

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
APRIL 5, 2006 ~ 1:30 P.M.**

Proceedings of a special meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, held in the auditorium at the County Administration Building, 4020 Lewis Speedway (County Road 16-A) and US 1 North, St. Augustine, Florida.

Present were: James E. Bryant, District 5, Chairman
Cyndi Stevenson, District 1, Vice Chair
Karen R. Stern, District 2
Ben Rich, District 3
Bruce A. Maguire, District 4
Ben W. Adams, Jr., County Administrator
Isabelle Lopez, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Terry Bulla, Deputy Clerk

Proof of publication for a special meeting of the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners was received, having been published in *The St. Augustine Record* on March 16, 2006.

(04/05/06 - 1 - 1:38 p.m.)
Chairman Bryant called the meeting to order.

(04/05/06 - 1 - 1:38 p.m.)
ROLL CALL
All five commissioners were present.

(04/05/06 - 1 - 1:38 p.m.)
Rich gave the invocation; Maguire led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(04/05/06 - 1 - 1:39 p.m.)
ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Bryant asked to add as item A1 - Use of the auditorium by the League of Women Voters on April 30, 2006.

Adams asked to add an item by Frank McElroy, Fire Service, on controlled burning.

(04/05/06 - 1 - 1:40 p.m.)
APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Motion by Stern, seconded by Stevenson, carried 5/0, to approve the agenda as amended.

Motion by Bryant, seconded by Maguire, carried 5/0, to readdress the agenda.

Bryant stated he would like to add an item to add a special proclamation for the Gator Nation. **Motion by Stevenson, seconded by Rich, carried 5/0, to approve the agenda as amended.**

(1:41 p.m.) Frank McElroy, St. Johns County Fire Marshall, gave an update on the wildfire status, and particularly, as it related to controlled burns. He said the risks would be increasing in the near future and controlled burns would probably be limited

in the future weeks. He cited the various options for limiting burns in the state and local communities, and said they would be closely monitoring the situation. He emphasized that neither St. Johns County Fire and Rescue nor St. Johns County issued burn permits. He said the State Department of Agriculture, through their Division of Forestry, was responsible for issuing permits for this area for land clearing burning, pile burning, air curtain incinerator burning, etc., through their district office in Bunnell. He said homeowners burning leaves and brush did not require a permit from the County or State, but there were certain limitations and setbacks that homeowners had to meet, and currently there were no plans to change requirements for those types of burns. He said other restrictions could be undertaken by the County or State as necessary. Adams stated that the Board could take emergency action if it became necessary.

(04/05/06 - 2 - 1:50 p.m.)

A1. USE OF AUDITORIUM BY THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ON APRIL 30

Motion by Stern, seconded by Stevenson, carried 5/0, to allow the League of Women Voters to use the auditorium on the evening of April 30, 2006.

(04/05/06 - 2 - 1:50 p.m.)

1. WORKSHOP - FY 2007-2011 REQUESTED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (CIP) - COUNTY DEPARTMENTS, CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS AND OTHER AGENCIES SUBMIT THEIR REQUESTS FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (CIP) AS PART OF THE ANNUAL COUNTY BUDGET PROCESS. THE CIP IS A 5-YEAR PLAN IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL PROJECTS AND THE FINANCING NEEDS FOR THEIR COMPLETION, INCLUDING ANY EXPECTED FUNDING SHORTFALLS. ALTHOUGH A 5-YEAR PLAN, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BCC) ADOPTS ONLY THE FIRST YEAR OF THE CIP AS A PART OF THE ANNUAL COUNTY BUDGET IN SEPTEMBER. THE FY 2007-2011 CIP REQUESTS ARE BEING PRESENTED TO THE BCC FOR THEIR INITIAL REVIEW AND DIRECTION. REQUESTED PROJECTS NORMALLY HAVE GONE THROUGH AN INITIAL EVALUATION PROCESS INVOLVING A CROSS-SECTION OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES AS DESIGNATED BY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR. PROJECTS ARE EVALUATED ACCORDING TO ESTABLISHED RANKING CRITERIA ON A 100-POINT SCALE, UNLESS THE PROJECT HAS ALREADY BEEN APPROVED OR MANDATED BY THE BCC OR OTHER LEGAL AUTHORITY (PROJECTS DESIGNATED WITH A RANKING SCORE OF "M") OR THE PROJECT ALREADY HAS ITS OWN AVAILABLE DEDICATED FUNDING (DESIGNATED "F"). HOWEVER, A FEW PROJECTS MAY NOT HAVE BEEN RANKED FOR VARIOUS REASONS (DESIGNATED "NR"). IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT NOT ALL FY 2007 CIP REQUESTS, ALTHOUGH PRESENTED HERE, MAY NECESSARILY BE ABLE TO BE FUNDED IN THE FINAL ADOPTED FY 2007 COUNTY BUDGET IN SEPTEMBER

Doug Timms, Director of the Office of Management & Budget, gave the presentation on the requested Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), and explained that this was the start of the budget process and was informational only. He noted that revisions had been made to the original information provided. He said those projects included were for \$25,000 or more, for a one-year life, and this year was a high watermark for the County. He reviewed the CIP requests by fund, the carry-forward comparison, the General Fund requests for FY 2007, including mandated (or grant match projects) and all other requested projects.

He said there would be a general shortfall of \$43.7 million in general fund requests, and it could be addressed with debt project financing. He stated the County's financial advisor said they had approximately \$80 million in debt capacity, but the upper limit should be at \$60 million for any additional borrowing. He noted the list presented was proposed and was very fluid, and it would be up to the Board to make the final determination. He reviewed possible sources for debt repayment.

Timms stated other funding would be required for public safety projects, and noted options for funding and/or leasing of certain project requests. There was general discussion on the leasing option for a communications system. Future funding requests were also reviewed through FY 2011 with a total of \$694.3 million, including candidates for which funding was currently not secured. He reviewed future funding concerns and the project funding shortfalls, with \$181.6 million in the General Fund and Transportation Projects at \$172.5 million. He discussed the options for funding of the shortfalls.

Timms asked the Board for consensus for County staff to move forward and to take all necessary steps for additional debt financing.

(2:37 p.m.) Maguire questioned debt service payments and why they were considered CIP. Timms explained that they were ongoing obligations and were a part of the funding of the CIP. Maguire asked about Pier Structural Studies Vilano/Shands. Timms stated it was not a capital expense if it did not lead to anything further. Maguire asked about the Shore Drive Trail Design and why it was a Tourist Development Tax and why Summer Haven was included. Timms said Summer Haven was mandated and Shore Drive Trail could be reviewed. Maguire asked about Vilano properties under grants and other funded requests. He said it had not been brought before the Board, and he did not like the process or the price. Timms said it would be further evaluated by the Board.

(2:44 p.m.) Mary Ann Blount, Land Management Director, explained that it was a timing issue because of the timing of the workshop and the timing of the property owner approaching the County with the possibility just days ago. She said they planned to present the entire project to the Board on April 18. (2:47 p.m.) Adams said the property would be gone if they did not act on it. (2:47 p.m.) Stevenson commented that she thought it was presented to the LAMP Board and not from it. She said acquisition was a sensitive thing. Blount agreed and said there was not a quorum at the last LAMP Board meeting. Maguire maintained that it was inappropriate and this was the third time this had happened, with no input from the Board. He said the Board set priorities, not the staff, and not the committee. Maguire also protested the storm water utility fee. Bryant gave a history of the subject.

(2:54 p.m.) Stern raised questions about the need for all the new buildings and general discussion ensued as to why they were needed. Ray Ashton addressed the Sheriff's needs.

(2:59 p.m.) Stern asked about the Flagler Estates Park that kept being put off. There was general discussion on efforts currently being made in that regard and Dan Weimer, Recreation and Parks Director, gave specifics on future plans.

(3:03 p.m.) Rich asked about renovations to the EOC building and Mike Rubin, St. Johns County Construction Manager, said he had talked with Penny Halliburton, regarding renovations to the EOC building. He said during election time she needed a great deal more space and parking. He said it would be very difficult to convert the EOC space into the kind of facility that she would need.

(3:05 p.m.) Stevenson said there were numerous big-ticket items that came up from the constitutional officers. Rubin said the County was in a terrible crunch because of the tremendous growth of the County. She asked that they work on a method for the Board to see these things before they came before them. Rubin said he provided his best estimates on what they would cost and the Board would have to make the hard decisions.

(3:08 p.m.) Michael McQuiston, 216 Rivers Edge Road South, expressed concern about the large increase in the budget and asked the Board to consider the taxpayer in this process and to do their best not to exceed last year's budget for a particular taxing authority.

Bryant asked Timms to give budget figures on the ad valorem side, and how much it had grown. He said it was confusing to the public. There was general discussion regarding the increase in expenses. Adams explained that the chief judge had come forward and said they needed the current administrative building to expand court services, which generated a tremendous capital expense, and expansion started from that request. There was general discussion about the prison, detox center and farm requested.

(3:24 p.m.) There was a consensus of the Board for appropriate County staff to move forward with possible debt financing of certain requested Capital Improvement Projects that would be specifically identified by the BCC at a future date. Stephenson added that they would continue to prioritize the list of projects. Bryant said it was just for the preliminary work to put the paperwork in place, and then if they decided to move forward, they could, and if not, they could tear up the paperwork.

There was general discussion about the earliest possible date for a referendum. Timms said it could be January 1, 2007, but that it needed to be explored further, and the "drop-dead" date was the notification to DOR by October 1.

[\(04/05/06 - 4 - 3:26 p.m.\)](#)

2. OTHER BUSINESS

Adams said Bill Nelson's office had called and said they were pleased that the County had received the Weed and Seed Grant.

(3:27 p.m.) Maguire read a proclamation into the record regarding the University of Florida's National Championship.

(3:29 p.m.) Bryant moved, Stern seconded, carried 5/0 to approve the proclamation as amended.

(3:30 p.m.) Rich asked the Board if they would like him to secure evaluators for the technical portion of the application process for the county attorney position.

(3:32 p.m.) Bryant said he would not support that proposal. He said the Board could gather the resumes and review them. He said they should follow the normal advertising procedures statewide. Stern said she agreed.

(3:33 p.m.) Stevenson said she had questions on how to proceed. Bryant responded that was how the Board had proceeded in the past, by utilizing the Human Resources Department. Stevenson asked if they were working on revising their economic incentive package. Bryant said they should be looking at some sort of yearly cap. She

said the third thing was to agree to index the impact fees annually on October 1. She said there were concerns raised during the impact fee task force review. She also mentioned the *Times Union* report on the Clay County elected officials and said there were certain things they needed to look at. She suggested that to be above reproach, they should look at anonymous information systems for monitoring inappropriate actions that might occur within the county, a whistle blower type system.

(3:40 p.m.) Bryant said he had erred in allowing Rich to bring up the motion of revisiting the way the Board selected the county attorney, whether inside or outside the county. He said a vote had previously been taken as to whether the Board wanted to go inside or outside the county; it was decided to stay inside, and because of that, it was an erroneous motion.

(3:41 p.m.) Stern said she was going to Tallahassee the next day to meet with Representative Mike Davis, author of the chief affordable housing legislation. She hoped to be able to bring back a report on how the issues had moved through the legislative process.

(3:42 p.m.) Adams expressed appreciation to the Board for their input on the budget process.

(3:42 p.m.) Motion by Stevenson, seconded by Stern, carried 5/0, to adjourn the meeting.

With there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Approved _____ May 2 _____, 2006

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: James E. Bryant
James E. Bryant, Chairman

ATTEST: CHERYL STRICKLAND, CLERK

By: Uwanne King
Deputy Clerk

