

**AT A BUDGET HEARING OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON SEPTEMBER
11, 2014, P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING
WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: Eric Hinson, Chair, District 1
Brenda Holt, Vice-Chair, District 4 (phoned in)
Doug Croley, District 2
Gene Morgan, District 3
Sherrie Taylor, District 5
Robert Presnell, County Administrator
David Weiss, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

Chair Hinson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He said in honor of September 11, 2001, he would like to have a moment of silence for the ones that lost their lives and ones that were still grieving today for lives lost and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag. A silent roll call was conducted by Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk. Chair Hinson said Commissioner Holt would be appearing by telephone.

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Presnell introduced the agenda and said this was the first of two required public hearings on the fiscal year 2014-2015 budget.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. PUBLIC HEARING-Final Budget Hearing for Adoption of Final Millage Rate and Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015

Mr. Presnell said this budget had been formulated based on maintaining the current county-wide property tax rate of 8.9064 mills. He added the calculated roll-back millage-rate (the property tax rate that generates the same amount of property tax revenue as last year) was 9.1443 mills. He further stated the current year rate of 8.9064 mills as a percent change of the roll-back rate is 2.67%. He further added there were two things that needed to be accomplished at this meeting besides taking any public input, was the approval of the tentative millage rate of 8.9064 and approval of the Countywide Budget.

Chair Hinson asked if there were any public comments and there were none.

UPON MOTION OF COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER CROLEY, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO ADOPT THE COUNTYSIDE MILLAGE RATE OF 8.9064.

Mr. Presnell said the 2014-2015 Tentative year Budget was \$45,137,380.

Chair Hinson asked for public comments and there were none.

Commissioner Croley asked how much money would have to come from Cash Balance to balance this budget.

Mr. Presnell said they would add \$1.6 Million total, but there would be cash carries forward from the current budget in the amount of just over \$600,000 for a net reduction of about \$1 Million.

Commissioner Morgan said the best he could figure, there was an increase of 5 percent from last year's budget and said in years past, there was a summary page that showed the trending so they could have a "snapshot" of the direction the County was heading and asked if they could have that at the next budget hearing. He also wanted to reiterate that he felt it important for the Board to maintain a 15 percent fund balance based on the budget, and at this point they would be working toward almost \$6.8 Million. He said he understood they did not have that now, but they had \$5-6 Million and did not want them to lose sight, as had happened in previous years to keep working forward. He also added that "we have got some other things in here regarding economic development, and it doesn't mean necessarily that we are going to spend all of the money that's budgeted in here..." He felt it important for the public to understand that because money was budgeted, it did not mean that the money would be spent.

Mr. Presnell said that was correct and there was several hundred thousand dollars that was a need, such as the Supervisor of Elections with new equipment that was a need and they would not be faced with that expense next year.

Commissioner Morgan also wanted to mention the aide for the Commissioners and said he had no problem with that if Chair Hinson felt that was something he needed and thought that figure was left at \$5,000 and said he now saw there was \$30,000 budgeted.

Mr. Presnell said they wanted to make sure there was enough there for other board members in case they wanted to utilize a student as well.

Commissioner Morgan pointed out they had an Administrative Assistant...

Chair Hinson interjected that, for the record, it was not for the aide.

Chair Hinson asked if he were more comfortable with \$5,000.

Commissioner Morgan said he was and it was his opinion they did not need more employees.

Chair Hinson asked if they took the summer off and went with \$10,000...

Commissioner Morgan asked to do what?

Chair Hinson said they would be re-investing back into the community and the student would do research and other things to get the understanding and would be similar to that the Commissioners do anyway.

Commissioner Morgan asked how the rest of the Board felt about that.

Commissioner Croley said he thought Commissioner Holt was trying to weigh in on how she felt.

Commissioner Holt said she had no problem with the position of aides and felt that they needed to

have research done and if not they were “sitting back and keep spinning our wheels”. She then asked that everyone speak into their microphone so she would be able to hear them clearly.

Commissioner Taylor said she felt they should be responsible for doing research themselves and thought the Chair and Commissioner Morgan had items that needed each other’s support and the \$10,000 would be so Chair Hinson and Commissioner Holt could get some help. She added that she would not need it.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 4-1 TO APPROVE THE TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015 WITH AMENDMENT FROM \$30,000 TO \$10,000 FOR INTERN ASSISTANTS. COMMISSIONER CROLEY OPPOSED.

Mr. Presnell said they would be advertising this and the second Public Hearing was scheduled for September 22, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- 2. October 7, 2014**
October 21, 2014

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HINSON DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:08 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

ERIC F. HINSON, CHAIR

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk