

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING  
FRANKLIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX  
SEPTEMBER 25, 2012  
5:15 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Commissioners:** Pinki Jackel – Chairman, Bevin Putnal – Vice Chairman, Cheryl Sanders, Noah Lockley, and Joseph Parrish

**Others Present:** Marcia M. Johnson – Clerk of Courts, Linda Phillips – Finance Director, Erin Griffith – Assistant Finance Director, Alan Pierce – Director of Administrative Services, Michael Morón – Board Secretary

**Call To Order 5:17 PM**

Chairman Jackel called the Public Hearing to order.

**Prayer and Pledge**

There was a Prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Hearing**

Mrs. Johnson provided information on the proposed budget and millage rate.

Chairman Jackel stated how much would be to get back to roll back rate and asked the Board if that is the direction they wanted to proceed this evening.

Chairman Jackel stated that a 1% reduction for all offices and departments would result in a savings of \$107,000. She also discussed the option of having Weems repay the \$1.5 million that is owed to the County and Weems current financial status.

Board agreed that the loan should be repaid but discussed how much and at what rate.

Commissioner Putnal suggested expedited court hearings for inmates at the County Jail so the cost to house inmates might reduce the Sheriff's budget.

Board and Johnson discussed this matter further.

Chairman Jackel stated that she had just talked to Steve Lanier at Weems and he thinks that the Hospital could pay at least \$15,000 per month to the County to reduce the loan balance.

Mrs. Griffith stated that the slow collections of the sales tax might affect the repayment.

Nathan Marks of Strategic Benefits Group discussed a possible savings to the County for health insurance coverage.

Chairman Jackel and Mr. Marks discussed some of the advantages of this plan.

Board members questioned Mr. Marks about this proposed plan.

Mrs. Griffith and Mr. Marks discussed the plan further.

Board decided to discuss this matter further at the next regular meeting.

Commissioner Sanders expressed her concerns of an overall reduction at this stage of the budget process and asked Mrs. Griffith if she included the repayment from the hospital how far are we from the intended goal of roll back rate.

Mrs. Griffith commented on the options to reduce the budget presented thus far.

Chairman Jackel opened the floor for public comment.

Cathy Puckett of the Franklin County Senior Center discussed their financial status, the events, and services provided at the Center. She asked for additional funding if possible.

Ms. Spavy also spoke in favor of providing additional funding to the Center.

Board discussed this item further.

Chairman Jackel asked Mrs. Griffith to discuss the possibility of cash carry forward amounts.

Chairman Jackel recognized Mayor Messer of Carrabelle.

Allan Feifer of the Concerned Citizens of Franklin County read from a prepared statement asking the Board to be diligent on reducing the budget.

Chairman Jackel agreed with a lot of what Mr. Feifer's discussed in his statement. She commented on different issues in the County, especially help for the seafood workers. She talked about this budget affecting future budgets and the economy in the County.

Commissioner Lockley suggested cutting funding to the Literacy Program and the Extension Office.

Commissioners Putnal and Sanders stated that cutting the wrong departments would end up costing the County more in the future.

Commissioner Sanders expressed her concerns with additional cuts to County Departments.

Commissioner Putnal and Mr. Polous, Director of Mosquito Control, discussed what services he would cut if the Board reduced his budget this evening.

Board and Mr. Polous discussed this item further.

Commissioner Putnal expressed his concerns of budget cuts hurting the operation and services in the County.

Commissioner Parrish echoed Commissioner Putnal's concerns. He reminded everyone of the budget cuts that have been made the past years, and would like the entire Board to support the Budget.

Board discussed this matter further.

Commissioner Sanders discussed the importance of the Board balancing between necessary services, quality of life issues, and other items relating to County residents and the budget.

Chairman Jackel stated that she could only support the Budget if the roll back rate can be met and will try her best to get there by cuts. She stated that she doesn't like the current budget process. Chairman Jackel commented on the Constitutional Officers managing their own budgets, including salary increases to their employees.

### **Recess 6:43**

Chairman Jackel called for a recess.

### **Reconvene 7:18**

Chairman Jackel reconvened the meeting.

Commissioner Jackel offered a correction regarding the Sheriff's department, salary adjustments and salary increases.

Commissioner Lockley warned that if we proceed with the 'across the board' 1% reduction the Board will end up reducing its contingency balance to fund shortfalls in departments and offices.

Frank Venable, an Eastpoint resident, talked about the economy and home repossessions in the County. He asked the Board not to raise property taxes. He commented on the \$750 bonus that the Board approved earlier during the year that came out of the County's contingency fund.

Chairman Jackel stated that the entire amount for the \$750 bonus didn't all come from the contingency fund.

Chairman Jackel, Mr. Pierce, and Mr. Venable discussed funding for repairing the courthouse roof.

Mr. Venable expressed his displeasure with some of the past expenditures by the County and the loan that is owed to the County by Weem's Hospital.

Chairman Jackel commented on the need to support Weem's Hospital.

Mr. Venable discussed the need for recruiting new businesses into the County.

Ken Osborne, an Alligator Point resident, explained that his taxes have risen over the years. He compared the County's budget to other taxing authorities in the County and discussed the fact that the money used to fund Weems Hospital was from an Alligator Point fund. Mr. Osborne offered some options to reduce the budget, including health insurance changes.

Chairman Jackel and Mrs. Griffith explained what changes are needed to immediately save on health insurance.

Gail Rieglmayer a resident of St. George Island asked the Board to consider some of the cost saving ideas that were discussed earlier in the meeting. She also asked about some of the other ideas that were presented earlier in the budget process.  
Board and Mrs. Rieglmayer's discussed cost saving ideas.

Mrs. Griffith provided an updated status on how much was needed to get to roll back rate. Board discussed the possibility of fully transitioning the health insurance to Capital Health.

Commissioner Parrish stated that after reviewing the budget and the taxpayer feedback he has received over the years after proposing cuts to certain services, he didn't see the how the Board would get to rollback. He discussed unfunded mandates from the State and other items beyond the Board's control that is increasing the budget.

Commissioner Sanders discussed the Board having to balance necessary services versus balancing the budget. She stated that Franklin County has the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> lowest millage rate in the State.

Commissioner Putnal agreed with Commissioner Sanders commented.

Commissioner Lockley stated that a reduced budget will cause a reduction in services to the residents.

Commissioners Sanders and Jackel and Mrs. Griffith discussed the budgeted amounts for Professional and Legal Services.

**Motion by Putnal to adopt the final millage rate; Motion failed due to a lack of a second**

Board discussed reducing the budget further.

Commissioner Putnal stated that the danger of a low millage rate is no financial assistance or grants from the State.

**Recess 8:43 PM**

Chairman Jackel called for a recess.

**Reconvene 9:04 PM**

Chairman Jackel reconvened the meeting.

Chairman Jackel talked about a future move to Capital Health for health insurance that would affect the next budget. She asked that dental insurance is looked at before the next budget. Chairman Jackel and Mrs. Griffith discussed the effect on the total budget of a 1% cut for all department and offices.

Chairman Jackel, Mr. Pierce, and Mrs. Griffith discussed what will happen to the reimbursed funds from FEMA for past declared disasters.  
Board discussed this matter further.

Chairman Jackel called for Board action to either adopt the millage and budget or reduce the budget further.

James Harris, County Tax Collector, stated the importance of the Board setting the millage rate this evening, especially since it affects the other tax authorities in the County.

Commissioner Parrish stated that the Board should unanimously agree to the Budget.  
Board discussed the budget further.

Board, Mrs. Johnson, and staff discussed the procedure if the Board was unable to agree to the millage rate and budget this evening.

Commissioner Putnal stated that he doesn't mind paying additional taxes for the services that he receives.

Allan Feifer stated that he isn't in favor of not setting a millage rate this evening. He offered some suggestion to help reduce the budget, including Weems repaying their loan, the 1% reduction for all department and offices, and counting on unanticipated revenues.  
Mrs. Johnson warned that there aren't much unanticipated revenues but there are always unanticipated expenditures that more than offset the revenues.

Commissioner Parrish stated that he isn't in favor of committing health care sales tax to reduce the budget.

Mrs. Griffith read the Resolution adopting the final millage rate.

#### ***RESOLUTION ADOPTING MILLAGE LEVY***

***A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL LEVYING OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR FRANKLIN COUNTY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012/2013; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.***

**WHEREAS**, the BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS of Franklin County, Florida, on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012, adopted Fiscal Year 2012/2013 Final Millage Rate following a public hearing as required by Florida Statute 200.065; and

**WHEREAS**, the gross taxable value for operating purposes not exempt from taxation within Franklin County has been certified by the County Property Appraiser to the BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS as \$1,650,508,792.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS of Franklin County, Florida that:

1. The Fiscal Year 2012/2013 operating millage rate is 5.9637 mills which is greater than the rolled-back rate of 5.7079 by 4.48%.
2. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

This Resolution **DULY ADOPTED** at a public hearing the 25<sup>th</sup> day of September 2012.  
Time adopted 9:37 PM

**Motion by Parrish, seconded by Putnal, to approve the Resolution adopting the millage rate; Motion carried 4-1, Jackel opposed.**

Mrs. Griffith read the Resolution adopting the final budget.

#### **RESOLUTION ADOPTING FINAL BUDGET**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012/2013; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners of Franklin County, Florida on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012, held a public hearing as required by Florida Statute 200.065, and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners of Franklin County, Florida, set forth the appropriations and revenue estimates for the Budget for Fiscal Year 2012/2013 in the amount of \$37,872,465.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of County Commissioners of Franklin County, Florida, that:

1. The Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Final Budget be adopted.

2. *That copies of this Resolution containing said budget be spread upon the records of Franklin County, Florida.*
3. *This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.*

This Resolution **DULY ADOPTED** at a public hearing this 25<sup>th</sup> day of September 2012.  
Time adopted 9:39 PM

**Motion by Lockley, seconded by Putnal, to approve the Resolution adopting the Final Budget;  
Motion carried 4-1, Jackel opposed.**

**Adjourn 9:40 PM**

There being no further business, Chairman Jackel adjourned the meeting.

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Pinki C. Jackel, Chairman – FCBCC

Attest:

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Marcia M. Johnson, Clerk of Courts