

The Board of County Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida, met in special session on the above date for the purpose of conducting preliminary budget hearings on the 2004/2005 budget. The Chairman called the meeting to order, Commissioner Batchelor gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

<b>Commissioners:</b>	Josh Wooten, Chairman; Vicki Phillips, First Vice-Chairman; Roger Batchelor, Second Vice-Chairman; Gary Bartell and Jim Fowler
<b>Administrator:</b>	Richard Wm. Wesch
<b>Director of Management and Budget:</b>	Cathy Taylor
<b>Deputy Clerk:</b>	Glenda Brown

Chairman Wooten welcomed members of the judiciary, the constitutional officers, members of County staff, and others to the meeting. Mr. Wesch then reviewed the constitutional officer's preliminary budgets for 2004/2005 as follows:



**CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE** (Page 2-3/\$18,200, overall decrease -94.62%)

Mr. Wesch advised that there was one reduction in personnel, the Director of Courts position, which was due to the impacts of the Article V legislation.



**CLERK**

- **CLERK TO THE BOARD** (Page 4-5/\$1,094,673, overall increase 7.50%)
- **CLERK OF COUNTY COURTS** (Page 6-7/\$21,008, overall decrease of -96.84%)
- **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE** (Page 8-9/\$319,373, overall increase of 78.19%)
- **HISTORICAL RESOURCES** (Page 11/\$99,067, overall increase of 16.07%)

Mr. Wesch stated that the significant drop in the Clerk's Budget was also a result of the Article V legislation. He mentioned that the Accounts Receivable Budget might be substantially revised between now and the final budget hearing due to the possible Interlocal Agreement with the Florida Governmental Utilities Authority (FGUA) to handle billing services.

(9:06 A.M.)



**SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS** (Page 12-13/\$720,431, overall increase 26.07%)

**ELECTIONS** (Page 14-15 /\$487,853, overall increase 21.78%)

Mr. Wesch reported that the increase in this budget was due to equipment upgrades required under federal law, namely the touch screen voting machines; however, there was a potential for reimbursement from the government.

Susan Gill, Supervisor of Elections, explained that the state of Florida would receive \$11.6 million in reimbursements that would be divided among the counties, but it was unsure how much Citrus County would receive. She also stated that the "Help America Vote Act" required that equipment upgrades and one touch screen or certified system be in place in each voting facility by July 1, 2005, for the visually impaired.

She answered Commissioner Bartell's question regarding one new position by stating that with over 87,000 new registered voters, additional staff assistance was needed.



**PROPERTY APPRAISER** (Page 16-17/\$3,378,294, overall increase 27.38%)

Mr. Wesch stated that this budget might change between now and the final budget hearing because the Department of Revenue (DOR) had issues with two of the three position requests and approximately \$20,000 in equipment and operating expenses.

He responded to Commissioner Bartell's question regarding money reserved for litigation by stating that the Board's share of the \$500,000 for potential litigation with Progress Energy was \$472,565 because the Board funded about 91 percent of the Property Appraiser's Budget. He indicated that litigation might not be necessary, and that transfer of the money from the reserve account to another account would require Board action. He added that there was no deadline for the litigation, and that it was subject to continued negotiation between the Property Appraiser and Progress Energy. (9:12 A.M.)



**SHERIFF**

- **GENERAL OPERATING** (Page 18-21/\$19,297,829, overall increase 10.17%)
- **COURT SERVICES** (Page 20-21/\$2,356,602, overall increase 12.41%)
- **CITY OF INVERNESS** (Page 22-23/\$945,066)

Mr. Wesch stated that the Sheriff worked with staff for a balanced budget by giving back approximately \$145,000, and agreed to allow the Board to retain about \$180,000 in retirement reserves pending state action next legislative session.

Sheriff Jeff Dawsy commended Chairman Wooten for bringing the matter of the Bicycle Safety Program to his attention. He said that currently the program was under the direction of the Health Department; however, the grant was expiring and the program would cease. He stated that by reducing two communication officers' positions (\$80,000) and reducing fuel expense to \$1.80 per gallon, his office was able to fund the Bicycle Safety Program at approximately \$54,000, and that it would continue to operate under the Sheriff's Office from now on.

He mentioned that he felt comfortable in escrowing approximately \$183,000 in retirement funds this year; however, based on the information received from the state, the retirement premiums would increase next year. (9:15 A.M.)



**TAX COLLECTOR** (Page 24-25/\$2,230,000, overall increase 14.36%)

Mr. Wesch advised that the Tax Collector was on a different budgetary timeframe, and staff would not have that operating budget until August, which would be presented at the final budget hearing in September. He added that this budget reflected the amount the County paid to the Tax Collector for the collection of taxes and for special assessments established by the Board.



**GUARDIAN AD LITEM** (Page 26-27/\$4,800)

Mr. Wesch specified that this budget was another impact of Article V, and that the County was now obligated to fund the expenses of the Guardian Ad Litem Office. He advised that the Board had approved the transfer of that office from the Masonic Building to the second floor of the courthouse to minimize impacts to residents. (9:17 A.M.)



**COUNTY COURT MEDIATION** (Page 28-29/\$5,000, overall decrease -9.09%)

Mr. Wesch emphasized that the benefits to the County exceeded the expenses of this budget.



**COUNTY PLANNING** (Page 30-31/\$81,811, overall increase 2.16%)



**DRUG COURT GRANT** (Page 32-33/\$136,505, overall increase 39.26%)

Mr. Wesch stated that although a large part of the substantial increase was due to the expense of "other contractual services", revenue generated by the Drug Court Program would offset the financial impacts to County residents. (9:19 A.M.)



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY** (Page 34-35/\$9,392)



**HEALTH DEPARTMENT** (Page 36-37/\$900,313, overall increase 1.71%)

Mr. Wesch said that this budget was of great value to the County. He noted that the budget was reduced to reflect the transfer of the Bike Safety Program to the Sheriff's Office as indicated by Sheriff Dawsy earlier.



**MEDICAL EXAMINER** (Page 38-39/\$302,180, overall increase 6.63%)



**MENTAL HEALTH - MARION CITRUS** (Page 40-41/\$300,588)



**MENTAL HEALTH- KEY TRAINING CENTER** (Page 42-43/\$20,000)

Mr. Wesch reminded the Board that this budget was offset by the Key Center's very successful Tree Seedling Program.



**PUBLIC DEFENDER** (Page 44-45/\$10,580, overall decrease -92.51%)

Mr. Wesch explained that Article V greatly affected this budget, which resulted in a decrease in the Board's obligation to fund this office. (9:21 A.M.)



**STATE ATTORNEY** (Page 46-47/\$26,357, overall decrease -72.35%)

Mr. Wesch stated that this budget was also substantially impacted by Article V. He pointed out that the County Attorney was working very well with the State Attorney's Office in addressing the Article V implications in the prosecution of County ordinances.

Brad King, State Attorney for the Fifth Judicial Court, stated that his concern about the \$6,250 for machinery had been addressed and was in the budget. He commented that he thought Assistant County Attorney Michele Slingerland and he would work very well together in prosecuting violations of County ordinances. He mentioned that Citrus County could be a proto type in the State of Florida because this was the first time a state attorney had appointed a county attorney to perform this function.

Mrs. Taylor responded to Commissioner Bartell's question regarding the \$6,250 for machinery by stating that it was funded by the new Article V Technology Fee, which was found elsewhere in the budget book. (9:23 A.M.)



**TEEN COURT - FINES** (Page 48-49/\$45,999, overall decrease -45.53%)

Mr. Wesch advised that the overall budget decrease was due to one position being transferred to a grant-funded revenue source.

The Chairman opened the meeting for public comment. With no public comment, the Chairman recessed the meeting. (9:24 A.M.)

**The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 9:42 A.M.**



Mr. Wesch reviewed the remainder of the budget by division.

<b>DIVISION</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b>	<b>2003-2004 BUDGET</b>	<b>2004-2005 RECOMMENDED</b>	<b>OVERALL % INCREASE/ DECREASE</b>
Community Services Administration	50-51	124,820	133,818	7.21%
Extension Center	52-53	357,406	365,549	2.28%
Canning Center	54-55	38,470	38,146	-0.84%
Nitrate Workgroup	56-57	20,338	11,441	-43.75%
Libraries	58-61	2,332,256	2,797,878	19.96%
Schitzer Trust	62	3,000	2,000	-
Library Trust	63	10,000	6,500	-35.00%
Parks	64-65	786,934	873,981	11.06%
Parks CIP	66-67	646,998	177,000	-72.64%
Parks Special Programs	68-69	103,386	176,584	70.80%
Chassahowitzka RV Campground	70-71	248,016	250,325	0.93%

Community Support Services	72-73	300,384	311,254	3.62%
Community Support Private	74-75		117,500	-
Veterans Service	76-77	96,835	134,868	39.28%
Social Services	78-79	70,373	73,302	4.16%
State/County Welfare Nursing Home	80-81	455,083	455,083	0.00%
State/County Welfare Hospital	82-83	684,740	684,740	0.00%
West Side Community Center	84-85	68,097	64,568	-5.18%
Citrus Springs Community Center	86-87		113,615	-
Senior Center	88-89	67,029	68,057	1.53%
East Side Senior Center	90-91	68,601	81,104	18.23%
N Paul Dr. Senior Center	92-93	20,691	25,192	21.75%
Tourist Tax	94-95	510,000	522,901	2.53%
Grant Cash Match	97		1,105,252	-
Development Services	98-99	194,392	186,256	-4.19%
Community Development	100-101	1,273,837	1,532,552	20.31%
Housing Services Division	102-103	144,151	154,314	7.05%
Building Inspection	104-105	2,241,167	2,351,085	4.90%
Public Services	106-107	541,891	641,762	18.43%
Animal Services	108-109	805,121	878,433	9.11%
Beverly Hills Fire Department	110-111	405,084	137,589	-66.03%
Fire Training Center	112-113	204,747	326,474	59.45%
Fire Administration	114	3,197,453	3,591,363	12.32%
Fire Rescue	115-117	2,062,911	2,951,377	43.07%
Reserves and Transfers	119	601,617	639,986	6.38%
Code Enforcement	120-121	575,952	571,122	-0.84%
Public Works Administration	122-123	472,210	481,424	1.95%
Capital Improvement Program - ADA	124-125	126,950	75,000	-40.92%
Aviation	126-127	83,046	80,321	-3.28%
Aviation CIP	128-129	291,750	205,716	-29.49%
Citrus Springs MSBU	130-132	476,960	835,613	75.20%
Beverly Hills MSBU	133	62,537	56,032	-10.40%
Road Maintenance	134-135	6,420,699	6,610,789	2.96%
Road Maintenance CIP	136-137	713,057	550,000	-22.87%
Aquatic Weed Control	138-139	1,928,511	2,694,009	39.69%
Lake Improvements	140-141	41,512	42,960	3.49%
Maintenance Operations	142-143	4,355,838	4,750,689	9.06%
Fleet Maintenance	144-145	813,567	786,576	-3.32%
Landfill	146-149	4,320,070	3,239,039	-25.02%
Long Term Care	150	507,412	1,247,990	145.95%
Litter Program	151	169,262	147,844	-12.65%
Recycling	152-153	668,326	645,689	-3.39%
Hazardous Waste	154-155	109,825	180,537	64.39%
Public Utilities	156	4,161,598	4,033,388	-3.08%
Water & Wastewater	157-159	4,090,554	3,944,557	-3.57%
Utility Billing	160-161	71,044	88,831	25.04%
Wastewater Expansion	162	-	175,000	-
Utilities Renewal/Replacement	163	456,700	143,700	-68.54%
WRWSA Renewal/Replacement	165	97,416	105,446	8.24%
Engineering	166-167	1,289,696	1,480,335	14.78%
Water Quality - Operating	168-169	208,888	190,848	-8.64%
Water Quality	170-171	727,500	70,000	-90.38%
Residential/Major Road	172-173	26,127,981	5,992,000	-77.07%
Board of County Commissioners	174-175	366,058	375,769	2.65%

Administrative Services	176-177	8,550,051	9,367,515	9.56%
Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	178-179	2,200,209	2,167,677	-1.48%
County Administrator	180-181	553,730	685,891	23.87%
County Attorney	182-183	364,794	416,361	14.14%
Human Resources	184-185	255,463	339,907	33.06%
Office of Management & Budget	186-187	377,088	354,130	-6.09%
Systems Management	188-189	890,341	1,184,608	33.05%
Geographic Information	190-191	-	214,034	-
Utility Fee Trust Account	192-193	275,000	188,662	-31.40%
107 Reserves and Transfers	195	68,500	71,000	3.65%
102 Reserves and Transfers	196	815,000	968,895	18.88%
001 Reserves and Transfers	197	5,726,227	6,366,373	11.18%
Court Facility Program	198	300,000	215,000	-28.33%
Boating Improvement	199	75,543	81,300	7.62%
Article V Technology	200-201	-	392,103	-
Article V Facilities	202	-	163,335	-
Article V Legal Aid	203	-	34,321	-
Article V Law Library	204	-	34,321	-
Article V Teen Court	205	-	34,321	-
Article V Drug Court	206	-	34,321	-
Article V Law Enforcement	207	-	24,355	-
Occupational License	208	124,100	220,100	77.36%
Health Insurance	209	3,200,270	4,451,500	39.10%
Insurance Trust Fund	210	3,005,005	3,257,000	8.39%
Dental Fund	211	311,932	360,000	15.41%
Courthouse Expansion	212	-	300,000	-
Community Center	213	-	300,000	-
<b>DEPT SERVICES</b>				
CRIM Justice Facility	215	406,900	372,200	-8.53%
Criminal Justice Facility	216	661,400	637,400	-3.63%
Lecanto Office Building	217	573,900	560,900	-2.27%
1999-2000 Projects	218	321,900	308,000	-4.32%
2001 Projects	219	385,000	375,000	-2.60%
Limerock Special Assessment	220	170,700	154,250	-9.64%
Limerock Program	221	47,603	45,000	-5.74%
River Rd & Stokes Ferry	222	-	12,454	-
Indian Water Program	223	4,000	4,000	0.00%
Tsala Apopka Gardens	224	26,225	26,510	1.09%
High Ridge Estate	225	-	17,899	-
Laguna Palms MSBU	226	28,300	44,645	57.76%
Suburban Acres	227	-	89,651	-
Riverhaven MSBU	228	193,850	193,700	-0.08%
Kensington Estates	229	2,100	2,250	7.14%
Cedar Lake Estates	230	1,410	1,460	3.55%
Carpenters Country Square	231	1,535	1,610	4.89%
Lovelace Lodges	232	3,633	3,633	0.00%
Crystal Oaks 7 & 8	233	5,910	6,060	2.54%
Southern Woods 2 & 3	234	4,400	4,500	2.27%
Southern Woods	235	3,080	3,180	3.25%
Hampton Hills	236	6,430	6,630	3.11%
Castle Lake Park	237	4,429	4,429	0.00%
Connell Heights	238	940	940	0.00%

Dixie Shores	239	1,370	1,520	10.95%
Emerald Oaks	240	1,030	1,030	0.00%
Apache Shores	241	2,510	2,830	12.75%
Crystal Oaks	242	12,260	12,260	0.00%
Cypress Village	243	193,060	198,060	2.59%
Foxwood	244	1,980	2,090	5.56%
Riverhaven Village	245	19,100	19,820	3.77%
Crystal Paradise	246	7,750	8,200	5.81%
Crystal Glen	247	6,880	7,050	2.47%
Cinnamon Ridge	248	8,310	8,310	0.00%
Water Oaks Subdivision	249	2,460	2,460	0.00%
Flying Dutchman	250	2,930	2,980	1.71%
Oak Forest	251	2,090	2,090	0.00%
Spring Gardens	252	2,150	2,250	4.65%
<b>IMPACT FEES</b>				
School	254	780,000	940,000	20.51%
Law Enforcement	255	197,000	575,000	192.00%
Fire	256	269,885	318,385	17.97%
EMS	257	52,615	52,815	0.38%
Libraries	258	140,500	38,500	-72.60%
Public Buildings	259	280,000	475,000	69.64%
Community Park 1	260	-	13,000	-
Park District 3 Impact Fees	261	199,356	23,000	-88.46%
Park Impact Fees/Dist 1	262	77,000	107,100	39.09%
Park Impact Fees/Dist 2	263	132,609	545,200	311.13%
Park Impact Fees/Dist 3	264	187,675	293,410	56.34%
Park Impact Fees/Dist 4	265	237,442	110,650	-53.40%
Road Impact Fees/Dist A	266	755,000	510,000	-32.45%
Road Impact Fees/Dist B	267	470,000	233,500	-50.32%
Road Impact Fees/Dist C	268	1,323,000	110,000	-91.69%
Road Impact Fees/Dist D	269	862,135	525,000	-39.10%



## **DISCUSSION**



### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES/BUILDING DIVISION**

Gaston Hall distributed the following documentation (filed with the Clerk's agenda): a letter from the Citrus County Builders Association (CCBA) President Ron Lieberman authorizing Mr. Hall to speak on behalf of the CCBA; two memorandums to the County Administrator from Gary Maidhof, Development Services Director; and a letter from the CCBA requesting changes to the Building Division (BD). He stated that the BD had been funded solely by permit fees since 1998, and that currently there was over \$2 million in the account. He advised that in 2000, the Insurance Services Office, Inc., (ISO) identified areas in the BD that needed improvement, such as staffing, a better staff selection process, training, and other issues; however, salaries had fallen farther behind in the last four years and were not competitive with surrounding counties. He remarked that the CCBA believed that this was the reason the BD could not fill vacant positions. He referred to Mr. Maidhof's letter requesting that changes be made in the BD, but that nothing had been done. He asked the Board to enact the CCBA's requested changes.

Mr. Wesch suggested that staff be given an opportunity to review the requested changes in the CCBA's letter dated July 28, and prepare a report to the Board on the County's current status and improvements that should be made. He stated that it was important to note that there was competition in all qualified County positions, not just in the BD. He also stated that it was County policy to treat all employees equally and fairly, and although the BD was funded by permit fees, there must be consistency in the overall classification.

Mike Moberly pointed out that not only had building inspector classifications changed, but that the nature of building inspections had changed. He explained that in past years, inspectors could perform multiple trades; however, under new state criteria, it would take years to achieve multiple building inspection trades; therefore, inspectors with multiple trades had become more valuable. He stated that the CCBA understood that all County employees must be treated equally, but the position of building inspector needed a salary adjustment now because of the change in the industry.

Commissioner Batchelor commented that several years ago, the state criteria for building inspector caused a high demand for qualified inspectors, and that the Board discussed the situation and decided that something had to be done. He stated that he thought staff should review this particular section of employment and bring the information back to the Board before the final budget hearing.

Mr. Moberly emphasized that this was not just a supply and demand situation; it was a change in the state criteria that had made the inspectors more valuable.

Commissioner Bartell mentioned that this issue had been discussed many times, and that he had understood that staff would continue monitoring the issue and make adjustments accordingly. He questioned if there had been a response to Mr. Maidhof's memorandums dated May 27 and May 28 regarding building inspector reclassifications and monetary compensation.

Mr. Wesch replied that the Human Resources (HR) Office did perform a comparative analysis of salaries and benefits of other counties and determined that the County was competitive. He agreed that the nature of the building industry had changed, that staff needed to assess the method used in hiring building inspectors, and if warranted, develop a program to convert from all trade inspectors to individual trade inspectors. He also suggested that staff improve the task of acquiring state certification for building inspectors, and that the HR Director attend all building inspector interviews. He advised that since 2002, the County had lost five building inspectors, not to other jurisdictions, but for personal reasons, retirement, and the private sector. He added that the focus should be to review and convert from the philosophy of all trade inspectors to individual trade inspectors, and then reorganize and adjust pay scales accordingly.

Commissioner Bartell replied that he thought the Board had already given staff direction to hire specialized trade inspectors. Mr. Wesch explained that some of the new hires were specialized in one building trade; however, he was talking about reorganizing



the entire BD, and dividing the all trade inspectors into areas of expertise. He added that the current staff should also be more efficient with new technology.

Discussion ensued concerning building inspectors as follows: comparisons were done in only two counties; increase existing salaries; inspections not being done correctly due to having to perform too many each day; creating different inspector classifications; being overworked and underpaid; the CCBA forewarning the County of this problem; lack of inspectors harming the building industry, and so on.

Mr. Wesch confirmed that there were currently three vacancies and that compensation was an issue; however, the biggest issue was the inability of inspectors to obtain state certification. Mr. Maidhof explained that at least one position had been vacant for over a year, but that the other two were newly created positions.

Chairman Wooten remarked that in his opinion, the information provided today should go through the proper channels of staff examination, and then Mr. Wesch would report staff's assessment to the Board. Commissioner Bartell mentioned that he wanted a full analysis of the situation, including comparisons of other counties, management issues, and changes that were currently facing the County. He added that staff's report should be scheduled for a regular Board meeting prior to the final budget hearing. Mr. Wesch affirmed that staff would report to the Board as directed.

Mr. Hall informed the Board that the City of Inverness (City) had approached the CCBA about merging the City and County Building Divisions. He stated that the CCBA would endorse that action in order to operate under one jurisdiction and one set of rules and regulations.

Chairman Wooten mentioned that the County had a great relationship and had entered into many agreements with the City; however, this was the first time he had heard about this proposal. He added that he thought the City Manager and the County Administrator should discuss this issue first. Mr. Hall requested that the CCBA be involved in those negotiations. Commissioner Bartell stated that while he appreciated Mr. Hall's input, the Chairman was correct, Mr. Wesch and the City Manager should discuss the idea first, and if a plan were developed, the Board would be glad to consider the issue.

Chairman Wooten said that the consensus of the Board was that staff analyze all the BD issues and report their findings to the Board prior to the budget hearing.

Mr. Wesch responded to Commissioner Batchelor's comment regarding direction given to staff to conduct annual salary studies by stating that HR was conducting studies and comparisons on an annual basis and would continue to do so. He pointed out that there was a budget request to adjust the minimums and maximums of all employee pay grades by three percent, which was due to the annual studies.

Commissioner Phillips instructed staff to specify the exact dollar amount in the BD special revenue account in addition to analyzing staffing issues. She added that she

did not support charging fees just to stockpile money, and that the special revenue account funds should be used for the intended purpose.

Mr. Maidhof answered Commissioner Fowler's question regarding building permits by stating that there were 330 permits waiting to be picked up, and that the turnaround time was three to five days on most applications. He added that he was in the process of inventorying the pending permits and would send letters to the appropriate persons.

Mr. Wesch advised that staff would require four to six weeks to analyze the BD issues before reporting the information to the Board. (10:18 A.M.)



**PUBLIC SAFETY/FIRE SERVICES**

Mr. Wesch stated that the Board challenged staff at the Preliminary Budget Workshop to develop an operational plan to hire paid firefighters this year without additional revenue sources. He also stated that this year's budget would allow hiring 27 paid firefighters at mid-year for placement at the most utilized fire stations in Pine Ridge, Connell Heights, and Inverness. He advised that in order to achieve this budget, the department's CIP budget was frozen for the year, and Public Safety Director Charles Poliseno was willing to forego the fire chief position for 12 months in order to free up an additional \$100,000 in revenue for paid firefighters.

Mr. Wesch confirmed for Chairman Wooten that staff would consider hiring volunteer firefighters for the positions of paid firefighters.

Commissioners Phillips and Wooten commended Mr. Poliseno and his staff for their willingness to take on the additional workload in order to accomplish the employment of paid firefighters this year. (10:23 A.M.)



**PRELIMINARY BUDGET WORKSHOP ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

Mr. Wesch addressed concerns expressed by the Board at the May 26, 2004, Preliminary Budget Workshop (supporting documentation filed with the Clerk's agenda).

**(1) HEALTHCARE INSURANCE COVERAGE**

The comparative analysis indicated that Blue Cross Blue Shield had control over the provider business within this region of the State of Florida.

Mr. Wesch replied to Chairman Wooten's question regarding the rise in costs from Blue Cross Blue Shield by stating that the budget was currently prepared at the 30 percent renewal factor. He added that after a meeting with the County's benefit coordinator, staff hoped to provide a reduced number at the final budget hearing.

Chairman Wooten recommended that the County absorb the increase in dependant healthcare coverage again this year because the pay raises received by some

employees would be offset by the increased costs of insurance. He mentioned several potential areas of savings in the budget that could possibly go toward this issue, including the Brown School debt service that would be balanced by the VA lease.

Mr. Wesch explained that the subsidy would probably be about the same as last year, which was in excess of \$100,000. He added that there were some outstanding issues that would be resolved between now and September, and if the Board directed, staff could review and determine if those savings could be used to subsidize the increased healthcare costs.

Commissioners Fowler and Batchelor agreed that additional funds in this year's budget should be used to offset the increased dependant healthcare costs. Short discussion followed.

The Chairman requested that staff report the final cost and funding solutions to the Board for discussion at the appropriate time. (10:30 A.M.)

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Commissioner Fowler mentioned that for two or three years he had requested an addendum to the mowing contracts that would require contractors to pick up liter when mowing right of ways and that it could be made a part of the bid process. He explained to the Chairman that the inmates were not doing a sufficient job. Commissioner Phillips stated that she had no problem including the request in the bid process to see what the cost would be. The Board concurred. (10:32 A.M.)

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(2) **UTILIZATION OF THE FIRE TRAINING CENTER**

A report was prepared and included in the supporting documentation.

(3) **FIREFIGHTERS' ISSUES**

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

(4) **PAVING LIMEROCK ROADS**

Staff would develop special assessment programs for paving limerock roads, which would begin in one geographic area of the County and continue until all roads were paved. The current budget for maintaining limerock roads would be retained until all roads were paved. Staff would report a proposed timeframe for this task at a future meeting. (10:34 A.M.)

(5) **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

Mr. Battista advised that he had mailed a memorandum to each Commissioner concerning the need for a second Assistant County Attorney (filed with the Clerk's agenda).

Commissioner Fowler stated that he did not think the method for determining the need for a third attorney was to divide the workload of two attorneys into three jobs. He explained that he thought the decision to hire another attorney should be when the Board started questioning the costs of outside legal services, which resulted because the County Attorney's Office workload had become too enormous. He further stated that there was no evidence demonstrated to him that proved a third attorney was necessary.

Chairman Wooten commented that although Mr. Battista's memorandum outlined various functions of the County Attorney's Office, he thought the request was premature at this time, and he would not support the request.

Commissioner Phillips stated that Commissioner Fowler's statement regarding contracted attorneys was interesting, and she would like to know the amount of fees paid to outside attorneys. She mentioned a memorandum she had seen from an external law firm that offered an opinion on a question about a municipal services benefit unit, which she said she could have answered. She requested an accounting of the contracted legal services and costs for the past year and the upcoming year from the County Administrator and the County Attorney, which might indicate if a third attorney was needed.

Commissioner Bartell commented that a cost comparison between contractual services and a third attorney was very important. He asked if the Board would agree to maintain the funds in the budget until the next fiscal year. Mr. Battista responded to his question regarding the costs for an additional attorney by stating that the starting salary would be \$43,000 per year. Mrs. Taylor specified that benefits would be 25 to 35 percent.

Commissioner Batchelor agreed and stated that identifying how much the County was spending on outside legal services would help the Board make a decision on whether an additional attorney was needed. Short discussion followed.

Chairman Wooten stated that the consensus of the Board was to maintain the funds for an additional attorney in the budget, but postpone the hiring decision until a future date. (10:43 A.M.)



### **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

#### **2-1-1 INFORMATION DATABASE**

Mr. Wesch informed the Board that the United Way had provided information and a proposal for a 2-1-1 Information Data Base (filed with the Clerk's agenda), which would be a storehouse of available County services. He also stated that the actual call center would be located in Hillsborough County, and that the United Way would serve as the lead agency in assimilating each in-County agency's services offered to residents. He reported that the 2-1-1 process was being recognized in Florida and all across the nation. He added that the contractual obligation would be \$22,000.

Commissioner Phillips advised that 2-1-1 began after the tragedy of September 11, 2001, and that since its origination, federal funding had been eliminated, and local governments must now provide funding. She stated that 2-1-1 was a nationwide

recognized number reserved with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for local governments to be the first contact in providing local services. She explained that the persons responding to 2-1-1 calls were certified to respond to people in need of particular services, that 2-1-1 operated 24 hours 7 days a week, and that all types of information was provided, included housing, food, suicide hotlines, and so on. She said that she became aware of the need for 2-1-1 through Mary Beth Nayfield, Director of Public Health, and John Marmish, Director of the United Way. She stated that Ms. Nayfield had applied for a grant; however, she might not be successful; therefore, she requested that the Board set aside \$22,000 this year for this purpose. She further stated that the information provided by the United Way disclosed the results of a public workshop sponsored by the Shared Services Alliance, which indicated that there was a need for this service. She pointed out that this was not a donation to an organization; it was a contract for service.

The Commissioners supported the request and thought it would be an excellent service to the citizens. Commissioner Phillips mentioned that it would cost \$150,000 to establish this service exclusively for Citrus County, and that contracting with an already established group would be more cost effective. She explained that the County would always have the authority to establish its own 2-1-1 service or solicit other organizations for the service, and that the service would be monitored for efficiency.

Mr. Marmish responded to the Chairman's question regarding the Sheriff's Office by stating that Sheriff Dawsy supported the concept. He advised that the 2-1-1 service would respond to less urgent calls and reduce the number of calls coming into the 9-1-1 Center. He stated that trained professionals answering calls from a central location would provide better information and eliminate a lot of time spent by city and county governments in answering service type calls. He further stated that reports would be generated, which would indicate major demands for specific services in particular regions of the County. He added that 2-1-1 would also work when there were power outages, and could be the source for providing information relating to emergencies, evacuation routes, and relief for other disasters.

Commissioner Bartell left the meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding 2-1-1 providing information of assistance from faith-based organizations, the 2-1-1 database would provide current information available from the agencies, United Way would serve as the focal point in communicating with organizations, agencies, television stations, radio stations, and others in letting the public know that the 2-1-1 service was available, and so on.

Commissioner Bartell returned to the meeting.

The Board consented to support and set aside funds for the 2-1-1 operation as requested.

Mike Gudis spoke in favor of 2-1-1 and said that the service would be a great investment for the citizens.

Mr. Wesch indicated that a motion was needed to establish millage rates and to authorize the Chairman to execute the Certificate of Taxable Value, DR-420. He pointed out that this was the eighth straight year that the millage rate had remained at 8.5553.

**Motion by Commissioner Phillips, seconded by Commissioner Batchelor, to (1) establish the following millage rates: General Fund at 6.4598, Transportation at 1.1470, Health Department at 0.1342, County-Wide Total for Board of County Commissioners at 7.7410, Fire Protection Taxing District at 0.4810, Library Taxing District at 0.3333, for a total millage rate of 8.5553, and (2) approve and authorize the Chairman to execute the Certificate of Taxable Value, DR-420.**

The Chairman opened the public hearing for public comment. With no public comment, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

**The Chairman called a question on the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Wesch thanked the Board, the constitutional officers, Mrs. Taylor and her staff, and all employees involved in developing this year's budget. Chairman Wooten complimented staff for the appropriate decisions made and for placing human needs ahead of equipment and other matters.

Mr. Wesch announced the dates for the final budget hearings in September.

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting. (11:03 P.M.)

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_, Clerk \_\_\_\_\_, Chairman