



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 16-2095A, Version: 1

Subject:

FY 2017 Budget Amendment No. 17-02 to use General Fund Reserves for site work at the 126th Avenue Landfill.

Recommended Action:

Approve Budget Amendment No. 17-02 realigning \$205,000 within the General Fund for site work needed at the 126th Avenue Landfill (Landfill) for the Real Estate Management Department.

Strategic Plan:

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.3 Protect and improve the quality of our water, air, and other natural resources

Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

4.3 Catalyze redevelopment through planning and regulatory programs

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources

Summary:

This budget amendment realigns \$205,000 from the Reserves Program to the Property Acquisition, Management and Surplus Program, within the General Fund, to support unanticipated costs associated with Landfill property. After assuming ownership through escheatment, the County is liable for security and remediation. The requested funds are required to remove site perimeter vegetation, provide ongoing vegetation maintenance for FY2017, and conduct additional site characterization to best determine remediation and redevelopment options.

Background Information:

The property escheated to the County in 2012 after the previous owner failed to pay property taxes. The County desires to return this property to beneficial use. To maintain regulatory compliance with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) landfill rules, the site must be secured and assessed for surface, soil and groundwater contamination.

On April 7, 2015, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) previously approved Board Budget Amendment No. 4 (Agenda Item #12) for \$110,000, which permitted the Real Estate Management Department (REM) to perform a review of historical site characterization information and to perform an initial assessment. Funds were also used to clear and grub a portion of the site to better understand the topography, the amount of surface debris, and to address immediate surface water drainage runoff to adjacent properties. The assessment activities revealed a large quantity of surface debris, inadequate perimeter security fencing and the need for additional characterization of the on-site pond and several soil mounds.

On March 15, 2016, the Board previously approved Board Budget Amendment No. 2 (Agenda Item #22) for \$105,000, which permitted REM to perform additional site evaluation activities including

surveys, preparation of a Voluntary Cleanup Tax Credit application, and funding for a perimeter fence. In November 2015, FDEP notified the County that the Landfill would qualify for \$70,000 in State Brownfield funding. After a site visit, FDEP increased the Brownfield funding amount to \$259,000 for contractual removal of vegetation and surface debris. The FDEP’s contractor completed the removal activities on October 12, 2016, but the vegetation along the site perimeter could not be removed from the entire site due to funding constraints.

This Budget Amendment provides for funding to remove site perimeter vegetation, regular site vegetation/grounds maintenance, and continued site characterization. Perimeter vegetation removal (\$100,000) is one time activity necessary to provide access to install new perimeter fencing. Funding for the new fence (\$50,000) currently exists in REM’s FY2017 operating budget. Regular vegetation/grounds maintenance is necessary to maintain the site for continued access for site characterization and to show the site to prospective buyers. This amendment includes \$50,000 for vegetation/grounds maintenance for FY2017. This activity will be included in REM’s FY2018 operating budget as a continuation item. Continued site characterization (\$75,000 with \$20,000 already included in REM’s FY2017 operating budget) is needed to analyze large soil piles, berms, buried construction debris, and the on-site pond. Analysis and results will be reviewed with FDEP to determine future site use options and the need for further remedial action(s).

A comprehensive plan with costs and timeline for remediation and redevelopment will be presented to the Board after the balance of the site characterization is completed and the results are discussed with FDEP. Once FDEP agrees with a path forward, any planned site work would be funded through the Capital Improvement Program, FDEP Voluntary Clean-up Tax Credits, and/or available Economic Development Authority funds. FDEP’s primary concern is the requirement to maintain surface water control and not impact the Cross Bayou or neighboring properties. In conjunction with planned improvements of 126th Avenue North, staff is confident this site can be redeveloped and will have value.

Fiscal Impact:

This amendment will realign \$205,000 from General Fund Reserves for Contingencies to Real Estate Management.

Site perimeter vegetation removal	\$100,000
Ongoing vegetation maintenance	50,000
Continued site characterization	<u>55,000</u>
	\$205,000

Real Estate Management currently has \$50,000 remaining in the FY17 budget for new perimeter fencing and \$20,000 for continued site characterization.

The County has recovered a portion of site cleanup costs via \$51,000 award from the FDEP’s Voluntary Cleanup Tax Credit. Additional opportunities to recover costs will be pursued.

Staff Member Responsible:

Jim Abernathy, Budget and Financial Management Analyst
Office of Management & Budget

Partners:

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Attachments:

Board Budget Amendment

Approved Board Budget Amendment April 7, 2015

Approved Board Budget Amendment March 15, 2016

Location Map and Aerial Photos (before and after FDEP site vegetation and surface debris removal)