

**AT A WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN  
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON SEPTEMBER 3, 2024 AT 4:00  
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

**Present:** Ronterious Green, Chair, District 5  
Alonzetta Simpkins, Vice-Chair, District 2, appeared online  
Eric Hinson, District 1  
Kimblin NeSmith, District 3  
Brenda Holt, District 4  
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator  
Roosevelt Morris, Assistant County Administrator  
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney  
Adriana Quijada, Deputy Clerk

**Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Green called the workshop to order at 4 p.m. and led into invocation and pledge of allegiance.

**Citizens Requesting to be Heard on Non-Agenda Items (3-minutes Limit)**

The Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners welcomes and encourages public participation at all meetings of the Board. Citizens are free to speak for up to three (3) minutes on non-agenda items. Public comments and participation are also encouraged for items on the agenda. Additionally, if you are unable to attend a meeting in person, comments from the Public can also be submitted via email to [CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov](mailto:CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov) until noon on the date of the meeting. Comments submitted after the deadline, but prior to the meeting, will be added to the official record, but the County cannot guarantee that Commissioners and staff will have adequate time to review comments prior to the meeting. Citizens are further encouraged to participate on the County's website at [www.gadsdencountyfl.gov](http://www.gadsdencountyfl.gov).

Chair Green read aloud the above statement

**General Business**

**1. Introduction**

Mr. Dixon introduced the workshop and stated they were presenting the balanced budget. He stated all of the budget team has COVID, so he will be the one presenting tonight.

**2. Budget Workshop #6 Presentation**

Mr. Dixon stated they have begun mobilizing Stevens School and also there will be the final 2 needed changes for EMS.

Mr. Dixon stated Mr. Lewis has launched his website GadsdenBiz.com. It was nice and easy to operate. He went through the pie chart from the presentation showing expenditure by funds of the budget. The biggest was the general fund and fine & forfeiture.

Mr. Dixon went on to the general fund revenue and stated it was up to about 30 million dollars. He mentioned that general fund comprises 48% of their budget and fine & forfeiture fund is 14%. They also had debt service funds totaling \$2,997,322. Mr. Dixon went through the major revenue projections in general fund.

Mr. Dixon went on to budget highlights. He mentioned public safety and stated they have continued their investment in the sheriff's department, EMS, and fire. EMS and Fire have outgrown funding sources. They will be looking at the re-organization of funding those services.

3.28 million dollars in remaining ARPA funds have been recommended. A fund shift will be initiated as a "Revenue Replacement" for allowable usage for "fiscal stability" for Governmental services. The remaining balance is not currently under contract, incumbered, or spent, to avoid any loss in funding per ARPA guidelines and requirements.

Mr. Dixon mentioned opioid program and stated they have made a change to where only 5% of the money could be used for salaries.

Mr. Dixon stated there was a request from the Clerk for cybersecurity in the amount of \$113,757.57. They have requested information from the Clerk for that.

### **3. Questions**

Chair Green asked about the funding source to cover the healthcare position. Mr. Dixon stated they are looking at some general revenue and savings from ARPA. Chair Green asked about the timeframe for cyber security for the Clerk. Mr. Dixon stated the clerk will send information over and I.T. will review it quickly and move on with it.

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned the 5% with opioid and stated the ARPA funds would take them through one year. She asked what was the plan from that point on. She asked if they made those changes in the current budget. Mr. Dixon stated they did make those changes in the current budget and stated he had no answer yet for the future, they were just informed of that last week. They want the opioid program so they will be coming back with further ideas.

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned the Clerk's request and asked why it was not in general funds. Mr. Dixon stated it was just where they had money.

*Commissioner Hinson appeared at 4:35 p.m.*

Commissioner Holt stated they may have too many fire stations. If they were trying to run a system that was not working, maybe it was the locations of where they are.

Chair Green stated they should schedule a workshop regarding ARPA funding.

Commissioner Simpkins asked about the budget itself. When preparing the budget, do they take a look at the actuals spent in previous years prior to the actual request of this year? Mr. Dixon stated they try to, if the information is available to them.

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned the PIO department and stated the actual that was spent up until the end of last month was \$10,000 but they were still allocating \$100,000 in there. She would like to know what that additional \$90,000 would be spent on. Mr. Dixon stated they were moving the Love Where You Live program and associated programs between one or two funds, not just PIO.

Ms. Steel stated the PIO office used to be responsible for all advertising and marketing. The Clerk's office will change the billing and has now been billing each department individually.

*Commissioner Hinson stepped out at 4:54 p.m.*

*Commissioner Hinson returned at 4:55 p.m.*

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned the vehicle maintenance cost. She stated when the lease was presented, it was said that it would decrease cost. However, there is not a decrease.

Mr. Dixon stated they still have 37 vehicles needed to be maintained. Commissioner Simpkins asked the total vehicles being leased and Mr. Dixon stated 34. Commissioner Simpkins asked for a breakdown on this.

*Chair Green stepped out at 4:56 p.m.*

*Chair Green returned at 5:00 p.m.*

Commissioner Hinson asked how much was put in for marketing for Gadsden County. Ms. Steele stated \$100,000 in the public information budget.

Chair Green asked about CRA and their conversations. Mr. Dixon stated have spoken with the Property Appraisers and they were waiting on correspondence from revenue.

Commissioner Hinson stated they need more EMS in the county. Mr. Dixon mentioned bringing in a consultant. Commissioner Hinson mentioned putting a library in Midway.

Commissioner Holt stated she was requesting a grant writer and coordinator. Commissioner NeSmith asked if they have a grants department and Mr. Dixon stated they have a grants coordinator.

Commissioner Hinson stated each department head should be able to go out and seek grants; that can help strengthen their budget and increase budget. Commissioner Hinson stated he thought Integrity was going to be a grant writer. They need a workshop on that to see how much they have produced.

Commissioner Holt stated they should not have 300 students in the Summer Youth program. She stated that 100 students that do well is a lot better than 300 students that do not do well.

**Motion to Adjourn**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR GREEN DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 5:41 PM.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**RONTERIOUS GREEN, Chair  
Board of County Commissioners**

**ATTEST:**

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**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**