

Pinellas County



Minutes - Final

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

9:30 A.M.

Virtual Budget Information Session

Board of County Commissioners - Budget Information Session

Pat Gerard, Chair
Dave Eggers, Vice-Chair
Charlie Justice
Janet C. Long
Kathleen Peters
Karen Williams Seel
Kenneth T. Welch

ROLL CALL - 9:30 A.M.

Members Present: Pat Gerard, Chair; Dave Eggers, Vice-Chair; Charlie Justice; Janet Long; Kathleen Peters; Karen Williams Seel; and Kenneth T. Welch.

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; and Chris Bartlett, Senior Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk.

Office of Technology and Innovation Director Bryan Zumwalt introduced himself and announced that he would be the Technology Moderator for the virtual meeting; and that Chief Assistant County Attorney Donald Crowell would serve as Process Moderator; whereupon, he conducted a roll call of the members.

Budget summary documents pertaining to each presentation and copies of all PowerPoint presentations provided to the Clerk's Office have been made a part of the record.

1. Introduction and Budget Overview

Mr. Burton summarized the Fiscal Year 2021 budget process and commended staff for their work on preparing the proposed annual operating and capital budget; whereupon, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Analyst Cecilia McCorkell discussed the purpose of the budget information sessions and how this year's budget development process differs from Fiscal Year 2020 due to COVID-19 impacts and other factors.

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation, Pinellas County Property Appraiser Mike Twitty discussed the history of property values in the county over the last several years, estimated taxable value increases, and factors that may impact property tax revenues in 2021, including COVID-19, residential home sale trends, tax exemptions, and the Save Our Homes cap. He provided information regarding the proposed constitutional amendment on the 2020 general election ballot regarding portability and responded to queries by Commissioner Welch.

Ms. McCorkell provided a high-level overview of the impacts of COVID-19 on Fiscal Year 2020 revenues and expenditures as well as the budget outlook for future fiscal years; whereupon, she and OMB Director Bill Berger responded to queries by the members.

2. Pinellas County Property Appraiser

Office of Management and Budget Analyst Don Mello (OMB) provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget request; whereupon, Pinellas County Property Appraiser Mike

Twitty discussed expenses within the operating budget and personnel services and, with input by OMB Director Bill Berger, responded to queries by the members regarding the following topics:

- Staff vacancies and recruitment
- Millage rates in calculating tax bills
- CARES Act funding availability for property owners

Later in the meeting, Mr. Berger related that Assistant County Attorney Don Crowell clarified that CARES Act funding cannot be used to satisfy property tax obligations.

3. Airport

Office of Management and Budget Analyst Erica Mitchell, with input from Strategic Performance Management Analyst Shane Kunze, provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget request and discussed performance measures, COVID-19 impacts, technology improvements, and reductions in revenues and expenditures; whereupon, St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport Director Tom Jewsbury responded to queries by the members regarding the following topics:

- Rent relief for airport lessees
- Personnel hiring freezes
- Travel trends
- COVID-19 safety protocols

4. Convention & Visitors Bureau

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Analyst Jim Abernathy, with input from OMB Strategic Performance Management Analyst Shane Kunze, provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget request and discussed performance measures, impacts of COVID-19, tourist development tax reductions, sponsorship opportunities pertaining to Super Bowl LV, potential threats to the tourism industry, and revenue and expense projections; whereupon, he discussed current and future projects.

Convention and Visitors Bureau President and CEO Steve Hayes provided statistics regarding occupancy rates and discussed a recent survey that was conducted to assess future travel to the area. He indicated that expenditures have decreased due to a reduction in marketing expenses, event cancellations, and position vacancies; whereupon, he discussed the development of a strategic plan and with input from Mr. Abernathy, responded to queries by the Commissioners regarding the following topics:

- Creative Pinellas funding
- Super Bowl LV sponsorship levels
- Reserve funds
- Tampa Bay Watch agreement
- Salvador Dali Museum project
- Florida Holocaust Museum funding
- Countryside Sports Complex reimbursement status

5. Economic Development

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Technology Program Coordinator Jason Rivera, with input from OMB Strategic Performance Management Analyst Shane Kunze, provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget request and discussed the future expiration of the qualified target industry work plan initiative, the development of a strategic plan, performance measures, COVID-19 impacts, and anticipated revenues and expenditures; whereupon, Economic Development Director Mike Meidel provided information regarding the implementation of the Pinellas CARES grant programs, the development of a virtual program to connect businesses to overseas customers, and virtual counseling for small business development centers.

In response to queries by Commissioners Welch and Seel, Mr. Meidel discussed the following topics:

- Sunset date for the qualified target industry program
- AmSkills funding and expiration date
- Economic ad valorem tax exemption

Meeting Recessed: 11:58 A.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 12:31 P.M.

6. Building & Development Review Services

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Analyst Jason Miller, with input from OMB Strategic Performance Management Analyst Belinda Amundson, provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget request and discussed the three divisions in the Department, the Department's performance summary, the implementation of the Accela program, the impacts of COVID-19, opportunities for efficiencies, potential threats, and anticipated revenues and expenditures in the three divisions; whereupon, Mr. Miller indicated that

several fee changes are being included with the budget request, and responded to queries by Commissioner Long.

Building and Development Review Services Director Blake Lyon discussed the implementation date of the proposed fee changes and, in addition to responding to queries by the members, discussed the following topics:

- Building inspector retention
- Reserve fund decreases
- Efforts to improve departmental processes through work with a consultant
- Timeline and implementation of the Accela program

7. Contractor Licensing

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Analyst Jason Miller, with input from OMB Strategic Performance Management Analyst Belinda Amundson, provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget request and discussed the implementation of the Accela program, COVID-19 performance impacts, citizen complaint tracking, opportunities for efficiencies, and anticipated revenues and expenditures. In response to queries by the members, Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) Director Bryan Zumwalt provided information regarding the Accela program timeline.

Contractor Licensing Department Director Gay Lancaster thanked her staff and OTI for their efforts and discussed the review process for outstanding citations and collectibles.

8. Housing and Community Development (Planning)

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Analyst John Ondrovic, with input from OMB Strategic Performance Management Analyst Belinda Amundson, provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget request and discussed data collection efforts, COVID-19 impacts on various initiatives, grant funding, opportunities for efficiencies, potential threats, and anticipated revenues and expenditures; whereupon, Mr. Burton and Assistant County Administrator Brian Lowack discussed departmental initiatives and responded to queries by Commissioners Justice and Welch.

9. Pinellas Planning Council (Forward Pinellas)

Office of Management and Budget Analyst John Ondrovic provided an overview of Forward Pinellas, its Fiscal Year 2021 budget request, and the two initiatives for Fiscal Year 2021: Planning & Place Making Grant Program and Safe Street Pinellas Initiative, indicating that

the Forward Pinellas Board made a decision to not pursue a millage increase this year, and Forward Pinellas Executive Director Whit Blanton provided input.

Miscellaneous Discussion

Deviating from the agenda and at the request of Commissioner Long, the Commissioners discussed drafting a joint statement regarding the civil unrest in response to the death of George Floyd.

Mr. Burton provided information regarding recent gubernatorial orders related to COVID-19 and responded to queries by the members.

ADJOURNMENT - 2:25 P.M.