

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

3:00 PM

The Board of County Commissioners of Brevard County, Florida, met in special session on April 27, 2017 at 3:01 PM in the Government Center Commission Room, Building C, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, Florida.

**CALL TO ORDER**

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Arrived</b>
Rita Pritchett	Vice Chairwoman/Commissioner District 1	Present	
Jim Barfield	Commissioner District 2	Present	
John Tobia	Commissioner District 3	Present	
Curt Smith	Chairman/Commissioner District 4	Present	
Kristine Isnardi	Commissioner District 5	Present	

**ITEM I., COUNTY MANAGER RECRUITMENT, MR. W. D. HIGGENBOTHAM, MERCER GROUP**

Jerry Visco, Human Resources Director, introduced to the Board W. D. Higgenbotham with the Mercer Group; he stated Mr. Higgenbotham is going to share with the Board a little bit of the consensus that he heard in the Commissioners individual interviews; and then he will share a few issues that need to get resolved so the advertisement for the County Manager recruitment can go forward.

W. D. Higgenbotham stated he sent an email to the Board Members yesterday touching on some of the things he would like to talk about a little bit today, and to get a consensus from the Board on where to go from here; most of the job announcement is finished; but there are issues that he needs clarification on. He went on to say some of the issues were the educational achievements, if it would be a Master's Degree, certainly a Bachelor's Degree, but whether a Master's Degree is required as well; there was some discussion about private sector experience, the number of years; there was some discussion about whether the educational requirements and the private sector experience should be a number of years and whether they should be preferred or required; and the issue with having a preferred versus required, if they have for example, the number of years required for public sector experience or private sector experience, the more requirements without any exceptions, the fewer responses there will be. He stated he is not suggesting that quantity is necessarily what is needed, of course quality is needed; if, for example, to say there is 10 years' experience required in either the public or private sector, if someone has nine years and are an excellent candidate, the Board would not be given the opportunity to see that candidate; everything received will be public information; the candidates may not want to go public if they think they are not quite meeting the qualifications and they will be excluded or not have the opportunity to come before the Board for a decision; and those are some of the things he would like to get clarification from the Board on. He pointed out he wants clarification in terms of advertising, salary, if there is a salary range, and the job announcement he presented as an initial draft to the Board; it shows the current salary of the County Manager; and that is just for the candidates to see what is being paid now for the County Manager. He added he suggested in the announcement that it would be market competitive, which means the Board would negotiate; he is not suggesting candidates that are way beyond that who are maybe demanding \$250,000 a year, that may be way beyond what the Board would consider; and he certainly does not want to bring a candidate like that to the Board. He stated if they have some idea what the Board is looking for, the candidates will know

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that as well. He stated he wants to talk a bit about the closing date; the closing date of June 2nd was suggested earlier; he suggested changing the closing date to June 9th, because the Board is out for the month of June; if the closing date is the 9th, he would have the material to the Board within 10 days of that date; it could have the materials of the semi-finalists, whether it is eight or 12; the Commissioners could review it for a couple of weeks; and sometime early in July the Board could meet with them in a workshop environment to narrow down the ones the Board would like to interview. He noted it will keep the semi-finalists from waiting too long after the closing date; the longer before it comes to closure, the higher the probability of losing quality candidates; a good candidate may be looking in more than one place; and they do not want to keep them waiting. He stated the sooner they move after the closing date, the better; and he reiterated he thinks the closing date should be moved to June 9th.

Commissioner Tobia stated June 9th is amenable to him; pushing it back a week would meet his needs. He stated he put down a Master's Degree or higher from a regionally accredited university; he is not stuck on a Master's Degree; in the newspaper article it was mentioned a Master's Degree in Public Administration; and he did not want to be that specific. He pointed out if a person had a Bachelor's Degree in Physics, he would not want that to knock a person out; he randomly put in a Master's Degree; and he does not know if anyone else did.

Commissioner Barfield stated he believes for this position for over 2,000 employees, all of the various operations, and the different funding sources, a Master's Degree should be required.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she agrees with that; the Board is not going to be specific on what that Master's Degree is in, because someone could have one in Public Administration and another in Business Management; and she reiterated that she is good with that.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she is good with that as well; Mr. Higgenbotham said it may reduce some candidates he thinks may be worthy.

Mr. Higgenbotham pointed out he was not suggesting that there is anything wrong with a Master's Degree, he did not hear that from a majority of the Board; and he wanted to make certain it was not an issue. He went on to say he did not want to provide the draft document and send it to the Board, and then all of a sudden find out there was a disagreement; and the Master's Degree is fine.

Chairman Smith stated he does not want to be restrictive in any one area, because somebody that has a Master's Degree that has five years of experience versus somebody that has 15 years' experience without a Master's Degree, he would be on the side of the person with 15 years' experience as it would be more prevalent than the education.

Commissioner Barfield noted he thinks someone in this leadership role would take the extra effort and get a Master's Degree, he thinks that is important; this is a huge operation; a Master's Degree should be required; there are so many different facets to it; but it also shows a commitment to working towards understanding it and working with this project.

Mr. Higgenbotham stated he understands what the Board is saying; a lot of situations they would say any equivalent combination or they would say a Master's Degree is preferred; the discipline is not important; that is not the issue; if there is a candidate, he will make some judgment calls when he looks at the resumes; and if the Board said it wants a requirement of a Master's Degree, those are the things they will publish and they will be looking for. He added they will get some candidates that will not have that; they will make an application; they will be close to it; and they may choose to send in a resume anyway. He stated there may be someone he knows out there he thinks may be a good candidate; the Board is not going to be able to see them; they may not be one of the eight semi-finalists; but he may have a second tier

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that would at least call attention to some other candidates that he thinks may be someone the Board wants to take a look at. He pointed out the final call will be the Board's.

Chairman Smith stated he would like the wording 'Master's Degree preferred'; by saying it that way the Board is telling the public that with the candidates it would like to see a Master's Degree; but he does not want someone who has a lot of experience that would be a cracker jack person to not submit an application because he or she does not have a Master's Degree.

Mr. Higgenbotham explained to the Board he can assure it that will happen, good or bad; and again, if it is required and someone does not have a Master's Degree, and they do not want to go public because of that, they will not feel like they do not have a chance because the Master's Degree is preferred and not required.

Commissioner Isnardi stated her thinking is if the candidate has all of the experience and they have been in government, a deputy, or a manager somewhere for 10 years, why they would not obtain a Master's Degree; that person would be at an executive level and managing thousands of employees; and she thinks that where the Board is giving lenience is what that Master's Degree is, because perhaps they have a degree in History or something else.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she will probably rise to the top all of the ones with the Master's Degree.

Chairman Smith asked Mr. Higgenbotham to make it a requirement.

Commissioner Tobia stated it needs to be a regionally accredited university.

Mr. Higgenbotham stated the next issue is private sector experience; it was essentially the same issue preferred number of years versus required; he had discussion whether it should be 10 years, five years, or seven years; it is not so much the number of years as it is the requirement that they have that number of years private or public sector; someone with two years of experience private or public sector may not be desirable anyway; but whatever it may be, if the Board is going to put a particular number of preferred years, it would be better to have preferred rather than required. He went on to state he does know the higher, the more difficult it is by raising the bar of what is required, the fewer responses the Board is going to get.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she is fine with preferred; ideally she does not think Mr. Higgenbotham will bring the Board someone with no experience; and she would say private sector experience. She went on to add if someone rises to the top and has a Master's Degree or even a PhD in Public Administration, she would hate to turn them down because he or she only has four or five years' experience in the private sector if the Board is requiring 10 years.

Chairman Smith stated it should say some private sector experience preferred.

Commissioner Pritchett advised the Board she feels the same; these are probably some of the things that will determine who she likes the most; and she will be looking for the most experienced ones. She reiterated she is fine with preferred as well.

Commissioner Barfield stated he has mixed emotions regarding industry experience; he does not think it is a problem if it is included in the experience; and he does not know if preferred is okay, but he does not want to require it.

Commissioner Tobia stated he was the one who put it as a requirement; he was not necessarily stuck on 10 years; but it looks like he does not have the support to go with that; and he inquired if the Board wants to put industry experience preferred or to put a number of years.

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Mr. Higgenbotham explained to the Board he stated maybe experience in an industry that is comparable in size, not a fast food organization; he does not think it would fit into the category of managing the County; and those are the things that he will be screening for. He noted he wants to hear from the Board if it wants private sector experience, so many years of preferred, he can pick a number, and the Board can go with that, but he thinks it has to be a comparable business.

Commissioner Barfield stated they need to show that they have lead a comparable size corporation, also budget size, and all those types of things as well.

Mr. Higgenbotham pointed out the Board will receive interest from owners or CEOs for organizations, but if they are not comparable in size it does not matter how many years he or she has, it will not qualify them to come forward and be the County Manager.

Chairman Smith inquired if the wording would be 'some private sector service preferred'.

Mr. Higgenbotham replied yes, he will give the Board the draft for its final approval; he stated he would suggest seven-plus years in the public sector, perhaps and/or including five years in the private sector, again preferred; and he will use the verbiage 'an organization comparable in size to Brevard County' with the public sector, and the private sector he will have to pick some words. He advised there will not be too many organizations that will have a billion dollar budget and 3,000 employees, including the Constitutional Officers that would attract a CEO; someone in an organization of that size will have stock options and serious bonuses over the years; and there are financial rewards in the private sector that are not offered in the public sector. He stated there are some candidates that will say that is what they want to do; and he does run across that from time-to-time in other recruitments.

Chairman Smith inquired how much private sector experience Stockton Whitten, County Manager, has.

Mr. Whitten replied probably a day or two at Wendy's.

Chairman Smith stated that is his point, he does not want to exclude a Stockton Whitten, that is what his fear is; he does not want to put some type of restriction on there that would exclude someone with his talent; he understands the point and purpose of talking about private sector; and he does not want to put numbers on there to scare a good candidate away. He noted he does not like the idea of years, he likes putting public service versus private sector experience preferred, or some private sector experience preferred but not required.

Mr. Higgenbotham stated private sector experience to compliment the public sector experience will certainly be a great asset.

Commissioner Tobia stated Mr. Higgenbotham mentioned public service experience saying seven years; if the Board is going to mention years, seven years in public service and years in management of public service are completely different; and he would much rather have someone with two years of management experience than someone with 15 years of sub-management experience to come in. He asked Mr. Higgenbotham when he writes this to be extremely clear that management of some type or another rather than just flat public service experience.

Mr. Higgenbotham stated sometimes he gets so close to the trees he does not see the forest, but he does know when he talks about experience it will be in the top end of an organization comparable in size; Commissioner Tobia mentioned an organization with at least \$100 million budget, for example; and that would be pretty small. He added he will be looking at something

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even larger than that; he does not mind putting something like that in there; he will use a large organization comparable in size; and then the candidate will pick that. He pointed out the Board will not see the unqualified candidates.

Commissioner Tobia stated Chairman Smith mentioned something about the flavor of Brevard County; he inquired if there is a way that can be put in the qualification or minimum requirements; and he further inquired what would the syntax of the diction be like 'by having knowledge of Brevard County'.

Mr. Higgenbotham stated one thing that was mentioned was familiarity with Brevard County, and the issues this County is facing, not only generic issues, but there are unique opportunities here that economic development would be looked at; it is always an issue with a county of this size; and to be familiar with not only Brevard County but with some of the unique aspects of the County, because someone in Volusia County would certainly be familiar with Brevard County. He stated someone in Corpus Christy, Texas, Galveston, Texas, or San Diego, California, may not be that familiar with Brevard County, but they are Coastal where they are, and they may have some experiences that are similar to what the Board is looking for in Brevard County.

Chairman Smith stated one of the things he was getting at was not just from a problematic standpoint of situations that may be unique, but some of the enticements; Brevard County has quanti-model, Space Port, airports, trains, planes, and cars; and that makes the County unique. He went on to say it would be a draw or attraction for someone who has a lot of talent who wants a lot of challenge.

Mr. Visco pointed out staff is putting together a brochure that captures all of that like they did for the Parks and Recreation Director and the Information Technology Director.

Mr. Higgenbotham stated Human Resources is putting together the brochure; what he is talking about is just the advertisement, where to advertise, and some of the words that can be put may be limited to 300 words, for example, which is not a lot; but the length he gives will give them additional information like that brochure and expanded description of the County. He noted the good candidates will know a lot about the County before he gets the opportunity to screen them; if they have not studied about the County, know some of the issues, and watch some of the archives and meetings, he would be very disappointed; and he reiterated that good candidates will do that.

Commissioner Tobia stated he asked about advertising in the *New York Times*, and Mr. Higgenbotham told him it was approximately \$10,000.

Mr. Higgenbotham pointed out it is expensive and not cost effective.

Commissioner Tobia inquired for the person who does not come from the traditional bureaucratic model and who would not check the publications that are traditionally read by those individuals, is it in any other generic online space or publication where someone from industry may read it, he is not sure what people use today like monster.com, Indeed, or any of these other places.

Mr. Higgenbotham replied he does not advertise in Indeed, although Indeed will pick up their announcements quite often and they will advertise; and they are typically flooded with resumes, hundreds of resumes. He stated unlike International City Management Association (ICMA), which is an industrywide advertisement for city and county managers internationally, if he were to want to go into the private sector and find an advertisement for a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) he would look for a CEO in a particular industry; there is nothing that comes to mind regarding a publication that is all CEO's who subscribe to this publication; and he reiterated

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there is not a publication. He stated the Board had talked about the current salary of the County Manager; he suggested that the salary of the current County Manager, but the Board is considering a market competitive salary; if someone is looking for more than that within reason, if he or she is an outstanding candidate, he may bring them forward to the Board; and if the Board wants to negotiate the salary, if that person would be perhaps worth more money, it would be its call. He inquired if the Board wants a salary range or as he has it now is satisfactory; he stated the current salary is \$188,000 annually; but the Board is committed to a market competitive salary, which means it is willing to negotiate.

Commissioner Isnardi stated Mr. Higgenbotham made it clear that he was going to wash out the candidates who were just looking to retire in the County.

Mr. Higgenbotham replied that goes without saying; he stated Brevard County is a wonderful place to come to; and depending on the time of the year, there will be a lot of candidates who want to come south. He noted he will screen the candidates out; he understands if someone is just looking to retire here; and he knows that is not what the Board is looking for.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she knows that public/private sector experience would seem to be a favorable thing; he does not want to say preferred necessarily unless the Board agrees; but maybe use the word 'encouraged' regarding experience; and she likes the idea of someone having worked in the private sector before working in the government sector.

Mr. Higgenbotham explained that private sector experience would be a plus; maybe not so many years being preferred; but to have private sector experience is a plus.

#### **ITEM I.A.1., SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Sheriff Wayne Ivey, Brevard County Sheriff, expressed his appreciation to the Board; and he introduced Greg Pelham, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Brevard County Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Pelham stated they are going to go through the programs and services in their agency, the operational expenditures, and then they will close out with some of their critical needs that they are doing their best to try to address. He went on to say the budgetary program is broken down into five programs and services, Law Enforcement, County Jail Complex, Judicial Operations, Animal Services, Contracted Services, and Law Enforcement Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU); as the Board can see on the chart, it breaks down the revenues they have within the Agency; 75 percent of the revenues received are a transfer from the General Fund, which is \$92 million; the next largest is Law Enforcement MSTU taxes, which is almost \$17 million; the Intergovernmental revenues are grants they receive from FDLE and the Federal Government; and charges for services is \$9.8 million. He pointed out the lion's share of that is the contract they have with Port Canaveral to provide law enforcement and seaport security services in the City of Cape Canaveral to provide law enforcement services to the City; their fines and forfeitures are the forfeitures that are received under the Florida Contraband Act; miscellaneous revenues are the telephone commission fees, interest and those types of things; and then their balance forward is the money that rolls forward each year in their Law Enforcement MSTU. He noted he put together this slide to show the Board the break out of the revenues on individual programs; the law enforcement side of the equation is a \$41.3 million transfer from the General Fund to operate their Countywide Law Enforcement Operations, criminal investigations, aviation's, SWAT, and those types of things; the County Jail is for operating the Jail for the Board; and Judicial Operations is providing all of the court deputies at all of the courthouses, which is also a General Fund transfer. The contracted services and Law Enforcement MSTU has no General Fund dollars; the contracted services are 100 percent funded by the City of Cape Canaveral and Port Canaveral; and he reiterated no General Fund dollars are going to

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that. He stated their Law Enforcement MSTU is a millage rate that is set up that is placed on the unincorporated area of the County, specifically for law enforcement purposes; there are three cities that do participate, Palm Shores, Grant/Valkaria, and Malabar; and they have passed ordinances to be included in the Law Enforcement MSTU. He stated that is how their \$123 million budget breaks out.

Sheriff Ivey stated the numbers the Board is seeing in front of it represents the 2016/2017 budget, not the forthcoming budget.

Mr. Pelham stated the next slide breaks down the expenditures for the Board; \$97.9 million is compensation and benefits; almost 80 percent of their budget is just people, the deputies out on the road, the investigators, the people in the Jail, the people in the courthouses, and Animal Services; operating expenses is \$22.2 million or 18 percent; and it is not the large share most people think it is. He went on to add the transfers are to the Property Appraiser and the Tax Collector for the services they provide related to the Law Enforcement MSTU; and it also includes money that is transferred back to the Board for debt payment, which he will address in a few minutes. He noted the breakdown of FY 2017 budget expenses are \$22 million in operating expenses; the largest expense the Sheriff's Office has is at the County Jail to provide inmate medical services; they are required to provide medical services to them; they have a contract with Armor Medical Services that they staff in house, the infirmary at the Jail; and they also have an agreement for reimbursement of any procedures that are performed offsite at hospitals and doctors' offices that inmates are taken to. He went on to say fuel, deputies are patrolling in their vehicles, so they need to have gas in them; on their insurance, insurance is their professional liability insurance that they have to carry on every person in the agency that is performing law enforcement functions, their general liability and aviation liability insurance; the next thing is inmate food services of \$1.8 million; and they are feeding the inmates three square meals a day. He pointed out they do grow a lot of food on the Jail Farm off of Interstate 95, that helps offset this cost and keeps it down. He stated communications are the model data terminals in the deputies cars, laptops, which is how they communicate and calls are dispatched; for every person who applied for a job with the Sheriff's Office has to take a background check that includes a polygraph, physiological test, and a drug test; and it also includes the 800 Megahertz radio that the County operates, and the Sheriff contributes money for the maintenance of that system. He advised their maintenance agreements, the two largest ones, are CAD Records Management Jail Management System, the emergency animal care vets at the animal shelters, and the judicial process servers; deputy outfitting are the uniforms, handcuffs, batons, flashlights, and all of the things provided to the deputies so they can do their jobs; and the \$418,000 in Animal Services is for pet food, janitorial supplies, pharmaceuticals for the surgeries, and those types of things provided to the animals in the shelter. He stated the operating leases are for the copiers; the hangars they have at the Merritt Island Airport for the Aviation Unit; the special investigations building that they have; inmate's supplies are for uniforms, wrist bands, and shoes; and they do not provide them with underwear or socks. He noted the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Canine grant, they have an agreement with Port Canaveral and TSA; TSA provides them with a canine; they reimburse them a \$50,000 a year per TSA canine team, they currently have five; and they expect to receive two more in the next year. He explained to the Board they are currently housed out of Cape Canaveral and used in the cruise terminals and around the cruise ships. He went on to say prisoner transportation services is where they have a contract with a company to provide prisoner transportation services from the Jail to other counties and out-of-state; if someone is picked up on a warrant in Montana, they can call the company and they will go out there and pick them up and bring them back; and that is not in conjunction with the State Attorney's Office. He stated vehicle equipment consists of radios, cages in the back of the cars, gun bolts to lock up the guns, and those types of things are included in that; their legal fees are self-explanatory; utilities, their criminal investigative building they do all of the utilities in that building, which was part of the agreement when the County purchased that for the Sheriff as part of them getting

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into that building; they also have the Jail Farm, aviation hangar on Merritt Island, and Camp Chance in West Port St. John; law enforcement training is all of the money they receive back from the State on the \$2 and \$2.50 surcharge placed on every traffic citation issued in Brevard County; and it can only be used, per Statute, for training of law enforcement purposes. He stated the repairs and maintenance are repairs on the facilities, other equipment they have, and ammunition. He stated on the Capital Program, the lions share is their vehicles; the vehicle is the number one piece of equipment the deputies need to be able to do their jobs; the computer replacement of \$328,000 if for rotation of the lap tops their deputies use every five years; body armor needs to be purchased; firearms are exchanged out per a local vendor every five years, and they will give them a brand new one to replace it at a discounted price; they still have bomb threats so they have to have bomb suits, which are warranted for five years; and they have 30 canines in the agency, 12 on the Jail side, and 18 on the law enforcement side.

Chairman Smith inquired if the bomb suits are guaranteed for five years and if they get thread worn or how does it wear out.

Sheriff Ivey replied the ballistic panels, heat exposure to the environment, and things like that takes its toll on them, just like it does on the body armor the deputies wear; sweat and everything else adds to it; and the companies that manufactures them, tests them at different intervals, and their guarantee is what they believe is the safest value of the suit.

Mr. Pelham noted the next chart, the top number should be \$127.39; this is in comparison to the surrounding counties immediately around Brevard County; and at the end of 2016, on a per capita basis, Brevard County is lowest Sheriff's Office for law enforcement in the East Central Florida area. He went on to add the next graph is the FY 2016 Jail per capita budget; the number that should be there is \$75.49; again Brevard County is the lowest operating on a per capita basis in the East Central Florida area; and one thing he wants to point out is within the past two years, Brevard has moved in front of Polk County. He added the good thing about that is Polk County receives \$2 to \$3 million a year from the Federal Government for housing federal prisoners, and Brevard County is still beating them, and they do not get that funding.

Sheriff Ivey pointed out that Seminole County houses federal prisoners as well, and Brevard is still coming in below Polk and Seminole Counties.

Mr. Pelham advised some interesting information they came across on from a person who provided it to them; the Office of Demographic and Economic Research at the University of Florida did a study and found out that in Brevard County, 26 percent of the total budget was for Fiscal Year 2014 goes towards public safety expenditures, which was 45th out of the 67 counties in the State of Florida; and additionally, Brevard was 58 out of 67 on a per capita basis for public safety expenditures. He noted public safety expenditures in this detail include the Emergency Medical Operations and Fire Rescue. He went on to say at the Agency, they are faced with critical needs of staffing, competitive salary, and equipment and facilities; the Board has a Comprehensive Plan in place that states there should be two deputies per 1,000 residents; in the unincorporated area right now the population is just over 230,000, which based on the County Comprehensive Plan, there would be 462 road patrol deputies, they currently have 402; and they are 60 deputies short of meeting that Comprehensive Plan.

Sheriff Ivey explained they are budgeted for 402.

Mr. Pelham stated in Fiscal Year 2020 the population is estimated in the unincorporated area to grow to 240,000, which would be an additional 20 deputies needed at that point in time; one of the issues with that is it takes about \$125,000 per brand new position; the salary and benefits for an entry level deputy is \$63,000; the vehicle and associated equipment to outfit that brand new vehicle for that deputy is \$45,000; and the other equipment to outfit the deputy, gun,

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uniform, and so forth is \$17,000. He pointed out this graph shows all of the local law enforcement agencies and their starting salary; the Sheriff's Office, being the premier law enforcement agency in the County and in East Central Florida area, and they are sixth; law enforcement world is a very competitive place; everyone is always looking to get a new and better person; and one of the ways they are doing that is to offer a higher starting pay. He advised the other major competitors for employees are the local surrounding sheriff's office, and Brevard County is sixth out of the seven counties on the starting salary; and he received notice this morning that Orlando Police Department, which is another big competitor of theirs, just raised their starting salary to \$48,000 for an entry level police officer.

Sheriff Ivey stated not only do they lose people to those higher competitive salaries, but the Fire Chief would echo the same thing, as they constantly lose people to Orlando Fire and Police, as well as Orange County.

Mr. Pelham added their other competitive salaries is for dispatchers; dispatchers are the life line of the deputies on the road; and their dispatchers, as the Board can see, just within the County are eight out of 11. He noted they are having a difficult time having people and retaining the people because of this; people come work in the County for a year or two; and the other agencies swoop in and pull them away.

Sheriff Ivey stated they have looked into part-timing their dispatchers and allowing them to work part-time for other agencies just so they can keep them with their agency.

Mr. Pelham stated the last critical issues are equipment and facilities; over the last several years with the impacts of the economy in the County, they have been forced to come up with creative ways to replace vehicles; a deputies vehicle is the number one piece of equipment needed; they currently have 584 vehicles assigned to the core functions patrol, investigations, prisoner transportation, and animal services; and they used to have a five year, 100,000 mile replacement plan six years ago, but it is actually six to seven years and 125,000 to 140,000 miles per vehicle. He added when looking at replacing a car, they really go over it make sure it absolutely has to be done; based on a six year, 125,000 miles, they should be replacing 80 to 90 vehicles a year; and the last four years they have only been able to replace 38, 33, 19, and this year 61 vehicles. He pointed out because they are pushing the cars for more years, higher mileages, they are starting to see an increase in repairs, and they are getting more costly to operate on a daily basis. He noted the Agency has been providing \$747,000 annually to the Board for debt payments on the acquisition and construction of the CIS building, North Precinct building, Hangar at the Merritt Island Airport, the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), Records Management System (RMS), and Jail Management System (JMS); no County ad valorem tax revenues have been used; West Precinct currently shares a building at the Government Complex with the Public Defender's Office; and the agency has outgrown this facility and requires additional space.

Sheriff Ivey added any time they can fill a void with the landscaping and mowing of all of the County buildings is to use inmate labor trying to supplement the budget as much as they can so that money can be used elsewhere throughout; they try to come up with innovative ways they can get the needs they have; the West Precinct with the growth and expansion that Viera is currently seeing, they are busting at the seams of their West Precinct; they know there is going to come a time, as Viera continued to grow, that they are going to have to look at expanding that facility; and at the same time they have the Public Defender's Office immediately above them that has growth problems as well. He pointed out there are capital needs that will be forthcoming and part of their strategy.

Mr. Pelham noted they have thought outside of the box to come up with solutions to help the Board out; to acquire the CIS building, build a new north precinct, and the hangar has not cost

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any taxpayer dollars; and these are things that have been generated by phone calls by inmates in the Jail, seizures on a federal forfeiture level, and additional operational savings they have been able to make within the agency.

Chairman Smith stated he is happy the Sheriff is present to point those things out; he and the Sheriff have talked about some of these things before; but for the general public to understand how much they do not cost and how much they help the system is great.

Commissioner Barfield exclaimed it is amazing what the Sheriff's Office gets done with what it has. He inquired how much is that turnover, how often, and how many people go in and out.

Sheriff Ivey replied last year in about a five or six month window they lost 748 years of service to the Agency due to Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP); that in itself left a tremendous void for them to try to catch up to; their Career Development Team and their Human Resources Team have done a fantastic job of doing that; it is not that there is a constant rush of people leaving; and it is the ones they train and put the investment into, and then they are lost to another agency. He noted it is a continuing problem they face; their team is doing a great job; but when they are 20 deputies down on the road, it puts them down in other areas as well.

Commissioner Barfield stated in the rest of the County there is a huge gap that keeps growing where people are retiring, and they will lose the experience; and he inquired how bad that is affecting the Sheriff for the future.

Sheriff Ivey responded it hit them pretty hard; their team does a good job at succession planning, not only in trying to get people in; they are doing something with East Central Florida State College to put a larger number of people into the police academy so they have their own group to pull from; and their team does a great job.

Commissioner Isnardi inquired if the Sheriff finds the turnover is a deputy that has been there five years or less, if it levels out to where they are more competitive as far as the pay scale goes.

Sheriff Ivey replied theirs gets more competitive the longer they have been here; unfortunately, the people who they are primarily recruiting, the age group, is they are what is there for them right now; and as soon as something comes along, it entices them more and they are more apt to go. He went on to add they are fortunate they have a community that strongly supports them; they have a County Commission and County Manager that supports them; the people in his Agency are happy and the morale is good; and they have the resources they need to do the job. He noted that helps a little bit to deter them from leaving and going to other places; but the salary difference is causing the biggest impact for them.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she thinks the Sheriff is doing a really good job in managing his funds and Department; and she thinks Brevard County has the best Sheriff's Department in the State of Florida. She went on to say she runs into a lot of deputies, and they really enjoy working for Sheriff Ivey and the people they are under; and she commended him for that. She inquired what the average year of service per employee is.

Mr. Pelham replied the majority of their employees are between eight and 11 years; that will change over the next five years because some of the lieutenants and above, 70 percent of those will turn over; it started last year; and he has projected out the people who are leaving in the next five years. He pointed out he cannot account for the people that come and work for a year or two and go to another jurisdiction.

Sheriff Ivey stated the pay difference is the biggest thing; it not only affects them in losing people, it impacts them in not being able to get them here; and they are recruited by other

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agencies. He stated they will not ever accept mediocrity in their applicants; they want the best of the best; and to do that it is challenging.

Commissioner Pritchett inquired if the Sheriff is able to get pay incentives such as higher education.

Mr. Pelham replied that is already included; on the law enforcement side of the equation, the State Statutes provide for education incentives for an Associate's Degree, a Bachelor's Degree, and up to a Master's Degree, and then other forms of training; and it is a maximum of \$120 a month.

## **ITEM I.A.2., TAX COLLECTOR**

Lisa Cullen, Tax Collector, stated they have a little bit of a different process, and she hopes to walk the Board through that today. She went on to say having watched the last budget meeting, watching the Board going line-by-line, she has some of her senior staff with her today as they do that exercise every year; it is a good yet tough way; but it keeps everyone on track. She stated the 177 men and women of the Tax Collector's Office operate the division of transparency and accountability every day in every way; she believes in that; and she believes it has gained some trust within the County. She noted they have branch offices throughout the County, with the administrative offices in Titusville; the majority of those are in County facilities; and she expressed her appreciation for that space, because it does provide a cost savings to the citizens. She advised the Tax Collector revenue for Fiscal Year 15/16, they generated \$16.4 million in revenue, and they have estimated about \$16.6 million for this Fiscal Year they are currently in. She added their funding is generated by performing State functions at the local level; the Board can think of the Tax Collector's budget much like their home budget; if they do not earn it, they do not spend it; but unlike a home budget, in order to spend it she must justify it and have approval from the Department of Revenue (DOR); and one of her primary funding sources is she is the agent for the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. She went on to state she does title and registration transactions for motor vehicles, vessels, and mobile homes; she provides driver's license and identification card services, as well as issuing handicapped parking placards; and during the course of any given year, depending on the economy, they will process between 800,000 to a million of these types of transactions. She pointed out another funding source for the office, in 2015 she partnered with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to offer concealed weapon licensing services locally; they initially told her she would do 10 to 12 licenses a day in this County, but they do well over 50 most days; in fact, Brevard County is number two in the State of Florida for Tax Collector's Offices that process these types of transactions; and it has been very well received. She stated the Tax Collector's Office statutorily bills and collects for real and tangible personal property taxes under the supervision of the Department of Revenue; these taxes are collected on behalf of 61 ad valorem districts and 38 county municipal and special districts; the 2016 tax roll they are currently collecting is over \$686 million, which encompasses 377 and 389 parcels; and she also oversees the collection and auditing of the Tourist Development Tax. She stated in recent years, and working closely with Eric Garvey, Tourism Development Director for Brevard County, collections have been steadily increasing; she and Mr. Garvey were able to contract with Airbnb so they collect the Tourist Development Taxes on behalf of their hosts; and that was an innovated thing in the State of Florida. She explained to the Board the Tourist Development Council (TDC) shares their knowledge of the industry with her; she does not propose to be a very knowledgeable person when it comes to the rental of hotel rooms and different facilities in Florida, but their knowledge has been extremely helpful; and she wanted to let the Board know how much she appreciates what Mr. Garvey does. She stated recently she discovered the only place to purchase a birth certificate was at the Department of Health in Merritt Island; she has contracted with the Department of Health; they now offer those services at the Sarno Tax

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Collector branch; it has been very popular and very well received; and they will be offering that throughout all of their branches before the end of the year. She pointed out they act as an agent for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; and they issue hunting licenses, fishing licenses, and permits that go along with those. She went on to add there are also some contractual services that she performs, which are not statutorily required; she takes applications for Brevard County business tax receipts, and she does it at cost; but she also has been able to contract with the Cities of Cocoa and Melbourne for lock box processing; and this provides an additional revenue stream to their office, and the Cities are receiving local cost water payment processing. She stated their budget approval and oversight is by the Department of Revenue (DOR) for the Tax Collector's Office; it is a detailed process; she has added the link to their budget workbook they fill out in detail and justification they want to see with their budget each year; and they look at the previous year's budgets to see if something is asked for over and over. She noted their budget time table is due to the DOR with the copy to the Board by August 1; by September 15, she will have some type of tentative budget approval back, with also a notice to the Board; between September 15 and 30, any additional comments that she or the Board would like to make concerning the Tax Collector's budget can be made to the DOR; and final budget approval is noticed to her by September 30. She explained when talking about her budget, she has three main buckets, personnel services, operating expenses, and operating Capital Outlay; the majority they pay for is personnel services; that number includes insurance, any benefits they would receive, Worker's Compensation insurance, and any of those types of things; operating expenses are a little over \$2 million; and operating Capital Outlay is \$197,604. She stated the Capital Outlay number is a little higher this time because they have been replacing their high speed processors. She stated the Board's ad valorem commissions were a little over \$8.5 million; she is statutorily required to return unused fees to the taxing authorities that pay those commissions; and last year she was able to return \$4.7 million. She stated in the non-ad valorem assessments, another \$989,000 can be added for that. She advised the Board they received the Excellence in Financial Operations Award in 2011, and the Legacy Award in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016. She stated she is proud of the Tax Collector's Office's financial policies and procedures; and their awards are based on clean audits, and it also requires them to show continual improvements in financial operations. She pointed out they have a cash machine that will detect counterfeit bills, it counts the cash, the specialist can make drops during the day, it knows who is making the drops, and it is a wonderful piece of equipment when dealing in the amount of cash they do. She stated she has lived in Brevard County for nearly 40 years, and she appreciates and values what they have here; she is raising two children and has a grandchild; she knows it is her responsibility as the Tax Collector to do her part for the County; and she can assure the Board, she is doing that.

Commissioner Barfield expressed his appreciation to Ms. Cullen for her service as it is excellent; he stated hereceives comments from people about the Merritt Island office and how quick it is to go through there; and people used to cringe to think he or she had to get tags or whatever.

Ms. Cullen stated their appointment system is an innovative thing they have done and has been very well received.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she thinks Ms. Cullen is doing a good job; she appreciates her making it easy to look at the financial reports; and she enjoys looking at them.

Chairman Smith reiterated what has already been said; he stated personally he has never liked going to get tags; he used to charge his wife with doing that; but now he does not mind because a person can zip in and zip right out again, and if a person makes an appointment, it is even quicker. He inquired if there is anything the Board can do to help Ms. Cullen besides giving her a lot more funds.

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Ms. Cullen replied they are doing really good; when she took office in 2009, it was probably one of the roughest years she has ever worked through because of the state of the economy and trying to talk to people who were not able to pay their taxes who were having those types of problems; and thankfully, they are seeing a lot of that going away. She pointed out they have the least amount of certificates they ever had this year since she has become the collector; and she thinks that is a statement about the economy. She went on to say she is happy to see how it is going; she will miss Stockton Whitten, County Manager; and she expressed her appreciation to him for his help and support over the years as it has been wonderful to work with him. She stated when she opened her office in Viera she called Mr. Whitten, and rents in Viera are astronomical; they had looked for a place to rent; but Mr. Whitten told her to give him two weeks; and he found them space at the Government Center. She noted he has been an awesome and dedicated servant to Brevard County; and words just cannot explain what she feels for him, and she will miss him. She stated she works well with the County Manager and her fellow Constitutional Officers.

### **ITEM I.A.3., CLERK OF COURT**

Scott Ellis, Clerk of Courts, stated he sent the Board the hard copy of the Clerk's budget; the only functions they do with the Board are the Clerk to the Board, Accounts Payable, and County Finance; big change is Article V probably 12 years ago or so; and they shifted where the Board used to fund a large part of the Clerk's Office and now it funds almost nothing.

Commissioner Barfield inquired if the Clerk is experiencing a lot of turnover.

Mr. Ellis replied in eight years they have gone from 500 to 300 people.

Commissioner Barfield stated he understands; but they have lost a lot of turnover with the County employees; and he asked how his organization is.

Mr. Ellis responded they have not really had raises, because they are under the State rule, for probably eight years; when they lose people, they tend to lose them to other governmental agencies; and particularly to the State Attorney's Office more so than anywhere else. He pointed out there is a turnover problem with millennials; they have a job hop mentality; and there is not much that can be done about that, it is just a very different generation. He added with the younger people they see the turnover; generally people he has hired 40 and up they do not see that kind of turnover; but everything has gone electronic and they need a lot of young people who are savvy electronically, but they just do not do the math when they jump jobs. He stated he understands when they leave for a better paying job, but when he or she leaves with a little bit of cash, he or she does not understand the benefits; it is a difficult situation for all of them; a person does not understand the value of retirement until he or she becomes 50; and a person does not understand the value of insurance until something gets messed up. He noted it is hard for him to talk to someone who is 25 years old who does not understand when they make \$11 an hour, there is a \$10 an hour benefit cost, because they do not understand the value of that benefit cost. He stated they need an eight percent cut in the insurance rates; they are probably the only office in the whole County that actually feels the pain on insurance; everyone else gets the money with one hand and hands it back with the other, because their budget is driven by the State; and they get nothing for what the insurance is. He noted it is killing them.

Commissioner Isnardi inquired if he has a number on that.

Mr. Ellis replied right now insurance is \$11,700, and they need to knock about \$1,000 a year off of that; if the Board knocked \$1,000 a year off of the insurance, at this point everyone has submitted their budgets, it should be able to deduct that money from every single agency with

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no pain at all; they all have submitted a budget based on the rate the Board has for insurance; and if the Board went to every single agency, cut their insurance by \$1,000 a year, and took that money back, it would give it \$3 million for roads, \$1 million for various enterprise funds that would have to go back to those funds; and it would pick up approximately \$3 million for the General Fund.

Chairman Smith inquired \$1,000 per person.

Mr. Ellis advised a \$1,000 per year, per employee; the way the Board bills its insurance is they are billed the \$12,000 per year for full-time employees; and it does not matter if a person takes the insurance or not. He pointed out they have not found another clerk's office in the State that gets billed like that; it has been a 15-year struggle; and after 15 years, he is certainly not going to win that, but they cannot afford that rate.

Commissioner Pritchett inquired how many employees the Clerk's Office has.

Mr. Ellis replied almost 300 employees.

Commissioner Pritchett asked if the Clerk is understaffed, as everyone else is.

Mr. Ellis responded it does not matter if they are understaffed or not, they hang in there; they have gone electronic; and they make do with what they have.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she just wondered if he was feeling the crunch like other departments.

Mr. Ellis noted no one has felt the crunch they have felt; he will be blunt, no one has come before the Board that had a 40 percent reduction in 10 years; and they have been cut more than anyone else in the County. He stated it is not the Board's fault, it has not been the County's cut, it has mostly come from the State; what is found is when their office is cut dramatically, they are forced to find better ways to do things; and the people they work with are forced to do things better. He went on to say in Brevard, they are all electronic, the judges are electronic; they have to be; and there are other counties who still use paper. He pointed out they cannot do paper as they do not have the money to do that. He stated he used to have 30 people in the File Room, including the second shift, and now there are probably six; if an organization is forced to be cut, they will be forced to find better ways to do things; and those around them will be forced to comply with what needs to be done. He stated he is sure there a people who would love to have a paper system; he told them they could have a court clerk or a file clerk; and they would rather have a court clerk. He stated they have put a lot of information on the web, but they do not want people coming to the office; they do not want a person's telephone call; they will take the email; but he would rather a person pay online or look online. He stated of the 67 counties, Brevard Clerk's Office probably has more online than any other county; they cannot function any other way; the Phone Center used to have 26 people and now there are 12; and they are forced to do things better.

Chairman Smith inquired if the State has forced that reduction.

Mr. Ellis advised all of the Clerks are getting cut; Polk, Lee, Pasco, Volusia, and Brevard Counties are piers; they get \$150,000 from the County which goes to their facilities money, Article V; Lee, Polk, and Volusia Counties get \$1 million apiece for various things; and Pasco County does as well. He went on to say Lee County pays for their child support; Volusia County's Board pays for their Information Technology (IT); and Polk County pays for their IT. He stated what happens to him when he goes in front of the State, they tell them they are not efficient; he has 30 to 40 less employees than all four of those counties as a full-time Clerk's

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Office; they are paid by the Board or they are paid by the Feds because of the way they work their child support system; and they do not show up. He noted they only report their State funded employees, they do not report the total employees; and they get beat on that every time they are up there. He stated they will not get beat on it this time, because this time they have had it; he reiterated they have 30 to 40 employees than any of those four counties; he does not have other funding sources; and he has never asked for other funding sources. He explained he worked as a Commissioner and he understands how Article V is supposed to work; in return the Board no longer gets a share of the fines, fees, and all of the things it used to get; and in fairness for that, the Board is not supposed to pay for the courts. He noted they do still pay for the courts, but the Board does not pay for them; the Board does not have to give money to Court Administration; and they do not ask for it or have never asked for it.

Commissioner Barfield inquired would cutting the insurance by \$1,000 be doable.

Frank Abbate, Assistant County Manager, replied staff will be looking forward to giving the Board a presentation on health insurance; they have done it in the past; and they are ready to do it this time. He went on by saying they looked at it and there was a cut a year ago of four percent because of what they did; he does not want to spend an hour of the Board's time now, because it will take some time to go through it; and he reiterated staff will be most happy to give the Board that presentation, and they will be looking at what needs to be done moving forward.

Mr. Ellis stated part of it needs to be discussed now or the Board will not understand what happens; last year when the rate was cut, the money was not swept back from anybody they gave the insurance to; the County did not sweep the money back from any Charter Officers; but it could have. He went on to say by cutting that rate by \$1,000 per person per year, it is almost \$4 million, and that money should be swept back; he has submitted a budget based on paying insurance of almost \$12,000 a year; if he pays \$11,000 a year, the Board comes back and takes \$40,000 from his Board side, it has no impact on them; and if he does the same for the Sheriff's Office is would be approximately \$1.5 million. He stated with the enterprise fund the Board cannot move it over for General Fund purposes, but it can do it with all of its General Funded agencies.

Chairman Smith stated he thinks Mr. Ellis lost him; and he is a little denser than other people. He stated if he is saying they have already submitted their budget, they are providing for \$12,000 for the individual; and now Mr. Ellis is saying to take the \$12,000 away. He inquired how he covers the cost.

Mr. Ellis responded really they are charging \$11,000, to not charge \$12,000, charge \$11,000, and sweep the \$1,000 per person back.

Chairman Smith inquired if that would make it \$1,000 short on paying that person's bills.

Mr. Ellis replied no, not at all; if a kid comes in and wants a ticket to the show that costs \$15; the kid gives them \$20; and they expect to get \$5 back. He added if the show was \$10 a person, he would get \$10 back. He went on to say the Board fully-funds the insurance for everyone else; it is put in one pocket; and they take it out and give it back to the Board. He pointed out they have already submitted a budget based on \$12,000 insurance cost; and if the insurance is cut to \$11,000 a year, the Board can sweep back \$1,000 per policy from every single entity under this County Board.

Commissioner Pritchett inquired if what Mr. Ellis is saying is the actual cost for employees is \$11,000 and not \$12,000.

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Mr. Ellis advised if the Board cuts the rate from \$12,000 to \$11,000, the money can be swept back from everyone; and it has no pain felt from anyone the money is swept from.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she wants to look at it, she thinks she understands where Mr. Ellis is going with this; she is curious what the cost is to actually insure an employee; and she is thinking it is being put into reserves for insurance because those funds cannot be transferred anywhere else.

Mr. Ellis stated the Board has already transferred them a week ago when they used the money to do the sales tax; the Board has \$30 something million in the insurance reserve; and there are \$40 something million for annual costs.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she would have to ask some questions on that; she would have to know statistically what they need to have in reserves; and her guess is about 100 days.

Mr. Ellis stated 100 days is about \$12 million.

Commissioner Pritchett stated the Board is self-insured; in the City of Titusville they have a self-insured healthcare system as well; they did not have enough in reserves; and they got kicked real hard one year because they had a few catastrophes. She noted she is open to looking at it.

Mr. Ellis pointed out the Board is way over what it needs in reserves; with the Clerk of Courts, it is a quarter million dollar savings; the Board side it is about \$30,000; but on the State side it is well over \$200,000 savings.

Commissioner Pritchett inquired how the State determines the Clerk's budget and how much they are giving him.

Mr. Ellis responded they collect all of the money, fees, and fines; someone pays a ticket; part of that goes to the Clerk's fund; at one point it was \$540 million; and that money has declined dramatically to about \$400 million or so. He noted that money is then divided amongst the Clerks; where the Clerk's Office was pounded last time, a 15 percent cut, was based on what they called a workload performance measure where they claimed that Volusia County does so much better than Brevard County; and Brevard County took a big cut. He noted what happened is what Volusia County does is they have 27 people charged into child support and he has eight; they are taking their reimbursement, they have a surplus, and they are putting it in their pocket; they have almost \$2 million from their county for their IT and Brevard does not have that; they run rocket docket during Spring Break, and they classify those as misdemeanor cases; and they ask them to pay \$100 or come back down a month from now. He stated his staff spent time digging through everyone else's budget, because they had to; now they have gone through all of those counties budgets; and that is the biggest difference the money they get from the Board and how they count their cases. He stated he does not care if they receive their money from their board, that is great, but to not tell Brevard County they are less efficient when they have more than 10 percent less employees than any of their peers.

Chairman Smith stated it sounds like Mr. Ellis is being punished for being efficient.

Mr. Ellis pointed out they do not see it that way because they are only looking at the money the State pays for, they are not looking at what the other money is paid for. He went on to add if Brevard County's insurance number here shows \$12,000, for the Clerk's Office it is the equivalent of \$13,000, because his office is paying for insurance who do not take the insurance; and no one else in the State has to do that. He explained to the Board they have not found another county in the State where insurance is billed to people who do not take it.

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Commissioner Pritchett inquired if the other Constitutional Offices do insurance with the County.

Mr. Ellis replied affirmatively.

Commissioner Pritchett inquired if the Clerk has their budget online.

Steve Burdett, Finance Director, advised the Board the Clerk's budget is not online.

Mr. Ellis stated they can put it online; they cannot take the insurance cost anymore; if the Board wants money for roads, there are \$3 million sitting there the Board can get on an annual basis; and if the County had a couple of bad years in a row, it can take the rates back up. He noted the County could not have a year bad enough to eat up that kind of reserve; and it could not have two years bad enough to eat up that kind of reserve. He stated Volusia County's insurance is \$8,000 or \$9,000 where Brevard's is \$12,000; they are out looking at insurance right now; and they may possibly pull out of the County's plan and going to something cheaper. He stated the County's insurance is very expensive.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she wants to make sure the Board looks into this, because obviously Mr. Ellis knows what he is talking about; she is concerned if they are charging any Constitutional Officer or anyone else for people who are not taking insurance; and if it is part of the County's model, maybe it needs to look a little harder at that as well.

Mr. Abbate reiterated he will be happy to spend as much time as the Board wants; staff has been doing this for a long time; they entered into interlocal agreements, which the Clerk and every other Constitutional Officer participates in voluntarily; the Clerk's Office has left the program and come back, because the County was the best program at that time; and he is trying to work with the Clerk, and he has met with Mr. Ellis within the last couple of months. He went on to say he has already indicated to the Board they constantly look at where they were; and he would appreciate being able to sit down in a workshop and explain the history of where they were, where they are, and where they are going. He advised the Board no one has submitted a budget for the upcoming year.

Mr. Ellis inquired what was presented today.

Mr. Abbate replied the current year budget; staff has not made any commitment in that area yet; but they will be looking at it.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she wishes insurance was not so expensive, and it has crept upon people within the last 10 years; and she does not think anyone expected this.

Mr. Ellis advised the Board it would be one thing if it did not have such a large surplus.

Commissioner Isnardi noted each office is unique; and obviously, the Clerk's Office is a lot tighter than others.

#### **ITEM I.A.4., PROPERTY APPRAISER**

Dana Blickley, Property Appraiser, expressed her appreciation to the Board for doing this; she stated in a public setting, she thinks it has only been done once since she came into office; and this gives them the opportunity to tell their story, along with the public being able to hear what they are doing, why they are doing it, what their plans are, the measurable outcomes and goals, and how they are doing it. She advised she would like to give the Board some information about what is going on in today's market and what is making the Property

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Appraiser's office churn. She stated they are experiencing a low inventory of properties, higher selling prices, and higher transaction rates; a considerable drop in foreclosures and short sales of single-family homes; for everyone who has been around here since 2006 can appreciate what that is doing for the County; higher prices in the County are transacting in a relatively high rate; and this is something that has not been experienced in a long time. She pointed out traditionally there is a big difference between lower priced properties versus higher priced properties; they are noticing quite an increase in the transaction of higher priced properties, those in the \$600,000 range on up; they are identifying brand new home sales, year 2016 sales from builders; and they have about 25 percent more at this time than they did at this time last year. She went on to say early indications show average selling prices of 2016 sales they use for assessing purposes have gone up anywhere between five and 12 percent; and that varies greatly by market area. She stated they are using about eight percent more sales, meaning 16 sales over 15 sales last year to generate their upcoming 2017 market values; and she does not have estimates today. She expressed her appreciation to Stockton Whitten, County Manager, for his service and partnership prior to her becoming the official and as the official; she stated there are so many things that go on behind the scenes every day with the five Constitutional Officers that the Board does not realize takes place; and anytime there is a cooperative spirit that way, time is money, resources are money, and they are constantly looking for ways to keep those costs down. She pointed out it can be anything from them having hosting their backup servers in the Sheriff's Office in a location that is secure without extra cost to them; it could be furnishing satellite offices with capital they receive from the Tax Collector or Supervisor of Elections; it could be an increase in the audit of their homestead roles with their customers by visiting the Supervisor of Elections Office and getting information from them that leads them to their office; she is working with the Tax Collector every day so every transaction that deals with tangible personal property or real estate has a process where both parties are touching it; and in terms of the Clerk of Courts, that is 365 days out of the year. She went on to say when Scott Ellis, Clerk of Courts, talks about doing things with today's technology, a document can be recorded at 2:00 a.m. sitting at home or in a person's office now, something that has changed the way they do business.

Milo Zonka, Finance Director for the Property Appraiser's Office, stated they do three jobs, discover, list, and value all property in the County; they try to make it accurate, uniform, and equitable; they do not create the value, the market creates the value; and they are just trying to determine what that is, report it, and apply it fairly and equitably across the assessment roll. He noted about 45 percent of the property in Brevard County is immune to taxation because it is owned by the federal government or other governmental agencies. He added they have about 100 employees that do the work of the office; about 70 of them are in their primary office in Titusville; others are located in County facilities; they are a tenant of the County's; and they appreciate that partnership. He stated they are a full-service organization, they provide all of the finance, Human Resources, internal support, Information Technology to their own organization, they host their own website, and they contract with the Board for benefits and facilities; they have a new elected official since 2013; and the important thing is it is the first change in 24 years in that office. He pointed out there was an entirely new perspective in that office; they had to start from the beginning; and they had to figure out how to do those things and do them effectively. He stated their green screen system, the CAMA System, was more than 30 years old; servers and desktops are beyond useful life; and they had an Arcane County-provided telephone system. He advised they took the payroll and put it into an actual payroll system, and they went and looked for an off-the-shelf CAMA system, which they just finished their transition to; the finance and HR, just general support to the office, they have two and one-half people to do it now; and they do it very well. He stated they did reorganization just this week; they consolidated two departments, which resulted in the departure in one of their senior staff members; and they are not afraid to continue to challenge themselves to be as efficient as possible. He explained they had to pay for change from the change; they financed an entirely new software system at \$1.8 million; the hardware that runs that software, they rebuilt the entire

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fleet of servers; and they did that at about \$700,000 in the budget. He stated their employees are 80 percent of their budget; if their employees are not doing their jobs well and motivated, they will fail; and their employees are their customers. He advised they tackled the telephone system, and did it as cost effectively as they could have; they replenished their desktops and servers. He went on by saying in 2006 they had 146 employees on the payroll, today they have less than 100, and they are doing the same amount of work; their budget has declined from \$12 million to \$8.82 million; they have to re-inspect one-fifth of the properties every year regardless of market times; but as market volumes increase, it does add work for them. He noted in 2006 there were about 39,000 sales and transactions; this year there were around 38,000, and they are down about three percent; but their numbers of exemption applications are up about nine percent. He added 16 percent of those were taken online; they had online applications before; and they now have straight through processing.

Chairman Smith inquired what an exemption application is.

Mr. Zonka replied it can be for homestead, senior exemption, military, and all those types of stuff. He stated they have to re-inspect every property every five years; they have to inspect sales, construction, and all of those things; in 2006 the office did 27,000; in 2016 they did 56,000; and almost 40,000 of those they used aerials and automation. He explained they are trying to find the best way to add value; someone sitting at a desk can now see all four sides of a property with three-inch resolution, they will take advantage of that; and they will sit there and do 100 properties in a day instead of driving from one to the other. He stated that is an application of technology that the office had a few years ago but they just were not using it right, now they are using it right; and as the Board can see the employees are from 146 to 102, they are down 30 percent. He pointed out the budget is the same way, 25 percent lower for personnel expenses, 33 percent lower for operating capital, and overall they are about 27 percent down from that real estate peak; and they are not struggling today. He stated the employees are working harder, they are multi-taskers; they are learning every day; his Chief Deputy is talking with the other Chief Deputies and learning what is going on with other property appraiser's offices; and they are stealing every good idea they can find. He stated there were times their front counter people may be reading a book, because they did not have anything else for them to do; they have a lot for them to do now; and they are working hard. He noted their Merritt Island office is virtually a data processing center as much as anything today because they are constantly moving paper for them and getting things processed, so they are getting the best value out of the employees. He went on to add looking forward they expect to be at one percent plus or minus; right now they are sitting right at no change; but they do not have all of their final numbers in so they can give the Board the exact number from their current budget; and they are not going to add to the Board's problem. He stated they are anticipating a pay increase for their staff; right now their plus or minus one percent incorporates the effects of what he would call the senate plan; they have been making significant investments in education, training, and certifications for staff; they are trying desperately to avoid turnover, because they have a lot of different specialties housed in one organization; and if they lose one highly skilled person, it is very damaging to them. He went on to say they are also trying to make sure they are educated and also working on their transition; they have younger employees coming in; there will be employees retiring in the next few years; and they have a lot of certification and education they need to try to get people as they are taking on complex jobs. He advised they are assuming on change in health insurance; Mr. Ellis made an excellent point, if the Board makes a change in health insurance at this point, it would be a come back to the Board; and whatever the Board charges for health insurance, they just turn around and charge it back. He stated he has been representing the Property Appraiser's Office on the Insurance Benefits Committee for a couple of years; he has some concerns; the health plan is a huge expense to the County; and it is a huge issue for competitiveness as an employer. He added he does not know how the Board gets there from here, as he does not know what the status of the Board's reserves are; he knows there are some statutory requirements and good business practices it

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wants to maintain; but it has been a status quo operation; and other than some benefits cut that were imposed a couple of years ago, and maybe those have or have not created the surplus the Board has now, but he does not know why the Board has a surplus now. He recommended to the Board that its number one expense outside salary costs, it should put some private sector people on that Insurance Benefits Committee; now what the Board has on there are 15 users; and if the Board wonders why it has status quo, it is because there is really no one there who will challenge it, because they are all afraid of what they may do to their own benefits. He stated as an employer, the County is not the best employer around these days; it does not pay well; the organization is challenged; and it needs to be able to show why it is a good place to work, including the Constitutional Offices. He stated the Board should treat it as important as it is and to get more eyes on it; he cannot empathize that enough; it has been a great frustration for him to watch the status quo continue; and looking at what is going on in other sectors of the industry, even the public sector, there is a lot more innovation, attempt to embrace education, and to power the employee to be a part of their insurance so they can understand how to use it better and more cost effectively. He inquired why there are no pay increases this year; and he stated it is because the health insurance has gone up \$5 million, because it was used wrong last year. He pointed out those things are all linked; it is a big frustration; it is a big expense; and that expense needs to be challenged as it is worth more than one hour. He noted they are at the state-of-the-art right now in their technology, and the state-of-the-art is moving away from them every day; and that state-of-the-art buys them efficiency, reliability, and redundancy. He stated they need the Board's help with the employee benefits, they are an issue for them; they are chasing after highly technical people in a lot of their positions; and that is a question that gets asked. He added they have issues with some of the facilities; the Facilities Department is terrific, but they are working with 50 and 60 year old buildings; there are asbestos at the Titusville six-story building; and everyone is afraid to touch a fleck of paint on the wall, let alone go in there and work every day.

Commissioner Tobia stated it looks like the homestead exemption is going to go before the voters in 2018, raising it from \$50,000 to \$75,000; his guess is voters will decide in favor of that; and he inquired what will that mean in real dollars to the County's budget in two years.

Ms. Blickley replied right now they have about 330,000 parcels and 150,000 of those are homesteaded; they are now going to be running some estimates, they have done it Statewide, as to what that would mean for Brevard County if those were increased; and the Board can rest assured that if that goes before the voters it will pass overwhelmingly.

Mr. Zonka stated the Florida Association of Counties just had an estimate he saw come out today, and he thinks they were talking \$9 million General Fund for the County.

Ms. Blickley noted to remember that is always expediential because of the Cap.

Chairman Smith inquired if the County can opt out of that.

Ms. Blickley replied no.

Chairman Smith stated all the County is doing is robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Ms. Blickley stated whenever she is asked this question, because she tries to keep it very clear that the same person that reports the value that is half of the property tax equation is not in charge of deciding what a person's tax rate is going to be, however, it takes five gallons to fill a five gallon bucket; and in order to fund all of the things that are required to do, it calls a core service, or that the constituents demand, it knows what the result of that is; and there are only two parts to the property tax equation. She stated there is that pesky thing called the ten mill cap; what she surmises will happen is a lot of the things that are above the line that are ad

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valorem value based, in order to fill that five gallon bucket, will probably go below the line and become assessments and user fees rather than taxes. She pointed out this is something the County needs to be preparing for.

Commissioner Isnardi stated that is assuming they do not create any more special categories of people who are possibly exempt.

Ms. Blickley advised the Board that will continue to happen; each session, some much more plausible than others, the Board will see additional exemptions being explored and passed; and very few exemptions put before the voters do not make it into law.

Commissioner Pritchett stated a while ago there was the Save Our Homes; and she inquired how that affects any of this.

Ms. Blickley responded that is in the County's Constitution, and it will probably have to live with that forever; what has become behind the Save Our Homes, once there has been a disparaging difference between what class of properties are paying for property tax revenue, behind that came additional assessment caps; and now there are non-homesteaded residential and commercial property with a 10 percent cap. She pointed out everybody has a cap until there is a transaction in the market where that cap is lost, either a three percent or the CPI, whichever is less, or a 10 percent cap if it is non-homesteaded; it is a factored value, not one the Property Appraiser creates, it is created at the time when someone files a return on the property, personal exemption or homestead exemption application or purchases a property and it stays with no change in title, it will realize that cap; and market value goes up 20 percent, the assessed value will only go up 10, three, or the CPI, whichever is less depending on what cap is applied on the property.

Chairman Smith stated the County will end up not dealing with real numbers but artificial numbers, and have to make them work.

Ms. Blickley advised they are not artificial, because they will be factually based; and starting from market, they are going to apply the appropriate exemption and/or assessment cap, and provide a taxable value. She stated now there are multiple types of exemptions, some applying to school taxes, some not applying to school taxes; the property tax equation pretty much takes not preferred Master's Degrees but required Master's Degrees for somebody to actually get their tax bill and know if they have been bamboozled or not; and she does not like it, but it is the law she has to work in. She noted she does not see any change in that; if there is anything this office does legislatively every year, it is to try to stop stupid stuff; very little legislation they propose as property appraisers, they spend most of their time trying to stop the obliteration of the property tax equation, not because they are trying to stop exemptions or assessment caps, but because it makes it increasingly difficult for property owners and taxpayers to understand their tax bills.

#### **ITEM I.A.5., SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS**

Lori Scott, Supervisor of Elections, stated it has been many years the last time they did this in a public meeting; and she always appreciates a chance to really sing the praises of not only being the good budget steward that the Elections Office is of Brevard County taxpayer dollars, but also singing the praises of what she believes to be one of the best elections teams not only in the State of Florida, but in the Nation. She went on to state she wants to do a little snapshot from when she ran in 2008; the Brevard County tax rolls have grown by 17 percent since that time, making Brevard the largest voting population in the third largest State in the Nation; she grew up here and has lived here her whole life; and she loves the small community, town feel.

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She pointed out the reality is Brevard County is a big tadoo when it comes to elections; their early voting sites, she has doubled; from the 2008 general election to the 2016 general election, it was collective hours and a 288 percent increase; and they saw those voting numbers soar. She added they have seen a 57 percent increase in mail ballots over that same timeframe. She advised Florida has three methods of voting, and she has to be prepared for all of Brevard County's 409,000 voters to do any one, just one of those, or all of those. She explained to the Board in that same timeframe, and she is proud of this, they have despite that 17 percent increase, she has reduced the head count by 10 percent immediately; their salaries have decreased 30 percent in that timeframe; and the benefits have decreased 21 percent. She went on to add they have had sweeping election reform in 2011 and 2013; they had two huge election bills in each of those years; the 2011 bill was 158 pages long, and 185 election law changes contained therein; and it went into law the date the Governor signed it. She stated they had to hit the ground running to put those in place; when things like that happen, they are already in a budget year, they are reactionary; when the budget was proposed a year before that, they did not know that 185 changes were going to come in one bill in one year; and those are just some of the things they have had to accommodate. She stated they are not budgeted when a party is disbanded; the Independent Party of Florida was disbanded in February; and she sent out 11,000 notices to voters in Brevard County that were registered members of that party that had to receive new voter registration cards and given the opportunity to register with their new party. She went on to say this month the Independence Party of Florida was disbanded, and another set of notices went out with that. She stated that made Brevard County the lowest cost per voter in the region, from Volusia County at the highest at \$22.25, Brevard came in at \$13.96 per voter; Brevard County is 1,557 square miles; she jokes with some of the counties that they are the size of a postage stamp, and that is why they can do things a little differently; and Brevard has a lot of polling places because of its large geographic footprint that has to be covered and to keep those polling places regional to their area. She added with 16 municipalities, special taxing district, and single member districts on the School Board and County Commission, all of those lines have to cross; and when that happens, there are a lot of precincts she has to accommodate for. She advised the Board their proposed budget for this year for compensation and benefits is a zero percent increase; she reiterated the comments of her fellow Constitutional Officers to say turnover in their offices is astronomically high; she has seven employees in her office with more than four years of experience; and they consider four years an election cycle, because until a person goes through a presidential election, it is not like anything else. She noted they see big departure because people do not want to make that kind of commitment of overtime for an entire year for that amount of money; and one thing the government had going for it was benefits. She stated she has always heard to run it like a business, but the County does not pay like a private business; she heard about millennials and job hopping; she sent her staff to classes about recruiting and keeping millennials; but she thinks they job hop because they are looking for forward movement. She pointed out that is hard to do if it is a small organization, and then to have the added responsibility of being a public servant. She stated she anticipates their budget this year will be a six percent decrease from 2017; this is a number she is proud of; even though they have had a 17 percent increase and have received numerous unfunded mandates, expansion of early voting, voting by mail, and the postage and printing costs that go along with that, this budget is 2.37 percent than the budget when she ran for office 10 years ago. She stated she is proud of the reputation of the office; a person does not hear bad things about the Brevard County Supervisor of Elections Office or elections problems; and the best thing for them is not to be read about. She added of the 16 largest counties of the State of Florida hold 72 percent of Florida's 12 million voters; of those 16 large counties, Brevard County is typically the highest voter turnout of any of them; and people look to them around the State.

Commissioner Barfield advised he was on the Canvassing Board this year and it gave him kind of a strong appreciation of what all is involved; and the Supervisor of Elections Office does a great job.

\*The Board recessed at 5:23 p.m. and reconvened at 5:32 p.m.

## **ITEM I.B., FIRE RESCUE**

Chief Mark Schollmeyer, Fire Rescue Director, stated looking at the programs and services Fire Rescue funds, Fire Rescue is two distinct operations, fire operations and Emergency Medical Services (EMS); they are in the blue and red colors on the slide; and under that is support. He went on to say their agency is 32 fire and EMS stations Countywide; most may not know they do Countywide ALS, EMS transport throughout the whole County; and they also do fire suppression in the contracted cities and the unincorporated areas. He advised there are 30 ambulances, 17 fire engines, five ladder trucks, 21 brush trucks, 20 seasonal lifeguard towers and five year-round towers, one hazardous materials truck and one technical rescue truck they staff as well; and they have 456 firefighters, the E-911 dispatch center there are 27 people, 13 people in fire prevention, 17 in ocean rescue, 80 volunteers/reservists, 12 fleet mechanics, 29 support-administration, two people in training, and five people in Information Technology (IT). He noted in 2016 they had 73,399 EMS emergencies, 51,514 EMS patients transported, 3,281, fire emergencies, 26,763 fire engine, Fire Responder EMS, 649 ocean rescue victim rescues, 74,087 ocean rescues regarding swimmer warnings, 7,038 fire inspections annually, 1,338 fire inspections on new construction, 1,860 fire prevention plans review, 249 fire prevention community outreach, and 121,571 training hours in Fire/EMS. He advised the Board in the next slide of the FY 2017 budget is separated out as red for Fire Rescue and EMS in blue; the fire operations has two distinct revenue sources, one being the fire special assessment and the second being the Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU); and on the EMS side there are two distinct revenue sources, one of which is \$15.8 million in patient billings and \$9.3 million General Fund, in which \$7.7 million goes to EMS and the remainder goes to the ocean rescue portion. He noted 70 percent of their expenses Countywide is compensation and benefits, and the second largest is operating. He provided two charts that shows the annual budget has declines from \$79 million to \$69 million; looking at the bottom chart, the Reserves, have declined as well; the reason for that is they are actually using reserves for operating due to the fire assessment being discounted; and that is why the Board sees the downward drop in the budget. He went on to state as far as the fire operations and the MSTU, the revenues have been flat over the years; and the EMS revenue over the years are pretty flat as well. He stated the breakdown of the General Fund expenditures for FY 2017, almost 75 percent of that is compensation and benefits, a small portion is capital, and \$1.6 million is operating expenses. He explained to the Board one of the ways they are able to keep the costs down is a few initiatives; one, they re-profiled staffing on ambulances; they noticed there were a large amount of paramedics on the ambulances; and in order to maintain advanced life support license, they only had to have one EMT and one paramedic on the ambulance. He added in dispatch they implemented a software program called Pro/QA; what that does is it allows the dispatch center to dispatch the proper unit to the proper call; in years past, a fire truck and an ambulance would show up at a persons house; through priority dispatch, the calls get broken down to Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo; and Alpha being the least of emergencies and Echo being the worst, such as cardiac arrest or death calls. He stated it takes a bit more time on the front end to interview the 911 caller, but on the back end of that they are sending the correct response team to the correct call. He noted they have implemented for EMS, the First Responder Squad Program; the stations that have ladder trucks with them, they split the crew on the ladder truck, and the crew mans a smaller brush truck with EMS equipment on it; and they send that to the lower calls, which means the smaller vehicle goes to the bulk of those calls keeping the mileage lower on the more expensive ladder trucks. He stated they entered into a Medicaid CPE Reimbursement Program; this is a pass through from the State; essentially they are able to gain more money for patients that are transported that have Medicaid; and this year they are scheduled to get back \$250,000, and next year it will be approximately \$400,000. He pointed out they entered into an agreement with NAPA, which is their single-source parts supplier; it

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eliminates dead stock on their shelves; they do not have to stock a bunch of parts on their shelves they do not use; NAPA bought their parts inventory from them; and they manage the parts and in most cases the parts are actually cheaper. He advised they entered into an agreement with Career Source Brevard; they have on-the-job training and reimbursement for qualified applicants if they hire them; if they hire 25 people or so, maybe four to six qualify for that program; and they get money back from Career Source Brevard. He went on to add they have a community health resource program; they hired a nurse with a grant; she handles EMS super users, people who call 911 more than three or four times a month; and hospitals get fined for re-admittance under 30 days for certain ailments. He noted while they do not care about that, they are concerned about people calling 911 multiple times for stuff they have already been transported for; and sometimes they will have the same person call three to four times a day. He noted this person utilizes resources such as 2-1-1; she is a patient navigator; she does not really do treatment outside; she will find these people the resources they need to get by instead of calling 911; and it has worked out well so far. He stated the nurse does community education as well, and goes out to nursing homes and hospitals to talk with patients and administrators. He explained some of their challenges are aging Fire and EMS stations due to mold, repairs, insulation, and HVAC repairs; they are on the books to spend about \$600,000 this year in mostly mold abatement in fire stations; some have been completed; and some of them are pending. He stated they have a few storm hardened stations in the County; and it seems ironic that a County with 72 miles of coastline that their stations on the beachside are not hurricane hardened or do not meet the current wind load capacity.

Chairman Smith inquired when there is a storm like a Matthew is Fire Rescue moving them off of beachside or are they leaving them there.

Chief Schollmeyer replied a storm of that magnitude may have drawn them off of the Barrier Island anyway; it is those Category 3 and Category 2; some of those buildings are 40 years old; they have a residential wind protection on them; and they have been concerned about leaving crews out there in a storm like Matthew that they could have major issues. He pointed out it is not just the beachside, it is also in Merritt Island, as they have only one storm hardened building there as well.

Chairman Smith inquired if it is something Chief Schollmeyer is concerned about and maybe a policy change may need to be implemented to get those firefighters and equipment off of the island, because they are not going out during a storm to fight fires.

Chief Schollmeyer responded they have to forecast a bit and estimate; in the case of Matthew, the decision to get off of the Barrier Islands have to be done earlier enough that they beat the storm; and those people do not need to be traveling in big, square, boxy vehicles. He stated if the buildings are storm hardened, the staff could stay out there in storms that are less intense; but as it stands now, the buildings will not take much of a storm. He went on by saying they have deferred construction out there; they had a fire station construction plan; they gave that up a couple of years ago; they do have some needs in the South Beaches; and their station in Barefoot Bay is a metal building next to the railroad tracks. He noted some of their stations are not ideally located; many fire stations were put where they could find land; and that is where the station was put. He stated the aging fleet of fire trucks and ambulances have increased the maintenance costs and reliability concerns; the average age of their backup fleet is 11.2 years; the percent of the fleet 10 years or older is 19 and one-half years; and the average mileage of the frontline fleet is 124,600 miles. He advised their ambulances put anywhere between 20,000 and 40,000 miles a year depending on how busy they are.

Chairman Smith inquired if the new ambulances double in price what they were six or seven years ago.

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Chief Schollmeyer replied affirmatively. He stated the average age of the reserve ambulance fleet is 243,000, and the average age of the entire fleet is 156,000; on their fire engines, the average age of the frontline fleet is 10.9 years; the average age of the reserve fleet is 15 years; and the average age of the entire fleet is 12.75 years. He stated the average mileage of the frontline fleet is 113,000 miles; most of those fire trucks were built by a company called American LaFrance; they filed for bankruptcy and went out of business in 2014; the problem with that is, unless it is an engine or transmission issue, all of the other parts are proprietary on those units; and somewhere someone is holding on to these parts and charging a lot of money for them. He pointed out it costs them about \$3,000 to \$4,000 for a windshield, and they waited a month for it; door handles and body parts either have to be manufactured in house or repaired to their satisfaction, or they have to check around the Country to come up with these parts; and that is a huge issue for them moving forward. He stated out of the 17 fire engines, 15 of those are the America LaFrance fire engines. He noted the good news is they are getting three new fire engines this year, which will help with the fleet. He stated they lost 66 employees in 2016 agency wide; only six of those actually retired; and the rest of them went elsewhere or were terminated. He stated the hiring cost for a typical firefighter with training and recruitment is about \$20,000 per employee; it includes gear as well; they are losing employees to other agencies; and they lose a lot of employees to other counties and municipalities. He advised the Board, people tend to go where the money is, and it is typically south or west of here. He stated labor negotiations impact wages in their budget. He provided a wage comparison slide to the Board; he stated these are the places Brevard County loses people to; and Orlando is paying approximately \$58,000, and they pay for experience. He stated he could have five years' experience in Brevard County and go to the City of Orlando and make several thousand dollars more than that; and even the City of Titusville pays more for a starting firefighter/paramedic. He added another challenge is reserve funds which are diminishing and are at \$3.4 million; due to the fire assessment being discounted 15 percent in 2009, they were asked to spend down reserves; they have done that; but the fire assessment was supposed to be readdressed in 2012 and it never was. He went on to say they had an audit about four years ago, and they recommended a reserve balance equal to 60 days operating expenses of \$5.2 million; and they have about 22 or 23 days in reserves for operating. He stated the fire assessment rate has been unchanged since 2009; the EMS billing rate is unchanged since 2009; and there is an increased service demand in south County EMS call volume and West Viera due to new development. He pointed out the department budget has gone down; and their service demand has gone up. He explained for FY 2018 they expect reserve balances to be about \$2 million, which is 23 days of operating; the current budget includes only step increases for IAFF employees; labor negotiations may have financial impact; additional ambulance in the south County area is needed as funding is not available; and the warning is the FY 2019 budget will more than likely require additional revenue or reduction of expenses, which will affect the service level.

Commissioner Tobia stated Fire Rescue purchased a cool truck last year, which cost \$45,000; and he inquired what pickup truck that is for ocean rescue.

Chief Schollmeyer replied it is just a regular pickup truck for beach operations.

Commissioner Pritchett expressed her appreciation to Chief Schollmeyer for all his department does.

## **ITEM I.C., LIBRARY SERVICES**

Jeff Thompson, Library Services Director, stated the Library Mission Statement is to enable people of all ages to improve their quality of life by providing information and enrichment through traditional resources and new technology. He went on to state they have 17 libraries, one large is the central library, four large libraries in Titusville, Cocoa Beach, Melbourne, and Franklin DeGroot Memorial, four medium size libraries, Merritt Island, Suntree/Viera, Satellite Beach, and Eau Gallie, four small libraries, Port St. John, Melbourne Beach, West Melbourne, and South Mainland, and four satellite libraries, Mims/Scottsmeer, Cape Canaveral, Martin Luther King, and Palm Bay, which do not have library directors but are near larger libraries and those directors are over those satellite libraries. He stated they circulate over one million books; there are over 4,600,000 items checked out for 2016; and their E-book checks are 23,000 plus per month. He noted information helps 825,000 plus people; computer assistance helps 316,195; educational and cultural programs are put on in the libraries of 2,500 last year; and there were 36,130 people who attended those programs. He added they have public meeting rooms in libraries; they use the rooms and put on public programs in them; when they are not using them, they are available for civil groups and non-profits to use; and last year they had 56,450 hours reserved in meeting rooms, which is an increase of the previous year. He stated they help kids to read, and every kid that learns to read is hopefully one less kid in jail; it is a great place for children who may not have that kind of support at home; and 17,772 children have been helped with personal computers and tablets. He pointed out they have partnered with United Way and they have a literacy program where children have tablets in the schools, and there is a software program on there that helps them to read; and when they come to the library they can continue to use that after school. He advised they put on a lot of programs; that is where they have story time; it teaches them to engage with literacy at an early age; they had over 85,000 kids last year; and they were awarded a prime time reading grant at the Eau Gallie Library. He stated Chairman Smith attended one of these.

Chairman Smith stated it encourages parents to read to their kids; it is a big deal to children when their parents read to them; and they think it is wonderful that an adult reads to them.

Mr. Thompson explained homebound services is where they provide services to handicapped citizens; they also do services for the blind as a part of that; there are over 2,000 citizens involved in this program; and in 2012 Brevard was awarded Sub-Regional Library of the Year by the Library of Congress.

Chairman Smith stated the other Commissioners can probably verify that when he or she was knocking on doors, people would say not to cut the libraries.

Mr. Thompson added they have a mobile library; they had 650 visits in 2016; and they had 9,006 visitors. He advised since 2008 it has been staffed by a single person, Tammy Moon; and she has done a fantastic job. He stated their computer folks have done a fantastic job for the libraries; they provide Internet service online and Wi-Fi; it is more complicated than Bright House Wi-Fi; their system has to be protected; and they provide and maintain more than 800 PCs for the public and library staff. He noted their budget basically has been pretty flat since the cutting started, and it kind of bottomed out in 2010. He provided a slide showing the adopted budget for this year; he stated fines and fees is when people pay their overdue book fines, and is used at that library for maintenance and additional books; miscellaneous revenue is interest and federal e-rates; and they received a federal e-rate grant every year for their Internet circuits. He stated this year they have a pretty good balance forward; they have been working on a back log of maintenance; some things do not get done like they would like; and the more things are deferred, the more they cost. He pointed out the expense side of the equation is the next slide; the Board can see the bulk of that is compensation and benefits at just under \$10 million; they have a staffing plan they executed several years ago, which has helped them

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control those costs and better support their mission and provide better service and safety in the libraries; their operating expenses are the next largest expense at \$4.7 million; and that is all of the things it takes to run a library. He stated capital outlay are books, equipment, construction, and renovations; they are in the second year of the five-year plan to get the libraries back up to speed in terms of their fiscal plan; and the majority of the critical stuff has been done or is underway this year. He went on to say roofs, air conditioning, and the building envelop are the top items being knocked out now; and they will be moving on to flooring, restroom renovations, and interiors after that. He stated some of the transfers are debt payments they have from the 1990s; they have several debts they are retiring; they have six more years of debt payment; and by about 2022 they will have retired all of their debt. He noted his hope is the maintenance they have been catching up on they will be at that point, and it will enable them to put forth a more measured and long-term maintenance plan; and with reserves and contingencies, they have to maintain a reserve to cover their operating during the period in which they do not get ad valorem, it is something they have to do. He explained to the Board the next two slides are their grants; he stated most of that is the State Aid to Libraries Grant; and he also added the Prime Time Grant. He stated most of the State Aid to Libraries Grant goes to operating expenses; his philosophy with that is to use it the way it benefits the whole system; and a lot of that goes to the IT folks. He shared with the Board they get a number of endowments; this is money people feel they want to give to the libraries out of appreciation; and the one end, there was a \$1.2 million bequest they received last year, which is being used to do renovations at the Titusville Library. He advised those funds vary in terms of how restricted they can be. He stated they are doing the Mims Library rebuild, Titusville Library renovations, and are doing Martin Luther King, Palm Bay, and Eau Gallie Library roof repairs; they will shortly be going into Central Library roof repairs, Satellite Beach and Suntree/Viera Libraries air conditioning and roof repairs; Eau Gallie Library needs its air conditioner replaced; there are various library renovations and enhancements; and they want to do flooring replacement at various libraries. He went on to say they have been looking at a library self-checkout system; it is an expensive figure, because what first has to be done is get all of the books into that system; once they are in and the system is up and running, it becomes inexpensive; and it is \$900,000 to get started on that. He stated as he said they are in their second year of their five-year plan to catch-up on deferred maintenance and repairs; when completed, ongoing maintenance program can be funded by retired debt payment monies; they have a lack of pay increases, and increasing use of part-time positions resulting in higher turnover; and they have technology demands consisting of Internet bandwidth and increasing demand for electronic materials, such as E-books. He noted they have an increasing demand for E-books, meeting rooms, large print materials and assistive devices, electronics, 3-D printing, and local history; and they have a continuing demand for physical books, reading, and study space.

Commissioner Tobia inquired if the automated checkout decreases that Full Time Equivalent (FTE).

Mr. Thompson replied they will have to see; they have had a test version at the Melbourne Beach Library for some time; it could have that effect; and they would have to see what the impact would be. He added some people use it and some people do not; some places it has not been super successful because people want that personal contact; but if a person is in a hurry, it is good. He noted it has a lot of other benefits he did not get into, which is all of the materials basically can be tracked electronically, so a person can walk down the aisle with a scanner and it will say what is on the shelf; it has multiple benefits; and there is definitely the possibility that in terms of the circulation department it could have an impact there.

Chairman Smith stated he is a supporter of libraries, but not everyone he knows is a supporter; one of the things he hears often is why the County needs so many libraries since so much of this is available online.

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Mr. Thompson replied the libraries provide a lot of services; not everyone can afford to have access to things; there is a lot of free stuff on the Internet; but there is not a lot of free quality stuff on the Internet; and if it is a person who does not have means, their access to these things are very limited.

Chairman Smith stated the Library in Eau Gallie is a prime piece of real estate that would bring some major dollars, and that library could be replaced for a whole lot less.

Mr. Thompson responded it is a beautiful location; a developer would love to have that location for a condominium or other usage; eight of their libraries were city libraries before the County came along and consolidated them into the Countywide Library District; they have agreements with those cities that limit what they can do; what would happen if they stopped having a library at that location, the City of Melbourne would receive the building and the property; and he does not think the County would reap anything from that particular one. He went on to say there are others that are unencumbered; those have been built since 1972; and those tend to be in unincorporated Brevard County as opposed to a city; and it is by a case-by-case basis. He expressed his appreciation to Stockton Whitten, County Manager; and he stated it has been a pleasure to work for him.

## **ITEM II., PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ron Bartcher stated libraries provide a critical quality of life for Brevard County; and having a centrally located library in the Mims area is very important to those who live there. He went on to say for some of the residents this library is essential; one of their residents live about two miles from the library, and on a daily basis he rides his bicycle to the library; he is somewhat handicapped; and he uses that library daily to get his books and DVDs. He stated this library provides popular and educational programs for the children; and this past year, the Mims Library provided support for 1,700 kids for the summer programs. He advised it keeps them off of the street, and it is good for the community; the library is currently scheduled to be rebuilt during the coming year, which they are very thankful for; the current building consists of used trailers; they have a life span of 20 years; and it has been 27 years, and it is still being used. He expressed his appreciation Jeff Thompson, Library Services Director, for putting it into his budget and giving them this new building. He noted their libraries are important, and when looking for money for roads, to not do anything with the libraries.

Sara Ann Conkling expressed her gratitude and appreciation to Stockton Whitten, County Manager, who she has worked with and been a thorn in his side for the past eight years; she stated he has handled it mostly graciously; and she pointed out he still owes her a Port St. John bus. She stated about eight years ago when Howard Tipton, former County Manager, was here, one of her first conversations she had with him was when he wanted to cut library hours, and he asked what she thought; she stated she thought it would be a horrible impact on citizens; those library hours have not been restored; and she would hope this particular Board would have a vision to add those hours back, as it would increase the communities wellbeing if it is done. She stated she is here to talk about the cut from the last meeting from the Community Action Agency; she inquired when thinking about needing assistance with rent, electricity, or medicine, does anyone think why it is someone else in line at the Community Action Agency and not them; she stated after all everyone is born with human frailty; she has a lot of illness and injury; but she always thinks of the verse, 'There but for the grace of God go I' when it comes to those kinds of benefits the County provides. She pointed out as such she thinks they are commanded to extend that grace wherever and however they can in every form available, including the form of government; that will be done does not expire outside of government buildings, within the walls of this room, and in the red ink and competing demands of a County budget; the Community Action Agency exists because private efforts, while

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considerable and laudable, do not fully meet the subsistence needs of the neighbors; and those private efforts will never fully meet those needs. She stated the Community Action Agency reduces and prevents suffering in the very ways they are specifically commanded to reduce and prevent suffering. She inquired if the future of the County includes everyone, including those suffering extreme material hardship; when thinking of what it means to value human life, do the lives of the poorest citizens matter; she stated she is not saying roads should not be cared about; she really cares about roads and buses; but she inquired should the Commission care more about the condition of the roads than the condition of its poorest citizens. She noted these citizens are not relying on a County budget; they have faces, they have children; she inquired should the condition of the roads or the condition of the hearts be the core concern; and she provided the Board with a quote from Pope Francis. She asked the Board to humbly reverse the vote it took on Tuesday and to restore funding to the Community Action Agency; and she asked the Board to reconnect with the place in his or her heart that acknowledges solidarity with all of the citizens including the poorest citizens, and with the will of God.

Philip Stasik, speaking on behalf of the Space Coast Progressive Alliance, expressed his appreciation to the Board for what it is doing; he stated budget work is hard; and he does not envy the Board. He expressed his appreciation to County staff; he stated watching the presentations today, and working with the various staff members of the County has always been an honor and a privilege; and he does want to recognize them. He thanked Stockton Whitten, County Manager, for his years of service. He stated during the Vietnam War, the United States destroyed the City of B  n Tre; a subsequent interview with the *Associated Press* an American Military Officer reportedly said, "It became necessary to destroy that town in order to save it." He went on to say they appreciate the desire to cut costs, but the Board must not destroy the County in its effort to save it; it must not pave roads on the backs of the poor, the elderly, or the environment; previous Boards have deferred expenses and cut services to shrink the budget over the years; and it will take years to recover from this. He added the Board has heard it all, aging ambulances, fire engines breaking down, a stream of employees leaving for better pay and benefits, crumbling infrastructure, and all while the population has steadily grown; the economy has recovered; it is time to raise revenue; it is time to invest in public services and facilities; the Board must defend the rivers, beaches, and the Environmentally Endangered Lands (EELs) treasures; and cutting funds from the arts and services to pay for roads is a kin to an agricultural society eating its seed stocks, they are doomed to failure. He pointed out if that is done, they are doomed to failure; and he asked the Board not to destroy Brevard County in its effort to save it.

Dave Pasley stated one thing that came to mind when talking about the requirements to hire a new County Manager, and he looked around the room and thought there are some pretty good people here working in the County, and the requirements being put forward would preclude them from even applying; and he looks at it like maybe the Board should step back and take a look at what its requirements are. He stated maybe the Board should turn some of that back a bit, the amount of experience in government and in the private sector, and educational requirements; a Master's Degree in something that is related to government would certainly be beneficial; but he does not see how if a person had a Master's Degree in Biology how it would do much good; and maybe something can be amended there. He went on to say he would like to see Human Resources take a bigger role in the process. He noted a lot of people are looking at roads, and asking why they are being talked about; a road needs to be in front of the library, it is pretty simple; when the County took a big haircut in 2006 or 2007, roads wound up looking like Commissioner Smith, he did not get a haircut, he got a buzz; and it is time to put that back in. He added if trimming needs to be done along the way to get roads the money they need, then to get the project going; no matter how nice the trashcans are or how beautiful the store front is, if there is a pothole on that street, it has to be fixed. He stated people look at parks and storefronts thinking they are interesting, but a person pays attention to transportation and the roads; and if the Board wants to grow the County, roads is where the money needs to be put.

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Joshua Madson, Brevard County Professional Firefighter, stated the can has been kicked down the road, it has been kicked off of the cliff, and it cannot be kicked anymore; the Board is cutting charities, \$160 million backlog of roads; and he asked if \$10 was not enough that the County kept going further. He pointed out it is not the current Board's fault as it came before it, but now it is time for the Board to step up and be responsible and do that right thing; it will not be fixed in one year; it has to change direction; and failure to do that falls upon the Board. He stated he represents the Fire Department; he has been here 16 years; 16 years ago he sat there in Station 63 and was told to leave this department, he needed to go somewhere where he was going to be taken care of; he said no, Brevard County is his home, it will come around; and 16 years later, he is looking at his employees, and he is telling them the next three-year contract and what is going on, and that they need to decide what is best for their family. He pointed out it is not just starting pay, it is where they top out; their 18 year employee is where Orlando's starting pay is; when he can only get there in 18 years where someone is starting in another area, he cannot afford to live; and he asked for him to tell his employees to stay for a County that is not going to take care of them, how is that responsible. He inquired how he can sit there and tell them the same thing to take care of their citizens although they are not being taken care of. He went on to add some of the numbers the Board saw from the Fire Chief posted, \$20,000 for each guy that leaves, that is just to hire, it is the hiring process; it is not talking about overtime being used when that person leaves; that position has to be filled; and when that person leaves, that position must be filled with overtime, which is an additional cost on top of that. He noted this County is becoming the whole broken window theory, when the first house in the neighborhood starts to go and it is not paid attention to, then it is the second and third, and no one wants to move to that neighborhood; businesses leave; and everything else follows. He explained they are at the same turning point as a County; there is a lot that can be done; the Charter Cap is an issue; some things may move below the line; but it takes a four out of five to see that it is responsible to move on to even go above that Charter Cap. He appealed to the Board to be the responsible parent and to know that it is time to move forward; if he or she is onboard to make this County better, they will not lose elections; everyone he has spoken with understands the dilemma the Board is under; and they and the citizens stand behind the Board, and it is time to move forward.

Chairman Smith inquired how long Mr. Madson has been with the County.

Mr. Madson replied 16 years.

Chairman Smith inquired if it was he who told him that someone left Brevard County and went one to two counties down, are working part-time, and they are making more money than he is with 16 years' experience.

Mr. Madson replied his new hire from a few years ago works in Boca Raton now; he has 16 years on and 10 years as a lieutenant fire paramedic; she started there as a fire paramedic, works 90 shifts a year, where he works 123 shifts; and she makes more money than he does. He pointed out that used to be the only problem for them was South Florida, but now Polk, Osceola, and Lakeland Counties were behind Brevard County several years ago; they never lost people to them; and now they are far ahead of the County. He noted they just lost three people to the City of Palm Bay in the last two weeks; they have lost 12 employees since January 1; one was terminated; and he inquired when they recruit like they used to recruit, what does the County get. He stated the ones that do come and are worth something are only here until they find something better. He advised this is a countywide problem they are running into.

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**ITEM IV., OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Tobia advised the Board he has another cut list; he distributed it to the Board; and he stated he would like to discuss it at the next workshop.

**ITEM V.A., BOARD REPORTS, STOCKTON WHITTEN, COUNTY MANAGER**

Frank Abbate, Assistant County Manager, stated they have five missed departments they need to bring in; the next two workshops have full schedules; there is a scheduled Board meeting on May 23rd at 1:00 p.m.; and whatever they do not get to at the next workshops will have those five departments included that day.

Commissioner Isnardi stated the Board knows what the departments do, to send the Board the stuff early to be reviewed, and to maybe expedite some of the departments through.

Mr. Abbate advised those five departments could be ready if it goes fast enough that they may not have to have another workshop; but he thinks they should keep the workshop scheduled in case they do need it. He pointed out he will speak to the directors about trying to move the presentations along.

The Board approved adding one new Budget Workshop date to the Board's Meeting Calendar, May 23, 2017, at 1:00 p.m.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Rita Pritchett, Vice Chairwoman/Commissioner District 1
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kristine Isnardi, Commissioner District 5
<b>AYES:</b>	Pritchett, Barfield, Tobia, Smith, Isnardi

Upon consensus of the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

ATTEST:

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SCOTT ELLIS, CLERK

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CURT SMITH, CHAIRMAN  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA