

**CALHOUN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
JULY 21, 2016**

PRESENT AND ACTING:

**MARION "LEE LEE" BROWN, CHAIRMAN
WOODROW "LEE" SHELTON
DARRELL MCDUGALD
DENNIS JONES
THOMAS G. FLOWERS**

**CARLA A. HAND, CLERK OF COURT AND COUNTY COMPTROLLER
KATHY STEWART, CLERK FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING MANAGER
SARAH WILLIAMS, CLERK ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

The meeting held in the Regular Meeting Room was called to order by Chairman Brown at 5:05 p.m., CT. Chairman Brown led the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

CARLA A. HAND, CLERK OF COURT AND COUNTY COMPTROLLER

Clerk Hand stated the proposed budget was prepared with a 9.90 millage rate per the Board's instruction also noting there is a slight increase in the 2016-2017 proposed budget ad valorem tax revenue due to a slight increase in property values. The Clerk discussed the vote required at the final budget hearing for the adoption of the millage rate.

Clerk Hand referred everyone to page one (1) of the proposed budget pointing out the cash balance forward (reserve) in the General Fund is approximately 4 million dollars. The ending reserve balance is 2.8 million dollars, which means 1.2 million dollars of the reserve has been spent in this proposed budget (page 12). There have been some items outlined in the budget on pages 33 and 34 which make up a large part of the use of the reserve. The Board would have to cut expenditures by 1.2 million dollars to balance the budget without using reserves. Clerk Hand stated the proposed budget includes all the requests received in the Clerk's office, whether they have been funded in the past or not, except for the volunteer fire departments which are included in the budget at \$7,500 each.

Chairman Brown inquired about the Guardian Ad Litem program which is listed on page 34. Clerk Hand stated they are advocates on behalf of children. Commissioner McDougald stated they are appointed by the court when children are in the court system because of custody battles and other situations. They represent the best interest of the child in court cases.

Clerk Hand reminded the Board all departments and constitutional officers were asked to prepare their budget including a 3% raise. The estimated cost of the 3% raise is approximately \$100,000 including retirement, FICA, and Medicare.

Clerk Hand reminded the Board health insurance is budgeted at \$500 dollars per month. It was also mentioned the premium for 2016-2017 is in excess of the monthly employee budgeted allowance by \$29; this is an additional annual cost of approximately \$22,000. It was noted the Board will either need to increase the amount they pay for employee's health insurance, or require employees to share the remainder of the cost in excess of \$500.

Clerk Hand stated the total budget for all funds combined is \$31,669,824. A large part of the budget is grants in the road department funds. The special revenue funds are restricted and can only be used for specific expenditures.

Chairman Brown thanked Clerk Hand and her team for all the hard work and hours they put into preparing the budget, and opened discussion regarding the proposed budget.

Commissioner McDougald stated more money is asked for every year, and the amount of money brought in to pay for the increases remains about the same each year.

Chairman Brown inquired about the reduction to the Health Department budget appropriation by \$7,200, a result of the County assuming the responsibility for mosquito control. Mr. Joe Wood stated the Health Department is aware the County may deduct \$7,200 from their \$30,000 annual budget appropriation, and they understand. (\$7,200 was the match previously provided by the Health Department.) Commissioner McDougald inquired if Mr. Wood had talked with the City of Blountstown about cooperating with the County on the mosquito control program. Mr. Wood replied the City of Blountstown (\$5,500) and the Town of Altha (\$1,500) will participate as they did in previous years, also noting the City of Blountstown does not want to run their own mosquito control program. Commissioner McDougald asked if the percentage of time spraying in Blountstown and Altha are known. Mr. Wood stated the routes have to be calculated, and more information will be needed to get those figures. Commissioner McDougald stated if more time is spent in the city limits than in the unincorporated areas, the County should be funding the City instead of the City funding the County. Mr. Wood stated he is not sure if that will be the case, the City does a route down the streets, they do not go onto anyone's property like in the unincorporated areas of the county. Clerk Hand stated the Mosquito Control budget worksheet is included on page 87 of the proposed budget document. Commissioner McDougald asked how much money was contributed last year to the Health Department. Clerk Hand stated they were given \$30,000 and there was also a \$10,000 fuel budget for the Health Department. It was discussed the Health Department should not need a fuel budget since they are discontinuing operation of the mosquito control program. If the Board approves the mosquito control budget, the net increase in expenditures to the County is \$5,200 after removing \$10,000 for fuel and reducing the amount given the Health Department by \$7,200. Mr. Wood stated these figures for the mosquito control budget are estimates. Since the county has not run the program before they did not want to cut the budget short. Commissioner Shelton stated he thought fuel for the Health Department was \$12,000 a couple years ago. Clerk Hand stated there was one year where fuel used was approximately \$12,000 however fuel costs have gone down considerably in the past couple years.

Clerk Hand discussed the reason for the increase in reserves.

Commissioner Shelton stated he would like an update on the \$700,000 budgeted for air handlers in the courthouse. He asked if it is critical the air handlers be replaced. Mr. Wood stated this is not a critical component of the air conditioning system noting better control of airflow through the courthouse would be nice, but at this point is not something that is critically needed. Commissioner Shelton stated he would like to motion to take that line item out if the system is not needed this year. Clerk Hand stated this is a workshop so there cannot be a vote, but by consensus the Board can eliminate certain things or make changes. There is another Budget Workshop scheduled for next Thursday night that could be a Special Meeting, at which time the Board could vote to make changes to the budget.

Clerk Hand stated next Tuesday night at the Regular Board Meeting she will ask the Board to vote on the proposed millage rates for the TRIM notice. Clerk Hand also stated at the last Board Meeting the tentative and final budget hearings were set. The September 8th date conflicts with the School Board final budget hearing, and asked the Board to change the tentative meeting to September 6th. The Board agreed by consensus for the tentative budget hearing to be moved to September 6th at 5:01 p.m.

Chairman Brown inquired what the Calhoun County School District is provided without charge by the County. Mr. Wood replied the majority of the space in the basement of the courthouse is occupied by the School Board. The Board furnishes office space, utilities, and maintenance, and does not charge them any rent. The School Board pays for their own phone lines. Chairman Brown asked what would be considered percentage of office space the School Board occupies. Mr. Wood stated they occupy approximately one-half of the basement. Commissioner Flowers mentioned the School Board also was not charged for the building inspections at the new school in Altha. Chairman Brown asked how much the building inspections cost. Commissioner Flowers responded he believed it was around \$20,000. Mr. Wood stated the School Board also has some storage on the 3rd floor of the courthouse. Chairman Brown stated he had been asked about these things by several people. Mr. Wood stated it is his understanding the Blountstown Library would be tying into the high speed broadband internet of the Elementary School with no charge. Commissioner Flowers stated the Library will hook into the high speed broadband regardless, so the question becomes should \$29,500 be given to the School Board for broadband internet services, or finish covering health insurance for the county employees.

Chairman Brown asked about the Bay Cares Program who is requesting funding this year. Clerk Hand referred Chairman Brown to page 91 and 92 of the proposed budget, and stated she believes Bay Cares is housed in the Bay County Health Department and is a non-profit organization who partners with counties for referrals. They have tracked how many services they provided per patient, which was 15 patients in 2012 and 2013, and now they are down to 5. The organization was not funded last year. Clerk Hand stated the organization is considered un-insured specialty healthcare support. Commissioner Shelton asked if they have provided services for Calhoun County. Clerk Hand stated the letter states "from your county for patient services through the Bay County Cares Program". Chairman Brown stated he would like to have someone from the organization come and explain more about what services they offer.

Chairman Brown inquired about the Chemical Addictions Recovery Effort. Clerk Hand referred the Chairman to page 55 of the proposed budget. Clerk Hand stated they have office space on the 3rd floor. Mr. Wood stated he believes they are based out of Chipley. Chairman Brown asked who he would need

to contact to get more information about the organization. Clerk Hand stated there is contact information in the proposed budget. Chairman Brown asked if the organization has been funded in the past. Clerk Hand stated they have not been funded since Chairman Brown has been in office.

Chairman Brown asked if the \$40,000 budgeted for the Supervisor of Elections equipment lease is mandatory. Clerk Hand stated the purchase of new equipment is mandatory. Commissioner McDougald asked if the \$40,000 is based on a vote the Board took at an earlier meeting to approve the purchase of new voting equipment. Clerk Hand stated the equipment has not been chosen yet, and \$40,000 is the approximate cost net of an equipment grant. The Supervisor of Elections, Ms. Margie Laramore, thought the decision on the new equipment would be best for the new Supervisor of Elections to select since they would be the ones working with the equipment. Commissioner McDougald asked when the new equipment would be put in place. Ms. Laramore stated the equipment has to be in place by 2020, but she has recommended it be in place by 2018 during a smaller election cycle in case an issue was to arise. Commissioner McDougald asked if waiting a little later may have the possibility of funding from another source. Ms. Laramore stated there is not a good chance of that happening, and many counties have already upgraded to the new equipment. She stated by waiting one year the county would lose a small amount of grant funds, which are only available for 5 years. Clerk Hand stated the cost will be recurring every year.

Commissioner Jones inquired about the dirt pit for the county; it has been discussed before the dirt pit is not producing as it should. Mr. Wood stated he has been in contact with someone who may be willing to sell some property that has a small dirt pit already started. Mr. Wood stated he hoped the county would be able to acquire a new dirt pit before the end of the current budget cycle. He stated he would give the person he has been in contact about another week, and if they are still undecided he will follow more leads on other properties which may be promising prospects for a new dirt pit.

Commissioner McDougald asked about the Fuel Depot generator listed in the budget. Mr. Wood stated the generator at the Depot is very old. The generator will crank and run, but it takes about 20 minutes before it produces any electricity. Mr. Wood is concerned about how much longer the generator will run before it is inoperable. The generator is very important to the county, but he hates to spend a lot of money on fixing the generator if it is at the end of its life cycle. Chairman Brown asked about the size of the generator. Mr. Wood stated he has not been able to find a tag anywhere on it, they have all rusted and fallen off over the years. Commissioner McDougald asked if anyone comes out to inspect the generator. Mr. Wood stated all they have done is replace the engine several years ago when it blew. He could get Caterpillar to come out and check the generator, but they are expensive. Commissioner Jones asked who uses the Depot. Mr. Wood replied the Sheriff's office, Road Department, Ambulance Service, all county vehicles, and some of the volunteer fire departments. There is a fuel system at the Depot to keep up with how much fuel is used by the different departments, and a bill is sent to them every month. The generator is critical to the Depot continuing to function. There was further discussion about the fuel depot.

Chairman Brown inquired about the asbestos removal for the old jail which is budgeted every year. He asked if there was still asbestos present in the building. Mr. Wood stated an assessment was done previously and it was determined it would cost \$24,000 to remove the asbestos. If the building were to

be torn down, the asbestos would have to be removed first. If the Board is interested in tearing the old jail down next year the \$24,000 would need to be left in the budget, if not that line item could be cut. Commissioner Flowers stated the money could be used to buy a new generator for the fuel depot or a new vehicle for 911 Mapping and Addressing. Mr. Wood stated the new jail still works off the kitchen in the old jail, so to tear the old jail down a new kitchen would have to be constructed.

Commissioner Flowers asked if a 911 Mapping and Addressing vehicle was absolutely needed. Mr. Wood stated they are temporarily using the old courthouse car because the transmission has gone out in the 911 Mapping and Addressing vehicle. They are going to try to get by until another vehicle can be purchased.

Commissioner Shelton asked about the increase for the Fire Departments. Clerk Hand stated two of the volunteer fire departments asked for a grant match. Currently there is \$15,000 available in the 2015-2016 budget for a grant match. Commissioner Flowers stated the \$24,000 for asbestos abatement and the \$15,000 for grant match, neither of which have been used this budget cycle, could be used before the end of the year to take care of a few things.

Commissioner McDougald stated he had a chance to talk to some of the members of the Tri-County Ag Park board of directors at the meet and greet which was held last night. He has looked at the budget and they are asking for \$5,000 for the next budget cycle, and he has also looked at the Riparian County Stakeholder's Coalition who are asking for \$10,000. The Riparian County Stakeholder's Coalition does not benefit us much, but the Tri-County Ag Pavilion is in Calhoun County. Gulf County and Liberty County both participate in the Ag Park, and if Calhoun County does not make a contribution to the park they will most likely not have much participation either. If \$5,000 contributed by Calhoun County will possibly motivate the other counties to contribute it could be beneficial. There was further discussion about the Ag Park. Mr. Wood stated he spoke with Commissioner Ward McDaniel from Gulf County last night, and he indicated if Calhoun County budgeted money to the Ag Park, they would budget money as well. Chairman Brown stated he believes Colonel Silcox and Calhoun Correctional Institution would be willing to help more with inmate work crews for the Ag Park as well.

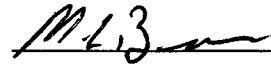
Clerk Hand asked if it would be suitable to the Board for the Tentative Budget Hearing to be scheduled for September 6th at 5:01 pm. The Final Budget Hearing has already been set for September 19th at 5:01 pm. The dates for the two (2) meetings need to be reported to the Property Appraiser's office as soon as possible. The Board came to a consensus for the meeting to be held on September 6th.

Commissioner Jones inquired about the insurance budget. Commissioner Flowers stated 3% raises would be \$100,000 and if the insurance allowance is raised the cost would be an additional \$22,000. Clerk Hand stated 3% raises are included in the budget, but raising the allowance for insurance has not been calculated into the proposed budget. Commissioner Jones asked if the Board does not contribute the additional \$22,000 would the Board employees and Constitutional Officer employees have to pay the difference of \$28.78. Mr. Wood stated to maintain the same amount of coverage the employees would have to pay the difference or move to a plan with less coverage. Clerk Hand stated all three (3) of the proposed insurance plans are over the \$500 allowance budgeted. Commissioner Shelton asked if the Board would like to stay with the current insurance plan, which is the more expensive of the three (3)

plans offered, or move to one of the other plans. The major difference in the top plan and the middle plan would be prescription drug co-pays. Commissioner Shelton suggested polling the employees to see what the majority would rather participate in. Commissioner McDougald stated he would rather see the Board go with the middle plan since there were not many major differences. Commissioner Shelton stated he would like to have more information from the Board employees as to what they would prefer at the next meeting. There was further discussion about insurance costs.

Clerk Hand stated she will ask the Commissioners at the Regular Board Meeting next Tuesday night to change the next scheduled Budget Workshop to a Special Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:20.


MARION "LEE LEE" BROWN, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:


CARLA A. HAND, CLERK