

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA  
FINAL BUDGET HEARING  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2019

NOTE: If any person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record for the proceedings and may need to insure that a verbatim record is made.

PRESIDING: Karen Cossey, Chair

RECORDING: Kellie Hendricks Connell, Clerk of Courts

ATTENDING: Commissioner Lacey Cannon; Commissioner Willie Croft; Commissioner Channing Dobbs; Commissioner Jimmy Tallman; James Williams, County Coordinator; Dianne Hannon, Board Secretary; Russ Wade, County Attorney

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Chair Cossey called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm. Commissioner Tallman offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED MILLAGE**

Chair Cossey announced the proposed 10.000 millage rate, corresponding information of a rolled-back rate of 9.5403 and 4.8185 percent change of rolled-back rate. Chair Cossey called for public comments in favor of the final millage rate. Hearing none, she called for any opposed to the rate. Hearing none, Chair Cossey closed the floor to public comments and called for Board action. **Commissioner Tallman moved to accept the proposed rate of 10.000 mils through Resolution 2019-09, and Commissioner Croft seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.**

**PRESENTATION OF BUDGET**

Chair Cossey open discussion regarding the final budget. Clerk Connell presented adjustments from discussion in the Tentative Budget Hearing. The consensus of the Board was to reduce the contribution to Meridian Mental Health Center from \$35,000 to \$15,000. Also, she provided the calculations for not providing the 3% COLA to employees of the Road Department and Solid Waste Department that received substantial raises in the last few months. Lastly, the Clerk presented an adjustment to correct the allocation of workers comp insurance for 911 dispatchers between the general fund and the 911 Department. **Commissioner Tallman moved, and Commissioner Cannon seconded, to adopt the adjustments presented by the Clerk. The motion passed unanimously.**

Commissioner Cannon stated he had several questions and comments regarding the budget. First, he asked Mr. Williams about the travel for the extension agent, specifically asking why IFAS was not covering the cost. Mr. Williams answered that it's his understanding that the contract between the County and IFAS states that the County should cover that expense.

Commissioner Cannon then directed attention to the EMS Department's budget. His first item was the line for Repairs and Maintenance of \$50,000. He asked Wayne Clemons, EMS Director to drop the amount to \$40,000. Mr. Clemons expressed concern for any unexpected and necessary repairs. Chair Cossey mentioned that the fuel line item was very high compared to the actual expenditure, and Clerk Connell answered that the amount for fuel across all County budgets has not been reduced since gas prices were close to \$5 per gallon. She further explained that those items have not been reduced because fuel is an unavoidable expense, and if prices were to jump unexpectedly, the funds would be available to cover it. However, as long as fuel stays low, the unexpended portion is not rolled into other spending, and will be available in the following year. Clerk Connell suggested the

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Board not lower any fuel budgets. Commissioner Cannon then inquired about Miscellaneous Expense of \$3,000. Mr. Clemons answered that the item is only used for unexpected expenditures, and Commissioner Cannon stated he would like to see the amount reduced to zero for that line-item. **Commissioner Cannon moved to lower Repairs and Maintenance to \$40,000 and Miscellaneous Expense to \$0 for the EMS Department. Commissioner Dobbs seconded the motion. Chair Cossey noted that she was opposed to the \$3,000 reduction of Miscellaneous Expense, but voted for the motion. Commissioner Cannon, Commissioner Dobbs and Commissioner Croft also voted in the affirmative. Commissioner Tallman voted against, and Chair Cossey call that the motion passed.**

Chair Cossey noted that Repairs and Maintenance for the Archer Building were budgeted at \$2,500, and suggested it be increased to \$6,000, as the building is in need of major repairs. It was also mentioned the Chair Cossey and Clerk Connell have discussed increasing the rent charged to the New River Public Library Cooperative, which should be done next budget year. Commissioner Tallman and Chair Cossey discussed the upkeep and recent repairs to the building. **Commissioner Tallman moved to increase the budget for Repairs and Maintenance to the Archer Building to \$5,000. Commissioner Croft seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.**

Chair Cossey directed discussion to the Emergency Management budget, specifically the contingency. Tim Allen, Director, answered that it is a plug for local contributions required by grant-matching requirements.

Commissioner Cannon then addressed items in the Fire Department. He suggested reducing the Training budget from \$6,000 to \$2,000. Chair Cossey agreed, and also noted that New Equipment should be reduced. **Commissioner Cannon moved, and Commissioner Tallman seconded, to reduce Training for the Fire Department to \$2,000. Commissioner Dobbs voted against the motion, and with all other commissioners voting for it, the motion passed.** Commissioner Cannon asked Mr. Williams what the Fire Chief's expectations were regarding new equipment, and he did not know. Commissioner Cannon asked if Mr. Clemons happened to know, and he also did not. Discussion ensued regarding equipment needs of the Fire Department and recent years' purchases, and the Board reached a consensus to not adjust the new equipment for the Fire Department.

Chair Cossey directed attention to the Solid Waste Department, and suggested that the line item for Boots and Uniforms be reduced from \$2,500 to \$2,000. **Commissioner Cannon moved to reduce the line item for Boots and Uniforms to \$2,000. Commissioner Dobbs seconded the motion, and all commissioners voted in favor.** Commissioner Cannon inquired about the \$30,000 budget for New Equipment. It was noted that the majority of this is for the new welding shop. A discussion ensued regarding the purchasing policy, and Mr. Williams noted that FACT is coming to review and recommend changes to all policies.

Hearing no other business from the Board members, Chair Cossey called for public comments in favor of the final budget. Hearing none, she called for any opposed. Hearing none, Chair Cossey closed the floor to public comments and called for Board action. **Commissioner Dobbs moved to approve the Final Budget with Resolution 2019-10, and Commissioner Croft seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.**

With no further business, Chair Cossey adjourned the meeting at 5:40 pm.

**“Adopted on November 18, 2019”**