

**AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON AUGUST 17, 2017 AT 4:00 P.M.,
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: **Sherrie Taylor, Chair, District 5**
 Eric Hinson, Vice Chair, District 1-arrived late
 Dr. Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, District 2-arrived late
 Gene Morgan, District 3
 Brenda Holt, District 4-arrived late
 Robert Presnell, County Administrator
 David Weiss, County Attorney
 Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Taylor called the Special Meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Chair Taylor stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS

WELCOME

Mr. Presnell welcomed everyone to the Special Meeting and gave a brief overview.

2. OVERVIEW

Mr. Presnell said they would be putting \$1 Million from the current budget back into reserves.

Chair Taylor returned at this juncture.

Commissioner Morgan said they were drawing down \$1 Million from the General Fund balance and then putting back \$1 Million from last year. Mr. Presnell said they anticipate at the end of next month when they close out the end of the year, there will be \$1 Million from the current budget that will be transferred to Reserves. Commissioner Morgan asked what the unrestricted fund balance was and Mr. Presnell said \$6.136 Million.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he had a question to piggyback off Commissioner Morgan’s question.

Chair Taylor asked Commissioner Viegbesie to remove his hat because he was out of order, he asked if it was in the policy and she said it was a matter of courtesy. He said he was grown enough to determine that and asked she let him use his grown decision to determine that. She said she was chairing the Board and he was out of order. He asked her to show him where in Policy and Procedures of the Board it was and he would remove it. She asked him to leave the meeting and he said she could not do that. She said she could if he was out of order and he was with regard with what he was wearing and disrespecting the Board. She then said there was no one there to remove him and would let it go but wanted it on record his attire out of order.

Commissioner Viegbesie said his question was a piggyback off Commissioner Morgan's question. It was his understanding to the response to the question was if \$1 Million was expected to be expended for the fiscal year remained that way, they would still have \$6.1 Million in reserve or would be in anticipation of the unspent \$1 Million from this fiscal year. Mr. Presnell said they currently have \$6.136 Million today; when they close the current fiscal year budget, they will be putting \$1 Million offsetting that Million that they were using to balance would be going into cash reserves and it will be a wash.

Commissioner Morgan asked if the overall budget was down \$500,000 this year versus last year. Mr. Presnell said yes and the majority was due to the current year budget still had money in capital projects in paving monies distributed and large amounts were not included. Commissioner Morgan said he did not want to get into a trend to pulling money out of the fund balance to balance a larger budget when revenues were declining.

Commissioner Taylor said the last few years they have had to balance the budget off reserves, it just happened that the excess made it a wash, they were still over-spending each year with buying trucks, etc.

3. NON-PROFIT/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Presnell said they needed a number tonight and currently had \$281,500 in there..

Commissioner Taylor said they could bring down the Non-profits to \$250,000.

Commissioner Viegbesie suggested sticking with the fiscal year 2017 budget.

Commissioner Morgan suggested an across the board reduction of 15% to bring it to \$230,775 that would result in a savings of \$50,725.

Commissioner Holt arrived at this juncture of meeting.

Chair Taylor said to clarify, -change Gadsden Arts to

Commissioner Viegbesie said he understood where Commissioner Morgan was coming from but he was leaning toward keeping the budget as was in 2017. He said another item that caught his eye was the Havana Mainstreet, Chattahoochee and Quincy was funded at \$5,000 and Havana was now running and they asked for \$5,000, the same as what was given last year to the other Main Streets.

Commissioner Morgan said he understood where Commissioner Viegbesie was coming from and they had not been funded as the others had and they should be. He asked if she was saying to keep it at \$281,500. Commissioner Viegbesie said the \$281,500 figure included \$15,000 to the Art Center and they were requesting \$5,000 for the 2018 budget. He said that would be a reduction of \$10,000; give \$5,000 to Havana Mainstreet and it would still be reduced by \$5,000.

Chair Holt said if the Main Streets were funded before, she did not think they should be funded because they had their own funds. She also said she did not think they should fund them for more than three years unless it was needed and if they request from TDC, they should not request from the BOCC; and reporting should be better.

Commissioner Hinson arrived at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Holt said the Commission needed to decide on needed items. She said she checked with other Counties and they had committee set up and they vetted non-profits.

Commissioner Taylor caught Commissioner Hinson up to speed since he just arrived.

Commissioner Hinson said he was a big fan of helping people, it had been an interesting year, they have the EMS situation going on and needed to find way to fund that; and he did not want to cut Legal Services of North Florida.

Commissioner Morgan asked what Commissioner Hinson wanted to budget.

Commissioner Hinson said due to what was going on now, he wanted to be safe. Commissioner Morgan asked a number and Commissioner Hinson wanted to bring it back in October and he told him it could not be done.

Chair Taylor suggested reducing the non-profits by half and letting them come back at a later date if they could afford it and let them make a request for additional funds.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked the Administrator if they could look at what the amount would be if they cut 10% across the board.

Commissioner Morgan said he agreed with Commissioner Holt on getting out of funding the Non-Profits over a period of time and have them understand that they would do X% this year, less the next year and over 3 – 4 years it be phased out where it would not be an initial shock and they could plan for it.

Chair Taylor agreed with that and said the Non-Profits depended on the dollars.

Commissioner Hinson suggested giving \$10,000 to Diamonds in Rough then a 3% cut across the board.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he was ok with \$276,500.

Chair Taylor said for them to look at Commissioner Morgan's suggestion of a 15% reduction. He said with a reduction such as this, it sent a message to the Organizations that the County could not keep this up on a long-term basis.

Commissioner Viegbesie said he suggested a 10% cut and hearing the sentiments of Commissioner Morgan, Reduce Gadsden Arts to \$5,000, \$5,000 in for Diamonds in the Rough, \$5,000 for Havana Main and everyone would be cut 10% which would keep the total Non-Profit request to the \$253,850.

Chair Taylor said this was a special meeting so they could vote.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE FOR 10% ACROSS THE BOARD CUT; \$5,000 FOR

DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH AND \$5,000 FOR HAVANA MAIN STREET AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER MORGAN HAD QUESTIONS.

Commissioner Morgan asked the amount of money that Diamonds in the Rough would be budgeted would be \$4,500 and Chair Taylor said yes.

CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

4. OTHER BUDGET ISSUES

Big Bend Transit

Mr. Presnell said regarding the Shuttle, they were paying the grant two years ago and implemented the Shuttle Program that went to all the cities.

Commissioner Morgan returned at the juncture of the meeting.

He said in October 2015 they started with 66 riders the first month and the ridership had increased as of May 2017 to 330. He said as the ridership increased and they were paying \$1.00, the Board's per month cost went down. He said the two year grant ran out and they were asking if the Board wanted to continue the program and they were recommending \$58,800 to continue to fund that program for another year.

Commissioner Hinson said he sat on the Board for the BOCC and hear a lot of information and the other organizations connected to this was in favor and supportive of this. He felt this helped with the economic development and they needed to stop at the 10/90 Commerce Park.

Commissioner Viegbesie supported what Commissioner Hinson said and that he saw signs where Safelight and Dixie Paving were now hiring and the stop there could be helpful.

Chair Taylor asked Shawn Mitchell with the Quincy Shuttle to step forward.

She asked if adding routes with the Shuttle, Connector or Express so folks could get to the jobs and he said all options were available. He said they added a bicycle racks on all of the routes and people were utilizing it like crazy. She asked if additional routes and stops were possible and he said yes. He said the Connector started in Chattahoochee, goes to Greensboro, then Gretna, then to Quincy and then to Havana and back and loops non-stop all day. He said the Shuttle surrounds the City of Quincy at all major stops and constantly loops and folks can access the Shuttle at Winn-Dixie and get to Wal-Mart, downtown and then get back on Connectors and go back to their home cities. He said they could get on the Gadsden Express to get to Tallahassee, Midway and then back to Quincy and then get on the Connector or the Shuttle.

Commissioner Morgan said they did not need to fund the full ride and suggested they ask the City of Quincy to assist in the costs.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked what happened if the Quincy Shuttle was not funded and Mr. Mitchell said the others would not work.

Commissioner Morgan said if they received help with half of the shuttle costs, he was OK with the \$58,800. Commissioner Holt, Commissioner Hinson, Commissioner Viegbesie and Chair Taylor said they were ok as well.

Chair Taylor asked for an around the table vote and they voted 4-1. Commissioner Morgan was only for this if the City agreed to fund half.

Commissioner Holt asked if they could apply for another grant again and Mr. Mitchell said no, that was seed money.

Mr. Presnell asked if Board wanted him to approach the City of Quincy for half of the funding and they said yes.

Chair Taylor asked what the funding source would be and it would come from General Revenue.

Concord traffic light

Commissioner Hinson said citizens came to him regarding this and said this was a State and County road and did not think the funding should not have come from a particular district but should have come from the County budget. Chair Holt asked about getting a percentage. Commissioner Hinson said they wanted "everything" and he did not want to disappoint them.

Commissioner Holt said she had no problem with it. She then asked the Administrator that she thought a traffic light would have come from Public Safety dollars and Mr. Presnell said not for traffic lights. He said Gas tax dollars could be used and he felt that was what the Commissioner was referring to.

Commissioner Morgan said was this was a good project and was much needed. He asked the balance in the Transportation Fund and Mr. Price said it was approximately \$900,000. Commissioner Morgan said he knew this was dollars that was tagged for the Paving Fund and asked if there were unpaved roads in his district and Commissioner Hinson said there were a lot of roads. Commissioner Morgan said if there was a need, he had no problem with transferring the full amount back to his paving fund. Commissioner Holt also said this would not affect money from the other Commissioners' district. Chair Taylor asked Commissioner Viegbesie where he stood in reimbursing the money and he said he was for it. Commissioner Morgan said he felt the full amount should be paid from the Transportation Fund and not from General Funds and placed back in his Paving Fund. Chair Taylor asked if everyone was in agreeance with that funding source and they did.

Community Center

Chair Taylor then said on the table was \$50,000 to purchase property for the future Community Center in the Havana area. Commissioner Hinson thanked the Board for making the commitment a couple of years ago to help out the City but was told by the Administrator they needed to get the land first before getting a grant and he had people looking for land. Chair Taylor asked if they were looking at a building or a park. Commissioner Hinson said they needed to have the land first then they could look into grants.

Commissioner Holt said she had to leave soon for another meeting and as long as it was near a

City or a community she was for it and felt it would be ok because that would help cut down on vandalism.

Commissioner Morgan said a Community Center would benefit the area but there were roads that could not be traveled on because they were not paved; or grass that they could not keep up with because there was not enough dollars put aside to lease an extra tractor for mowing for four months of the year; or a bridge that was in need of repair. He said they had to prioritize and did not feel they were in a position financially to commit \$50,000 and did not think that would be a wise move with so many other priorities pending; such as funding Quincy Shuttle with no help from the City of Quincy; or telling the Non-Profits they were being cut 10-15% but they bought a piece of property. He said he did not agree with it but it was whatever the majority of the Board wanted to do.

Commissioner Viegbesie thought it was a great idea for the community and was something that was needed and they needed to understand there were some restrictions on where the location could be. HE said they bought approximately 25 acres for \$50,000 and that will house ball fields and would be designed like the Jack McLean Park. He said they could reduce that to \$30,000 because they would need less land space than what was needed for a Park and Recreation Center because all they were looking for was a community center.

Chair Taylor said she was hearing that Commissioner Hinson would like to see \$50,000 and he concurred with having land strategically located so it was accessible and limited vandalism; Commissioner Holt had no heartburn with the amount, only the location; Commissioner Morgan had a heartburn with doing this at this time and he was at \$0 and Commissioner Viegbesie was ok with a reduced amount of \$30,000. Chair Taylor said she wanted to stay with \$50,00 and with it being strategically located.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE FOR APPROVAL OF \$50,000 AND BEING STRATEGICALLY LOCATED AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, COMMISSIONER MORGAN HAD A QUESTION.

Commissioner Morgan asked where the money would come from and was told General Revenue.

CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 4-1 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM. COMMISSIONER MORGAN OPPOSED.

Road Paving

Commissioner Morgan said he looked at this as a top priority in the County and in some areas all of the County roads were paved and in some they were not. He suggested because of the low cost of asphalt due to fuel prices being down, and that being due to the costs of barrels of oil being down, they go ahead and pay from Fund Balance \$1 Million and do a "Pay and Pave Program".. He said Public Works would identify the roads in the District where the unpaved roads were and strategically use those dollars over the next three years and should cover the funds. He said he had spoken with the Administrator and \$3 Million should get all the unpaved roads paved.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked Commissioner Morgan how much money he was looking at and he responded \$1 Million per year for three years. Commissioner Viegbesie asked if the monies were to be spent on unpaved roads and Commissioner Morgan said correct. He said all districts did not

have an equal amount of unpaved roads and Commissioner Morgan said that was correct. Commissioner Viegbesie asked how beneficial that would be to the citizens of the County if they concentrated only in one part of the County and did not think that was an equitable use of the funds. Commissioner Morgan said his objective was to get unpaved roads paved and bring all the districts to the level of the districts where roads were paved.

Commissioner Holt said she did not appreciate not being recognized. Chair Taylor said it was not on purpose. Commissioner Holt said In 2007, they decided to do the east side of the County because that was where the numbers were. She said they had SCOP and SCRAP money they could use for the roads and that would help free up money for the Community Center.

Commissioner Viegbesie said this was one of the reasons they needed someone there with the history of what went on.

Commissioner Hinson said he concurred with everyone.

Commissioner Holt stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Hinson felt they should get a bond so the money would not come out at one chunk.

Commissioner Holt returned at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Hinson said could pave a lot of roads for \$200,000.

Commissioner Holt said she did a study and was how she was able to get bond money. She said three different studies were done and she did one on how much it would cost to move equipment. She said they would get SCOP and SCRAP money because of being an economically deprived County.

Commissioner Morgan said the original reason he was promoting this project was it would even the playing field for the West side of the County and not in favor of borrowing money to do this and this was the right time to do it because of the costs. He said with SCRAP and SCOP money, those roads were ranked every year and had to meet specific requirements in order to receive the funding and they had been very fortunate in the past.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked the County Administrator how \$1 Million a year for 3 years would impact the aspect of the budget.

Chair Taylor said she was advised by the County Attorney they could not obligate for three years of debt in this year's budget, only obligate one year. Commissioner Morgan said he understood that, he was saying to have the program in place to make it fair for everyone.

Chair Taylor asked Commissioner Hinson where he was regarding this and he said he was for bonding and being fiscally responsible. Commissioner Morgan said he was for putting it in the budget for the upcoming budget year. Commissioner Holt said she was for \$1 Million and Commissioner Viegbesie said he saw the need but was hesitant to go into the Fund Reserve to take out \$1 Million. Commissioner Holt said in that case, they keep SCOP and SCRAP and Commissioner Viegbesie said the engineer would have to determine the roads to be done.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOLT TO BUDGET \$1 MILLION TO PAVE DIRT ROADS IN THE COUNTY AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN WITH A QUESTION.

Commissioner Morgan wanted to maintain \$5 Million in reserve and did not want to go below that. Chair Taylor clarified he agreed with that as long as it did not take them below the \$5 Million and he said yes. Commissioner Hinson asked if they had another meeting and Mr. Presnell said yes.

CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE MOTION. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

Commissioner Holt mentioned St. John Park and Robertsville Park and the fact that the restrooms were in need of help and hoping for no more than \$10,000-\$15,000 for each.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HINSON FOR UP TO \$15,000 EACH AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER HOLT, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

Commissioner Hinson said the Health Department was losing a lot of money this year and it was detrimental and Mr. Presnell said that was coming up.

Commissioner Holt left at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Morgan stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

At this point Chair Taylor apologized to Commissioner Viegbesie about his hat and he accepted her apology.

Chair Taylor said it was brought up previously regarding prisoners renovating abandoned houses so they would have a place after going through the reentry programs. She said the County owned several abandoned houses that was not on the County Tax Roll and was not bringing revenue to the County.

Commissioner Morgan returned at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Viegbesie stepped out at this juncture of the meeting.

Mr. Presnell said the County owned three houses. Chair Taylor said she thought if they could put a little seed money in them, one could become halfway house and two sold to replace money. She asked the Board to look into this. Commissioner Hinson said he thought she was onto something and wanted more information.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO ALLOCATE \$15,000 TO RENOVATE HOUSES.

Commissioner Viegbesie returned at this juncture of the meeting.

Commissioner Morgan had questions.

Commissioner Viegbesie said it was a wonderful idea but had concerns. He said he did not think the County could offer houses legally; it was an obstacle that Leon County had and did not think the County could go into the Not-for-Profit project.

Chair Taylor asked to put money in the line item in case it could be done and Commissioner Hinson said she hit the nail on the head and if it did not work, the money would go back into the fund.

Commissioner Morgan asked where the houses were located and Mr. Presnell said they were located all over. Chair Taylor said in the unincorporated areas. Commissioner Morgan asked the attorney about the liability issue. Mr. Weiss said that was one of the things that ran through his head; he would never advise the County to be in the business of providing half-way houses. He had a lot of questions and he saw no harm to set aside funds with the expectation to be used for a purpose that was alter determined, but it needed to be explored.

CHAIR TAYLOR MADE THE SECOND AND THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS.

Chair Taylor said they were now discussing items that Staff had recommended decreases; \$40,000 from GCDC and was money they did not have privy to in the first place and Mr. Presnell explained it was going to another contractor and he was no longer there.

Commissioner Morgan said they needed to set the total amount and could decide later how they were divided. He said the Administrator had recommended a total of \$180,000 (to both organizations) and he supported that. Chair Taylor said she felt they needed to do something in-house and use the entities to do the deliverables.

Commissioner Viegbesie said GCDC and the Chamber was beginning to turn the County in the right direction and felt they should keep \$180,000.

Antonio Jefferson, GCDC, appeared before the Board and said he was troubled by the cut when the expectations of deliverables were the same. Chair Taylor asked what deliverables. Mr. Jefferson said the cost of doing business had not diminished because of the lack of a warm body in the chair.

Commissioner Viegbesie said when they talk about deliverables from entities, there was tangible and intangibles and Mr. Jefferson's request was very viable.

Commissioner Morgan proposed to budget \$180,000 and to have a workshop to discuss the details.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO BUDGET \$180,000 FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CHAIR TAYLOR MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HINSON HAD QUESTIONS.

Commissioner Hinson said they may want less or more.

CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 2-2 BY VOICE VOTE.

COMMISSIONER HINSON AND COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE OPPOSED. VOTE WAS TIED.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THIS ISSUE AND COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO TABLE THIS ITEM.

Mr. Presnell said September 7th was the first public hearing and sounded like they needed a special meeting with the capability to vote. Commissioner Viegbesie asked they consider his teaching schedule. A meeting was scheduled for August 29th at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Presnell said there had been a \$75,000 proposed cut in relation to finding a solution for the EMS problem and would reflect some of the monies used to correct the problem. He said the Health Department Director was fine with it and was present if they had questions.

Dr. Adrian Cooksey appeared before the board and said the cut came hopefully contingent that they could work together in upcoming years as a way to fill the primary care gap.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO STAY AT \$125,000 AND CHAIR TAYLOR MADE THE SECOND. THERE WAS QUESTIONS.

Commissioner Morgan thanked her for coming before Board. He said they needed to pay attention to what the Director said and urged the Board to go with the advice. Commissioner Hinson said he heard what she said. Chair Taylor said she kind of wanted to withdraw her second with Dr. Cooksey agreeing with this but she heard how compassionate Commissioner Hinson was.

CHAIR TAYLOR CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 2-2- BY VOICE VOTE. COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE OPPOSED. MOTION FAILED.

Mr. Weiss said these votes were to put in front of them what would be a definitive budget and they would still have an opportunity to make changes. Mr. Presnell clarified it was currently budgeted at \$50,000.

Mr. Presnell gave a recap of tonight.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

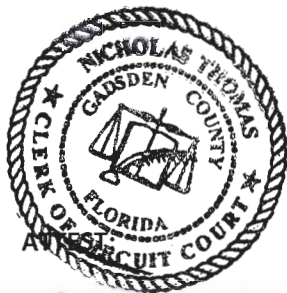
Antonio Jefferson

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners
August 17, 2017-Budget Workshop

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, THE CHAIR DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 7:51 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA



BRENDA HOLT, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk