

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

A meeting was held at the Murdock Administration Complex in Room 119, Port Charlotte, Florida. The following members were present: Chairman Loftus, Commissioner Duffy, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner D'Aprile, and Commissioner Moore. Also in attendance were Deputy County Attorney Gallagher, County Administrator Loucks, Chief Deputy White, and Deputy Clerk Manley. The following members were absent: None. The meeting was called to order at 5:01 PM. (Proof of publication was in order.)

(Commissioner Cummings was not present for this portion of the meeting.)

A. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR - Opening Comments.

Mr. Loucks explained that this is the second of two required budget public hearings; that since the last meeting savings of over \$4 million has been identified through various means; that savings this year does not equate to savings next year as it is not recurring revenue; and that options for the savings are: 1) put it in reserves and determine what to do with it at a later date 2) program it for a one-time expenditure such as a capital project or debt service, and 3) reduce the millage rate, which in this case the potential millage rate reduction rate calculates to two tenths of a mill reduction. Mr. Loucks cautioned making a millage reduction because we would be collecting that much less next year in the millage reduction; and indicated that it may be a conversation for the Board to have when it gets to the County Wide General Fund Budget. Mr. Loucks recognized the good efforts of Mr. Sandrock and the budget services staff.

Chairman Loftus thanked Mr. Loucks, Mr. Sandrock, and their staffs. Commissioner D'Aprile stated that he appreciates the efforts of all the staffs to find additional money, and indicated that of the 3 options given he is in favor of reducing the millage rate.

B. COUNTY BUDGET OFFICER

Ray Sandrock reviewed the format to be followed and the changes detailed on page 8 of the agenda resulting from the September 13, 2007 First Budget Public Hearing.

Commissioner Moore clarified that the Greater Port Charlotte MSBU had once been \$50 and was changed upward to the neighborhood of \$150. Mr. Sandrock advised that the current rate for occupied is \$43.00 and vacant \$50.00 per ERU, moving up to \$118.00 occupied and \$125.00 vacant. **Commissioner Duffy** opined that the occupied rate was \$54.00. Mr. Sandrock clarified the current rate for occupied is \$54.00 and vacant \$59.73, moving to occupied rate of \$149.00 and vacant of \$163.73, which is an increase of \$95.00 for occupied and \$104.00 for vacant.

COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED TO ADOPT THE CHANGES FROM THE 9/13/07 FIRST BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING LISTED ON PAGE 8, SECONDED BY CHAIRMAN LOFTUS.

Motion Carried 4:0.

ABSENT: Commissioner Cummings.

Mr. Sandrock stated he received communication from Sheriff Davenport advising that he has continued to look at the funds that would be returned to the County at year-end; that at the last public hearing Sheriff Davenport projected \$400,000, and has increased that to \$600,000, for an additional \$200,000, which would be reflected as part of a year-end item.

Mr. Sandrock stated that the proposed aggregate county millage rate is 6.1435 mills, which is 9.49% under the current year aggregate rolled-back rate of 6.7873 mills, and that the total proposed County Wide budget is \$1,163,190,734; and advised that he would begin going through each of the procedural areas where rates and budgets are passed.

(Commissioner Cummings was present for the remainder of the meeting.)

I. COUNTY WIDE FUNDS

Mr. Sandrock stated that he could read through the funds and millage rates now or there could be a discussion on the savings for this year.

Commissioner Duffy advised that she would support reducing the millage rate. **Commissioner Moore** indicated that he would like a split of half for millage reduction and half for reducing debt. **Commissioner D'Aprile** asked for a dollar amount. Mr. Sandrock said it was an estimated \$4.5 million. **Commissioner D'Aprile** said he would have to think about how much of the County's debt could be reduced by \$2 million.

Commissioner Cummings pointed out that the mandated cap is for 5 years; expressed concern that if the millage is lowered this year it would lower the base for the next 4 years; that many of the savings for this year are one-time savings; and that the County could be in a bind for the next 4 years if the base is lowered further. **Chairman Loftus** stated he would like to reduce the millage rates as much as possible, but has the same concerns as **Commissioner Cummings**; and indicated that he would support the full amount being used for debt reduction, but not being put in reserves.

Commissioner D'Aprile expressed concern with spending the full amount toward debt reduction and not retaining a portion for unforeseen expenses. **Commissioner Moore** stated that the difference in argument is that if the millage rate is reduced now, the base is lower next year and you scramble to reduce more, but that debt reduction is a legitimate one-time expenditure and does not penalize the budget controls that a reduction in millage would.

Chairman Loftus stated that this year there have been many non-recurring deductions, such as the Jail Expansion, but would have to be funded next year. **Chairman Loftus** inquired how much the reduction would amount to on a \$200,000 home. Mr. Sandrock estimated it would save about \$35.00 per year. **Commissioner Duffy** opined that the Board could find other ways next year to make up for reducing the millage rate.

Commissioner D'Aprile opined it would be better to pay one - half to reduce debt and hold back one - half for future debt. **Chairman Loftus** stated he would support that. **Commissioner Cummings** pointed out that department cuts were almost all one-time things, cannot be counted on happening every year, and would get tighter each of the next 4 years; and that having a reserve would be helpful to phase into the next 4 years. **Commissioner**

Cummings stated that the Board does not have all the information on how Murdock Village will pan out until a contract with Mr. Kitson is signed; that by placing the \$4 million in reserves now the Board keeps its options open because it is completely within the control of the Board what the funds are used for, and that several months from now the Board may have better information than it has tonight on where the greatest need is. **Commissioner Moore** asked if that was a motion. **Commissioner Cummings** indicated it could be if the Board wished it so. **Commissioner Moore** advised if it was a motion he would second it. **Commissioner D'Aprile** stated he needed more specifics.

COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS MOVED TO PLACE THE FULL \$4.5 MILLION INTO RESERVES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MOORE.

Commissioner D'Aprile inquired about the current reserves. Mr. Sandrock advised that there is \$5.5 million in contingency reserves in the General Fund today; that it was \$11/\$12 million last year; and about \$10 million the year before due to recovery.

Commissioner Cummings advised that between this year and last year the contingency reserves in the General Fund were reduced by slightly more than we presently have in reserves. **Chairman Loftus** recalled that some of the reserves were used to reduce the millage rate in the current year. **Commissioner Duffy** expressed concern that if the \$4 million is put into reserves it is too late to reduce the millage rate. **Commissioner Cummings** commented on the importance of the reserves. **Commissioner Duffy** stated that placing \$2 million of the savings in reserve would increase the reserves to \$7.5 million and that the remaining \$2 + million could be used to reduce the millage rate.

Chairman Loftus clarified that the motion on the floor is for the full \$4.5 million to be placed into reserves at this time. **Commissioner D'Aprile** opined that the Board must be frugal in spending money and stated that he believes there are ways to capture more money next year. **Commissioner D'Aprile** reported that he has a meeting scheduled, and has received support in his proposal to be avoid bidders from knowing how much money we have in the bank, and indicated that if it goes through it would save the County money. **Commissioner D'Aprile** stated that he is comfortable placing \$2.5 million in reserves and using \$2 million

to lower the millage rate, but he does not support the motion to place the entire \$4.5 million into reserves.

Motion Failed 2:3. Chairman Loftus, Commissioner Duffy, and Commissioner D'Aprile opposing.

COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED TO PLACE \$2.5 MILLION OF THE ESTIMATED \$4.5 MILLION INTO RESERVES, AND THAT THE REMAINING \$2 MILLION BE BROUGHT BACK TO REVENUE TO REDUCE THE MILLAGE RATE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DUFFY.

Mr. Loucks suggested that a tenth of a mill reduction be used to make it easier for Mr. Sandrock to calculate (Mr. Sandrock stated that it would be \$2,250,000.00), and the difference go into reserves.

COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED TO AMEND REDUCING THE MILLAGE RATE BY A TENTH OF A MILL, AND PLACING THE REMAINING FUNDS INTO RESERVES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DUFFY.

Commissioner Cummings pointed out that Senate Bill 360 went into effect last year requiring that we keep up with the infrastructure requirements, which is \$100 million over 5 years, or \$20 million per year; that we have already identified that we do not have the money to meet that requirement and be able to continue issuing building permits; and advised that he could support putting half of the \$4.5 million into reserves and half of it toward debt.

Motion Carried 4:1. Commissioner Cummings opposing.

Commissioner Duffy inquired if monies put into reserves could be used for infrastructure such as building roads. **Commissioner Cummings** replied affirmatively. **Commissioner Duffy** opined that when the time comes that is what should be done with the funds being put into reserves.

Mr. Loucks advised that the number used tonight is an estimate and would probably be different when the books are actually closed in about January 2008, and indicated that when the books are closed the definitive number would come back before the Board to decide what to do with it.

Commissioner Moore inquired that if next year the valuations drop 25%, what does that mean in dollars out of the budget. Mr. Sandrock explained that based upon the way the new tax reform is written, one of the parts of the calculation is that if the valuation decreases that as a starting point you can increase the millage rate so that it produces the same amount of revenues as this year, which is step one; and step two is that we have certain caps each year that we can increase that by and potentially you could see in year two, if you have that kind of valuation drop, an increase in the millage rate in order to get the same revenue that we have this year. **Commissioner Moore** confirmed that if this occurred next year that Mr. Sandrock would come back and explain why the increase in millage rates is proper. Mr. Sandrock replied affirmatively, and requested a break in order to re-compute.

RECESS: 5:30 PM-5:45 PM

Mr. Sandrock read the re-computed proposed County Wide funds, millage rates, and budget into the record and advised that the proposed County Wide millage rate is 4.5426 mills, which is under the rolled-back rate of 5.1018 mills, by 10.96%, and has been adjusted for the 0.1000 decrease in millage. Mr. Sandrock stated that the re-computed General Fund millage rate is 3.4830, with a total proposed budget of \$148,916,908; the Charlotte County Health Unit millage rate is .0709, budget \$1,747,075; Capital Projects Fund millage rate is 0.9887, budget \$108,705,537; County Transportation Trust Fund \$29,996,322; Charlotte County Law Library, \$38,095; Charlotte County Legal Aid \$75,000; Local Housing Assistance Trust Fund \$7,202,105; Special Grants Fund \$2,144,165; Stadium Improvement Fund \$25,500,000; Tourist Development Trust Fund \$2,843,370; Stadium Improvement Debt Service \$1,392,000; Charlotte County Land Fill \$33,286,229; Health Insurance Trust Fund \$17,826,923; Self Insurance Fund \$13,496,911; Road Improvement Fund \$168,221,749; with a total County Wide millage rate of 4.5426, and a total County Wide proposed budget of \$561,392,389.

Public Comment

Bruce Pomeroy spoke in favor of restoring funding for the DASH program.

Ron Jordan commented on improper facts being given by staff to support funding requests, lights, the number of people leaving Charlotte county due to loss of jobs and inability to keep their homes, and his concern with continued approval of developments in Charlotte County.

Howard Shaw commented on his discontent with the School Board and the half -cent sales tax proposal by the School Board not passing; opined that due consideration was not given at the MSBU meetings; expressed concern that he will have to sell his home and leave the area when his money is gone; and stated that he hopes there will be new faces sitting on the Board after the next election.

Grace Nurse gave an overview of the New Operation Cooper Street program and spoke in opposition of proposed budget cuts for this organization.

Taylor Duckett commented on her attendance and experiences at the New Operation Cooper Street program.

Joan Rhinehard expressed concern in the 80% cut in funding to the Council on Aging; and requested a \$25,000 increase, which would reduce the cut to 50%.

Gary Bergeron opined that taxes are being spent insufficiently; expressed concern with high property assessments, heavy traffic, no public transportation, difficulties in obtaining a business permit, and general concerns that persist in the community; and spoke against Murdock Village.

Charles L. Meyers commented on the poor drainage system at his residence; indicated he received no reply to correspondence inquiring when the Greater Port Charlotte MSBU became a taxing unit; opined that the Commissioners collectively should go to Tallahassee in support of the citizens; expressed concern with the number of residences for sale, the cost of Murdock Village, and the increase in the market value of his home when home values are going down. Mr. Meyers indicated there should be more fiscal responsibility; that good structures should not be destroyed to build new ones; but that instead there should be add-ons with technology placed in the new addition.

Gregory Whyte spoke in opposition of the reduction in funding to New Operation Cooper Street.

Daniel Chamberlain advised he is a new homeowner and needs help understanding how his smaller home can be assessed higher than a larger home located on the beach. Commissioner Duffy suggested that he call her office and schedule an appointment with her.

Carrie Pierce opined that the Commission is making an effort and that Frank Desguin, Property Appraiser, is working to solve issues for the entire community; that citizens need to know more about what the Special Revenue Fund is; that Murdock Village has not been addressed correctly and needs to be resolved, which would then allow funding for many organizations that were cut; commented on those areas of the budget she agrees with and those she does not; indicated that she is concerned with the lack of communication; that the Commissioners need to go to Tallahassee; and that the citizens need to see improvements.

Neal Borasch agreed that most citizens do not know what the Commissioners do; expressed concern with the many increases, closing of small businesses, loss of jobs, vacancies, foreclosures, and citizens moving; inquired if anyone has been in touch with the Governor for tax relief; opined that a vote should be put to the citizens to roll back taxes to the 2003 level, cap taxes on non-homesteaded owners and businesses, and allow tax incentives; and that county budgets, millage rates, taxes, and large investment projects be approved by a 51% vote of the citizens of Charlotte County.

Russell Garrad commented on the need to fund the non-profit organizations and indicated that if the Murdock Village contract is negotiated one month earlier the county could pay for the cuts to the non-profits.

Board Discussion and Action

Chairman Loftus explained that the Commissioners and Administration have gone to Tallahassee and commented on the inequity between the homestead, non-homestead, and commercial properties.

Commissioner D'Aprile stated that the Commissioners have heard the cry from the people on difficulties they are experiencing and how adjustments can be made; and indicated that some have been made tonight, but not enough. **Commissioner D'Aprile** explained that MSBU's are voted on by the citizens and agreed that there needs to be some type of education to the people of the community to make them aware of how funds are allocated.

Commissioner Duffy explained that it is frustrating for the Board when people do not have correct information; that the Board's function is to listen at the meetings, but corrections need to be made if it is determined someone has incorrect information; that anyone can communicate with the Board through various means, including personal visits by appointment; and indicated that the Board is making efforts to reduce costs.

Commissioner D'Aprile acknowledged that assessments have gone up and indicated that Assessors are doing what the law states they must do; reported that he is going to Tallahassee with a proposal for the County not to be required to disclose bid amounts; advised that he received a reply from the Governor with suggestions to concerns he had voiced; and requested that Mr. Meyers, Mr. Borasch, and anyone else who doesn't understand where the funds are spent to meet with him personally.

COMMISSIONER MOORE MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION # 2007- 146 APPROVING THE COUNTY WIDE MILLAGE RATE OF 4.5426 MILLS AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER D'APRILE.

Commissioner Duffy requested there be discussion on the non-profits and inquired if it was possible to give the Council on Aging an additional \$25,000 and New Operation Cooper Street an additional \$16,000.

Commissioner Moore withdrew his motion, and **Commissioner D'Aprile** withdrew his second.

Commissioner Duffy requested that funding be increased to the Council on Aging by \$25,000 and to New Operation Cooper Street by \$16,000.

Commissioner D'Aprile asked if there is to be consideration for DASH. Commissioner Duffy opined an adjustment was made at the last meeting. Chairman Loftus thought there had been an increase of \$37,500. Mr. Sandroch advised that the only adjustment at the last meeting was the Boys and Girls Club, but that there were changes made at the last Workshop. Commissioner D'Aprile suggested increasing funding to DASH by \$35,000; Commissioner Duffy recommended increasing funding to DASH by \$20,000. Commissioner D'Aprile clarified that funding would be as follows as a reduction from reserves: Council on Aging - \$25,000, New Operation Cooper Street - \$16,000, and DASH - \$20,000 and indicated that he would second this as a motion.

COMMISSIONER DUFFY MOVED TO APPROVE INCREASE IN FUNDING AS FOLLOWS: COUNCIL ON AGING - \$25,000, NEW OPERATION COOPER STREET - \$16,000, AND DASH - \$20,000, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER D'APRILE.

Commissioner Cummings pointed out that the only organization that requested funding but not getting it is the Charlotte Community Foundation, and recommended that funding in the amount of \$24,175 be given to Charlotte Community Foundation, which is half of its request.

Chairman Loftus clarified that reduction in reserves funding would be as follows: Council on Aging - \$25,000, New Operation Cooper Street - \$16,000, DASH - \$20,000, and Charlotte Community Foundation - \$24,175.

COMMISSIONER DUFFY MOVED TO AMEND MOTION TO APPROVE INCREASE IN FUNDING TO COUNCIL ON AGING - \$25,000, NEW OPERATION COOPER STREET - \$16,000, AND DASH - \$20,000, AND APPROVE FUNDING TO CHARLOTTE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION - \$24,175, AS A REDUCTION IN RESERVES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER D'APRILE.

Motion Carried 5:0.

Commissioner Duffy requested that next year there be a completely different procedure for handling non-profits. Commissioner Cummings commented on his visit to New Operation Cooper Street.

COMMISSIONER MOORE MOVED TO ADOPT THE COUNTY WIDE BUDGET OF \$561,392,389, AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER D'APRILE.
Motion Carried 5:0.

Mr. Sandrock pointed out that the County Wide millage rate must be adopted first.

COMMISSIONER MOORE MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2007-146 ADOPTING THE COUNTY WIDE MILLAGE RATE OF 4.5426 MILLS AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER D'APRILE.
Motion Carried 5:0.

COMMISSIONER MOORE MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2007-147 ADOPTING THE COUNTY WIDE BUDGET OF \$561,392,389 AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER D'APRILE.
Motion Carried 5:0.

II. VOTED DEBT SERVICE FUND (ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS) CONSERVATION CHARLOTTE FUND.

Mr. Sandrock read into the record the Environmentally Sensitive Lands voted millage rate of 0.2000 mills and tentative proposed budget of \$24,370,000.

Public Comment

Pete Quasious of the Audubon Society spoke in favor of the Environmentally Sensitive Lands and Conservation Charlotte Fund.

Board Discussion and Action

COMMISSIONER MOORE MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION # 2007-148 APPROVING THE ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS MILLAGE RATE OF 0.2000 MILLS AND RESOLUTION # 2007-149 APPROVING THE ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS TENTATIVE BUDGET OF \$24,370,000, AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER D'APRILE.
Motion Carried 5:0.

III. AD VALOREM -MUNICIPAL SERVICE TAXING UNITS -MSTUs

Mr. Sandrock read into the record the MSTU millage rates, roll back rates, and proposed budgets, and explained the proposed "aggregate" County millage rate is 6.0435 mills, which is 10.96% under the current year "aggregate" rolled-back rate of 6.7873 mills, and reflects the 0.1000 millage decrease in the County Wide Funds.

Public Comment - None

Board Discussion and Action

Commissioner Duffy asked why Ackerman Waterway District is 0.0000 mills, but reflects \$47,502 revenues. Mr. Sandrock explained that this is one of the units being converted to a MSBU from a MSTU and that the revenue shown is a balance.

COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED TO ADOPT THE MILLAGE RATES FOR EACH AD VALOREM DISTRICT BY RESOLUTION; THAT THE COUNTY MILLAGE RATE IS 6.0435 MILLS, WHICH IS 10.9% UNDER THE CURRENT YEAR "AGGREGATE" ROLLED-BACK RATE OF 6.7873 MILLS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MOORE.

Motion Carried 5:0.

Commissioner D'Aprile stated that we must also move the Ad Valorem District by Resolution.

COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION # 2007-150 APPROVING THE MILLAGE RATES FOR EACH AD VALOREM DISTRICT AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MOORE.

Mr. Sandrock pointed out there was a slight difference in the way the millage rate was read into the record and clarified that the proposed aggregate Charlotte County millage rate is 6.0435 mills, which is 10.96% under the current year "aggregate" rolled-back rate of 6.7873 mills.

Motion Carried 5:0.

Chairman Loftus stated that we must now adopt the budget for the Ad Valorem District by Resolution and indicated that the Chair would entertain a motion.

COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION # 2007-151 APPROVING THE BUDGETS FOR EACH AD VALOREM DISTRICT AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DUFFY.
Motion Carried 5:0.

IV. NON-COUNTY WIDE FUNDS AND NON-AD VALOREM MUNICIPAL SERVICE BENEFIT UNITS (MSBU)

Mr. Sandrock reported that the last section is the Non-County Wide Funds and Non-Ad Valorem Municipal Service Benefit Units (MSBU), which are grouped into different sections on pages 5-7; that the Special Revenue Funds (Non-MSBU) total proposed budget is \$133,684,909; that the Proprietary/Enterprise Funds total proposed budget is \$260,064,999; and that the Special Revenue Funds - MSBU's total proposed budget is \$109,146,300.

Public Comment

Aleshia Macomber advised that she has previously appeared before the Board regarding the issue of stormwater exemption for agricultural properties; that the matter started in 2005 when the Board was requested to change the Resolution that South County was exempt, and that if the Board exempts one part of the county it should exempt all parts of the county that meet the criteria that South County presented. Ms. Macomber read a letter from the Agricultural Natural Resource Advisory Committee (ANRAC) stating that the committee has determined that property owners whose lands lie in the Mid-County Stormwater Utility Assessment area qualify for exemption from the Mid-County Stormwater Utility Assessment; that those properties are consistent with the same criteria for exemption as smaller properties located in the South County Stormwater Utility Assessment; and that it is the recommendation of ANRAC that those properties and all other Charlotte County properties determined by the Property Appraiser to have bona fide agricultural greenbelt classifications be exempt from all stormwater utility assessments. Ms. Macomber requested the Board immediately adopt an appropriate Resolution and notify the Property Appraiser in order that a correction to the current tax rolls can be made.

Robert Thomas addressed the issue of the Mid-County Stormwater Utility Assessment exemption, and stated that he would like a

refund from previous years or have credit applied to the current year taxes.

Tim Verwiebe addressed the issue of the Mid-County Stormwater Utility Assessment exemption; stated that nothing has changed or is going to be changed in the drainage; that if South County has enjoyed the exemption for the last few years that Mid-County should be exempt as well, and opined that refunds should be given to the Mid-County property owners who have paid; and presented a letter from one of his neighbors, Dannie Raulerson, addressing the same issue.

Board Discussion and Action

Chairman Loftus explained that the matter must come before the Board as a Resolution; that no action can be taken tonight; but that it will be placed on the Board's agenda as quickly as possible.

Commissioner Moore agreed that what is fair in South County should be fair in this portion of the county as well; that it is only for those who "qualify"; and that it is not as clean as it sounds.

Commissioner Cummings expressed concern that there was not more participation at ANRAC; stated that the total revenue for the Mid-County Stormwater Unit is 10 times the other unit; that there is 10 times the amount of work being done there as what is being done in the other units; recalled the circumstances of when exemptions were given in South County; stated that it may not be the same as what is happening in Mid-County and possibly West County; and indicated that we may need to explore those who match the conditions of those in South County.

Tom O'Kane advised that the revenue for South County and West County is substantially less, primarily because the work done there is the main outfalls and stormwater ditches that convey very large areas of those parts of the county through the outfalls, and goes to the testing and monitoring of the Harbor. Mr. O'Kane stated that the central part of the county is the most developed as far as stormwater is concerned; that there are 30 + stormwater structures that must still be replaced; and that it would be many years before they are all done in Mid-County. Mr.

O'Kane commented on his concerns that Agricultural Exemption should only be for those who have active agricultural uses going on; stated that there is insufficient staff for monitoring; and that they rely on ANRAC to make recommendations and give guidance on how the agricultural properties are being managed. Mr. O'Kane reported that if the exemption is given the reduction in revenue for Mid-County would be about \$21,000 and for West County about \$6,200, which is fairly small in comparison to total collections.

Chairman Loftus opined that the current Resolution should be brought back as soon as possible to address the Agricultural issue. **Commissioner Moore** stated that those who are entitled and qualify should get the exemption regardless of how it affects the budget, but he is not certain how fast that can happen.

Commissioner Duffy inquired if it would take affect for the current year property taxes, provided it was brought back to the Board within the next couple weeks. Mr. Loucks advised the Board could provide for a refund. **Commissioner Duffy** asked if it can be fixed before the property owner's had to pay anything. Mr. Loucks said yes, but probably not before the November payment comes due. **Commissioner Duffy** advised that the Board would take care of it as soon as possible.

Commissioner Cummings opined that the likelihood of agricultural land increasing in the urban service area is slim.

COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION # 2007-152 APPROVING THE BUDGETS OF THE REMAINING NON-AD VALOREM FUNDS TOTALLING \$502,896,208, AS READ INTO THE RECORD BY MR. SANDROCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MOORE.

Commissioner Moore inquired if the Board wanted to continue moving forward with the action proposed in line item 14, on page 6, Greater Port Charlotte Street and Drainage Maintenance Unit, inasmuch as **Commissioner D'Aprile** is working on modifications to the Street and Drainage approaches with a possible re-work on that. **Chairman Loftus** commented on the 3 areas that are badly needed; opined that it is necessary to maintain and resurface them now; and indicated that it would cost more in the long run to delay the projects.

Mr. O'Kane pointed out that the Advisory Committee unanimously supported moving forward with doing the 3 areas; indicated that there is a tremendous back-log of drainage work that we have been unable to fund; and stated that we need to move forward on it.

Motion Carried 4:1. Commissioner Moore opposing.

ADJOURNED 7:25 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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