MINUTES OF THE SECOND PUBLIC HEARING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGARDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026 COUNTY-WIDE BUDGET

SEPTEMBER 23, 2025

Present: Commissioner Michael S. Kohler, Chair, District 2
Commissioner Ashlee M. Hofberger, Vice Chair, District 4
Commissioner Steven L. Barry, District 5
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3
Commissioner Steven R. Stroberger, District 1
Codey Leigh, General Counsel, Clerk and Comptroller’s Office
Wesley J. Moreno, County Administrator
Alison Rogers, County Attorney
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Operations Supervisor, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Jose Gochez, Operations Manager, County Administrator’s Office

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

Minutes prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

AGENDA ITEM

1. Call to Order

   Commissioner Kohler, Chair, called the Second Budget Public Hearing to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

   Commissioner Stroberger led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and the Board observed a moment of silence.

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

3. Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

   The Board was advised by DeLana Allen-Busbee, Operations Supervisor, Clerk and Comptroller's Office, that the Second Public Hearing for Consideration of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on September 18, 2025, in the Board's Weekly Meeting Schedule; the *Notice of Proposed Tax Increase* and the *Budget Summary, County of Escambia – Fiscal Year 2025/2026*, were advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on September 19, 2025; and the 5:02 and 5:03 p.m. Public Hearings were advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on September 10, 2025.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion: So moved
Made by: Commissioner May **Seconded by:** Commissioner Hofberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously

5. Board Action Items

   I. 5:01 p.m. - Public Hearing for Consideration of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025/2026

      A. Presentation of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 - County Administrator Wes Moreno

         The Board was advised by County Administrator Moreno that:

         (1) This is the second of two required Public Hearings for the Board to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget;

(Continued on Page 3)

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

5. Continued…

   I. Continued…

      A. Continued…

         (2) At its first Public Hearing held September 9, 2025, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) adopted the Tentative Millage Rates and Budget for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. The law requires that prior to consideration of the Final 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;

         (3) The millage rates tentatively approved by the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners on September 9, 2025, are 6.6165 for the County-wide millage rate, .3590 for the Library Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) and .6850 for the Sheriff's Law Enforcement Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU). The aggregate of these millage rates proposed for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 is 4.83% above the "Rolled Back Rate" of 7.1312 certified by the Property Appraiser. This represents the percentage increase in property taxes tentatively adopted by the Board;

         (4) Staff has recommended one Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Tentative Budget. This Amendment for an increase of $44,041,563, is for recommended adjustments to the Tentative Budget; and

         (5) The revised budget will result in a balanced unified budget of $868,481,713, which is 8.7% more than the adopted Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget of $798,672,479.

Speaker(s): Mary Konopka

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

5. Continued…

II. Community Partners Discussion

Stephan Hall, Finance Director, advised that staff is looking for direction on Community Partners. The Board discussed the Return on Investment for various events and future reviews of Community Partners including the possibility and potential benefit of having them go through the procurement process.

Motion: Move that we fund him [Cadillac Banks/Jazz Fest] at $200,000
Made by: Commissioner May **Seconded by:** Commissioner Stroberger and Commissioner Barry
Disposition: Carried 4-1, with Commissioner Hofberger voting “no”
Speaker(s): Pastor Joseph L. Marshall, Andrew Wraalstad, Tomeko Harper, William “Cadillac” Banks, Andrew Roberts, Jerry McIntosh, Brian Wyer, and Charles Bare

Motion: Move the slate of Community Partners **For Information:** Commissioner Barry clarified that his motion included the change in providing funding to Jazz Fest in the amount of $200,000.
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

6. Public Forum

   The Board heard comments from Martha Bunting, Tim Myers, Jacob Rockwell, Diane Ressler, Mark Hill, Mike Steeger, and Arnetha Welcome.

7. Board Action Items Continued

   I. Board Adoption of the Final Millage Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025/2026

   Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Final Millage Resolution [R2025-101] presented in the agenda backup. Millage rates presented are:

   County-wide millage rate - 6.6165 mills
   Library MSTU - .3590 mills
   Sheriff's Law Enforcement MSTU - .6850 mills

Motion: Move to adopt the Final Millage Resolution with a County-wide millage rate of 6.60 mills, Library MSTU of .359 mills, Sheriff's Law Enforcement MSTU of .685 mills with direction to staff that the reduction of revenue be a reduction in the allocated reserves for the year **For Information:** The Board held a lengthy discussion regarding ways to reduce the budget as well as upcoming changes at the State level that will likely impact local municipalities. The Board agreed to hold further discussion regarding reducing the next Fiscal Year Budget.
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously
Speaker(s): Lisa Rogers, Mary Konopka, and Joshua Roberson

7. Continued…

II. Board Adoption of a Supplemental Budget Amendment Resolution amending the Tentative Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Resolution [R2025-102] approving the Supplemental Budget Amendment amending the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Tentative Budget, in the increased amount of $44,041,563 for the following funds:

- General Fund - ($8,809,683)
- M&A State State 1 Funds - $13,254
- Local Provider Participant Fund - $47,027,311
- Tourist Promotion Fund - $3,040,921
- Library Fund - $97,164
- Misdemeanor Probation Fund - $25,948
- Opioid Abatement Fund - $22,335
- Fire Protection Fund - $2,032,532
- Community Redevelopment Fund - $116,511
- Building Inspections Fund - $39,873
- Internal Service Fund - $435,397

Motion: Make that motion **For Information:** Commissioner Kohler clarified that amounts may change based on the previous item's motion.
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

III. Board Adoption of the Final Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Final Budget Resolution [R2025-103] of $868,481,713 for Fiscal Year 2025/2026.

Motion: So moved **For Information:** County Attorney Rogers advised that the number in the Resolution would be adjusted to align with the Board's motion/direction regarding the change in millage.
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

7. Continued…

IV. 5:02 p.m. Public Hearing to Consider the Adoption of the Myrtle Grove Redevelopment Plan

Recommendation: That the Board adopt the Myrtle Grove Redevelopment Plan in accordance with Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (the Community Redevelopment Act).

Motion: So moved
Made by: Commissioner May **Seconded by:** Commissioner Barry
Disposition: Carried unanimously
Speaker(s): Mary Konopka

V. 5:03 p.m. Public Hearing to Consider the Adoption of an Ordinance to Establish the Myrtle Grove Redevelopment Trust Fund

Recommendation: That the Board adopt an Ordinance [Number 2025-40] creating Volume 1, Chapter 46, Article VI, Section 46-294 of the Escambia County Code of Ordinances relating to the establishment and funding for a Redevelopment Trust Fund for Myrtle Grove Redevelopment District projects; providing for short title; providing for legislative findings; providing for definitions; providing for establishment of redevelopment trust fund; providing for funding of redevelopment trust fund; providing for disposition of monies upon expiration of the fiscal year; providing for independent audit; providing for severability; providing for inclusion in the code; providing for an effective date.

Motion: Move the 5:03
Made by: Commissioner May **Seconded by:** Commissioner Barry
Disposition: Carried unanimously

VI. Resolution to Establish the Tax Increment for Funding the Myrtle Grove Redevelopment Trust Fund

Recommendation: That the Board adopt and authorize the Chair to sign a Resolution [R2025-104] of the Board of County Commissioners of Escambia County, Florida establishing the tax increment for funding the Myrtle Grove Redevelopment Trust Fund; providing for an effective date.

Motion: Move item VI
Made by: Commissioner May **Seconded by:** Commissioner Barry
Disposition: Carried unanimously

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

7. Continued…

VII. Interlocal Agreement Between Escambia County, Santa Rosa County, Okaloosa County, and Walton County for the Design and Construction of a Regional Medical Examiner Facility

Recommendation: That the Board take the following action concerning the Interlocal Agreement and Second Amendment to the Interlocal Agreement between Escambia County, Santa Rosa County, Okaloosa County, and Walton County for the design and construction of a Regional Medical Examiner Facility which will be located in Santa Rosa County, Florida:

A. Approve and authorize the County Administrator to issue and sign a Purchase Order in the amount of $1,402,500, to District 1 Medical Examiner Inc. for the second, third, and fourth county capital contribution, ($467,500 each) per Section 3(a) of the Interlocal Agreement.

District One Medical Examiner, Inc.	
Fund	001
Cost Center	110190
Account	58201
Amount	$1,402,500.

Motion: Move the balance [items VII through XI]
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

VIII. Interlocal Agreement between Escambia County and Okaloosa County Boards of County Commissioners and the Office of the First Judicial Circuit Trial Court Administrator Relating to the Consolidation of Court Technology Personnel Services Under One County Fiscal Agent

Recommendation: That the Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign the Interlocal Agreement with Okaloosa County and the Office of the First Judicial Circuit Trial Courts Administrator relating to the consolidation of court technology personnel services under one county fiscal agent, where Escambia County has agreed to be the fiscal agent.

Motion: Move the balance [items VII through XI]
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

7. Continued…

IX. Board Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Annual Budget for the Santa Rosa Island Authority

Recommendation: That the Board adopt the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Annual Budget for the Santa Rosa Island Authority.

Motion: Move the balance [items VII through XI]
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

X. Approval of a 3% Employee Pay Increase for FY 2025/2026

Recommendation: That the Board approve a 3% Employee Pay Increase that is budgeted for and included in the FY 2025/2026 Budget. This increase will be effective with the pay period beginning on September 27, 2025.

Motion: Move the balance [items VII through XI]
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

XI. Contribution Rates for Mission Square 401A SMSC Participants

Recommendation: That the Board adopt the employer contribution rates as proposed through the annual County's budget process. The proposed rate for 401A Restatement Government Money Purchase Plan will be 16%. This rate will be effective for Fiscal Year 2025/26.

Motion: Move the balance [items VII through XI]
Made by: Commissioner Barry **Seconded by:** Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Kohler, Chair, declared the Second Budget Public Hearing regarding the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 County-Wide Budget of the Board of County Commissioners adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: ______________________
Michael S. Kohler, Chair

ATTEST:
Pam Childers
Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller

SEAL THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ESCAMBIA CO. FL

____
Deputy Clerk

Approved: October 16, 2025