

PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA

JUNE 19, 2007

SPECIAL MEETING

The Gulf County Board of County Commissioners met this date in special session with the following members present: Chairman Bill Williams, Vice Chairman Jerry W. Barnes, and Commissioners Carmen L. McLemore, Billy E. Traylor and Nathan Peters, Jr.

Others present were: County Attorney Timothy McFarland, Clerk Executive Administrator Towan Kopinsky, Clerk Finance Officer Carla Hand, Chief Administrator Don Butler, Deputy Administrator Lynn Lanier, Building Official Lee Collinsworth, Building Inspector George Knight, Emergency Management Director Marshall Nelson, Emergency Management/911 Coordinator Ben Guthrie, G.I.S. Director Larry Davis, Grant Writer Loretta Costin, Gulf County E.M.S. Director Shane McGuffin, Human Resources Director Denise Manuel, Mosquito Control Director Mark Cothran, Planner David Richardson, Public Works Director Gerald Shearer, P.W./S.W./M.C. Secretary Karen Collinsworth, Road Department Superintendent Bobby Knee, Assistant Road Department Superintendent Chris Wood, Solid Waste Director Joe Danford, T.D.C. Director Paula Pickett, Veterans' Service Officer James Kennedy, and Sheriff's Office Major Joe Nugent.

Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m., E.T.

E.D.C. / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Jim Townsend, Gulf County E.D.C. Chairman, appeared before the Board to discuss offshore leases for oil (requesting support from the Board) , and introduced Bob Sanchez, of the James Madison Institute. Mr. Sanchez discussed their research regarding energy, and how the United States is dependent upon foreign oil. He discussed the U.S. Senate proposed Energy Bill, and that the State could possibly receive coastal impact funding as is distributed to Alabama, Texas and Louisiana if they support offshore oil exploration which would be located 125-150 miles offshore. Allen Cox, Port Authority Chairman, reported that the Port Authority supports offshore drilling and the opportunity to obtain some independence from foreign imports and for economic benefit for Gulf County. Tommy Pitts, Port Authority Executive Director, thanked E.D.C. and Mr. Sanchez for bringing up this issue, and he stated that the Port Authority will be preparing a resolution in support of offshore drilling. Stuart Shoaf, St. Joe Natural Gas Company, discussed that his company and the Florida Natural Gas Association supports this, and they feel Florida is missing out on the opportunity for future revenues. He stated that they think that gas and oil are available domestically, and he requested that the Board also adopt a resolution of support. After discussion regarding current gasoline prices, Commissioner Peters motioned for County Attorney McFarland to work with E.D.C. and the Port Authority to draft a resolution in support of this endeavor. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

STATE & COUNTY BUDGET ISSUES

Chief Administrator Butler discussed the legislation recently passed that requires Gulf County to adopt a budget for 2007-08 that is 9% less in ad valorem taxes than what they have for 2006-07 (not including the M.S.T.U./M.S.B.U.). He reported that the 2008-09 budget can only increase by the cost of living increase, and 2009-10 can only increase by the cost of living

increase and new construction. He stated that there are several things the Board can do (i.e. - discontinue providing building inspection services for the Cities, etc.), and he would like for them to be able to sit down and look at all of the options before making a decision. Chairman Williams also discussed the Constitutional Amendment that will be voted on in January that could also tremendously affect ad valorem tax revenue. After discussion by members of the Board regarding fire assessments, State mandated increases (retirement, etc.) and steps the Board may have to take to reduce the budget, Commissioner McLemore requested that the Board proceed with the budget process as quickly as possible. Upon discussion by Clerk Finance Officer Hand regarding the tentative budget requests and packet, the Board requested that she delay preparation of the packets until next Wednesday (June 27th), because the budget requests that have been submitted to her are useless now that this reduction is required. After discussion, Chairman Williams scheduled special budget meetings for Friday, June 22nd, Monday, June 25th, Tuesday, June 26th and Wednesday, June 27th from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., E.T. each day.

The meeting did then recess at 3:06 p.m., E.T.

The meeting reconvened at 3:19 p.m., E.T.

STATE & COUNTY BUDGET ISSUES

Chairman Williams discussed preparation of the budget requests and issues the Board will have to face during the budget sessions regarding employees. Commissioner Peters and other members of the Board thanked Clerk Finance Officer Hand for the hard work she put into preparing the tentative budget with the previous Departmental requests that are now of no use.

WEEKEND PARK CLEANUP

Commissioner Peters discussed that an individual was hired to perform weekend park cleanup for the North end of the County, and one needs to be hired for the South end of the County. Upon discussion by Chief Administrator Butler that the same individual has been working on various parks on both ends of the County, Commissioner Peters motioned to contract with a separate individual for weekend park cleanup on the South end of the County. Commissioner McLemore seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

COUNTY-WIDE BURN BAN

After discussion by Commissioner McLemore and Planner Richardson regarding the recent rainfall in Gulf County, Commissioner McLemore motioned to lift the County-Wide Burn Ban. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Commissioner Peters requested that Planner Richardson notify the Board if the Fire Danger Level increases.

LANDFILL

Commissioner Peters discussed that he is concerned about making the landfill self-supporting, and has met with Chief Administrator Butler regarding this matter and how it will be affected by the recent budget legislation.

STATE & LOCAL BUDGET ISSUES

Jeremy Branch, Jackson County Commissioner, appeared before the Board to discuss that Jackson County is required to have a 0% roll-back, but the Homestead Exemption element

planned for January could potentially cause them a 50% reduction in their ad valorem tax base. Upon inquiry by Commissioner McLemore, Commissioner Branch stated that Jackson County currently has a millage rate of 8.00.

FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Upon discussion by Chairman Williams, Commissioner Traylor motioned to advertise to receive sealed bids for fire equipment for the new White City Fire Department fire truck. Commissioner McLemore seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Upon request by Chief Administrator Butler, Commissioner Traylor motioned to advertise to receive sealed bids for bunker gear for the Beaches Fire Department. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Chairman Williams discussed Board approval to advertise to receive bids for design/build buildings for Highland View Fire Department, stating they need to carry forward \$200,000.00 into the 2007-08 budget to cover the cost of the building. Upon motion by Commissioner Peters, second by Commissioner Traylor, and unanimous vote, the Board approved this request. Upon inquiry, Chairman Williams stated that he will inquire with South Gulf County Fire Department to determine if they also need to carry forward funds for their building, and will notify Clerk Finance Officer Hand as soon as possible.

Upon inquiry by Chairman Williams, Chief Administrator Butler discussed that is now up to the County to take the necessary action to ensure that all areas are in a Fire Control District (re-draw the lines). He further reported that the Board may want to consider having a fire assessment that is charged so that everyone pays.

SPECIAL PROJECTS PAYMENTS

Upon motion by Commissioner Peters, second by Commissioner Barnes, and unanimous vote, the Board approved the following Special Projects payments:

Dist. 1	Wewahitchka Fire Department - Donation	\$ 100.00
	P.S.J.H.S. Summer Weightlifting Program - Donation	\$ 200.00
Dist. 2	P.S.J.H.S. Summer Weightlifting Program - Donation	\$ 200.00
Dist. 3	P.S.J.H.S. Summer Weightlifting Program - Donation	\$ 200.00
Dist. 4	P.S.J.H.S. Summer Weightlifting Program - Donation	\$ 200.00
Dist. 5	P.S.J.H.S. Summer Weightlifting Program - Donation	\$ 200.00

(End of Special Projects)

LANDFILL

Solid Waste Director Danford made a presentation to the Board regarding a cost analysis for landfill operation, stating that it will cost approximately \$62.40 per ton to operate the landfills. He stated that the new rules require that Class III Landfills have a liner or the Board must adopt a C.C.A. Management Plan, because these materials can no longer be placed in the landfill (it must be placed in a roll-off container and taken to Bay County for incineration which would cost approximately \$130,000.00 per year, \$70,000.00 of this being tipping fees to Bay County).

He then made the following recommendations:

- 1) That the County only open the landfill 4-5 days per week.
- 2) Advertise for bids for metal recycling. Upon motion by Commissioner Traylor, second by Commissioner Barnes, and unanimous vote, the Board approved this request.
- 3) Recycling/Give away usable lumber that is stored in a special area.
- 4) New Class III Landfill Site. He stated that St. Joe Company has agreed to give the County 100 acres for use as a landfill, and he would like to utilize 80 acres on S. R. 22 (Clay Smallwood is amiable to this). Upon his request, Commissioner Peters motioned to proceed with having the soil tested on the proposed 80-acre site, and Commissioner McLemore seconded the motion. <Commissioner Traylor left the meeting at 3:40 p.m.> After further discussion, the motion passed unanimously (4-0). Upon inquiry, Solid Waste Director Danford stated there are funds for this in the 2006-07 budget to pay these costs. <Commissioner Traylor returned to the meeting at 3:42 p.m.>
- 5) He then discussed the possibility of obtaining 20 acres from the St. Joe Company near Five Points Landfill to use for debris storage and obtain a transfer system to place at Five Points Landfill to compact the debris and haul it to the new landfill site on S. R. 22 for burial. He stated that the Board could have a "chipping" area and also consider selling the wood chips for mulch, etc. for landscaping.

Solid Waste Director Danford discussed the possibility of creating a M.S.B.U. to fund the landfill, stating that would insure that everyone pays for solid waste services. Upon discussion by Commissioner Peters regarding increasing the landfill tipping fees to \$50.00 per ton, Commissioner Traylor stated that he feels this would cause people to dump their debris in the woods. Members of the Board thanked Solid Waste Director Danford for this presentation.

There being no further business and upon motion by Commissioner McLemore, second by Commissioner Traylor, and unanimous vote, the meeting did then adjourn at 3:53 p.m., E.T.

**BILL WILLIAMS
CHAIRMAN**

ATTEST:

**REBECCA L. NORRIS
CLERK**