

# **Pinellas County**

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



## **Minutes - Final**

**Thursday, June 15, 2023**

**9:30 A.M.**

**Budget Information Session**

**Palm Room**

## **Board of County Commissioners**

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

*Dave Eggers*

*René Flowers*

*Charlie Justice*

*Chris Latvala*

*Brian Scott*

**ROLL CALL - 9:34 A.M.**

**Present:** 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; and Katie Poviones, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

Chair Long related that Commissioner Eggers would like to participate remotely; whereupon, Commissioner Flowers made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Justice, to allow Commissioner Eggers to appear virtually. Upon call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

In response to a query by Commissioner Peters regarding establishing a policy for out-of-state individuals providing public comment virtually during BCC meetings, Attorney White indicated that staff can research case law and re-examine the Board's public participation guidelines related to time allotments; and that the Board may choose to give priority to individuals providing public comment who live in Pinellas over those who live outside of the county or state.

**1. Medical Examiner**

District Six Medical Examiner Dr. Jon Thogmartin referred to a PowerPoint presentation titled *Forensic Science Center*, provided statistical data related to increases in the number of autopsies performed and accidental drug-related deaths, and compared his office's costs to those of other medical examiners in Florida. Forensic Laboratory Director Reta Newman discussed the lab's workload, noting that it continues to increase from what was originally projected for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023; whereupon, Dr. Thogmartin discussed the proposed budget increase, highlighting that the primary cause of the increase is the rising cost of supplies due to inflation.

In response to queries by the members, Dr. Thogmartin, with input from Ms. Newman, provided clarifying comments regarding accidental drug-related deaths, operational efficiencies, the need for specialized equipment to better identify drugs in toxicology reports, and other topics.

**2. Building Development and Review Services**

Referring to a document titled *Building and Development Review Services*, Budget and Financial Management Analyst Belinda Amundson, Office of Management and Budget, reviewed the Department's budget summary, FY24 budget drivers and topics for discussion, proposed user fee changes for FY23, decision packages, and legislative impacts. She related that the Department's FY24 budget is decreasing from the previous year's budget by approximately \$800,000 due to declining expenses in the Building Services Fund.

Building and Development Review Services Director Kevin McAndrew discussed the Department's FY23 accomplishments, work plan, and performance measures, noting that improvements to the Department are part of a larger continuous improvement program. In response to queries by Commissioners Justice and Scott, Mr. McAndrew discussed the timeframe for permit review, improved data collection to better categorize permits in review, the lien foreclosure process, long-term implications of the virtual inspection process, and potential legislative impacts of Senate Bill 154; whereupon, Commissioner Eggers commended Mr. McAndrew for his leadership and commented on the importance of more frequent code changes.

Mr. Burton, with input from Mr. McAndrew, related that staff is reviewing the County's fees, as they are low in comparison to those of neighboring counties; and that the Stormwater Manual peer review study is scheduled to be discussed at the July 13 BCC work session.

### 3. Contractor Licensing Department

Referring to a document titled *Contractor Licensing Department*, Ms. Amundson reviewed the Department's budget summary, legislative impacts, FY24 budget drivers and topics for discussion, decision packages, operating budget analysis, and proposed fee changes, highlighting that Florida House Bill (HB) 735 was anticipated to have a negative impact on the Department's license and permit revenue in FY24 via the elimination of local construction licensing for certain specialty trades effective July 1, 2023; that pending the ratification of Florida HB 1383, the elimination of certain specialty licenses would be postponed to July 1, 2024; and that some of the negative impacts on the Department's revenue would thus be shifted to FY25.

Contractor Licensing Director Michelle Krickovic elaborated on the forthcoming legislative impacts of HBs 735 and 1383 and reviewed the Department's FY23 accomplishments, work plan, and performance measures.

Thereupon, Office of Management and Budget Director Chris Rose referred to the requests for funding of two temporary staff positions presented in the Department's decision packages and indicated that temporary staff funding has been removed from each Department's budget with a request for justification in an effort to promote overall budgetary efficiency.

### 4. Housing and Community Development and Lealman CRA

Referring to a document titled *Housing and Community Development*, Budget and Financial Management Analyst Yana Matiyuk, Office of Management and Budget, reviewed the Department's budget request, FY24 budget drivers and topics for discussion, and decision packages, emphasizing that an over 30% increase in costs for the Affordable Housing Development Program has impacted the number of projects that could potentially be funded with available grant and Penny for Pinellas funds; that operating expenditures are decreasing by \$130,000 or 5.7% due to decreases in intergovernmental and administrative costs associated with community development; and that there are no proposed changes to user fees.

Housing and Community Development Director Carol Stricklin provided information regarding the Economic Impacts of Poverty Report decision package and introduced Planning Division Manager Evan Johnson; whereupon, Mr. Johnson and Division Manager Bruce Bussey elaborated on the Department's FY23 accomplishments, work plan, and performance measures. In response to a query by Commissioner Eggers, Ms. Stricklin remarked on the status and framework for conversions of light industrial areas into land to be utilized for housing. Later in the meeting and in response to queries by Commissioner Justice, Ms. Stricklin provided information regarding the scope and deliverables of the Poverty Report decision package and the Food Access in Under-served Pinellas study.

Thereupon, Ms. Matiyuk referred to a document titled *Lealman CRA* and reviewed the Lealman Community Redevelopment Area's (CRA) budget request, FY24 budget drivers, and topics for discussion, highlighting that operating expenditures are increasing by approximately \$300,000 or 479.14% over the FY23 adopted budget due to professional services associated with the Joe's Creek Master Plan update; and that there are no proposed decision packages; whereupon, Assistant to the County Administrator Chris Moore provided information regarding the CRA's FY23 accomplishments and work plan.

Responding to queries by Commissioners Justice and Eggers, Mr. Moore provided clarifying comments regarding a timeline for street signs in the entryway to Lealman, Tax Increment Financing contributions, the roles of the three full-time CRA employees, growing job opportunities in Lealman due to the CRA's efforts, and the evolving dynamic of the CRA's Citizen Advisory Committee.

## 5. Forward Pinellas

Referring to a document titled *Forward Pinellas*, Ms. Matiyuk reviewed the Department's FY24 budget drivers and topics for discussion; whereupon, Forward Pinellas Executive Director Whit Blanton provided information regarding a joint Multimodal Fee study decision package submitted by Housing and Community Development, relating that the purpose of the study is to review the County's transportation impact fees and consider transitioning to a mobility fee, which would better align with Countywide goals and strategies for redevelopment, housing, and transportation; and that there are partial funding commitments for the study from Forward Pinellas as well as the Cities of Largo, Clearwater, and St. Petersburg.

In response to a query by Commissioner Scott, Mr. Blanton provided clarifying comments regarding a timeline for the study and elaborated on the Department's FY23 accomplishments. Thereupon, he discussed progress and next steps towards the merger of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations of Pasco, Hillsborough, and Pinellas Counties to create a regional transportation planning and decision body for the Tampa Bay region.

6. Business Technology Services

Referring to a document titled *Business Technology Services*, Ms. Matiyuk reviewed the Department's FY24 budget drivers and topics for discussion, including one elimination and one transfer of a full-time position. She highlighted that charges for services are projected to decrease by \$4 million or 7.88% from the FY23 adopted budget due to the former Office of Technology and Innovation's cost allocation being consolidated with that of the Department; and that there are no proposed decision packages; whereupon, she commended the Department's efforts to create a new methodology for the FY24 Cost Allocation Plan to provide a more transparent and equitable allocation to each customer based on their consumption of services.

Business Technology Services (BTS) Chief Information Officer Jeff Rohrs elaborated on the aforementioned methodology and the Department's performance measures, and BTS Chief Technology Officer Brian Zumwalt provided information regarding the Department's strategic project cost center. Thereupon, Chair Long thanked Messrs. Rohrs and Zumwalt for their efforts to ensure the Commissioners understand the intricacies of the Department's work.

**ADJOURNMENT - 12:04 P.M.**