

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

March 5, 2024

CALL TO ORDER:

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) met in a workshop session in Commission Chambers at 1:32 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at the Marion County Governmental Complex located in Ocala, Florida.

INTRODUCTION OF WORKSHOP BY CHAIRMAN MICHELLE STONE

Chairman Stone advised that the workshop was scheduled this afternoon to finalize the One Cent Infrastructure Surtax Priority Project List.

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 Michelle Stone, District 5; Vice-Chairman Kathy Bryant, District 2; Commissioner Craig Curry, District 1; Commissioner Matthew McClain, District 3; and Commissioner Carl Zalak, III, District 4. Also present were County Attorney Matthew G. Minter, County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes, Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Angel Roussel, ACA Tracy Straub, ACA Amanda Tart, and Executive Director of Internal Services Mike McCain.

It was noted for the record that the Deputy Clerk was in receipt of a 26 page Agenda packet to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation.

PRESENTATION

1. Workshop to Finalize the One Cent Infrastructure Surtax Project List
County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background:

- Revenue Estimates
 - Estimating \$65,000,000 per year for 20 years.
- Agency Allocations

	Amount	%	Amount	%
Emergency Communications	\$56,990,000	4.38%	\$78,000,000	6%
Animal Services	\$20,419,000	1.57%		
Sheriff Emergency Management	\$591,000	0.05%		
Fire Rescue	\$87,450,000	6.73%	\$130,000,000	10%
EMS	\$42,550,000	3.27%		
Sheriff Jail	\$9,710,000	0.75%	\$130,000,000	10%
Sheriff Regular	\$48,058,000	3.70%		
Sheriff Patrol	\$72,078,000	5.54%		
Sheriff Bailiff	\$154,000	0.01%		
Transportation	\$962,000,000	74.00%	\$962,000,000	74%
	\$1,300,000,000	100.00%	\$1,300,000,000	100%

- Sales Tax Project Schedule
 - Fire Rescue and EMS
 - Public Safety Communications

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- Animal Services
- Sheriff (Exhibit A)
- Transportation (Exhibit B)

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: For information and discussion.

County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes advised that the purpose of the workshop is to present to the Board all the projects that will be considered for the 20-Year Plan for the proposed Sales Tax, noting staff traditionally referred to the first Sales Tax as Surtax 1; the renewal was known as Surtax 2; and the proposed Sales Tax is referred to as Surtax 3. He stated the Plan being presented encompasses transportation and public safety. Mr. Bouyounes commented on Board discussions held at the recent transportation workshop where the Board addressed and refined different priorities and transportation projects. Mr. Bouyounes presented a 1 page handout entitled, "Proposed One Cent Infrastructure Sales Surtax Project Expenditure Schedule" and 1 page handout entitled, "Marion County Fire Stations". He referred to the handout entitled, "Proposed One Cent Infrastructure Sales Surtax Project Expenditure Schedule", noting the estimated total for the projects listed is approximately \$1,300,000,000.00 with a projected Sales Tax revenue of \$960,000,000.00 or 74 percent (%) of the total cost over the next 20 years. Mr. Bouyounes stated no adjustments have been made to include growth and the estimated costs are based on today's dollar (no inflation). He noted the projects will be reviewed on an annual basis through the budget process and the estimated costs will also be refined through that process.

Mr. Bouyounes addressed "global" projects that will impact the County as a whole, for example, Public Safety Communications (PSC), which is an expense that impacts all law enforcement and first responders. He stated staff then reviewed the needs of the Emergency Management and the Animal Services Departments and added those to the list of projects. Mr. Bouyounes noted these project costs equal approximately 6% of the total estimated expenditures. He advised that he had a meeting with Fire Chief James Banta, Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR), and Sheriff William "Billy" Woods, Marion County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), noting 20% had been set aside for the two Departments with each receiving 10% of the generated tax revenues. Mr. Bouyounes noted emergencies may arise over the next 20 years and the Board has the flexibility to reprioritize projects at any time. He clarified that this Plan is an umbrella and each year as the Board addresses the budget, the plan will be refined.

Mr. Bouyounes referred to the Agenda packet (pages 1 of 3 through 3 of 3), noting page 1 lists Fire Rescue, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), PSC, and Animal Services projects. Predominantly from PSC the County will be replacing vehicles and equipment. He noted under Fire Rescue, the projects include fire stations that need to be rebuilt and under EMS there are 2 new stations proposed to be built (1 on the eastside of the City and the other on the westside of the County). Mr. Bouyounes advised that the new EMS stations may include fire stations as well, noting staff are recommending starting those off as modular stations and then expanding in the future as needed. He noted the biggest dollar amount under EMS is to replace transport units. Mr. Bouyounes stated under PSC most of the projects will impact both law enforcement and first responders. He commented on the systemwide radio replacement plan over the next 20 years, which has an estimated cost of \$16,500,000.00. Mr. Bouyounes addressed the plan of going from leased communication towers to County owned communication towers. He commented

on Animal Services projects estimated at \$20,419,000.00 in addition to the \$2,000,000.00 already allocated from the current sales tax revenue.

Mr. Bouyounes noted page 2 of 3 lists Sheriff Emergency Management; Sheriff Jail; Sheriff Regular; Sheriff Patrol; and Sheriff Bailiff projects. He addressed the need to allocate for routine vehicle replacements on an annual basis, noting the Sheriff is requesting another helicopter in the future at an estimated cost of \$4,600,000.00. Mr. Bouyounes referred to the Sheriff Patrol replacement of vehicles over the next 20 years at a cost of approximately \$47,000,000.00. He opined that the Sheriff's Office projects seem to be a need and a top priority. Page 3 of 3 lists Transportation projects. Mr. Bouyounes referred to the 1 page handout entitled, "Proposed One Cent Infrastructure Sales Surtax Project Expenditure Schedule", which is the same list of transportation projects on page 3; however, staff added numbers next to each project so it will be easier to identify during discussions (i.e., project number 14 is the NW 44th Avenue project). He referred to project number 0 (CR 484 at I-75 bridge replacement), noting after discussions with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), it appears they are very open to include that project as part of the I-75 work being performed. Mr. Bouyounes clarified that FDOT does not have the funding for the bridge replacement; however, if the County has the money and is willing to step-up and partner with them, they will include it in their project plan. The estimated cost of the project is \$50,000,000.00 to \$60,000,000.00. He commented on project number 1 (NW 49th/35th Street phase 3 (formerly known as (fka) 3A & 3B) from County Road (CR) 225A to NW 44th Avenue), noting this project will connect the new Interchange with NW 80th Avenue in front of the World Equestrian Center (WEC). Mr. Bouyounes noted the County has some State funding to go towards this project. He addressed project number 4 (SW 38th/40th Street Phase A from SW 80th Avenue to SW 60th Avenue), noting the design is in place and the County does have some funding budgeted for this project. Mr. Bouyounes noted rights-of-way (ROW) acquisition is a major cost of any roadway project. Project number 12 (CR 484 Widening Phase 1 from Marion Oaks Boulevard to CR 475A) is a 6-lane project to be performed after the State has finished its I-75 project. He referred to the projects listed that reflect 0 miles, noting those are intersection projects (i.e., new Interchange at SE Maricamp Road at Baseline Road). Mr. Bouyounes noted those projects are not listed by priority. He addressed project 31 (Marion Oaks Manor Interchange at Interstate 75 (I-75)), noting this project would be a fly-over and the description may need to be amended. Mr. Bouyounes advised that in regard to rehabilitation projects, the County has over 200 miles of roadway to be resurfaced at a cost of \$147,000,000.00. Also included on the project list is a new Traffic Management Center at a cost of \$6,500,000.00. He opined that the Southwest to Northeast Corridor would be a huge project that will have a major impact on how traffic moves around Marion County.

Mr. Bouyounes stated the rest of the pages provide more details and a breakdown of costs and which year the project would be planned for over the 20 year timeframe.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND CLOSING COMMENTS

Commissioner Bryant referred to project number 0 (CR 484 at I-75 bridge replacement) and opined that if the County has the opportunity to receive State or Federal grant monies, the sales tax funding can be reapportioned to another project. Mr. Bouyounes concurred, but opined that because FDOT is on a very strict timeline for their project (2025) the County may not have the necessary time to apply for grant funding for that project. General discussion ensued.

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Mr. Bouyounes advised that if the County has a local Sales Tax, it is a huge advantage, noting some of that money can be used to leverage additional grants from FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). He opined that project number 12 (6 laning of CR 484 from Marion Oaks Boulevard to CR 475A) would be a perfect project to ask for federal assistance.

In response to Commissioner Zalak, Mr. Minter stated projects on the list can change.

In response to Commissioner Zalak, Mr. Bouyounes stated the timeframe for project number 17 (Interchange at SE Maricamp Road at Baseline Road) is fiscal year (FY) 2030-2034. Commissioner Zalak opined that project should have been done in FY 2001. He commented on the Study the BCC had performed relating to the State Road (SR) 200 corridor, noting there is going to be tremendous growth in that area and was unsure, after reviewing the 20-Year Plan, if that relief is being addressed.

Mr. Bouyounes referred to page 6 of the Agenda packet, noting included in the Plan is a Preliminary Engineering Evaluation of the Southwest to Northeast Corridor. He stated when some of the projects are ready to go, the County can bond and move them forward on the list. Mr. Bouyounes noted the market is currently saturated and production is not keeping up with the money as it is coming in. He clarified that even if the County bonded the money for the project soon, the production will be slow on both the construction side and the engineering side.

General discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Zalak, Mr. Bouyounes advised that the proposed Traffic Management Center will be combined with the signal connectivity upgrade, noting as the County upgrades the connection between signals and renews the technology, the Management Center will be able to monitor congestion areas and adjust signal timing.

Commissioner Zalak reiterated the importance of addressing the SR 200 corridor. Mr. Bouyounes stated it will cost \$7,000,000.00 for the Preliminary Engineering Evaluation and approximately \$30,000,000.00 to purchase the ROW.

Commissioner Zalak commented on the 203 miles of road rehabilitation projects and how those will be addressed. Mr. Bouyounes advised that a list of the exact roadways would be included in the Transportation 5-Year Plan.

In response to Commissioner Zalak, Mr. Bouyounes referred to the list of equipment provided by the MCSO and MCFR, noting the estimated costs for the equipment are based on today's cost.

Commissioner Curry questioned whether there is a possibility of widening SR 200. Mr. Bouyounes advised that SR 200 has been declared as a constrained corridor, which means it is not financially feasible to widen.

Commissioner Zalak commented on SW 80th Avenue, SW 60th Avenue, etc., noting as the County widens those roads, it needs to make a better stand when it comes to access points. He clarified that every time the County adds to those lanes, allows a business to put a driveway in, etc., it continues to slow down traffic. Commissioner Zalak commented on the need for limited access on these major corridor roads that are meant to move traffic by providing cross-access points on the inside.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Minter advised that when dealing with commercial corridors, the County can place medians to block cross access, noting many times a frontage road may be needed. He noted that would also mean more ROW would be necessary.

General discussion resumed.

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Chairman Stone stated as the projects move forward, they would eventually be added to the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) list for the County's 5-Year Plan.

Mr. Bouyounes advised that the list provided can be utilized to share with citizens to show what the future tax will be used for, noting as the County moves forward staff will present more refined 5-Year Plans. He stated during the annual budget process is when the funds would be added to the budget to get projects done.

Mr. Bouyounes advised that in his discussions with the MCSO and MCFR, there are 3 locations that are prime to co-locate those 2 operations. For example, the County is rebuilding the fire station in Marion Oaks and the MCSO has an office in their Community Center, which could be combined and co-located. The other 2 locations would be the Silver Springs station, as well as the new Training Center to be built on NW 63rd Street.

In response to Chairman Stone, Mr. Bouyounes stated staff will add the handouts to the Agenda to be available for public viewing on the County's website.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting thereupon adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

Michelle Stone, Chairman

Attest:

Gregory C. Harrell, Clerk

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