

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
September 3, 2014
5:01 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, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida.

Proof of publication of the notice of special meeting on tentative millage rates and tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2015 was received, having been published in *The St. Augustine Record* on August 30, 2014.

Present: John H. Morris, District 4, Chair
 Rachael Bennett, District 5, Vice Chair
 Cyndi Stevenson, District 1
 Ron Sanchez, District 2
 William A. McClure, District 3
 Michael Wanchick, County Administrator
 Patrick McCormack, County Attorney
 Pam Halterman, Deputy Clerk

(09/03/14 - 1 - 5:02 p.m.)
CALL TO ORDER

Morris called the meeting to order.

(09/03/14 - 1 - 5:02 p.m.)
ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll. All board members were present.

(09/03/14 - 1 - 5:03 p.m.)
INVOCATION

Cameron gave the invocation.

(09/03/14 - 1 - 5:03 p.m.)
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Morris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(09/03/14 - 1 - 5:04 p.m.)
PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none.

(09/03/14 - 1 - 5:04 p.m.)
ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Wanchick asked to add an item to the end of the agenda concerning the purchase of the compressed natural gas vehicles. He noted that the deadline for purchase was prior to the next board meeting.

(09/03/14 - 2 - 5:05 p.m.)
APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Motion by Sanchez, seconded by Stevenson, carried 5/0, to amend the special meeting agenda to include the CNG item.

(09/03/14 - 2 - 5:05 p.m.)

1. **ADOPTION OF TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATES & BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015**

Doug Timms, Director of Management & Budget, gave a PowerPoint presentation. He advised that procedures were dictated by Florida Statutes. He noted that the first issue to be discussed involved the percentage increase, if any, and the millage rate over the rolled-back rate. He added that the rolled-back rate was defined as the aggregate millage rate that would generate the same level of prior year tax revenues less certain defined allowance, which were principally new construction. He stated that the roll-back rate did not account for inflation or the need for asset, maintenance, or replacement. He advised that the percentage increase from the rolled-back rate was 3.24% and specific purposes for the increase was to continue to address deferred maintenance at \$2.6 million in the FY2015 budget, as well as replacement of county vehicles at an approximate cost of \$2 million.

Bennett opened the hearing to public comment.

(5:07 p.m.) Denver Cook, 266 Topsail Drive, voiced that he was not satisfied with the tentative millage rates, because the rates did not address the shortages in the transportation or the fire funds.

(5:08 p.m.) Timms noted that the tentative millage rate needed to be adopted by the taxing authority being St. Johns County, the rolled-back rate at 7.0275 mills, percentage increase of property taxes from the rolled-back rate at 3.24%, and the tentative aggregate millage rate of 7.2552 mills.

(5:09 p.m.) **Motion by Sanchez, seconded by Morris, carried 5/0, to adopt Resolution 2014-242, approving the tentative FY2015 millage rates of the Board of County Commissioners.**

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-242

RESOLVED, that the following **TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE** is hereby set by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, for all property in St. Johns County, as of January 1, 2014.

General Fund	5.3900
County Transportation Trust Fund	.5300
County Health Unit Trust Fund	.0171
Fire District, Countywide	
Except City of St. Augustine	1.4000
Vilano Street Lighting District	.0500
St. Augustine South Street Lighting District	.2100
Summerhaven M.S.T.U.	8.5000
AGGREGATE MILLAGE RATE	7.2552
Rolled-back Rate	7.0275
Percentage increase in Property Taxes from rolled-back rate	3.24%

(5:10 p.m.) Timms provided the tentative budget resolution to the board. He noted that Florida Statute required the Board to open the hearing to public comments. He directed attention to page 8 of the budget book, which involved changes to the recommended budget, and specified that the change was attributable to project carry-overs involving capital projects budgeted in FY2014, but needed to be carried over into the FY2015 budget for completion. He noted that the carry-overs totaled approximately \$73.4 million, and included North Florida TPO grant for CNG vehicle conversions at \$732,462, additional healthcare expense savings of \$430,150, additional general fund of \$294,918, and a decrease in utility services primarily in unit connection fees for a change to the tentative budget at \$619,288,674.

(5:13 p.m.) Bennett opened the hearing to public comment

The following residents spoke in favor of additional library funding:

- Marcy Carreras, 805 Mariam Elias Way
- Bill Napper, 4936 Los Altos Carde, Elkton
- Ted Voorhees, 115 Washington Street
- Diane Kaminski, 715 Remington Forest Drive, St. Johns

Those citizens offered the following reasons to support and to increase the library budget:

- Library usage increased 7%
- Programs increased 55%
- Retain or increase hours at libraries
- State aid for libraries decreased 82%
- 1.1 million people visited the county libraries
- Security issues
- Retain the bookmobiles and numerous public programs
- Need for additional staffing
- Free AARP taxpayers assistance program
- Story-time and baby-time programs
- ASL elementary age program
- Arts program
- Over 50% of county residents possess a library card

In response to an inquiry from Bennett, Jesse Dunn, Assistant Director, Office of Management and Budget, noted that he had reviewed the library budget, and it would not decrease in FY2014-2015. He explained that requested budget items of security contractual services and reinstatement of Sunday hours at the libraries were both deferred. He reiterated that library hours would not be cut, but will remain in place.

(5:24 p.m.) Debra Rhodes Gibson, Director of Library Services, spoke on the security and part time employee requests. She affirmed that staff's original discussion with the Library Advisory Board had included Sunday hours; however, the two requests were eliminated from the budget request long before the administrative budget hearings. She explained that, due to the volume of business through the library buildings, the request for security and added employees were needed for baseline services. She detailed that the cost for 12 contracted part time employees was \$140,000, and security at two library locations was \$20,000. She noted that security would be placed at the Hastings and Main library branches due to theft issues. In response to an inquiry from Stevenson, Gibson pointed out that the Anastasia Island and the Southeast libraries during winter months were slammed with snowbirds.

(5:29 p.m.) Wanchick stated that all department heads could affirm with similar stories regarding the need for additional staff and administration recognized that need. He noted that while the perception that the economy was improving, more demands for services were being requested. He pointed out that property taxes raised a total of \$7 million, of which \$5 million would be used for essential needs, and \$2 million non-discretionary funds were used for core public services such as water, sewer, and streets. He voiced that if the board wanted to make a change to the budget, funds would be cut from the budget or taken from reserves. He said he would not recommend taking funds from reserves because doing so was a dangerous financial strategy. He expressed that a larger discussion with the community on new revenues would be necessary. He affirmed that staff recognized the need and importance; however, the board was required to adopt a balanced budget.

(5:31 p.m.) Stevenson spoke about the history of the recession and coming out of the problem. She suggested that currently the county was in a recovery mode. Discussion ensued regarding the library hours and budget. Wanchick commented that every county department's budget had been reduced 22% over the past seven years, which allowed \$168 million annual savings. Morris noted that the county was \$114 million behind the all-time high since 2007.

(5:37 p.m.) Public comment continued with support for security and additional part-time employees for the library:

- Wendy Jo Williams, 10460 Turpin Ave, Hastings
- Lisa Barnett, 1441 Kipling Lane, Ponte Vedra
- Eliese Keith, 101 Shelby's Cove Court, Ponte Vedra Beach
- Michelle Dillon, 94 Lincoln Street
- Cathy Snyder, 324 Oglethorpe Blvd
- Laurie Kelly, 221 Pablo Road, Ponte Vedra Beach
- Carolyne Estrada, 11 Dondanville Road, St. Augustine Beach
- Gail Hilliker, 113 Burning Pine Court, Ponte Vedra Beach
- Ashley Dalia, 4805 Devonshire Drive
- Terry Allan, 505 St. Croix Street
- Judy Dodge, 217 Boating Club Road, Vilano Beach
- Dr. Jim Wilson, 124 Twine Street
- Mary Geer, 1165 CR 13 South, Riverdale
- Karen Zalkin, 321 Hefferon Drive
- Paul Phillips, 6 Ewing Street, B, St. Augustine Beach
- Rosita Angeli, 3414 Lands End Drive
- Alexandria Thomas Tuft, 381 Lena Street
- Melanie Soldevilla, 361 Sunshine Drive
- Rev. Gretchen van Aken Johnson, 120 Old Town Pkwy #1101
- Terry Seaton, 4406 Coastal Highway, Vilano Beach
- Marianne Stein, 169 Clear Lake Drive
- Hanna Wilkirson, 6825 Solano Farm Road, Elkton
- Denver Cook, 266 Topsail Drive
- Lorraine Davi, 3 Veronese Court
- David Farah, 621 Casa Fuerta Lane
- Andre D'Elena, 809 St. Augustine South Drive
- Ann Palmquist, 213 10th Street, St. Augustine Beach
- Judy Beerbauer, 660 Sand Isles Circle, Ponte Vedra Beach
- Mary Ann Gumble, 213 Cantabria Way, Unit 207

Those residents offered the following reasons to support and to increase the library budget:

- Crowding and thefts at the Hastings and Main libraries
- Teenager programs such as Teen Gaming Night
- Bookmobile served 14,000 north and northwest citizens in 2013
- Free use of meeting rooms by local community groups
- Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts use the free meeting rooms
- Ponte Vedra meeting rooms were used 570 times by 7,800 people so far in 2014
- Veterans Oral History project
- Over 200 programs for preschoolers and elementary students
- Over 12,000 people attended programs at the Main library in 2013
- Southeast library answered 32,000 questions in 2013
- Take funds from Rail-to-Trail and put money into sidewalks
- 71,000 questions answered at the Main library during 2013
- Eliminate long lines by hiring part time employees
- 250,000 visited the Main library in 2013

(6:18 p.m.) Stevenson pointed out that many funds were restricted with how and where those funds could be spent. She added that the truth about St. Johns County's budget suffered during every election cycle.

(6:29 p.m.) Bennett spoke about libraries and how important those facilities were to the community. Morris voiced that the Board appreciated each citizen taking their time to voice concerns and attending the meeting. McClure noted that libraries acted as community centers. He mentioned that members of the AmeriCorps Retired Senior Volunteer Plan might be interested in fulfilling their required hours by volunteering at libraries in the county. Rhodes Gibson stated that some branches already used volunteers, but would welcome additional volunteers to help the libraries.

(6:34 p.m.) Stevenson noted that the budget process was very detailed and complicated; however, she voiced that her door was always open to discuss county business with residents. She pointed out that the Aid to Government Agencies item had been added to the budget and asked for details. Wanchick explained that the item was the West Augustine study on the water and sewer issue. Stevenson voiced that serious challenges faced the county and Commission in the upcoming year. She stated that the security issue must be addressed, and noted that the county had a new volunteer coordinator position, which would help with the library need.

(6:42 p.m.) Wanchick mentioned that from 2005-2008 the County's ad valorem values had increased 98% and the quality of life such as libraries, boat ramps, parks, and fire stations were built on that increase. However, he noted that since 2008 the county had lost 30% on ad valorem values. He stated that Administration and the Commission had fought off every attempt to shut down a library. He pointed out that since 2007 libraries had increased their program attendance by 55%, recreation programs were up 20%, animal control up 38%, Code Enforcement up 158%, fire rescue calls up 41%, county roads increased 11%, and beach attendance was up 30%, showing that demand for services was across the board. He explained that the county needed to combine fire stations #5 and #11 in the Shores, and was in need of a fire station in the northwest area. He noted that the county was not able to fund haz-mat rescue apparatuses, down payment for the SJCSO training facility, expansion of marine rescue services, pier parking and pier design, a World Golf regional park, the Hastings library building need, deferred maintenance, and GTV equipment. He communicated that the Board's strategy was to adopt a balanced budget for FY2014-2015 and assess the community's satisfaction with the budget. He advised that much discussion would be in order to come to terms with the issues facing the county. He expanded that the County's bond

rating had just increased from AA- to AA+. He advised that in order to preserve the quality of life the county must confront the short term and long term issues. He reiterated that the revenue discussion must be paired with the demands issue in the near future.

(6:48 p.m.) Sanchez stated that the board heard the citizens' concerns regarding the library. He noted that the tentative budget would remain as presented.

(6:50 p.m.) Timms advised that the next task for the board would be to adopt the tentative budget.

(6:50 p.m.) **Motion by Sanchez, seconded by Morris, carried 5/0, to adopt Resolution 2014-243, establishing the tentative budget for FY 2015.**

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-243

RESOLVED, that the following **FISCAL YEAR 2015 TENTATIVE BUDGET** of the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, developed using the certified taxable value of \$18,587,867,022, generating an estimated \$134,859,062 in taxes, is hereby adopted, resulting in a total budget of \$619,288,674 as follows:

General Fund	\$179,507,263
Special Revenue Funds	
Alcohol & Drug Abuse Trust Fund	\$12,694
Beach Services Fund	\$1,796,341
Building Services Fund	\$13,665,536
CH Arnold Rd Grading MSBU Fund	\$11,771
Communication Surcharge Fund	\$604,112
Community Based Care Fund	\$5,920,031
County Cultural Events Fund	\$8,295,477
County Health Unit Trust Fund	\$314,680
County Transportation Trust Fund	\$52,948,582
Court Facilities Trust Fund	\$663,895
Court Innovation Fund	\$106,525
Crimes Prevention Trust Fund	\$79,644
Court Technology Trust Fund	\$4,982,385
Deerwood Lane ROW MSBU Fund	\$10,269
Driver Safety Education Fund	\$127,325
E-911 Communications Fund	\$1,723,917
Elkton Drainage District Fund	\$33,949
Fire District Fund	\$37,287,467
Fire/EMS Impact Fees Fund	\$4,461,537
Florida Boating Improvement Fund	\$259,071
Flagler Estates CRA Fund	\$83,394
Juvenile Alternative Programs Fund	\$41,582
Law Enforcement Trust Fund	\$88,183
Law Library Fund	\$37,439
Legal Aid Fund	\$314,281
Northwest Tower Fund	\$237,144
Parks Zone-A Impact Fees Fund	\$379,237
Parks Zone-B Impact Fees Fund	\$239,312
Parks Zone-C Impact Fees Fund	\$177,801
Parks Zone-D Impact Fees Fund	\$86,967
Pier Fund	\$302,647
Police Services Impact Fees	\$265,278
Public Bldg Impact Fees	\$2,475,444

Roads Zone-A Impact Fees Fund	\$3,575,805
Roads Zone-B Impact Fees Fund	\$6,501,500
Roads Zone-C Impact Fees Fund	\$6,544,537
Roads Zone-D Impact Fees Fund	\$1,773,665
Rusty Anchor/Wendover Rd MSBU Fund	\$451
St. Augustine South Lighting District Fund	\$47,699
State Housing Initiative Program Fund	\$1,342,667
Summerhaven MSTU Fund	\$188,343
Tourist Development Tax Fund	\$10,666,463
Transit System	\$2,865,027
Treasure Beach MSBU	\$308,239
Tree Bank Special Revenue Fund	\$2,862,198
Vilano CRA Fund	\$288,898
Vilano Street Lighting District Fund	\$13,952
West Augustine CRA Fund	\$258,600

Debt Service Funds

03 Transportation Improvement Debt Service	\$241
04 Flagler Estates CRA Debt Service	\$509,976
05 Revenue Sharing Debt Service	\$1,227,225
06 Sales Tax Bonds Debt Service	\$2,997,000
06 Transportation Improvement Debt Service	\$1,834,550
09 Sales Tax Bonds Debt Service	\$3,821,518
09A Sales Tax Refunding Bonds Debt Service	\$1,568,769
12 Transportation Refunding Bonds Debt Service	\$2,016,175
12 Sales Tax Refunding Bonds Debt Service	\$1,915,969
Series 2012 Chase Note Debt Service	\$1,279,890
Commercial Paper Program Debt Service	\$785,862
GE Capital Note Debt Service	\$31,461
Ponte Vedra MSD Debt Service	\$1,634,736
HHS Facility Note	\$413,964
Trane Capital Lease Debt Service	\$241,561

Capital Improvement Funds

06 Transportation Projects Fund	\$1,487,796
Beach Re-nourishment Projects Fund	\$684,381
HHS Facility Project	\$7,515,682
Interoperable Radio System Towers Fund	\$14,996
SR 207 CIG Development Agreement Fund	\$154,077
Trane Equipment Lease Fund	\$86,168
Treasure Beach MSBU Dredging	\$2,108,324

Enterprise Funds

Convention Center Fund	\$3,596,295
Ponte Vedra Utility Services Fund	\$26,007,976
Solid Waste Fund	\$36,108,349
St. Johns County Utility Services Fund	\$124,692,125
St. Johns Golf Course Fund	\$2,534,041

Internal Service/Trust & Agency Funds

FSA - Dependent Fund	\$94,203
FSA - Medical Fund	\$662,594
Group Health Insurance Fund	\$31,836,120
OPEB Trust Fund	\$4,168,970
Worker Compensation Fund	\$2,478,456

(6:52 p.m.) **Motion by Morris, seconded by Bennett, carried 5/0, to set a public hearing on September 17, 2014, at 5:01 p.m. in the County Auditorium to consider the adoption of the final millage rates and budget for FY 2015.**

(09/03/14 - 8 - 6:53 p.m.)

2. CNG PREPPED VEHICLE BIDS IN EXCESS OF \$100,000, BUT NOT TO EXCEED \$600,000

Wanchick explained that the board had previously endorsed the CNG proposal and had authorized to set aside funding for up to thirty-six vehicles. However, he noted that the contractual date would arrive sooner than the Board's next meeting.

(6:54 p.m.) **Motion by Bennett, seconded by McClure, carried 5/0, to authorize the County Administrator or his designee to award CNG prepped vehicle bids in excess of \$100,000, but not to exceed \$600,000.**

(6:55 p.m.) Stevenson asked for clarification on bond refinancing. Timms affirmed that bond refinancing would artificially increase the budget because of recognizing proceeds to refund and pay the escrow agent.

(09/03/14 - 8 - 6:56 p.m.)

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

McClure stated that the revenue and taxation had been capped by the State of Florida.

Sanchez and Bennett thanked staff for their work with the budget.

(09/03/14 - 8 - 6:57 p.m.)

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Wanchick reiterated that Administration would not compromise with security at any library.

(09/03/14 - 8 - 6:57 p.m.)

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report.

(09/03/14 - 8 - 6:57 p.m.)

CLERK OF COURT'S REPORT

No report.

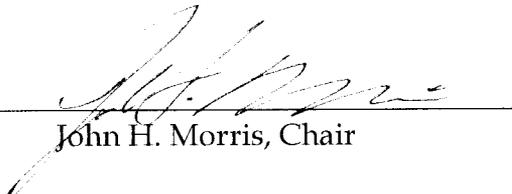
With there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Approved _____October 7_____, 2014



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____


John H. Morris, Chair

ATTEST: CHERYL STRICKLAND, CLERK

By: *Pam Halterman*
Deputy Clerk