

**MINUTES OF THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGARDING THE FISCAL YEAR
2021/2022 COUNTY-WIDE BUDGET**

SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

Present: Commissioner Robert D. Bender, Chairman, District 4
Commissioner Steven L. Barry, District 5
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3
Commissioner Douglas B. Underhill, District 2
Honorable Pam Childers, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
Wesley J. Moreno, Interim County Administrator
Alison Rogers, County Attorney
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Shamara Jernigan, Agenda Program Coordinator, County Administrator's Office

Absent: Commissioner Jeffrey W. Bergosh, Vice Chairman, District 1

Location: Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, Board Chambers, First Floor
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida

Minutes prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

AGENDA NUMBER

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bender called the First Budget Public Hearing to order at 5:39 p.m.

Commissioner May led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

2. Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

The Board was advised by DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office, that:

- A. The 5:31 p.m. First Budget Public Hearing for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 was advertised in the Board's Weekly Meeting Schedule in the *Pensacola News Journal* on September 4, 2021; and
- B. As required by Florida Statute 197.363, the 5:32 p.m. Public Hearing for consideration of adopting the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 First Year Assessment Rolls for street lighting, holding pond, sewage system improvement, Perdido Key beach mouse, and nuisance abatement Municipal Services Benefit Units (MSBUs) was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on August 13, 2021, and First Class Notices were mailed to all property owners in the affected MSBU Districts.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion: Move the agenda, as presented
Made by: Commissioner Underhill
Seconded by: Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried 4-0, with Commissioner Bergosh absent

4. Board Action Items

I. 5:31 p.m. - Public Hearing for Consideration of Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2021/2022

- A. Presentation of Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 - Interim County Administrator Wes Moreno

The Board was advised by Interim County Administrator Moreno that:

- (1) This is the first of two required Public Hearings for the Board to adopt the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget. The Board later in the meeting will set the second Public Hearing;
- (2) The Escambia County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the 2021/2022 tentative millage rates for TRIM notification purposes at the BCC meeting on July 22, 2021;

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AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

4. Continued...

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

- (3) The law requires that prior to consideration of the tentative budget, an explanation of the “Rolled Back Rate” be provided and entered into the records. The “Rolled Back Rate” is a computed millage rate that would generate the same amount of Ad Valorem tax dollars as the prior Fiscal Year, based on the proposed year’s tax roll, excluding new construction;
- (4) The millage rates tentatively approved by the Board for TRIM notification are 6.6165 for the County-wide millage rate, .359 for the Library Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) and .685 for the Sheriff’s Law Enforcement Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU). The aggregate of these millage rates proposed for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 is 3.24% above the “Rolled Back Rate” of 7.2252, certified by the Property Appraiser. This represents the percentage increase in property taxes tentatively adopted by the Board; and
- (5) For information and to avoid any misunderstanding concerning the process of this meeting, this Public Hearing is convened tonight to discuss the County’s Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget. Because of time constraints, we will need to confine our discussion to this subject. Increases in property assessments, remarks or questions concerning individual property appraisals should be addressed to the County Property Appraiser at his office during normal business hours.

B. Questions/Discussion from the Board

The Board briefly discussed the increasing demand and cost of governmental services, the impact of the \$15 minimum wage, and clarified the “rolled back rate.”

II. Community Partners Discussion

The Board:

- A. Discussed Community Partners and requested that the Administrator and staff bring back an updated presentation to discuss at the Tuesday Committee of the Whole with a funding amount of approximately \$1.2 million;
- B. Clarified that staff should start with amounts funded from the previous fiscal year and that the Board will make adjustments from there;

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AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

4. Continued...

II. Continued...

C. Agreed that there was no need to further address State-mandated agencies or the unified budget for Visit Pensacola as the Board has already acted on those requests/mandates; and

D. Was advised by Commissioner May that he wants to see a proposal for the budget that provides livable wages for County employees and was advised by Commissioner Underhill that he will only be able to vote on legally required services.

5. Public Forum

There were no speakers for Public Forum.

6. Board Action Items Continued

I. Board Adoption of the Tentative Millage Resolution for Fiscal Year 2021/2022

Chairman Bender advised that the Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the Tentative Millage Resolution [R2021-166], as presented in the Agenda backup, of 6.6165 mills for the County-wide millage rate, .359 for the Library MSTU and .685 mills for the Sheriff's Law Enforcement MSTU for Fiscal Year 2021/2022.

Motion: So moved
Made by: Commissioner Underhill
Seconded by: Commissioner Barry
Disposition: Carried 4-0, with Commissioner Bergosh absent

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AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

6. Continued...

II. Adoption of the Tentative Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2021/2022

Chairman Bender advised that the Chair entertain a motion to adopt the Tentative Budget Resolution [R2021-167] of \$568,262,165 for Fiscal Year 2021/2022, as presented in the Agenda backup.

Motion: So moved
For Information: The Board clarified the tentative nature of this budget amount and advised that it could be changed, if necessary.
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner Underhill
Disposition: Carried 3-1, with Commissioner Underhill voting “no” and Commissioner Bergosh absent

III. Announcement of the Date and Time of the Second Public Hearing for the Adoption of the Final Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget

Chairman Bender announced that the second Public Hearing for adoption of the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget will be held September 21, 2021, at 5:31 p.m., in the Board Chambers on the First Floor of the Ernie Magaha Government Building located at 221 Palafox Place.

Motion: So moved
Made by: Commissioner Underhill
Seconded by: Commissioner Barry
Disposition: Carried 4-0, with Commissioner Bergosh absent

FOR INFORMATION: The Board discussed the cost allocation plan and agreed to ask Administrator Moreno to walk the plan back for this budget year to allow further discussion and time for the partners to prepare for the changes to be implemented next budget year. Commissioner May requested that staff provide an analysis regarding the amount that could have been recovered by grants if the cost allocation plan were in place.

IV. 5:32 p.m. - Public Hearing for Consideration of Adopting the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

A. Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

Interim County Administrator Moreno advised that a list of all non-ad valorem rates is provided in the agenda backup.

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AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

6. Continued...

IV. Continued...

B. Public Forum

There were no speakers for Public Forum.

C. Board Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

Chairman Bender advised that the Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll, as presented in the Agenda backup.

Motion: Move the item, excluding the reference to Mr. Granger's property [8 E. Ensley Street]
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For Information: The Board discussed whether the lien would still exist on the property and holding the assessment to allow for additional research. Mr. Granger offered payment of \$300 for the abatement if the assessment is unable to be eliminated.
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Made by: Commissioner Barry

Seconded by: Commissioner May

Disposition: Carried 4-0, with Commissioner Bergosh absent

Speaker(s): Todd Granger

Motion: Move the FY 2021/2022 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll, as presented
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Made by: Commissioner Underhill
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Seconded by: Commissioner Barry
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Disposition: Carried 4-0, with Commissioner Bergosh absent

SUPPLEMENTAL COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

1. Recommendation: That the Board discuss the following:
 - A. Determine which insurance plan structure/premiums we want to offer County employees for the 2022 benefit plan year;
 - B. Determine whether to change the payment method for HSA employer contributions;
 - C. Determine whether to consolidate dependent life insurance plans;
 - D. Determine whether to continue offering Retiree Life Insurance; and
 - E. Inform the Board of a premium increase for the Firefighter Cancer Policy.

For Information: The Board:

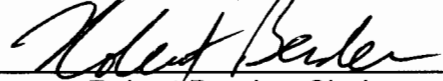
- A. Agreed to offer Plan Proposal A to employees for the 2022 benefit year and supplement the additional cost between options A and B with American Rescue Plan Act funds; further discussed potential options to bring savings and benefit the health of employees, such as requiring spouses to complete health assessments;
- B. Agreed to fund the HSA employer contributions biannually;
- C. Expressed no concerns with consolidating dependent life insurance plans;
- D. Discussed Retiree Life Insurance and agreed to continue offering the plan, but have retirees pay the cost of \$15 per month to maintain coverage; County Attorney Rogers advised that the same coverage must be offered, but not necessarily at the same rate and she will do additional research on the subject;
- E. Was advised of the increase in premiums for the Firefighter Cancer Policy; and
- F. Discussed requiring retirees to enroll in Medicare and having staff review the penalties for late enrollment for County payment; was advised by Crystal Dadura, Interim HR Director, that the County can require retirees to go on Medicare Part A and also transition them to the Medicare Advantage Plan, which is beneficial for the County and the retirees.

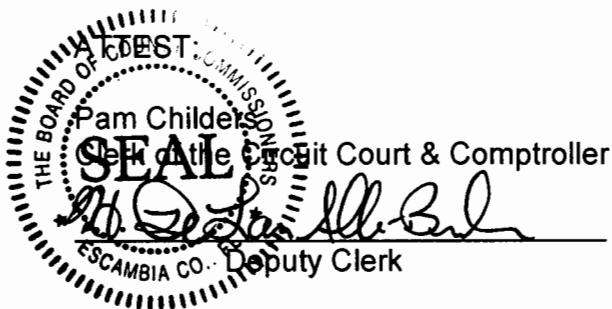
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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Bender declared the First Budget Public Hearing regarding the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 County-wide Budget of the Board of County Commissioners adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Robert Bender, Chairman



Approved: October 14, 2021