

Pinellas County

*333 Chestnut Street
Clearwater, FL 33756*



Minutes - Final

Thursday, June 23, 2022

9:30 A.M.

Budget Information Session

333 Chestnut Street, Palm Room, Clearwater

Board of County Commissioners

Budget Information Session

Charlie Justice, Chairman

Janet C. Long, Vice-Chair

Dave Eggers

Rene Flowers

Pat Gerard

Kathleen Peters

Karen Williams Seel

ROLL CALL - 9:35 A.M.

Present: Charlie Justice, Chairman; Janet C. Long, Vice-Chair; Dave Eggers (via Zoom), René Flowers, Pat Gerard, and Karen Williams Seel

Not Present: Kathleen Peters

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Michael A. Zas, Managing Assistant County Attorney; and Teresa Ribble, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

1. Health Department

Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County Director Dr. Ulyee Choe referred to documents included in the agenda packet, discussed the partnership between the Department of Health and the County, and provided trends and successes of various health initiatives, including the Opioid Task Force and the school health nurses and dental sealant programs. He noted that there has been a nurse placed at all Pinellas County Schools for the past two years; and that positive student outcomes have greatly improved; whereupon, he summarized proposed the proposed budget, including information regarding sources of funding and details regarding requests for increases in infrastructure funding for the first phase of a roof replacement, for two user fees, and in wages for State and County Health Department employees.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Long, Dr. Choe indicated that the county's current COVID-19 percent positivity is approximately 14.5%; that Centers for Disease Control guidance recommends a second booster for individuals over 50 years of age, for those at high risk of developing severe disease, and those with certain conditions such as being immunocompromised; and that any COVID-19 booster shot may be given concomitantly with any other vaccine.

2. Medical Examiner

District Six Medical Examiner Dr. Jon Thogmartin referred to a PowerPoint presentation titled *FY 22-23 Budget* and provided statistical data related to increases in the number of autopsies performed and accidental drug-related deaths, an overview of the forensic lab workload through May 2022, and proposed budget increase; whereupon, he indicated that future strategies include management of increased workload due to synthetic opioid overdoses and a potential satellite office for Pasco County due to its expanding workload.

Dr. Thogmartin recognized the Pinellas County Forensic Lab staff for being one of only 13 laboratories to receive a 2022 American Society of Crime Laboratories Foresight Maximum Award, which is awarded to facilities operating at a minimum of 90% efficiency. Responding to queries by Commissioners Long and Seel, Dr. Thogmartin indicated that county

accidental drug overdose deaths are from all age brackets and demographics; and that Pasco County is paying what it should for use of the medical examiner facility; whereupon, Mr. Burton related that he will be meeting with the new County Administrator for Pasco on July 7.

3. Human Services

Referring to a document titled *Human Services*, Budget and Financial Management Analyst Abigail Lloyd, Office of Management and Budget, provided an overview of Human Services' Topics for Discussion, two proposed decision packages, and a budget summary, including explanations for increases and decreases in revenues and expenditures.

Utilizing the aforementioned document, Human Services Director Karen Yatchum highlighted 2022 accomplishments, including establishment of the Optimal Data Set and development of the Coordinated Access Model, purchase of a new medical mobile unit for the Healthcare for the Homeless program, implementation of a County five-year Age Friendly, and the creation of a Quick Response Team as part of the opioid mitigation efforts; whereupon, she provided an overview of performance measure data and work plan efforts for the coming year.

Responding to queries by the members, Ms. Yatchum, with input by Mr. Burton, provided information on the following topics:

- Medical mobile unit service areas and schedule
- County Health Program opioid recovery drug availability
- Staffing
- Opioid settlement
- American Association of Retired Persons livability score
- Bayside Clinic and Pinellas Safe Harbor
- Pinellas County Empowerment Team and clients served
- 211 Tampa Bay Cares and Foundation for a Healthy St. Pete
- Consumer protection updates
- Senior and aging population involvement

4. Office of Human Rights

Management and Budget Manager Fredricka Collins, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), referred to a document titled *Office of Human Rights* and presented a budget summary, including primary reasons for increases and decreases in revenues and expenditure, as well as an overview of the types of services and programs provided by the Department.

Office of Human Rights (OHR) Director Jeffery Lorick referred to the above-referenced document and discussed the Department's 2022 accomplishments, including being on

track to meet contractual obligations with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, development of materials and resources for tenant's rights, utilization of an OHR brochure campaign to promote its services to the community, providing anti-harassment policy training to 700 County employees as of May, and the completion of two mandatory federal reports; whereupon, he noted that the Department continues to staff the County's wage theft program, which assists improperly-paid citizens with recovering wages, and that over \$300,000 has been recovered over the past seven years.

In response to queries by Chairman Justice and Commissioner Flowers, Mr. Lorick clarified that the wage theft program is fully managed by OHR, provided information related to trends in the County's housing discriminations cases, and discussed specifications regarding requirements for the use of service animals.

OMB Director Chris Rose requested a deviation from the agenda for Safety and Emergency Services staff's delivery of their budget presentation prior to the Tax Collector.

Meeting Recessed: 10:54 A.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 11:04 A.M.

6. Safety & Emergency Services

Budget and Financial Management Analyst Veronica Ettel, Office of Management and Budget, referred to a document titled *Safety and Emergency Services FY23 Budget Summary*, and provided an overview of the Topics for Discussion section, items which could impact the proposed budget, decision points, budget summary, and proposed user fee changes.

In response to queries by Chairman Justice and Commissioner Long, Safety and Emergency Services Director Jim Fogarty, with input by Mr. Burton, provided information related to the 911 communications fee and fire department funding requests.

Mr. Fogarty highlighted FY22 accomplishments, focusing on strategic partnerships, from each of the Department's four divisions, performance measures data, and future work plans, including management of growth, regional 911 operations, and computer-aid dispatch and Pinellas Regional Information Management Enterprise project.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Fogarty provided insight into the cardiac arrest survival rate, challenges with staffing, fee for ambulance service, fire stations as transport providers, and a trend related to vehicle crashes.

Meeting Recessed: 12:05 P.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 12:34 P.M.

5. Tax Collector

Tax Collector Charles Thomas indicated that the proposed budget is a bit higher than the Office of Management and Budget's target and explained that the increases are due to costs and challenges related to staffing, operating expenses due to system implementation costs, and renovation at the mid-county office. Mr. Thomas noted that the implementation costs during FY23 will become subscription costs in following years and will be much lower; and that his office is working on implementing a human resources management system (HRMS) which will allow for best practices to serve the public more efficiently and better tracking of employee performance and skill sets.

Mr. Burton reminded the Commissioners that Florida Statute drives the fees set for the Tax Collector's Office; and that the fees are approved by the Department of Revenue prior to submittal to the Board.

In response to queries by Commissioner Long, Mr. Thomas indicated that while his office has instituted salary increases for all staff, there is still work to do since many employees are not yet at the midpoint; that he will be reimplementing employee career tracks; that job fairs recently held have been very successful; and that the proposed budget has a combined increase to operating expenses of \$1.7 million, citing technology changes to the call center functions, the implementation of the HRMS system, and the build-out of the mid-county office, as reasons for the increase; whereupon, Mr. Burton noted that the Constitutional Officers and the Appointing Authorities are meeting on June 24; and that he hopes for a discussion related to a consistent approach as to attracting, retaining, and compensating employees.

7. General Government

Referring to a document titled *General Fund and General Government*, Countywide Budget Division Director Cecilia McCorkell, Office of Management and Budget, discussed General Fund revenue and expenditure budget summaries, noting that decision package recommendations, any pay adjustments above the annual 3%, and an increase to the County's contribution to the Florida Retirement System, were not included in expenditures; whereupon, Ms. McCorkell provided an overview of the General Government budget summary, noting that it is a cost center within the General Fund, and furnished insight into its expenditure categories.

Mr. Burton briefly discussed his thoughts related to reserve levels, the importance of a three-month cash flow, and financial options related to a future facility; whereupon, Commissioner Seel expressed concern regarding a decrease in the reserve level, and discussion ensued.

ADJOURNMENT 1:02 P.M.