

MINUTES OF THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGARDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009 COUNTY-WIDE BUDGET AND
FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009 NON-AD VALOREM SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS ROLL
HELD SEPTEMBER 4, 2008
BOARD CHAMBERS, FIRST FLOOR, ESCAMBIA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL COMPLEX
221 PALAFOX PLACE, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA
(5:21 p.m. – 6:31 p.m.)

Present: Commissioner Gene M. Valentino, Chairman, District 2
Commissioner Marie K. Young, Vice Chairman, District 3
Commissioner Grover C. Robinson, IV, District 4
Commissioner Kevin W. White, District 5
Commissioner D. M. "Mike" Whitehead, District 1
Mrs. Lisa N. Bernau, Chief Deputy Clerk, representing the
Honorable Ernie Lee Magaha, Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller
Mr. Robert R. "Bob" McLaughlin, County Administrator
Mrs. Alison Rogers, County Attorney
Mrs. Patricia L. Sheldon, Clerk & Comptroller's Administrator of Financial Services
Mrs. Shirley L. Gafford, Program Coordinator, County Administrator's Office
Mrs. Doris Harris, Deputy Clerk to the Board

AGENDA NUMBER

1. Call to Order

Chairman Valentino called the First Budget Public Hearing to order at 5:21 p.m.

2. Confirmation of Public Notice

The Board was advised by Patricia L. Sheldon, Clerk's Administrator of Financial Services, that:

- A. The 5:01 p.m. Public Hearing for consideration of the Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 was advertised in the Board's Weekly Meeting Schedule in the Saturday issue of the Pensacola News Journal on August 30, 2008, and by TRIM (*Truth in Millage*) Notice to each property owner; and
- B. The 5:02 p.m. Public Hearing for consideration of adopting the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 First Year Assessments Roll for Municipal Services Benefit Units was advertised in the Pensacola News Journal on August 18, 2008, as required by Section 197.3632(4)(b), Florida Statutes, and that first class notices were also mailed to all property owners in the affected MSBU Districts.

MINUTES OF THE FIRST BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING – Continued

AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

3. 5:01 p.m. Public Hearing

A. Presentation of Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2008-2009

The Board was advised by County Administrator McLaughlin, as follows:

- (1) This is the first of two required Public Hearings for the Board to adopt the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget; the Board, later in the Meeting, will set the second Public Hearing;
- (2) The Board of County Commissioners approved the (*Fiscal Year*) 2008-2009 Tentative Millage Rates for TRIM (*Truth in Millage*) notification purposes at the BCC Meeting on July 30, 2008;
- (3) The law requires that prior to consideration of the Tentative Budget, an explanation of the “Rolled Back Rate” be provided and entered into the records; the “Rolled Back Rate” is a computed millage rate that would generate the same amount of ad valorem tax dollars as the prior Fiscal Year, based on the proposed Year’s tax roll, excluding new construction;
- (4) The millage rates tentatively approved by the Board for TRIM notification are 7.8570 mills for the Countywide millage rate and .685 mills for the Sheriff’s Law Enforcement MSTU (*Municipal Services Taxing Unit*); the aggregate of these millage rates proposed for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 is 5.65% below the “Rolled Back Rate” certified by the Property Appraiser; this represents the percentage decrease in property taxes tentatively adopted by the Board;
- (5) Three of the largest issues arising from previous budget discussions have been related to the International Paper EDATE (*Economic Development Ad Valorem Tax Exemption*), resulting in a reduction of property tax revenue in the amount of \$1.684 million, an additional \$1 million reduction in property taxes proposed by the Board, and a fuel charge increase from Gulf Power (*Company*), in the amount of \$390,000, affecting the Facilities Budget; any funding changes made tonight will be incorporated as a Budget Adjustment and presented at the Second Public Hearing to adopt the Budget; and

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MINUTES OF THE FIRST BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING – Continued

AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

3. Continued...

A. Continued...

- (6) For information, and to avoid any misunderstanding concerning the process of this Meeting, this Public Hearing is convened to discuss the County's Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget; because of time constraints, discussion should be confined to this subject; increases in property assessments, remarks or questions concerning individual property appraisals should be addressed to the County Property Appraiser at his office during normal business hours.

B. Questions/Discussion from the Board

The Board:

- (1) Discussed ad valorem tax revenue collections for Santa Rosa Island, and the Board:
- (a) Was advised by Commissioner White that the revenues should be used to further reduce the millage rate;
 - (b) Was advised by Commissioner Whitehead that the Board had committed to using the taxes, which would be approximately \$11 million this year (*for Portofino Towers, which includes prior years*), to roll back taxes;
 - (c) Was advised by Amy Lovoy, Bureau Chief, Management and Budget Services Bureau, that the amount of recurring revenues for Portofino Towers is approximately \$3 million per year;
 - (d) Was advised by Commissioner Robinson that he cannot support using more than 50% of the revenues this year; and
 - (e) Upon inquiry from Commissioner Whitehead, was advised by the Honorable Chris Jones, Property Appraiser, that the lawsuit was bifurcated into the taxability issue, which has been resolved, and the valuation issue, the outcome of which is unknown; however, he is confident in the assessed values;

(Continued on Page 4)

MINUTES OF THE FIRST BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING – Continued

AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

3. Continued...

B. Continued...

- (2) Was advised by Commissioner Whitehead that the Board has an opportunity this year to reduce the Sheriff's Budget; and
- (3) Was advised by Benjamin A. "Steve" Stevens that the Sheriff's (*Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Proposed*) Budget has already been reduced by \$900,000.

C. Public Forum

Speaker(s):

William Norvell
Bob Graves
Alan Miller

D. Adoption of the Proposed Millage Resolution

Motion made by Commissioner Whitehead, seconded by Commissioner White, and carried unanimously, adopting the Proposed Millage Resolution (*R2008-154*), as modified to 6.9755 mills for the County-wide millage rate and .685 mills for the Sheriff's Law Enforcement MSTU (*Municipal Services Taxing Unit*) for Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

E. Adoption of the Tentative Budget Resolution

Motion made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, and carried 3-2, with Commissioner White and Commissioner Whitehead voting "no," adopting the Tentative Budget Resolution (*R2008-155*) of \$402,012,044 for Fiscal Year 2008-2009, as presented in the agenda backup.

MINUTES OF THE FIRST BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING – Continued

AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

4. Scheduling of the Second Public Hearing

Motion made by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Young, and carried unanimously, approving to schedule the Second Public Hearing for adoption of the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget for September 18, 2008, at 5:01 p.m., in the Board Chambers, on the First Floor of the New Office Building (*Escambia County Governmental Complex*), located at 221 Palafox Place.

5. 5:02 p.m. Public Hearing

A. Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

The Board was advised by County Administrator McLaughlin that Florida Law requires that the County adopt a Resolution, prior to January 1 of a calendar year, electing to use the Uniform Method of Collection for Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments in that year, that a Resolution adopting the Uniform Method of Collection was approved by the Board on December 6, 2007, and a list of all non-ad valorem rates was provided in the agenda backup.

B. Public Forum

Speaker(s) – None.

C. Adoption of the Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

Motion made by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Whitehead, and carried unanimously, adopting the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll.

6. Board Consideration of Debt Defeasance

Motion made by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Whitehead, and carried unanimously, approving to defer consideration of debt defeasance to the September 18, 2008, Second Public Hearing for adoption of the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget.

MINUTES OF THE FIRST BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING – Continued

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Valentino declared the First Budget Public Hearing of the Board of County Commissioners adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:

By: _____
Gene M. Valentino, Chairman

Ernie Lee Magaha
Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller

Deputy Clerk

Approved: September 18, 2008