

Columbia County
Board of County Commissioners

Minutes of
August 26, 2021

The Columbia County Board of County Commissioners met in a Special Meeting at the auditorium of the School Board Administrative Complex at 9:00 a.m. The meeting opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Commissioners in Attendance: Chairman Rocky Ford, Ronald Williams, Robert Hollingsworth, Toby Witt and Timothy Murphy

Others in Attendance: County Manager David Kraus ("CM")
Assistant County Manager Kevin Kirby ("ACM")
County Attorney Joel Foreman
Clerk of Courts James M. Swisher, Jr.
Deputy Clerk Susan Heimer

Agenda Additions/Deletions

There were no additions or deletions.

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to approve the agenda. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Items:

David Kraus, County Manager

Unfunded Capital Projects including ARPA funds

2021-2022 Floor Budget

CM Kraus gave a presentation relating to the FY 2021-2022, which included the following topics:

- Budget Schedules
- Budget Highlights
- Tentative Budget Review of proposed budget 2021-2022
- Special Assessment Rates
- Road Improvement Fund
- County Funded Roads
- Capital Projects
- Unfunded Capital Projects

Budget Highlights

- Hold Department budgets levels near FY 2020-2021 levels
 - Continue funding Annual Repaving Program
 - Fund Constitutional Officers Budget Requests
 - Reduce millage rate from 8.015 to 7.815
 - Employee Compensation
- (1) Start to address Constitutional Amendment for \$15.00/hour and Salary Compression/Competitiveness Issues
 - (2) Funds increases in Florida retirement system contribution rates as approved by the Florida legislature
 - (3) Fund the employee's increase to Health Insurance

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner Murphy to give staff latitude to take the remaining funds to address the problem areas the County has relating to compression and any remaining funds, have Staff come up with a plan to disburse. SECOND by Commissioner Williams. The Motion carried unanimously.

Review of Unfunded Capital Projects

Bell Road Sewer Upgrade/US 41

MOTION by Commissioner Murphy to move monies for Bell Road project in the amount of \$1,500,000 from grant/ARPA. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

The following Unfunded Capital projects were presented as Staff's priority projects:

Petro Cleanup Match, Courthouse Chiller and Elevators, Public Works Building Roof Repairs, Sheriff's Office CSI/Evidence Building, Courthouse BDA, Jail BDA, IT Fire Suppression, Franklin Street Tower Generator, Rail Spur Switches, Resurfacing Various County Roads, SW Bascom Norris repairs, Washington Street RR Crossing, Utilities Master Plan, Field Laser Grading & Repairs

MOTION by Commissioner Witt to accept all of staff's priority projects along with the amendment relating to the Bascom Norris project; we fund it with the understanding of the funding being \$500,000 a year over the 4 year term. SECOND by Commissioner Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

Urban and Roadside Mowing

MOTION by Commissioner Murphy to add the additional \$400,000 to the urban and roadside mowing category. SECOND by Commissioner Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor of Elections' Office Improvements

MOTION by Commissioner Witt to approve the Supervisor of Elections remodel in the amount of \$362,419. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

Richardson Community Center Generator

CM Kraus was directed by the Commission to speak with the City of Lake City to determine whether they would be willing to split the cost of a needed generator with the County. The cost of the generator is around \$171,399. This cost divided would be \$85,700 for each.

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to move the \$85,700/split cost into the floor budget. If the City is not willing to fund it, then the monies will be moved back into the budget. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

Jail Administration Design

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to put aside \$400,000 for the Jail Administration Design. SECOND by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried unanimously.

Router Upgrades and VOIP Switches

MOTION by Commissioner Murphy to fund the router upgrades in the amount of \$37,568 and the VOIP Switches in the amount of \$37,568. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

911 AC Monitor Program

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to fund the 911 AC Monitor Program in the amount of \$17,400. SECOND by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried unanimously.

Generator Monitoring

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to fund the Generator Monitoring. SECOND by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried unanimously.

Richardson Outdoor Court Lights

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to fund the Richardson Outdoor Court Lights in the amount of \$105,000. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

5-Points Park Restrooms

MOTION by Commissioner Hollingsworth to fund the 5-Points Park Restrooms in the amount of \$82,000. SECOND by Commissioner Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

Rum Island Gate Improvements/Kiosk

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to fund the Rum Island Gate Improvements Kiosk in the amount of \$30,000. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

Replace Alligator Lake Shade Structure

MOTION by Commissioner Williams to replace the Alligator Lake Shade structure. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

Affordable Housing Request

Commissioner Williams addressed the Board in regards to the request for affordable housing funding development. The project would need a letter of commitment from the Board of County Commissioners to secure other loans for the development.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to have the County Attorney look into this and address all of the issues before the County commits to this request. There was no Second.

The Board agreed this is a project worth supporting. However, before agreeing to a letter of commitment, there needs to be more concrete terms and additional information would need to be provided before funding this project. The County Attorney will draft a resolution to bring back to the Board by September 16, 2021 for further consideration.

Commissioner Ford withdrew his motion.

Fire Station 51 Expansion

MOTION by Commissioner Witt to approve the funding of the Station 51 Expansion. SECOND by Commissioner Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Works Equipment Barn

MOTION by Commissioner Hollingsworth to approve the funding of the Public Works Equipment Barn in the amount of \$142,500. SECOND by Commissioner Witt. The motion carried unanimously.

Remaining Funds in the Budget

MOTION by Commissioner Witt to move the remaining funds in the amount of \$5,580,557 into reserves. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

Tentative Budget

MOTION by Commissioner Witt to approve the millage rate of 7.815 and the 2021–2022 Floor budget as amended. SECOND by Commissioner Ford. The motion carried unanimously.

ARPA and Cares Money

MOTION by Commissioner Witt to address individual and business assistance with the \$2.9 million of leftover cares money, split the monies between the two, with the understanding that we make adjustments as we move forward. SECOND by Commissioner Hollingsworth. The motion carried unanimously.

Budget Hearing Dates

- September 9, 2021
- September 16, 2021

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

Rocky Ford, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

James M. Swisher, Jr.
Clerk of Circuit Court