

Pinellas County

*333 Chestnut Street, Palm Room
Clearwater, FL 33756*



Minutes - Final

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

2:00 P.M.

Hybrid In-Person and Virtual Regular Meeting

Public Hearings at 6:00 P.M.

Board of County Commissioners

*Janet C. Long, Chair
Kathleen Peters, Vice-Chair*

Dave Eggers

René Flowers

Charlie Justice

Chris Latvala

Brian Scott

ROLL CALL - 2:01 P.M.

Present: 7 - Chair Janet C. Long, Vice-Chair Kathleen Peters, Commissioner Dave Eggers, Commissioner René Flowers, Commissioner Charlie Justice, Commissioner Chris Latvala, and Commissioner Brian Scott

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; Derelynn Revie, Board Records Manager; and Krista Johnson, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

INVOCATION by Reverend Erick Ashley, Clearview United Methodist Church, St. Petersburg.**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE****PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS**

1. 2023 Pinellas County Fire Professionals of the Year Awards:
Fire Professional
 - Doug Higley, Firefighter Paramedic/Assistant Chief, Pinellas Suncoast Fire Rescue
 - James "Rich" King, Public Safety Telecommunicator II, Pinellas County Regional 911 Special Operations
 - John Ryan Mitchell, Fire Lieutenant/EMT, Pinellas Park Fire DepartmentPinellas Federal Credit Union
 - Jim Kreiter, Jr., Vice President of Lending

Chair Long introduced the 2023 recipients and following a video highlighting their hard work and achievements, she presented the awards and recognized the other fire chiefs in attendance; whereupon, a representative from the Pinellas Federal Credit Union provided each recipient with an award.

2. Fire Prevention Week Proclamation:
 - Craig Hare, Director, EMS & Fire Administration

Chair Long invited Chiefs Graham, Mixson, and Stefancic to join her and read a proclamation recognizing October 8 through 14 as Fire Prevention Week.

3. National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month Proclamation:
 - Kerry Kriseman
 - Claudette Carlan
 - Jeanine Oliver
 - Amy Quillen

Chair Long invited Ms. Kriseman to join her and read a proclamation recognizing September as National Ovarian Cancer Awareness month; whereupon, Ms. Kriseman thanked the Commissioners for their support.

- 4. National Recovery Month Proclamation:
 - Jon Essenburg, Vice President of MAPS & HIV Services, Operation PAR, Inc.
 Chair Long invited Mr. Essenburg to join her and read a proclamation recognizing September as National Recovery Month; whereupon, Mr. Essenburg and Amanda Moore-Krummerich, Operation PAR, thanked the Commissioners for their support.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

- 5. Citizens To Be Heard - Public Comment.

Bryan Beckman, Clearwater
 David Ballard Geddis, Jr., Palm Harbor
 Amelia Wallon, Clearwater
 Katherine Kastanis, Oldsmar
 David Happe, Tarpon Springs

In response to a request by Chair Long, Mr. Burton provided clarifying comments regarding the total budget and the General Fund, explaining that he will outline details of the funding sources and uses with regard to the General Fund during the budget public hearing later in the meeting; whereupon, Commissioner Peters encouraged residents to contact their legislative representatives to express their concerns.

CONSENT AGENDA - Items 6 through 15 (Item No. 7 addressed under Regular Agenda)

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Flowers, that the Consent Agenda items be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

- 6. Vouchers and bills paid from August 13 through August 19, 2023.

Period August 13 - August 19, 2023
 Accounts Payable - \$17,993,865.26
 Payroll - \$4,272,813.37

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

Miscellaneous items received for filing:

- 8. City of Clearwater Ordinance Nos. 9681-23, 9697-23, and 9700-23, adopted August 3, 2023, annexing certain properties.

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DEPARTMENTS

Administrative Services

9. Award of bid to Waste Management Inc. of Florida for trash and recycling services.

Bid No. 23-1090-ITB awarded in the total not-to-exceed amount of \$4,942,153.50 effective for 36 months based on being the lowest responsive, responsible bid meeting specifications. The contract replaces Contract No. 178-0561-B.

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

County Administrator

10. Receipt and file report of non-procurement items delegated to the County Administrator for the period ending August 31, 2023.

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

Parks and Conservation Resources

11. Award of bid to Advanced Roofing, Inc. for countywide Parks and Conservation Resources roof replacement.

Contract No. 23-0653-ITB-C awarded in the amount of \$648,639.52. All work to be completed within 1,095 days. This contract replaces Contract No. 167-0327-CP.

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

Public Works

12. Ratification of the County Administrator's approval of the Resilient Florida grant applications with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Administrator's approval ratified and confirmed for four grant application submissions totaling \$51,131,100.00 (County match, \$51,131,100.00).

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

Utilities

13. Award of bid to Brenntag Mid-South Inc. for liquid chlorine one-ton cylinders.

Contract No. 23-0385-ITB awarded for a 12-month term in an amount not to exceed \$1,792,000.00 and includes a provision for four 12-month extensions. The contract replaces Contract No. 190-0526-B.

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

- 14. Receipt and file report of civil lawsuits filed against Pinellas County as delegated to the County Attorney.

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

AUTHORITIES, BOARDS, CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS AND COUNCILS

Business Technology Services

- 15. Ranking of firms and agreements with the five highest-ranked firms for requirements of information technology staff augmentation (temporary staffing) services.

(Contract No, 23-0063-RFP) Ranking of firms and agreements approved in the total amount not to exceed \$3,000,000.00 effective through December 31, 2026.

The item was approved as part of the Consent Agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

Reports received for filing:

- 7. Division of Inspector General, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller, Report No. 2023-21 dated August 23, 2023 - Inspector General's Follow-up Audit of Fleet Management Services Annual Physical Inventory of Surplus Fixed Assets.

Commissioner Eggers commended the Division of the Inspector General staff for their work on behalf of the citizens.

A motion was made by Commissioner Eggers, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DEPARTMENTS

Human Services

- 16. Funding recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2024 Human Services Social Action Grant Program.

Recommendations approved awarding funding to 17 community agencies in an amount not to exceed \$1,551,000.00, with an additional \$155,100.00 for two additional agencies, pending approval of the decision package funding. County Administrator delegated authority to sign all associated agreements and documentation.

Commissioner Flowers indicated that the funding assists with areas of concern voiced by the public relating to homelessness and supportive services.

In response to comments and queries by Commissioner Eggers, Human Services Director Karen Yatchum discussed the scoring and funding.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Commissioner Scott, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Nay: 1 - Commissioner Eggers

- 17. Funding recommendations for the 2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant-Countywide and related grant administration documents.

Grant funding recommendations by the Substance Abuse Advisory Board and execution of grant documents approved. Funding amount not to exceed \$250,805.00 to support 11 projects in Pinellas County; no local match required. Authority delegated to the County Administrator to complete the application process.

In response to queries by Commissioner Scott, Mr. Burton and Human Services Director Karen Yatchum provided information regarding the federal grant funding, the formula-based scoring process, and the grant application criteria.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Flowers, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Public Works

18. Federally funded subaward and grant agreement from the Florida Division of Emergency Management for Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IV Hazard Mitigation Grant program funding for the replacement of span-wire-supported traffic signals with mast arm traffic signals.

(PID 005750A; FEMA Agreement No. H0995/Project No. 4486-125-R) Subaward and grant agreement approved. Total project cost, \$8,314,000.00 (grant funding, \$5,383,682.70; County match, \$2,930,317.30). Agreement ends January 31, 2026.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Vice-Chair Peters, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Utilities

19. Grant agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for a Septic to Sewer Conversion Project for properties located in the City of Tarpon Springs.

(County PID No. 006052A; Grant Agreement No. WG003) Agreement approved in the amount of \$10,000,000.00 with a required County match of \$10,000,000.00. Agreement term expires on June 30, 2027.

Mr. Burton indicated that the County will utilize American Rescue Plan Act funds for the match.

Commissioner Flowers highlighted the Florida Association of Counties' efforts regarding sewer to septic programming policy and funding.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Scott, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

AUTHORITIES, BOARDS, CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS AND COUNCILS

Business Technology Services

20. Purchase Authorization Agreement with Insight Public Sector Inc., as requested by the Business Technology Services Department, for technology products and services.

(Contract No. 23-0909-PB) Agreement approved in the total not-to-exceed amount of \$3,600,000.00. Agreement term is through April 30, 2026.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Flowers, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Emergency Medical Services Authority

21. Amendment to the Advanced Life Support First Responder Agreement with 4 municipalities and independent fire districts.

Sitting as the Pinellas County Emergency Management Services (EMS) Authority, the Board approved the amendment to the EMS Advanced Life Support First Responder Agreement with four municipalities and independent fire districts for specific enhancements outlined in the Staff Report. The current agreement will expire on September 30, 2024.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Scott, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Housing Finance Authority

22. Resolution approving the issuance of Multifamily Housing Revenue Bonds by the Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County to finance a multifamily residential rental housing project Burlington Post 2.

Resolution No. 23-86 adopted allowing the Housing Finance Authority to issue multifamily housing revenue bonds in a principal amount not to exceed \$16,000,000.00 for the benefit of Burlington Post 2, Ltd., a Florida Limited Partnership, or its affiliate. No County General Funds are required; all lendable funds are generated from the sale of tax-exempt housing bonds and the sale of low-income housing tax credits from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Commissioner Scott, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Pinellas County Community Redevelopment Agency

23. Fiscal Year 2024 Lealman Community Redevelopment Trust Budget.

Sitting as the Community Redevelopment Agency, the Board approved the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Lealman Community Redevelopment Area Trust budget in the amount of \$8,798,300.00.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

24. Fiscal Year 2024 Lealman Community Redevelopment Area Work Plan.

Sitting as the Community Redevelopment Agency, the Board approved the Fiscal Year 2024 Lealman Community Redevelopment Area Work Plan, which includes \$2.21 million in Tax Increment Financing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Flowers, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

COUNTY ATTORNEY

25. Proposed initiation of litigation in the case of Carolyn Pulido v. Isle of Sand Key Condominium Association Inc. et al; HUD Case No. 04-23-4677-8; PC Case No. 23-021 - alleged housing discrimination.

Initiation of litigation approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

26. Proposed settlement in the case of Bryan Bardega v. Pinellas County; Circuit Civil Case No. 22-004817-CI.

Settlement approved in accordance with the confidential memorandum dated September 19, 2023.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Scott, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

27. Proposed settlement in the case of Roger Reed v. Pinellas County Sheriff's Office; Workers' Compensation, Office of the Judges of Compensation Claims Case No.11-012637JPM.

Settlement approved in accordance with the confidential memorandum dated September 19, 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Flowers, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

28. County Attorney Reports - None

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

29. County Administrator ReportsEmergency Purchase Authority

Mr. Burton briefly discussed authorizing emergency purchases related to protective measures for the beaches, noting that the emergency purchases will be presented to the Board for its concurrence and approval at the next BCC meeting.

During discussion and in response to comments and queries by the members, Public Works Director Kelli Hammer Levy, with input by Mr. Burton, discussed temporary construction easements, construction of dunes, use of trap bags, and the inefficiency of sea walls, indicating that constructing dunes on one of twelve miles of beaches will cost approximately \$6 million; that the total cost is estimated to be between \$25 and \$30 million; that Tourist Development Tax funds are being used to fund the projects; and that staff will apply for a grant with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to offset some of the costs; whereupon, Mr. Burton related that it is important that the County work out the issues with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the impacted residents to provide long-term protection for the community.

Tampa Bay Rays

Mr. Burton provided an update regarding the development of the Tampa Bay Rays stadium and the non-stadium site, relating that he intends to finalize the non-binding term sheet and bring it before the Board at its October meeting. In response to comments by Commissioner Eggers, he indicated that a development agreement will also be provided once it has been prepared; whereupon, he reiterated that a majority of the funds for the County's contribution toward the project are coming from the Tourist Development Tax fund.

COUNTY COMMISSION

30. 2024 State Legislative Program.

Mr. Burton noted that the program priorities will be presented at a meeting with the State Legislative Delegation next month, and a brief discussion ensued wherein Commissioner Peters discussed and requested the addition of language pertaining to dangerous dogs.

Vice-Chair Peters made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that language regarding dangerous dogs be added to the priorities list. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Commissioner Eggers indicated that it is important to make the gas tax fund whole by encouraging a fee on electric vehicles.

Commissioner Eggers made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Scott, that language regarding a fee for electric vehicles and indexing of the gas tax fund be added to the priorities list. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Commissioner Flowers made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Scott, that the priority list be approved with the amendments by Commissioners Peters and Eggers. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

31. County Commission New Business:

Pertinent and timely Committee/Board updates, policy considerations, administrative/procedural considerations, and other new business.

The Commissioners provided updates regarding their assigned boards and committees and discussed various issues, as follows:

The members thanked Mr. Burton for his efforts regarding the Tampa Bay Rays.

Commissioner Latvala

- Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue 9/11 Memorial Walk
- Celebration of SPC Day at St. Petersburg College
- Suncoast Behavioral Health Center
- Ethics complaints

Commissioner Eggers

- Tampa Bay Rays
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers meeting
- Curlew Hills Memory Gardens 9/11 ceremony
- Clarified his vote on Item No. 16

Commissioner Peters

- Sunset Beach easements
- Thanked staff for efforts regarding emergency beach protective measures

Commissioner Scott

- Madeira Beach 9/11 ceremony
- Visit to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Suncoast Utility Contractors Association meeting

Commissioner Flowers

- Beach renourishment
- Waste-to-energy facilities
- Florida Association of Counties (FAC) legislative conference
- Sierra Club fertilizer ordinance
- Visit to the Ronald McDonald House

Commissioner Justice

- Gulfport Beach 9/11 ceremony
- ALPHA House of Pinellas County annual dinner
- Hispanic Outreach Center
- FAC Board meeting
- St. Petersburg College Evening of Excellence

Chair Long

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers meeting
- Forward Pinellas
- Joint Tourist Development Council and Board of County Commissioners meeting
- Tampa Bay Area Chiefs of Police Foundation Annual Gala
- Tampa Bay Rays
- Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area Leadership Group

Meeting Recessed: 3:55 P.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 6:01 P.M.

6:00 PM

PUBLIC HEARINGS

All public hearing items have been properly advertised. Affidavits of Publication have been received and are on file in the Board Records Department.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

- 32.** Resolution supplementing the Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget for revenue and expenditures for the General Fund, Emergency Medical Services Fund, Lealman Solid Waste Fund, and Lealman Community Development Agency Trust Fund. Realign appropriations from the General Fund, Fleet Management Fund, and Risk Management Fund reserves for unanticipated expenditures.

Resolution No. 23-87 adopted. No correspondence has been received. No citizens appeared to be heard.

Mr. Burton provided information regarding the purpose of the resolution.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Vice-Chair Peters, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

- 33.** Resolutions to adopt final millage rates and budgets for Fiscal Year 2024 (second public hearing).

Public hearing was held regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 final millage rates and budgets for Pinellas County; resolutions adopted approving final millage rates (No. 23-88) and budgets (No. 23-89) for the Pinellas County General Fund; resolutions adopted approving final millage rates (No. 23-90) and budget (No. 23-91) for the Pinellas County Health Department Fund; resolutions adopted approving final millage rates (No. 23-92) and budgets (No. 23-93) for the Emergency Medical Services Authority, Pinellas Planning Council, Unincorporated Area Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU), Public Library Services District MSTU, Palm Harbor Community Services District, Feather Sound Community Services District, East Lake Library Services District, East Lake Recreation Services District, and the unincorporated portions of the Belleair Bluffs, Clearwater, Dunedin, Gandy, High Point, Largo, Pinellas Park, Safety Harbor, Seminole, South Pasadena, Tarpon Springs, and Tierra Verde Fire Protection Districts; and Resolution No. 23-94 adopted approving the total final Fiscal Year 2024 County Budget.

At the request of Chair Long, Ms. Revie reported that the Clerk's Office has received 138 emails in opposition to millage reductions for the Palm Harbor Community Services District, Public Library Services District MSTU, East Lake Library Services District, and East Lake Recreation Services District; that five emails were received in opposition to an increase in taxes; and that the Office of Management and Budget has received six phone calls.

Chair Long reviewed the sequence of events for the evening's proceedings and indicated that a representative from the Property Appraiser's Office is available to respond to anyone having questions or comments regarding their assessed property value, exemptions, classification, or information appearing on the Truth in Millage (TRIM) Notices; and that those attending virtually may contact the Property Appraiser's Office.

Chair Long indicated that even though Florida Statutes provide that a taxing authority may adopt tax levies and budgets of all its dependent special taxing districts and MSTUs by a single unanimous vote, members of the general public can request that the Board discuss and adopt any of those items separately; whereupon, in response to her query, no citizen requested that any item be separately reviewed.

Chair Long opened the second public hearing on the final millage rates and budgets for Fiscal Year 2024, and Ms. Revie reported that the public hearing is being held in accordance with Chapters 129 and 200 of the Florida Statutes; that the meeting has been duly noticed by the "Notice of Proposed Tax Increase" and the "Summary of Proposed Budget" legal advertisements that were published in the September 17, 2023, edition of the *Tampa Bay Times*; and that affidavits stating proof of publication have been received for filing.

Chair Long announced that the BCC, as taxing authority for the BCC Countywide, the Dependent Special Districts, and the MSTUs, as previously referenced, will now proceed with the public hearings.

Mr. Burton related that the percentage increase in the millage rate for all budgets over the rolled-back rate, based on the maximum rates on the TRIM Notice, to fund the Fiscal Year 2024 Final Budget is an 8.46% increase over the aggregate rolled-back rate; whereupon, he indicated that the primary purpose for the changes in millage are as follows:

- In the General Fund, including Unincorporated MSTU, and in the Emergency Medical Services Authority, revenue increases are required to support personnel and operating expenditure levels that are driven by inflationary factors and Board priorities. In the Pinellas Planning Council, revenue increases are required for the same purposes, as per the request of Forward Pinellas. The Health Department Fund revenue is remaining flat due to having sufficient reserve levels to provide for future planned capital, along with property values, that can support annual operations.
- In the Public Library Services District MSTU, the Palm Harbor Community Services MSTU, the Feather Sound Community Services MSTU, the East Lake Library Services MSTU, the East Lake Recreation Services MSTU, and nine Special Fire Protection Districts, revenue increases are needed to support increased expenditures by the agencies providing services for those districts.
- In three Special Fire Protection Districts, revenues are decreasing due to those districts having sufficient reserve levels to provide for future planned capital along with property values that can support annual operations.

Chair Long announced that the BCC will continue with the hearing as the taxing authority for the BCC Countywide, Dependent Special Districts, and MSTU levies, by taking public comment from citizens who wish to be heard regarding the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget.

Responding to the Chair's call for public comment, the following individuals appeared and expressed their concerns:

Aden Barnes, Largo
Heather Vernillo, Palm Harbor
Lois Eannel, Palm Harbor
Rose Sims, Clearwater
Saskia Murphy, Clearwater
Diane Leriche, Clearwater
Stephanie Gray, Clearwater
Meghan Panek, Clearwater
Jeanene Capone, Clearwater
Melissa Sherman, Clearwater
Audra Christian, Seminole
Bob Delaware, Clearwater
Sharon Calvert, Tierra Verde
Jeanne Malnati, Clearwater
Barbara Mellen, Palm Harbor
Preston Delaware, Clearwater
Rosie Purden, Clearwater
Rain Delaware, Clearwater
Kathy Sweigart, Clearwater

In response to queries and comments by Commissioner Latvala, Mr. Burton provided clarifying information related to the proposed budget, including how certain sources of funding such as the American Rescue Plan Act grant and the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) must be used; whereupon, he provided additional details related to the General Fund and Sheriff's budgets, the impact of the proposed budget to the average household, and the use of TDT dollars for tourist-related activities, such as baseball stadiums, beach renourishment, and museums.

Thereupon, Chair Long asked whether the members wished to recommend any changes to the proposed millage or budgets.

Commissioner Peters indicated that unfunded mandates from the State of Florida have made it difficult to roll back the millage rate and pointed out that 48 other Florida counties have a higher millage rate than Pinellas County; whereupon, she recommended that citizens contact their representatives in the state legislature to voice their concerns.

Commissioner Latvala voiced concern regarding reducing the Sheriff's budget and indicated that he would be receptive to ideas for budget reductions that would not impact the Sheriff's budget; whereupon, Commissioner Scott expressed concern regarding the County's ability to sustain a growing budget each year and related that his goal for next year is a full rollback of the millage rate; whereupon, he proposed and moved that a 0.15 mill reduction be made to the General Fund millage rate, which was seconded by Commissioner Eggert for the purpose of discussion.

In response to comments and queries by Commissioner Flowers, Mr. Burton discussed staff's efforts to find efficiencies and absorb cost increases, employee retention, allowable uses for Penny for Pinellas funds, and other topics.

Commissioner Justice provided remarks regarding the distinction between the rollback and millage rates and related that the millage rate is not increasing; and that the state legislature's failure to address homeowner's insurance rates is crippling.

Commissioner Eggers commented on the need to be fiscally cautious going forward, the sustainability of continuous budget increases, and the use of reserves funds to provide some relief to residents.

In response to queries by Commissioner Latvala, Commissioner Scott indicated that Mr. Burton and County department leaders would know best where to make cuts to reduce the budget, and Mr. Burton related that reductions to the budget would be equally distributed; and that cutting the Sheriff's budget would impact pay raises for the deputies; whereupon, Commissioners Latvala and Peters expressed concern about not knowing where budget reductions would be made.

In response to comments and queries by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Burton discussed Penny for Pinellas funds and the three millage additions from past years to stabilize the gas tax, address local roads, and cover replacement costs in the maintenance schedule.

Commissioner Flowers expressed concern regarding having adequate reserves in the event of another hurricane and commented on County deputy salaries, workforce and affordable housing, and service level delivery to residents.

In response to comments and queries by Commissioner Peters, Mr. Burton discussed the use of reserves for ongoing costs, noting that doing so would cause a shortfall in the following budget year; whereupon, Commissioner Scott suggested that, in an effort to accommodate a millage reduction, funding could be delayed for the Clearwater Transit Center until the project is ready to proceed; and that staff could determine where to cut the remaining reductions, and discussion ensued wherein Mr. Burton pointed out that the County has an interlocal agreement with the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority that it used in its federal grant application.

Commissioner Eggers provided brief comments regarding the Penny for Pinellas fund, the County's debt policy, and reserves funds.

Thereupon, Commissioner Justice indicated that this discussion would have been more productive if had taken place earlier in the budget process; that he does not think that the County's debt policy should be modified tonight; and that he does not support the motion on the floor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Eggers, that the General Fund millage rate be reduced by 0.15 mills. The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye: 2 - Commissioner Eggers, and Commissioner Scott

Nay: 5 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, and Commissioner Latvala

Chair Long announced that the resolutions will now be considered to set the final millage rates and budgets; that their adoption requires a unanimous vote; and that should the unanimous vote not be received, each resolution will be adopted separately; whereupon, Mr. Burton announced each of the resolutions separately, noting that the millage rates for each taxing authority are listed on Schedule A, which has been posted to the County website.

Resolution No. 23-88 adopted approving the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 millage rate for the Pinellas County General Fund.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 millage rate for the General Fund be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, and Commissioner Latvala

Nay: 2 - Commissioner Eggers, and Commissioner Scott

Resolution No. 23-89 adopted approving the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget for the Pinellas County General Fund.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget for the General Fund be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, and Commissioner Latvala

Nay: 2 - Commissioner Eggers, and Commissioner Scott

Resolution No. 23-90 adopted approving the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 millage rate for the Pinellas County Health Department Fund.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Peters, seconded by Commissioner Flowers, that the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 millage rate for the Pinellas County Health Department be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Resolution No. 23-91 adopted approving the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget for the Pinellas County Health Department Fund.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget for the Pinellas County Health Department be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Mr. Burton referenced Schedule A, which was provided to the members, and stated that the millage rates and budgets of Dependent Special Districts and MSTUs will now be considered.

Resolution No. 23-92 adopted approving the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 millage rates for the Dependent Special Districts and MSTUs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Commissioner Justice, that the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 millage rates for the Dependent Special Districts and MSTUs be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Resolution No. 23-93 adopted approving the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budgets for the Dependent Special Districts and MSTUs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Vice-Chair Peters, that the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budgets for the Dependent Special Districts and MSTUs be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Mr. Burton requested that the Board amend the tentative budget to include a \$21 million increase to the post-Hurricane Idalia emergency shore stabilization project. He noted that the funds are previously transferred TDT funds specifically for beach renourishment projects; and that this will not affect the General Fund, millage rates, infrastructure sales tax, or the Penny for Pinellas fund.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Flowers, that the request to amend the tentative budget in the amount of \$21 million for the post-Hurricane Idalia emergency shore stabilization project be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

In response to remarks by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Burton provided clarifying comments and discussed the County's efforts to seek reimbursement from the State for emergency beach repairs.

Resolution No. 23-94 adopted approving the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 total County budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flowers, seconded by Vice-Chair Peters, that the final Fiscal Year 2023-2024 total County budget be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Long, Vice-Chair Peters, Commissioner Eggers, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Latvala, and Commissioner Scott

Thereupon, Commissioner Justice recommended that the Board prioritize working with staff from the Office of Management and Budget and the Communications Department to find a way to better explain the County budget to the public during next year's budget process.

ADJOURNMENT - 8:20 P.M.

ATTEST: KEN BURKE, CLERK

By *Deilyn Leiro*
Deputy Clerk



Janet C. Long
Chair