

BUDGET WORKSHOP – JULY 11, 2011

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Budget Workshop on July 11, 2011, at 9:00 a.m., at the Walton County Courthouse in DeFuniak Springs, Florida.

The following Board members were present: Commissioner Larry Jones, Chairman; Commissioner Scott Brannon, Vice-Chair; Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen; Commissioner Cecilia Jones; and Commissioner Sara Comander. Mr. Greg Kisela, County Administrator; Attorney Lynn Hoshihara, County Attorney; and Ms. Martha Ingle, Clerk of Courts; were also present.

Chairman L. Jones led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and then called the meeting to order.

Mr. Gregory Kisela, County Administrator, presented the proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 and stated that the proposed budget is available on the county's website. He discussed the budget challenges and stated that there was a \$4 million revenue deficit that needed to be addressed. He presented possible solutions to aid in locating the needed funds and felt that dipping into reserves should not be considered.

Mr. Kisela addressed the health insurance costs and the steps the Insurance Committee and Constitutional Officers have taken to adjust those costs. He recommended re-implementing the prescription plan to enhance the benefits to the employees.

Mr. Kisela recommended continuing at the current Millage rate of 3.5563 mills. He reported that even though keeping the current rate will generate \$1.8 million less in revenue, he felt the current levels of service can be kept without raising the millage rate.

Mr. Kisela briefly discussed the Total Budget and Revenues; the total authorized FTE's for the Constitutional Officers and BCC; the implementation of the Division of Driver's License

within the Tax Collector's Office; the recommended budget changes to each of the departments; statutory required contributions; and discretionary contributions. He also discussed the recreational plat fee, sidewalk fund, local option gas tax, special revenue funds, MSBUs, and capital projects.

Ms. Kisela felt that the budget is balanced for 2012 but will have challenges heading into 2013.

Chairman L. Jones stated that the critical component will be funding the budget at the same millage rate as last year.

Commissioner C. Jones asked how much money is expected from BP. Mr. Kisela stated approximately five hundred thousand dollars.

Mr. Dan Scupin spoke in support of not raising the millage rate and spoke in favor of pay raises for lower paid employees. He felt that a merit increase should be determined by the work performed by the employee. He spoke in opposition to pay increases for management positions.

Ms. Pam Thompson spoke regarding the library system and requested that the funding to the library system be kept at or above the current level. She spoke against closing the Gladys Milton Branch Library. Chairman L. Jones stated that there was no intention to close the branch.

Mr. Bob Sullivan, Walton County Tea Party, spoke in support of keeping the current millage rate. He asked the Board not to consider an across the board pay raise for the employees.

Mr. Bob Hudson, Walton County Taxpayers Association, discussed the amount of outstanding fines and levies issued by Code Enforcement. He stated that there are approximately \$500,000 in uncollected fines and levies and urged the Board to collect on those fees. Mr. Hudson discussed the benefits package for the employees. Mr. Kisela reported that the current employee health insurance plan contracted with Blue Cross/Blue Shield is being reviewed. The

contract is to last through the 2012 budget year and Mr. Kisela anticipates more flexibility in employee health insurance negotiations during the 2013 budget process.

Mr. William Infeld, County Finance Director, stated that a tentative millage rate needed to be set for the preparation of TRIM notices by the Tax Collector and Property Appraiser. He reported that there will be two public hearings in September to finalize the 2011/2012 Budget.

Motion by Commissioner Comander, second by Commissioner C. Jones to set a tentative millage rate of 3.5563 mills. Ayes 5, Nays 0. L. Jones Aye; Brannon Aye; Pridgen Aye; C. Jones Aye; Comander Aye.

Chairman L. Jones stated that the approved tentative millage rate cannot be raised but it can be reduced.

There being no further items to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Larry Jones, Chairman

Martha Ingle, Clerk of Courts