

PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA

JANUARY 28, 2008

SPECIAL MEETING

The Gulf County Board of County Commissioners met this date in special session with the following members present: Chairman Billy E. Traylor, Vice Chairman Nathan Peters, Jr. and Commissioners Carmen L. McLemore, Bill Williams, and Jerry W. Barnes.

Others present were: County Attorney Timothy McFarland, Clerk Becky Norris, Clerk Executive Administrator Towan Kopinsky, Clerk Finance Officer Carla Hand, Chief Administrator Don Butler, Deputy Administrator Lynn Lanier, Building Inspector George Knight, Emergency Management/911 Coordinator Ben Guthrie, G.I.S. Director Scott Warner, Grant Writer Loretta Costin, Gulf County E.M.S. Director Shane McGuffin, Human Resources Director Denise Manuel, Planner David Richardson, Road Department Superintendent Bobby Knee and T.D.C. Director Paula Pickett.

Chairman Traylor called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., E.T.

BUDGET

Upon request by Chairman Traylor, the following reports were made regarding budget assignments given to each Commissioner.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

Chief Administrator Butler reported that the Property Appraiser's Office has corrected between 160-200 of the errors found regarding the tax roll, and they will be submitting the list to the Board. Chairman Traylor thanked Commissioner McLemore and the Property Appraiser for their work on this issue.

PARKS & RECREATION

Commissioner Williams discussed the possibility of working out something with the City of Port St. Joe regarding the \$600,000.00 commitment for Parks (in the interlocal agreement) due to the severe budget constraints. After discussion by Commissioner Williams regarding future F.R.D.A.P. grants, he discussed looking for grants that can be used for maintenance of the current parks. He stated that the Board may have to consider closure of some of the parks. Chairman Traylor discussed that the impact fees collected through the Building Department cannot be used for ongoing repair and maintenance of these facilities. After further discussion regarding utilities and timers on the lights, Commissioner Williams stated that timers can be installed as new facilities are constructed, but the old parks must be turned off manually.

MOSQUITO CONTROL

Commissioner Barnes discussed that the major increase in the Mosquito Control Department has been for salaries and benefits (a portion of Joe Danford's salary is charged to this department, and there was the shift of benefits to individual departments last year). He stated that, for public safety reasons, this should be one of the Board's top priority budgets that should not be cut. Upon inquiry about what the employees do during the winter months, Commissioner Williams stated that they do work in the landfill some, and Commissioner Barnes stated that he will check into this matter.

ROAD DEPARTMENT / COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Commissioner Traylor discussed an editorial he read in *The Star* regarding there being 30 employees at the Road Department, and there are only 18 employees. He stated that he knows personally that only 9 people went into the field this morning. He stated that he wishes only facts would be printed in the newspaper. Road Department Superintendent Knee stated that his department actually lost 3 positions during the lay-off instead of 2.

STATE MANDATES

Commissioner Barnes discussed the mandates that are passed down from the State (close to \$9 million). Chief Administrator Butler discussed that there are requirements and there are mandates, and these added together total between \$5.5-\$9 million. He stated that he and Grant Writer Costin are still working on finalizing the list to present to the Board.

'93FISCALLY-CONSTRAINED" COUNTIES

Chief Administrator Butler discussed the need to submit a letter to the Governor's Office regarding the reimbursement to be made to "fiscally-constrained" counties if the Property Tax Amendment passes. Upon motion by Commissioner Barnes, second by Commissioner Peters, and unanimous vote, the Board agreed to submit this letter. After further discussion by members of the Board regarding the State's budget, Chairman Traylor stated that he and Chief Administrator Butler will be meeting with Allan Bense (Chairman of the Budget Reform Commission) tomorrow to discuss what the "Budget Reform" is doing to Gulf County.

SOLID WASTE

Commissioner Peters stated that he and Solid Waste Director Danford will present a list of items for the Board to take action on at the next meeting regarding Solid Waste. He discussed that it includes mandatory garbage collection, discontinuing pickup of trash on County right-of-ways, charge tipping fees to everyone, etc. Upon his inquiry, Chief Administrator Butler stated that the mandatory garbage collection can be handled through the ordinance process. County Attorney McFarland stated that the County has

an ordinance regarding litter on the right-of-ways (would need to be enforced), and he discussed the M.S.B.U. ordinance process. Upon inquiry by Commissioner McLemore about the possibility of opening the Transfer Station in Wewahitchka at least 1 day per week, Commissioner Peters stated that he will get with Solid Waste Director Danford to

discuss the costs involved, etc.

OVERSTREET WATER SYSTEM C.D.B.G.

Chairman Traylor reported on the status of the Overstreet Water System C.D.B.G., stating that City of Port St. Joe Mayor Magidson is in Tallahassee today. Chairman Traylor stated that the Mayor came in on this issue (not something that he created). Chief Administrator Butler stated that he called Grant Administrator Fred Fox and D.C.A. Representative Debbie Boyett the day after the County received the letter regarding loss of the grant funds. He stated that he is trying to schedule a meeting with D.C.A. and all parties concerned (County, City of Port St. Joe, Bailey Bishop & Lane, Preble-Rish, and Fred Fox Enterprises) to see what can be done.

BUDGET

E.M.S.

Upon inquiry by Chairman Traylor regarding E.M.S. revenues, Gulf County E.M.S. Director McGuffin discussed that they currently collect about 57% of their billings. He also discussed that they are looking into establishing a "subscription" program that should significantly increase their revenue.

COUNTY VEHICLES

Chairman Traylor discussed that he has had discussions regarding allowing Gulf County E.M.S. Director McGuffin and Building Inspector Knight to drive their County vehicles home. Gulf County E.M.S. Director McGuffin stated that he is often on-call and will go directly to the scene from his home, from church, etc., and Chairman Traylor stated that Building Inspector Knight lives in the Wewahitchka area, and he handles inspections up there before he comes to Port St. Joe. After discussion by members of the Board, Commissioner McLemore motioned to allow Gulf County E.M.S. Director McGuffin to drive his County vehicle home (but not the Building Department). Commissioner Peters seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

E.M.S.

Gulf County E.M.S. Director McGuffin stated that he will continue to look for ways to increase the revenue for ambulance services. Upon inquiry by Commissioner Peters regarding completion of Sacred Heart Hospital, he stated that the fuel costs would definitely decrease, as well as wear-and-tear on the vehicles.

BUDGET LEGISLATION

Chief Administrator Butler reported that the rules regarding the 2008-09 budget process are different this year. He stated that (1) by majority vote of the Board, they can adopt the rolled-back rate plus growth and income, or (2) by super majority vote of the Board they can

adopt 110% of the rolled-back rate plus growth and income, or (3) by unanimous vote of the Board they can adopt a millage rate of up to 10. He stated that if the assessments reduce significantly, just going to the rolled-back rate could require a much higher millage rate.

M.S.B.U. PROCESS

County Attorney McFarland stated that the Budget/Alternative Revenue Committee needs direction from the Board on which items they want to include in the M.S.B.U. Chairman Traylor stated that they will let them know as soon as possible.

BUDGET MEETING

Chairman Traylor stated that the next budget meeting will be held on Monday, February 4, 2008 at 9:00 a.m., E.T.

BAY CARES INVOICE

Upon discussion, Commissioner Williams motioned that the Board allow him to work with Chief Administrator Butler to find \$1,411.00 in the budget and pay the Bay Cares Invoice balance. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT / WHITE CITY PARK

Bill Stitt discussed charging a fee for motor homes staying at the White City Park. Commissioner Williams discussed that overnight parking is not allowed at White City Park and he will look into this matter. Chairman Traylor discussed how important parks are to Gulf County. Mr. Stitt also discussed that there is a boat (for sale) that has been docked at the park for 6 weeks. Commissioner Williams stated that he will check on this as well.

There being no further business and upon motion by Commissioner Peters, the meeting did then adjourn at 9:43 a.m., E.T.

ATTEST:

**BILLY E. TRAYLOR
CHAIRMAN**

**REBECCA L. NORRIS
CLERK**