

Commissioner's Minutes of November 6, 2007

The County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Tuesday, November 6, 2007. Purpose of the meeting was to review, consider, and/or adopt the 2008 General Fund Budget and the 2008 Judicial Management Fund Budget.

Chairman Whittington called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call all Commissioners present.

Public comments – none

Chairman Whittington then opened the Public Hearing.

County Financial Coordinator Laura Brandon explained the budget binders that were presented for each member and provided for the public. General Fund Budget first, followed by the Judicial Management Fund Budget.

Ms. Brandon explained discussions had at the last workshop- noting that 2 matters had been returned to the committee. The budget committee, after review with the department heads, are presenting the proposed budget which includes the two positions that were reviewed – namely an additional position in the Prosecuting Attorneys Office as well as an additional court clerk in the County Clerk's Office.

Commissioner Rhode commented on the position of the Budget committee's Recommendation on the position in the Prosecutor's Office – noting that the current 80% position will be 100% funded and the new position will be at least 80% funded by the Cooperative Reimbursement Grants. Discussion.

Commissioner Rhode then addressed the request from the Clerk for an additional court clerk position. Commissioner Rhode explained the need of the additional clerk because of the increase in work load created by the addition of the second Circuit Court Judge. Discussion.

Commissioner Carl commented on the 1 ½ % raise being offered and built into the budget and noted that he feels part-time employees with over 10 years of service should also be given the same raise as well as elected officials (excepting Commissioners) Discussion.

Commissioner then moved **to close the public hearing** and return to special session. Motion supported by Commissioner Hargrave. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Rhode then moved to **approve the budget** as presented with the following adjustments – **1 ½ increase to non-union part-time employees with over 10 years of service and a 1 ½ % increase for Elected Officials (excluding Commissioners)**. Motion supported by Commissioner Hoag. Roll call vote as follows: Commissioner Hargrave-no, Carl-yes, Rhode-yes, Reid-yes, Posey-yes, Hoag-yes and Whittington-yes. With 6 yes and 1 no, ayes carried, and **the 2008 General Fund Budget is declared adopted**.

Chairman Whittington thanked Department heads and commission members for their assistance and help in putting together the budget. He noted that it is a long process and while there things that each may not agree with – we all need to work together for the good of the County.

The question was then raised as to consideration of the Judicial Management Budget, with Magistrate Greer raising a couple of issues to be adjusted.

Commissioner Hoag then moved that the Board **return to Public Hearing for discussion on the proposed 2008 Judicial Management Budget**. Motion supported by Commissioner Carl. Ayes carried, motion passed.

District Court Magistrate Mike Greer commented on the revenue line for District Court attorney fees- feeling that they are estimated about \$10,000 to high. Mr. Greer also commenting on his “newness” to the position had failed to realize that District Court Supplemental fees are no longer received and the budget would need to be adjusted by the \$27,000 shown for that line. Mr. Greer also questioned his JMS support expense and where that expense is recorded. Ms. Brandon explained which expense line is used to record JMS support expense

Board members then questioned Ms. Brandon regarding the adjustments that Mr. Greer has brought up. Ms. Brandon replied that the Budget could be adopted as is – with amendments being made for those adjustments at the first of the year by increasing the appropriation from general fund unallocated.

Judge Roy Mienk spoke on his need for a law clerk, and that no funding was provided for in the proposed budget. Judge explained that he would like a part-time clerk for 20 hours per week with the cost to be split with Clare County. He noted that he would be addressing this issue with Clare County at their next meeting. Discussion

Commissioner Hoag then moved to **close the Public Hearing** and again return to special session. Motion supported by Commissioner Posey. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Carl then moved to **fund a law clerk for Judge Mienk for 20 hours per week, pending agreement by Clare County**. Motion supported by Commissioner Hoag. Roll call vote as follows: Commissioner Carl-yes, Rhode-no, Reid-yes, Posey-yes, Hoag-yes, Whittington –no and Hargrave-yes. 5 yes and 2 no, ayes carried, motion passes.

Commissioner Hoag then moved to approve the 2008 Judicial Management Budget as amended. Motion supported by Commissioner Reid. Roll call vote as follows: Commissioner Rhode-no, Reid-yes, Posey-yes, Hoag-yes, Whittington-no, Hargrave-yes and Carl-yes. 5 yes and 2 no, ayes carried, **the 2008 Judicial Management Budget is adopted.**

Commissioner Hargrave commented that the amount from unallocated was much lower for the 2008 budget than the 2007 budget – so we were making strides. He then questioned the remodeling request for the Clerk’s office. Discussion. Matter referred to Building & Grounds committee.

Commissioner Reid also commented on the decrease in dollars from unallocated to support the 2008 budget – noting that it was less than half of what had been transferred to support the 2007 budget. Commissioner Reid also voiced his concerns about the amount of deficit to come from unallocated, the drastic cuts on State funding to the County and the Wiggins Lake/Chappel Dam bond that must be considered before year end.

Shirley Gagne questioned the 2008 budget and the elimination of her position, and asked if she could apply for any current openings in county offices. Mrs. Gagne was informed that county positions were posted prior to hiring and she was free to apply for any position.

Further discussion on remodeling projects and the status of project cost quotes.

Commissioner Rhode then moved that Mr. Ghent proceed with gathering quotes for remodeling in the Prosecutor and Clerk’s offices, and further that the matters be reviewed by the Building and Grounds committee prior to the next board meeting. Motion supported by Commissioner Hoag. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Carl then moved to adjourn, supported by Commissioner Hoag. Ayes carried, motion passed, meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m. until November 13, 2007 unless otherwise ordered.

Laura Flach
Clerk

Terry Whittington
Chairman