

**CALHOUN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MINUTES – BUDGET
APRIL 24, 2018**

PRESENT AND ACTING:

**DANNY RAY WISE, CHAIRMAN
GENE BAILEY, VICE-CHAIRMAN
DARRELL MCDUGALD
JERAL HALL
DENNIS JONES**

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

Chairman Wise called the workshop held in the regular Board meeting room to order at 5:00 P.M., CT.

Ms. Carla Peacock, Property Appraiser, stated the Legislature has approved Amendment 1 (Homestead Exemption Increase Amendment) to go on the 2018 ballot. Ms. Peacock stated homeowners with homestead properties with assessed values over \$125,000 would receive the full \$75,000 exemption from property taxes other than school taxes. Ms. Peacock stated properties with an assessed value between \$100,000 and \$125,000 would receive a proportional exemption. Ms. Peacock stated the Florida Association of Counties has done some research for each county and estimated Calhoun County has about 500 homes that would qualify for the additional exemption. Ms. Peacock stated the Property Appraiser's Office has estimated closer to 650 homes that would qualify, and are still receiving homestead exemption applications so the total number could still change. Ms. Peacock stated the exemption would take off \$129,923 in actual taxes from the tax roll, but legislation passed requiring the state legislature to provide funds to fiscally constrained counties to offset decreases in property taxes caused by the passage of Amendment 1. Ms. Peacock stated if the exemption passes in November, it would take effect in 2019. There was further discussion about Amendment 1. Ms. Peacock stated this exemption is not going to benefit everyone, so she has placed a calculator on her website for homestead property owners to enter their address to see if this exemption would benefit them.

Clerk Hand stated a six (6) month budget was provided to the Board in their April 10, 2018 agenda packets. Clerk Hand explained the calendar of events for planning the next Fiscal Year budget (2018-2019). Clerk Hand stated that in April the Board provides the Clerk's Office with directives to the Constitutional Officers, Department Heads, and outside entities, who must have their budget requests submitted to the Clerk's Office by June 1. Clerk Hand stated in June the Clerk's Office prepares a balanced budget and in July, an initial budget draft is provided to the Commissioners. Clerk Hand stated Special Budget Meetings are held as needed in July and August, and in August, the TRIM process begins.

Clerk Hand stated the current premium for Capital Health Plan insurance for employee only coverage is \$573.70 per month, and a 9.5 to 12.5% increase is anticipated which would be an estimated \$650 per month for employee only coverage in the next fiscal year. Clerk Hand stated they would like to use this amount if the Board is planning to provide insurance coverage at 100% as they have done in the past.

Clerk Hand stated the Board would need to determine the amount or percentage increase for employee raises. There was further discussion about raises.

Clerk Hand stated the Board would need to determine their equipment needs for the next fiscal year. Clerk Hand stated she has been asked to get pricing for Smart Boards for the meeting room for presentations and displaying information during Board meetings. Clerk Hand stated she has also heard a new spray truck for Mosquito Control might be needed, as well as necessary equipment for the Road Department.

Clerk Hand stated the Board would need to determine any Capital Projects they might consider for the next fiscal year, and if there were any special or new programs such as a Recreation Director, they would like to fund.

Clerk Hand stated the Board would need to determine funding for other outside organizations, such as the Volunteer Fire Departments, Chamber of Commerce, Calhoun County Senior Citizens, the Pioneer Settlement, and various others. Clerk Hand stated the Board would need to decide whether they would send these outside organizations a letter with instructions for requesting 2018-2019 budget funding, or to fund the organizations at a set amount.

Clerk Hand stated the Board would need to determine if they wanted the preliminary millage rate to be set at the current rate of 9.9 mils, or start out at 10 mils (the maximum allowed millage rate).

Clerk Hand stated the funding source of the County Bailiff position, Article V grant funds, would almost be depleted by the end of this fiscal year and once depleted this position would be funded with ad valorem taxes. Clerk Hand asked if the Board would rather the Bailiff become a Sheriff employee and increase the transfer to the Sheriff since the Bailiff is under his supervision.

Clerk Hand stated there might be some County employees that are considering retirement, so there could possibly be a payout of compensated absences as well as additional personnel costs (short period of overlap for training). Clerk Hand stated the Emergency Management Director position is currently an interim position, and stated the Board would need to decide whether they would advertise for a permanent director. Clerk Hand stated if the Board advertises for a permanent director, this position is subject to senior level retirement, which is a higher rate than the interim rate.

Clerk Hand stated the Board would need to determine whether they wanted to budget any discretionary funding for their individual districts as has been done in the past. Clerk Hand stated in a previous year \$20,000 per district was budgeted.

Clerk Hand stated the female inmates for Calhoun County are housed in Jackson County, and if the current number of female inmates is maintained, the County would go over budget by about \$45,000 this year. There was further discussion about female inmates. Commissioner Jones stated with the money spent throughout the year to house the female inmates at Jackson County the Sheriff could look into building a facility to house the inmates in Calhoun County and save some money. Clerk Hand stated the County must pay inmate medical, and do not normally have inmate medical bills for the female inmates because they have their own medical staff. Clerk Hand stated it is not unusual for the Clerk's Office to receive a \$20,000 medical bill for the male inmates, so it may be worth continuing to house the female inmates in Jackson County. There was further discussion about inmate budgets. Clerk Hand stated the Board might need to budget more for inmate housing in the next Fiscal Year.

Clerk Hand stated if the Board agrees, they would use \$650 for employee insurance when preparing the preliminary budget. Clerk Hand asked the Board how they would like to budget for raises. Commissioner Jones stated 3% would be a good starting place for raises. There was further discussion about salaries. There was Board consensus to compute a 3% raise across the Board split between all County employees. Commissioner Bailey asked what 9.9 mils would bring in for County taxes next year compared to this year. Ms. Peacock stated they are still working on the numbers, so she would not know the answer to that question until June 1. Commissioner Bailey asked Ms. Peacock if she has found out the assessed value of an oil well and how it effects property taxes. Ms. Peacock stated she has not gotten the information yet, and would not know the assessment until or if oil is found. Commissioner Bailey stated the first piece of drilling equipment is being moved on to the site today. There was further discussion about the oil well.

Clerk Hand stated they would direct the different departments to be specific about their equipment needs when they submit their budgets to the Clerk's Office. Clerk Hand asked the Board if they would like the Clerk's Office to include pricing for two (2) Smart Boards in the budget. There was Board consensus to budget for the Smart Boards.

Clerk Hand asked the Board if they have any capital projects they wanted to budget for in the next fiscal year. Commissioner Bailey \$50,000 be placed in the budget for Sam Atkins Park. Chairman Wise suggested the Board budget \$100,000 for the County parks.

Clerk Hand asked the Board if there are any special or new programs they would like to budget for in the next fiscal year. Commissioner Jones suggested funding an Animal Control budgeted. Ms. Kathy Stewart asked who would prepare the Animal Control budget request. Chairman Wise asked if the Sheriff's Department would handle Animal Control. Commissioner Jones stated in Gadsden County Animal Control is under the Public Works department. Clerk Hand stated she could get Mr. Joe Wood to help put together a budget estimate for Animal Control. Commissioner Bailey stated he would like to see some funding for Code Enforcement in the County, and possibly use the same person as Animal Control. Clerk Hand stated the two (2) positions would not be able to be placed in the same department (function) per the Uniform Chart of Accounts, but the same person could be hired to perform each job.

Clerk Hand asked the Board if they would like a letter sent to the other outside organizations funded by the Board or have a set amount budgeted for these organizations. Chairman Wise suggested including the same grant match funding in the budget for the Volunteer Fire Departments as last year. There was further discussion about sending letters. There was consensus of the Board not to send a letter of request to the other outside organizations. Commissioner Bailey suggested placing \$500 in the budget for firefighter physicals. There was further discussion about the budget. Commissioner Bailey asked Clerk Hand how the County revenues are at this point compared to how the Board budgeted last year. Clerk Hand stated the County is on target with what has been budgeted.

Commissioner Bailey stated \$50,000 was included in the budget year before last for CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) match funds. Commissioner Bailey asked if this match should be included in the preliminary budget in case the current CDBG project has been completed by June and another project could be applied for next year. Clerk Hand stated a \$50,000 CDBG grant match could be included in the County Transportation II budget.

Clerk Hand asked the Board what millage rate to use in the initial budget draft. There was Board consensus to set the millage at 9.9 mils in the preliminary budget.

Commissioner Bailey inquired about funding to repair the fire main to the two (2) empty fire hydrants above Four Mile Creek on State Road 73 North. Commissioner McDougald stated the County should apply for a grant for the water line, and stated the fire department has indicated the line is not needed. Commissioner Bailey stated he would like to try to fund repairs for the two (2) hydrants that are not working. Commissioner McDougald stated he has gotten several calls about roads that need new striping. Commissioner McDougald stated the County needs to look into equipment to re-stripe the roads. Commissioner Bailey stated the Board could put striping or striping equipment into the Road and Bridge budget for \$50,000 to buy equipment or pay a contractor to complete the work. There was further discussion about striping. There was Board consensus to include \$50,000 for striping or equipment for striping in the County Transportation II budget. Clerk Hand asked the Board if they wanted funding allocated for the hydrant at Carr School. Commissioner Jones asked Commissioner Hall what he has heard about the need for a hydrant. Commissioner Hall stated the fire chief has told him the hydrant is not needed because the fire station and tanker are right across the road from the school, but he has had other people call and tell him they believe the hydrant is needed. There was further discussion about the hydrant. Commissioner Jones asked if an answer as to what the School Board was willing to pay towards the cost of the new hydrant. Clerk Hand stated she does not believe this information has been received.

Clerk Hand stated if the Board thinks of anything else they want included in the budget, they could bring it up at a future meeting prior to the time the preliminary budget is completed. There was further discussion about the budget.

Commissioner McDougald stated he wants the Board to consider not budgeting for the Apalachee Regional Planning Council. Commissioner McDougald stated he served on the council for several years, and does not see how they are beneficial. Commissioner Bailey stated he would like funding for the ARPC left in the budget unless it was absolutely necessary to cut them from the budget. Commissioner Bailey stated he was in a meeting with the ARPC about the airport ordinance today. Commissioner Bailey stated the ARPC called a meeting for all the airports and FDOT in order to have a solid ordinance drawn up, as an informational service. Commissioner Bailey stated there are three (3) citizens from Calhoun County participating in the revolving loan program with the ARPC. Clerk Hand stated the ARPC does prepare a report each year about hazardous materials. Commissioner McDougald stated this is just an update each year of current information. Commissioner Bailey stated he was upset with the letter the ARPC sent out regarding the oil well, and he has let them know. Commissioner Bailey stated the letter should not have been sent.

Clerk Hand asked if the Board anticipates hiring a permanent Emergency Management Director in the next Fiscal Year. Commissioner Jones stated he believes the Board needs to advertise for a permanent position with hurricane season approaching and budget the position. Clerk Hand asked if the Board if they were going to fund an additional position. Commissioner McDougald stated the Board should check with the Emergency Management department to see what is needed. Commissioner Bailey stated he would like to see the Board fund the same three (3) positions as they did last year.

Clerk Hand asked the Board to consider whether they would like discretionary district funding to be placed in the budget in addition to the \$100,000 indicated to be placed in the budget for park improvements.

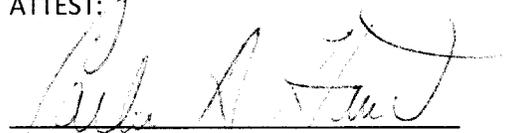
Commissioner Bailey asked if there are any unforeseen judicial costs, court costs, or courthouse security costs. Clerk Hand stated she has heard cameras and alarms on the doors are in the works for the courthouse, but those costs should be covered in the Court Facilities Fund.

Clerk Hand stated the Clerk's Office would get started with the information gathered tonight, and would check back with the Board at future meetings for any additional items.

There being no further business, the workshop adjourned at 5:52 p.m., CT.


DANNY RAY WISE, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:


CARLA A. HAND, CLERK