

# **Pinellas County**

*315 Court Street  
Clearwater, Florida 33756*



## **Minutes - Final**

**Thursday, August 2, 2018**

**9:30 A.M.**

**BCC Assembly Room**

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

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

**ROLL CALL - 9:33 A.M.**

Present: Kenneth T. Welch, Chairman; Karen Williams Seel, Vice-Chairman; Jay J. Beyrouti; Dave Eggers; Charlie Justice; and Janet C. Long.

Absent: Pat Gerard.

Others Present: Mark S. Woodard, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; other interested individuals; and Jenny Masinovsky, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk.

**1. Establish maximum millage rates for certification to Property Appraiser**

Mr. Woodard and Office of Management and Budget Director Bill Berger indicated that the main objective for the meeting is to establish the maximum millage rates, which will be transmitted to the Property Appraiser for certification by the end of the day tomorrow; and that the Truth in Millage (TRIM) notices informing property owners of the maximum tax impact will be mailed out on or about August 20 by the Property Appraiser.

Mr. Woodard stated that today the members have the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Fiscal Year 2019 proposed budget, presented to them on July 17, and discuss the related decision packages. He noted that any new initiatives or enhancements in service level that the Board may wish to pursue may have an impact on the property taxes; and that after the certification, millage rates may be decreased, but not increased.

Mr. Berger referred to a PowerPoint presentation titled *Doing Things! Budget Information Session* and provided information regarding the decision packages, maximum millage rates, and the proposed budget and its timeline. He noted that all millage rates are currently set to be the same as they are this year, with the exception of the rate for the Feather Sound Community Services District, which is proposed to be increased from the current 0.5 mills to 0.7 mills at the District's request; and that funding of some decision packages is contingent upon whether or not the additional Homestead Exemption (Amendment 1) and non-homestead property cap (Amendment 2) will be approved by the voters in the upcoming referendum.

Thereupon, the members referred to a document titled *Proposed Decision Packages and Funding Strategies, FY2019 Proposed Budget* provided at the June 14, 2018 Budget Information Session, and discussed the purpose and potential funding sources for certain decision packages, comparing the original requested amounts with staff recommendations and advocating for various needs of the residents. Staff provided input on issues such as homeless family housing, funding for the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) and the Justice Consolidated Case Management System, plans to revitalize downtown Palm Harbor, and financial sustainability of the Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board.

During discussion regarding homeless services case management, the members agreed that it would be beneficial to have a joint meeting with the Human Services Leadership Board, Juvenile Welfare Board, and the School Board to raise awareness and approach the problem of homelessness comprehensively. Mr. Woodard provided input and suggested that the matter be brought up with the Federal and State Legislative Delegations, in order to potentially reset the table of programming and funding responsibility for certain human services currently handled by the County.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Woodard noted that resources are finite as opposed to the needs, and explained that staff recommendations regarding the decision packages and the proposed budget seek to strategically and incrementally restore service levels in a way that is fiscally sustainable. He clarified that the Cross Bay Ferry decision package is deferred contingent on partner contributions toward the initiative; that the small business assistance decision package is intended to address the needs of the North County Business Incubator; and that an update to the Board regarding the Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan will take place sometime in the fall, and Mr. Berger provided input.

Commissioners Eggers and Beyrouiti expressed concerns regarding staff's recommendation to fully fund 69 full-time positions, noting uncertainties relating to the economy, the impact of the upcoming referendum, and the importance of the future County Administrator's involvement in decisions pertaining to staff. Chairman Welch pointed out that the number of requested positions includes realignments from Business Technology Services; that the upcoming Enterprise Asset Management project will require additional manpower; that staffing levels remain comparable to levels of 1989; and that the impact on the General Fund would be less than nine positions; whereupon, he invited the members to attend the BTS workshop and cybersecurity update on August 15.

Following further deliberations by the Board, Chairman Welch and Mr. Berger referred to the aforementioned document listing decision packages and summarized how the following packages will be addressed, indicating that a total amount of \$863,000 will be moved from *contingent* categories to the *fully funded* category:

Commissioner See/

- Bridge Housing and Homeless Services: \$500,000 to be fully funded, with the possibility of partial leveraging with the British Petroleum settlement funds

Commissioner Eggers

- Florida Business Incubator: placeholder to be fully funded in the amount of \$25,000, unless the need can be addressed through the small business assistance decision package
- The Justice System (as part of the \$232,040 Business Technology Services request): \$42,000 contingent on the results of the referendum

Commissioner Long

- TBARTA: \$100,000 request will be on hold until the organization determines the exact amount it requires from the partners and provides a formal request to the County

Commissioner Justice

- Home Delivered Meals Program for Seniors: \$200,000 to be fully funded, \$100,000 contingent on Amendment 1

Chairman Welch

- Urban Youth Empowerment Program: \$138,000 to be fully funded, provided the amount will be sufficient for the organization's operation

Mr. Woodard thanked the Board for direction provided to staff, indicating that they will seek sources other than the General Fund to finance the requested packages, and Mr. Berger expressed appreciation to all County departments and partner agencies contributing to preparation of the budget and decision packages. Commissioner Long emphasized that the Emergency Medical Services millage once again is not being increased, and Commissioner Eggers urged continued caution with regard to the budget, in light of the potential passing of Amendment 1; whereupon, brief discussion ensued pertaining to inclusion of educational material in the TRIM notice mailing.

Mr. Berger related that he is seeking the Board's consensus and direction with regard to the proposed maximum millage rates, and the members indicated their support.

**ADJOURNMENT - 11:50 A.M.**