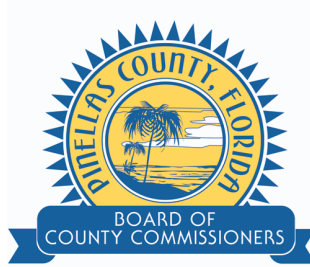


# **Pinellas County**

*315 Court Street, 5th Floor Assembly Room  
Clearwater, Florida 33756*



## **Minutes - Final**

**Tuesday, May 16, 2017**

**9:30 AM**

**BCC Assembly Room**

## **Board of County Commissioners** **Budget Information Session**

*Janet C. Long, Chairman  
Kenneth T. Welch, Vice-Chairman  
Dave Eggers  
Pat Gerard  
Charlie Justice  
John Morroni  
Karen Williams Seel*

## **ROLL CALL - 9:32 A.M.**

Members Present: Janet C. Long (9:35 A.M.), Chairman; Kenneth T. Welch, Vice-Chairman; Charlie Justice; Pat Gerard; Dave Eggers; John Morroni (9:42 A.M.); and Karen Williams Seel (9:37 A.M.).

Others Present: Jewel White, Chief Assistant County Attorney; Mark S. Woodard, County Administrator; other interested individuals; and Tony Fabrizio, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk.

Vice-Chairman Welch called the meeting to order and noted that Chairman Long was delayed and would arrive shortly.

### **County Attorney Announcement**

Chief Assistant County Attorney Jewel White indicated that she desires advice concerning specific litigation matters arising from The Richman Group of Florida, Inc., versus Pinellas County, Circuit Civil Case No. 14-005608-CI-15; that the case was tried in the Sixth Judicial Circuit and judgment was rendered for the plaintiff on June 29, 2016; that the County filed an appeal of that judgment, and the appeal case now styled as Case No. 2D16-3279 is fully briefed by the parties; that oral arguments are set for June 20, 2017; and that she requests that a meeting be scheduled for a time certain of Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 9:30 A.M. She related that in addition to herself and the County Commissioners, those in attendance will be County Administrator Mark S. Woodard, Managing Assistant County Attorney Don Crowell, and Sylvia Wabolt and Chris Altenbernd, Outside Counsel, Carlton Fields Jorden Burt, P.A. Law Firm; and that County Attorney James L. Bennett will be available as necessary.

Attorney White related that pursuant to Section 286.011 of the Florida Statutes, the Board will meet in private session to discuss a settlement negotiation or strategy related to litigation expenditures; that the shade meeting will be recorded by a certified court reporter, and the notes will be transcribed and filed with the Clerk; and that the transcript will be made part of the public record upon conclusion of the litigation; whereupon, she estimated the length of the attorney-client session to be one hour.

Mr. Woodard provided a brief overview of the meeting agenda, noting that this is the second of two budget information sessions that include the Constitutional Officers.

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

### **1. Tax Collector**

Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas related that he will be making his first budget presentation after attending several as Chief Deputy under former Tax Collector Diane Nelson; whereupon, he discussed the projections and needs of his office in Fiscal Year 2018.

Mr. Thomas indicated that staff accepts the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) estimate of \$10,859,280 in net commissions paid to the Office as a valid target; and that his operational budget shows an increase of approximately 5.4 percent, due to higher healthcare costs, Electronic Data Processing and Workers' Compensation expenses, and a small amount for operational efficiencies.

Responding to queries by the Commissioners, Mr. Thomas referred to a document titled Tax Collector FY18 Budget Request - BCC Funds and indicated that OMB could provide Commissioners with copies of the line-item budget. Mr. Woodard clarified that the Tax Collector is a fee officer and, as such, the Office's budget is approved by the Florida Department of Revenue; that the County applies statutory commission factors to the projected ad valorem collections, and the total appears in the budget; and that unexpended collections are returned annually to the County as excess fees.

In response to query by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Thomas, with input by Deputy Tax Collector for Budget and Finance Steve Farber, indicated that the Office returned \$8.9 million in excess fees last year and is projected to return \$9.2 million in Fiscal Year 2018; that excess fees are prorated based on the taxing authorities that pay commissions; and that approximately 40 percent of those are returned to the School Board, 40 percent to the Commission for the taxing authorities it represents, and the remainder to smaller taxing authorities such as fire and emergency services districts. Mr. Woodard, with input by Mr. Farber, related that the Commission, as required by statute, pays the commissions on behalf of the municipalities and the School Board.

Responding to query by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Thomas indicated that plans to establish a South County One-Stop Service Center and on-site driving course are proceeding; and that he hopes the center will be operational by late fall 2018.

## 2. Sheriff

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri conducted a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of his department's funding and staffing, and presented his Fiscal Year 2018 budget and a four-category decision package. He indicated that the Office's budget of \$283,804,130 meets the target; that revenue from contracted law enforcement services reduces the requested funding by \$32,091,820; and that the decision package categories total up to \$8,150,000; whereupon, he related that:

- The staffing level is where it needs to be.
- The budget is made up of three silos, with 51 percent going to Law Enforcement, 40 percent to the Department of Detention and Corrections, and 9 percent to Judicial Operations. With contract revenue offsetting some of the law enforcement costs, the most expensive part of the operation is the Department of Detention and Corrections at \$114.1 million. Approximately 1,100 of the Office's nearly 3,000 employees work in the Jail.

- Of the \$248.4 million allocated to Personal Services, approximately \$70 million goes to health insurance and Florida Retirement System contributions. Health insurance costs have risen about 10 percent, and some of the additional costs will be passed on to employees in 2018.

Sheriff Gualtieri discussed the decision package, relating that his department is reeling from years of insufficient spending on infrastructure during the economic downturn; and that Personal Services shortages have been addressed in the last few budget cycles, but there is a critical need to catch up spending in other areas. He presented the four categories as follows:

- In conjunction with OMB and the County Administrator, the Sheriff's Office has submitted a forecast for vehicle needs over the next 13 years that calls for replacing 143 vehicles in Fiscal Year 2018. Option 1 is to purchase the cars for \$6.5 million; Option 2 is to borrow the funds at a debt service of \$1.7 million annually for four years.
- The oldest of the Office's three helicopters, a 1991 Astar, will be due in Fiscal Year 2018 for a Federal Aviation Authority-mandated engine overhaul and refurbishment costing \$745,000.
- Aging patrol radios that are no longer supported by the manufacturer, Motorola, should be replaced at a cost of \$450,000.
- With the County Jail undergoing infrastructure revitalization, the Storage Area Network is projected to run out of space in February 2018, and its replacement is budgeted at \$455,000.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Eggers as to whether there would be an advantage to financing the replacement vehicles, OMB Director Bill Berger indicated that doing so would provide cash flow; that OMB is not ready to make a recommendation; that allocating \$6.5 million for the vehicles would severely constrain opportunities elsewhere in the budget; and that the Commission would probably want to finance some portion of the cost.

Lengthy discussion ensued, and Sheriff Gualtieri responded to queries and comments by the Commissioners as follows:

- The helicopter refurbishment would be good for 10 years, although given the aircraft's age, the County may decide to replace it within that timeframe.
- Sheriff's Office priorities for potential Penny for Pinellas IV tax revenue funding are (1) replacement of the aircraft hangar, which falls under the Real Estate Management Department's authority; (2) ongoing vehicle replacement, averaging 170 to 200 units per year through 2023; and (3) constructing a driving pad for Precision and Mobilization Technique training and other uses.

- A new hangar would likely cost a few million dollars.
- The driving pad at St. Petersburg College's Allstate Center does not meet the training needs nor have the necessary capacity.
- Storage Area Network is used for data storage.
- The Sheriff's Office is not seeking funding for a Marchman Act facility, believing that it is more cost-effective to continue using the County Jail for housing and focus available resources on services. Through community partnerships, counselor case managers are coming to the Jail to do discharge planning for Marchman Act detainees, and Operation PAR has prioritized beds for treatment. The County should look at the Orlando model of having a central receiving facility, where qualified staff conduct evaluations to determine what services are appropriate.
- The Sheriff's Office has the only law enforcement aviation section in the county and covers all law enforcement needs from Tarpon Springs to St. Petersburg. A countywide tax helps fund the services.
- Funding for the Adult Pre-Arrest Diversion program, implemented last October as a pilot program with Commission support, is included in the Sheriff's new budget. The program has worked beyond expectations through its first two quarters, and another evaluation will be done in August.
- Vehicle maintenance is performed in-house with no subcontracting. The Sheriff's Office has approximately 1,400 vehicles, including 700 to 750 patrol cars. Vehicles for child abuse investigators are funded through a state contract.
- The Sheriff's Office is working with Real Estate Management to relocate its North District operations from its current building, owned by the City of Dunedin, to another location later this year. There are several problems with the existing location, including an unhealthy mold condition. Although many Dunedin residents want the operations to remain in the city, a suitable building has not been located, and a site in East Lake is under consideration.
- Lease payments at the current Dunedin location total about \$200,000 annually.

Later in the meeting, Commissioner Eggers commented further on the prospective relocation, relating that when Dunedin first contracted with the Sheriff for city policing in 1995, a deciding factor was that there would still be a law enforcement presence in the city, and some residents are concerned about losing that visibility. He also noted that the loss of lease revenue will be a hit to the city's budget.

Discussion ensued, and Commissioner Welch noted that there has been discussion about a portion of future Penny revenue being committed to Information Technology

infrastructure, and the Storage Area Network is the type of project that could be considered.

Commissioner Gerard advised caution on advocating for a County-funded centralized receiving facility, relating that many substance abuse and mental health services are state responsibilities, and Sheriff Gualtieri indicated that progress is being made within the existing system. Chairman Long related that she is compiling a list of state responsibilities that the County is funding, and Commissioner Welch indicated that he would like to explore the subject further at a future meeting.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Welch, Sheriff Gualtieri indicated that the North District includes the area between State Road 60 in Clearwater and the Pasco County line; that the Sheriff's Office will continue to provide contracted policing to the City of Dunedin; and that there have been no recent discussions about adding Kenneth City to the city policing roster.

Sheriff Gualtieri discussed city policing, relating that the Sheriff's Office provides such services to 13 of the County's 24 municipalities; that the last city to be added was St. Pete Beach in 2013; that cities realize substantial savings and receive as good, or better, services than they were accustomed to; and that the Sheriff's Office hires all of the existing officers when it supplants a police department.

Responding to query by Chairman Long, Sheriff Gualtieri indicated that:

- The County's biggest void in mental health treatment is inadequate case management, and Commissioner Welch has inserted a \$500,000 placeholder in the decision package to establish an intensive case management system. The Behavioral Health High Utilizer Program, funded by the County last year as a pilot program through Suncoast Center, Inc., is working very well.
- Cities that the Sheriff's Office does not have dispatch contracts with for the regional 9-1-1 communications center are St. Petersburg, Largo, Pinellas Park, and Clearwater. Tarpon Springs uses the computer system, but has its own radio channels. The remaining municipalities are part of the system.
- Sheriff Gualtieri shares Chairman Long's concern about the disconnect between the Legislature and local governments about how funding decisions could impact public safety and social services, and he will be happy to work with the Commission on putting together its next appropriations package for the Legislative Delegation.

Chairman Long related that she echoes the sentiments of the other Commissioners in commending Sheriff Gualtieri for his leadership and his employees for their dedication.

### 3. Business Technology Services

Interim Executive Director and Chief Information Officer Jeff Rohrs conducted a

PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of Business Technology Services (BTS), and presented the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request.

Mr. Rohrs acknowledged the contributions of Budget and Finance Manager Greg Carro and OMB in preparing the budget; whereupon, he related that BTS has 165 full time employees, discussed the many departments, boards, councils, and third party entities to which BTS provides services, as well as the nature of those services, and displayed the department's high-level organizational chart.

Noting that BTS condensed its Strategic Plan to one page last year, Mr. Rohrs outlined the updates to this year's plan, including enhanced metrics, and reviewed the department's vision, mission, guiding principles, and core disciplines. He related that a major function of BTS is to maintain more than 400 applications and related infrastructure for its customers; whereupon, he discussed the department's three major projects for Fiscal Year 2018 as follows:

- Enterprise Asset Management, a strategic multi-year project serving major departments under the Commission that is budgeted at \$4,355,110 for Year Two.
- Accela Civic Platform Land Management software implementation, approved by the Commission in April. It will serve major departments under the County Administrator and modernize building design review and permitting.
- Justice Consolidated Case Management System (CCMS) Enhancements, with a decision package of \$234,560 to complete the enhancements started last year.

Mr. Rohrs related that the BTS base budget request is \$33,681,410; that it is under the target of \$34,060,120; and that the total funding request, including projects and the Capital Improvement Plan, is \$48,845,910; whereupon, he related that the category breakdown is 38 percent for labor, 31 percent for operating costs, 22 percent for projects, and 9 percent for the Capital Improvement Plan.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Rohrs, with input by Mr. Berger, indicated that:

- Although BTS has several open positions, the department plans to be fully staffed soon. Certain in-demand positions involving business intelligence and the Oracle Hyperion system may be filled using contracted services. Chairman Long suggested recruiting through St. Petersburg College and the University of South Florida, and Mr. Rohrs agreed to take better advantage of those resources.
- Funding sources for the \$17.4 million Enterprise Asset Management project, as shown in a pie chart in the PowerPoint presentation, are 42 percent General Government, 39 percent Enterprise, and 19 percent Special Revenue. Special Revenue includes the Transportation Trust Fund and Surface Water Assessment Fund.

- The primary Special Revenue funding source for the Accela project is Building Services.
- A particular ransomware that is going around is transmitted through email as a PDF file, and BTS security has taken preventive steps. McIntosh and iOS systems have not been infected.

Mr. Woodard provided input, relating that the planned realignment of certain vertical applications under his office will be discussed “at the 30,000-foot level” at tomorrow’s BTS Board meeting.

Responding to a concern by Chairman Long regarding Russian email addresses appearing in the County database when she first joined the Commission, Mr. Rohrs indicated that he would look into it; whereupon, she thanked him for the presentation.

**4. Creative Pinellas, Inc.**

Creative Pinellas Executive Director Barbara St. Clair referred to a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the goals outlined during last year’s presentation; whereupon, the following individuals discussed how they, or the arts organizations they lead, have been helped by Creative Pinellas through its grants, advocacy, networking opportunities, education, and partnerships:

Steven Kenny, artist  
Kim Dohrman, Executive Director, Creative Clay  
Michelle Wilder Larson, Managing Director, Theatre Exceptional  
Vivian Taylor, artist  
Yeal Kelley, artist

Danny Olda, Creative Pinellas’ Digital Content Manager, discussed the agency’s website, podcast, and blog, noting that the website has received approximately 35,000 page views from around the world since last fall, and the blog includes a guest editorship program offering monthly commentary from community arts leaders.

Ms. St. Clair asked the Creative Pinellas Board of Directors members and grant recipients in attendance to stand and be recognized; whereupon, she indicated that the agency has accomplished the following in the last year:

- Applied to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to establish 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.
- Converted from a contractor model to a staff model.
- Added new Board members with diverse backgrounds.
- Moved into the vacant office building at the former Gulf Coast Museum of Art, with



plans to establish an arts-business incubator.

- Solidified its mission, vision, and strategic plan.

Ms. St. Clair related that the Fiscal Year 2018 budget of \$645,800 shows an increase of 3 percent, or \$19,000; however, the funding request has risen by \$89,000, due to fulfillment of the agency's promise to spend down its historical bank of funds, resulting in a smaller contribution this year; that 3 percent of the 2017 funding will be held back in support of the increased request; and that a three-month reserve will be maintained; whereupon, she displayed a line-item budget and responded to the Commissioners' queries as follows:

- Regarding plans for the County's allocation from BP Oil settlement funds for public art, Creative Pinellas has presented OMB with a detailed plan covering three years and is set to recruit for a project manager.
- The budget line for the Co.Starters series (\$15,000) is listed under *Education*, and Creative Clay funding is part of *Organizational Grants - Education*.
- A new budget line showing \$14,400 for *Other Organizational Grants - Program Support* is proposed funding set aside for smaller organizations that offer worthwhile programs but may not be able to compete for dollars against large organizations that have professional grant writers.
- The agency will learn within 30 days whether the IRS will quickly approve it for 501(c)(3) status or require additional information.
- The name of the podcast is *AI* for Arts In, a pun on Artificial Intelligence.

Ms. St. Clair related that Creative Pinellas is becoming a force for the arts and the community and cited various factors demonstrating its positive impact and return on the County's investment.

Chairman Long referred to the agency's requested funding increase of \$89,000 and cited the importance of having a strategic plan to generate more revenue. Ms. St. Clair agreed and indicated that the agency's focus for Fiscal Year 2018 is to become as functional as possible and focus on the BP arts project and starting the business incubator.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. St. Clair and expressed appreciation for her efforts, and Commissioner Welch also commended Commissioner Seel for her hard work with the agency. Commissioner Seel recognized Creative Pinellas staff members Mason Gehring and Elizabeth Brincklow, and Ms. St. Clair discussed their roles as Marketing Manager and Director of Engagement.

Thereupon, Chairman Long called for citizens wishing to be heard, and the following

individuals expressed their support for funding Creative Pinellas:

Elizabeth Daniels, Largo, Clearwater Arts Alliance, Inc.  
Linda Hamilton, Dunedin, Dunedin Fine Arts Center  
Diane Shelly, Dunedin, Dunedin Fine Arts Center  
Estelle Loewenstein, Clearwater  
Maria P. Cantonis, Belleair  
Paula Parish, St. Petersburg, Morean Arts Center

Chairman Long thanked the speakers for their input.

#### **Miscellaneous Discussion**

Chairman Long discussed two topics unrelated to the budget presentations as follows:

- Related that she recently met with the principals of the Clearwater Marine Aquarium to discuss allegations that have been made about them, and they answered all of her questions. The Commissioners can contact them directly if they have any concerns or questions.
- Expressed concern about the safety of students and staff at county schools because of escalating disciplinary problems, relating that her daughter is a School Resource Officer at a north county high school and was recently knocked unconscious by a student. She discussed attending a recent function at which faculty indicated that the disciplinary problem is widespread and cited a School Board policy change that limits the ability of administrators to transfer or suspend problem students; whereupon, she proposed that the Commission meet with the School Board and Sheriff to discuss the situation.

Commissioner Welch discussed the broader problem of juvenile crime, noting that it was brought up during Representative Charlie Crist's recent Town Hall Meeting; and that a variety of approaches are being tried; whereupon, he opined that there should be consequences for repeat offenders who refuse to take advantage of diversionary opportunities, and proposed that Chairman Long arrange to have the Commission attend the next meeting of the Sheriff's Juvenile Crime Task Force and invite the School Board as well. Commissioners Seel and Eggers supported the idea, and Chairman Long thanked everyone for their support and indicated that she would follow up.

#### **ADJOURNMENT - 11:58 A.M.**