

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**March 23, 2009**

A meeting was held at the Murdock Administration Complex in Room 119, Port Charlotte, Florida.

Members present were: Chairman Duffy, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Loftus, Commissioner Skidmore, Commissioner Starr, County Administrator Baltz, County Attorney Knowlton, and Deputy Clerk Lansing. The following members were absent: None

The meeting was called to order at **1:30 PM** followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. REVIEW PERFORMANCE BUDGETS - ENVIRONMENTAL AND EXTENSION SERVICES - KELLY SHOEMAKER and RAY SANDROCK**

Mr. Sandrock reviewed the savings to date, indicated they have recognized \$2.8 Million in reductions in general revenue areas, \$6 million in other funds, noted they did reach the \$10 million goal in Capital Improvement Program (CIP) delays and eliminations, explained the process related to the organizational chart, said the consolidation chart will be provided for review later, and stated they are still looking at how to best organize several positions on an on-going basis.

**a. Aquatic Weed Control**

Mr. Sandrock provided detail related to Aquatic Weed Control which included its Mission Statement, Core Services, Revenues, Results, explained why they recommend a 1% Reduction Scenario, and paralleled visual slides and packet information.

**Chairman Duffy** asked for clarification of the reduction percentage staff was recommending. Mr. Sandrock advised they were requesting a 1% reduction.

**COMMISSIONER LOFTUS MOVED TO APPROVE A 1% REDUCTION FOR THE AQUATIC WEED CONTROL DIVISION, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STARR**

**Commissioner Skidmore** asked for detail related to the launch site improvement budget. Jim Thompson explained the reason for the budget and said they are delaying the improvements.

**MOTION CARRIED 4:1. COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS OPPOSING.**

**b. Extension Services - 4-H, Horticulture, and Sea Grant**

Ms. Shoemaker provided detail related to Extension Services - 4H which included its Mission Statement, Core Services, Revenues, and Results, announced their recommendation is for a 15% reduction, noted a savings of \$10,000 in staff from experienced to entry level, and paralleled visual slides and packet information. **Commissioner Skidmore** asked why the savings is only \$10,000. **Chairman Duffy** asked if the position is currently vacant. Ms. Shoemaker explained the savings, position funding, and noted the position is vacant. **Commissioner Skidmore** asked if this position will save \$18,000 this year. Ms. Shoemaker answered affirmatively. **Commissioner Starr** received clarification of Full Time Equivalent (FTE), asked if printing and binding costs could be reduced by utilizing County printing, and questioned an increase in the phone and electric bill projection. Mr. Thompson provided detailed explanations. **Commissioner Skidmore** asked if they could run the 4-H program without filling the position and asked about using volunteers and experienced residents. Mr. Thompson explained the importance and responsibilities of the position and remarked on the coordination required to support volunteers to maintain the current level.

**COMMISSIONER LOFTUS MOVED TO APPROVE A 15% REDUCTION IN 4-H EXTENSION SERVICES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SKIDMORE**

**MOTION CARRIED 4:1. COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS OPPOSING.**

Mr. Sandrock provided detail related to Extension Services - Horticulture which included its Mission Statement, Core Services, Revenues, and Results, announced their recommendation is for a 13% reduction, and paralleled visual slides and packet information.

**COMMISSIONER SKIDMORE MOVED TO APPROVE A 13% REDUCTION IN HORTICULTURE EXTENSION SERVICES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOFTUS**

**MOTION CARRIED 4:1. COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS OPPOSING.**

Ms. Shoemaker provided detail related to Extension Services - Sea Grant which included its Mission Statement, Core Services, Revenues, Results, announced their recommendation was originally for a 15% reduction, noted the true reduction scenario is 27%, explained it includes transferring the Sea Grant Program Assistant position to the Natural Resources Division with 100% of funding from the Boater Improvement Fund, and paralleled visual slides and packet information. **Commissioner Skidmore** opined they are not saving money, said they are just shifting money, and asked for information related to the Clean Marina Program. Mr. Thompson gave a timeline and explained it is an ongoing support program that was established in the early 1990's. **Chairman Duffy** asked where the funding from the Boater Improvement funds come from. Mr. Sandrock advised they are received from boater registration fees. **Commissioner Skidmore** said market driven funds cause the funding source to be reduced. **Chairman Duffy** questioned whether the funds could be used for this position, inquired on how critical this position is, and opined the funds could be used for other purposes. Mr. Thompson commented it is a valuable program, explained they are looking to reduce their ad valorem costs, mentioned the Marine Advisory Board supports this concept, and noted the program will be evaluated annually. **Commissioner Starr** asked if the \$51,900 is the annual revenue. Mr. Sandrock explained.

**COMMISSIONER STARR MOVED TO APPROVE A 27% REDUCTION IN SEA GRANT EXTENSION SERVICES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOFTUS**

**Commissioner Skidmore** disagreed, said they are moving on the wrong track, noted the shifting of funds puts other deserving programs at risk, and opined this is not what they asked for in Performance Budgeting. **Chairman Duffy** agreed and said she is unable to accept this recommendation as it is.

**MOTION FAILED 2:3.**

**Commissioner Skidmore** asked what Board direction would now be. **Commissioner Starr** commented that we asked for a 15% reduction, noted we received a 27% proposed reduction although it was related to shifting funding sources, and opined they will be

unable to go back and find savings in other areas. **Chairman Duffy** indicated she would be in favor if the 27% was gained by the elimination of the position. **Commissioner Loftus** suggested they eliminate the discretionary position. **Commissioner Skidmore** provided his opinion on the programs and made savings suggestions in many areas. Mr. Thompson expressed his concern in stretching resources, explained the program in detail, discussed the position and its responsibilities, and opined they would not be able to maintain the same level of service.

Mr. Baltz clarified they are discussing the Sea Grant Program Assistant position, not the Sea Grant Agent position; referenced page 7 of 9 within the backup packet information; pointed out reduction scenarios; and noted the results of each. **Commissioner Loftus** remarked that the Illegal Dumping Committee was responsible for the Abandoned Boat Program in the past, discussed Statute related to abandoned boats, and explained the process. **Commissioner Cummings** recalled the Abandoned Boat Program was put in place in the mid 1990's when he was part of the West Coast Inland Navigation District, explained the process and legalities involved, and mentioned the importance of the Abandoned Boat Program as well as the Artificial Reef Program. **Commissioner Loftus** remarked one Sea Grant person oversaw several of the projects in the past, noted 2 people are presently responsible for illegal dumping, and opined the need for staff to pull together as a team now to assure the quality of life in Charlotte County. **Commissioner Cummings** pointed out the level of service reduction in Scenario 3 and mentioned its impact. **Commissioner Skidmore** said reducing government is a policy decision and suggested they work harder to find another way to fund the position. **Commissioner Cummings** said every decision will have consequences, noted staff has been clear on the level of service impacts, and commented the programs were established to save money in the long run. **Commissioner Skidmore** said they did without the assistant four years ago and opined they can again. **Chairman Duffy** and **Commissioner Loftus** agreed.

**COMMISSIONER SKIDMORE MOVED TO ACCEPT STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE ELIMINATION OF THE SEA GRANT PROGRAM ASSISTANT POSITION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009/2010, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STARR**

**MOTION CARRIED 3:2. COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS, COMMISSIONER STARR OPPOSING.**

**c. Mosquito Control**

Mr. Sandrock provided detail related to Mosquito Control which included its Mission Statement, Core Services, Revenues, Results, and paralleled visual slides and packet information. Mr. Sandrock said staff recommends a 10% reduction, explained a 15% reduction would produce an unacceptable result, noted a \$128,000 savings by using the County helicopter versus outsourcing, talked about the backup contract related to the helicopter, and asked the Board to consider approving a 10% reduction.

**COMMISSIONER SKIDMORE MOVED TO APPROVE A 10% REDUCTION IN MOSQUITO CONTROL, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOFTUS**

**Commissioner Starr** asked if the \$128,000 savings is in the first year. Mr. Thompson answered affirmatively, stated they plan to see an increase in savings during the following year, and discussed the need will change with the season. **Commissioner Cummings** talked about the impacts and reserve budget. Mr. Thompson explained the impacts, efficiencies to be expected, and stated they have budgeted for a typical season.

**MOTION CARRIED 4:1. COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS OPPOSING.**

**d. Solid Waste**

Ms. Shoemaker provided detail related to Solid Waste which included its Mission Statement, Core Services, Revenues, Results, paralleled visual slides and packet information, explained why staff was recommending a 10% reduction, mentioned the Landfill gas collection as a revenue opportunity, announced the current year savings, discussed current outsourcing, and asked for Board direction.

**Commissioner Cummings** noted none of these are ad valorem funded and discussed tipping fees and landfill hours of operation. Mr. Thompson stated our tipping fees are much lower than our neighbors and explained part of the revenue comes from the sanitation assessments. **Commissioner Starr** questioned why the

Sheriff Department did not investigate the 1192 cases of illegal dumping, asked how eliminating that position would impact the department, and asked for the cost. Mr. Thompson explained the process, noted the agreement with the Sheriff and Code Enforcement, and estimated the cost at \$100,000. **Commissioner Starr** opined the Sheriff is responsible for finding illegal dumpers, indicated double dipping, and suggested we save \$100,000 by not supplementing the program. **Commissioner Loftus** stated this is not double dipping, noted this position is dedicated to illegal dumping, and explained the importance of the program. **Commissioner Skidmore** asked for detail related to the \$85,000 allocated for the illegal dumping deputy. Mr. Thompson explained the cost of a vehicle, gas, salary, training, and benefits are included. **Commissioner Cummings** said the position was created because nothing was getting done, explained the Sheriff has higher law enforcement priorities, and noted it does not cost the taxpayers any additional money. **Commissioner Loftus** pointed out an analysis that indicated this program is more cost effective. **Chairman Duffy** expressed the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the Sheriff. **Commissioner Starr** asked for the number of arrests this year. Mr. Thompson said six felony arrests were made this year. Barbara Kula confirmed all six arrests were made by the deputy. **Commissioner Skidmore** calculated the cost of each arrest. **Commissioner Starr** commented the job could be done by the many other officers driving around the County. **Chairman Duffy** asked if the position had additional responsibilities. Mr. Thompson answered affirmatively. **Commissioner Cummings** opined it is more expensive to not fund this position. **Commissioner Starr** asked if there is a lighter day at the recycling centers and questioned if they could close on those days. Mr. Thompson explained the slow days are still fairly busy, remarked they service approximately 100 customers per day, and provided additional information. Ms. Shoemaker announced the hours of service. **Commissioner Skidmore** commended Mr. Thompson and his staff.

**COMMISSIONER SKIDMORE MOVED TO APPROVE A 10% REDUCTION FOR SOLID WASTE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOFTUS**

**Commissioner Cummings** said some of the recommendations will cause additional work, said they will eventually need to purchase a new dozer, and noted one time reductions will drive

up the costs in the future. Mr. Thompson agreed they will need to purchase a replacement dozer in the future.

**MOTION CARRIED 3:2. COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS, COMMISSIONER STARR OPPOSING.**

**COMMISSIONER STARR MOVED TO ELIMINATE THE ILLEGAL DUMPING DEPUTY AND CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER FROM THE SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT BUDGET; THE MOTION DID NOT RECEIVE A SECOND AND WAS LOST.**

**e. Natural Resources**

Mr. Sandrock provided detail related to Natural Resources which included its Mission Statement, Core Services, Revenues, Results, paralleled visual slides and packet information, and advised staff recommendation was a 15% reduction. **Commissioner Cummings** questioned replacement revenues. Mr. Thompson explained and mentioned they are working with two budgets. **Commissioner Starr** asked why wages were increased. Mr. Thompson said they created the environmental land funds program in mid-year and explained the budgets. **Commissioner Loftus** asked if they looked at outsourcing some of the programs. Mr. Thompson said they have looked at several opportunities, explained they do little in-house physical management of the properties, and mentioned working with Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC). **Commissioner Loftus** commended CHEC for their work. Mr. Thompson agreed and explained how CHEC operates. **Commissioner Starr** talked about high land management costs, said the referendum does not cover the management costs, recommended the use of volunteers, and suggested that could help reduce expenses. **Commissioner Cummings** asked for clarification associated with the reductions transferred, said the referendum did originally expect to use money for land management, explained why that changed, and discussed public benefit impacts related to Conservation Charlotte.

**COMMISSIONER LOFTUS MOVED TO APPROVE A 15% REDUCTION FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SKIDMORE**

**MOTION CARRIED 4:1. COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS OPPOSING.**

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Mr. Thompson thanked the Board. Mr. Sandrock announced the next workshop will be held at 1:30 PM on March 30, 2009 and will cover Central and Indirect and Self Insurance.

ADJOURNED: 3:28 PM

Signature on file in Commission Minutes  
Chairman

ATTEST:

BARBARA T. SCOTT, CLERK  
OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND  
EX-OFFICIO TO THE BOARD  
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

By: Signature on file in Commission Minutes  
Deputy Clerk

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