

**MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, Florida  
APRIL 18, 2017**

Present were:

Betsy Benac, Chairman  
Robin DiSabatino, First Vice-Chairman  
Charles B. Smith, Second Vice-Chairman  
Stephen R. Jonsson, Third Vice-Chairman  
Vanessa Baugh  
Carol Whitmore  
Priscilla Whisenant Trace

Also present were:

Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator  
Mitchell O. Palmer, County Attorney  
Amanda Cornwell, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

Chairman Benac called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M.

**AGENDA**

BC20170418DOC001

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

 Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator, spoke on planned improvements to the Boardroom chambers.

 Tom Yarger, Construction Services Division Manager, elaborated on the plan to increase the amount of seating, creating a center aisle and making the staff room accessible from outside the chambers as opposed to inside. The Board Records staff room will be expanded into a larger conference room for other uses. The Sheriff's Office has reviewed security possibilities, and staff recommends placing a door between the dais and the general public.

 Mike Dipinto, Project Manager, continued the slide presentation and discussed the construction plan, future configuration, replacement of the secretary desk, seating, carpeting, construction time frame (6/24/2017-7/9-2017), and estimated cost of \$80,000.

 Charlie Bishop, Property Management Director, stated that monies have been set aside for the renovations and spoke on enhancements to the Board secretary desk.

 Discussion ensued regarding the importance of Chambers security, questions of whether the dais is bulletproof, where will the secretary's desk be placed in the future configuration, improvements made to the lobby of the administration building, could glass be replaced with bulletproof glass, request for a cost estimate, concealed weapons are permissible in the administration building but not Chambers, and support for looking at uniform security in the administration building.

 Mr. Yarger confirmed that the dais is bullet proof. The two seats behind the secretary desk could be removed. The glass above the lobby desk is not bulletproof, and added that improvements were made taking the most common incidents into account.

 Mr. Bishop responded that staff had evaluated other counties' approach to building security and advised that any future changes made would affect the air system and impact cost. Staff will examine the possibility of replacing the glass panel at the lobby desk with bulletproof glass. He noted which doors are commonly locked during business hours.

 Mitchell O. Palmer, County Attorney, stated that it is unlawful to bring concealed weapons into county commission chambers when the Board or an advisory board is in session, but it is lawful elsewhere in the administration building. BC20170418DOC002

## 1. **FY 2017-2018 BUDGET PROCESS**

 Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator, utilized a presentation to provide an update on the FY18 budget. All the available reserves would be consumed, and it is estimated that in 2018 it would be necessary to meet current expenses with current revenues. There will be sufficient revenues to support the operating budget in FY18, based on an excess of \$4 million from FY16 and a nine percent growth in the tax base. He reviewed cost challenges, the status of the General Fund, the Transportation Trust Fund, the Library Fund, and the Unincorporated Municipal Service Tax Units (MSTU). Health care funding will be taken from reserves, and he proposed that each year \$1 million of new money generated by the growth in the tax base be allocated to healthcare, reducing the amount withdrawn from reserves.

 Discussion ensued requesting an itemized breakdown of community healthcare costs, non-mandated costs are important for continual funding, request from the hospital to remain at their \$3.5 million limit from the previous year, how much are organizations that do not participate in the Health Information Exchange (HIE) receive, the application of gas tax proceeds, property tax applications, the need for a new library in the east county, trend toward electronic books in libraries, and inflation costs associated with libraries are higher than with transportation.

 Mr. Hunzeker responded that as Blake Medical Center and Manatee County Rural Health have declined to participate in the HIE, their combined annual funding is approximately \$900,000. The proposed additional homestead exemption could be on the ballot in 2018 and would impact the budget in 2019. Manatee Memorial Hospital is currently receiving \$3.5 million. Staff will provide total breakdown of healthcare costs. There will be a presentation on the future vision for libraries to create gathering places, as opposed to the emphasis on books. The library inflation cost is inclusive of staff, equipment, building, electricity, and construction costs.

 Jan Brewer, Financial Management Director, spoke on gas tax application and inflation costs associated with library services.

 Mr. Hunzeker continued the presentation on the ongoing budget review, and the 150 separate funds balanced individually. In some cases, monies can be transferred between funds. The Board has the most discretion in the General Fund but is limited by statute. He invited input regarding budgeting concerns and Board prioritization of items. The growth in the tax base will likely fall below the nine percent estimate, and homestead property tax is state-mandated.

 Discussion ensued regarding the index determining the homestead exemption increase, questions of whether employee health insurance costs are being examined, every revenue source required to have a fund balance, Palmetto Pier item on previous budget, request to

look at departments with high turnover to address issues, suggestion to offer communities greater incentives to create Municipal Service Taxing Units (MSTU), areas of the County with compromised landscaping because of a lack of irrigation and drought conditions, request for explanation of employee healthcare options post-retirement, upcoming retirement of Board Executive Assistants and the need to evaluate the work load and possibility of additional assistants.

 Mr. Hunzeker employee cost for health care has not been increased in four years, but there could be a need to adjust that cost. He clarified that individual funds are created when the State dictates the way revenue can be spent; each fund requires reserves, which is dependent on the fluctuation of spending and volatility within the fund amount. There is an MSTU application process in place, requiring a 67 percent community vote for adoption, and the process can be revisited. It is a statutory requirement to allow retired employees to remain on healthcare plan, and if they choose to do so they pay 100 percent of premium costs.

 Dan Schlant, Assistant County Administrator, stated there is a State-dictated subsidy for the retired employee, but not for the employee's family.

 Discussion ensued regarding the opioid epidemic and upcoming meetings, request for peer-program funding is looking positive but still unknown, budgets from constitutional officers not yet received, legislative proposals to reduce funding if organizations have monies in reserves, sales tax infrastructure funding can be a dedicated revenue source to address a storm-water system, additional staff will become necessary in relation to utilizing sales tax funds, no dedicated funds for trails currently, need an update on the Southwest TIF, opposition to a storm-water fee, Public Works issues are ongoing in terms of road repairs and congestion, Rubonia could be improved from the General Fund, work force compression and previous efforts, and Board request to know if other county money has been spent on Nathan Benderson Park besides tourist development funds.

 Mr. Hunzeker explained the County relied on reserves during the recession, and a State mandate eliminating reserves could jeopardize County government and impact credit ratings. Staff is in the process of evaluating the need for additional personnel to facilitate expenditure of sales tax revenue, and \$500,000 is set aside for positions with the highest turnover. The Citizens Financial Oversight Committee will be returning with recommendations, and impact fees in the Southwest zone are being applied primarily to the 44th Avenue extension. Staff will provide the amount of TDC funds spent in Nathan Benderson Park.

 Discussion continued regarding need for matching funds, importance of having adequate office space, constant community need for road repair, rapidly growing population, upcoming work session with constitutional offices, Rubonia improvements could be addressed with sales tax infrastructure funds, the Palmetto pool, importance of reserves to address short term events, and the approximate bonding capacity of the County.

 Mr. Hunzeker responded that all County reserves in excess of the minimum have been spent down in the previous five years, and any future excess spent or placed in reserves would be a Board decision. Population growth will necessitate additional staff across offices, but the demands to Public Works will also increase with greater infrastructure. Public Works was heavily impacted by the recession and is currently operating with no staff redundancy. A work session could be scheduled to discuss the County capacity to borrow monies. The

helicopter purchase could be achieved through an inter-fund loan rather than in the public market. Interest rates are low, but borrowing on a tax exempt basis requires funds be spent down in a timely manner.

 Mitchell O. Palmer, County Attorney, responded that TDC expenditures are individually presented to his office for legal opinion and can be reexamined.

 Discussion continued regarding the need to advocate for County concerns on the State level, Florida League of Cities previously recommended at least a six month reserve to meet unanticipated events, Congressman Buchanan is aware of County concerns, importance of infrastructure improvements, block grant funding importance, the benefits of MSTUs to communities, need to examine the 67 percent requirement, sales tax cannot be spent on staff to meet needs in Public Works, and questions of how much money is accumulated in the Southwest TIF.

 Mr. Hunzeker provided clarification that at the end of 2016, spending was decreased to create a \$4 million excess at the end of the year, and the 2017 budget included that estimated excess. This excess will alleviate the problem of utilizing reserves in 2018. The amount accumulated in the TIF will be provided.

 Ron Schulhofer, Public Works Director, responded that 67 percent requirement to adopt a MSTU is a positive stipulation, because the previous 51 percent requirement created division in communities. He added that Public Works is operating with one irrigation technician and one asphalt team for the County, and additional staff needs will be assessed during the budgeting process.

 Mr. Hunzeker responded that Community Redevelopment Areas were created in 2002 but not sustained by actual construction. Geri Lopez will be addressing questions regarding the southwest district and TIF, and a full report will be provided to the Board regarding expenditures.

There being no comment, Chairman Benac closed public comment.

 Mr. Palmer advised that there are 14 remaining seats in the Annual Local Government Law seminar on May 1 at the Convention Center at 8:30 A.M.

 Discussion ensued regarding the State sponsored opioid work session taking place on May 2, 2017 at the Convention Center.

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RECESS 11:31 A.M. to 1:33 P.M.

2.  **ALL THINGS HOUSING RESET**

Geri Lopez, Redevelopment and Economic Opportunity Director, utilized a presentation to review All Things Housing, covering questions of “Who” is affordable housing, why is it important, why it is difficult, how does it work, and what can each of us do now. She reviewed the average workforce salaries in Manatee County, what County residents can afford, median sales prices and rents, the Shimberg Center for Housing 2016 Rental Market Study, cost-burdened households, regulatory, financial and political/social barriers, Garden Trail Apartments as an example of how an affordable housing project can work, financials and source of funds, proposed focused areas and recommendations from the Affordable Housing

Advisory Board, proposal for a workforce housing rental incentive program, best locations for affordable housing, and proposed incentive program criteria.

 John Osborne, Planning Official, referred to the Multi-Family Housing Efficiency map and spoke on examination of the area to evaluate the available services and infrastructure in place to identify affordable areas with density allowance overlay. He spoke on potential growth patterns and the corresponding impact on services and cost, referencing previous Board decision to pursue a hybrid growth pattern. Proposals for development and land use changes in north county will be presented to the Board.

 Discussion ensued regarding suggestion for density amendments, previous studies identifying the urban core as having the infrastructure to support greater density, transportation not available in North county to support high density development at this time, need to advertize current incentives, suggestion of purchasing School Board surplus property, importance of making workforce housing publically accessible, questions of areas where housing is affordable but sub-par, encourage public/private partnerships to improve existent stock of rental units, great need in the north county for housing, and a previous rezone request for affordable housing in the north county area that was approved but could not be built.

 Ms. Lopez responded to questions regarding density recommendations for north and south county and spoke on the applicable impact fees.

 Denise Thomas, Housing and Community Development Coordinator, responded that \$1.8 million in SHIP funds were received in the previous year.

 Ms. Lopez clarified that the incentive fee program applies to new construction to address the issue of housing supply. Restrictions would be imposed to dictate maximum rents and requirements for income. The areas under discussion fall primarily in the southwest area. She spoke to existing stock rental issues and the possibility of a rental program to encourage rental owners to upgrade units, and responded that other methods of control include land trusts that hold properties and impose controls to ensure quality. Staff is working with Code Enforcement on rental unit quality.

 Mr. Osborne responded to questions regarding the site previously approved and the evaluation of increased density requests and considerations that contribute to staff approval.

 Ms. Lopez clarified the developer of the affordable housing project was deterred by the need for a Comprehensive Plan and land use change.

 Discussion continued regarding previous opposition to the project in discussion, productivity will promote greater awareness of incentives, avoid waiving quality requirements for the sake of promoting affordable developments, the Affordable Housing Advisory Board recommendations, the urban corridor, application of land trusts in other areas, private partners who address homelessness have no housing resources, recommendation is to expand the incentive to apply to multifamily, importance of looking at alternate housing types, FHA203K program and potential coordination with lenders who offer that program, renovation vs. new construction impacts maintenance costs, identification of UC case sites, impact fees being paid for affordable developments, regular updates on the status of affordable housing, Canal Road development suggestion and potential of a County-initiated

Comprehensive Plan change.

 Dan Schlant, Assistant County Administrator, reiterated that the purpose of the work session was to present a conceptual approach and demonstrate identification of particular areas with previous interest that have encountered obstacles to development.

 Ms. Lopez reviewed specific priorities and suggestions identified by the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, adding that State Statute requires them to return to the Board with their full report in December. A developer interested in specific UC case study sites, and a meeting is scheduled to identify priorities.

 Mr. Osborne responded that significant interest has been generated in the urban corridor as a result of previous changes.

 Mr. Schlant responded that commissioners could be individually briefed on any resolution brought forward. Land Use and Comprehensive Plan changes will be pursued on sparse tracts and staff will move forward if the Board supports the recommended multifamily impact fee incentive.

 Discussion ensued regarding Canal Road development, Memphis area, government involvement in revitalizing property, public/private partnerships will be necessary, City precedents for purchasing properties to offer for affordable development, potential properties may be represented by a commercial broker who has acquired a study to avoid consultant costs, expand impact fee incentives for developers, the Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA), and interested parties were previously advised to apply to the County for changes.

 Ms. Lopez clarified that the recommendation is to go through a Market and Site analysis to determine the greatest likelihood for private partnerships, and use that information to identify the best utilization of the sites. Samples from other areas that have performed a similar review could be provided, and a market study would provide information on how to address the gap-cost on specific sites. She confirmed that she is a member of the FRA.

(Exit Commissioner Trace)

 Rosalee Rhinehart and Dwight Rhinehart spoke on the limitations of fixed income residents.

 Michelle, a Manatee resident, spoke on issues with homelessness and inability to find affordable housing.

Discussion ensued regarding issues of fixed income housing needs, homelessness, possibility of coordinating with the Sheriff regarding homeless solutions, invite Pinellas County Sheriff to make a presentation, and a recent incident in a trailer park over a threatened eviction.

There being no further comment, Chairman Benac closed public comment.

 Dan Schlant, Assistant County Administration, stated that he will communicate with the Pinellas County Sheriff.

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**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Benac adjourned the meeting at 3:55 P.M.

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(Continued)

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_