

The Board of County Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida, met in special session on the above date to conduct Preliminary Budget Hearings on the 2005/2006 budget.

Present: Vicki Phillips, Chairwoman; Gary Bartell, First Vice-Chairman; Jim Fowler, Second Vice-Chairman; Dennis Damato and Joyce Valentino

Administrator: Richard Wm. Wesch
Director of Management and Budget: Cathy Taylor

Clerks: Betty Strifler, Clerk, and Theresa Steelfox, Deputy Clerk

The Chairwoman called the meeting to order, Commissioner Fowler gave the invocation, and Commissioner Bartell led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Wesch explained that staff had presented the Board's portion of this budget package in May 2005; therefore, the Constitutional Officers' budgets would be reviewed first and then other issues the Board needed to review would follow.

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS:

Pages 40-41 Supervisor of Elections - \$765,473 - 6.25% and pages 42-43 Elections - \$362,861 - (25.62%)

Mr. Wesch stated that Susan Gill, Supervisor of Elections, had not requested any new positions and had an overall budget increase of 6.25 percent.

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE:

Pages 24-25 Judicial Administration - \$20,500 - 12.64%

Mr. Wesch advised that there were no salary accounts in this budget, and that the Board was only required to fund communication services, repair and maintenance, and other ancillary requests due to the implication of the Article V funding amendment. He mentioned that there was an increase of 12.64 percent in this budget.

Judge Patricia Thomas introduced the Trial Court Administrator David Trammell and Court Technology Officer Jonathan Lin. She thanked Mrs. Strifler and her staff for their continued work and cooperation with the judiciary during the transition to state funding, which she said was not true throughout the state with other judiciary and clerks.

CLERK TO THE BOARD:

Pages 6-7 Accounts Receivable - \$95,730 - 9.35%; pages 26-27 Clerk to the Board - \$1,179,186 - 4.89%; pages 28-29 Clerk of County Courts - \$13,500 - (35.74%); and pages 52-53 Historical Resources - \$95,076 - (4.03%)

Mr. Wesch informed the Board that no new positions were requested and there was an overall increase of 4.89 percent in the Clerk to the Board budget.

Mrs. Strifler stated that this marked a full year that the Board had not funded the Clerk of Court's court operations, which reduced the County budget by approximately \$900,000. She added that she was requesting Board funding for the Clerk's finance function, accounts receivable, historical resources, and records management.

PROPERTY APPRAISER:

Pages 72-73 \$3,555,239 - 8.12%

Mr. Wesch mentioned that this budget included five new positions and had approximately 14 percent budgetary increase; however, the Board's responsibility was for 8.12 percent. He explained that the Property Appraiser's Office was funded across the various taxing authorities, including the school board and the hospital.

He responded to Commissioner Bartell's questions regarding the \$500,000 that was placed in escrow for litigation by stating that the money had not been released by the Property Appraiser's Office and that staff would research and report back to the Board.

SHERIFF:

Pages 78-79 General Operating - \$21,954,750 - 13.77%; pages 80-81 Court Services - \$2,637,502 - 11.92%; and pages 82-83 City of Inverness - \$963,107 - 1.91%

Mr. Wesch explained that this budget included 13 new positions and had increased by approximately 13.77 percent.

Sheriff Jeff Dawsy and Mrs. Taylor replied to the Commissioner's questions as followed:

➤ Sheriff Dawsy stated that the additional personnel would be assigned to the County and would only be within the city limits during times of emergency, which was the primary law enforcement function. He added that increases in salary, fuel costs, retirement costs, and so on were included within the City of Inverness budget. He also stated that his office had finalized the contract with the City of Inverness.

➤ Mrs. Taylor advised that the revenue from the School Board for School Resource Officers (SROs) was shown as General Fund revenue.

➤Mrs. Taylor stated that staff would need to resolve whether the money from Nature Coast Emergency Medical Services (NCEMS) for 911 Dispatch would be transferred into the General Fund or sent directly to the Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Dawsy stated that the money from NCEMS was not reflected in his budget for accountability purposes. Mr. Wesch explained that it would be staff's request that the money from NCEMS be transferred into the Board's General Fund; therefore, staff would discuss this method with NCEMS.

➤Sheriff Dawsy explained that the 911 budget was a revenue source, that most of those funds were used for technology enhancements, and that he would break down the 911 budget for Commissioner Valentino.

➤Sheriff Dawsy advised that there were no state funds used for protective investigators, that trained civilians could assist the Division of Children and Family Services because most of those cases were civil in nature, and that if a criminal investigation was needed a deputy would respond.

➤Sheriff Dawsy said that his debt service was primarily used for automobiles and some technology. He added that his office was moving away from that concept because it was not an effective way to do business. He advised that the capital outlay was for automobiles, technology, computers, enhancements, and so on.

➤Sheriff Dawsy addressed the question regarding officers taking home vehicles by stating that they were modestly used for personal use, used to go to court, for personal fitness purposes, to go to school, and so on. He mentioned that the more officers that were in the neighborhoods and on the roads the less likely a crime occurred, and that assigning the vehicles to the officers was an employee benefit.

➤Sheriff Dawsy made comments about the SRO Program and advised that Citrus County's program was selected as one of five model SRO Programs in the nation. He mentioned that there were many programs in the schools that should be run by officers and not volunteers. He advised the Board of the many aspects of the program and the duties that the officers had when they were not in the schools during holidays and summer. He spoke about the 1,000 volunteers and the Public Service Aid Program for minor calls for service.

PUBLIC DEFENDER:

Pages 74-75 General Administration - \$10,580 - 0.00%

STATE ATTORNEY:

Pages 86-87 General Administration - \$26,720 - 1.38%

Mr. Wesch stated that the Public Defender and State Attorney budgets were statutorily driven by Article V.

He then continued by reviewing the various agencies' budgets.

Agency	Page Number	2004-2005 Budget	2005-2006 Recommended
County Court Mediation	206-207	5,000	10,290
County Planning	38-39	81,811	86,586
Division of Forestry	46-47	9,392	10,759
Guardian Ad Litem	50-51	4,800	5,200
Health Department	258-259	900,313	1,167,262
Medical Examiner	62-63	302,180	316,881
Mental Health (The Centers)	64-65	300,588	300,588
Mental Health (Key Center)	66-66	20,000	20,000

➤ Marcia Hewitt, representing The Centers, distributed a packet of information regarding her organization (filed with the Clerk's agenda). She gave a brief history of the mental health and substance abuse services that were provided to the County and stated that they had not asked for an increase in the budget for several years. She referred to a graph in the packet that reflected the number of County clients that had been served and the increases throughout the years. She advised that the need for mental illness and substance abuse disorder services was growing and that The Centers' staff were now serving the Citrus County Schools. She thanked the Board for their continued support and for the Board assigned liaison.

Mr. Wesch advised that The Centers was requesting a 5 percent budgetary increase or approximately \$15,000.

Ms. Hewitt replied to Commissioner Fowler's questions by stating The Centers tracked the mental health and substance abuse cases separately and that the cases seemed to be growing equally. She spoke about there being so many clients that had co-occurring disorders and both disorders had to be treated at the same time. She mentioned that her organization was starting a new co-occurring disorder project in this County, and that there was a legislative budget request to build a children and adolescent substance abuse residential facility.

She replied to Commissioner Phillips' question by stating that a similar budget increase was requested from the Marion County Board of County Commissioners.

She explained to Commissioner Valentino that her organization was a member of the Safe School Initiative Program with the Sheriff's Office; that they worked with Drug Court and the Homeless Coalition, that they met with the Health Department frequently on cases, and that they were part of many other services.

Mr. Wesch added that there had not been an increase in funding for The Centers since 1997.

Commissioner Bartell left the meeting.

Commissioners agreed to increase The Centers' budget by 5 percent.

Mr. Wesch stated that the constitutional officers' budgets and agencies' budgets had been completed. The Chairwoman commented that the constitutional officers in this County had been good to work with and there seemed to be a team effort now. Mr. Wesch said that staff agreed, that the budget process was an arduous task, and that the involvement and participation received from the constitutional officers made the job easier.

Commissioner Bartell returned to the meeting.

Mr. Wesch advised that the remainder of the budget document was the Board's budget items, that there had been no substantive changes since the May workshop, and that the Board's questions from the May workshop had been responded to in writing.

He then referred to page 100, Reserves and Transfers, Account No. 60999, and stated that staff would need guidance on how to allocate the surplus of approximately \$3,300,000. He explained that the current budget in its entirety (with the exception of The Centers' funding increase) was fundable at 8.143 mills and that last year's millage rate was 8.5553 mills, which resulted in that surplus. He added that this money was in addition to the Board's Contingency Fund at the 1 percent requirement or approximately \$700,000, and the Cash Reserve Fund at 6.5 percent.

The Chairwoman stated that she preferred taking the money out of the Reserves and Transfers account and giving it back to the people, unless a project needed to be funded now or the money needed to stay in the Reserves and Transfers account for some reason. Mr. Wesch explained that the current budget reflected the Board's level of service and funded the policies and programs that the Board had set as a priority. He added that the \$3,300,000 was available to the Board if they wanted to engage in an additional program or expand an existing program. The Chairwoman stated that she would need time to think about that decision.

Commissioner Bartell agreed with the Chairwoman; however, he recommended leaving the money in the Reserves and Transfers account and re-establishing the existing millage rate with the understanding that if the Board decided not to utilize those dollars at the Final Budget Hearing, the money would go back to the citizens with a millage reduction.

Commissioner Valentino asked questions about the \$400,000 that was in her district for a recreation/water park. She questioned how the money was transferred from her district and placed into the General Fund, why staff removed the money without Board direction, and why she was not informed of the transfer of funds.

The Chairwoman responded by stating that those funds originally came from the General Fund and was set aside under the Parks and Recreation budget for a family park. Mr. Wesch stated that the \$400,000 was placed into the General Fund pursuant to the Board's action of July 12, 2005. The Chairwoman advised that the Board was polled by a citizen at that meeting and even though she understood why staff would have taken the Board's reaction to the polling as direction regarding that money, no

formal motion was given to staff. She added that since the \$400,000 was back in the General Fund, the money was outside of the Parks and Recreation purview. She mentioned that the Board would need to decide if that money should stay in the General Fund or if it should be reserved for some type of park or recreational project. She further explained that the \$400,000 was originally from the General Fund, could be used for any credible project in any district, and was not restricted like impact fee money.

Discussion ensued regarding the history of the recreation/water park, the problems with having a park in that area of the County, the reason for staff's actions, and so on. The Chairwoman stated that since the money was placed back into the General Fund and the majority of the Board did not want to embark on a family park, the money should remain in the General Fund.

The Chairwoman stated that the Board needed to return to the discussion about the \$3,300,000 surplus. She agreed with Commissioner Bartell's suggestion of leaving the money in the Reserves and Transfers account until the Final Budget Hearing, and then the Board could decide if the money should be used for other projects or if the millage should be lowered.

Commissioner Damato commented that it was nice to have the extra revenue and suggested giving the money back to the people in services, such as potable drinking water, water and sewer, drainage, cash match for grants, and so on. He mentioned that the majority of those funds were paid by new residents of the County and those citizens would be demanding services. He added that if the millage was reduced now, it might be difficult to increase it later.

Commissioner Fowler agreed with Commissioner Damato regarding the services and read off a list of ideas that he had, such as, increasing the County emergency reserve, paying down debt service, increasing funding for the GIS (Geographic Information System), accelerating park improvements, instituting a local funding source for affordable housing, and so on.

Commissioner Bartell reiterated his suggestion and agreed there were many projects that needed to be considered. He added that the Board could utilize the money for transportation needs, modify the aggressive plan set for the next five years for roads, and readdress the implementation of the gas tax.

The Chairwoman recommended that the decision regarding the surplus money be made prior to the Final Budget Hearing, and Mr. Wesch suggested placing the discussion on the agenda of the September 13, 2005, regular meeting. He stated that staff would meet with the Board members individually prior to that meeting in order to composite an agenda exhibit with their ideas.

PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARINGS ISSUES AND CONCERNS

- (1) Page 9 - Administrative Services:
- (a) \$30,000 increase in Other Contractual Services - staff would research and bring the information back to the Board.
 - (b) \$25,000 increase in Medical Services - Mrs. Taylor explained that the increase was based on the Public Safety Director providing updated information on the expected jail count, and the revenues and expenditures associated with the CCA (Corrections Corporation of America) contract.
 - (c) Increase in the CCA contract - Mrs. Taylor explained that the increase was based on the anticipated rate times the number of inmates.
 - (d) Transfer to Whispering Pines Park - Mrs. Taylor stated that staff did not have the actual Whispering Pines Park budget when the budget booklet was submitted to the Board in May; therefore, the increase represented in this budget booklet was the actual budget request.
- (2) Page 11 - Animal Services - increase of approximately \$60,000 in salaries with no increase in staffing: Mr. Wesch stated that the increase was due to the bonus program approved by the Board for the building inspectors based on additional certifications that were obtained. He added that in order to maintain pay equity across the organization, staff extended that availability to similar positions, such as animal control inspectors.
- (3) Page 77 - Public Safety - increase in salaries with no increase in staffing: Mr. Wesch explained that this increase was due to the same explanation as with Animal Services.
- (4) The additional position in Parks (medium equipment operator) since the transfer of personnel from Maintenance Operations to Parks: Mrs. Taylor explained that staff failed to identify this position until the first payroll was completed, and that the medium equipment operator worked at the beach.
- (5) Page 189 - Fire Rescue - increase in Casual Labor and decrease in Firefighter Expenses Reimbursement: Mrs. Taylor stated that the changes were due to transferring the volunteers from the accounts payable system to the payroll system.
- (6) Page 243 - Citrus Springs Community Center - Staff would research if the Citrus Springs MSBU (Municipal Services Benefit Unit) contributed some funding for the Citrus Springs Community Center, and if so, reflect that amount in the budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fowler and seconded by Commissioner Damato to (1) set the following tentative millage rates: 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) announced that the Tentative Budget Hearing had been set for September 15, 2005, at 5:01 P.M.

Commissioner Bartell requested that staff provide the Board with a list or pie chart of discretionary/nondiscretionary items prior to the Final Budget Hearing. Commissioner Phillips asked for a condensed listing of the 35 new employees and their job classifications and departments.

The Commissioners thanked Mrs. Taylor for the improvements to the budget document.

The Chairwoman opened the hearing for public comment.

Morris Harvey stated that the Board was only entitled to the surplus money if they could justify a need and that staff should provide a performance analysis in the budget document.

He questioned the following:

EOC Center (Emergency Operation Center): the Chairwoman stated that staff would get the square footage information to him and that the Sheriff could respond to the other questions.

Aviation - \$40,000 income: Mr. Wesch explained that the \$40,000 was the revenue (percentage of gross sales) from the two Fixed Based Operator Contracts (Crystal River Airport and Inverness Airport). He mentioned the amount of money that had been allocated in the CIP (Capital Improvement Program) for the airports.

GIS: The Chairwoman stated that the program would be phased in over a number of years.

DeRosa Substation and water supply issues: Director of Public Safety Charles Polisenio stated that a fire station was needed further south to provide better response times and that water supply issues were being addressed in District IV.

With no further public comment, the Chairwoman closed the public hearing.

Mr. Wesch announced that the Final Budget Hearing would be September 27, 2005, at 5:01 P.M.

The Chairwoman called a question on the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting. (11:17 A.M.)

ATTEST: _____, Clerk _____, Chairwoman