


**AT THE BUDGET HEARING FOR THE BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN  
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2016 AT 6:00  
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

**Present:** Brenda A. Holt, Chair, District 4-appeared by telephone  
Eric Hinson, Vice Chair, District 1-arrived late  
Dr. Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie, District 2  
Gene Morgan, District 3  
Sherrie Taylor, District 5  
Robert Presnell, County Administrator  
Nicholas Thomas, Clerk of Court  
David Weiss, County Attorney  
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk


**Citizens Requesting to Be Heard on Non-Agenda Items**


 Commissioner Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

There were no citizens that requested to speak.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**1. PUBLIC HEARING-Final Budget Public Hearing for Adoption of Final Millage Rate and Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2016-2017**

 Mr. Presnell said there were 2 Resolutions that needed to be voted on tonight; they needed to pass one that: 1) sets millage rate and 2) adopts the final budget. He then asked if there were any particular things the Commissioner wished to discuss or request changes, this was the time.

 Commissioner Taylor asked if the millage rate needed to be voted on separate from the final budget and Mr. Presnell said yes.

Commissioner Taylor asked for public comment and there was none.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if the millage rate set as it was, if that would make them fiscal for the year and Mr. Presnell said yes, they held the line and there was no change in the millage rate. He then apologized for missing the last meeting and said he was in the hospital; he heard at the last meeting there was a 1.5% cut across the Board and did not think that was healthy for the County and asked that be put back to not cause any stress on the County with regard to providing services they were required to do.

Commissioner Taylor said that topic was well received and noted and she asked if they could move forward on adopting the final millage rate at this time.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE FOR ADOPTION OF OPTION 1-RESOLUTION 2016-018 FOR THE FINAL FY 2016-2017 COUNTYWIDE MILLAGE RATE OF 8.9064 AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN, THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.**



Commissioner Taylor asked for discussion of the final budget for 2016-2017.

Commissioner Holt said she was interested in the same position as she spoke of at the last meeting of adding a Health Care Coordinator and asked the amount be set aside to help get the health numbers up in the County.

Commissioner Taylor said there were two items for discussion: 1) Commissioner Viegbesie wanted to see the 1.5 % cut placed back in budget and 2) Commissioner Holt wanted to add a Health Care Coordinator position.

Commissioner Taylor asked for discussion regarding the 1.5% cut.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if the new position was part of the original budget and Mr. Presnell said no, it was not included, it would be an add-on. Commissioner Viegbesie asked how that would impact budget as of now.

Mr. Presnell said the original request was for \$100,000 to include salary plus benefits but the impact would be whatever the Board set that amount at and if they chose to add the position they could do it for \$75,000 or \$80,000 total, depending on what they wanted to pay.

Commissioner Holt said she was not in favor of cutting 1.5%, instead they needed to look at other measures.

Commissioner Taylor said she assumed Mr. Presnell had talked with the constitutional officers regarding cut and asked if any had heartburn and were any positions or jobs in jeopardy. He said Sheriff Young said he would make a request later in year for his funding to be restored.

Commissioner Taylor said it was time to put this on the floor for a vote.

**COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION TO REINSTATE THE 1.5% ACROSS THE BOARD CUT AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER HOLT.**

*Commissioner Hinson arrived at this juncture of the Hearing and took over as Chair and Commissioner Taylor brought him up to speed.*

Commissioner Holt said to include 1.5% so the Sheriff could move on with his budget.

Commissioner Hinson asked how much was cut from the Sheriff's budget and Mr. Presnell said \$130,000, that he and Public Works took the largest hits. Commissioner Hinson said they had to protect the Sheriff and asked how much cleared out of \$1.5%. Mr. Presnell said it was reduced at the last budget hearing by \$500,000.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he anticipated by the end of the fiscal year, the Sheriff and other offices coming before the Board asking for emergency funds to complete the fiscal year and his position was they were here as custodians of taxpayers money and needed to be on the safe side and go with the most viable and fiscal budget; to carry the vote up or down and call it a day.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they did this, how it would impact the Sheriff's budget, if he would have to lose or fire anyone. Mr. Presnell said that was up to the Sheriff, he indicated if it was a substantial cut, he would be asking it to be restored and he was very concerned.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he did not think they needed to look at just the Sheriff, but other constitutional officers that would be losing 1.5% of the budget and other departments outside of constitutional officers with 1.5% cut that would put unnecessary strain on their ability to get work done. His position was he hoped to vote it up or down.

Commissioner Morgan said he thought most reasonable citizens understood they could not keep spending more money than they took in and they needed to prioritize where they wanted to do that. He said there were areas where they could cut dollars, the question was do they want to do that. He also said when the money was not there, it was not there. He felt they were in charge of maintaining a healthy fund balance and did not think it made good sense to continually pull from the fund balance and was not healthy on a rural County with a budget this size.

Commissioner Hinson asked if everything was as was now, how much would be in the fund balance, \$5 Million? Mr. Presnell said \$5.5 plus whatever was put back in at the end of the fiscal year. Commissioner Hinson said if they did not cut 1.5%, they would still have \$5.5. Mr. Presnell said around \$5 Million plus what unspent funds that went back in at the end of the year. Commissioner Hinson said \$5.5 Million, almost \$6 million. Mr. Presnell said at the end of the fiscal year if they made the 1.5% cut there would be about \$6 Million, without the cut there would be approximately \$5 Million plus what they put back in.

Commissioner Hinson said Commissioner Viegbesie was not here at the last meeting when he proposed 25 more summer youth jobs and he said he was curious and asked again how much the county had. Mr. Presnell said in either case they would have over \$5 Million but if they left the 1.5% reduction in, they would be closer to \$6 Million.

Commissioner Hinson asked how much the State said they needed to be at and Mr. Presnell said 5%, around \$2.5-3 Million.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they were in good fiscal condition and Mr. Presnell said he did not think anyone could say they were not in sound fiscal condition, he did hear concerns about the trend of two years in a row using some of the cash to balance the budget, but they will get an audit at end of the year regardless of their vote tonight that would say they were still in good fiscal shape.

Commissioner Hinson asked if any Public Works employees would lose their jobs and Mr. Presnell said they would not lay anyone off, they would make cuts in other areas.

Commissioner Viegbesie said if they took in less annually from savings to replenish sustainability that was actually saving because they were taking less and less from savings. He added if they were increasing the amount coming from the reserve every year, that meant the balance would be decreasing at an increasing rate and said "it makes no sense for one to live by the bank of the river and wash their hands with spit".

Commissioner Hinson said everyone had their pet projects, like a community center, when there was more money in reserve, there was no problem in putting that stuff out there; for instance, the Sheriff's situation now was time to start doing things to help the community. He added the more money they had, the more they could give to the community. He said if they cut 1.5%, they should give a raise of 1.5% and they would be helping and increasing their way of living. He said every year he asked for raises and this would be the first year ever they did not give a raise, he said there was several ways to look at it, insurance was going up, and people needed a raise. He added since they were not going to be fired, they would love to have more money, at least 1.5%. He asked what that would cost the County and Mr. Presnell said little over \$70,000-\$80,000.

Commissioner Viegbesie called the question.

Commissioner Hinson said they have employees struggling, insurance rates went up. Commissioner Morgan said costs were covered. Commissioner Hinson said he would agree with 1% cut and 2% raise.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he was invoking Roberts Rule of Order, he called the question and there should be no more continuous conversation.

Commissioner Morgan asked that the motion be restated.

Commissioner Viegbesie restated his motion:

**COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION THAT THE BUDGET REFLECT A REINSTATEMENT OF 1.5% ACROSS THE BOARD CUT AND THEY GO BACK TO WHAT IT WAS BEFORE THE 1.5% ACROSS THE BOARD CUT. COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND.**

Commissioner Hinson asked if it was in Roberts Rules of Order that he...

Mr. Weiss said the person that made the motion could move to call the question and the motion to call the question was then voted on by the body and was not debatable and technically they had to make a motion to call the question and someone had to make the second. Commissioner Viegbesie said he made the motion to call the question and there was no second. Commissioner Morgan said he would second that motion.

Mr. Weiss said they first had to carry the motion to call the question.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE THE MOTION.**

Mr. Presnell stated, for clarification purposes, the motion was to adopt the Resolution for the final fiscal year...

Mr. Weiss interrupted and said this motion was to reinstate the 1.5% cut, not for the final budget.

Mr. Weiss said this motion was to bring the budget back to what it was before 1.5% cut, not to approve the budget yet.

Commissioner Hinson said there was a motion on the floor and asked if there was a second. Commissioner Holt said she had made the second. Commissioner Viegbesie said she had made the second "a long time ago".

**COMMISSIONER HINSON CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 3-2. COMMISSIONER HINSON AND COMMISSIONER MORGAN OPPOSED.**

**COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO GIVE EMPLOYEES 2% RAISE. THERE WAS DISCUSSION.**

Commissioner Viegbesie said the millage rate had been adopted and there was no additional revenue for any additional expenditure. Commissioner Hinson asked him if he did not want to give their employees a raise and Commissioner Viegbesie said he was looking at the budget for what it was.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO GIVE EMPLOYEES ACROSS THE BOARD A 2% RAISE AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR. COMMISSIONER HOLT HAD QUESTIONS.**

Commissioner Holt said that was higher than the cut made at the last meeting and if they did that, what would they have to do to go back and meet that number. Mr. Presnell if that passed, he would have to add that for them to adopt the final budget resolution and the money would come out of reserve, an additional \$140,000. Commissioner Hinson said out of \$5.5 Million. Commissioner Holt wanted to make they could meet that without meeting all day and night.

**CHAIR HINSON CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 3-2. COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE OPPOSED. COMMISSIONER HOLT ASKED WHO VOTED WHAT.**

Commissioner Hinson said there was a 3-2 vote in favor. He said she voted in favor because she was silent and Commissioner Holt said she did not hear it.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if he could move for a roll call vote and Commissioner Holt agreed.

**Deputy Clerk called for Commissioner Holt's vote. She said she had no problem with it, she just did not hear who voted. Commissioner Hinson said she was for it. Commissioner Viegbesie called for a point of Order. He did not hear Commissioner Holt say yes and asked she place a yay or nay vote. She said yes.**

**Commissioner Hinson: Yes  
Commissioner Morgan: No  
Commissioner Viegbesie: No  
Commissioner Taylor: Yes**

**COMMISSIONER HINSON SAID THEY HAD A 5-0 VOTE AND WAS CORRECTED. HE THEN CLARIFIED IT WAS A 3-2 VOTE IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED.**

Mr. Presnell asked if there would be any other changes before adopting the Final Budget Resolution and Commissioner Holt said she wanted to put in motion for Health Care Coordinator.

**COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE UP TO \$100,000 TO BE SET ASIDE FOR HEALTH CARE COORDINATOR. COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE HAD QUESTIONS.**

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if he understood with the motion, the position was to be created now without being funded with this budget or was she requesting that the funds for the position be included in this fiscal year 2017 budget they were working on now. She said it should be included in this budget. She said they must do something in order to pull the rankings up.

**COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A SECOND TO THE MOTION AND HAD COMMENTS.**

He said the policy workshop he attended dealt with Health and Human Services and Gadsden County did not have a Health and Human Services Director and that Dr. Cooksey was not answerable to the Board and the County needed to have someone that looked into this for the county and the position was needed for Gadsden County.

Commissioner Hinson said there was a Motion and Second on the floor and said felt they needed to be aggressive with healthcare and did not want to duplicate. He said before the vote, he wanted to make sure he did all his research but could not support this tonight because he had not done his research.

Commissioner Holt said in his research, he would find the evaluation of the County not only included healthcare but other items and she gave examples and said it was more serious than people thought. She said they were paid to look after people of the County and there had been enough time for research because this had been out for years.

Commissioner Morgan said there was no problem with developing a comprehensive Health Care program for the County, but the issue was they were not willing to reprioritize the spending in their existing budget. He said they had to cut back in other areas in order to fund a needed program such as this and there was a limited amount of money and that was the whole issue with what they were discussing earlier. He said they were heading in the same direction they were in years ago and they needed to make cuts in other places and could not absorb costs of increasing health care costs and give raises to employees and add another position with there was declining revenue; it could not continue on a long term basis-it would catch up. He encouraged them where they could, to make cuts if this was the direction they wanted to take-where did they want to look to make cuts to fund these important needs.

Commissioner Taylor asked him to move the motion.

Commissioner Holt called the question.

**THE BOARD VOTED 2-3COMMISSIONER MORGAN, COMMISSIONER TAYLOR, AND COMMISSIONER HINSON OPPOSED. MOTION FAILED.**

**COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO ADD 25 JOBS TO SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER TAYLOR. COMMISSIONER HOLT HAD COMMENTS.**

Commissioner Holt asked how he could vote for that when he would not vote for a have permanent job for healthcare.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked why provide people with income if they were not well enough to spend it.

Commissioner Holt asked that they vote. Commissioner Hinson said he thought they had voted already and was told no.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON CALLED THE VOTE. COMMISSIONER MORGAN HAD A QUESTION.**

Commissioner Morgan asked how that would impact the budget. Mr. Presnell said \$25,000 and Commissioner Hinson said that was all.

**COMMISSIONER HINSON AGAIN CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 4-1 BY VOICE VOTE. COMMISSIONER MORGAN OPPOSED.**


Commissioner Viegbesie said they “could shake the money tree in the back yard”.

Mr. Presnell said the Board needed to adopt option 2 with a revised number of \$48,535,075 that would include the increase of \$25,000 for summer youth jobs, 2% raise for the employees and 1.5% added in.

Commissioner Morgan asked the amount was they what would be borrowing from fund balance and Mr. Presnell said \$1.3 Million. Commissioner Morgan said hoped they were good with it because they were flying the plane.

**COMMISSIONER TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT OPTION 2, RESOLUTION 2016-019 WITH AMENDED CHANGES OF \$48,535,075 TO INCLUDE \$25,000 FOR SUMMER YOUTH JOBS, 2% RAISE FOR EMPLOYEES AND 1.5% ADDED IN AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-1 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM. COMMISSIONER MORGAN OPPOSED.**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

 **THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, COMMISSIONER HINSON  
DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

---

**SHERRIE TAYLOR, Chair  
Board of County Commissioners**

**ATTEST:**

---

**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**