

**MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET WORK SESSION
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, MANATEE and OSPREY ROOMS, FIFTH FLOOR
1112 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, Florida
June 7, 2023**

Meeting video link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCULgjuGhS-qV966RU2Z7AtA>

Present were:

Kevin Van Ostenbridge, Chairman
Mike Rahn, First Vice-Chairman
Amanda Ballard, Second Vice-Chairman
Jason Bearden, Third Vice-Chairman
Vanessa Baugh, entered during the meeting
George Kruse
James A. Satcher, III

Also present were:

Lee Washington, Acting County Administrator
William Clague, County Attorney
Sheila McLean, Chief Financial Officer
Robin Toth, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court



Chairman Van Ostenbridge called the Budget Work Session to order at 9:02 a.m.

INVOCATION



The Invocation was led by Chaplain Tony Ledbetter, International Fellowship of Chaplains, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Bearden.

AGENDA

BC20230607DOC001

1. FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET PRESENTATION AND DECISION UNIT REVIEW – DEPARTMENT BUDGET AND OTHER PROGRAMS

BC20230607DOC002



Lee Washington, Acting County Administrator, presented the Recommended Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Budget Message. This is the first budget work session to review the FY24 Recommended Budget, which focuses on sustainable services, resiliency, and improving the quality of life for residents and guests. The recommended FY24 Budget has a total, gross amount of \$2,103,239,581, and a strong FY24-28 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) totaling \$2,110,241,932. This budget is structurally balanced and supports the County's strategic priorities of Public Safety, Cybersecurity and Technology, Health Care, Retention and Development of Workforce, Providing the Highest Level of Service to the Community, and Expansion and Maintenance of Infrastructure.

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BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Public Safety (Safe Communities)




A FY24 budget of \$190 million is recommended for the Sheriff (11 percent, or \$18.6 million increase from last year).


Public Safety Department has a proposed budget of \$23.1 million. This includes eight new 24-hour Paramedic and EMT staff for the new North County (Parrish) EMS Station, three new Animal Services officers, and two new Code Enforcement officers.

Manatee County continues to address homelessness and transitional housing for Veterans by adding \$11.1 million of funding in FY24.


Cybersecurity and Technology

 An investment of \$923,000 is recommended for IT Services, to strengthen cybersecurity initiatives, technology efficiencies and add two new positions.


Health Care

 A budget of \$15.7 million is recommended for Health Care programs covering specialty care, mental health, opioid prevention, and treatment. An additional \$5.1 million was received from the State of Florida related to the Opioid Settlements to continue programs addressing substance abuse treatment, education, and prevention.


Providing the Highest Level of Service to our Community

 Community and Veterans Services requests two new Veterans Services Counselors (\$128,726), Neighborhood Connections Enhancement Grants (\$100,000), creation of the new Neighborhood Ambassador Program (\$5,000), Lakewood Ranch Library operations (\$437,024) and three new custodian positions (\$195,676), Library Services Division requests four new positions to assist in the Books-by-Mail Program (\$278,345), and an additional operating budget of \$400,000 to sustain the Water Taxi Transportation System.

Retention and Development of Workforce

 One Administrative Specialist and one Benefits Specialist is recommended for Human Resources, as well as a one percent increase on both employer and employee to cover rising health care and medication costs. A salary compensation increase of five percent is also recommended, effective October 1.


Expansion and Maintenance of Infrastructure

 Property Management is investing in a five-year, ballfield backstop replacement program across the County and a \$5.8 million overhaul of the downtown energy complex.


Public Works requests an additional \$1 million for Watershed Management, \$1.6 million for intersection enhancements, and Utilities requests 16 new positions to keep up with growth.


CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Public Safety


 Two, new large projects (Fleet Facility and Property Evidence Building) are currently under construction in the CIP with FY24 funding of \$18.1 million. Two new EMS stations are to be funded in FY24 totaling \$3.1 million, and Moccasin Wallow Road EMS Station and Ambulance are funded in the CIP for \$3.2 million, with finalized construction in FY24.

Transportation

 A budget of \$493.2 million is recommended for Transportation improvements over the next five years, with emphasis on road improvements, representing over 90 percent of the total requested funds. Major improvements include The Big 6 road projects (59th Street West, 63rd Avenue East, 75th Street West, Lena Road, Lorraine Road and Upper Manatee River Road), and four additional featured road projects (44th Avenue East, 60th Avenue East, Canal Road and Moccasin Wallow Road).

 A total investment of \$44.2 million is recommended for Intersection improvements, and \$1.4 million for Sidewalks in the FY24-28 CIP. Manatee County will have 35 sidewalk projects with the implementation of the FY24-28 CIP.


Sports and Leisure


 A budget of \$89.2 million is recommended for Sports and Leisure Services for park shade structures at seven County parks, a new pool and pump house at the Willie J. Clemons, Jr., Pool/Park (fka East Bradenton Pool – 1148 13th Street East), a complete makeover at John H. Marble Park and multiple new facilities at Premier Sports Complex.

Natural Resources


 A total of \$3.7 million is proposed for Natural Resources, which will focus on a Lakewood Ranch Park Destination Playground, the restoration of Washington Park and the repair and replacement of the boardwalk at Robinson Preserve.

General Government Buildings and Libraries

 Several key building and Library projects, expansions and improvements are identified in the FY24 CIP to include the Bradenton Area Convention Center (\$24.8 million), downtown County parking garage (\$33.5 million), Florida Maritime Museum in Cortez (\$1.5 million), Rocky Bluff Library expansion (\$1.3 million), and the Bishop Animal Shelter (\$5 million).

 Sheila McLean, Chief Financial Officer, stated the working documents for this work session are (1) Decision Unit Book FY24 Recommended Budget and FY25 Planned Budget, (2) Summary of Reserves Recommended FY24 Budget, and (3) Decision Unit Book FY24 Recommended Budget and FY25 Planned Budget Summary on the breakdown of each department budget. The FY24 Recommended Budget presentations and materials are published on the County's website.


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 Ms. McLean reiterated the total recommended FY24 Budget is \$2,103,239,581, with a robust FY24-28 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) totaling \$2,110,241,932. FY24 investment into the CIP is \$339,863,202, for a total CIP FY24-28, inclusive of existing and future projects of \$3,578,481,176 billion; by far, the largest CIP in the history of Manatee County.

Challenges facing the budget involve employee recruiting, retention and compensation, rising costs in the supply chain, fluctuation and rising interest rates, increasing cost in the affordable housing market, labor shortage hindering capacity to complete projects timely, and how to balance to meet demands with funding capacities.


Changes in legislation impacting the budget include the Live Local Act (Senate Bill 102), the Save Our Homes Assessment Cap (Amendment 10) change, from three to two percent reducing property taxes by \$14.4 million, and recently adopted Senate Bill 250 protecting residents during emergency operations from increased building fees and prohibiting local governments from raising building fees.

She gave a brief recap of the budget cycle. The Property Appraiser will certify final assessed values July 1, and Budget Reconciliation will be addressed following summer recess. TRIM (Truth in Millage) Notices will be mailed, and budget hearings to adopt the FY24 budget are scheduled September 12 and September 19.

 An overview of Countywide Expenses reflects total Reserves of \$745 million, with the Sheriff representing 9.04 percent, or \$190 million of the total County Budget. The FY24 Recommended Budget is broken into Main Sections of (A) Business Operations and (B) Capital Improvement Plan, which will be discussed June 13. Four days of work sessions are scheduled to address the budgets of County Departments. The budgets of Constitutional Officers and Judicial Programs, as well as budgets for Property Management, Public Safety and


Information Technology (IT) will be presented June 12. The Debt Management Plan for the future of the CIP will be discussed June 13. The Utilities budget will be presented June 14.

 The recommendation of the County Administrator is to fund 64 new positions, resulting from CIP projects that are coming into operation in the fall of FY23 and FY24.


 Ms. McLean addressed the impact of the recommended one percent increase in health insurance to both employer and employee. As a good recruitment and employee retention tool, the employer is paying 82 percent of the total cost of health insurance, with the employee paying only 18 percent.


The portion of Human Resources in the General Fund is Employee Relations. Human Resources is broken down in Employee Health Benefits, which is funded by the Health Insurance Fund. Employee Relations includes compensation and hiring, etc. The \$69.84 million for Human Resources under Countywide Expenses Uses (Slide 7) includes the \$2.5 million of Employee Business Relations for the Department and Employee Health Benefits.


As to General Fund Uses – Expenses (Slide 17), Ms. McLean stated the Sheriff's portion represents 38.23 percent, or \$194.81 million, which is inclusive of the Sheriff's support costs. Reserves represent 29.33 percent or \$149.44 million. Further discussion will be held on the Fund Summary.

 She addressed the Millage Summary, stating FY22 had a millage reduction of .20, and FY23 had a millage reduction of .30. Staff has no recommendation on the Millage at this time. She addressed options toward a potential millage reduction and the financial impact. The General Fund would be the only fund to take a large hit.


Positive factors associated with changes to the FY24 Millage are estimated growth in assessed values at a 17.5 percent increase. Save Our Homes (SOH) will continue to be capped at three percent if assessed values continue to rise for Homestead properties (The amount reduced from Ad Valorem Revenues due to the SOH Cap for Tax Roll 2022 was \$14,413,891,162). Negative factors for FY24 are the first year of the Parrish TIF. The impact will be a reduction of General Fund's Unrestricted Cash Flow and diverted to the Parrish area with boundary restrictions of use. A reduction would solely impact the General Fund.

 The FY24-28 CIP will be discussed in greater detail June 14. The FY24-28 CIP is \$2,110,214,932, with a FY24 investment of \$339,863,202. There are a total of 653 projects of which 66 are new projects, 274 projects of additional funding, 379 projects of no additional funding, and 117 projects – IST (209 projects in total), for a Total FY24-28 CIP, inclusive of existing and future projects, of \$3,579,481,176. A pie chart of percentage breakdowns of CIP sources was shown.

 A slide of CIP-Uses shows the largest concentration on Water and Wastewater due to growth. Execution Factors – CIP are attributed to a multitude of factors and it is not a one size fits all. Factors include challenges on CIP Projects in General, Building/Vertical Projects – Additional Challenges, Road Projects – Additional Challenges, and Utility Projects – Additional Challenges. The CIP Plan is a DFL Review Plan (Doable, Fundable and Logistically Sound).


 Ms. McLean addressed current and future Outstanding Debt – Governmental, Total Current Outstanding Debt – Enterprise, and Debt for Recommended FY24-28 CIP. Manatee County has one of the best bond ratings that a local government can have. Total outstanding debt, inclusive of the last two bond issuances is \$673,525,000, 57 percent of which is Public


Utilities, and 43 percent is General Government. Manatee County has five, active outstanding debt bond issuances and has been able to secure very competitive interest rates. The last bond issuance was at 4.08 percent (5/25/23).


 She addressed Debt for recommended CIP FY24-28, for General Development and Enterprise and economic market conditions, stating that long-term maturities were paid at lesser amounts of yield than short-term maturities. Market conditions are driving the bond ratings. Inflation and cost increases are the reasons Manatee County needs to find other funding opportunities such as a line of credit or commercial paper. As directed by the Board, Financial Management staff would work with Bond Counsel and the Financial Advisor to bring other funding source options back to the Board.


She addressed Summary of Reserves for Contingency, Salaries, Cash Balance and Capital. A Reserve for Contingencies may be provided, which does not exceed ten percent of total appropriations. Reserve for Cash Balance to be carried over may be provided for the purpose of paying expenses from October 1 of the next fiscal year until Revenues for that year are available. This Reserve may not be more than 20 percent of total appropriations. She addressed Reserves Set Asides as part of the Reserve for Contingency.

(Enter Commissioner Baugh)


 She addressed Reserves for Contingency and Reserve for Cash Balance. Total Reserve for Cash Balance is \$664.60 million. General Fund Cash Balance Reserves for FY24 is \$86.2 million (only unrestricted), with a \$2.8 million budget stabilization. A Summary of changes in Cash Balance Reserve reflects an increase in Reserves of \$90.6 million from FY23. Florida Statutes 129 and 200 govern the TRIM process.

 Discussion ensued that at some point the budget needs to be looked at from the aspect of growth and the ability to support/maintain growth, there is going to be a revenue impact from sources outside the millage that need to be factored, many CIP projects are being done, need to make sure to not cut the millage because debt service is being capped out, the Board should view the budget in five- to ten-year projections, estimated growth projection information would be provided, the possibility of a .25 millage reduction could predominantly come from operations such as a cap on travel but excluding staffing cuts, Reserves need to be accessed when needed, direction with the rate of inflation and adding to healthcare costs, how can the County continue to absorb costs, how to balance to meet short- and long-term demands, and how to make today's funds perform today and for long-term projections.

 Rather than address millage cuts for just this year, Chairman Van Ostenbridge offered an idea to make a commitment to cut the millage to .3 over the next five years.

 Commissioner Kruse commented about going into potential recession, looking at a lack of alternate sources of revenue, the County is starting to cap out on debt, make sure the Board is unified in a commitment to lower the millage and keep costs down while maintaining the commitment to provide a quality of life in Manatee County.

RECESS/RECONVENE: 10:39 a.m. – 10:51 a.m. All Commissioners were present.

 Ms. McLean reiterated the FY24 Recommended Budget presentations and materials could be found on the County's website.


 Commissioner Baugh pointed out that on Page 22 of the Decision Unit Review Part 1, General Government Program (6301), the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority


(TBARTA) no longer exists, and the \$61,000 could be reallocated. She is also gathering information to provide the Board with the amount of funds being spent on travel for County departments, County Administration, and the Board.

Commissioner Baugh commended Financial Management staff for their professionalism and projecting forward to prepare Manatee County for unanticipated situations.


RECESS/RECONVENE: 10:57 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. All Commissioners were present.

Decision Unit Review

 The FY24 Decision Unit Review Part 1 is a presentation of the budgets for Community and Veterans Services, Convention and Visitors Bureau, County Administration, County Attorney, Financial Management, Human Resources, Natural Resources and Sports and Leisure Services. Budgets for the Courts, Judicial System and Constitutional Officers will be presented the morning of June 12, followed by the budgets for Public Safety, Property Management, Public Works and Information Technology (IT).

 Ms. McLean utilized a slide presentation to highlight budgetary details/needs of the FY24 CIP, FY24 Decision Unit Review Part 1 Department/Programs. The Business Operations Budget entails 14 departments with a total of 67 programs. Each program is broken down based on Levels of Service, and Departments/Programs reflect a total funded amount of \$585,844,611. Non-recurring Desired Unit costs total \$5.2 million, with recurring Desired Unit costs of \$14,724,036. New requests totaling \$4.5 million are not recommended for funding.

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 Department/Program budgets are broken into levels of Base, Continuation and Desired. Base is the minimum resources required to operate the basic service of a program. Continuation are any levels of services that are provided beyond Base minimum. Base and Continuation is inclusive of the levels of service and total budget of each department before Desired Decision Units are requested. Desired Decision Units for this year total an increase of \$23.8 million, with additional Reserves of \$8.1 million, for a total additional \$31.9 million in new requests.

Ms. McLean explained The Pull Process, consisting of one Commissioner having the desire to fund an item the County Administrator has not recommended for funding; therefore, the first Commissioner may pull the item. A fellow Commissioner must agree with the primary Commissioner and second the pulled item.


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Upon question as to where the Continuation of Service and line-by-line information is clearly listed, Ms. McLean stated a Continuation, line-by-line report would be provided to the Board.

Community and Veterans Services


 Tracie Adams, Deputy Director of Community and Veterans Services, stated Community and Veterans Services Department has seven programs, with a total budget of \$14,452,153: Neighborhood Connections (Program 3701), County Probation (Program 3702), Veterans Services (Program 3703), Library Services (Program 3704), Human Services/Community Services (Program 3705), Community Development (Program 3706), and Grants – Community and Veterans Services (Program 9537).

Neighborhood Connections, Program 3701 – Page 20


 Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$5,000, for the creation of a Neighborhood Ambassador Program. The Program will be a hybrid course, which will be held both online and in person to educate residents on Manatee County functions.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$100,000, for Neighborhood Enhancement Grants.

Veterans Services, Program 3703 – Page 22

 Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$128,726, for two, additional Veterans Services Counselor positions to reach more Veterans in a timely manner.

Library Services, Program 3704 – Page 23

 Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$58,317, for one Assistant Librarian in the Outreach and Community Engagement Program.


Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$143,136, for two Collection Development Librarians dedicated to the selection and management of materials for the entire Library system at all seven locations.


Desired Unit 5 is a request for funding of \$76,892, for one Assistant Department Head for Library Programming.


Desired Unit 6 is a request for funding of \$25,000, for an Annual Refresh of Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment to Library facilities in a rotating fashion at all seven locations.

Desired Unit 7 is a request for funding of \$100,000, for the purchase of Library materials and electronic resources at all Library locations.

Human Services/Community Services, Program 3705 – Page 30


 Desired Unit 3 is for Temporary Services – Scan Client Files, for a temporary employee (up to six months), to scan in files for a one-time cost of \$26,645.


 Upon question, Ms. McLean stated the FY24 Library Reserves balance is \$8.7 million. The Summary of Reserves Recommended FY24 budget and how they are tied into the expenditure of uses will be reviewed June 12.


 Ms. Adams stated it currently takes four to six weeks for a Veteran to get an appointment and services. The addition of two Veterans Counselors will reduce the wait time to four to five days for a Veteran to receive services. Estimated cost savings of staff not having to scan client files, would result in the ability to see clients by an increase of one client.

(Depart/Enter Chairman Van Ostenbridge)


Pulled Items


 Commissioner Satcher stated he did not have a level of comfort with the Library Services budget, specifically Program 3704, and pulled Desired Units 7, 5, 4, and 3 for more information. Commissioner Baugh seconded the pulled items for discussion.


 Commissioner Kruse pointed out the reason why the balance of Library Reserves is so high is because they are not being spent; consequently, Library needs are massively underfunded.


 Commissioner Baugh explained she seconded the pulled items, because time has been wasted in trying to move forward. She does not want to hinder the opening of the new Library, but new policy is needed for its opening in September 2023, and the policy must be established for the benefit of and with respect for the citizens of Manatee County.


Commissioner Ballard agreed with Commissioner Baugh, but questioned if withholding funds would delay the opening of the new Library and reduce services for the community.

 Discussion ensued that the \$8.7 million in Library Reserves is for upgrades, the Library millage is .2475 and dedicated solely for operational costs, confusion between policy versus budget, total funded budget for Program 3704 is \$9.9 million which should cover the operational costs of all the County's Libraries, concern of additional Library staff being hired to push a political agenda, the image of Manatee County as a whole, have Library policy ready for Board review/consideration/action following summer recess, the County Attorney is not the author of policy, but serves as legal counsel to the Board, and the County Attorney's office would review Library policy once it is drafted.


 Commissioner Ballard shared suggestions to expand the Library Advisory Board, change the parental consent form, and provide labels for children's materials. However, the discussion that needs to be had is to work on the policy and present it at the July 25 meeting.

 Commissioner Baugh asked if Administration could provide policy to the Board in advance for review during summer recess and present the policy on July 25.


 Mr. Washington stated Libraries Services has policies; the Board just disagrees on how those policies are applied. He would work with the County Attorney's office to come up with a workable policy for the Libraries and staff. This is political and everyone understands the current environment. He could not stand for certain individuals to target specific individuals in the community based on correspondence received, religious beliefs and otherwise. As Acting County Administrator, Mr. Washington stated he would continue to do the best job possible to protect staff and move this County forward.

 Mr. McLean noted that the Library received an influx of dollars and positions to open the Lakewood Ranch Library September 23. What has been discussed is additional, recurring needed items. She requested clarification of the Board's desire to unfund these items and flag them in a special Reserve until a policy comes forward.


Pulled Desired Units 7, 5, 4 and 3 - Withdrawn

 Inasmuch as the Board is to address Library policy, Commissioner Satcher withdrew pulled Library Items (Program 3704, Desired Units 7, 5, 4, and 3). Commissioner Baugh concurred.

Convention and Visitors Bureau

 Elliott Falcione, Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Director, stated the CVB has three programs, with a total budget of \$15,815,755: Tourist Development (Program 1101), Convention Center/Crosley Operations (Program 1102), and Premier Sports Campus (Program 1103).


Tourist Development, Program 1101 – Page 48

 Desired Unit 3 is a request for an additional \$500,000, to support the domestic airline leisure travel marketing budget to maintain brand awareness in the recently added airline nonstop flight markets.

Mr. Falcione noted this is the first time in over a decade that additional marketing dollars have been requested for leisure tourism.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for additional increase of \$300,000 for FY24, for Conferences Marketing and Sales and another \$100,000, for a total of \$400,000 in FY25.


Convention Center/Crosley Operations, Program 1102 – Page 49

 Desired Unit 6 is a request for funding of \$66,301, for a new additional, full-time Event Supervisor.


Desired Unit 5 is a request for funding of \$39,113, to convert one current, part-time Event Tech III position to a full-time position.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$51,615, for a new, full-time Custodian at the Bradenton Area Convention Center.


Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$71,796, for a new, full-time Convention Sales Manager.

 Discussion ensued that leisure tourism is at an all-time high in Manatee County, if Mr. Elliott has sufficient dollars for Program 1101-Desired Unit 3, the need to advertise in bigger business industry publications in non-stop flight markets and to industries and corporations, the use of digital advertising Convention-brand elements will be integrated into leisure travel during non-peak season, funding request for Program 1101-Desired Unit 3 for airline travel marketing is warranted, there is potential non-stop cross-country airline flights cross-country and future non-stop flights to Europe, Mr. Falcione was congratulated for being re-appointed Chairman of the Airport Advisory Board, Desired Unit 3 funding will be invested into digital advertising, Florida receives five dollars for every dollar spent by a Florida visitor, Manatee County receives eight dollars for every dollar invested in marketing, Manatee County is drawing 33-35 percent of first-time Florida visitors, non-stop flights at Sarasota/Bradenton International Airport have increased exponentially since 2018, it is the fastest growing Airport in the United States for the past two years, the CVB is fiscally conservative, the CVB budget is funded by tourism revenues, and revenues are spent wisely.

County Administration

 Mr. Washington stated County Administration has six programs, with a total budget of \$19,881,101, and an additional desired increase of \$573,000. Ten new positions are requested. County Administration/Board of County Commissioners (Program 0101), Information Outreach (Program 0103), Records Management/Copy Center/Counter (Program 0104), Economic Development/Redevelopment (Program 0105), 311 Operations (Program 0106), and Agriculture – Admin (Program 0107).

Information Outreach, Program 0103 – Page 81


 Desired Unit 3 is a request for additional funding of \$40,044, for Promotional Special Events.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for additional funding of \$8,000, for County-Wide Special Events (grand openings, ribbon cuttings).

Decision Unit 5 is a request for additional funding of \$16,150, for Continuing Education to provide memberships and conferences for staff members for FY24.

Desired Unit 6 is a request for funding of \$12,228, for video equipment.

Records Management/Copy Center/Courier, Program 0104 – Page 85

 Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$160,000, to upgrade the OnBase system for FY24. Mr. Washington stated he does not recommend this funding, as the IT team is not on board at this time with allowing the County to go into a cloud base with an enterprise system such as OnBase. More conversations are expected with OnBase staff related to the system to see if this is the direction the County would like to go.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$48,000 for FY24, for phase three of the Agenda Management System and basic functions of Agenda Management, Voting Clients and Minutes. This information would be used to develop a digital and paperless workflow to streamline the current process which requires printing materials that need Board signatures. This increases the workload for the Agenda Coordinators. Prerequisites for this project will include the implementation of the DocuSign and Adobe Sign modules.

Desired Unit 5 is a request for funding of \$41,000, to implement the E-Signature Configuration of OnBase DocuSign integration.

Mr. Washington requested Desired Unit 6 of \$48,000, for the OnBase Work Order System be put on hold. This may be brought back to the Board at a later date.


Desired Unit 7 is a request for funding of \$69,111, to hire an additional Courier to provide timely and efficient delivery and processing of mail for all County customers.

Desired Unit 8 is a request for funding of \$130,000, to implement OnBase upgrade modules used for Human Resources for Document Knowledge Transfer, Employee Performance and the External Portal to manage new hire paperwork.

Brief discussion occurred regarding the OnBase upgrades.

RECESS/RECONVENE: 3:00 p.m. – 3:09 p.m. All Commissioners were present.


County Attorney


 William Clague, County Attorney, stated the County Attorney's office has two programs, with a total staff of 19 and a total budget of \$18.9 million: Legal Representation (Program 0701) and Risk Management (Program 0702). The \$18.9 million budget includes funding of Risk Management, which retains a considerable amount of money to cover County liability.


Legal Representation, Program 0701 – Page 94


Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$80,214, for one Legal Assistant position.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$300,000, for market salary adjustments. Human Resources performed an industry salary comparison of all positions in the County Attorney's office, which concluded that the current pay grades were below market for five of the seven categories of employees as compared to other coastal governmental entities.


 Mr. Clague expressed concern that his office is at risk of falling behind the average level of compensation for government law offices in the area. He cannot let this happen, because it will be more difficult to hire and retain people. Any funding for pay ranges would be data driven, and he offered to report back to the Board on how the funding is applied.


 Commissioner Kruse asked Mr. Clague if he had enough staff, because the County Attorney's Office is overwhelmed and his concern is rushing things through this office, resulting in an additional cost, which could exceed the salary of another attorney. He spoke of a local ordinance bill that could create more work load for Mr. Clague's office.


 Mr. Clague stated he is cautious of adding additional attorneys, because it is hard to gauge where things are going. The Board could fund one new attorney position, which would not be filled until he determines the additional attorney is needed. The difficulty is that the hiring of another attorney requires the staff to support that attorney.

 Commissioner Kruse stated he would rather include an open FTE position for Mr. Clague to fill at his discretion as his office work load increases, so he does not have to wait until the next budget cycle.


 Commissioner Ballard concurred with Commissioner Kruse and questioned if County Attorney employees are included in the five percent, across-the-board compensation increase.

 In an effort to understand Mr. Clague rephrased the question if the across-the-board increase would address concern of maintaining the position of staying on average with the rest of the legal market, he stated he was not sure because it depends. Many other local government law offices are going to be under similar pressure in this very inflationary environment ,and he needs to keep up with them.

 He spoke about the loss of one Attorney to Pinellas County due to salary; however, he cannot base his office salaries just on governments of similar sizes. He addressed the cost investment to train an Attorney, looking at a two-year learning curve to practice at the same efficiency as those who are experienced. It is unfortunate to train Attorneys and then lose them to other law offices. He noted there is an intense demand for Paralegals and other legal support staff at this time.


 Mr. Clague stated there is the possibility that the workload will increase next year. Options are to come back to request one additional attorney, or seek outside legal counsel, which tends to lack in-house local government expertise. He would like to make sure salary ranges and average salaries based on years of experience, remain in line with the other local government law offices in the region with whom he competes to hire and retain people. The requested \$3.7 million budget increase would include the additional attorney.

Chairman Van Ostenbridge stated one person signed up to speak regarding Libraries.

 Janet Riggs, President of the Friends of the Island Library, stated all Librarians come from different backgrounds. The common thread is the love of libraries and appreciation of the benefits libraries bring to the County. The focus should be to get children reading instead of making this a political agenda.


There being no further public comments, Chairman Van Ostenbridge resumed the budget presentations.

Financial Management

 The Financial Management Department has three programs, with a total budget of \$6,282,739: Management and Budget (Program 1401), Purchasing (Program 1402) and Fiscal Services (Program 1403). Financial Management is funded mostly from the General Fund; however, with the new Fiscal Services Division, Financial Management has a multitude of funding sources.

(Depart Chairman Van Ostenbridge)

Management and Budget, Program 1401 – Page 124


 Fiscal staff from each department was merged with Financial Management (10/1/22), resulting in a staff increase from 37 to 117. One of the Budget Analyst Decision Unit requests is due to her assistant inheriting the Human Resources Liaison duties, which is absorbing all her time.

Desired Unit Request Withdrawn

Ms. McLean requested one Budget Analyst to fill the Liaison position, and the County Administrator granted the additional position because it is needed now. Therefore, Ms. McLean withdraw one, new Budget Analyst I position for FY24-25.

The second Budget Analyst request, Desired Unit 3, is for funding of \$103,687, to help with the load of work coming into the CIP.


Purchasing, Program 1402 – Page 125

 The other department under Financial Management is Purchasing. Manatee County has lost good staff due to retirement and has had to reach out to the market for staff with competitive compensation.


Fiscal Services, Program 1403 – Page 126

 Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$74,777, for one additional Fiscal Specialist to assist in the support of the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Human Resources

 Human Resources Department has two programs, with a total budget of \$14,452,153: Human Resources Services (Program 1501) and Employee Health Benefits (Program 1503).

Desired Unit 3, Program 1501 – Withdrawn

 Zach Ribble, Employee Relations Manager, withdrew Desired Unit 3 for funding of \$64,655, for one requested position under Human Resource Services (Program 1501).


Employee Health Benefits, (Program 1503), Desired Unit 3 is the second request for funding of \$82,272, for one position to address the increase in health benefit claims.

Natural Resources

Natural Resources Department has five programs, with a total budget of \$8,350,750: Natural Resources (Program 4001), Environmental Protection and Mining Regulation (Program 4002), Ecological and Marine Resources (Program 4003), Environmental Lands (Program 4004), and Programming, Volunteer and Education (Program 4005). Natural Resources' main funding sources are the General Fund and Environmental Lands Millage.

(Enter Chairman Van Ostenbridge)

Natural Resources, Program 4001 – Page 171


 Charlie Hunsicker, Natural Resources Director, stated Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$105,867, to hire a consultant to perform annual monitoring services for the Turtle Watch and Shorebird Monitoring Program-Anna Maria Island. This Program is required by State Law.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$93,500, to hire an outside contractor to perform annual, invasive plant management at Rye Preserve.

Desired Unit 5 is a request for funding of \$68,190, for one position and additional trapping equipment to control feral hogs in East county preserves.


Discussion ensued about the hog trapping and transport program, hogs are given away at no charge to local restaurants, and the staff position would be a full-time ranger.

Environmental Protection and Mining Regulation, Program 4002 – Page 179


 This Program measures and monitors air and water quality resources.

Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$82,310, for one Environmental Specialist position.


Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$67,000, to renovate the environmental laboratory at 1501 Dam Road.

 Upon question, Mr. Hunsicker stated that additional staffing is not included in the budget at this time; however, upon approval of the budget, a request for three, additional full-time staff would be brought back.

Commissioner Satcher stated Commissioner Rahn brought up the mitigation bank. There is no Board conflict on moving forward with the mitigation plan.

 Upon question Mr. Hunsicker stated that with the requested Decision Units along with the existing budget, an increase in General Funds would be approximately \$329,686. An increase in the Environmental Lands taken from the millage would be roughly, \$903,467, for a total Natural Resources budget of \$8,350,750.

Ecological and Marine Resources, Program 4003 – Page 180

 Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$100,000, to purchase/stockpile rock and shell to build multiple oyster reefs. Staff is working off \$6 million of grants to put oysters in the Manatee River.


Desired Unit 4 is to request the creation of a new Artificial Reef Deployment Program with contractual services for ongoing, small scale deployment of inshore and nearshore reef modules and materials.


Environmental Lands, Program 4004 – Page 181

Program 4004 is funded by the Environmental Millage and not General Funds.

Upon request, Mr. Hunsicker clarified the Desired Unit funding for Program 4003 represents one staff person and a vehicle.

Volunteer and Education, Program 4005 – Page 182

 Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$35,000, to upgrade several education facilities at Rye Preserve. Currently, 500 programs with 12,000 participants are overseen annually with just five staff.

 Chairman Van Ostenbridge commended Mr. Hunsicker for his work with Natural Resources; however, the budget is higher than anticipated. He suggested Mr. Hunsicker meet with Mr. Washington to trim the budget.

Sports and Leisure Services


Molly White, Deputy Director of Sports and Leisure Services, stated Sports and Leisure has one program, Recreation Programs (Program 3901), with a budget of \$6,093,049.

Recreation Programs, Program 3901 – Page 326


Desired Unit 3 is a request for funding of \$85,000, for the renovation of three, full size outdoor basketball courts at Lakewood Ranch Park.

Desired Unit 4 is a request for funding of \$66,768, to purchase four electric golf carts for use by the 13 Park Attendants at G.T. Bray, Lakewood Ranch, Buffalo Creek and Blackstone Parks.


Desired Unit 5 is a request for funding of \$60,000, to replace 12 Selectorized Exercise Machines at G.T. Bray Fitness Center. The replacement machines are purchased in a set.

 Desired Unit 6 is a request to set aside \$1 million to replace the aging irrigation system at Manatee and Buffalo Creek Golf Courses. Reserves balance is approximately \$3.6 million.

Desired Unit 9 is a request for funding of \$60,000, for a professional contractor to perform advanced maintenance and support on the eight clay courts at Walton Racquet Center starting in FY25.

 Discussion occurred as to the annual maintenance costs of the eight clay tennis courts, staff is getting ready to sign off on a \$2 million renovation that began two years ago which changed the irrigation system to be underneath, what constitutes continuation of annual maintenance costs, if a utilization versus cost analysis was done, a cost analysis would be provided, clay court memberships are significantly higher than a regular use membership at G.T. Bray, the clay is expensive and clay courts consume most of the memberships, the reason for baseball fields in District 5, more baseball fields are definitely needed due to growth and would be addressed in the CIP, none of the clay tennis courts are in Lakewood Ranch, and the tennis courts at the Marble facility are hard surfaced and are anticipated to be resurfaced.

Other County-Funded Programs/Agencies

 Ms. McLean reviewed Elements of the FY24 Recommended Budget. Other County-Funded Programs/Agencies include nine Programs of Economic Development Programs (Program 6000), Courts/Judicial (Program 6100), Other Community Services (Program 6200), General Government (Program 6301), Non-Profit Agencies – Adults (Program 6401), Non-Profit Agencies – Youth (Program 6402), Health Care Programs (Program 6403), Miscellaneous Programs (Program 6500) and Health Care – Public Safety (Program 6600). Some of these programs are maintained by Administrative and Community and Veterans Services.

Economic Development Program (CRAs), Program 6000 – Page 387

The budget for Economic Development Programs totals \$8,399,218, and constitutes funding for the five, Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs), with associated revenue.

Courts/Judicial, Program 6100 – Page 397

The Courts Judicial Programs FY24 budget of \$4,223,835 will be presented June 12.



Discussion ensued that funding for The Bar Association Legal Aid of \$119,677 is split between Legal Aid of Manasota (\$59,677) and Gulf Coast Legal Services (\$60,000), other funding for Court costs is Courthouse facilities and Judicial Center, Continuation Unit 5, Medical Examiner costs of \$2,029,738 (Other Community Services, Program 6200 – Page 401) does not include the new Medical Examiner facility, what constitutes \$2,029,738 for Medical Examiner costs, the funds are for a program managed by Community Services and further details would be provided, these funds do not represent Manatee County's portion of the new Medical Examiner shared facility with Sarasota and Desoto Counties, and the Board has not approved any funding for the new facility.



Chairman Van Ostenbridge addressed Other Community Services (Eligible Burials, Program 6200 – Page 401) in the amount of \$100,045. Funeral homes are losing money on indigent funerals. He stated he would ask Bradenton Mayor Brown to reach out to individual Commissioners to discuss this in greater detail.

General Government, Program 6301 – Page 389

Continuation 2, Non-Departmental Expenses are County-wide expenses incurred but not itemized as a department, e.g. funding for Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, Value Adjustment Board, legal services, external auditors, lobbying consultants, etc.

Upon question by Chairman Van Ostenbridge, Ms. McLean stated Lobbying Consultant funding of \$138,000 is for the only Lobbyist Consultant, Ballard Partners.

Other County-wide Costs of \$1,354,006 were reviewed.

Health Care Public Safety, Program 6600

Ms. McLean stated funding of \$150,000 is for The Academy of Glengary in Sarasota (a full-time, semi-private, non-profit rehabilitation facility for adults and children. The County has funded the facility for the past three years through Public Safety on the medical side.

Non-Profit Agencies, Children, Program 6402

Funding of \$13,525,651 to non-profit agencies is based on criteria of performance and deliverables, as assigned by the State.

Miscellaneous Programs (6500)

Funding of \$36,762 is for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Funding of \$80,418 is for Palm Aire MSTU Landscape.

Funding of \$98,054 is for Street Lighting District (18).

Ms. McLean reiterated the budgets of Constitutional Officers and Judicial Programs, as well as budgets for Property Management, Public Safety, and Information Technology (IT) would be presented June 12.

JUNE 7, 2023

(Continued)

A FY24 Proposed Budget Book would be presented July 27, and a FY24 Adopted Budget Book would be presented in September.

There being no public comment, Chairman Van Ostenbridge closed public comment.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Van Ostenbridge adjourned the Budget Work Session at 4:19 p.m.

Minutes Approved: July 25, 2023