

JUNE 27, 2011

A Budget Workshop Meeting of the Board of Lee County Commissioners was held on this date with the following Commissioners present:

Frank B. Mann, Chairman
 John E. Manning, Vice Chairman
 A. Brian Bigelow
 Ray Judah
 Tammara Hall

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The Chairman then called on the following for their respective budget updates:

1. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

CLERK OF COURTS CHARLIE GREEN

Mr. Green referenced the budget summary he provided, and outlined the major reductions.

PROPERTY APPRAISER KEN WILKINSON

Deputy Property Appraiser Roger Desjarlais referenced the budget summary provided, and responded to the Chairman's request for a year-over-year expenditure comparison. He explained the funding mechanism for their budget, confirmed that they receive no ad valorem tax dollars, and noted their budget was approved by the State Department of Revenue.

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS SHARON HARRINGTON

Assistant County Manager Pete Winton advised that neither Ms. Harrington nor her representative were able to be present, and no budget report was provided.

TAX COLLECTOR CATHY CURTIS

Management Analyst Julie Drum stated that the Tax Collector's budget is funded in a similar fee generated manner as that of the Property Appraiser, in accordance with Florida statute. She continued that, while their overall Operating Budget is anticipated to go down, the preliminary number will not be available until August 1, when the budget is submitted to the Department of Revenue.

SHERIFF MIKE SCOTT

Sheriff Scott highlighted the budget submitted on June 1, and addressed the status of the School Resource Officer (SRO) contractual arrangements with the cities of Fort Myers and Cape Coral and advising that a meeting with the cities is scheduled for June 29. Sheriff Scott and Mr. Winton responded to Board questions.

2. COURT RELATED SERVICES

COURT ADMINISTRATION

Chief Deputy Court Administrator Lisa Kiesel, presented the current budget request which represented a reduction from the prior year; and noted that while their caseload increased, the State portion of their budget was reduced by approximately \$2 million

MEDICAL EXAMINER DR. REBECCA HAMILTON

Administrative Manager Patty Wheaton, on behalf of Dr. Hamilton who was unable to attend, advised that their budget would remain about the same as last year. Ms. Wheaton responded to Board questions and explained that the Medical Examiner's office operates as a private contractor to Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties and that all remaining unspent funds are returned to the Counties at fiscal year end.

PUBLIC DEFENDER KATHY SMITH

Ms. Smith reviewed the submitted budget and explained the slight overall increase of 3.3% over last year, but a 3.8% reduction in the County portion.

STATE ATTORNEY STEVE RUSSELL

Mr. Russell advised that the 20th Judicial Circuit budget, like the Public Defender's, is primarily State funded with the County basically responsible for facilities and communications. He reported about a 1% reduction in their overall budget, and responded to Board questions.

3. BOCC DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGETS, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM/MAJOR MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

County Manager Karen B. Hawes opened the discussion by thanking the budget staffs and fiscal resources, as well as the citizen representatives for their time and efforts. Ms Hawes advised that work on the budget will continue through July and final recommendations will be available for Board review beginning in August. She concluded by stating that today's goal was to obtain consensus Board recommendations for staff as they move forward. Assistant County Manager Pete Winton reviewed the current budget status utilizing a [PowerPoint presentation](#) and a [5-Year Comparison](#) handout. Mr. Winton pointed out the spending cut history of departmental budgets over the last several years and those anticipated in the coming years. Ms. Hawes, Facilities Services Director Rich Beck, Assistant County Manager Holly Schwartz and Public Safety Director John Wilson responded to Board questions and comments throughout the presentation.

Chairman Mann pointed out that a request he has made numerous times for staff pay package options and extension of furlough days were not included on the cut list options. He and Commissioner Bigelow spoke in support of having those options available at budget time. Commissioner Judah congratulated staff for the \$17.5 million in reductions, expressed opposition to further pay package reductions citing the inability of even such reductions to close the deficit gap, and clarified that a potential millage roll-up would not result in a tax increase. Commissioner Manning expressed his appreciation for the thought and effort by staff in preparing the budget figures and support for getting back to core levels of services. Commissioner Hall stated that the focus should be on the General Fund; noted support for substantial cuts; emphasized she was not in support of salary reductions but would support other sources of revenue, including millage roll-ups capable of actually closing the General Fund deficit gap by FY13-14. She also requested a separate payroll breakdown. Chairman Mann provided a summary of the Board positions with additional discussion among the Commissioners and response by Mr. Winton to a question from Commissioner Bigelow. Chairman Mann requested a memorandum from Mr. Winton on the history of merit raises and a summary of how they were applied. Commissioner Bigelow requested a summary of personnel costs by department beginning with FY 03-04 through this year.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:13 a.m.

ATTEST:
CHARLIE GREEN, CLERK

Deputy Clerk

[Chairman, Lee County Commission](#)