

**MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
BRADENTON AREA CONVENTION CENTER, LONGBOAT KEY ROOM
One Haben Boulevard
Palmetto, Florida
September 14, 2020**

Meeting video link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUlgjuGhS-qV966RU2Z7AtA>

Present were:

Betsy Benac, Chairman
Carol Whitmore, First Vice-Chairman
Misty Servia, Second Vice-Chairman
Reggie Bellamy, Third Vice-Chairman (entered during meeting)
Vanessa Baugh (attending via Zoom)
Stephen R. Jonsson (attending via Zoom)
Priscilla Whisenant Trace

Also present were:

Cheri Coryea, County Administrator
Jan Brewer, County Attorney
Vicki Tessmer, Board Records Supervisor, Clerk of the Circuit Court

 Chairman Benac called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

BC20200914DOC001

1. **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

 Cheri Coryea, County Administrator, stated the Board has been continuously updated throughout the budget process.

BC20200914DOC002

2. **STAFF PRESENTAITON**

Jan Brewer, Financial Management, explained this meeting is required by Florida Statute. She used a slide presentation to review the August State of Florida Revenue Estimates. The estimates compare the July and August numbers. The State estimate has gone from a 14 percent decrease to an eight percent decrease. The budget has been updated with the new estimates for gas taxes, and the County Revenue Sharing Program. She recommended keeping the reserves, and as soon as solid numbers are published, these will be reviewed again. Due to the change from a 14 percent decrease to a seven percent decrease in sales tax, she suggested part of the increased fund go to the Lincoln park pool to include some of the add alternative requested by the City of Palmetto.

Discussion ensued regarding the increase in price for the pool, there is a contingency which will come back to the Board, there will not be a dive well, revenue sharing dollars come straight to the County and then the County in turn pays the cities, the cities participate in other shared revenues, these numbers are estimates, and take the estimates month by month.

 Ms. Brewer continued the slides to note the additional revenue share is \$4,144,361, of that \$1,475,000 will go to the Lincoln Park Pool, \$2,662,067 will go to the hardening of the John Marble Center, and \$7,294 will be applied to Transit Operations (set aside increase). She reviewed numbers for the infrastructure sales tax estimate of \$6,207,402, the list of the projects, and noted the Bayshore Gardens project was moved to 2022 based on a request from Public Works.

 Cheri Coryea, County Administrator elaborated that the add alternatives for the Lincoln Park Pool include a lesson plunge pool, a slide, a shaded structure with lounge seating, a shaded structure with spectator seating, additional parking, and the geothermal system.

BC20200914DOC003

4. **TENTATIVE BUDGET**

Jan Brewer, Financial Management Director, continued the slides to identify surrounding counties that have dedicated funding for environmental lands, revenues by source, net budget of \$740 million, the vast majority of the increase in property tax revenue is due to new growth, uses by function, revenue comparison between FY2020 and FY2021, spending more cash on projects, Public Safety increased \$9.1 million, Human Services increased due to increased property taxes, tourism expenses decreased, Reserves for Contingencies increased \$10.3 million, and a \$5.8 million increase in the Southwest Tax Increment Funding.

(Enter Commissioner Bellamy during presentation)

County property values have adjusted due to the market, and new construction has contributed to increased values. Budget Stabilization is used to level out. Ms. Brewer used a slide to explain what would be needed in millage rates if budget stabilization was not used. Save Our Homes establishes that the value of a home can only go up three percent if the property is homesteaded. Ms. Brewer elaborated on the impacts of Save Our Homes to tax payers which reduces the tax rate. The millage rate has not changed in 10 years.

Ms. Brewer continued the slides and distributed a packet of updated reserves to further discuss the reserve for cash balance found on pages 5-8 of the handout. When specific revenue comes in, it must be used for the same purpose that brought it in. She continued to compare the rate of reserves between the State and Manatee County, and explained there are Statutory requirements for holding reserves in the General Fund. The roll back rate would be used to get the same amount of funds as the previous year.

 Discussion ensued regarding the elements of the Truth in Millage (TRIM) form, defunding is defined as not providing the same amount of services as the previous year, Constitutional Officers have not been defunded, only defunding was in 2008, State allows counties to have up to 20 percent in reserves and the reserves are for the entire budget overall, the 20 percent reserves held by Manatee County are in compliance and follows best practices, Manatee County passed its own Resolution regarding the percentage of reserves, Governor's finance office recommends two months of reserves, except for the coastal areas that are prone to natural disasters, and coastal counties around Manatee have similar reserves to ensure they can maintain services and rebound from an emergency.

 Ms. Brewer explained there are State parameters for what the 20 percent can hold, and the contingency is what the County uses if there is a need. The State does not require the stabilization. Upon question, she noted Sarasota has a stabilization of \$53 million, and their reserves are to maintain operations for 30-60 days.

 Discussion continued regarding Manatee County is well funded, money is managed well, excess reserves in areas that do not need them, reserves have been used for roads, provide a comparison of Counties that are similar to Manatee in population and commercial property, the mean housing costs in Manatee exceed those of Sarasota, State of Florida is in a better position than other States because of the budget stabilization, Manatee is not in a position to do anything other than what is proposed, zero based budget, reducing employees would reduce services, maintaining the AAA bond rating and getting low interest rates is important, and the Disaster Fund was established in 2019.

BC20200914DOC004

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

 Mike Meehan distributed a handout and expressed concern with the budget and suggested a property tax credit for FY2021, a December billing holiday for water and sewer, increasing social services, funding the land acquisition conservation program with \$10 million, and accelerating the development of the Premier Sports Complex from 10 years to two years.

 Katherine Edwards expressed concern regarding the infrastructure sales tax advisory committee and budget amendments. She suggested the County use an Inspector General to review spending.

 Discussion ensued regarding the lifeguard stands needed to be updated, the Board approves the budget not staff, Chapter 129 Florida Statutes mandates a balanced budget, and the Clerk of the Court has an Inspector General. BC20200914DOC005

MOTIONS – TENTATIVE BUDGET

 A motion was made by Commissioner Trace, seconded by Commissioner Whitmore, and carried 7-0, to adopt Resolution B-21-001 for tentative millage rates for Fiscal Year 20-21.

A motion was made by Commissioner Trace, seconded by Commissioner Whitmore, and carried 7-0, to adopt Resolution B-21-002 which adopts the Tentative Budget for FY20-21, which also includes the Unincorporated Municipal Services Taxing Unit and the Palm Aire Municipal Services Tax Unit.

A motion was made by Commissioner Trace, seconded by Commissioner Whitmore, and carried 7-0, to adopt Resolution B-21-003 which adopts the Tentative Budget for FY20-21 for all identified Manatee County Dependent Special Districts. BC20200914DOC005

5. **AGGRIGATE MILLAGE**

 Ms. Brewer stated the aggregate millage rate for Manatee County Board of County Commissioners for Fiscal Year 2020/2021 is 6.8813 and the change from the rolled back aggregate millage rate of 6.6549 for the operating millage is hereby determined to be +3.40 percent. Again, there is no increase in the overall tax rates. BC20200914DOC006

6. **PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE**

 Chairman Benac announced the next public hearing to adopt the FY20/21 Budget will be held September 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at the Bradenton Area Convention Center in the Longboat Key Room. BC20200914DOC007

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Benac adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes Approved: _____