

**Official Minutes of
MARION COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

July 16, 2021

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners met in a workshop session in Commission Chambers at 9:08 a.m. on Friday, July 16, 2021 at the Marion County Governmental Complex located in Ocala, Florida.

INTRODUCTION OF WORKSHOP BY CHAIRMAN JEFF GOLD

Chairman Gold advised that the workshop was scheduled this morning regarding the fiscal year (FY) 2021-22 proposed budget.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call the following members were present: Chairman Jeff Gold, District 3; Commissioner Craig Curry, District 1; Commissioner Kathy Bryant, District 2; and Commissioner Michelle Stone, District 5. Vice-Chairman Carl Zalak, District 4, was absent due to a prior commitment. Also present were County Attorney Matthew G. Minter; County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes; Fiscal Manager Mike McCain; Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Jeannie Rickman; ACA Angel Roussel, and ACA Tracy Straub.

OPENING REMARKS - Audrey Fowler, Budget Director

Budget Director Audrey Fowler presented a 5-page handout entitled, "Marion County Board of County Commissioners Budget Adjustments Tentative Budget Fiscal Year 2021-22, Adjustments through July 15, 2021". She advised that this document reflects an update from Thursday, July 15, 2021, noting \$50,000.00 of additional turn back money from the Tax Collector's Office was added to the General Fund Reserve for Contingencies.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Bryant advised that the Rainbow Lakes Estates (RLE) Advisory Board voted to move forward with looking into the option of their Fire Department being taken on by Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR).

OPENING REMARKS – Jonathan Lin, Court Administrator

Court Administrator Jonathan Lin appeared to review the proposed FY 2021-22 budgets for Cost Center 210, Court Administrator (page 77); Cost Center 211, Court Administration – Technology (page 78); Cost Center 213, Circuit Court Judges (page 80); Cost Center 214, Circuit Court Judges – Technology (page 81); Cost Center 215, Circuit Court Judges Legal Research (page 83); Cost Center 216, Circuit Court Legal Research – Technology (page 84); Cost Center 218, County Court Judges (page 85); Cost Center 219, County Court Judges – Technology (page 86); Cost Center 260, Law Library (pages 88 & 275); Cost Center 264, County Court Summary Claims Mediation (page 91); Cost Center 265, Family Mediation (page 92); Cost Center 266, Pre Trial Release, (page 93); Cost Center 267, Other Circuit Court Juvenile (page 95); Cost Center 280, Teen Court (page 98); Cost Center 282, Drug Court (page 100); Cost Center 283, Drug Court Expansion (page 102); Cost Center 284, Misdemeanor Drug Court (page 104); Cost

July 16, 2021

Center 290, DUI Court (page 107); Cost Center 291, Veterans Court (page 108); Cost Center 292, Mental Health Court (page 110); Cost Center 261, Legal Aid Services of Mid Florida (page 276); Cost Center 270, Court Innovations Staff Attorney (page 277) and Cost Center 272, Juvenile Alternative Program Drug Court (page 279). Also present were Judge Robert Hodges, Administrative Judge for Marion County, and Director of Problem-Solving Courts, Alina Stoothoff, Court Administration.

Judge Robert Hodges advised that Judge Scott retired, and he has taken over as the Administrative Judge for Marion County. He stated former Chief Judge S. Sue Robbins will retire in October and Judge Peter Brigham has come over from Citrus County and has taken Judge Scott's place and Judge Stacy Youmans, also from Citrus County will take Judge Robbins' place.

Judge Hodges expressed his appreciation for the Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) support of the Court system in general, noting there is a new Magistrate helping in Dependency who is already up and running. He stated there are multiple Diversionary Courts that save money for the judicial system, help prevent crime, and hopefully lower the recidivism rate for each of the individuals that have been to any of these Courts.

Judge Hodges advised that a large amount of COVID-19 funding was used to increase technology in the Courthouse so that hearings can be conducted for anywhere in the world via Zoom meetings. He stated that he worked throughout the entire pandemic as did most of the judges, allowing for hearings the entire time. There has been a huge increase in the number of hearing requests because individuals can attend remotely. Judge Hodges advised that jury trials started on the first day allowed by the Florida Supreme Court, noting the Courts are conducting in-person trials but can use Zoom for witness testimony during those trials.

Judge Hodges expressed appreciation for the Board's support relating to security. He stated the Courthouse is a big target, and measures continue to ensure the safety of staff and the public in that facility.

Judge Hodges advised that planning has begun relating to the build-out of the 4th floor of the Courthouse, noting the 3rd and 4th floors of the new portion of the Courthouse (JC-3) are shells. He stated the floors are there, but they are empty. Plans include space for the State Attorney's Office and a high-capacity courtroom for high profile trials, with additional space for up front for the attorneys and television cameras, etc.

In response to Commissioner Bryant, Director of Problem-Solving Courts Alina Stoothoff, Court Administration, advised that the Diversion Courts are conservative in the way they count dollars so when divided by 50 percent (%) of the maximum time spent in jail, excluding juvenile programs, there was a savings of \$5,852,129.38. Ms. Stoothoff stated that figure does not include community impact, for example, individuals holding jobs, paying taxes, and court costs.

Judge Hodges stated another benefit relates to individuals that do not become victims of crime.

Clerk Harrell advised that the County could not have a better Court Administrator, Administrative Judge, and team of Judges, noting their professionalism.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Court Administration budget.

OPENING REMARKS - Beth McCall, Executive Director, Marion County Children's Alliance

Executive Director Beth McCall, Marion County Children's Alliance, appeared to review

the Department's proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center 136, Marion County Children's Alliance (page 43).

Ms. McCall expressed appreciation to the BCC for its support of the Marion County Children's Alliance, not only through funding but also through the donation of space. She advised that the Children's Alliance did not shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic and was very busy during this time. Ms. McCall stated through the Domestic Violence Task Force, the agency served close to 200 women and children with emergency services, including putting them in motels and providing gas cards to allow travel to safe locations.

Ms. McCall advised that last year the agency partnered with Project Hope and rented an apartment used to serve 13 families, noting they can stay 30 days, but must have a plan to get on their feet, to move into a safe environment and find work. She stated 550 children were served during the holidays, noting they were provided with Christmas and food for their families and the mothers were supplied with much-needed gift cards.

Ms. McCall advised that Jerry Lourenco allowed the Children's Alliance to use the Friends Recycling, LLC., facility for a drive-through backpack drive that was successful, noting the same thing is planned for July 31, 2021.

Ms. McCall stated there are 700 students in the SADD (students against destructive decisions) Club. She advised that the Children's Alliance partnered with the Ocala Drive-in for a "Friday Nights Done Right" event to show children they can have fun without drugs and alcohol.

Ms. McCall advised that the Children's Alliance has a grant with the Department of Health (DOH) in Marion County, to assist with substance exposed newborns (SENs) born at AdventHealth, noting one of her passions when she took on this role was to determine what could be done to solve the problem of SENs. She stated a SENs Task Force was formed and is using the grant from DOH to provide a peer facilitator to help with that initiative. Ms. McCall advised that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the ability to identify and work with those women, but the Children's Alliance will be meeting with Mr. Lander and possibly the Heart of Florida (HOF) to take the next steps to solve the issue. She stated many SENs become the school system's Emotional/Behavioral Disability (E/BD) children.

Ms. McCall advised of a grant through the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), noting they have served over 130 children identified as students who have already entered the DJJ system, or have the propensity to end up in that system. She stated the Children's Alliance has been successful in providing mentors for those students. Ms. McCall advised that through this program, they have developed "barbershop talks". She stated most of these talks occur on the West side of Ocala, where they bring in young men and positive role models to have talks in locations where those young men are familiar. The talks are going very well and being run by Mentor Dominic McDonald.

Ms. McCall advised she would love it if her job went away and the Marion County Children's Alliance was not needed because the community was treating its children the way they need to be treated, providing them all with safe havens, and a good family.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Marion County Children's Alliance budget.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Stone opined that all the agencies presenting today enjoy some form of financial assistance from the BCC and questioned whether the Board could ask them all to submit their meeting minutes to the Clerk of Court's office so they

July 16, 2021

can be included in the Board packages. She stated any Boards that Commissioners have been appointed to serve as liaisons on, should also provide the minutes and other documentation.

OPENING REMARKS – Roseann Fricks, Early Learning Coalition

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Roseann Fricks, Early Learning Coalition (ELC), appeared to review the proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center 137, Early Learning Coalition (page 44). Ms. Fricks presented a folder containing a 4 page handout entitled, “Early Learning Coalition of Marion County”, containing 8 slides to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation, a 1 page handout entitled, “This is why...”, and a 1 page laminated handout showing some of the programs offered at the Early Learning Coalition. Also present was Todd Panzer, Board member and ELC Officer. Ms. Fricks stated the funding request being presented reflects no increase. She expressed appreciation towards the BCC for all they do to support the children of Marion County.

Mr. Panzer advised that he not only has a hand in helping Marion County children, but is also a recipient of that help, noting he and his wife have been foster parents in the community for nearly 10 years and have had roughly 29 children through their home in addition to adopting children. He stated those children all received the ELC’s funding that helps them with education, school readiness, and childcare, noting the financial impact of childcare on families. Mr. Panzer advised that the ELC allows individuals to be looking for work, helps with childcare, and helps the children be invested in socialization and school readiness.

Chairman Gold thanked Mr. Panzer for carrying on his father, Dr. Robert Panzer’s legacy, and for volunteering to serve on multiple Boards.

CEO Roseann Fricks advised that while the doors were locked, the ELC remained open during the COVID-19 pandemic and continued to provide services. She stated the request for this year is \$125,000.00, the same as last year. Ms. Fricks advised that there are 396 children on their waitlist for school readiness services, noting applicants must go through an initial eligibility process and that occurs through the waitlist. She stated the waitlist is being cleared off, with 118 called off the waitlist since July 1, 2021.

Ms. Fricks advised that the number of childcare providers contracted varies, as some of those businesses have made the decision to no longer be in business due to the lack of ability to find qualified staff. She stated parents can select the setting of their choice for childcare if it is a provider that meets the ELC’s qualifications and guidelines and contracts with them.

Ms. Fricks referred to a slide relating to the School Readiness Program in Marion County, noting ELC served an average of 2,460 unduplicated children. That number can often be doubled to account for age changes that require each child move to a different care level. She advised that roughly 5,000 children receive services during any given year. Ms. Fricks stated the eligibility category funded by the Board is different from the eligibility category that funds services Mr. Panzer receives. She advised that the only eligibility priority that calls for individuals to be on a waitlist and meet a variety of requirements relates to the economically disadvantaged, who need to be in school, or a work activity, and must to contribute to the cost of their childcare.

Ms. Fricks stated the request for \$125,000.00 remains 100% for services and for those working families that are eligible to receive services. She stated the average cost is about \$12.00 per day for 12 hours of care.

Ms. Fricks advised that the ELC remains committed to providing services for these

children. She stated that while the Statute requires 78% of the ELC budget go to direct services, the coalition has always gone above and beyond and in the most recent year, it was 87%. Ms. Fricks advised that over \$489,000.00 was provided to these small businesses to assist with their needs so they could redirect other funds, whether that was for training opportunities, cleaning supplies, or other resources needed to keep doors open.

Ms. Fricks stated the ELC is fortunate to have numerous community partners, noting they receive grants for car seats, pack and plays, diaper bags full of supplies for new mothers, etc.

Chairman Gold commented on the anonymous donors that are often overlooked.

Commissioner Bryant thanked ELC for being present and for all they have done for the children that have benefitted from this program. She advised that she wished ELC had been an option for her when she was a single mother paying for childcare.

In response to Commissioner Bryant, Ms. Fricks stated this year because of the influx of federal funds, the Legislators in Tallahassee have changed the match ratio from \$16.00 per \$1.00 to \$1.00 per \$1.00.

Commissioner Bryant questioned the impact of the decrease on the ELC. Ms. Fricks advised that her organization has not received their specific allocation from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) yet, noting their budget for this year is starting out lower but will increase because of those funds and they are in a position to serve all eligible families.

Commissioner Bryant asked Ms. Fricks to put something in writing that shows what the ELC could do with an increase of approximately \$25,000.00.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Early Learning Coalition budget.

OPENING REMARKS – Jennifer Martinez, Director, Marion Senior Services/Transit

Transit Director Tom Wilder, Marion Senior Services/Transit, appeared to review the Department's proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center, 138, Marion Senior Services/Transit (page 45). Also present was Finance Director Patty Yoder.

Mr. Wilder thanked the Board for their continued support of public transportation for Marion County, specifically for the County's transportation disadvantaged citizens. He advised that this year Marion Senior Services is requesting slightly less funding for the next fiscal year to be used as local match funds for the organization's federal dollars.

Mr. Wilder stated the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the organization, noting trips were reduced by 50% and have slowly begun to increase again over the past several months. He advised that the organization is currently operating at roughly 75% to 80% of pre-COVID-19 trips and continues to see trip increases every month. Mr. Wilder stated Marion Transit never shut down or stopped providing transportation service during the peak of the pandemic. He advised that a disinfecting regiment was developed and reviewed by DOH, which had no additional recommendations. Mr. Wilder stated the buses continue to be disinfected and have equipment onboard to clean the air and protect the drivers.

Mr. Wilder advised that because the organization is considered public transportation, they are required to follow the federal rules with regards to wearing masks, social distancing, etc. He stated the reduced trips allowed the organization to social distance on the buses.

Mr. Wilder advised that as the result of receiving CARES Act funding, the organization did not utilize all its match requests for this fiscal year. He stated because the CARES Act funding did not require any local match, approximately \$500,000.00 of that request will not be used, but going forward the FY2021-22 CARES Act funds will have been

July 16, 2021

exhausted and the organization will be required to apply a match, which is why there is a request for roughly the same amount.

Mr. Wilder advised that on behalf of Marion Senior Services and Marion Transit, he thanks the Board for their partnership in helping provide rural public transportation for those individuals who have no other means of getting to their medical and life-sustaining activities.

In response to Chairman Gold, Mr. Wilder stated the Ordinance relating to transport contains language that exempts this organization.

Commissioner Curry commented on the tremendous job this organization does, noting they are a lifeline to a lot of individuals.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Marion Senior Services/Transit budget.

OPENING REMARKS – Darrell Riley, Chairman, Historical Commission

Chairman Darrell Riley, Historical Commission, appeared to review the proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center 145, Historical Commission (page 47).

Mr. Riley expressed appreciation towards Commissioner Curry for the job he has done as the Board liaison to the Historical Commission.

Mr. Riley advised that the Historical Commission serves as a liaison between the BCC and the Marion County Historical Museum and provides advice to the BCC relating to historical matters.

Mr. Riley stated the Historical Commission has one of the smaller budgets of any group that the BCC funds. He advised that the work performed is important as it preserves the County's history which aids in understanding the present and moving towards the future.

Mr. Riley stated it has been a difficult year for the Historical Commission relating to public meetings, noting they have met the COVID-19 requirements and offered telephonic meetings for a while. He advised that recently meetings have been held offsite at locations including West Ocala and Fort McCoy and the Historical Commission plans to take advantage of the meeting rooms within the Marion County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) subdivisions.

Mr. Riley stated the Historical Commission is partially responsible for overseeing the Marion County Museum of History and Archeology and accepts artifacts on behalf of the BCC to be displayed and stored at the museum. He advised that the Historical Commission also provides some monetary support to the museum, especially for archival supplies. The Historical Commission supplies the flags for the police officers display and the 5 flags display on the McPherson Governmental Campus, which are replaced every 6 months. Mr. Riley commented on the expense related to these flags, noting the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) is the most expensive and the hardest to find.

Mr. Riley stated the Historical Commission is considering the addition of historical markers in the future and have approved the wording on a marker to acknowledge and commemorate lynchings that occurred in Marion County between the 1860s and the 1920s, noting they are in the process of identifying a location to put that marker. He advised that once the BCC approves the location, the information is submitted to the State, the State approves it, advises of the cost, and oversees the making and shipping of the marker. The process takes anywhere from 9 months to a year. The State Board that approves markers only meets quarterly. Mr. Riley stated in the future there are plans to add more markers, noting the many locations and events in Marion County that need to be commemorated with markers. He advised that in future years the Historical

Commission looks forward to asking for additional funding to cover more than just 1 marker per year. A marker costs between one-third and half of the current budget.

Mr. Riley stated prior to COVID-19 the Historical Commission was part of Marion County Day and the Founder's Day celebrations, which they plan to continue.

Mr. Riley advised that he is requesting the same funding amount as last year of \$9,000.00. Commissioner Curry stated he has enjoyed being the liaison Commissioner to this group and has tried to add some value.

Commissioner Stone advised that she appreciated Mr. Riley's years of service to the Board and the work relating to preserving the County's history. She encouraged the Historical Commission Board to go outside and look for funding for any sort of markers.

Mr. Riley stated the marker that is currently being considered will likely receive funding from outside groups.

In response to Commissioner Bryant, Mr. Riley advised that the Historical Commission approves the wording, but the BCC approves the location. He stated once the marker is set up, it must be maintained by the County.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Historical Commission budget.

OPENING REMARKS – Justin Albright, Chairman, Marion Soil Conservation District

Chairman Justin Albright, Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, appeared to review the Department's proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center 147, Marion Soil Conservation District (page 49).

Mr. Albright expressed appreciation towards the BCC for their help and support. He advised that the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District's biggest impact relates to assisting farmers with implementing best management practices (BMPs) and providing cost-share funds via the State to local farmers. Mr. Albright stated Marion Soil Conservation District provided funding to 27 farmers during the past year, and nearly \$400,000.00 in cost-share funds from the State despite the limitations related to the COVID-19 pandemic. He advised that next year those funds are expected to exceed \$500,000.00.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District budget.

OPENING REMARKS – Kevin Sheilley, President, Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership

Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership (CEP) President Kevin Sheilley appeared to review the Department's proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center 150, Ocala Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership (page 51).

Mr. Sheilley stated there is a slight increase to the proposed budget for this year, noting the CEP is quite busy and to stay on top of what they are doing, the increase request was needed. He advised that for every dollar of public money, the CEP adds \$4.00 of private money.

Mr. Sheilley stated the CEP looks forward to continuing to have an impact. He advised that new construction over the last few years is very exciting, and the CEP wants to see it continue, especially the industrial construction.

In response to Chairman Gold, Mr. Sheilley stated that a group of regional southeastern homebuilders had a meeting yesterday and many were amazed that building permits in Marion County were getting through within 2 weeks, when they are waiting approximately

July 16, 2021

10 to 12 weeks. He advised that it is known that the sooner permits are issued, the sooner buildings can be built, and the sooner they start paying taxes and people have homes. Chairman Gold stated there have been many positive comments lately relating to the work performed by the CEP, Building Safety and all the County departments.

In response to Commissioner Bryant, Mr. Sheilley advised that there is Supreme Court case law that any business that is lawfully allowed to operate cannot be refused membership within his organization regardless of where they are located.

Mr. Sheilley expressed appreciation for the partnership with the BCC. He stated recently a developer was present and noted that within the brokerage community in Tampa, the only thing anyone is talking about is Ocala. Mr. Sheilley noted the CEP continues to work with companies and developers, noting the partnerships that have been formed is what sets this community apart.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership budget.

Chairman Gold passed the gavel to Commissioner Bryant, who assumed the Chair. Commissioner Gold out at 10:03 a.m.

OPENING REMARKS – Dr. Phillip Geist, Area Director, Small Business Development Council

Area Director Dr. Philip Geist, Florida Small Business Development Center Network (FSBDC), at the University of North Florida (UNF), appeared to review the Department's proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center 151, Small Business Development Council (page 52).

Dr. Geist expressed appreciation towards the Board for their past support, noting in the case of the Small Business Development Council, it has enabled them to help businesses stay afloat and apply for their emergency loans.

Dr. Geist advised that an annual third-party survey goes out every January looking at the previous year, which is 1 of the requirements of the Small Business Administration (SBA) audit process. He stated due to the COVID-19 pandemic the response was less than stellar, but even so the businesses they worked with reported 208 jobs retained and 45 jobs created due to working with the Small Business Development Council. The new jobs created were mostly in businesses that were working with either healthcare or larger employers in town. Dr. Geist advised that a factor in small business growth is that as CEP brings in some of the very large businesses, they require the services provided by some of the County's smaller businesses.

Dr. Geist stated the previous support from the Board has been very important, noting it is leveraged with State and Federal funds. He requested the Board's continued support and level funding.

Commissioner Curry advised that he has worked with Dr. Geist for a long time, noting the great job he does helping parties to create their business, which leads to jobs and taxable property, benefitting the entire community.

Commissioner Bryant expressed appreciation for the work Dr. Geist does for small businesses.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Small Business Development Council budget.

OPENING REMARKS – Marcia Hilty, Program Director, Guardian Ad Litem

Circuit Director Marcia Hilty, Fifth Judicial Circuit Guardian Ad Litem Program, appeared

to review the proposed FY 2021-22 budgets for Cost Center 262, Guardian Ad Litem Program (page 89) and Cost Center 263, Guardian Ad Litem Technology (page 90).

Ms. Hilty advised that the past year has been a tremendous challenge because the Guardian Ad Litem Program is primarily a volunteer-based organization which primarily relies on retirees who were at risk due to COVID-19. She stated the organization suffered significant losses relating to the pandemic, but individuals are beginning to return now that the vaccine is available.

Ms. Hilty advised that on any given day there are 2,100 abused and neglected children in the 5th Judicial Circuit, noting 1,000 of those children are Marion County residents. Most of those children are below the age of 5 and most have been removed from their parents due to drug and alcohol addiction.

Ms. Hilty expressed appreciation for the Cares Act funding during the pandemic, noting her organization benefitted from the Information Technology (IT) equipment that allowed for Zoom meetings. She stated the organization kept things going the best they could, noting they are not serving as many children as she would like, especially in Marion County. Ms. Hilty advised that she is working with CEP President Kevin Sheilley to appeal to local businesses and try to get more volunteers.

In response to Commissioner Bryant, Ms. Hilty stated she may be meeting with Board members individually to solicit suggestions for what the organization can do differently. She advised that Senate Bill 1920 was troubling to the organization and would minimize if not eliminate the Guardian Ad Litem Program in favor of giving children direct representation, which the organization does not believe is the most appropriate action. Ms. Hilty stated having an adult stand up in front of a Judge and say what is in the child's best interest is preferable to having an attorney state their wishes. She advised that children 10 and up would have been impacted, and the Guardian Ad Litem Program would no longer be involved in their cases. She expressed appreciation towards the Board for talking with local Legislators and helping to make sure Senate Bill 1920 was stopped.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Fifth Judicial Circuit Guardian Ad Litem Program budget.

Commissioner Curry out at 10:09 a.m.

OPENING REMARKS – Mark Lander, Public Health Unit Director

Public Health Unit Director Mark Lander, Department of Health (DOH) in Marion County, appeared to review the proposed FY 2021-22 budget for Cost Center 130, Marion County Health Unit (page 269).

Commissioner Curry returned at 10:10 a.m.

Mr. Lander expressed appreciation towards the Board, noting the support DOH received made it possible to serve Marion County. He advised that DOH not only received regular funding, but additional revenue supplied to help with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Lander stated DOH looks forward to more traditional work in public health during the remainder of the year, noting the pandemic has been a large part of individuals lives for the past 18 months, but other public health issues remain. He advised that DOH is still working on disease intervention, specifically relating to Hepatitis C cases, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and other infectious diseases. Mr. Lander advised that there was talk last year of bringing on epidemiological support, which they have done. He stated in addition to the COVID-19 funding used for other/outside professional services (OPS) positions, DOH brought in a footprint in the Epidemiology Department of full-time career service individuals. He stated this year DOH will increase their disease intervention

July 16, 2021

specialists with a focus on HIV, Hepatitis C, and other infectious diseases that may occur during the year. DOH added a primary care component to the HIV Ryan White clinic, noting many of those individuals do not have a primary care office where they can receive care.

Commissioner Gold returned at 10:12 a.m.

Chairman Bryant returned the gavel to Commissioner Gold, who resumed the Chair.

Mr. Lander advised that a redesign is underway, noting much of the laboratory work performed can require individuals to go from 1 location to a 2nd or 3rd to get their testing done. He stated DOH is moving the immunizations and epidemiology departments into the old Heart of Florida (HOF) area. Mr. Lander advised that the redesign allows an individual to go to a clinic, go to 1 area for laboratory work, and then exit the building creating a more efficient experience for DOH clients.

Mr. Lander stated DOH is working on access to care, noting they have expanded the dental sealant program to some schools that were not under that program last year. He advised that there is a plan to expand some services in the Belleview area, noting that currently there is only the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Mr. Lander stated DOH is considering bringing back family planning and disease intervention testing.

Mr. Lander advised that there are many challenges faced by minorities and DOH is hiring a Minorities Liaison to work within the community and be a direct link between DOH, faith-based community, and other areas.

Mr. Lander commented on the permitting process relating to environmental health, noting additional inspectors and staff are being added to expedite septic tank inspections and the permitting process.

Mr. Lander stated DOH is still working with the County to bring in nurses through contract agencies, noting there are 2 Registered Nurses (RNs) supplied by the County working on COVID-19 activities. He advised that Marion County did not release the OPS individuals when numbers initially declined, and still has 20 OPS COVID-19 funded positions performing a variety of functions.

In response to Commissioner Bryant, Mr. Lander stated he has never had a Board that has been so fantastic to work with and such a community that partners.

Commissioner Curry advised that the most important thing for an elected official is to protect the safety, health, and welfare of the community. He stated he has worked with Mr. Lander behind the scenes on the blue-green algae issue, noting a closer relationship was formed regarding the sharing of information. There was a meeting with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which will make communication to the Public Information Office (PIO) and Parks and Recreation run more smoothly.

In response to Commissioner Curry, Mr. Lander advised that his primary focus is his role as Public Health Unit Director, but he also serves as Deputy Secretary for County Health Systems in Tallahassee.

It was the general consensus of the Board that there are no further questions in regard to the Public Health Unit's budget.

NEW BUSINESS: County Attorney Matthew G. Minter, Legal, requested the Board consider his recommendation relating to 3 positions, noting the 2 paralegal positions should be on par with the County's Administrative Assistants. He stated there was a previous discussion with Human Resources (HR) relating to this matter, but there was an oversight on his part. Mr. Minter advised that the Chief Assistant County Attorney position

would be brought up to the same range as the ACAs. He stated the total for the 3 changes is \$16,730.40.

NEW BUSINESS: Chairman Gold advised of a recent public records request that required payment in the amount of \$8.10. He stated there has been conversation relating to additional public records requests, and the need for a line item under the BCC or possibly the County Administrator for future requests.

County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes advised that the line item could be in either the Legislative or Administrative budget.

Mr. Minter stated during a budget session, particularly with respect to the Sheriff's budget, Statute 30.49 requires him to submit a sworn certificate with his budget stating that his proposed expenditures are reasonable and necessary. He advised that further in the Statute it says the sheriff shall furnish to the Board of County Commissioners all relevant and pertinent information concerning expenditures made in previous fiscal years and proposed expenditures which the Board or Commission deems necessary, including expenditures at the subobject code level. Mr. Minter stated independent of the public record, the Sheriff under the budget Statute is required to provide to the Board whatever supporting information is deemed necessary.

Chairman Gold advised that if there comes a point where the Board must reach out to another County or Government agency for some type of information, there may be an associated cost.

In response to Chairman Gold, Mr. Bouyounes stated the line item can be placed under Administration.

Ms. Fowler questioned the amount of funds that should be placed in that line item.

Mr. Bouyounes advised that the amount should be \$2,500.00.

UPDATE: Chairman Gold stated RLE had a meeting, and that Board wants to look at some of the issues with the Capital property.

Commissioner Bryant advised that they are looking at possibly coming under the purview of MCFR instead of having a volunteer fire department, noting any volunteer that wanted to stay could. She stated now it is a matter of working out the details and having public meetings. Commissioner Bryant advised that it may or may not happen, but that will be the decision of the citizens of RLE.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Curry stated the Community Foundation sent a letter requesting \$125,000.00 which was forwarded to Community Services, he questioned whether there was any appetite from the Board to revisit that decision and possibly have Lauren Deiorio speak to the Board regarding what is behind that request.

Commissioner Stone advised that she has had a conversation with Ms. Deiorio in the past and it is her understanding that they are looking for operational funding and believes that Commissioner Bryant made a request earlier in the week to ask for clarification as to how it could be a measured dollar value based on what the Community Foundation provides. She stated there are funding mechanisms in place through Community Services dollars that allow the Community Foundation to offer a program and get the funding to provide the services that are so helpful to the non-profits that also assist the community overall. This helps the Community Services Department when sending out grants, to have those strategic plans that the Community Foundation had helped that non-profit put together, ensuring the non-profit is viable and sustainable with the grant funding from Community

July 16, 2021

Services.

In response to Chairman Gold, Ms. Fowler expressed appreciation towards the Board for their hard work during the budget workshops, for the excellent communication from the County Administrator, all the Departments, her team, and the Board relating to changes and adjustments being made. She advised that all changes except the Community Services personnel have been entered and will be netted out, so they do not touch the Reserves. The changes will be done in time for the next meeting along with the summary. Ms. Fowler stated she is waiting on revenues from the State, noting they have changed their update timeframe from the middle of July to "not available". She advised that the Infrastructure Surtax, and the Tourism Tax are related, noting she expects both of those numbers will increase over the projections from the last 2 months. Ms. Fowler stated her projections were done in May and based on February and March actuals, noting April and May actuals are substantially higher, so there is likely discussion going on in the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) relating to the true outlook, and how sustainable it is. She advised that there could be additional revenue in the General Fund but does not expect a big change.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Bryant requested the County Administrator review all the liaison positions on the BCC schedule just to make sure that all should remain on that list, noting there may be a few that are no longer active.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting thereupon adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Jeff Gold, Chairman

Attest:

Gregory C. Harrell, Clerk