

AT A BUDGET HEARING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON SEPTEMBER 6, 2018 AT 6:00
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

Present: Brenda Holt, Chair, District 4
Dr. Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie, Vice Chair, District 2
Eric Hinson, District 2-arrived late
Gene Morgan, District 3
Sherrie Taylor, District 5-arrived late
Dee Jackson, Interim County Administrator
David Weiss, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Holt welcomed everyone to the Budget Hearing and called the meeting to Order at 6:01 p.m., asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

Chair Holt asked for Citizens that wished to speak and it appears below

Chair Holt said they had gone through the budget over and over and unless there were any other public comments, she wanted to hear from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Hinson arrived at this juncture of the meeting.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE MILLAGE RATE AND COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE THE SECOND. MR. WEISS HAD COMMENTS.

Mr. Weiss said they first have to set the millage rate.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. First Budget Public Hearing for Adoption of the Tentative Millage Rate

Mrs. Jackson said this was the first of two required public hearings for the fiscal year 19 Budget and read aloud the Adoption of the Millage rate.

Commissioner Viegbesie asked if they could approve all three with one motion or if they had to be handled separately and Mr. Weiss said one at a time.

COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE TENTATIVE FY 2018/2019 COUNTYWIDE MILLAGE RATE OF 8.9064 AND SECOND MADE BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN. THE BOARD VOTED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE.

Chair Holt then asked for a roll call for attendance. All were present with the exception of Commissioner Taylor.

2. First Budget Public Hearing for Adoption of the Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-2019

Mrs. Jackson introduced the tentative budget for fiscal year 2019. Chair Holt asked the will of the Board.

COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION FOR APPROVAL AND COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE THE SECOND. COMMISSIONER HINSON HAD A QUESTION AND THERE WAS A BRIEF DEBATE. CHAIR HOLT ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION FROM THE ATTORNEY.

Mr. Weiss said typically discussion is allowed prior to ... Commissioner Hinson started to speak then Chair Holt talked over him-asked him to let the attorney finish speaking then he could talk.

Mr. Weiss continued and said typically they allow for questions and discussion prior to taking a vote and she was in middle of calling for the vote when he asked for a question and he felt the appropriate procedure would be to allow for the question prior to calling for the vote.

Commissioner Taylor arrived at 6:08 p.m.

Commissioner Hinson said his constituents had questions and he would like the answers. He asked where was the workers comp figured in; where was the insurance costs figured in; and there was no explanation and was there a raise increase for any staff. He asked if any staff had received a raise this year.

Mrs. Jackson said there was budgeted costs for workers comp and insurance but it was not delineated in the budget that way, it was calculated into the Personnel costs and if a person was making \$30,000 it may look like they were making \$50,000 because of everything being calculated in with that, and workers comp was a part of that budget for the Administration. She said raises happen every year, she did not know how may raises there have been and when she said raises, she meant people were assuming extra duties or moving up and that would be a raise versus someone coming in with a new salary.

Commissioner Hinson said he's question was if anyone received a raise this year.

Mrs. Jackson said she would not be able to count how many raises were done throughout the various departments this year. She said there were people that retired and were replaced with people that already worked there and technically could be considered a raise. Commissioner Hinson asked about a dollar amount raise. Mrs. Jackson repeated what she said last night, "The Clerk provides oversight over anything that we do and they would **not** approve a raise for nothing for any staff, they don't do that". She said they don't approve raises unless the Board approves raises.

Commissioner Hinson said he was not talking about the entire body, which he was for, he was talking about any individuals that she gave a raise to this year.

Mrs. Jackson said "Again the Clerk would not allow me to just give out a raise to anybody on this..."

Commissioner Hinson asked if she had increased anyone's income.

Mrs. Jackson said there had been countless increases, she then said she did not know but if he

wanted that information she could pull it for him and show how many had a change in pay but again, they would not have received a change in pay unless they were doing something different than what they were doing before. She said some of the raises were temporary where some may have assumed extra duties until a position was filled and when the position was filled, that person would go back to their regular salary. She said the information could be pulled and provided to him.

Commissioner Hinson then said first the answer was no but yes; it depended on if more duties and responsibilities were added and created other job titles if they were given a raise.

Mrs. Jackson said, as she said last night, part of the way they were able to get to \$722,000 cut was in some cases she felt they had duplication of services with staff and some positions were cut and if a staff member assumed extra duties that were more than they originally had there was increase for that staff person and that was throughout the whole County budget.

Commissioner Hinson said if they budget \$39,000 for a position for "X", "X" no longer works there, they give "Y" an extra \$5,000 for handling "X"'s responsibilities; two months later they hire "X" to fill that position and "Y" was still there. Mrs. Jackson said "Y" would go back to their original salary. She said the way it is sent to the Clerk's office, it states a temporary salary increase and when that position is filled, the Clerk's Office automatically takes that money and that person goes back to their regular wage.

Commissioner Hinson then asked if they created other positions in the budget year and Mrs. Jackson said yes; the Building Facility department for a custodial position; they created another Code Enforcement position; and the Planning Director position. She said previously the Board agreed to consolidate the position with the Building Official position and she believed it required a Planning degree to do that position and they were looking for someone to fill it.

Commissioner Hinson asked about anything dealing with the SHIP housing.

She said in front of them was the resume of Lamar Kemp, he is a consultant for SHIP and was not being paid a wage of what a staff person would be. She said she believed in being fiscally conservative and there were ways to save money instead of having someone that worked there fulltime who received benefits and other fringes they had to pay for. She said she was not interested in having another Housing position right now even though there was money to do that.

Commissioner Hinson said one of the positions in-house ranges from \$13,000-\$28,000 and asked if there was anything in place that the Board approved the salary. Mrs. Jackson said the Board approves every position and salary pay range. Commissioner Hinson asked if anything was in place for the County Administrator where they could jump from \$13,000 to \$29,000, was there something in place to stop that.

Chair Holt stated in this, salary ranges were set by the Board.

Commissioner Morgan very respectfully called the question. Commissioner Hinson said they could call the question after he finished.

Chair Holt asked for the attorney's position. Mr. Weiss said a motion could be made to call the

question and if the motion passed, then the question was called.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION AND SECOND MADE BY CHAIR HOLT. THE BOARD VOTED 2-3 BY VOICE VOTE. COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, COMMISSIONER HINSON AND COMMISSIONER TAYLOR OPPOSED. MOTION FAILED.

Commissioner Hinson said he hoped the Board thought hard on this, it was OK to be angry once in a while; they employed 125 kids for the summer and now they were talking about getting rid of it; it was ok to be angry about emergency housing and senior citizens; they were cutting Veterans Affairs by \$50,000 and they don't have enough now. He said he was not for cutting anything; he did the numbers and if they subtract the first sheet by 16% of what the increase was; that would be \$237,000 and everybody could have what they want .

Commissioner Taylor thanked Commissioner Viegbesie and Commissioner Hinson. She apologized for not being present for previous meetings, there was a planned trip. She said she had some of the same concerns that Commissioner Hinson had and had questions for Mrs. Jackson. She asked her about the increased salaries because of increased responsibilities; she was hiring because she saw a need; she spoke of a Planning Director and she sits here and cut funding for programs for the senior citizens, persons with disabilities and children and she stands firm on that. Mrs. Jackson said she could not say that because she did not make any recommendations, the Board decided last night on that. Commissioner Taylor said the majority of this Board voted to eliminate the Emergency Repair Program for seniors and people with disabilities, was that correct? (Asking the Board).

Chair Holt said they agreed to cut Emergency Housing because there was \$600,000 in SHIP funds that could be used for Emergency Housing. Commissioner Taylor said they knew the SHIP program was a little more tedious to get services and SHIP does not cover what emergency funds do. Mrs. Jackson said with the veterans, they have not cut services; they currently provide transportation and do not provide resources. She said they have received a new vehicle and that meant they did not have to pay for maintenance on the previous vehicle. Commissioner Taylor asked about the \$50,000 the cut. Mrs. Jackson said they do not have to pay for the maintenance on the previous vehicle; they cut costs they currently do not use. She said they provide transportation to appointments and linkage to resources. Commissioner Taylor said they give them services beyond transportation, they have helped with housing. Mrs. Jackson said they helped with a linkage to housing and resources they needed but the County did not pay for Veterans other than transportation. Commissioner Taylor asked about the Summer program, the Board voted to get rid of the summer jobs for the children and Chair Holt said they cut it to \$50,000. Commissioner Taylor asked the rationale and Chair Holt said they had to come up with \$237,000. Commissioner Taylor said she knew there were Reserves that could have taken care of the \$237,000 and said she remembered when they had a big debate about the emergency facility and she and Commissioner Morgan argued tooth and nail about it. She said she remembered when she was with the City of Quincy as a City Commissioner, there were four against her and she knew she was getting nowhere, but someone told her to put her statement on record and let it go forth from there.

CHAIR HOLT CALLED FOR THE VOTE. THE BOARD VOTED 3-2 TO APPROVE THE BUDGET. COMMISSIONER HINSON AND COMMISSIONER TAYLOR OPPOSED. MOTION PASSED.

Commissioner Morgan said regarding specifically Commissioner Taylor's misinformation regarding

the facility, he supported from day one was a sustainable model, that they have, and yes, he went there and received excellent services and it was appreciated.

Commissioner Taylor left the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Commissioner Morgan left the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Commissioner Viegbesie said Commissioner Taylor's comment of some high-fiving one another, he did not see that and has no idea where the comment came from; everyone cares about children and the cut is only for one fiscal year. He said the Reserve was down to \$3.5 Million and everyone cares about the seniors but for them to understand this was temporary.

Chair Holt said this was not the cut they were looking to do but they get paid to set the budget. This year they need to spend \$2.4 Million for a communication system that was overdue; \$908,000 for Medicaid because the government did not take the Medicaid reimbursement from the Federal government and Gadsden County has to set aside \$1 Million because of the 89% increase was not in the old budget; \$517,000 was not collected for ambulance services; \$400,000 for a tower to put the communication system on; she said the County side took \$700,000 cut, the Clerk, Sheriff and Supervisor has to work off the 2018 budget. She said this process started in June and for any commissioners that come in and act like they don't know what was going on, they could have set down with the Administrator or the Budget Manager at any time; they took out \$100,000 for Emergency Housing money but still have \$600,000 in the SHIP program. The money was still there and an application process was in place and should be because they were taxpayer dollars. She said Commissioners were choosing who got their houses fixed and she told them at that time it was wrong. She said the application process should have been there before the money was there and that way their constituents were not being chosen over anyone else. She said they have to send a balanced budget to the State and they could move numbers around as long as it was within those numbers but they could not go over.

Mr. Weiss said there was a third motion for direction of Staff to advertise for the final budget hearing set for September 17th at 6:00.

Chair Holt said they were not supposed to walk out during the meeting without it being an emergency.

COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION TO DIRECT STAFF TO ADVERTISE ON SEPTEMBER 13TH FOR THE FINAL BUDGET HEARING SET FOR SEPTEMBER 17TH AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE BOCC CHAMBERS AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 3-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS MOTION.

Citizens Requesting to be Heard on Non-Agenda Items

Hugh Stephens, 701 Woodward Road., Quincy, FL – privatization of EMS & Budget

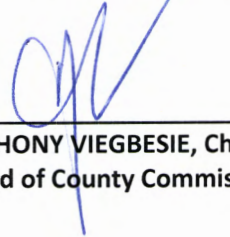
**** Jed Carroll, 1872 Jamieson Road, Havana, FL**-appeared before the board and thanked the Commissioners for sticking it out and getting things worked out (EMS) the night before. He thanked Commissioner Morgan for putting some heavy-duty brain power into it and finding a solution.

Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners
September 6, 2018-Budget Hearing

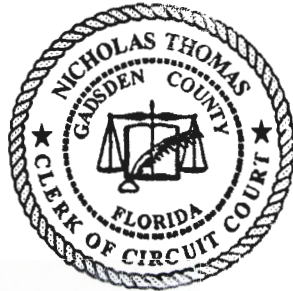
MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HOLT DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:44 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA



ANTHONY VIEGBESIE, Chair
Board of County Commissioners



ATTEST:



NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk