

March 9, 2009  
Special Session  
Bonifay, Florida

The Holmes County Board of Commissioners held a Special Session on the above date with the following members present: Commissioner Ron Monk, Commissioner Kenneth Williams, Commissioner Jim King, Commissioner Phillip Music, and Commissioner Monty Merchant, Chairman of the Board.

Alice Vickers, Deputy Clerk, was present and kept the minutes.

Chairman Merchant opened the meeting with prayer and led the pledge.

Chairman Merchant stated that the Board would be discussing revenue information that the Budget Office had prepared. Cody Taylor, Clerk, advised that the State had already passed down budget cuts earlier in the year and that there would possibly be more cuts after the new revenue forecast was released in a few days. He stated that the "fiscally constrained" funds and the "Amendment 1" funds had helped the County significantly, but if these funds were cut for the upcoming year, the County would be greatly affected. He also advised that information from the Property Appraiser's office indicated that the Board could not count on an increase in the tax roll to offset declining revenues for next budget year.

(Revenue Information)

The Board discussed inmate medical care. Cody Taylor, Clerk, advised that inmate medical bills for the first four months of the fiscal year had already exceeded the \$145,000 which was budgeted by more than \$31,000. He stated that the County may get some funds back through the "Catastrophic Insurance Policy" for one inmate's bills. He advised that he had checked with Jackson County who has a much higher inmate population and found that they budgeted only \$55,000 and contracted with their local hospital. The Board discussed working with our local hospital to provide this service since for the last few years they have not submitted a bid. Discussion also included checking with the Health Department to see if they were interested since they have a new doctor with inmate medical expertise.

(Inmate Medical Summary)

The Board discussed local revenues. Administrator Wood informed the Board that Emergency Medical Services revenues were up and commended the director for this. Cody Taylor, Clerk, stated that other local revenues were down particularly the Building Department. He stated that the law requires any excess building permit fees to remain in the Building Department and that a surplus had been rolled forward this year. He advised that if present revenue and expenditure trends continued in this department, there would be very little surplus to roll forward next year and the Board would have to begin subsidizing this budget from General Fund revenues.

(Building Department Summary)

The Board also discussed generating revenue by housing state prisoners or inmates for other counties at the jail. Cody Taylor, Clerk, stated that revenue had been received in the past for housing out-of-county inmates but that the Board should discuss this with the Sheriff.

Commissioner Monk asked that each department head evaluate their budgets to determine where any cuts could be made. Shep Eubanks, Extension Director, asked what percentage he should look to cut from his budget. Commissioner Monk responded that it would be a 12% to 15% cut from this year's budget. Administrator Wood stated that the option of taking time off without pay had been discussed in a department head meeting and that some were agreeable to that idea.

Susan Harris, Library Director, presented a reduced budget for the Board's consideration. She advised that the Library Grant had been reduced by approximately \$72,000 so she had reduced her budget accordingly.

Hubert Hendrix, Shop Supervisor, advised that his department had returned funds to the Board for the past two years. He stated that since the equipment was older and requiring more maintenance, he felt that he may not have funds to return at the end of this year. He also stated that he had changed the mechanics' vehicles to smaller trucks and was doubling up on the same vehicle when they were responding to service calls. Administrator Wood advised that good deals were available for equipment purchases at the present time. The Board discussed the cost of repairing the old equipment versus the cost of purchasing newer equipment.


Wanda Stafford, Emergency Management Director, stated that her State grant had been reduced by 4% but that her Federal grant had been increased. She also stated that she had received a \$25,000 supplement that would be expended on the new Emergency Operations Center building. She informed the Board that the County only provides between \$9,200 and \$10,000 towards her budget and that this amount has not changed for several years. She stated that the National Weather Service was considering paying the utility charges for the NOAA Weather Satellite which would help her budget. She also advised the Board to remember that one major storm would greatly impact her budget and other departments as well.

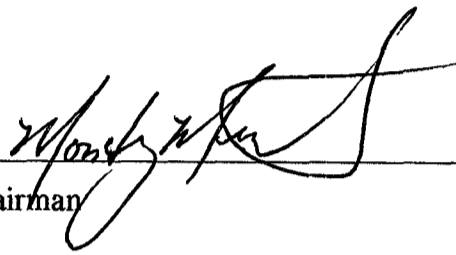
The Board discussed the FEMA paperwork progress. Wanda Stafford, Emergency Management Director, advised that everything was about to be closed and that the County would owe approximately \$9,000 back to FEMA.

Jerome Szczekot, EMS Director, advised that he was reducing his expenses by negotiating with the oxygen vendor and streamlining the phone bills. He asked the Board to consider raising the rate per mile for ambulance service to \$10.00 from the present \$8.00. He advised that in-house training had been provided to improve reporting procedures which should help to increase revenues.

Michele McDaniel, Planning & Zoning, asked if the Board wished for each department head to bring their recommendations for budget cuts and changes in fee schedules to the next night Board meeting. Chairman Merchant confirmed that this should be done at the last meeting in March.

Commissioner Williams offered a motion to adjourn with Commissioner Music offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

  
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Clerk

  
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Chairman