

AT A WORKSHOP HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON AUGUST 11, 2025, AT 4:00 P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

**Present:** Eric F. Hinson, Chair, District 1  
Ronterious Green, Vice- Chair, District 5  
Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2  
Brenda A. Holt, District 4  
Shawn Wood, District 3  
Roosevelt Morris, Interim County Administrator  
Louis Baptiste, Interim County Attorney  
Adriana Quijada, Deputy Clerk

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

Commissioner Holt called the workshop to order at 4:05 p.m. Commissioner Holt led into a moment of silence and the 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).

Commissioner Simpkins read aloud the above statement.

**General Business**

**5.a. Introduction – Budget Workshop #5**

Mr. Morris stated they will start with a presentation by finance.

**5.b. Department Budget Presentation**

Ms. Raynak appeared before the board to provide a presentation. She stated the tentative budget hearing was scheduled for September 15, 2025 at 6 p.m. and the final budget hearing was scheduled at September 30, 2025 at 6 p.m. She mentioned budget deadlines that they have to meet. By October 30, they have to have the final budget uploaded to their website.

Ms. Raynak went through budget decisions that need board action. They need decisions on reserves and if they want to establish reserve funds for future legislative/state impacts.

*Commissioner Simpkins stepped out at 4:11 p.m. and returned at 4:12 p.m.*

Ms. Raynak stated during the last two workshops, they addressed pending federal and state policy changes that are all the buzz among local governments, not just in Florida, but nationally. She stated the Clerk was correct in that they do not know of the impacts yet or when these changes will occur. As their Finance Director, she needed to put those in front of them so they could be informed and prepared for it.

*Chair Hinson appeared at 4:16 p.m.*

**Priority Milestone #1: Board Approved Increases and Decreases**

- Target Date: August 19, 2025
- Deadline: Before August 25, 2025

**Priority Milestone #2: Schedule a Special Meeting to Approve Millage Rate and Draft Tentative Budget**

- Target Date: August 28 at 6 p.m.
- Deadline: August 29 at 10 a.m.

**Priority Milestone #3: Public Hearing #1 - Adopt the Tentative FY 25 Budget and Millage Rate**

- Tentative Budget board-approved budget and millage rate must be posted to the website no later than September 10, 2025\*
- Tentative Hearing: September 15, 2025 @ 6 PM\*
- Once adopted at the public hearing, the approved tentative budget becomes the final budget and millage rate for board adoption at the second statutorily required Public Hearing.

**Priority Milestone #4: Public Hearing #2 - Adopt the Final FY 25 Budget and Millage Rate**

- Legal ads must be submitted to the newspaper no later than September 19, 2025 \* to be in the newspaper by the last edition on September 25, 2025, before the final budget hearing September 30, 2025.
- Final Budget must be posted to the website no later than September 24, 2025, prior to Final Hearing\*
- Final Hearing: September 30, 2025 @ 6 PM\*

Ms. Raynak asked if the board wanted to use this budget year to set some reserves this year or not. Commissioner Holt stated they need to set aside money for those future impacts like Medicaid and SNAP.

*Commissioner Green appeared at 4:19 p.m.*

Commissioner Green asked for a breakdown on the possibility of cuts from the departments. Ms. Raynak stated the directors did a good job with finding cuts and have totaled 1 million in cuts.

Commissioner Wood stated to look at their county buildings and see if they could reduce them.

Commissioner Holt stated they need to know what services will be cut from each department. Commissioner Green stated he would like to know as well.

Commissioner Holt stated that the \$100,000 that the Clerk received from ARPA funds was in his budget but it was not reoccurring money. She stated it should not be in that budget.

*Commissioner Green stepped out at 5:01 p.m. and returned at 5:02 p.m.*

*Commissioner Wood stepped out at 5:03 p.m.*

Commissioner Holt asked about cuts in animal control. Ms. Raynak stated she worked on this with Mr. Meeks; he asked for 2 additional part-time positions to help with after-care hours. Chair Hinson stated he would like to know what was in their budget.

Commissioner Green stated finding part-time people would be difficult and asked about combining 2 part-time positions for one full time position that could work under different departments. Ms. Raynak stated it was possible; they just need to find someone who would want to work under 2 departments.

*Commissioner Wood returned at 5:06 p.m.*

Mr. Morris stated he would hate to ask HR to write a description for 2 separate positions; it would be a challenge finding someone with experience in both departments. He stated he has spoken with the Sheriff's department regarding animal control.

*Commissioner Simpkins stepped out at 5:09 p.m.*

Ms. Raynak stated last year, the budget for animal control was at \$490,000. This year, it was cut down to \$427,000. Chair Hinson asked how many employees were in animal control. Ms. Raynak stated 4.

Commissioner Holt stated overtime was more expensive than putting a new position there. She was concerned about cutting building inspection and Planning & Zoning. Anything that brings in money should not be cut.

*Commissioner Simpkins returned at 5:14 p.m.*

Commissioner Green stated they do not know what was cut yet for the planning or building departments. Ms. Raynak stated the Planning department made cuts in professional services, rentals, printing supplies, supporting parades, office supplies, uniforms, gas, training, etc. Their budget is at \$717,000. Chair Hinson stated Planning & Zoning still received an increase compared to last year, but costs were going up as well.

Mr. Morris stated they will conclude the finance presentation so the EMS director, Chief Ford, could present his proposal for the 24-72 work schedule.

Chief Ford appeared and stated his goal by the end of this presentation was for them to find a common ground that allows them to take care of their community as well as their employees. Chief Ford went through their initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year:

- Pursue Grant Funding: Continue applying for state and federal grant opportunities to update our ambulance fleet and offset the costs related to medical equipment.
- Launch an EMS Apprentice Program: Develop and implement an apprenticeship program targeting high school juniors and seniors.
- Community Education: They will offer community education courses such as CPR and Stop the Bleed classes to empower residents and improve public safety awareness.
- Explore an EMS Dispatcher Position: They will seek to create a dedicated EMS dispatcher position to improve response times, provide pre arrival instructions and streamline dispatch operations.
- Transition to a 24-72 schedule.

Chief Ford went on to explain why they should transition to a 24/72 schedule. Under the current 48/96 schedule, full time staff are required to work 2,928 hours/year, with 848 hours at the overtime rate. This averages out to over 56 hours per week. The proposed 24/72 schedule lowers required hours to 2,184 hours/year, with only 312 hours at the overtime rate. This averages out to 42 hours per week. This equates to a 63% reduction in overtime hours worked. This could lead to improved clinical performances, allows them to expand the PRN pool, reduce impact of callouts, and offers significant burnout relief, improving retention and morale.

For fiscal year 2023-2024 Personnel services: actual expenditures were \$4.16 million. For this year, they were budgeted for \$3.76 million.

In summary, transitioning to a 24/72 schedule would be a smart move for the county and has little to no downside.

Commissioner Green asked if any other counties are following this model. Chief Ford stated yes, several counties. Commissioner Green asked about replacing part time; what would happen to the current full-time people. Chief Ford stated they have 32 vacancies and they will keep the current full-time positions. He stated they are increasing their PRN pool and there are 27 current part-time employees.

Commissioner Holt asked for the list of counties that are currently doing the 24/72 schedule. She stated it was puzzling that they would accept a part-time position with no health insurance. Chief Ford stated most of their pool consist of students, but if they take on this schedule and increase their salary, they may have more people come in.

Commissioner Holt asked Mr. Morris what he thought about this. Mr. Morris stated Chief Ford was correct in increasing the PRN pool. They needed to do something in order to stop the burnout; it was about services not money.

Commissioner Wood asked about collections. Chief Ford stated they collected about \$4.2 million last year. Commissioner Wood asked why do so many people pass the Gadsden ER and what equipment

was needed. Chief Ford stated they need an MRI machine and there are services they could not do, like neuro or a heart attack.

Commissioner Holt stated their last strategic plan stated they were looking at opening a hospital in 2025 and they need to look at that.

Chair Hinson stated he would like breakdown of the \$4.5 million that they received and what they did with that. Chief Ford stated it goes into a revenue account with the Clerk's Office.

**6. Motion to Adjourn**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HINSON DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 5:51 PM.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**ERIC F. HINSON, Chair  
Board of County Commissioners**

**ATTEST:**

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**NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk**