

**AT A BUDGET WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON AUGUST 21,
2014 AT 4:00 P.M., THE FOLLOWING
PROCEEDINGS WERE HELD, VIZ:**

Present: Eric Hinson, Chair, District 1
Brenda Holt, Vice-Chair, District 4
Doug Croley, District 2 (arrived late)
Gene Morgan, District 3
Sherrie Taylor, District 5 (arrived late)
Nicholas Thomas, Clerk of Court
Robert Presnell, County Administrator
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

FISCAL YEAR 2014/2015 GADSDEN COUNTY DRAFT ANNUAL BUDGET OVERVIEW

Chair Hinson called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and thanked everyone for attending the workshop.

Mr. Presnell welcomed everyone to the third and final workshop for the 2015 budget, and then went over budget figures for the benefit of everyone.

Commissioner Croley appeared at this juncture of the meeting.

Mr. Presnell said the total budget number changed to reflect the priorities the Board directed the staff to incorporate into the budget at the last workshop and currently was at \$44,266,311 and the budget was currently balanced. He said they were using some draw-down cash forward money and the same thing was done last year and incorporated monies that were unspent and returned to the reserve from this current budget and that total was \$799,888.

Commissioner Morgan asked the Administrator to explain the draw-down figures for the benefit of everyone so the public would understand this was not ever-budgeted, but funds that were being carried forward.

Mr. Presnell said that was correct, the monies were coming from the 2014 budget on line items that they were able to accomplish savings and the monies would be moved into the 2015 budget.

Commissioner Morgan asked him to explain the difference between the proposed budget for this year versus last year and the proposed increase in spending.

Mr. Presnell said the budget changed, just like the revenues changed because they relied on a lot of state revenue. He said this year's budget showed a change of \$1,312,000. He said last year's total budget was \$42,953,389. He said a lot of the increase in the budget was from state revenue, library funding went up, solid waste funding and sales tax, and that the fuel tax had finally turned around.

Commissioner Croley asked if the figures were still based on the rate in the ad valorem tax rate.

Mr. Presnell stated the figures tonight reflected on the Board's direction to staff to the roll-back rate of 9.1 millage rate.

Commissioner Croley asked how much additional money that was to generate.

Mr. Presnell said basically \$200,000.

Chair Hinson said he had talked to Mr. Presnell and they had a conversation with the Property Appraiser and he said everything was "in great condition so we'll go back down to 8.9, I'm going to make that recommendation that we go back down to 8.9".

Commissioner Morgan said they would have to change the budget \$200,000 to make it balance.

Commissioner Holt stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Croley asked about the draw-down of the general funds.

Commissioner Taylor arrived at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Croley asked if they were representing that the \$799,888 was a carry-over from projects.

Mr. Presnell said not entirely, that approximately \$600,000 of it was from the 2014 budget.

Commissioner Holt returned at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Croley said he did not want to become so exuberant saying that they were carrying over all the money because the projects were not completed, but they really were taking out \$200,000 out of the fund balance.

Mr. Presnell said they were very conservative in the figures this year, and were competent that they would be turning back in an excess of \$600,000.

Commissioner Croley said he wanted to point out to them that they were the only county out of five: Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, Jefferson and Franklin, that was showing an increase in millage rate.

Commissioner Hinson interrupted and asked him to be as accurate as possible because it was not true; that everything would stay the same this year.

Chair Hinson said that was not true, and that when he came on board, there was \$5.9 Million and now they had almost \$7 Million, which meant they were taking taxpayer dollars and using the money wisely, that they were not spending money bad, they were making great decisions. He further added, at the same time, when the option came up, there was a motion from Commissioner Croley and a second from Commissioner Holt or Commissioner Taylor to keep it at 8.9; then when he asked the budget director to speak and give the true meaning of the roll-back, then everyone's eyes were opened. He stated at that point "everyone's eyes were opened and I

said OK, let's see and wait for a month first before we decide to make this decision, because something catastrophic, that's what Commissioner Morgan always said, we've got to make sure we protect the County, cause if something catastrophic come into the county, we want to make sure we have enough money in there so, since we had the option to wait and postpone, then we said, well, let's wait until the next day and today's the day and so we got the answer from the property appraiser, right? And the property appraiser said we are in good standings, right? Everything is OK, so we are, as of today..."

Commissioner Croley asked Chair Hinson to talk to the audience and not him, because he was at the meeting.

Chair Hinson

"Well, why are you saying we are increasing the...?"

Commissioner Croley

"You are increasing when you go from 8.9 to 9.1."

Chair Hinson

"We are not increasing from that, we are going, we are..."

Commissioner Taylor stepped out at this juncture.

Commissioner Croley

"Let's see if you do that, let's see if you do..."

Commissioner Holt

"Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, Fellows, Fellows, Mr. Chairman, may I speak? Listen, first of all, we have a presentation to do. That's the first thing. The second thing is that we decided at 9.1 because that's the only time you can reduce. If you went to 8.9 and you need to increase, you could not, that's the law, OK? Set it at 9.1 and you can always reduce, that's the law. So we're following the law. If we can finish the presentation, we can decide on the budget. Mr. Chairman, may we continue?"

Chair Hinson

"Commissioner Holt, I thank you too, for that presentation."

Commissioner Morgan said, for the public, that currently there was no increase in millage rate, there is proposal to increase; they were only having a discussion at this point to hash out the budget.

Commissioner Taylor returned at this juncture.

Commissioner Croley said the budget as presented is based on the millage rate going up.

Mr. Presnell said some things that needed to be addressed to finish the budget was the Boys and Girls Club and staff was instructed to reach out to the club to get a proposal for an additional club for Quincy and they did respond and requested \$241,000 to open an additional club in Quincy for a total of three clubs.

Chair Hinson

"Can I, I know everybody wants to talk about this situation. I will let you guys speak first and I can go next, but my proposal will be, personally, to keep it as is for right now, until we could look into it because what we're looking at is staff. If you move it from Havana or Chattahoochee, whatever, I'm not just, everybody know I'm the guy for the whole of Gadsden County. It's not because of Havana or Chattahoochee's involved. If we move, we've got \$75,000, I think, in Havana, \$75,000 in Chattahoochee. If you remove one, then you say you're going to equal it out, which means you've got to move a staff too, as well, because that's just, I think, is 100% staff, I think. So, ah, you move staff around, so you do that, you are going to mess up the whole equation. But, whatever the Board decides to do, the majority of the Board decides to do, I will live with it, but I think we need to keep as is. That's just me talking about it. I'm not sure how y'all feel about it. Commissioner Croley?"

Commissioner Croley

"I just have a question. Is that money, Mr. Presnell, included in this budget?"

Mr. Presnell

"No sir, that's why we need to address it tonight."

Commissioner Croley

"OK."

Commissioner Morgan said currently there no dollars funded in the proposed budget for the Boys and Girls Club and that there were currently two existing clubs that they were funding for \$75,000 each. He added that the City of Chattahoochee takes a lot of responsibility for the club as well by providing the building, maintenance issues with the building, along with other services for the Chattahoochee branch. He said he thought they might work with the local School Board to help with some of the expenses like had been done in Leon County. He added it was important to him that the funding for the existing two clubs be kept. He said if it were feasible to start a club in Quincy, he would like to look into that if the budget allowed that in the future. He added that his stance was to keep a 15 percent cushion in the general funds revenue, which they were doing at the moment. He also added that in the past, they had a seven year agreement with the club and he felt that was too long to enter into a contract with any entity, but would rather see them provide them with a three year agreement for the existing two clubs at the same amount of funding and if could work in the Quincy one, was open for discussion on it if the money was there. He also said they would need to find an additional \$150,000 and at the appropriate time, he had found a way to do that and would be willing to share if anyone was interested.

Commissioner Croley said he was trying to understand that they were saying that the \$241,309 was not currently in budget.

Mr. Presnell responded no.

Commissioner Croley

"If the millage rate does not go up, that's another \$200,000 that you don't have. Then you've got \$200,000 coming out of cash balance, that's \$400,000. Now if you put \$241,000 in there, that's \$650,000 approximately that we are getting near. Is that correct?"

Mr. Presnell said he did not see his reasoning on \$200,000.

Commissioner Croley

“Well, I’m just saying, if you’re taking the \$200,000 out of cash balances to balance the budget, that’s how much revenue we are short. We’ll be \$400,000 of revenue short if you go keep the millage rate at 8.9, correct?”

Commissioner Morgan said he was correct.

Commissioner Croley

“That doesn’t include anything in here about a pot hole repair machine for Public Works or anything?”

Mr. Presnell said several things were removed from the budget that they originally had in earlier in the year.

Commissioner Croley

“Well, I tell you, what is frustrating to me, is I sit here every time I come to these meetings, we are always talking about, and I’m not saying they are not important, everyone out here is not-for-profit, I understand. I’m for you, but, I can’t afford to do everything. The point I’m trying to make is, we don’t, every meeting we come to, all we talk about is not-for-profit. Every workshop, (looking at Commissioner Morgan) you didn’t miss anything. We were talking about the same thing the last time. We’re not dealing with things that are substantive to the Public Works, pot hole repairs, street resurfacing, things of this nature. We’re talking about how much money we’re going to take from everybody and re-distribute. That is what’s frustrating to me. If I offend anybody, I certainly don’t mean to do that, but that is certainly, that is what we are faced with and my perspective on it, is coming from, and the last time I looked from the Property Appraiser’s Office, District Two is contributing 35% of the revenue to run the County and a lot of the rest of it is coming from District 1. It’s very difficult for us to sit here and look at this without having some idea of how to be equitable.”

Chair Hinson

“That’s good discussion, I thing, I really thank you Commissioner Croley for your observation, that’s your ideology and I strongly appreciate what you said.”

Commissioner Holt said as far as Boys and Girls Club, it was \$75,000 for Havana & Chattahoochee, put \$75,000 in for Quincy and take whatever is off the top and then it would equal out.

Commissioner Taylor said she liked the idea of funding, but she was of the mindset “no-one rocks your baby better than you can”, and she added that she could appreciate the Boys and Girls Club, but would rather see some of the local organizations operate the programs, churches have after-school deterrent programs, grass-root organizations run the programs.

Lee Wagner, POB 7141, Tallahassee, Florida, CEO of Boys & Girls Club of the Big Bend, appeared before the Board.

Commissioner Taylor asked if he had the data with him for the average attendance for the club in

Chattahoochee.

Mr. Wagner then passed out a packet to each of the commissioners.

Commissioner Taylor said there were almost 6,000 students in the county and in the divided areas, there were only a certain group of children that would attend after-school programs, but there were more that attend churches and other organizations and that was where she would like to see the funding. She added she did not think the vast numbers were being reached with his program, although it was a very highly respected program. She said with regard to the school system, they had the Florida Standards that was coming, a very difficult, rigorous teaching methodology that was coming and they would need a lot of help. She said she was for putting the money out there, but did not think the avenue they were taking was the best and would like to hear his response.

Mr. Wagner said he wanted to share with them in response to their concerns, the Boys and Girls Club of Florida had a state alliance and commissioned it in 2013, and the study revealed to them that taxpayers would realize a cost avoidance of \$5,000 per youth diverted from the criminal justice system. He added that he thought in the long run, their program was very cost effective and saving the county a significant amount of money.

Commissioner Taylor said when talking about the penal system, she agreed, but she was talking about reaching the students academically and trying to get the masses into the programs where the numbers could make the difference. She asked how he could increase the numbers so more could be reached.

Mr. Wagner said in his proposal was a very aggressive recruitment process and they were projecting a 10 percent increase in the numbers served this coming year and another 10-15 percent every year thereafter.

Chair Hinson thanked Commissioner Taylor for her observation and said when he was the head football coach in Jefferson County back in the day, there was an after-school boys and girls club after 6:00 and it shocked him when he came to Gadsden County and noticed it was during the day hours because the crime is between 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. and not the other hours and felt if they went with those hours, more kids would participate. He asked what the hours were for Leon County.

Mr. Wagner said typically, the hours were from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. and he was about partnerships and they certainly they would bring to the table is establishing effective, quality partnerships with entities throughout the community. He said he would like to share that with the Chattahoochee club, 91 percent of the students that submitted their report cards were promoted to the next grade level and at the Havana club, there were 62 report cards collected and 95 percent of those students passed to the next grade level.

Commissioner Holt pointed out that the attendance for Quincy was in 2008, and there was an overflow every day and there were no seats left. She said attendance was not the problem, the concern was to have the program in place so the students would come. She said there was nothing for the students above the grade level, so they look at the humanity and arts and things to help them advance and one was definitely needed in all three towns.

Mr. Wagner said he wanted to also share with them, he was talking to Mr. Smith, their Director of

Operations, and he shared there was a music program at the Havana site, and there was one young lady that was part of the program, she learned violin approximately 5 years ago, stuck with it with their resources and she is becoming their virtuoso in violin, so they did bring other aspects other than recreation and wanted to challenge the kids to grow in all aspects of life.

Commissioner Morgan thanked Mr. Wagner for sharing that with the Board and said he thought it was important for them to keep in mind that the children have a lot of time and little direction and that is when problems could occur. Commissioner Morgan asked his opinion if he thought it was better to have two clubs as there currently was or to try and fund three clubs.

Mr. Wagner said it would depend on the level of funding, if they tried to fund three clubs at the current \$150,000, he felt like they would "become watered down and provide a service we would not be proud of".

Commissioner Morgan asked how long it would take to have the club up and running effectively.

Mr. Wagner said he would like to devote a good 6 – 9 months to develop relationships with various entities throughout the community to include possible private funding.

Commissioner Morgan asked Commissioner Holt if, in an effort to soundly get the third club in place, could she live with 6 – 9 months and not have the other two clubs suffer.

Commissioner Holt said she appreciated his effort, but when the club was taken out of Quincy, it was taken out without the consideration of those children and was moved to Havana. She said put the other \$75,000 in and be done with it, that they could set the money aside for when he was ready for it.

Commissioner Croley asked Mr. Wagner if they received any funding from United Way and he said they did. Commissioner Croley said he provided support from his business to United Way from the private side and from the public side, he added there were citizens in two districts and possible a third being served, but there was not enough money to go around.

Commissioner Holt pointed out that the Havana Boys and Girls Club served Districts 1 and 2 and children in Quincy would be from Districts 2, 4 and 5 and Chattahoochee would have children from Districts 3 and 4 and it would serve everyone, it was just the location.

Commissioner Taylor said at one point she was in the business and the Boys and Girls Club was a competitor of hers, but she was out of the business now and she added if it did come, it needed to be effective. She said having to come up with additional money concerned her somewhat and she asked to look at it case by case and year by year and if the statistics were looking good. She said when she first started, there were \$800,000 in the reserves and today there was \$7.3 Million, and the Board was right to the fact there had been massive work done with regards to putting funds back into the reserves.

Commissioner Croley asked if the County Administrator went through the process for the Not-for-Profits and applications made, if the Boys and Girls Club were involved in the process.

Mr. Presnell said a request was submitted to operate the current two sites and it was a slight

increase.

Commissioner Croley said there was a recommendation to fund a number of not-for-profits and asked if they were included in the present budget.

Mr. Presnell said at the last workshop with the direction they were given, there were two added and they were included.

Commissioner Taylor said Commissioner Morgan had mentioned how to fund this without touching any money and asked that he elaborate on that.

Commissioner Morgan said this was based on two things: 1) Keep the 15 percent of cushion in the back in case of an emergency or catastrophe; and 2) Not for raising the millage rate and they were going to have to find approximately \$198,000 in order to do that and \$225,000 for the Boys and Girls Club. He added one way they could recoup \$125,000 was to fund one-half of the new voting equipment for the Supervisor of Elections in this year's budget and the other half in next year's budget and in doing it that way, it did not impact the Supervisor's ability to have the machines up and going by the 2016 election.

Mr. Presnell said at the last workshop, there was discussion of road paving requests and the projects came to \$789,296. He added that Staff did not recommend to move forward with the requests, was just following up on conversations. The list is:

Road Paving Requests

Frank Jackson Road \$118,877
Joe Adams Road \$154,068
Shiloh Road/Holt Lane \$199,504
Deerwood Circle \$176,333
Lake Yvette East \$140, 514

Chair Hinson said Lake Yvette East should not be included in this list because the entire paving was going to be funded last year and the Board decided to split it to do half this year and the other half next year. He added that everybody got their wish list last year, Commissioner Morgan disagreed, and he thought they could finish his wish list, then everybody could start new and put their two cents in.

Commissioner Croley asked where the road paving money would come from.

Mr. Presnell said none of that was funded in the proposal and would have to be found or come from reserves. He offered some alternatives if they wished to proceed with some of the projects. He said there was still the existing loan (road bond) that was done to pave the roads and if they wanted to direct staff to use that as an alternative, the reserve money wouldn't be used, would take them a few months to refund the money, but would give them the cash available to pay for the projects.

Commissioner Croley asked how long before the bond reached maturity and was paid off.

Mr. Presnell said three years and the annual payment was approximately \$750,000. He said what

they had put together was basically the same payment with a fifteen year term and would generate approximately \$6.4 Million. He added the funds would be specific for road projects.

Commissioner Morgan said why not equally divide the dollars over the five districts and use the funds as they saw fit.

Commissioner Taylor said for the first time, he said something that she agreed with.

Commissioner Croley asked if the source of revenue for that would be fuel tax.

Mr. Presnell said yes, they were obligating the same two cent fuel tax as currently obligated, for a fifteen year term.

Commissioner Croley said fuel tax was actually going down because of the increased mileage in vehicles.

Commissioner Taylor stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

Mr. Presnell said they had to find \$425,000 and he knew there were other items that the Commissioners wanted to discuss.

Commissioner Croley asked if there were a way to fund a pot hole repair machine.

Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Croley asked how much a machine of that nature would cost.

Mr. Presnell said it would run approximately \$109,000-\$112,000.

Commissioner Morgan returned at this juncture.

Commissioner Holt asked if they were looking at any FRDAP grants for the parks.

Mr. Presnell said if the Board wanted to deviate from the list that had been approved; they would need to discuss that prior to applying for the grants.

Commissioner Croley said if they had a pot hole repair machine, there would not be as much of a problem with the roads tearing up, because if you "watch your pennies, the dollars take care of themselves".

Commissioner Taylor returned at this juncture.

Commissioner Holt said for that machine to be added to the budget.

Chair Hinson said there was a lot of issues everywhere in county with economic development, affordable housing, and wanted to propose that they look at finding an aide for each commissioner and a salary could be added, a certain amount per each district.

Commissioner Holt said she knew some of the other counties were using aides and the purpose of that was they would do research and could help go after funding. She said if a commissioner decided they did not want an aide, they would not have to get one, but she thought it would be a very bad idea to not get one.

Commissioner Morgan asked what an aide would do.

Commissioner Holt said normally they would be in charge of a lot of research, would be community based and could do scheduling.

Commissioner Morgan asked how much they were looking at.

Chair Hinson said they could hire a full-time aide, pay them \$25,000 or they could give each commissioner funding so they could hire their own and make Gadsden County run a little more efficient.

Commissioner Morgan said there were a lot of folks out of work, not by choice, and he thought this would be looked at negatively with a poor, rural county hiring aides. He added that with his job, he did a lot of traveling and if there were something he needed to have researched, he normally would have staff do it for him. He said he would have a hard time spending taxpayer dollars to hire someone to be an aide to him.

Commissioner Croley said there were four counties that made up the Tallahassee Metropolitan area, Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla and Jefferson and Leon was the only county doing that. He added he did not think that was the route to go and if they wished to partner with Florida State Public Administration units and have some student to assist the county, he might be able to agree with that.

Commissioner Taylor said she was afraid lightening might strike, because she agreed with Commissioner Morgan again. She added she thought the idea was a great idea; the timing was not, there were too many issues facing the county that needed to be addressed. She said she had thought about that before, but considered paying for it out of her own pocket.

Chair Hinson said someone like himself was very involved in the community, not only in his district, but everywhere else as well and wanted to make sure the folks received everything they needed. He further stated there was another option, with the graduate system, if they set aside \$7,500 - \$10,000 per year to hire a grad assistant, they were encouraging and educating students in Gadsden County.

Commissioner Morgan asked if there was \$5,000 budgeted for the Summer Youth program and Mr. Presnell said there was. Commissioner Morgan said a child needed to go out on their own and ask for their own job and there was \$85,000 already budgeted to help out there.

Chair Hinson said he had a quick story, "How can, how can you tell, it would be your option, because you see some future leaders in your community, right? Some stars in your community and they want to be like Commissioner Morgan, right? They want to get that experience and if you had the opportunity to give them some, some assistance along the way..."

Commissioner Morgan said he would do that; he would take them by the hand and show them how to go out and get a job rather than give them a summer job with taxpayer dollars.

Chair Hinson responded, "That was not taxpayer, I mean, we're the only county, I mean, you know, I'm going to tell you a secret. This year we hired interns this year, the Gadsden County Commission. I'm just saying, we are doing it anyway. So it's not like we are not doing it, we're hired interns, the Gadsden County Commission. OK, so, all I'm saying, why don't we do it so they can get that experience as a commissioner? That's, we doing it anyway. Everybody doing it."

Commissioner Holt said she did not know where it got off being a waste of taxpayer's money. She said there was a high rate of negativity in the county. The research people were not out there, there were funds and all kinds of things there that the Board could get help with. She added that all the commissioners had a job and this was part-time and that was why they were getting part-time results. She further stated there had to be a way to go after solutions to the problems.

Chair Hinson said he was talking about hiring a grad student and pay them \$5,000, he did not mean to hire one at \$100,000, if they worked in Gadsden County, they would want to stay in Gadsden County.

Commissioner Morgan stated they were elected to set policy, not to hire people, if people were waiting on local government to hire them that would set the wrong tone for everyone. He said he did agree with Commissioner Holt on setting effective policies that would move them forward.

Commissioner Croley asked if they could move on.

Mr. Presnell said they were through with the presentation and wanted to mention a few things, the grant writer was in; the Sheriff's Administration/Emergency Management building was in and funded; the Public Defender's renovations were in; the \$250,000 received from the legislature for the Livestock Pavilion was in; incinerator for Animal Control; equipment, nothing real extravagant; couple of vehicles; Senior Services, Economic Development money; and increased several other areas; emergency housing, health department, etc.

Commissioner Croley said he had some calls and wanted to make sure there was \$113,740 in the budget for the identified private, not-for-profit organizations.

Commissioner Morgan said they had made good progress and had a couple of things he wanted to run by the Board for consideration. He asked for an explanation from the previous workshop for the economic incentive of \$400,000.

Mr. Presnell said there was an Ordinance on the books that was done in 2007 or 2008 and was to create where the BOCC would have the ability to incentivize economic development projects and it was never funded and are now proposing some revisions to it. He said it would set aside dollars that would be very specific for economic development.

Commissioner Holt explained that she had asked for \$500,000 for seed money to attract businesses or to expand businesses. She said if they did not fit in an Industrial Park, there might be something near Interstate 10 and would help with what the County might need to do to get them in the county.

Commissioner Morgan asked if it could be used as matching grant dollars and Commissioner Holt said yes. He said he had a couple of specific items he wanted to entertain: Chattahoochee Mainstreet Organization and said it was a brand-new organization that recently received their designation earlier this year and it was the most active and was growing and would impact the entire county because of things going on the Apalachicola River, as well as other things, that would bring money into the county. He said an application was submitted and was a really important organization for the west side of the county that could impact everyone. He added he would like to see \$5,000 for funding to get the program kicked off. He said his second request was the Chattahoochee Senior Center because there were some needs and the City of Chattahoochee had already provided a lot funding for that club. He reminded them that last year they funded the Havana Senior Center with \$10,000, already fund the Gadsden County Senior Services and this year they were funding Havana again and provided them with a van. He said he would like to see \$10,000 funded for Chattahoochee. He asked about the Redeemed Program and said he did not see where it was funded when it had been in the past funded for \$5,000. He further said at the appropriate time, there had been very constructive conversation on how they could move forward with economic development and would like to consider a way to remedy the situation. He added he felt there were "two different paths we are trying to go down instead of one" and hoped to have everyone go in the same direction. He said he would like to equally fund the Gadsden County Economic Development County. He said to keep the funding in place for the ECDC, but equally fund the Gadsden County Economic Development Council. He stated that way they could have private industry leaders involved in it and would be much more effective in different levels. He asked that they look at it for a three year period of time to see if there were any results.

Chair Hinson said they were not preachers or civil rights activists, they were consensus builders, politicians and he felt strongly on everything Commissioner Morgan said and wished everyone else on the Board felt the same way to help jobs and people out in the community.

Commissioner Taylor said Chair Hinson was correct in they should be consensus building, but when you lived in a democracy, there would be times when you agree to disagree because people have different ideas and concepts.

Commissioner Holt stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Taylor said she agreed with some of Commissioner Morgan's ideas on the non-profits he mentioned. She asked about the EDC and if it was separate from the Chamber of Commerce.

Commissioner Morgan said it was an existing organization that they have had for years and was recently revitalized and had members in the community involved with it, the majority from the private sector and felt with that, they might see some good results. He further stated there was a major announcement made regarding Goodwill that would bring in approximately 26 jobs and there was more to come if they could get on board with them.

Commissioner Holt returned at this juncture.

Commissioner Morgan added that they had the expertise of both organizations working together and see what results come from it. He said to give each organization \$75,000 each for a total of

\$150,000 and \$30,000 to the Small Business Center and thought they might be amazed with what might could be done.

Commissioner Taylor said they needed to look at funding for economic development and felt that ECDC was on the right track. She said she was interested in looking and the Gadsden Economic Development Council, but not at the same level of funding.

Commissioner Morgan said the only reason he suggested the same amount of funding was they could evaluate both programs the same way. He said with the Boys and Girls Club, Senior Citizens and Mainstreet, to put it in the budget for three years, but let them come back.

Commissioner Holt said there was no reason to have two different organizations because businesses would not know who to contact to bring a business into Gadsden County. She said there needed to be one force and one objective. She said she did not have a problem with the Chamber Economic Development Council working with this Council and it be funded at a higher level.

Commissioner Morgan said where he was coming from was there were certain organizations that either feel more comfortable dealing with private sectors opposed to the GCDC and there were people within the private sector that had relationships and expertise than those that were primarily on the government side, public sector side. He added to have one point of contact that was advertised and when it comes in to whoever that would be, it might be they need to turn it over to the right area to handle.

Chair Hinson said Chattahoochee MainStreet was asking for \$5,000, Chattahoochee Senior Citizens was asking for \$10,000. He said to take Redeemed out.

Commissioner Croley asked why they were not funded.

Mr. Presnell said their application was not complete when it was submitted, the financials (audits) were not included and never received them.

Commissioner Croley said why other entities that applied and turned in the information, towed the line were approved and asked if there was any other reason Redeemed would not have been equally considered.

Mr. Presnell said the package was not complete per the policy the Board adopted.

Commissioner Croley said they had to meet the standards, it was not fair to have policies in place and not adhere to them or they should not have the policies at all. He then asked the County Attorney if that was consistent with what was required.

Mr. Weiss said they should follow their policies.

Chair Hinson

“Well, we’ll just put Redeemed right here, right quick. I’m just trying to keep things, we’ll discuss that later on, OK? We’re going to make sure to be fair to you. Alright, so we’ve got \$10,000 for Chattahoochee Senior Citizens and give me an amount that you think that will make you feel

comfortable with the Chamber of Commerce right now.”

Commissioner Morgan

“Well, again it’s, and I appreciate...”

Chair Hinson

“Because we going to keep whatever is going on with them right now, so just give me a little small figure that...”

Commissioner Morgan

“I know these get interchanged here Mr. Chair, but I’m talking about the Gadsden County Economic Development Council.”

Chair Hinson

“I know, I’m sorry, the Gadsden County, I understand.”

Commissioner Morgan

“I’m not talking about giving money to the Chamber...”

Chair Hinson

“We’re going to exclude the Chamber...”

Commissioner Morgan

“No, my figure was \$100,000, which is what, I thought not as much as we talked about with the other, but that’s where I was coming from.”

Chair Hinson

“What about, what about, I’m just throwing a number out there, what about \$50,000 plus the \$30,000 that we, ah, \$100,000 plus the \$30,000, right?”

Commissioner Morgan

“Well, that’s the Small Business Development Center. I thought that was...”

Chair Hinson

“That’s something similar.”

Mr. Presnell

“At this point, they are grouped together. We have \$140,000 is all that is budgeted. Total.”

Commissioner Morgan

“Right, and what I was saying, was to have it at \$200...have the same amount for each of the groups, and I heard what you said before, you don’t want to cut that amount, make it the same and then set the Small Business Center aside, however you guys want to do that. It doesn’t matter to me. I think it’s an effective program. But, anyway, whatever you want to do.”

Chair Hinson

“What about, what about, cause I know, I may have one person on the fence, there’s you and I and one other person on the fence while I’m doing this here. What about we go with that piece, right?”

We go with \$50,000 plus the \$30,000. I'm just throwing something out there, then we can figure that another year, another time..."

Commissioner Morgan

"Are you saying doing that for three years where they can move forward and have a program in place? I mean, that's what I'm trying, even for GCDC, the same thing."

Chair Hinson

"I'm trying to persuade one more person, so, we, let's go three years first."

Commissioner Morgan

"Well, I'm just saying that in order to get a program and just what Commissioner Holt was saying, too, with economic incentives. Have it budgeted for three years. Don't have to have this discussion every year."

Chair Hinson

"What about, we've got \$50,000 plus \$30,000 for the Small Business..."

Commissioner Morgan

"OK, and then you've got \$140,000..."

Chair Hinson

"They, they're doing, what they, they doing two separate things, though, one of, one of them, they doing the same but separate, one is attracting jobs here and the Chamber, pretty much, that group which you are talking about, is pretty much staying the one, small business existing business we have right now. So, they are doing two different..."

Commissioner Morgan

"Why don't we meet in the middle and say \$75,000 and \$30,000."

Chair Hinson

"I can't go down, because my feelings would be hurt, so I..."

Commissioner Morgan

"No, I'm not saying go down, I'm saying keep it at the GCDC. I'm saying going to \$75,000 and \$30,000 on the Economic Development Council."

Chair Hinson

"Not sure should vote that. But we are building a consensus."

Commissioner Morgan

"Again, you want them to work, you want to give them the same amount of resources so we can evaluate them, is what my point was. I mean, that's what I was trying to say. There is no reason to say, somebody could come say, 'Well, we didn't have that amount of money to work with', which I don't think you would hear that. I'm trying to say let's get it on, let's take as many variables out as we can and put it in place so we can move forward and truly evaluate it. Just like what Commissioner Taylor said, look at it each quarter with our (inaudible) and say hey, what's the deal."

Chair Hinson

"Now, see here, this is the key. See how I'm building a consensus with you, right? I'm going to go with \$60,000, right?"

Commissioner Holt

"Would y'all please stop building consensus around here?"

Chair Hinson

"\$60,000 plus \$30,000, right? Now, Commissioner Morgan, now, only if, right, only if. So we've got the \$5,000, \$10,000, the \$60,000 plus the \$30,000..."

Commissioner Croley

"Don't forget the \$125,000..."

Chair Hinson

"Oh, we're not worried about that right now."

Commissioner Morgan

"You want me to be your aide, don't you?" (Laughter)

Chair Hinson

"No, I want, only if, if we can set aside, now the Commissioner know I love him, right? Only if, not throw \$25,000 out right? We set aside \$10,000 per person to hire a great assistant. That's it, per year and that's for..."

Commissioner Morgan

"You want one Commissioner Hinson? I'm not going to do that for me because I could not sleep at night doing that, and I'm not saying that in a bad way."

Commissioner Holt

"Mr. Chairman..."

Commissioner Morgan

"If that's something that you, individually, think you need to have and the rest of the Board can live with that, I don't, that's not something that I can..."

Chair Hinson

"But you've got to have the vote to do it though."

Commissioner Holt

"Mr. Chair, may I please?"

Chair Hinson

"Ho, ho, hold up, I want to hear what Commissioner Morgan's saying for one second. Go ahead Commissioner"

Commissioner Morgan

"Well, I'm just saying. You truly feel that you need an aide to be effective in your job and I'm negotiating with you on things that I feel that are important for the whole county. That's where I'm from on that."

Chair Hinson

"No, I'm telling you, this is for county, it's not for Eric Hinson."

Commissioner Morgan

"No, I understand that. I'm saying that don't put \$10,000 in for me for an aide."

Chair Hinson

"Well, we have solved the problem." (Turning to Commissioner Holt) "Now, go ahead, Commissioner."

Commissioner Holt

"Thank you Commissioner. I don't think any of that's solved. But, I hear y'all arguing, I mean debating and agreeing, all that stuff back and forth. As far as I'm concerned, none of it is solved. As I have said before, when it comes to economic development, no one wants to hear from this group or that group when they come to town. They just want to hear from one group and they want everyone to have the same story. They want to be received welcoming into the county. You already have a group, I don't have a problem with the Chamber. My days of having a problem with the Chamber are just about over. I have a problem with reporting, (inaudible) but I think that's pretty much been taken care of."

Chair Hinson stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Holt

"I think that's pretty much been taken care of. I just need the two groups together. I don't need one over here and one over there. If we are going to fund one group at \$240,000, let's fund it. But we need to have that group together. Because two separate groups come and make two different reports. One's pulling over here and the other is pulling there. I heard y'all talk enough. I don't mind you finding Chattahoochee Senior Citizens as long as Gretna Senior Citizens and anyone else that has Senior Citizens is funded, OK? If you want to fund Mainstreet, there are two Mainstreet's already up and running in the county, set aside for each Mainstreet. That would be \$60,000. Set it over to the side and come up with a Mainstreet program and looking to bring economic development in their town, you've got \$60,000 sitting over there. Can't draw off of it unless they have a Mainstreet, and without approval of this Board, they can't draw off of it. So that will solve that problem. I'm fully in favor of funding for those that will work. But, I don't want to mess up what you already have. You've already started on the economic development track. Let us get the Chamber to pull in with them, they get together, and just fund them at \$240,000. That will solve the problem with economic development. It doesn't matter who's in charge as long as we are making the progress. It's unusual if business can't work with government anyway, so no one is going to come here if we're fighting."

Commissioner Morgan

"So what I'm hearing you say Commissioner Holt, in that particular issue is, fund it at \$240,000 and \$100,000 of it is directed through the GCDC to the Gadsden Economic Council so they can work together?"

Commissioner Holt

"No, they can find their own acronym, put both of them together and let's just go after any economic development. There is no reason to..."

Commissioner Morgan

"You're saying do away with the GED..."

Commissioner Holt

"I'm saying doing away with the Chamber and Economic whatever and..."

Commissioner Morgan

"Well, takes the private sector out of it."

Commissioner Holt

"No it doesn't, because the private sector would be part of that group."

Commissioner Morgan

"What I'm trying to say, you need to have those two separate organizations working together."

Commissioner Holt

"They can have their separate organizations for their own thing, but for county-wide economic development..."

Commissioner Morgan

"What's the difference? But you've got to fund that in order for them to participate in it."

Commissioner Holt

"So you are telling me they couldn't participate in it for \$240,000 for the same group?"

Commissioner Morgan

"No, I'm not, I'm saying that, no, I'm saying that the Gadsden County Economic Development Council, in order for them to participate in that, we've got to fund that so we can have that expertise and guidance and everything else they bring to the table from the private sector. That's what I'm saying. I'm saying for them to work together, not take any money away from the GCDC, I'm saying add that, just like what you are saying and move forward."

Commissioner Holt

"I'm not saying take anything away, but what I am saying is this, we are showing that we are divisive already. That's wrong. "

Commissioner Morgan

"No, I'm talking about working together."

Commissioner Holt

"Well, look, I tried it before and it didn't work. It just doesn't work if it's separate. Can't those two groups get together? If they can't get together then, they are not..."

Commissioner Morgan

"You've got to be working on the same page, you've got to have the private sector involved. It really should be leading the efforts."

Commissioner Holt

"It would be if, if they had shown that in the beginning with the Chamber..."

Commissioner Morgan

"But they took that way from how we responded in the previous years."

Commissioner Holt

"No, no, no, I'm not talking about that, I'm talking about before then, years before."

Commissioner Morgan

"We can't go back years..."

Commissioner Holt

"Yes we can, because..."

Commissioner Morgan

"Why? It's not solving anything. We are trying to move forward."

Commissioner Holt

"Thank you. That's what I'm saying. You cannot have the money unless you get together."

Commissioner Morgan

"I'm not saying that. I'm about getting together."

Commissioner Holt

"Thank you."

Commissioner Croley

"I was going to say, more opinions are changed by observation than argument. That's something that everybody ought to bear in mind and all I know is this, it didn't make any difference to me whether we chose the Chamber route or whether we chose the present Gadsden, what I call the Jackson County model, the Economic Development Council. But, I do know this, it's the municipalities that wanted to go the present route. They are the ones with the utility infrastructure. I don't care where your business is going to go, it's got to go where there is utility infrastructure. If the municipalities are willing to put the money forward, and many of them served on the Chamber Board of Directors that made this decision that is the way it was decided to go and that was the commitment made on that basis."

Chair Hinson returned at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Croley

"I'm still a member of the Chamber, or at least the businesses are, but, at the same time, I can't speak about, you can't speak out here, you can't match your horse and ride off in two different directions. We have got to either remain committed to what the previous commitment was, which

was, I thought y'all had said three years to the Gadsden Economic Development Council. If I am mistaken, Mr. Presnell, help refresh my memory, but the route was to go in that manner in support of the cities that who had the infrastructure and we've heard that we have fifteen commercial parks from Ms. Kirkland gave that inventory. I believe you said at least two of them were publically owned by the respective municipalities and the others were owned by the private sector, and you were inventorying and working with all of them. Commissioner Morgan, I'm going to come back and tell you, I don't care which way we go as a group, but, one direction seems to me to be the only property course."

Commissioner Morgan

"And I agree with you, and it should have part of the private sector included in it."

Commissioner Croley

"And it would be my understanding that the, and correct me if I am wrong, but, it's my understanding that there is a seat on the Economic Development Council that you are presently using for the Chamber or for any other private sector entity that is interested. Is that correct, Mr. Presnell?"

Mr. Presnell

"The Chamber has a permanent seat on the..., yes."

Commissioner Croley

"OK, so, I don't know where, why y'all are having this..."

Commissioner Morgan

"Where we are missing the boat, if you want to know, where we are missing the boat is you have two different directions because there are those that think that we only want to go this way and that's the public sector environment and then you think there are the people that only want the private sector and until you get those both working together, rolling in the same direction, we won't be, there is not one single economic development council working effectively that doesn't have the private sector included in it. You think about the biggest regional event we had at Amelia Island right there that was led by the private sector that was there. It had the public sector and, but those small businesses are the backbone of economic development and it is never going to be different. Never."

Commissioner Croley

"Commissioner Morgan, and I don't mean this in any disrespect to you, but I have attended those Chamber events in Amelia Island for many years, and when I haven't been there, I've had representatives. I am also a member business-wide, in all of those organizations that you referenced in Leon County. I am simply saying to you, that in order for this county to be effective, Commissioner Holt is correct, there does need to be one voice. (Commissioner Morgan agreed with that.) You bring nothing but confusion to the table. There was, there is a place, multiple places as I take it, for the private sector with the Gadsden Economic Development Council, and I'm not holding that up as a model to go by, but it is a model that has been chosen by those entities who are putting their money in it, and who have the utility infrastructure."

Commissioner Morgan

"So, if we can improve that model by including private sector into a model, and we haven't been

successful in the recent years, what would be the issue to that?"

Commissioner Croley

"I'm not debating that. I'm saying that it sounds like to me that the avenue is already open and it, and, I don't know what else there is to say. I mean, y'all have been talking about this for quite some time and it's kind of gotten, We get the picture, we really do. I do, I don't know if Commissioner Taylor or Commissioner Holt does, but I think everybody else in this room certainly does. All we are saying to you is, 'Look, we get it', I just want to move on."

Commissioner Morgan

"So, Commissioner Holt, you are asking me to consider \$400,000 for three years in the next budget for incentives?"

Commissioner Holt

"Yes."

Chair Hinson

"Actually, \$500,000 she said."

Commissioner Morgan

"There's \$400,00 in the budget right now and we are not willing to take dollars and invest it, you know, to have the private industries become a part of this program. So, I'm going to tell you that, I'm not going to support that \$400,000 if we don't have the private sector included. Because it just doesn't make sense. I'm not trying to be hard-nosed. I'm just saying it doesn't make sense to do that."

Chair Hinson

"I think you have support already."

Commissioner Morgan

"I haven't heard it though."

Commissioner Holt

"Let me say this, Commissioner Morgan, the GCDC has that organization. When you say we are going to fund it, for how long, Robert, were we going to fund it?"

Commissioner Morgan

"One year."

Mr. Presnell

"It hadn't even been a year yet."

Commissioner Holt

"OK, so we want to fund it. We set it up. We, now, we are about ready to tear it apart. Wait a minute, that's what's going to happen. Because if they are your lead group, you put them out there and say 'Chamber, (inaudible) the economic development council, that's what we told them. The Chamber Director was right there. We decided to do that. Now, I don't mind giving them more money. I don't mind the private sector coming over into this. That doesn't faze me one bit."

But all I am saying is, as I said before, one horse, we told them to do it, we asked them to do it, they are starting to do what we asked them to do. Now we decide we want to go and do something else, and then, they both are going to some back and say we're not (inaudible) like two kids trying to get one piece of candy. It's not going to happen. What happens with them just coming in and have a seat, even if we funded them, they have to be part of that group, because if they are not part of that group, neither one will be successful. Like you said, we don't want to go back and talk about the past, because I've got some horror stories there and we don't want to do that. Let's just talk about progress. How can they get in with that group? Same as me, I went and talked with the Director. I sat down; I talked to him in that office. I said, 'I thought we were going to stay on that Council', because I was looking at putting in some more money this year. That's what I told him. Well, he said y'all didn't fund it. I said, I was willing to fund it, but it was just how to fund it. That's all I'm interested in."

Commissioner Taylor

"Commissioner, may I? May I please? I just want to say this, Mr. Chairman, to those that are out in the audience. I don't think there is any budgeting (inaudible) sessions that are going on across this Big Bend region that's not similar to what you are hearing up here today. When you are talking about money, there is always going to be this type atmosphere. So though we smile and laugh, please don't take this as if 'My God, what's going on'. This is happening everywhere. Some of the places are a little bit more ferocious than what you have seen thus far. So the climate is right for what we are doing. Let me just set that stage. The other day, I think what will work for us, if we can do, Commissioner Holt, Commissioner Morgan, I am where both of you are. I think economic development needs to be funded so we can get the private. Commissioner Holt, I think we need to stay the horse that we are own. I don't think we need to jump off. The \$240,000 is a good amount of money. I am leery, however, to put that money there available solely for GCDC. What I would like to do and both of you are right there, I think at some point and time, we can ear-mark that money, Commissioner Holt. But we need to bring the two entities together and let this Board set some guidelines on how to spend it. We need to come together and let's sit down and talk about that one engine that the both of you are talking about. That we definitely need to do. But, right now, you are right, they are divided. But, it does need to be one engine. Everyone needs to come to the same table so that we can make this thing work for the good of our county. So, I'm simply saying, Commissioner Holt, Commissioner Morgan, Mr. Chair, Commissioner Croley, let's set it for them. I like your amount. I have no heartburns with it whatsoever. Because you are right, if we don't fund it, then it fails for lack of and I don't want anyone coming back in and telling us we didn't have enough money in it. So, let's set it there and after this budget is over, let's have both of them come back and you (pointing to Commissioner Holt) dictate, because you have been the lead horse up here about economic development and I have to respect your authority on that. You've been it. Let's just, let's just set it aside for economic development, that's what we will call it, Mr. Manager, we will call it economic development. We will increase it from \$140,000 to \$240,000, and I'm with her on that. We'll increase it to that amount. But let's don't ear-mark it for any entities. Let's bring them both back and like you gentlemen and ladies have said, get one horse together."

Commissioner Holt

"Not a bad idea."

Commissioner Taylor

"Let's move. What's the next...Mr. Chair, Mr. Chair; may I ask you a question? Are we going to get

a chance to hear from the non-profits that are here now? Commissioner Morgan, you had two non-profit organizations that you mentioned. Then you want to come back and make this rule about application wasn't complete so we can't consider it. But the two organizations that you're talking about didn't have an application presented at all. So we are going to set that rule, if we are going to set that rule..."

Commissioner Morgan

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, both of the ones that I'm talking about, we asked, Mainstreet went through and did a complete application. The Senior Center, we have been in discussion for months on some things..."

Commissioner Taylor

"Do they have an application on file?"

Commissioner Morgan

"Well no, but they weren't required..."

Mr. Presnell

"They are not required to do..."

Commissioner Taylor

"But you are talking about a new entity getting some funding at this point and time?"

Commissioner Morgan

"No, I'm talking..."

Commissioner Taylor

"I'm talking about the Senior Citizens. You talk about new funding that's not in the budget, let me say it that way."

Commissioner Morgan

"Right, they've got some needs, like we did for Havana last year..."

Commissioner Taylor

"I've got no problem, I'm not arguing your point at all, I'm just trying to make..."

Commissioner Morgan

"The only one I've got, other than that, Chattahoochee Mainstreet, and I'm just familiar with..."

Commissioner Taylor

"Let me stop you right there. I've got no problems with it. I just don't want a rule set up in front of an organization who's counting, for example, Redeemed. They did not have a complete packet; however, if we are going to consider some other entities at this point and time, then let's consider them as well. Because, still paperwork or not in order on something that we are talking about."

Commissioner Croley

"And I would agree with you, if you are going to break your policy, you've got to break it for everybody. That's my whole point."

Commissioner Taylor

"I'm not going to get into that. I'm not going to get into that."

Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this juncture.

Commissioner Croley

"I'm saying if you are going to break your policy..."

Chair Hinson

"Let's go ahead and make the vote right now, then."

Commissioner Taylor

"You can't make the vote."

Chair Hinson

"Not vote, I'm sorry. Legal advice, I'm sorry, about what Commissioner Croley said."

Mr. Weiss

"I have already responded to this. You should always follow your policy. Your policy, I mean, I said that."

Commissioner Holt

"Mr. Presnell, how many mon-profits did we have that applied? Because you are talking about funding all of them now."

Commissioner Taylor

"There's just two more other ones."

Mr. Presnell

"There were several y'all didn't fund at the last workshop."

Commissioner Holt

"What I'm saying is, that means that you've got to go back."

Chair Hinson

"Y'all are making things difficult so..."

Commissioner Holt

"No, no, he said follow your procedure, so if you don't follow the procedure, that means you've got to go back."

Commissioner Morgan returned.

Chair Croley

"Mr. Chair, let me throw this out to you. Let's hear from the different not-for-profits so that these folks don't have to be kept waiting in here like this. Let them make their presentations and at least we will hear what they have to say and move-on."

Commissioner Taylor

"That's fair enough, that's fair enough".

Redeemed, Inc.

Stacey Jacobs, Assistant Director, 1616 Smith Street, Quincy, FL, appeared to speak on behalf of her non-profit. She said they bridge the gap between the incarcerated; the ex-offenders back into the community. She said the number of years the County funded them, they used the funds for the children of the ex-incarcerated, and the ones that are getting out of jail and prison to have us for utilities, rent, they do a back to school drive for the children of the parents that are incarcerated and Christmas Connection for children of incarcerated parents. She said they also do substance abuse for the County and 90 percent of the clients are under-privileged individuals with basically no income. She added they were looking for funding in order to continue the services.

Commissioner Croley said he had received a call from Ms. Berry and was under the impression they were in the budget to be funded and now found out they were not because they had not turned in their audited financial statement and asked if there was a reason for that.

Ms. Jacobs said she was under the impression everything had been completed. She said the financial advisor told her she forgot to send it in.

Commissioner Croley asked her if they had a completed audit and she said yes. He then asked if that had been communicated to the County Administrator. She said they just found out a couple of weeks ago that they did not have it and wasn't sure if that had been relayed to the Administrator or not.

Commissioner Taylor asked how much they were requesting and Mr. Presnell said it was \$5,000.

Chattahoochee Main Street

Ben Chandler, Director, 25 Madison Street, Chattahoochee, spoke on behalf of this organization and had a slide presentation he showed the Board and said they were requesting \$5,000.

He said one-third of their funding was expected from local government, one-third from memberships, including individuals, families, businesses and organizations and the last portion was from special events. He said they also seek grant funding for special projects. He said there was a one-time start-up grant that they were eligible for and they would find out shortly if they had been selected for it, but it would not be available until the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

Commissioner Croley asked who the target market was that the Mainstreet goes after. Mr. Chandler said it was a combination; it focuses on the downtown historic district of the community to promote and maintain business retention. Commissioner Croley then asked in order to keep the businesses there and keep them viable, who the target market was and who they were trying to attract there.

Mr. Chandler said that was part of their visioning process, they were trying to determine what their purpose was, if they wanted to be a retirement community, promote their river system, etc. He said they had a good prospect with the paddle wheel boat that was being restored. He said George Floyd, who owns the Maritime Museum in Apalachicola, owns property on the south side of the

River landing area, and will be bringing his paddle wheel boat on excursions from Apalachicola to Columbus, GA.

Commissioner Morgan said he wanted to highlight also that they were trying to put an identity for Chattahoochee for people to come and said it reminded him of what went on in Havana years ago. He also said he did not have a problem with other Mainstreet programs in the County and once they received a designation, it should be supported.

Chattahoochee Senior Citizens

Commissioner Morgan said he knew that the Chattahoochee city manager had been present, but Mr. Garner had to leave for another meeting. He added if they needed a list of the needs, he could get that together for them.

Gadsden County Economic Development Council

Robert Nixon, 534 Charles Willis Blvd., Midway, FL, appeared before the Board. He said he was very excited to appear before them and representing another element of the County's economic development network and that was the Gadsden County Economic Development Council. He wanted to clarify that the Gadsden County Economic Development Council and Gadsden County Development Council were two separate entities and the Chamber of Commerce was a third entity. He stated that his organization, the GCEDC, was a stand-alone organization and was comprised and led by business leaders in this community who had decided that it was in their best interest to get involved in a more active way in economic development. He said the long-term strategy of this group was to solicit public funding, but they had to have private sector funding also. He said one thing he liked about the GCDC, it was allowing them to market the county in a favorable way to recruit prospects. He added he felt they needed to develop the existing business support system. He used, for example, that Goodwill was using 10,000 square feet of the old IGA building and putting in a retail center and training center and part of that was dedicated to the re-entry program and creating jobs for the ex-offenders coming out of the system. He added that he felt there were businesses here that, if they could get in front of them and figure out what they need to create five, ten or fifteen jobs at a time. He said his only concern and why he felt they had to work together, was while they were creating opportunities for the citizens now, there had to be a very strategic approach of maximizing and leveraging resources, internally and externally and make sure there was a natural progression of jobs, and when a business was brought into the County, to make sure our citizens were the ones hired. He added with the Grow Gadsden campaign, they were joining with University of Florida Agriculture Center in writing a grant and felt really good about it and one of the elements will to create an agriculture enterprise incubator.

Commissioner Holt said in listening to him and Beth Kirkland speak, it showed they had known each other and, as Commissioner Taylor had said, wanted them to come back in and sit down and hammer some of these things out because it made too much sense.

Commissioner Croley said he appreciated seeing him at the meeting the other day and them having an opportunity to discuss things and will get him the information of the agri-business they had discussed.

Anti-bullying program

Ann Ratke, 1412 Florida Ga Highway, Havana, FL 32333, appeared before the Board and said she had an anti-bullying program she was interested in getting into the school system. She said she

was not asking for money, but for knowledge, that they had applied for money a few years ago and did not receive any money and was hoping to find out more about the application process.

Sheriff's Office

Shawn Wood, 314 West Marion Street, Chattahoochee, FL, appeared before the Board and thanked the Board members for everything that has been done for the Sheriff's Department. He said in 2006, there were 478 violent crimes and last year there were 113 and said the money the County Commissioner had invested in them showed the difference. He added that the investment that had been made had kept one child, one person, one elderly person from being a victim of a violent crime every day in this County. He said the better equipment, better employees, the more visibility they had, the better they have done. He said he and Commissioner Holt had the opportunity to work on the Rural County Summit and it is going to be state-wide and everyone who was in disaster services, were coming here.

Chair Hinson said with the work program that was implemented last year with the Sheriff's Office, it helped reduce the crime rate in the county.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PRIORITIES, DISCUSSION, AND DIRECTIONS

Commissioner Holt pointed out that Gretna Senior Citizens was not included in the list and wanted to make sure they were written down.

Commissioner Croley told Major Wood he appreciated the attitude and approach he had taken in expressing their appreciation for everyone working together.

Commissioner Holt asked that they review the list to give the Manager clarity on what they wanted so the meeting could be concluded.

Mr. Presnell said with what he had heard about adding the two Senior Citizen programs and Mainstreet, they were pretty well done and needed to find \$670,000.

Commissioner Taylor asked to bring something back, with regard to Redeemed, to give them an opportunity because they were present tonight...

Mr. Presnell said if they could get with his Office and make Mr. Price happy on the financials, and Commissioner Holt said it could not happen without that.

Commissioner Morgan asked about the millage rate.

Mr. Presnell said it went to 8.9.

Commissioner Taylor said it was her understanding that with the maintenance crew, they lost a state inmate crew and had caused a hardship. He added he thought another could be gotten, but not sure if that would happen.

Commissioner Taylor said they could look into hiring a crew leader, someone who could be hired that could have inmates from the local jail do that. Mr. Presnell said they could hire someone like they use with Public Works could get a card to work with the state inmates.

Commissioner Croley said he wanted to make sure about the road repair equipment. He said the bridges were still falling apart, roads were still falling apart, signage needed to be replaced, safety stripping needed to be done; the basic things that county government needed to be doing, needed to be addressed safety wise. He said he heard a lot of wants and wanted to point out there were things not being addressed safety-wise. He asked if there was money for stripping and Mr. Presnell said there was \$100,000. He said they were still faced with culverts caving in and they needed to realize citizens drawing on the resources, their needs were not being addressed with this budget. He added that he spent a lot of time riding the back roads in the community and talking to people and there were a lot of things that were not getting done that a lot of them had asked for.

Chair Hinson said he had wished that Commissioner Croley had gone to the Administrator with these concerns months ago and Commissioner Croley said he had discussed this with Mr. Presnell months ago and he had discussed things with Mr. Curtis Young.

Mr. Presnell pointed out those funds were restricted dollars and the problem with transportation, the things he mentioned, they were restricted dollars out of gasoline taxes and we didn't have them, they were not available.

Commissioner Croley said unless money was taken out of some of the things in the list to spend on it.

Chair Hinson said it was a County Commission problem, but that was something, hopefully, he could address to the Administrator and have him bring it to the Board and the Board could satisfy the problem.

Commissioner Morgan said he heard what Croley said about the basic services and he agreed with it. He asked beyond the pot hole repair, where there any other immediate needs that were doable right now for the County that was not being address.

Mr. Presnell said we were not in as bad of shape as some of our neighbors. There were always resurfacing needs, dirt roads and the biggest issue with the Public Works Department is equipment. Mr. Presnell said the bridges were not falling in, but there were some outdated bridges and a couple with safety issues, but they were moving along and the State was funding two of them now.

Commissioner Morgan said as they move through the next fiscal year, they could keep an eye on things and put funds to work. He added, as he said before, keep that fifteen percent in fund balance and if there were extra dollars, put them into Public Works for any of these items.

Mr. Presnell said they had to work on \$670,000 to find for the budget.

Commissioner Taylor asked for a recap.

Mr. Presnell said staying at 8.9 mills took \$200,000 away from the budget, Boys and Girls Club was \$225,000, the pot hole patcher was \$120,000 and Mainstreet, Senior Citizens Centers and Economic Development. He said there was \$140,000 budgeted, they added an additional \$100,000 and they were at \$670,000. He said if they used cash reserves that would take the cash reserve to

\$5.2 Million or asked them if they wanted him to try to find some off-setting cuts.

Commissioner Taylor asked him to look around because he knew where soft money was and they did not. She said she was with Commissioner Morgan that they did not need to liquidate their reserves.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HINSON DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:11 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

ERIC HINSON, Chair

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk