

**AT A BUDGET HEARING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2018 AT 6:00
P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HELD, VIZ:**

Present: Brenda Holt, Chair, District 4
Dr. Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie, Vice Chair, District 2
Eric Hinson, District 2
Gene Morgan, District 3
Sherrie Taylor, District 5
Dee Jackson, Interim County Administrator
David Weiss, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

Chair Holt called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., asked phones be placed on silence; welcomed everyone, then asked for a moment of silence and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

Chair Holt asked for a roll call:

Chair Holt - Present
Commissioner Viegbesie - Present
Commissioner Hinson - Present
Commissioner Morgan - Present
Commissioner Taylor - Present

AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no amendments of the Agenda.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Final Budget Public Hearing for Adoption of the Final Millage Rate

Ms. Jackson said on September 6, 2018, the Board approved its tentative millage rate prior to adopting its tentative budget. She said the meeting was advertised on Thursday, September 13, 2018 in the three local papers and the Board adopted the final Millage. She said for fiscal year 2018-19, the final Gadsden County, FL operating Millage Rate is 8.9064 Mills, calculated rolled-back Millage rate (property tax that generates same amount of property tax revenue as last year) is 8.7009 mills which is 0.2055 mills less than the current rate of 8.9064 mills. She said the current year rate of 8.9064 mills has the percent change of the roll back rate is 2.36% more. For the fiscal year 2018/2019, the Final Gadsden County budget is \$47,951,195. Staff has recommended approval of the Resolution 2018-011 that adopts the millage rate and Resolution 2018-012 that adopts the final budget.

Chair Holt announced it was a public hearing if anyone would like to address the millage rate and

there was no-one.

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN TO ADOPT OPTION 1 AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE, THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THIS ITEM.

the Final Budget Public Hearing for Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Final Budget

Chair Holt said next on the agenda was the final budget.

Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve option 1 and Chair said she had to ask if there were any comments from the public first.

Chair Holt then announced it was a public hearing.

Pam Irwin, 8530 Charrington Forest Blvd., Tallahassee, FL – Executive Director of Capital Medical Society Foundation/We Care Network-appeared before the Board. She said they were before the Board to request funding for their organization; they were the only program of this kind serving Gadsden County adult patients. She said the BOCC has provided funding for this program through its non-profit grant for the last two years and grants have totaled \$5,000 in 2016 and \$4500 in 2017. They applied for funding to be included in the pending budget and were advised that their program was removed from the budget during the last meeting. They requested the Commissioners prioritize healthcare for their adult residents, they had no other resources than the We Care Network to receive needed specialty medical and specialty dental care. She said last year they coordinated over \$1.4 Million in specialty medical and dental care for Gadsden County. From a separate fund, the Indigent Fund, she determined by reviewing the budget for 2017/18 and its Expenditure Budget Report for years 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 that although the BOCC allotted in its budget to Gadsden Community Health Council from that fund, significant funding for We care Network, they were not awarded the entire amount. She said they received \$27,000 each year, the amount budgeted was \$218,520, the amount received was \$81,000. She said during their first meeting with the Commission, they were advised that one of the reasons they were not receiving more funding through the non-profit program was they were funding them through that and they were looking at the same report she did and would have assumed they were receiving funding that they set aside for them. She requested that the \$5,000 be placed back into the budget and asked that the County Administrator investigate the expense discrepancy to determine if there was a reason why they were not awarded the total allotment and if they were still supposed to be in the budget under that category.

Abby Edwards, 1204 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, FL - Capital Medical Society Foundation/We Care Network appeared before the Board to speak on behalf of their organization. She requested funding be placed back into the budget.

Diana Bixler, 1204 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, FL 32305-Capital Medical Society Foundation/We Care Network appeared before the Board. She requested funding be placed back into their budget. She said next to Leon County, Gadsden was the next largest county. She said they budgeted for \$27,000 from the Gadsden County Health Department and it was received in July; they received total \$36,000 and did not fully cover their operating expenses.

Chair Holt said she spoke with the ladies earlier and told them this was the Final Budget Hearing and they could not adjust the amount of budget but could work within the budget.

Commissioner Taylor said she was in favor of putting \$5,000 back in the budget; this has not gone to the State yet and they still had time to amend it.

Commissioner Hinson said he personally felt they should look at that and entertain what Commissioner Taylor said.

Chair Holt asked if there were any questions or comments.

Commissioner Viegbesie said that We Care provided vital services and there was not one single one that was not important. He added they were facing having to reduce the budget and have a \$2.4 Million shortfall because of the funded mandates that have come from the State and National level that was now affecting local government. He said over the years they have dipped into the Reserves and at this time, they did not have money in the Reserves and that would sustain the County for approximately three months and was what was required of the County by the State. He said sometimes they have to make some very hard and heartburning decisions and as much as he would like to give to everyone that asked for money, this was not the time that they would be able to do that. He said his position was a tough decision but think they have been able to manipulate numbers to have a balanced budget. He added they need to work with what they have.

Chair Holt said as she said earlier, they could work within the budget; they could get with the Manager at a later date.

Commissioner Taylor said with regard to Commissioner Viegbesie, he's right, there are areas of deficit and they have to look at this fiscal year and be more responsible with this year's budget, once this is approved, the budget becomes public record and they can look at the Budget and review it, it will be seen that a lot of departments received an increase. She said when there is an increase in the departments are seen and a decrease in other areas, it did not give a true picture. She said it shows where they are taking care of some areas and not others. She asked about the increase of \$87,000 to Office of Management and Budget. Mrs. Jackson said Commissioner Hinson asked about that; she thought there were some positions better in other departments; the Grant Writer position was moved to that Department. Commissioner Taylor mentioned different departments that received increases and said there was not a complete trail of where they moved money around and there should be a straight budget showing cuts and increases. She asked about the Indigent Ordinance Surtax, why was it under Expenditures and not Revenue and it contradicts where she is showing it placed.

Mrs. Jackson said they had an Indigent Tax and there were certain ways that it could be spent.

Commissioner Taylor said the Endowment and Surtax was listed as Expenditures and should be listed as Revenue. She said with regard to the Summer Youth Program, either support the children now or support them when they are in jail and would cost \$30,000 per child. This County has already been identified as one of the lowest counties in health care. She said they were not in a destitute situation and if they approve a budget like is, she was ashamed; people that vote put them there.

Mrs. Jackson asked Mr. Price to respond.

Mr. Price said the Indigent Care ordinance received \$1.6 Million in Revenue, they have to pay debt service out of that, which is \$600,000, the remaining amount was broken out by the Board and that is what is paid out. The Revenue comes in and it goes back out; there are no double deductions. Chair Holt asked about the surtax. Mr. Price said they could not do much with the Endowment; the Foundation was in charge of that.

Mrs. Jackson said in the earlier meeting they provided a document that showed everything and they will put that out for the public to see; she said she felt transparency was important. She also said since they voted to eliminate emergency housing, they found that emergency housing could also be done from the current dollars they had in Housing so revisions would be coming before the Board.

Commissioner Taylor said the \$1.6 Million for Indigent Ordinance Surtax and the \$100,000 that was brought up; at the end of this Expenditure there was \$47.9 Million, was the Indigent Care Surplus and the \$100,000 added into the \$47 Million and Mrs. Jackson said yes. Commissioner Taylor said they had that as an Expenditure and that was incorrect,

Mrs. Jackson said it was only expenditure because it was all spent out; there were no dollars that were not expended out.

Commissioner Hinson thanked Commissioner Taylor for bringing this up, thought he was out there by himself. He said he asked this question about four months ago; he said he sits on the Board of Directors for Florida Association of Counties and gets information all the time. He asked about the Medicaid increase. Mrs. Jackson said it went up \$900,000 and was a gradual increase. Commissioner Hinson said it was told to the people they had to cut because of Medicaid and asked what went up to. Mrs. Jackson said it went up to over \$900,000. Commissioner Hinson asked how much the increase was. Mrs. Jackson said there was a combination of things that made the budget what it was this year; the major one was the communication system. Commissioner Hinson asked about Medicaid and said the answer was it went up \$50,000, he said he was told there were major budgets cut because of the Medicaid increase; then they have "this frivolous math as seen here that no-one understands", but they have increases Inspection \$92,000 increase, they get rid of services-cut Havana library by \$33,000, cut Quincy by \$66,000, cut Chattahoochee \$2,000 but they increased Management Services by \$60,000. He said they cut services without any explanation. He asked if anyone was given a raise and Mrs. Jackson said no He said he was a supporter of the Gadsden County Democratic Party and they were given some money and now they want to cut from kids and health services. He said County money should not be given to a Democratic Party. He asked how they could live with themselves. He said he would guarantee every church and every community, everybody they know, will have a big list of how they cut jobs; cut Veterans Services by \$50,000; cut Emergency Housing by \$100,000. He said the Clerk of Court brought this to their attention.

Regina Davis, Quincy CRA appeared before the board and she said had not been advised they had been deleted from their budget. She said there were several things they had done the past fiscal year where they spent over \$715,000 for low income areas in the CRA district. The amount being taken away is \$284,900 and was being taken away from people that need it the most. She asked they place the money back in the budget.

Mrs. Jackson said she was not sure where she got her information, the Board had not voted to pull that money. Mr. Price said the total Ad Valorem tax included the CRA money and had to show it coming out because it went to them; they were not cut.

Chair Holt said the budget process started back in June and everyone was allowed to appear and make a statement since then. She said they had three different meetings for Board members to meet with the Manager to discuss the budget and there was nothing new. She said some Commissioners did not come to the workshops. She said she checked with Ethics and they were not supposed to put another job over this; they signed a contract with Motorola for the Communications contract and have to make arrangements for it and it was a \$500,000 payment per year they had to make; whether there was an increase or not in Medicaid, they had to budget for an increase; and EMS was down \$500,000 that has to be covered; and they have to put a new tower up for the Communications equipment and will be \$400,000. She said if anyone was confused on this Board, they had the opportunity to discuss it with the Manager.

Commissioner Viegbesie commented he was a Professor of Budgeting at FAMU for many years and he understood budgets; they should know the primary source of revenue from any government; the money did not come from the elected officials pocket and if an elected official has the money in their pocket to cover (inaudible), cough it up and everything would be covered and the budget would look like they wanted it to look. He said he was the only one up for re-election on November 6th and he was going to vote his conviction and his conviction was he made a motion to approve the budget.

COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET. COMMISSIONER MORGAN HAD A COMMENT.

Commissioner Morgan asked that the option be read.

COMMISSIONER VIEGBESIE MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT OPTION 2, VIA RESOLUTION, THE FINAL FY 2018/2019 COUNTYWIDE BUDGET, RESOLUTION NO. 2018-012 AND COMMISSIONER MORGAN MADE THE SECOND WITH A QUESTION.

Commissioner Hinson said they needed to be accurate when they give information; they budgeted for \$300,000 a year for Motorola for that; for Medicaid \$50,000 for next year and that was it, everything would be squashed from that point and they still have not had the "why" yet. He said they want to fire 82 kids and want to approve the Democratic Party. Chair Holt asked where that came from. Mrs. Jackson said the Democratic Party went before the Tourist Development Board and was funded from there for an ad that was bought. Commissioner Hinson said it was approved in the budget. Chair Holt said when they had the previous meeting, Commissioner Taylor was not there and he left and did not come back. He said he was there. She said no, (the vote) was 3-0. He said it was 2-1. Chair Holt said he was not there and should have been there. Commissioner Hinson said they went to the restroom. Chair Holt explained they took a break and he did not return.

CHAIR HOLT CALLED FOR THE VOTE. COMMISSIONER MORGAN HAD A QUESTION.

Commissioner Morgan wanted to confirm they were not moving any funds from the unrestricted Fund Balance to balance this budget and she said that was correct.

THE BOARD VOTED 3-2 TO APPROVE THIS BUDGET. COMMISSIONER HINSON AND COMMISSIONER TAYLOR OPPOSED. MOTION PASSED.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD

Abby Edwards, 1204 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, FL - Capital Medical Society Foundation/We Care Network

Diana Bixler, 1204 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, FL 32305-Capital Medical Society Foundation/We Care Network

Pam Irwin, 8530 Charrington Forest Blvd., Tallahassee, FL – Capital Medical Society Foundation/We Care Network

Regina Davis, Quincy CRA

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HOLT DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:55 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**BRENDA HOLT, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk