuisance Abatement Coordinator. He is working closely with the Sheriff's Office on the cases.

Discussion: Would like another position in Nuisance Abatement; can address this position after the budget; have not been receiving the quarterly reports; how to get repetitive crime situations under control; the County Administrator has the authority to adjust staff as needed; etc.

Mr. Hunzeker advised the funding source for the position was drying up from CRA (Community Redevelopment Area) and CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds. Staff is trying to integrate it without having to increase staffing. [BC20110729DOC008](#)

**Neighborhood Services Department – Library Self-Checkout System**

This system could improve service and reduce wait time; however, the cost could not be offset by savings from staffing reductions. Not all patrons can be served by the automated system; therefore, minimal staff support would still be required. This was not recommended for funding because the savings could not be found elsewhere. [BC20110729DOC009](#)

**Neighborhood Services Department – Interlibrary Loan Service**

The cost of this program is \$93,113, which includes two positions and other costs related to the service. It was identified as a high priority in the recommended budget, and no change is being made to the recommendation.

Discussion: Possibility of a nominal fee for this service; etc. [BC20110729DOC010](#)

**Parks and Recreation – Lincoln Splash Park**

The omission of the Lincoln Splash Park was an oversight when the budget was prepared. It is now in the budget.

Discussion: Of the \$29,466 funded for this project, \$15,866 is for operational and the remainder is for security; next year, the security will be split out with security among all the parks; the operational funding for the Pride Splash Park is also \$15,866; etc. [BC20110729DOC011](#)

**Public Safety – Island Cities Beach Security**

The reduction for this item results in a \$5,000 reduction for the beach security agreement with the City of Bradenton Beach. The Board invested funds in improving Coquina Beach security over the last few years. As a result, calls for services from the Bradenton Beach Police Department have declined. No additional changes are recommended.

Discussion: These funds go to the cities to patrol the County's beaches; the Bradenton Beach Mayor does not have an issue with this; Sheriff's Office responds to calls and the cities are not charged; etc. [BC20110729DOC012](#)

**Community Services Department – County Probation**

This item was flagged to determine if this program is self-sufficient and not in need of tax revenues. There is no policy that all portions of the probation program should be covered by fees. The goal is to generate fees to the maximum level possible. Pre-trial programs and probation divisions are an alternative to more expensive jail costs, and these savings are not reflected in revenues. Staff is working with the judges to reduce waivers of fees, and is looking at other ways to increase revenues. Probation programs have resulted in cost savings to other County programs of nearly \$100,000. Approximately 70 percent of the Probation Services budget is expected to be funded by program fees. No funding changes were recommended.

Discussion: The Offender Work Program has been used by the Property Management Department, saving approximately \$100,000; report on the types of parole and funds that should be generated; etc. [BC20110729DOC013](#)

**Natural Resources Department – Beach Renourishment Costs**

The construction phase of the next full Anna Maria beach renourishment project is estimated to begin in 2015 and could cost up to \$27.5 million. If the Federal and State grants continue to be available, the County will be able to fund the anticipated local match to complete the island-wide renourishment projects through 2015. If State and Federal funds are available at reduced levels, or not at all, an alternative local revenue source will be needed. Decisions to defer the implementation of renourishment projects will result in higher costs. The County currently funds its local share with a portion of Tourist Development funds. [BC20110729DOC014](#)

**Property Management Department – Recreation and Parks Services/Gym Floor Repairs**

The Parks and Recreation Department requested a desired Decision Unit for the repair; however, the repair is funded in the Property Management Department budget. [BC20110729DOC015](#)

**Property Management Department – Conservatory Park**

The County cannot stop the park construction, sell the land, or pay back the grants. With reduced funding for operations, this will be a passive park, and no staff will be assigned to the park. Staff will periodically maintain the landscaping, etc.

Discussion: Answers to other questions raised during the budget process will be provided to Commissioners; the entrance to the park needs to be cleaned; etc. [BC20110729DOC016](#)  
(**Note:** See further discussion/action following public comments.)

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Mary Lou McFate, Peter Brock, Brian Lipton, and Bill Eiffert** spoke in support of Conservatory Park. **Joseph Shangooso** read and submitted a letter from **Adeana Tanko Osika** in support of the park. [BC20110729DOC017](#)

**Paul Valenz**, Federation of Manatee County Community Associations, commented on the need for tourism. He noted the Republican National Convention will meet in St. Petersburg (**note:** the Convention is in Tampa) next year, which will create local business opportunities and attract people to Manatee County.

Discussion: The Tourist Development Council has spent money for billboards around the convention center where the Convention will be held; *Southern Living* is doing an article on Anna Maria Island; etc.

**CONSERVATORY PARK** (Continued)

Motion was made by Mr. McClash, seconded by Mrs. Hayes, and carried 7 to 0, to un-flag Conservatory Park because there were change orders on hold until the Board made a decision.

Tom Yarger, Property Management Department, stated Park construction was paused because the item was flagged. The land clearing has been completed in preparation for the hard surfaces. Construction should be able to be continued with the current funding. It will take approximately eight months to finish the Park, with funding next year for the pavilion and playground and the restroom facility. [BC20110729DOC016](#)

**COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

**Basin Boards**

Mr. Chappie advised the legislative impacts on basin boards will have an impact on the Utilities budgets and how the County expands and repairs the systems. He recommended this issue come back for discussion or a resolution that can be sent to Tallahassee and the legislators. It appears that the Southwest Florida Water Management District will handle all issues, and local jurisdictions will suffer monetarily.

Mr. Hunzeker stated this item will be placed on the next agenda.

Discussion: Taxation without representation; etc.

[BC20110729DOC018](#)

**Millage Rate**

Ms. Whitmore was advised the tentative millage rate is 6.3703.

[BC20110729DOC018](#)

**Transit - Free Rides**

Ms. Whitmore commented on free transit rides for people over 85 years old. Staff will look into this and bring it back to the Board.

Discussion: Concerns with offering free rides; in the process of cutting the budget, should not be adding new expenses; etc.

[BC20110729DOC018](#)

**Budget Stabilization Account**

Mr. McClash stated an additional \$3.5 million will have to be cut from the budget next year. The millage rate increase would provide for a continuation of funding for law enforcement and jail needs.

[BC20110729DOC018](#)

**Community Redevelopment Areas**

Mrs. DiSabatino referenced an email, in which she questioned funding available in the Community Redevelopment Areas (CRA). She questioned if the salary supplement is charged equally between the CRAs, and if the staff is devoted solely to the CRAs or have other duties.

Mr. Seuffert stated the salary supplement seems high. Staff will provide a report.

Discussion: Differences between the 14th Street West and South County CRAs; the Community Redevelopment Agency will make the final decision on how funds are spent; schedule a work session with the Community Redevelopment Agency and the CRA Advisory Boards; staff will provide an analysis of the this year's budget and the proposed budget, because there is a proposed reduction in the expenses; the community center in the South County CRA is on hold; the lot for the community center needs to be cleaned; the reduction is in the administrative costs; the County does not yet have possession of the lot for the community center; etc.

[BC20110729DOC019](#)

**Longboat Key Trolley**

Mrs. DiSabatino questioned if funding for the Longboat Key Trolley will be included in next year's budget.

Mr. Hunzeker stated the Board, in conjunction with the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners, will revisit the issue in December. In the recommended budget, \$200,000 is funded for the trolley for the entire year. If in December the Board decides not to continue the funding after January 1st, approximately \$150,000 would come back to the Board to put in Reserves. [BC20110729DOC018](#)

**44th Avenue Connector**

Mrs. DiSabatino commented on saving impact fee and gas tax funds for the 44th Avenue Connector (44th Avenue East Extension).

Mr. Hunzeker advised a presentation is scheduled for August 9, 2011.

[BC20110729DOC018](#)

**Sheriff's Budget**

Mr. McClash noted he discussed with the Sheriff the idea of allowing a third-party review of the efficiency of the Sheriff's Office. [BC20110729DOC018](#)

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Adj: 12:04 p.m.  
/dev

Minutes Approved: August 23, 2011