

5:30 p.m.

The Suwannee County Board of County Commissioners met on the above date and time for the FY 2017-2018 tentative budget hearing and the following were present: Chairman Ricky Gamble; Commissioner Clyde Fleming; Commissioner Don Hale; Commissioner Larry Sessions; and Commissioner Ronnie Richardson. Clerk of Court Barry A. Baker; Chief Deputy Clerk of Finance Ken Williams; Neena Funicelli, Eric Musgrove, and Logan Woods, Deputy Clerks; Randy Harris, County Administrator; and Mr. James W. Prevatt, Jr., County Attorney, were also present.

Chairman Gamble called the hearing to order at 5:31 p.m. and asked Commissioner Fleming to lead the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018.

Chairman Gamble opened the public hearing.

Clerk Baker announced the proposed tentative millage rate of 9.000 mils and proposed tentative budget of \$81,532,467.00. He stated that the proposed millage rate would be a 0.51% increase over the rolled back rate of 8.954 mils.

Chairman Gamble opened the floor to public comments, beginning with the Constitutional Officers.

There were no Constitutional Officers who wished to speak.

Chairman Gamble asked for outside agencies to speak.

There were no outside agencies who wished to speak.

Chairman Gamble asked for department heads to speak.

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County Administrator Harris stated that the Tax Collector had asked for a letter from the County Commission stating that they would be responsible for covering her salary. He would research the issue further and come back to the Board with definite information. County Administrator Harris noted an adjustment with the dump truck leases regarding postponing payments until October. He also discussed the potential financial escrow for the items on the Capital Improvement Plan, which he estimated at approximately \$2 million per year. This number would be affected by construction dates and by how much funding the County wished to use as a down payment.

Ms. Katherine Allen, Extension Office Director, asked about rolling over funding for Exhibition 2. County Administrator Harris replied that the funding was still in the budget to be rolled over.

Ms. Allen also asked about potential funding sources for Capital Improvement Plans, including a loan through Suwannee Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC). County Administrator Harris replied that there were some structures that would be eligible for the SVEC loan, but grants would be the first source.

There were no public comments.

There being no further comments, Chairman Gamble closed the floor to public comments and recessed out of the tentative budget hearing at 5:40 p.m. to enter the tentative hearing for the Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Benefits Units Board.

County Administrator Harris announced the proposed household assessment rate of \$130.00, which was the same as the current year.

Chairman Gamble opened the floor to public comments.

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There being no further comments, Chairman Gamble closed the floor to public comments.

Member Fleming moved to assess households at a rate of \$130.00 each. Member Richardson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Gamble closed the Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Benefits Units Board hearing at 5:41 p.m. and opened the Suwannee County Municipal Services Benefit Unit for the Fire Protection Board.

County Administrator Harris announced the proposed Residential Urban rate (per dwelling unit) of \$100.00 and Non-Residential (per square foot up to 179,400 square feet) of \$0.12. For land, less than 160 acre parcels would be \$17.91, and for land greater than 160 acres up to a maximum of 640 acres, the amount would be \$0.14 per acre.

Chairman Gamble opened the floor to public comments.

There being no comments, Chairman Gamble closed the floor to public comments.

Member Richardson moved to adopt the Residential Urban rate (per dwelling unit) of \$100.00 and Non-Residential (per square foot up to 179,400 square feet) of \$0.12. For land, less than 160 acre parcels would be \$17.91, and for land greater than 160 acres up to a maximum of 640 acres, the amount would be \$0.14 per acre. Member Fleming seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Gamble closed the public hearing on the Municipal Services Benefit Unit for the Fire Protective Board at 5:42 p.m. and returned to the recessed Board of County Commissioners' tentative budget hearing.

Commissioner Sessions moved to adopt the Fire Board's recommendation of Residential Urban rate (per dwelling unit) of \$100.00 and Non-Residential (per square foot

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up to 179,400) of \$0.12. For land, less than 160 acre parcels would be \$17.91, and for land greater than 160 acres up to a maximum of 640 acres, the amount would be \$0.14 per acre. Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (Resolution No. 2017-58)

Commissioner Hale moved to adopt the Solid Waste Board's recommendation to assess households at a rate of \$130.00 each. Commissioner Sessions seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (Resolution No. 2017-59)

Chairman Gamble recessed from the tentative budget hearing at 5:43 p.m. to go into a public hearing for a Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU).

County Administrator Harris noted that the MSBU was for 78th Street/76th Terrace for Fiscal Year 2017.

Chairman Gamble opened the floor to public comments.

There being no comments, Chairman Gamble closed the floor to public comments.

County Administrator Harris noted that this was an ongoing MSBU. He added that some parcel owners had already paid off their portion.

Commissioner Fleming asked about applying for MSBUs and the delay in beginning one. County Administrator Harris replied that once all requirements had been met and the County approved it, the MSBU would begin as soon as possible, with payments as part of the parcel owners' tax bill.

Commissioner Richardson asked about the reduced number of parcel owners paying. County Administrator Harris replied that some owners had paid their entire amount up front, saving them a cost in interest.

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Commissioner Sessions moved to recommend approval of the assessment roll for the Municipal Services District known as 78th Street/76th Terrace Municipal Services Benefit Unit for the year 2017. Commissioner Richardson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Gamble closed the public hearing on the 78th Street/76th Terrace MSBU at 5:48 p.m. and returned to the recessed Board of County Commissioners tentative budget hearing.

Commissioner Fleming moved to approve the MSBU's recommendation to consider adoption of a resolution confirming the assessment roll for the Municipal Services District known as 78th Street/76th Terrace Municipal Services Benefit Unit for the year 2017. Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (Resolution No. 2017-60)

Chairman Gamble asked if there were any more directions to be given to the Budget Office.

County Administrator Harris replied that the County had just received information on Fire Rescue vehicles as discussed at the budget workshops, and he would like to go over the details before the final budget hearing. He added that it would not affect the budget numbers, but only the amount to go into contingency.

After questioning, County Administrator Harris replied that the Board's contingency now stood at \$916,252,000.

Chairman Gamble noted that the Property Appraiser was looking to upgrade their computer system, and he hoped that perhaps \$200,000 would be set aside for the project, if the Board so desired.

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Clerk Baker stated that there was one person in the State of Florida who knew how to operate the Property Appraiser's computer software, and he was looking to retire.

Discussion ensued on computer upgrades and funding.

The Board reached a consensus to create a line item of \$200,000 using contingency funds for the possibility of new computer software for the Property Appraiser.

Chairman Gamble asked about a request for additional 4-door crew cab trucks for the Public Works Department. County Administrator Harris replied that the trucks would be used for tractor crews.

Discussion ensued on the need for the crew cab trucks.

The Board reached a consensus to retain crew cab trucks in the Public Works budget.

At 6:05 p.m., Commissioner Fleming moved to adopt a resolution adopting the levying of a tentative millage rate of 9.000 mils for ad valorem taxes for Suwannee County for Fiscal Year 2017-2018. Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (Resolution No. 2017-61)

At 6:06 p.m., Commissioner Sessions moved to adopt a tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 at \$81,532,467.00. Commissioner Hale seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (Resolution No. 2017-62).

Chairman Gamble closed the public hearing.

County Administrator Harris stated that due to the impending impact of Hurricane Irma, the decision had been made earlier in the day to close the various County offices on Monday, September 11, other than essential personnel.

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Commissioner Sessions noted that there was a mandatory evacuation in effect for Miami-Dade County and other highly populated areas in South Florida, so traffic would be more congested.

Sheriff Sam St. John noted that the most recent hurricane update showed that the hurricane track had shifted to the west, potentially further impacting Suwannee County.

Chairman Gamble stated that he had signed a local state of emergency at 9 a.m. earlier in the day.

Sheriff Sam St. John stated that public notices regarding Hurricane Irma would be sent out later in the night.

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Gamble adjourned the tentative budget hearing at 6:10 p.m.

ATTEST:

_____, DC
BARRY A. BAKER
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

RICKY GAMBLE, CHAIRMAN
SUWANNEE COUNTY BOARD OF
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS