

February 20, 2020

# **Brevard County Board of County Commissioners**

*2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Viera, FL 32940*



## **Minutes**

**Thursday, February 20, 2020**

**1:00 PM**

**Budget Workshop**

**Florida Room**

**A. CALL TO ORDER 1:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Commissioner District 1 Rita Pritchett, Commissioner District 2 Bryan Lober, Commissioner District 3 John Tobia, Commissioner District 4 Curt Smith, and Commissioner District 5 Kristine Isnardi

**Budget Overview**

Chair Lober stated he wants to move the Fire Assessment Item up after the Budget Overview; he sees many people present to talk in relation to that particular Item; the Board will hear the Fire Assessment, then do Roads and Bridges, and then take a short break; and then it will continue on within the rest of it.

Frank Abbate, County Manager, stated he will try to get started with this, and then staff will try to make the adjustment moving the Fire Assessment up, because it is all done by PowerPoint.

Chair Lober noted if it is problematic from a technical standpoint just let him know and it can be kept as is.

Mr. Abbate expressed his appreciation to the Board for the opportunity today for staff to get together with it and have hopefully some dialogue with it about where the County is, where it has been, and where it is going relative to the budget; they are looking at this from a staff perspective an opportunity to talk on a fairly high level; they are going to do this a little bit differently than what has happened in some of the prior years where staff has given the Board a lot of specific numbers; they have talked about the color of money, et cetera; but the Board has been through that multiple times with some of the Commissioners; and they are going to try to address issues they have heard the Board talk about over time, and this is really an opportunity for everyone, staff especially, to hear where the Board is on a variety of issues so they can move forward preparing this year's budget and moving on far beyond that in a longer-term range. He went on to say that is really what the goal is today; they welcome input in terms of what the Board has; and hopefully it will find where staff is headed is very much aligned with things he has heard, and other staff members have heard, from the Board over the last several years. He noted with that, just to give the Board an idea what staff is going to do, they are briefly going to go over the adopted budget very quickly; he does want to speak to the issue of the Citizens Budget Review Committee where staff is with them, and give the Board a little overview there; after that they are going to make that adjustment, and go to Fire Assessment first; and then subsequent to that staff will follow everything else that is in order in the presentation outline. He added they are going to be using that, he is very confident in staff, so they are going to be making a lot of the presentations for their particular Departments; and with that, he will turn it over to the Budget Office Director.

Jill Hayes, Budget Office Director, the first several slides are just going to be giving a very broad overview of the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 adopted budget; the first chart shows the budget and just a broad overview of the adopted revenues; and the total budget was just over \$1.3 billion. She went on by saying Florida Statute, Chapter 129, establishes the guidelines for the annual budget of counties; one of the most fundamental requirements is that the budget must be balanced so that all estimated recipes from taxes and other sources, along with funds being carried forward, equal the appropriation of expenditures and Reserves; again, this chart shows the Revenue side of that; the operation revenues, which are in blue, those represent the recurring portion of the County's budget; and this includes property taxes, permits, fees, charges for services, intergovernmental revenue, and things of that nature. She pointed out

staff is going to show additional detail on operating revenue on the next slide. She stated what balance forward represents, which is in the green, is the funds being brought forward from the prior Fiscal Year, so these are dollars that were collected in the prior year that are being carried forward; these can be carried forward and unspent for a variety of purposes; and primarily one of the largest portions of the carry forward dollars are funds that are associated with multi-year capital projects that just take years to complete. She added, the financing revenues shown here, the \$18.6 million, that is primarily associated with a state-revolving loan for utilities, as well as the loan for Parks and Recreation to do hurricane repairs; then the transfer portion of this slide, this represents funding being transferred from one fund to another, so an example of that would be the County collects operating revenues in the General Fund, those funds are then transferred to different fund programs and services; and those are not new revenues coming into those Departments, they are just transfers from another fund. She advised this slide breaks down that operating revenue portion of the previous slide; again, this is about 57 percent of the total \$1.3 billion budget; and what they showing here is because the operating revenues have to be used for specific purposes in many cases, they wanted to break down those different fund types and just give a broad overview of what they are used for. She pointed out the General Funds which are there in the green represent the funds that can be used for any governmental purpose, so that is where the Board has the most discretion; in this slide they have broken down the General Funds into two shades of green; the darker green represents general government revenues; they will go over those in additional detail in the next slide; the lighter shade of green represents more user service fees, which are theoretically unrestricted; however, if those dollars were not funneled back into the respective programs, those programs would not have the funds to exist, so a good example of that is the Sheriff providing contracted services to the School Board, the Cape, and Port Canaveral. She added that light shade of green also includes Parks and Recreation fees for campgrounds, leases, rentals and things of that nature. She stated the pink slice of the pie are the special revenue funds; these account for revenues that are restricted for specific purposes; the Indian River Lagoon Trust Fund is a good example of a special revenue fund; and also Federal and State grants, as well as Local Option Gas Taxes (LOGT), and Tourism Development taxes are all accounted for in the special revenue funds, and have to be used for specific purposes. She noted the enterprise funds there in blue represent the operations that are financed and operated similar to private business where the costs are funded through user charges, so these are the Utility and Solid Waste funds; internal service funds account for goods and services provided by one department or agency to another, so those are primarily the health insurance fund; and then there is capital project funds, which she wants to point out the majority of capital projects are funded through special revenue and enterprise funds. She advised the next slide is the general revenue sources and uses; what she mentioned earlier is Florida Statute requires that the budget be balanced, not only in total, but by fund and by program as well; on the left side of the slide, the Board can see the revenue, and this corresponds with the darker shade of green that was in the previous slide, so there is the ad valorem taxes and other major revenues, such as communication service tax, FPL Franchise fees, and state shared revenue; and then they added into that those balances being carried forward, as well as non-operating revenue, which is payment in lieu of taxes, transfers in, and things of that nature. She went on to say again, the general revenue side of that \$1.3 billion represents about \$250 million of the budget. She noted on the right side of the chart the Board sees a summary of how those general revenues are appropriated; approximately 45 percent of the General Fund dollars go to fund the Charter Officers; the County also must fund certain things according to State Statute, such as court operations and mandates; mandates include Medicaid, Baker Act services, commissions to the Property Appraiser and Tax Collector, and pre-trial detention of juveniles; and there are quite a few mandates the County is required to pay. She stated when looking at total General Fund obligations there is about \$174 million of that \$250 million for Charter Officers, mandates, courts, Reserves, debt service, and other obligations; lower down on that slide they show the

Board General Fund supported agencies, which Public Safety and infrastructure are broken out separately identified as core services, including Public Works, Road and Bridge, Facilities, Fire Rescue, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Emergency Management, and the Medical Examiner; and then under General Fund programs and services it includes Parks and Recreation, Housing and Human Services, Information Technology, and other support agencies.

Mr. Abbate advised with that general overview, what he wants to spend a couple of minutes talking about is organizational initiatives the County has; basically what he would suggest to the Board is they have been operating, and plan to continue operating, on five or six pillars, which are points the County, as an organization, feel are most important because that is what staff understands with all of the dialogue they have had with the Board; and it will see in the course of this presentation a couple of Departments, he will point out Utilities specifically, but even though the County's budget preparation that the Departments try to align what they are doing with one or more of these pillars. He went on to add first they try to be inclusive, and he hopes the Board hears some of that today, people they try to include in the process, and to be as responsive as they can be; but as they start looking at specific things as funding becomes more and more important for consideration, is how the sources are allocated; one of the first ones the Board will see there, and one of their pillars is, is that they are doing more and more, never less, in the area of maintenance, drainage, resurfacing, and reconstructions of the County's road system; what the Board is going to hear today is relative to that particular pillar, two additional areas of importance, that being bridge systems where the County is with that, which is something they really have not organizationally focused on for other than what is needed to be done at that time for that moment; and a very important one, as the Board will see during the course of the presentation, relates to capacity issues and where the County is with that. He noted in addition to that, part of that pillar, at least in his eyes, is other infrastructure needs; he thinks good progress is being made in other areas whether it is in Fire Rescue and what is being done at stations or other County facilities, there has been a significant period of time from 2008 onward that things have been deferred; and they are in the catch up mode now, there has been some progress in some areas, but there is plenty more to do. He pointed out the Board will hear more of that as staff is moving forward as they prepare to get to that better tomorrow. He advised the Indian River Lagoon, and being good stewards of that, of course, is a priority of the Board, staff understands that; they are not going to talk about that a lot today, because the Board has an Agenda Item coming up on Tuesday that is going to be dealing with that issue; the Board knows staff is very committed to that; and staff is always very committed to making sure they do what is needed to be moving in the direction that the Board wants in that area. He went on by saying supporting critical public safety needs the Board is going to be hearing a lot of that today; they will be talking about the Fire Assessment; the Board has heard it from the Sheriff in the past in other areas; staff understands very clearly the Board's desires in that area; and he reiterated they will be talking about that. He explained tied to that to some degree is the last pillar which is employee compensation, recruitment and retention, things that they are doing in the area of employee development, succession planning, and those are all very important things; they tie into some of the other areas; but those are the areas that staff considers the pillars that, if staff is not misunderstanding where the Board is, he thinks they have aligned the organization in what is being done in those areas, because those are the areas that are the most important to the Board. He mentioned consistent with that, he wants to highlight very briefly what they did in those areas, what is being done this Fiscal Year, because that is really the foundation for them moving forward. He noted they committed to 61 miles of road resurfacing, they have accomplished that and more; they are trying to make up for the backlog in reconstruction; he thinks the Board will hear about that today, they have eight miles they have committed to doing where they are; they are doing significant improvements in the area of drainage, dealing with ditches, and that nature; and Susan Jackson will be talking about

that in a few moments after the Fire Rescue Fire Assessment presentation. He stated there has been a bunch done on Countywide facilities; there is a bunch more to be done; the County is in a good position for the mid-year supplement coming up, so staff will be listening to what the Board says as they give it this overview in all of these areas to make sure that they put those dollars and allocate what is going to be available to things consistent that they know the Board wants prioritized moving forward, because there are going to be some opportunities at mid-year to address some of these things in infrastructure, maybe in Fire Rescue, some of them, definitely in roads he would anticipate the Board telling staff it wants them to do things in that area; and they are going to be spending attention listening to what the Board has to say in those areas today. He added maintaining and enhancing programs, paratransit service; Space Coast Area Transit, they will be part of the presentation today; and staff knows the Board has an interest in that, and to know that at least. He went on to say the County has been able to stay par with cost of living increases, it has not been able to do much more than that; staff did an Evergreen Study, they did do some of that, they are trying to do more; there are other opportunities they are looking forward to working with the Board in terms of making sure staff has the resources they know the Board feels is important as it relates to recruitment, retention, and succession planning issues throughout the organization, in Fire Rescue and in other Departments that are having challenges; Road and Bridge has been one area; and staff has the resources the Board provided. He added staff is taking action, to be honest with the Board, to do more in the area of getting recruiters so that vacancies can be filled because with the market; in Brevard County great news is it is at 2.8 percent for unemployment; and that makes it very difficult to fill a number of positions organizationally for staff, so they are working on that to get it to a better place. He advised having said all that, what he wants to spend one or two more minutes on is to talk about the Citizens Budget Review Committee; he feels staff has been working rather closely with this Committee this past year; they have met 11 times; staff has been there, the Budget Office has gone to two or three of their meetings; they are looking at the budget and providing input; he believes members of the Committee are meeting with Commissioners who appointed them giving he or she input; and staff has been listening to them. He went on by saying he thinks the Board will see in the course of the presentation a variety of areas where they have made suggestions, staff is heeding to those suggestions, even though there is no formal Board action on that; but he can tell the Board that he thinks staff's relationship and partnership with them is that they have provided them with the information, they will probably speak for themselves on the issue, when they have requested it; he thinks staff is trying to be very attentive to it, listening, and then making appropriate adjustments; one of the adjustments, for example, is what they did for Sea Ray Bridge to try to use some resources so the County could do more for roads and other areas; and various District are benefiting from that. He added the Board is going to hear, consistent with the pillars, a variety of the Departments where strategic planning over a five-year period where staff had started to give the Board, and it will see that during the course of this presentation, what they are planning to do over the next five years with resources they believe are going to be available, and where they are headed with that; it is not in every single Department right away, but they are hitting the bigger ones, so he thinks they are in a good place with that; and he wanted to let the Board know staff is taking what they have to say seriously and they are trying to take their input consideration moving forward. He stated, for example, they have committed they are not going to let any roads go; and they have committed this to the Board; he committed it to the Citizens Budget Review Committee, that they are not going to let any roads go into reconstruction, so they are working extraordinarily hard to make sure that they honor those commitments. He advised the Board he is going to stop his presentation with one final slide, which relates to ad valorem revenue; what Ms. Hayes indicated to the Commission is when starting with the \$1.3 billion, that comes down; the real number is one-fifth of that almost, \$250 million is what they are talking about; that \$250 million, when taking everything else out that they showed the Board on the expense side with Charter Officers, et cetera, it takes it

down to \$37 million; and that is really what is discretionary on the Board's part when everything is taken out, that is the General Fund, general government part the Board is dealing with. He asked from that all of the general Countywide Ad Valorem Revenue, when looking at Ad Valorem tax revenue, where is the County going to be in light of the Charter Cap. He noted it is an issue dealt with a lot in Brevard County, because of the unique Charter provisions that it has; last year the County was at 2.44 percent; it was the highest year the County had in several years; this year the number is 1.81 percent, that is what it will get if it goes to the Charter cap CPI; that would generate an additional \$2.8 million that is the additional money out of the \$1.3 million that is Ad Valorem money that will fund whatever it is the Board believes is important priorities; and that is why staff is listening to what it has to say in that regard. He asked how that compares to the last year; he advised it is more money than where the County was; last year's revenue, plus this additional money, plus new construction money, which is supposed to help pay for growth; but last year with 2.443 percent, that was \$3.6 million, so that just gives the Commission the idea moving forward in light of where the CPI is going to be what that additional revenue source is. He pointed out when talking about all of the very important programs, the job for the County Manager, staff, the Budget Office, how they allocate those resources in light of what they know are critically important priorities to the Board; with that he believes they will move over and turn over the presentation Matthew Wallace, Public Safety Director and Chief Mark Schollmeyer, Fire Rescue Director to let them talk about the Fire Assessment and Fire Rescue.

\*Commissioner Tobia's absence was noted at this time.

## **Fire Assessment**

Mr. Wallace stated originally they were set to go to the end of this, so he had a pretty thing to say that the boss was going to save the best for last, but now since they are going first he thinks he who is last shall be first as the good book says; and he will proceed from there. He expressed his appreciation to the Board and the County Manager for giving them the opportunity this afternoon to talk about public safety, Brevard County Fire Rescue, and more importantly the Fire Assessment; and he further expressed his appreciation to the men and women of Brevard County Fire Rescue to take the time out of their day to discuss this critical issue that is being faced. He went on by saying he is a military guy, so in true military fashion there are three objectives that he would like to cover today, because every military brief has three objectives; one is to socialize the concept of a Fire Assessment in 2021; second, they would really love to generate some discussion amongst the Commission; and third, to really get Board direction on what its vision is for its Fire Department. He stated the Fire Assessment is a primary source of revenue for Fire Operations; Fire Operations provides fire service to all unincorporated Brevard County; they protect land, people, and property; and they assess those property values based on square footage, so as the Fire Assessment happens it is a very critical component of what they do from a public safety perspective as they provide those resources to get those done. He went on to say as they coordinated the Fire Assessment across the County staff, the County Attorney's Office really, strongly suggested that they produce a study for the Fire Assessment; because they will be taxing citizens, they wanted to make sure they had a fair and equitable assessment of the tax, that they do not tax one too much or one too little, but that study will help them determine an equal distribution of that tax amongst the requirements that are out there; but he also sees a very important second goal of having that study done, and having that done by a consultant; and they will talk about that in a second. He advised having that study done will give the Board an unemotional, unbiased data set where it can then provide staff the recommendations of how it wants to resource its Fire Department, and what level of service the Commission wants across Brevard County, so as the consultant and that study provides the Board with that data, it will be unbiased, unemotional,

and it will be about requirements, about data, and they can make those data-based decisions going forward. He pointed out one of the four main components of what fire assessment resources is the Reserve account; this slide kind of depicts where they have been over the last 12 years as their resources in the Reserve budget have been steadily declining; they use their Reserves to cover expenses during events; and those events being natural disaster events like hurricanes, wildfires, and those kind of things. He added as those events happen and they sustain damage to stations or equipment, and even the surge of manpower and people, they need to stand up to those events; they depend on those dollars to cover those costs; the most likely thing they plan for is a tropical event, Category 2 or 3, as a near miss; and as they bring the fire assessment to the Board, that will be their planning factor of what they would recommend to the Board of what those Reserve numbers should be. He stated in his opinion Reserves equals risk; the lower the Reserves, the higher the risk; the higher the Reserves, the lower the risk; and again, the Board's decision will be where to fit in that realm that is most comfortable for it, as well as most comfortable for public safety operations across the County. He went on by saying two previous Board decisions greatly influenced their Reserve numbers of where they are today; back in 2009 their Reserves were quite healthy, probably too healthy, at the tune of about \$14 million on a \$60 million budget; the Board at that time decided to spend down the Reserve line, move dollars from Reserves to operations, and to move those Reserves down so they did not have to increase the fire assessment, so it foregoes the fire assessment in lieu of spending the Reserves down; then in 2018, they looked at the line and the line was going down too far for the Fire Operations own safety; staff came back to the Board, and it approved a fire assessment that flattened out the Reserve line a little bit; but at that time they told the Board they think they could make it three years, and would like to come back in 2021 to relook at this. He noted part of the limiting factors they have in Reserves, in the fire assessment, and in Fire Operations, or their red dollars, is they are one-year dollars; they get infused with those dollars one time in tax season; throughout the rest of the year they cannot add dollars, cannot add General Fund dollars to offset emerging requirements that they have on the Fire Operations side; that is why the fire assessment in the fire Reserves is so critically important, they have one shot at it to make it through the year; and on a year-to-year basis things happen, they need to make sure they appropriately plan for those things so they can respond to them in a very safe manner. He stated Mr. Abbate talked about not talking about the color of money too much, but he would be remiss if he did not talk about it here about why the fire assessment is so important to them; starting on the red side, which is the Fire Operations money; two primary sources of revenue will go into Fire Operations, the fire Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU), which is ad-valorem and the fire assessment, which is non ad-valorem; and those two sources of dollars are it. He added he likes to say their red money is 'X', they get that one shot of what 'X' is; the Board can see at the bottom of that red box what that covers; it covers about 250 field personnel, their salaries, their compensation and benefits, fire truck, fire houses, and everything it takes to put water on a fire; that is the red side of their financial house; and the house is divided and it cannot be combined. He went on by saying the other side of the house is their blue money, or their Emergency Medical Services (EMS) operations dollars; those are funded with General Fund, which are ad-valorem, as well as billing, which they bring back to the customer; he thinks of those dollars as 'X + Y'; in a budget year they will budget 'X' dollars on the General Fund side for Fire Operations; but as things happen throughout the year, emerging requirements happen, he can go to the County Manager and advocate for those to seek Board direction to see if dollars will be added back to that side. He pointed out more flexibility on the blue side, less flexibility on the red side, again which leads back to the importance of this fire assessment, and why it absolutely has to be done right.

Mr. Abbate stated he wants to speak to this issue a little bit before Mr. Wallace goes on. He advised the reason this is critically important, and staff is spending the time they are on it today

is because going back to the slide that was on earlier in terms of where the County is in terms of its Reserves, once they got to 2018, and the Board can see where that Reserve is, what that is telling the Commission is with where the fire assessment is at, having utilized Reserve dollars every year from 2010 through 2019 to pay operational costs, at the current level of service all of the dollars gotten through the fire assessment have to pay what Mr. Wallace referred to in terms of fire trucks, ladders, in other words all capital needs, all needs that are related to fire stations; they have made a variety of areas with indoor air quality issues, et cetera, that have been addressed in the last couple of years, there are more that are outstanding, from a fire safety perspective, not only for the people in the Department, but for the citizens and making sure there is the right equipment there; the current flow of dollars that are maxed out, and the payments for the firefighters, for all of the services they are providing relative to fire service, that is what comes out of this pot of money in the fire assessment; and if they were to look at things as they address things of recruitment, retention, overtime issues, mandatory time issues, how they address that in terms of staffing, et cetera, that fire assessment pot of money and what the Board has to spend there is critically important. He went on to say he is indebted to the Board for what it did in 2018, which it will see on the next slide, was to make up that 15 percent, which was something that was requested, or part of the 2009; they are making up that in the next couple of years, that is allowing the County to stay a little bit flat on the Reserve; but that stops because a point has been reached in 2021; and for staff to look at what is important to the Board in terms of salaries, staffing, and what can be done in those areas, when they are doing all that can be done with the resources there, this becomes the ceiling, wherever the fire assessment goes, because they have limited opportunity to do anything in the MSTU as under the Charter the Board can only raise it to that certain cap unless the Board decides to do something beyond that. He noted they are not looking that the Board is necessarily going to head in that direction, because there will be opportunity to do things on the General Fund side in other areas; but the MSTU cannot be raised beyond a certain amount; on the General Fund side, for example, there is the opportunity to do more; if the County is at 1.81 percent, in certain Departments that amount may not be needed or service levels may be changed, so the Board will still have those General Fund dollars; and that is not the same case in fire assessment. He went on to add when the Commission looks to do something for an organization that is 550 plus people, and it sees everything that is on the Fire Operations side of the house, for staff to address these things, at least from a staff perspective, until he hears differently, the capital needs to be taking care of to make sure the Department has the proper equipment to address citizens' needs, they have to have the facilities, those two issues have to be addressed, and then the other issues can be looked at as it relates to staffing, where salaries are, et cetera; the County has to have the pool of money in the fire assessment addressing that, because if it does not, those issues cannot be solved with the MSTU or the General Fund alone. He explained they are complementary parts of the solution, but the fire assessment has to be addressed, so that is why the Board hears staff talking about where they think they need to go in terms of getting one done, letting the Board know if the fire assessment is X, Y, or Z what that will provide in terms of the services; and that is what they plan to do through utilizing the consultant to give the Board that option, so that base can be established moving forward.

Mr. Wallace stated as the County Manager talked about, this slide is just a recap of what happened in 2018; he expressed his appreciation to the Board to an awesome decision to flat line their Reserves; again, the biggest take away on this is they knew it would get them through 2021; and 2021 is now on the horizon as times flies, so it is about time to come back. He went on to say moving forward with the fire assessment, this is kind of the milestones and timelines as far as what staff envisions right now to make it executable and get it to a point of decision in front of the Board; there is a ton of work that needs to be done; there are a lot of things that need to be looked at, a lot of stones that they need to un-turn, and a lot of issues to explore about where the most appropriate spot to spend the next dollar is; dollars are scarce; and they



need to make sure they are being spent in the correct areas. He mentioned they want to take an absolutely comprehensive look at Fire Operations, get that total look, and that data sent to the Board, that they are not segregating one issue, but looking at everything in total. He noted their first major step in this would be to seek Board approval in March for that consultant for a Request for Proposals (RFP), bringing that consultant on board, and starting to partner and work with them, whoever that is, to pull that data together, and get that to the Board; it is absolutely imperative that they work and team with their union, and work with coordination and partnership moving forward; their union represents 98 percent or even more of the folks in Brevard County Fire Rescue; they are the voice in the field, the voice on the tactical level, that puts water on the fire that saves lives; the issues that are important to them are important to Fire Rescue; and they will use that team and that path moving forward with their inputs to make sure they are putting the right dollar at the right place at the right time.

Chair Lober asked with respect to that consultant, could he give the Board more information in terms of what specifically they are going to be doing.

Mr. Wallace replied really two things, first would be looking at across Brevard County to see how the tax is actually assessed to make sure it is evenly distributed, depending on the type of house a person lives in, a farm, or pole barn, that there is a philosophy of equitable distribution of the tax that covers the property, the value of what their unincorporated citizens have; the second will be to pull data together; they will be doing a facilities assessment and a capital assessment to gauge operational impacts upon their fire houses, as well as their equipment, to see where those stand, providing that data to the consultant to give them the base line of what their recommendations were as well as a look at salaries and people; pulling those three main components in as well as reserves and coming up with a look across; and he sees them doing those two things.

Mr. Abbate stated bottom line, the assessment will tell how much revenue will be generated and this is what will be provided with it; they do an assessment of that based on the data provided to them; it was talked about wanting to be cooperative and on the same page, to make sure the things being addressed are important; he does not want to be deferring things one area for another unless the Board wants to see that; and he is hopeful that is not where it wants to go but that it wants to plan for a long term future and he hopes that is what the consultant will be helping them do by providing that picture.

Commissioner Isnardi stated the County has known it had a lot of these problems for a long time; she asked why the County waited so long to do this and why it is waiting even longer to get the information from them; and she stated she knows it is government and all but it seems to be taking forever. She added she is not blaming the County Manager.

Mr. Abbate explained the history of where the County was in assessment is this team has been together for three years; during the first year it came to the Board because of where the reserves were and they saw where it was going, so they asked the Board for that increase; all he can speak for is the last three years; why decisions were made previously in terms of spending that reserve, etcetera, was because that was the Policy direction that the Board at the time thought was the best policy to be following; and the only other thing he can say is they were clearly following Board-directed policies. He continued by saying he believes there was only supposed to be initially three years that they would be spending down that reserve and it lasted, because of the things that happened, over a nine-year period; and the time they were going to look at the Fire Assessment previously, it just did not get back to the Board level.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she was under the impression that the Board would look at doing

this in 2021 when it had initially been talked about.

Mr. Abbate advised when the consultant is brought on board, and they do what needs done, he believes it is going to be during 2021 because there needs to be a certain amount of time to get the assessment through certain public hearings, that the Board will be giving them the direction with the consultants results early in 2021, and the Board can give staff direction of which option because there will be more than one option from the assessment; and the Board can provide what option it wants to use moving forward. He mentioned when he knows where the Board wants to be when that happens, it needs to know what the level of service needs to be, what the County is going to be able to do in all three of the areas that will be talked about shortly, in terms of capital, the infrastructure, and the employee recruitment, retention, and salaries; all of those pieces will be provided and it will set where the County is on the Fire Assessment side; and then it will be his job to figure out how to make it work for the rest of the organization in terms of the General Fund allocations that will be required for the other side of the house.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she understands all of that; what she is asking is if there a way to move this forward so it is something the Board can look at starting to put in place before 2021; and she inquired if that is feasible or unreasonable.

Mr. Abbate stated it is now 2020; he will have the consultant providing that information sometime towards the end of this year or the beginning of the spring; as soon as he receives that, he will bring it to the Board; and it is going to take time because he believes statutorily under the assessment, there are certain time frames that come into play.

Commissioner Isnardi stated it may be close but it also may be something the Board can look at; and she knows it is government and it moves slowly.

Mr. Abbate stated they move in this timetable so he can address it for October 2021, so that is the goal.

Commissioner Pritchett stated when the Board did the Fire Assessment, it was not with Mr. Wallace, it was with Chief Schollmeyer; she voted for that because he gave a good recommendation; she thinks it has been in place for a couple years and it is like 8.7 percent, so it is getting closer to the 15; she is curious if it is just being flat-lined because the Board was trying to get it up to where it is ahead; and she asked the Budget Office Director how staff is doing with that because she knows the economy is higher.

Jill Hayes, Budget Office Director, stated the Board direction was to, because the initial Fire Assessment had been reduced by 15 percent, was to spend down those reserves; then the Board gave the direction to increase it by six percent; then she thinks it was CPI until the County reached that 15 percent; however, she does not have those exact numbers on what those are but she can get them to Commissioner Pritchett. She noted once the 15 percent is reached, that is why they must go out for the new assessment and get a new baseline of where that revenue should be to support all of those needs.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she is opening up to that; she thinks that is going to be a really good idea to bring in a consultant because the Board was kind of guessing before; and she asked what is a responsible reserve amount and if that is done by percentages or dollars when trying to put a reserve in the Fire Department.

Chief Mark Schollmeyer, Fire Rescue, stated about two years ago the former auditor, CRI, had recommended 10 percent.

Commissioner Pritchett asked what that is in dollar amount.

Chief Schollmeyer advised it is 10 percent off the Fire Operations, which should be like 3.5.

Mr. Wallace replied it is \$34 million Fire Operations budget so it should be about 3.5 for the minimum level and that is what they should really be carrying in reserves.

Commissioner Pritchett said that is reasonable; she was looking at the slide and it is talking about the filled positions, there is Fire Operations and EMS; she is guessing there is not 430 staff members, but those are people who work dual jobs; the County allocates the payments from two different revenue sources; and she inquired if that is correct.

Mr. Wallace asked if Commissioner Pritchett was looking at the blue side, the red side, and purple side in the middle.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she just looked at the two on the side; she did not go to support but she got 181; she took the fill positions, the 249 fill positions; and she asked if these are actual fire fighters that are in the field, 400 of them.

Chief Schollmeyer advised those are fire fighters assigned to Fire Operations.

Commissioner Pritchett asked for clarification that it is 400 different men.

Chief Schollmeyer stated there is 249 over at Fire Operations and there is 181 at EMS; and in support there is about 123.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she thinks she only got data on 200 and something, but she will check on that later; the question is to get to those reserves, when the County gets a consultant, how long would it be to get to the reserve level; and she mentioned she likes all the data coming in for capital, but when it comes to salaries what she would like to do, because it is so abstract, is she would like for them to compare it as far as first responders salaries with a competitive number; she would like to throw the Sheriff's dollars in with that too and get a competitive first responder all the way so everybody is operating in the same playing field; that way there would not be one out of bounds with the others; otherwise, it is going to be really hard to try to figure this out under a government entity because it is not in the competitive market. She noted that is something she would like to see, for staff to have the consultant look into that; they will have to dig into the law enforcement side as well to get some numbers; and she mentioned she has some ideas maybe down the road but she is not sure she even has to have them right now.

Mr. Wallace stated absolutely, the Sheriff's Office as well as the municipal fire departments that they really compete with as well as the regional fire departments that they compete with; and they want to bring all that data in to see where they are losing their people to, to see what competitive salaries and ranges they need to be in, and they will funnel all of that information to the consultant to give the Board advice.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she knows this is not a popular thing and she would not even really suggest doing it but she hears so many people talk about privatizing, it would only be bad things with that so she is not going to do it, but the only good thing is then it would get in the competitive market and people would find out there are these great jobs; but the County does not have that right now; it does not even discuss pay out in the competitive market; and that might bring more people in wanting to do this job because it is really a great position, wonderful

people doing it, and an honorable job. She noted that is why she struggles with that; she knows it is great, these guys are good, and they like what they are doing; but there has got to be some way to get this into a place where they are very happy with their jobs and making a good income, with getting that information from the Sheriff's Department and everything being on the same level so people do not end up leaving the County for a certain amount; the County has to look at how much it costs to live in certain areas; it is a lot of work and she knows it; however, she would really like the consultant to bring back some information on that as the Board makes these decisions.

Mr. Wallace stated to answer the first question on how to get the reserve dollars back into their accounts, they will present options of how quickly they want to get up to the Board, if it wants to do it quickly or phase it in; they will throw in the risk associated with each of those decisions at that time; and they will absolutely provide those tailorable options for the Board to choose from.

Commissioner Isnardi asked if there is any data at all, people keep talking about losing County people to municipalities because of the grossly inflated salaries and pensions; she knows the attrition rate is supposedly the same as everybody else's at least that is what she keeps being told, but is there any data that shows that; and she inquired does Brevard have their attrition rates, salary ranges, and whether they are losing employees like Brevard County is. She commented she would be really curious to see how many were lost last year, how many unfilled positions the County has, and what that looks like.

Mr. Abbate advised he has it for the County Manager's Department and for the rest of the organization; it is harder to look at the data from other areas but he can get that, it is available; the question is how do they determine turnover; it has to be looked at using apples to apples comparison because for some it may be soon the as vacancy; however, if the vacancy is because someone was promoted that is not the same as a turnover in terms of leaving the organization.

Commissioner Isnardi stated her concern is, she knows the County is hiring a consultant and the Board is at the mercy of what the consultant suggests if the Board goes with the consultant's suggestions; the Board does not need a consultant to tell it that these are bad things that are happening; and it is not rocket science.

Mr. Abbate advised the rocket science part is not determining for the County what its turnover rate is, the important part is that staff provide options saying it wants to do this for facilities, capital, and addressing employees in an X, Y, or Z way over time; it is for them to come up with a model of what revenues are going to be necessary to do that and how to distribute that through the Fire Assessment; that is really what the consultants specialty is, to determine that pot of money, whatever it is, whether it changes from \$23 million to \$24, \$25, or \$29 million a year over time; with the CPI increase how that gets distributed among residential properties by square footage etcetera; and that is where the expertise comes in.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she gets that; what she is saying is if there is anything the Board can do now to stop the bleeding, then it should be doing it; if the Board needs to make adjustments with those few adjustments it is making now, then it should do that; and she does not think the Board needs to wait forever to try to put some positive changes in place.

Mr. Abbate stated he does not think that is what is occurring; staff is trying to move in areas for example, in hiring with temporary positions, doing more hiring above the positions that were allocated, that is ongoing right now; they are also, they have a Lean Six Sigma Team that is working right now on processes to shorten the hiring time frame, to do it quicker; there is one of

the Assistant Chiefs who is a black belt in Lean Six Sigma, and he was just assigned to do that so the County can try to shorten those kinds of processes; and he assured Commissioner

Isnardi that staff is trying to move in those areas.

Chair Lober advised he has some questions that may appear irrelevant at first but in his mind they are relevant; and he asked if Mr. Wallace is more of a Beretta 92 or a 1911 type of guy.

Mr. Wallace advised he is a 92.

Commissioner Lober stated say the Board gives him a Beretta 92, it is old and has not been taken care of very well, and someone else has a new HKP30 or VP9 or something, and the gun is eight times more expensive than his old Beretta, and he asked Mr. Wallace if he thinks with them being a brand new shooter, that he would be able to outshoot them in all likelihood with that old Beretta.

Mr. Wallace replied it depends on the training, it depends on how familiar someone is with their weapon, how many times it was shot downrange, and where they are with that.

Chair Lober asked Mr. Wallace with wherever his existing level of training is versus someone that just turned 21, finally bought a firearm, and have been to the range maybe twice in their life beforehand, does he think it would be much of a challenge.

Mr. Wallace noted it should not be.

Chair Lober commented his point of bringing that up is the Board may get to a position with respect to Fire Rescue where it has to determine how the Board wants to prioritize personnel versus the equipment that they use; his thought is all else equal, he would rather have folks retained that have the knowledge, the investment time, and the experience to do what they need to do with perhaps not the shiniest, latest, and greatest equipment, if the Board has to make that choice; he wanted to put that out there; and he would hope that the Board is not put in a position where it would have to choose between the two, but seeing how funds are limited, he would rather focus on the people. He continued on by saying whether that means simply raising salaries to the degree that it can or whether it means adding six, 10, or 12 new fire fighter positions to hopefully reduce that mandatory overtime, he would rather focus on checking those boxes first; whatever is left over, the Board could look at putting that either into the facilities or the equipment that they have; and he does not know how the other Board Members feel about that, but that is something he feels pretty strongly about.

Commissioner Isnardi stated the Board wants to make sure they are safe; she does not want them using old and broken equipment, obviously that is a priority, but she would much rather something be a little beat up and safe, but taking care of the people so they do not leave; that is the goal; and she noted she does not just want a young team that keeps turning over.

Mr. Abbate stated he just wants to assure the Board that none of staff is thinking they want the shiniest and newest equipment at whatever the cost; they are talking about safety for citizens and making sure they are equipped at the minimum amount for that; and safety for the men and women in the Department and the stations where they are located. He mentioned he had spoken to the Union leadership on more than one occasion to let the Union know the County wants to be on the same page and aligned with them on that; but that level and he thinks that is consistent with what he is hearing the Board say, is fundamental; if they are on the same page and understanding that the County needs to at least minimally do that because people will not

stay if there is mold in their facilities and they do not think it is safe for them; and those are the kinds of things the County wants to make they are in the right place with. He went on to say if he left the Board with the impression that he was trying to do way beyond that and that has to be first, it is not what he was trying to say. He added he just wanted to be clear on that.

Commissioner Pritchett stated the statement made the other night got her attention, that there are all these new guys coming in, it cost a lot to train them, and they are leaving so she would like to know which ones are leaving; she mentioned if it is the new ones maybe when they are recruited, the County could look at the cost of recruitment to energize them and maybe that is where they need the pay raises and not in the other; she would want to look at all those numbers again because she does not have them all; she thinks those would be interesting points for her; someone would not want a brand new pistol that he or she cannot shoot, then they do not want to stay; and she thinks that is just good management. She commented Mr. Wallace does not want the Board micro managing his Department; and she would be interested in hearing what solutions are brought back in targeting the problem areas and what is being done to solve those.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she totally gets it; she has had these discussions about pay raises for the new people coming in; however, the Board has to be careful because she thinks if that pay is increased then there may be others who have been there three or four years that are making less than the new ones. She commented this is not a shot at management and for them to not take it that way; when she looks at the presentation there are four slides that are in great detail and then the last slide is personnel and staff; she is letting staff know that is a priority for her as well; and she advised if the County cannot take care of its own them it might as well not do this at all.

Mr. Wallace agreed with Commissioner Isnardi. He advised he has a lot of talking points about that with very few lines on the slide.

Commissioner Lober asked that Mr. Wallace finish up his presentation.

Mr. Wallace continued by saying he had talked earlier about the four components of a Fire Assessment and what they resource; he wants infrastructure to be looked at in terms of operational impact and capability; they will provide a priority list of that and balance it up against the others; as populations explode in Brevard County, they are having emerging requirements in new fire stations that will need to be built; that can be seen in West Viera, Station 49 is definitely a requirement in the future that this Fire Assessment would need to address; capital is in a lot of the same lines as infrastructure; this is the stuff that is needed to get to the fire, the stuff that puts water on the fire; and that needs to be up-to-date and safe so it does not put the firemen and paramedics at risk and that they are doing the right thing for the citizens of the County. He went on to say the last slide is the one he wants to make the biggest impression on; they can have the greatest technology in the world, the most awesome capability in the world, but it is people who bring that capability to the fight; if there is not enough people to do that they cannot fight, they will not fight, and they will lose; there is always emphasizes on the people in the United States Air Force, they emphasize people in every command he has ever been in, including this job as Public Safety; he knows he comes to work, breathes air and signs documents, he does not put water on fire, his job is to solely to take care of those young men and women who are in the firehouse to make sure they have the right resources, the right equipment to be safe, to go home to their families, and to save the citizens of Brevard County; and that is his emphasis, his direction, and his goal. He added that is all he ever wants to do; with this Fire Assessment he will be able to address salaries, absolutely; salaries will have an absolute positive impact on recruiting and retention, on mandatory overtime and all overtime,

and yes that will be a priority for him; and he noted they cannot put any fire out with equipment or facilities, people are needed to do that. He added if he is not focused to take care of them then he has failed the Board, the County Manager, and the Fire Chief. He stated he appreciates the Board's compassion, energy, and direction; the Board has focused and framed in what he needs to work on to get this Fire Assessment to the Board in an appropriate manner and time to address the needs across the County.

Commissioner Pritchett stated when the Board voted the six percent with the CPI, and she asked if it would bumper with that; she mentioned if that is something he would have to do to bring them up to the 15, she would not be opposed to voting it through this budget cycle; even though they are waiting on the consultant number she wants Mr. Wallace to know she did not have any heartburn with the other, and the Chief said either way would work; and if he is needing that now because they are getting behind, she would probably be okay with that too.

Chair Lober commented he has the same sentiment in a sense that if his house is burning, he does not need a guy with a gun to show up he needs a guy or gal with a hose; and he noted he does not feel the need to wait until everything is perfectly in place to give some resources to that department to at least start chipping away at the problem.

Commissioner Smith stated he voted for the 15 percent to begin with; he felt that it was extremely important; having been in business, he agrees they have to have the latest in equipment to get the job done; however, nothing is more valuable in this case to the Fire Department, than the people they have working for them. He added the County Manager is absolutely correct, someone cannot have good quality people and have mold in the fire houses, so it has to be both; if the Board can get to the 15 percent quicker rather than later, then they will get where they need to be sooner; and he thinks it is important to do that because if he is having a heart attack at 2 a.m. he wants to make sure whoever is coming to help him knows what they are doing, and they are backed up by others who know what they are doing and they have the equipment that they need. He went on to say he does not want a disgruntled employee because they did not receive a raise or because they feel as though they have been slighted; and he knows they are dedicated but it is really hard to be dedicated when he or she does not feel like they are appreciated.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she does not have an issue with it all, if there are four people willing to support it, she just wants to make sure it is spent correctly.

Mr. Abbate advised it absolutely has to be done correctly and that is why he has to go back to the County Attorney, someone cannot just change the Fire Assessment; that is why the County has to go through this whole process; that is why they had the 15 percent initially; there has to be public notice; it has to be mailed out to people; there is a certain time frame; and he will look at all that to see what potential opportunity there is to do exactly what the Board is suggesting today. He added that piece going from 8.5 to 15, it will help a little maybe on the reserve, but that is not where the difference is going to be made; the difference is going to be made in the Fire Assessment options that are going to be developed as part of the plan; they will be worked diligently to get it done in an appropriate time frame so that he gets it to the Board by October 2021; the Board can make the decisions that it believes is appropriate to move forward; and staff will be in a position to give the Board all the information to help it make the best decisions.

Commissioner Pritchett stated that will be a little hesitation past this budget cycle; she would like to make a recommendation that when the County Manager and the Budget Office Director are putting together the budget that they go ahead and implement bringing it up to the 15 percent from the initial year; she knows they have to send out the notices, but that would be

something that she would support; and from what she is hearing the other Board Members would support that as well. She continued by saying as far as when they do break CPI, she has no problem doing it for public safety and infrastructure; and she would like to see that happen. Commissioner Isnardi stated for many years a lot of these places were neglected so she understands why it is a priority for the County Manager as far as getting these stations up to par and making the repairs that are needed; she reiterated she believes there needs to be a balance; and the Board agrees that personnel is important.

Mr. Abbate stated he does not think anyone is on a different page.

Mike Bramson stated there has been a lot of good discussion here today; the Union is happy to hear the direction moving forward from here on out; he noted he would like to emphasize the aligned plan that the union, staff, and Commission have all been on; it started to create a change in culture in the Fire Department which is key; it is what the community looks to for fire service to bring which is culture; fire trucks are pretty, they drive down the street, kids love to chase them, and that is a great thing that they bring to the community; and that is a unified front and an aligned plan to bring that back into Brevard County. He added they are very happy to have the opportunity to do that. He continued by saying what they are looking forward to now is specifically what has already been discussed here; it is a consideration of priorities and unfortunately timing; in their current position there is mandatory overtime; just to clarify they get to a certain point in staffing where they ask the fire fighters to stay an extra 24-hour shift which is different from when they choose to make accommodations; they were supposed to go home, they intended to go home but they are asked to stay to fill the gaps in staffing; and they feel at this point that mandatory overtime is getting to an un-survivable rate which puts them in a very delicate issue of timing between infrastructure and stations and emphasizing on the employees. He went on to say safety has got to be the number one concern; he is stating that he wants it all, clean stations, pretty trucks, and he wants to be able to do his job in a safe and delicate manner; he wants to support his community, and he wants to support what the community expects out of him; that is exactly what Commissioner Smith said, when someone calls 9-1-1 there is an expectation to survivability of the event that person is having; and to provide that service to the people, they need it all, so it becomes a timing and priority issue. He added being that he is the Union president, the consideration he brings to the Board is that emphasis, consideration, and accommodations be for the employees. He advised the Board to consider their wages; the contract ends on September 30, 2021; at that time they have to have wages in place, funding to the Brevard County Fire Rescue Department to implement a new contract; everyone behind him is sitting on the edge of their seat to find out if that contract is going to be something that will allow them to survive the rest of their career here in Brevard County; they are waiting to hear what the Board has to say to put them in the green; and that is what they are looking for. He noted they understand it is a timing issue and there is a lot of consideration, there is a lot of weight because everyone else wants to speak about their budgets too; however, it is a critical function and an essential necessity to Brevard County.

Commissioner Pritchett stated Mr. Bramson just heard the Board agree they are going to put some more funding in there so eventually that is what is going to happen down the road; she keeps hearing the mandatory overtime and she asked what if they ran eight or 12 hours shifts and had more people; they would be able to increase the wages then, so the fire fighters would be making more money; there were studies done around the Country that when there were first responders and emergency medical that were not there overnight it actually increased the safety of the residents; and she asked for him to kick that around and maybe bring it back to negotiations.

Mr. Bramson asked if she wants an opinion now or to give it some consideration.



Commissioner Pritchett asked him to think it through because she thinks it is worth the thought.

Ryan Barrach stated he appreciates the Board's candor; and he thanked the Board for its emphasis on taking care of the internal customer.

Anthony Zuccarelli stated he lives in Brevard but unfortunately, he does not work in Brevard County Fire Rescue; he is a career Fire Officer and in attendance to support his brothers and sisters; he heard one of the Commissioners say early about wages and where the fire fighters are going; he advised they are coming to his department; he does not want them coming to his department, he wants them protecting his family, his daughter, and his house; therefore, he wants them to stay where they are. He noted he has called Commissioner Smith so many times; and he thanked the Board for proposing to raise it to 15 percent to give these guys the money they need to stay where they are.

Commissioner Pritchett asked if he thought she was suggesting that she wanted any of them to go.

Mr. Zuccarelli replied no, he understands she wanted to know where they were going and why they were leaving.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she cannot help it; she gets numbers and when she can figure out what the problem is she can usually swoop in with some good solutions in financing for it; that is all that is; and she stated she loves all these guys and she wants to keep them.

Josh Madsen stated Commissioner Isnardi had asked when this all happened; he can tell her 10 or 12 years ago forced the Fire Department, quality, service, all paramedics, equipment, and the economy, they all voted for a freeze back then; they were always told the Commissioners would take care of them so they voted the pay freeze; and it has never come back from that. He added then the economy went down and just kept rolling; they went into the reserves and spent those down; their wages never went up; he has been there 19 years; he is a topped-out Lieutenant, firefighter, paramedic; guys are leaving because in five years they make \$15,000 more than what he makes now; and they have Kelly days which is 17 more 24-hour shifts off per year. He continued by saying that is like a month and a half less they work per year and make \$15,000 more; when the consultant comes in he would like them to look at the hourly because if they just say annually, the others work a lot less hours annually; he would like the Board to see it apples to apples and oranges to oranges; and he noted the can was kicked down the road for many years and that is where they are at today. He went on to say he was in Mr. Bramson's position for many years; he got frustrated and could not do it any longer; he was lied to many times and he cannot stand for it; he stated quality over quantity; can they get people, they can get some now, but is it the quality they used to get, no; and the reason he is still there is because his family, his friends, and his neighbors are here and he is here to serve them. He mentioned he shows up on calls, people are disgruntled, they are upset, underpaid, they cannot afford their bills, and they end up losing people from their department to go somewhere else; guys that were focused on for training and thought would be there, they leave and go somewhere else for \$15,000 more on day one and work 17 less 24-hour shifts; and they cannot keep somebody if the Board is not trying in the area. He stated he hears "hey firetruck put the fire out," and he commented but they do a lot more than that; just so the citizens know they run every motor vehicle accident there is; they are there clearing the road, helping the patients, they run all the EMS calls, if there is an elderly patient who falls they are there; some people say there are not that many fires, but that is the small part of their job; EMS is about 85 percent of what they do and they do it all day long; and they do water rescue and trench specialty. He reiterated the pay difference is huge and people are going to leave because of it; quality is quantity and they get what they pay for; and everyone knows when they

go buy a new car, they get what they pay for.

Commissioner Isnardi stated if anybody, and there is probably more people in this room than has been in a long time, and they probably know her position on pensions and that sort of thing; she has had her battles with the municipal side when she served a municipal government, the County does not have that problem here; for her it is very black and white, there is FRS and a very strong pension so she has no issue with that; and she asked what he would suggest when some of these municipalities, never mind that most of these pensions are not funded. She explained what she is trying to say is there has to be something else whether it be wage, because the County cannot offer it to the firefighters in the pension because they are part of the FRS; that is actually a good thing because now it can take care of them on the salary end; and that is why this is easy for her because the County is not giving them 100 or 80 percent of their pay when they retire, plus the other stuff that is complete nonsense and is going to bankrupt a self-funded pension, that is the core difference between this Department and many municipal departments; and her point is she does not know if the County will ever be able to compete. She asked how does the County compete with someone who retires in their early 50s that is making \$85,000 per year when they retire; she noted these municipalities have worked it in such a way, because they own their politicians, is they somehow come up with a DROP because FRS has a DROP; that is like Mr. Madsen brought up the Kelly Days and it makes her cringe because 17 days of paid 24-hour shifts is ridiculous in any department; she would much rather take care of the firefighters because they have the pension, which is good and they can opt for an additional pension, but she would rather the County take care of them on the salary end; and that way the firefighters and their families are seeing that money now and they still have the nest egg when they retire along with the DROP to save money. She added she thinks FRS is one of her favorite things.

Mr. Madsen stated FRS is wonderful, and he sees a lot of them leave down there; he has a hard time telling a new employee that comes to him to ask for family and life advice; he is the highest he can go in rank at \$72,000 and he works right at 2,912 hours per year; down south they are working 2,500 hours, 400 hours less which is almost two months; their Fire Medics are topping out at \$85,000 in 10 years; and if they make Lieutenant Paramedic they are at \$115,000 to \$125,000.

Commissioner Isnardi explained none of them are guaranteed a pension until they die.

Mr. Madsen advised they are all FRS; and when they leave, they go to retire, he has to work a month and a half to two months more worth of hours and on top of that he is only at \$72,000.

Commissioner Isnardi stated when the County loses someone to Melbourne or Palm Bay that is the reason why, it is because of their pension.

Mr. Madsen stated he loses people to there because some of the EMS work and honestly they look at the budget and the direction Brevard County has been heading; that slide shows it; when someone asks him what is his faith in Brevard County, he is honest; when he was young and had two years on the job he was told he needed to leave and go somewhere else; he told them no he lives here and things are going to get better; he was told it is Brevard County, it will never get better, Brevard is behind on everything; and that was 17 years ago. He added and here years later, sadly it is true.

Commissioner Isnardi commented it cannot be that bad because Mr. Madsen is still here, and she is glad.

Mr. Madsen commented it is because he lives right down the street and he can protect his family.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she is very glad he is here so do not doubt that for a second; what she is trying to say is there is some value; and the Board just needs to fix what is wrong and what is broken.

Mr. Madsen stated he loves his community and he wants to stay here, but like the gentleman back there, he cannot afford to work in Brevard County so he drives 30 to 40 minutes; he has tons of friends that live in Indian Harbor like he does but none of them work in Brevard; and sadly they laugh at him and tell him to come work where they work because they get those Kelly Days and they are paid more money.

Commissioner Isnardi stated but what they say about Brevard is that they are the real fire fighters at least that is the feedback she gets.

Mr. Madsen stated Brevard is the training ground of Florida it and loses everyone; and they are good fire fighters.

Commissioner Isnardi asked Mr. Madsen to give the Board a chance.

Mr. Madsen stated he has faith in this Board and that it will help them because that is what they need.

Commissioner Isnardi mentioned her whole point was the firefighters do not have a pension system that is fragile; what she used to tell the municipalities was they did not know if their pension was going to be there in 20 or 30 years when they are only 40 to 60 percent funded; and especially when they are at the mercy of a board that makes their investments.

Mr. Madsen stated with a lot of the municipalities around here he would agree 100 percent; he does not lose a majority of his people to municipalities they lose them to other counties and South Florida; Brevard opens up a hiring process and because they cannot get anyone from around here they pick people from outside; and they need that job to start.

Commissioner Isnardi advised the Board is going to look at that too.

Commissioner Pritchett asked Mr. Madsen how long he has worked here.

Mr. Madsen responded 19 years.

Commissioner Pritchett inquired how old he is.

Mr. Madsen responded he is 41 right now.

Commissioner Pritchett stated he will get to retire soon so that is wonderful.

Mr. Madsen stated that is another thing, a fire fighters health.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she agrees with the pension and she is glad they have that; there have been a couple guys come up that have been there for a while and they live in other areas but come here to work; the Board is just going to have to balance that; but she is listening and gathering data; and she is just looking for good information and truth.

## Roads and Bridges

Susan Jackson, Assistant Public Works Director, stated she is starting off with a report on the road program; in 2017 Public Works presented the Board with a significant amount of road back log that had accumulated and needed to be addressed; that backlog was calculated based on the 2011 pavement condition assessment; typically for a County of this size, those assessment updates are done every three to five years and they cost on average about \$400,000; between 2011 and 2017 there was no funding available for an update so they relied on the 2011 pavement condition assessment to project those roads forward; and this is the accumulated back log and with that back log they provided a five-year plan on how they would address that backlog. She continued by saying as they developed that plan there were two notable challenges; the first was that a majority of the backlog was roads at risk of falling into reconstruction; as the Board knows roads that need reconstructed costs more than four times the amount of road resurfacing; when developing the plan they had to come up with a very cost effective strategy; they decided they were going to attack those at-risk roads first; that is exactly what has been done as it was one of their primary objectives; and the second challenge was that some Districts had more at-risk roads than others. She noted Commissioner Pritchett has more of the roads in the County than other Districts, but looking at the percentage of at-risk roads, her percentage was 24 percent; and that compared to Commissioner Smith, he has less roads but is at 30 percent of at-risk roads. She went on to say at the far left is the proposed miles in Fiscal Year 2017/2018; that was the year they started the program; the percentages on the screen are the actual percentages of backlog that each Commissioner had in their District; to deal with the challenge, they had asked the Board for leeway in developing the plan; what they did after year one was they adjusted that percentage every year so that in year five and the years going forward, they would then sync the percentage of money that they would spend on road resurfacing with the percentage of miles of road in that District; and that is the background on how the plan was developed and a few of the challenges. She stated looking at the total miles, the first year goal that was set for them was 55 miles and they delivered more than 64 miles; the second year, the goal was 61 miles and they delivered more than 70 miles; this year they planned 63 miles and 63 miles in the two years following; and currently they are 40 percent complete for this year and they are on schedule and on budget. She added as the Board can see, throughout past years, what they have done is increased the amount of roads that they are paving; they have done that with additional resources that the Board has provided; they put those resources right back into resurfacing with the idea of some added assurances so that no road falls into reconstruction; that has been one of their primary objectives of the road program; and it has been the commitment that they had made to this Board, and to the citizens, in a budget review committee. She continued on by saying moving on to road reconstruction, while they were focused on making sure that they caught those at-risk roads from falling into reconstruction, this Board wanted to do more; they were committed to doing more; in particular the Board wanted to address the roads that were in serious to failed condition, where they had no other option but to reconstruct; the Board wanted them to tackle that and provided additional resources; with those resources they created this five-year plan; they started out reconstructing 4.63 miles and exceeded that goal; every year they have increased the amount of miles that they are reconstructing; this year they will be reconstructing 8.3 miles; and that will level off based on the available funding.

Chair Lober inquired if this ties into the percentages with each District as well as with the prior slide for repaving.

Ms. Jackson advised it does not; she explained what the Board will see is that based on the assessment they had in the south part of the County, they had the greatest amount of road reconstruction that was needed; and with that said, they did make sure based on the funding that they did reconstruction in every District.

Chair Lober stated perfect.

Ms. Jackson went on to say staff has done a tremendous job executing this program; they have been very committed to meeting and exceeding a lot of their goals; and that is because they know that roads have been, and continue to be, a top priority for this Board. She advised she wants to go back and address the money; in this Fiscal Year there is a bump in the funding, it is \$4.9 million; that came about for the funding for Babcock and they are very grateful to the Board for giving them the funding; originally they were going to pave 1.26 miles; in January, they had completed 3.29 miles of Babcock Street, it looks great; and they are excited to move forward and tackle the next nine miles of Babcock Street. She pointed out on the road program, something the Board and the Budget Review Committee asked them to do was to always have a five-year plan through strategic planning and that is exactly what they have been doing; she stated they have taken a look at the miles of roads being done and how well they are doing; she talked about a tool previously that State and local governments use in order to gauge the health of their paved roads and that is the pavement condition assessment; last year this Board funded and updated the pavement condition assessment; with that information Public Works is happy to deliver this favorable report card; and she would like to provide the report card for those roads. She continued by saying in 2011, the overall score for County roads was 66 which was fair condition; today the overall score and Pavement Condition Index (PCI) rating is 79, satisfactory; a little background, when the condition of roads are evaluated they are given a numerical score from 0 to 100, zero being the worst possible condition and 100 being the best possible condition; looking at the Districts on the chart it shows each Districts PCI for 2011 and the PCI for 2019 for the roads in each District; and it shows each District has improved substantially. She went on to say they have increased their center line miles of roads by about 20 miles; they now have about 1,126 miles of roadway; on the right it shows the percentages of roads in each District of the overall road inventory; and the percentages seen here will be used in year five and going forward in how they distribute resurfacing money. She stated the next report card looks at roads by functional classification and this is important because the arterial and collector roads are the ones that are traveled the most; these arterial roads are comprised of more than nine percent of the overall inventory with a score of 82; the collector roads there is more than 12.5 percent with an average PCI rating of 81; and of course local roads compromised of the most majority with a score of 79. She stated looking at the bottom of the chart, the yellow bars are the 2011 assessment and the green bars are the 2019 assessment clearly showing they are making progress; the next slide is about the dreaded potholes that everyone hates; since 2015 they have had a six percent decrease in the number of pothole repairs, with the biggest decrease between years 2017 and 2019; that was because of the Boards commitment and investment in the road program; based on that new assessment, the consultant took the roads in the County and categorized them based on national standards and PCI score; and what this slide shows on the left is that, the County has 498 miles of roads that are in good condition, 320 that are in a satisfactory condition, and moving to the right it starts to show roads that need to be resurfaced and major rehab and reconstruction. She went on to explain based on the new assessment they currently have 306 miles of backlog; she has a slide of what the future program is going to look like in the years ahead; the backlog is the yellow all the way to the right with resurfacing and reconstruction; she asked the Board to remember to the left on the slide is the roads in satisfactory condition, but just like all infrastructure, roads age and each year a certain amount of miles of road are falling into resurfacing; she wants the Board to keep that in mind going forward with the slides; the next slide is a quick comparison from the 2011 and 2019 PCI results; the blue bar represents 2011; and the orange bar represents 2019. She added as the Board can see, they have made substantial progress in all areas; in 2011 they had 664 miles of backlog; and today they have 306 miles. She went on to say this slide is a look at the repair activities; these are the roads

organized by their condition and scores; the important thing on this slide is if they were to take care of that backlog today it would cost \$87.5 million; she also wanted the Board to see with the poor roads there is a variety of techniques that are used; the roads in this category cost more than the roads that need to be resurfaced but they do not cost as much as roads to be reconstructed; and what they look at is taking roads individually and the cost savings strategies in order to repair that road to get it back to a PCI of 100. She explained this slide is one she was setting up before; this slide looks at the road ahead and it is consistent with them looking at the next five years and always looking forward and never looking back; looking at the red line to the left those are the three years remaining in the road program that was started in 2017-2018; to the right is the next five years; the bar to the far left at the bottom is the miles of roads they will reconstruct and resurface this year, 71 miles; at the top of the bar it shows 306 miles of backlog; and once they pave those roads that will leave them with 235 miles of backlog. She commented to the Board to remember they have to catch those roads that were to the left of the yellow before they fall into resurfacing, so they never go back to this place of accumulative backlog; what is shown for the next year, they will start off with 255 miles and pave 71 and they will catch 18 miles of backlog moving forward; another important part is that they predict in 2024, based on the data that they are seeing now and of course they will need a new one in three years, they will eliminate the road reconstruction program in 2024 and they will have caught all of the at-risk roads; and what they will need to do at that point is to begin transitioning from this primary objective of catching roads before they fall into reconstruction to extending the service life of roads through preservation and maintenance. She noted they will then start lowering the number of roads they resurface because once they reach 2027 the backlog will be zero; and what they will do going forward is to continue to resurface roads that are aging and spilling over, so it is a resurfacing effort. She stated now moving into drainage which is another important priority to the Board; back in 2017/2018, they had been inundated with flooding complaints; to respond to the citizens, the Board provided resources to create two additional crews and equipment; now there is one crew stationed in the north part of the County, one in the central part, and one in the south part of the County; all they do is clean ditches and reshape swells; this slide is a five-year plan and she just wanted the Board to know what they did with the investment; and the goal for 2021/2022 is they should be cleaning 90 to 100 miles of ditches each year, previously that was about 30 miles. She continued on by saying they will also be transitioning from a 10 to 12 year cycle to get to a ditch to a three to five year cycle; this is just an update; and they will continue to bring the Board an update year after year.

Chair Lober advised he wants to thank the Sheriff's Office as well; he stated he had asked them if they could help take over some of the mowing requirements using inmates; and those who were mowing could go clean up the ditches in certain parts of Merritt Island.

Ms. Jackson stated they really appreciate that too, the Sheriff has been very good about giving them weekend warriors and additional assistance. She noted another area of the transportation infrastructure that has not been talked so much about is the bridge infrastructure; on the slide it shows the County bridge inspection results; there are 46 bridges in the County and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) inspects those bridges every year; they inspect 38 of those bridges and eight of the bridges were previously inspected by County staff; and based on the most recent inspection results, there are 36 bridges in good condition and six that are in poor to fair condition. She went on to say bridges, much like roads, if nothing is done with them and there is no program created and there is no dedicated funding to keep them in good condition, they will fall into major repairs and replacement; at the bottom of the slide based on inspection results, these are the unfunded repairs that need to be made to those bridges in good condition in each District; that is a little over \$3 million; at the far left it shows the age of bridges; there is one over 80 years old, nine at 50 to 60 years old, and four that are 40 to 50 years old; FDOT has in their 2018 report that the bridges designed today have a life

expectancy of 75 years; however, bridges designed before have a life expectancy of about 50 years; therefore, the County is getting very close to the life expectancy of these bridges. She mentioned in that same report they recommended that the County have an aggressive maintenance program, that it be their strategy so they can extend the service life of the bridges; that is exactly what Public Works wants to do; she noted she wants the Board to look at the roads that are fair to poor which some of them the Board is very familiar with, like Sea Ray Bridge; they have funding for that one but it fell into poor condition and it is going to cost about \$5 million to have it replaced; and on the other hand there is Micco Road over San Sebastian Canal. She continued by saying that bridge is 80 years old, so it has far outlived its service life and needs to be replaced; it has received band aids in the past and that is not working; that is a \$1.8 million unfunded cost that needs to be planned for as soon as possible; there is the Tucker Lane bridge that is functionally obsolete which is also unfunded; and currently for the poor to fair bridges there is \$5.4 million that is funded and \$2.3 million that is unfunded. She advised their action plan to deal with this is to develop a plan very consistent with what this Board and the Citizens Review Committee continues to ask them to do; they need a funded bridge program and inside of that program they need a replacement plan so they can prepare for these bridges that are reaching their service life; in addition, they want a consultant to do an evaluation on these bridges very much like the pavement condition assessment; they would do the same on the bridges and help them with maintenance and repair strategies and how to budget that going forward; and she noted they would like to outsource the eight bridges that previous staff was doing because they no longer have a structural engineer nor do they anticipate having that going forward. She stated to oversee the program they will need one dedicated position to manage the program; of course the program would have to have reoccurring funding in order for it to work; and that is all she has, she will turn things over to the Interim Public Works Director, Corrina Gumm.

Corrina Gumm, Interim Public Works Director, stated as they have talked about the road conditions, they must also talk about the growing unfunded roadway capacity improvements needed on the County's transportation system; the list includes all of the County's arterial and collector roads that are at or above 80 percent of the maximum acceptable volume (MAV); the MAV can be considered the capacity of a road for planning purposes; the 2018 volume and vehicles per day shown on the slide is the most current data they have available that Space Coast TPO collects and provides to them; and the existing capacity has been determined based on the desired level of service that the County has identified in its Comprehensive Plan. She added it is also consistent with Florida's quality and level of service guidelines for the traveling public. She noted the last column is the ratio of the existing volume over the capacity, for example the segment of Grissom Parkway was at 80 percent capacity in 2018; they know that some of the roads have experienced a significant increase in traffic volumes since 2018 and maybe closer to or over capacity at this time; the values in red are identifying the roads that were already over capacity in 2018; a lot of these are in the south County and they should be planning to address those; the next slide has the same list of roads but includes the associated planning cost for roadway widening in order to increase capacity; and the current total estimated planning cost is in the area of \$470 million with no source of funding over time to address the issues. She continued by saying the current funding streams that they have available to them are largely dedicated to the roadway maintenance efforts; the good news is that they continue to pursue grants with these specific needs in mind; and she commented there are interim solutions that cost a lot less that can be considered to improve the quality for travel for the people in Brevard County.

John Denninghoff, Assistant County Manager, stated in the planning of transportation improvements, at least for capacity improvements, as they have moved through the last four to five years, they have reduced the amount of funding that was available for that purpose and in

favor of doing more maintenances as was just mentioned; this is a good investment because of the cost of reconstructing a road as compared to resurfacing is so devastating that it just about has to be done that way; in so doing they have also began to fall further behind in terms of developing new capacity; and again with the MAV, the more roads that get into that 80 percent, or worse category they will start hearing more from the citizens. He continued at this point, the amount of funding they have going to capacity is pretty much limited to the occasional little bits of gas taxes that they can send towards it and other than that it is pretty much limited to transportation impact fees; the Planning and Development Director will be talking a little bit about the impact fees very soon; in addition to the impact fees and the gas tax, they do seek grants, sometimes they are good grants with Federal funds that might fund an entire project; however, it is usually a 50/50 grant so they have to be able to have funds to match the grant funds. He went on to say the options on that have been talked about in the past; the increase in gas tax could go to as much as six additional pennies for that; there is infrastructure sales tax and services tax, but he is really not wanting to talk about that too much today; there are some alternatives but none of them are what he would call fun; they are looking at and trying to exploit opportunities to use ITS and intersection improvements that will improve the efficiency of the corridors; and by doing that they can relieve a lot of congestion on the roadways so they would feel like there is less volume on them when in reality there may be more. He added but they run very efficiently. He stated they have a growing ITS program but as far as the growth that it has, they can use impact fees for that and other funds as well for transportation purposes; they are looking to that option to increase or maximize their capacity, it is far cheaper dollar for dollar than putting new pavement down on the road; eventually even that will be exhausted in terms of improvement; and then they will have to look at additional pavement, new corridors, or something of that sort.

The Board recessed at 2:53 p.m. and reconvened at 3:06 p.m.

### **Transportation Impact Fees**

Tad Calkins, Planning and Development Director, stated in 1989 the County established an \$855 fee for the single-family detached home and this fee was in place for 11 years; the transportation impact fee study update was conducted in 2000 and it calculated a new rate of \$4,353; when that went to the Board for adoption, it only adopted that rate at 27 percent; and that remained in effect with a one percent increase until 2007 when the Board adopted the maximum recommended rate. He added that happens to be the current rate at \$4,353. He noted in 2009, the Board adopted an impact fee moratorium which was in place all the way through to 2016; the Board directed staff to initiate the process to do a transportation impact fee study update in 2013; the study update calculated a new rate that if it would have been implemented it would have effectively increased the rate by 66.3 percent; when it went to the Board there was no action taken on it; and in 2016 the moratorium sunsetted so the fee is currently based on the 2000 transportation impact fee rate. He went on to say this slide shows the funds that are available by each of the benefit Districts from October 2016 to December 2019; the disbursement of these monies is based on the project meeting the criteria of the Benefit District Advisory Group's approval; the advisory groups are made up of members from each of the municipalities and the Public Works Department; and in the slide they have omitted the monies that are collected within the cities because traditionally those funds go back or are disbursed to those municipalities where they are collected.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she knows the County had talked about some prorated impact fees, and she asked how far behind the County is in a person paying for their own impact to the area; she asked if it should be at 30 percent right now; and what would be the dollar amount.



Mr. Calkins responded if he understands the question, the rate that is being collected now is based on a 2000 study.

Commissioner Pritchett asked how far the County is going in the hole.

Mr. Calkins responded if the Board was interested in looking at that, then it could use the 2014 study or initiate a new study to look at it based on the current construction costs for those improvements.

Commissioner Pritchett stated she knows the County is not getting enough in it and since it is not she asked who is paying for that.

Mr. Calkins responded the bill would be filled by other sources.

Commissioner Pritchett asked if that is the homeowners, businesses, and ad valorem taxes.

Steve Swanke stated no one is footing the bill; it is money that is not collected; and there really are no alternative funding sources for capacity improvements because the money is going to maintenance.

Commissioner Pritchett stated someone is paying for it or the Board does not need to provide the money.

Mr. Swanke responded there is a backlog and they do not have the money to resolve that backlog, with exception to the impact fees that they do collect; and the rest of it is just unfunded.

Commissioner Pritchett asked a backlog of what because she knows when a business comes in the impact fee is to cover costs.

Frank Abbate, County Manager, explained the capacity should be paid by development, that is what the impact fees are for; if the Board is going to stay up or try to address that capacity and they do not have the impact fees then the alternative is either going to be using one of the existing resources that are either being used for maintenance, and they will fall behind there, or the General Fund dollars from another program; and that is the bottom line.

Commissioner Pritchett asked if the County has not been doing any of these things that the impact fees would have covered.

Mr. Denninghoff explained the things they would have been paying for with impact fees during the moratorium were either not being done, so they were falling behind, or they were being paid for with LOGT, basically gas taxes; when they shifted from gas tax supporting the capacity improvements instead of doing the maintenance, that left it with only the impact fees; during the moratorium they did not have those either so they were left at the mercy or the opportunities that the State would provide, grant funds, or Federal funding through the TPO; and that is where they are at today except they do have some impact fees. He noted to answer the question on how much the County is behind, the current level of \$4,353 for a single-family home, the study in 2014 was \$7,238, so they are \$2,885 behind per single-family home; that was based on a six-and-a-half year old study; and inflation has been pretty severe so it is going to be much worse than that.

Commissioner Pritchett asked how does that reflect; she stated that happened and the County did not collect the fees and from what Mr. Denninghoff is saying is the County just did not do

the work; and she inquired if that is why the County has capacity problems now.

Mr. Denninghoff advised that is correct.

Commissioner Pritchett asked what are the other problems.

Mr. Denninghoff continued by saying to the extent that the County could have offset some of those capacity problems, they would have been better set to do them; one of the things that having funds in a timely manner does is it allows them to be prepared with a completed set of plans, maybe acquired some right-of-way, and when grant funds become available the County is in a good position to match it and more or less have a shovel-ready project; that was the strategy they used for a long time; and they were able to take advantage of over \$120 million or \$130 million in grant funds and Federal funds that they have acquired over the last 15 years or so. He mentioned they have been unable to keep that pipeline full because they just do not have the capacity funds available; he does not want to sound too critical of the shift to the maintenance because he has seen it both ways; they have gone back and forth on that over the years; there was a time back in 2005 when they were spending almost everything on maintenance; they realized they had to get some major road projects done, therefore, they shifted it back; one of those roads was Pineda and the Parkway; and because of that they shifted back to capacity. He continued by saying that left staff abandoned on the maintenance so they have never really solved both problems at the same time, they have just never done it.

Commissioner Pritchett noted she is going to have to get a little better educated by staff; she had another thought with this and she thinks she just found out she does not know enough about that; and she needs more time with that instead of throwing out a really bad idea right now.

Mr. Denninghoff stated that slide 24 has the capacity planning numbers that are needed, it is \$470 million right now; and that is just what the County has identified up to this point.

Commissioner Smith stated when he took office back in 2014, the County was coming out of, but they did not know it back then, the downturn and they had suspended the impact fees; he had made a motion for a second year without impact fees because he really was concerned for the builders and the realtors; that was four and five years ago; and he thinks it is time that as a Board, they should start considering what the alternatives would be if the Board were to increase the impact fees. He noted people are still going to come to Brevard; the County is in a boom time; people are going to build houses, people are going to come here, and who knows how long before the next downturn; hopefully when it comes it will not be as devastating as the one from 2009 to 2016; in the meantime, the County is having capacity issues and that is what impact fees were designed to do; they were designed to ameliorate the increased traffic, the increased amount of people living here, and the wear and tear on roads and the community; and he would just like to encourage his fellow Commissioners to start thinking about that. He asked if the Board would be remiss if it did not have another study to bring it up to date, as it was pointed out that there has been quite a bit of inflation since the 2014 study.

Mr. Denninghoff stated he thinks it would be appropriate to do another study and it may be statutorily mandatory anyway; there is a bill being considered in Tallahassee still that says they have to have the studies updated on a three-year basis; Brevard is already twice as old as it is supposed to be based on that; there are other things in that Statute that will hurt the County a bit as well; and if the Board wants to stay ahead of the Statute it probably ought to get a study underway.

Commissioner Smith commented he thinks it would be appropriate anyway; it has been five-and-one-half years since it was done last time; he thinks it would give some insight as to where the County is; and he would like to make a motion to get a study and find out where the County is at. He added he knows the realtors and the developers are not going to be happy about that; he is just as sure that with higher impact fees they are not going to see less building being done; Brevard County is the place to be, people want to be here, they want to live here, and they want to build houses here; and he really does not think any of the developers or realtors are going to suffer. He mentioned if someone is selling a \$300,000 house or even a \$100,000 house he does not think putting in a \$7,000 or \$8,000 impact fee and add it to someone's mortgage for over 30 years, he does not see that little extra keeping anyone from building a house; it certainly would make a big difference in the condition of the County going forward; everyone drives on the roads, there are traffic jams, and there are periods of time where it is tough to get anywhere; and he thinks it is important to consider this.

Commissioner Pritchett asked if the Board can come back and have that discussion; she was actually going to go in that direction until she started asking questions; she received some answers that she was not prepared for which tells her she does not have enough knowledge; she was thinking maybe the Board would consider the thought of the blue ribbon study and when they came back with some recommendations a while ago; one of them was a gas tax and she thinks that may be less painful, it is more of a user fee and it goes towards roads and capacity; and she thinks that impact fees may be really hard on a family trying to absorb those kinds of funds on a home. She included it is not that she does not think people should pay their share, but something like a user fee tax for people who use those roads; she does not know about the rest of the Board but since the County implemented the Lagoon fund she has no idea she is paying that little extra when she purchases something; and she thinks that could be more of a thought moving forward that would help alleviate some of the pain with capacity and roads.

Chair Lober stated he does not think this is the be all end all by any means, it at least takes a portion of the burden off, is the idea that is on for the next Commission meeting on the TDT, the delta between the 16.6 they projected and whatever it ends up increasing to; that is not going to solve the problem altogether; he would like to at least make sure the Board exhausts all reasonable alternatives before looking at raising impact fees; and that is not to say he would not consider it, but he just wants to make sure the Board is doing everything it possibly can and that it is truly something that is necessary before the Board takes that extra step. He went on to say if it looks like the majority of the Commission would support the findings of an impact fee study he will vote to have the study; he just wants to really have a better idea with Commissioner Tobia in attendance, whether it is the next meeting or a subsequent meeting; if it appears the majority of the Board is disinclined to raise the impact fees anyway then there is no point in having the study anyway; and he advised he will support it assuming if it has certain recommendations, the inclination would be to go that way.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she does not have a problem doing the study just to take a look but she cannot guarantee that she would be supportive of increasing them; she does not believe that it is going to be put on the family; she thinks if a builder wants to sell a home they will probably absorb it out of some of their profits, but she is not sure; even looking back on moratoriums, the intentions are good but now the County is suffering for it; she just does not ever want the County to be in a position of trying to make up for the short falls or mistakes of

past Boards or management not addressing those capacity issues; and the Board is dealing with that right now with the whole Babcock scenario with the intersection. She continued by saying she wants to make sure that road does not get completely and utterly overwhelmed; she

reiterated saying she would have to look at it, she does not have a problem with the study, she just does not know that she would be for that; as far as the gas tax goes, people will scream if the Board goes and looks at that gas tax; and it is something she is okay with looking at but it is not something she would support, at least right now. She mentioned she thinks there are some alternatives out there as far as addressing the issue.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like to hear the alternatives because he thinks the Board needs to look at these things.

Commissioner Isnardi commented maybe it is something that needs to go back to the voters; maybe the Board can ask the voters if they are okay paying it; and she does not want to just do this because it is easy.

Commissioner Smith stated he does not think any time the County is going to raise fees or taxes is ever easy; he thinks one of the things that the Board needs to look at is what is equitable; new houses, new construction, and more people moving in will definitely have an impact; and he questions how the Board would account for that.

Commissioner Isnardi agreed with Commissioner Smith.

Commissioner Smith went on to say whether it be impact fees, gas tax, or some other way, he is all ears; he wants to look at this; and the Board cannot stick its head in the sand and pretend there are no problems out there.

Commissioner Isnardi stated the Board cannot solve them all because of mistakes in the past either in one or two budget cycles; she was really hopeful when she saw that the County is now at a point where it does not have road falling into complete reconstruction; she does not want to wait 20 years until they are ahead of the game or 10 years until the County is actually eliminating that backlog because there will be more growth; and she does not know how the Board will solve that problem. She noted the County is ahead of the game, leaps and bounds ahead of where they were five years ago, so there is something to celebrate.

Commissioner Smith stated the County is still \$200 million behind and he does not see how the County is going to get there just by picking off an extra five miles here and three miles there; it feels good they are making that kind of progress; however, when he looks five years down the road, he sees the County still in a big quandary.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she still thinks the bigger issue is capacity more so than it is not keeping up with what the County already has because there are not more roads falling in those red categories.

Commissioner Smith stated impact fees are going to help with capacity; and he agrees with Chair Lober in that if there is no appetite to do it then there is no point in doing a study, but he has the appetite.

Commissioner Isnardi commented she thinks it is something the Board should look at she just does not want to see the Board doubling it to make up for mistakes from the past.

Commissioner Smith noted for him everything is on the table; if it comes back and says it should be doubled or that the Board should only go 50 percent, he is good with it; he really wants to hear what the Board has to say; and he also thinks it is something that has to be addressed.

Commissioner Isnardi advised she is totally supportive of doing a study; she wants to make sure when the consultant comes back with the information and that it is not comparing the County to an actual comparable city or municipality; she does not want to be compared to a city like Orlando, that is completely not like Brevard County; and she wants to make sure the comparison is a true comparison.

Commissioner Smith stated that is the beauty of the Board being able to discuss this because it does not have to do that.

Commissioner Isnardi remarked she agrees with Commissioner Smith and she thinks the Board should look at it.

Commissioner Pritchett said when she saw capacity, she thought that is a very big issue for Chair Lober and for Commissioner Tobia; she thought the idea of the gas tax would help those two out; in District 1 she thinks Commissioner Scarborough was very invested on roads; he had set up an MSTU fund in District 1 so they have extra funds coming in; and District 1 has been paying for a lot of their own capacity. She noted District 1 has a lot of dirt roads so they do not have all that stress right now, just because they have done that; the Board is going to have to help and she thought the gas tax would be less painful; as for the impact fees, she does not know where that is affecting most of the Districts so that is a conversation for the rest of the Board; this is probably less impactful on her; however, she thinks the Board needs to help out Districts 2 and 3 because her jaw almost dropped when she saw the capacity problems. She asked if staff could get the blue ribbon information to Chair Lober; she advised they had a panel of people come together and they had made expert recommendations, but the Board never did any of them; some were minimal amounts that would be paid by each person and even a lot with the tourists that would cover an X amount of funds that would help in some of these projects; and she thinks if the Board moved things over to user fees, the County could possibly lower the ad valorem taxes because it would not be on the homeowners and the businesses, everybody would be paying for what they are using. She added she has always liked those types of fees and she asked the Board to think about that. She stated maybe prorating the impact fees as the Board moves forward because she believes the County has to do the study from what Mr. Denninghoff has advised; she believes these are strategic things that can be done down the road; and she thinks the Board needs to start looking towards the future.

Commissioner Smith noted the study would give the Board some idea of where it might want to go from here as to whether it wants to do a partial increase or put it aside for now; having the study gives good information that will be needed to go forward; the Board may come up with some other ideas; maybe knowing that the County would bring in a certain amount of dollars if it is through an impact fee or another gas tax it could be a cut on ad valorem taxes so that it helps the medicine go down; and he mentioned he does not have a problem waiting until Commissioner Tobia is in attendance to bring this up again and vote on it.

Chair Lober advised he appreciates that.

Commissioner Smith commented he thinks the County has to do the study because it will provide the information the Board needs to make a decision, information is key.

### **Utility Services Sanitary Sewer System**

Eddie Fontanin, Utility Services Director, stated these are the pillars that the County Manager mentioned earlier; as he goes through this presentation it will be a snapshot based on these

pillars, what is going on today, and what the long range planning staff will be doing on this; the first pillar to talk about is responsiveness; when the County went through the recession there were layoffs at the County, as everyone knows, which impacted his Department; and over the course of the past two years they have been getting those positions back with the goal of adding more in the future fiscal years. He mentioned what that will do for the County is get the level of service where it needs to be; he explained in Mr. Wallace's presentation the level of service he mentioned applies to any department; and he takes his with pride also. He noted they have updated the billing software, they have 8,200 water accounts, they are not just waste water utility; the billing software is key to get that responsiveness; looking forward, what he is looking at doing is converting all of their water meters to radial read; that is what the utilities in the 21st century are doing and he believes that is where his Department needs to be; and he noted there are some bullets on the slide that talk about the benefits but he will leave those to questions if anyone has any. He continued by saying staff is looking at those 8,200 accounts along with some of their 55,000 waste water accounts and hiring someone to be more of a dedicated coordinator for those customer service questions; road and drainage has been talked about a little; a lot of times road and drainage is associated with Public Works, but really when talking about a road it is anyone who has an ownership in that right-of-way; as the Board knows utilities have their water and waste water lines in there; and one of the things they are doing is putting a big push on assessing. He went on to say they are assessing the gravity of sewer; they have done a lot of it and they are not done doing it; they are getting really good feedback on where they need to spend their dollars; and he mentioned it is a very precise way to allocate the funds and they are finding that with great success. He stated moving forward one of the things they are looking at is collaborating more with Public Works in the spirit of not digging the same hole twice; when they talk about a road program or a milling program, they are also looking at opportunities with expanding their utility from septic to sewer; he has highlighted some of the good that has been done since the rate increase in Fiscal Year 2013/2014; he does not know if the Board has heard the news of what has happened in Fort Lauderdale, but that is the reason why assessments needs to be done, so the County does not end up in one of those positions; that is not to say they are foolproof but his staff tries to look at probability; in all of their assets whether it is a lift station or a gravity line in the future they will be doing force mains but the key is basically getting objectionable, independent, assessments on what they need to repair; and he mentioned they have not lost track of the R&R program that they have been doing for the past five or six years and they plan on taking that further. He continued by saying some of that conversation that ties in with what the Board had earlier with Mr. Denninghoff and Mr. Calkins about capacity of roads, they also have to look at capacity of treatment plants; he mentioned in his sense if someone does not have water, sewer, and roads he asked how does one develop it; that is really the key; what they have done is work with a consultant to do a long range population projection analysis to provide them a glimpse of what the County's growth spots look like in the next 10 or 15 years; and he knows that seems like an eternity but when considering a treatment plant costs \$30 million to \$40 million someone cannot just go the Board on a dime and ask for that \$30 to \$40 million, so it is pivotal they start looking at that now. He noted they are also looking at the functionality of the beaches; he talks about the beaches because staff is looking at how to minimize some of the previous mishaps; they talk about the discharges that occurred back then; they have studies going on that look at tightening that system; and the five bullets that are listed, that is about \$20 to \$25 million in order to accomplish those. He added the other two bullets are just ways his Department is moving forward, expanding, and making the utility more resilient. He mentioned when talking about the Indian River Lagoon, a lot of times it is associated with Save Our Indian River Lagoon (SOIRL) but as a Department they are doing initiatives independent of SOIRL; the good news is they have five SOIRL projects underway; the five projects listed are about \$20 to \$21 million worth of work; one will soon go out to bid and others are following soon behind so they are very excited about that; in addition there are other projects, an additional eight, that are in the queue

currently in the SOIRL plan in which they are working with consultants and Task Order on getting those developed; and he advised they have submitted 28 projects overall and they total \$167 million. He stated they really took a look at the County as a whole, the information available, and then submitted; their approach is after it goes to the Board for approval, they will then take the approved projects and start seeking Federal and State funding that is available; however, the first step is getting Board approval on those projects. He talked about Mr. Wallace and how he did a really good job talking about employees; he is not trying to make Utility staff sound like they are the Fire Department or the Sheriff's Department but they are a 24/7 365 day operation; if the Board has ever seen their malfunction reports they do not happen between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. they always happen at some odd hour or on the weekend; they always have a dedicated crew that is out there on call in order to do that; they want to make sure they have staff to fill those positions and make sure the ones that are filled stay filled; he highlighted some of the initiatives that they have done today; and there are some initiatives that they are currently looking at. He stated between the County Manager, Human Resources and other Departments, they have all been very supportive in helping and guiding them through the system.

Chair Lober asked Mr. Fontanin to go back to the previous slide. He stated as far as expanding the incentive pay program, he would like a little more information on what his general thoughts are.

Mr. Fontanin stated in the Union Contract, the Blue Collar Union Contract, there is incentive pay associated so if someone were to get a certain license the County gives them a certain amount per hour addition; he does not think those have been touched in quite a long time; he has a lot of staff that cannot remember the last time those rates were adjusted; and when there is talk about CPI and rate of inflation, he would like to talk about seeing if there are opportunities.

Chair Lober thanked him.

Mr. Fontanin continued by saying a lot of what was talked about, they highlighted just briefly some of the big ticket items, he talked about \$25 million and tightening up what is going on with beaches, he talked about \$167 million being submitted in projects for SOIRL with the understanding that based on the SOIRL formula it will not get them to the \$167 million, therefore, they have to look at grants and rate increases or other means in order to bridge that gap to accomplish that goal; they have looked at other initiatives but when there is no money that is tough to do; and the point of it is he is really proud of his staff and what they are accomplishing based on the rates. He went on to say with a utility, typically 80 to 90 percent of the revenue is associated with the user rate; a lot of time there is talk about connection fees and whatnot, but for utility it is that monthly bill that is getting sent out; to do a comparison, and the slide is up-to-date, it kind of gives a perspective on a bar graph of where the County is relative to other utilities; he knows there was talk about financial studies with Public Works and the Fire Department that is soon going to be initiating, but he is proud to say he thinks theirs is the first department that got this going back in December and they are a month away; and really the goal is to have a financial model of the whole dynamics of operations and projects because they want to put in that model what the future expansion of treatment plants and new treatment plants looks like, tightening the system. He added they have to look at the long range to set the rate today; they are anticipating in the next four to six weeks to get that model; and then they can start working on it and reviewing it with internal staff and sharing it at a later date.

## Human Resources

Jerry Visco, Human Resources Director, stated today he wants to hit on some of the high points of some of the particular functional areas; for him the 100 pound gorilla in the room is always going to be the group health plan so he will spend most of his time on that; there has also been a lot of back and forth on compensation, recruiting, and retention which is the other 500 pound gorilla; and he will touch on that one as well. He went on to say the County has been in the group health insurance business for 20 years; that is a lot of experience and a lot of expertise developed over time; the County has been able to minimize the impact on employees compensation by managing as aggressively as they have been the group health plan; to look at just the last four years there have been zero premium increases on employees; and over that same period of time they have reduced the employer contribution by 12 percent. He added it would be hard-pressed to find a lot of health plans out there in the world that can make similar claims; he is very proud of that; he wants to continue that momentum going forward; there has been a lot of conversation about looking forward, not the immediate future, but the years off into the future; and the County is trying to do the same thing, it is the desire to keep moving forward discussing what the future impacts of the health plan will be, not just this year 2020 but in 2021. He stated the County finished up 2019 with just over \$55 million a year health plan and ended up about \$1.4 million in the hole; for an example of how volatile health care is, the County was running pretty well flat through the year and lost the \$1.4 million in the last two weeks of December, that is how quickly it can turn; with that said the County is still in a very healthy place, holding over a \$35 million reserve right now; that is being held against a statutory requirement for a required runoff of \$12.4 million and the Government Accountability Standard Bureau (GASB75) liability post-employment benefit, it is the projected cost of retiree health care; and they have the funding to meet all of those obligations and he is pretty proud of that. He continued by saying he wants to show the Board the projections going forward; if the County does nothing today and maintains its current plan design, the current premium structures, based on the actuary assumptions over conservatively, using only a four percent medical trend the County would be looking at and over \$3.5 million shortfall by the end of this year, with almost \$6 million shortfall at the end of 2021; this is telling the Board if it is serious about staying ahead of the curve the County needs to do things now; and in response to that one of the things they are doing is they have put forward a Request for Proposal (RFP) for this year. He noted he would like to talk quickly about that; the county's group health plan agreements expire at the end of 2020, which is the end of the five year life cycle; there is an RFP on the street as of right now; Monday this week there is a pre-bid conference with those vendors coming in; the County is well along in that process; their hopes are they are able to get that RFP completed and have decisions from the insurance committee to the Board either by the last meeting in May or the first meeting in July, depending on how the interviews go and what kind of responses they will get from the health care community; what they are thinking they need to do to stay ahead of the curve is they are contemplating the need to reset the plan designs and/or the premium structure to make those adjustments in 2021 so the County can keep its cost relatively more receptive to the employees, less expensive than they have been or could be if the County just maintains its status quo; and they have explored several options and he will share with them shortly. He added ultimately they are going to ask the market place to give them their best shot at what are all those market place alternatives.

Chair Lober inquired if Mr. Visco is talking about how the County advertises them or how they are made available to folks or if he is talking about reducing the number of options that are available.

Mr. Visco stated they are taking all of that into consideration; the first part of the conversation is to minimize the number of options available because the feedback being received from the field



is that is too much choice; he responds to them that they have asked for choices over the years so he gives a lot of choices; he commented he will see if they cannot ratchet that back maybe a little bit and make the selection process a little simpler; they focus on those products that have the best return and provide the best coverage for the County; and he mentioned they are also going to look at how they simplify the design so that the access to the coverage and ultimately how they figure the cost of those coverages are a lot more easily understood by everyone because this gets to be real complicated. He mentioned last time anybody looked at the explanation of benefits it is almost rocket science and it needs to get better. He went on to say staff has gone to the Insurance Advisory Committee with several recommendations; there has been some feedback on the scope of work and the RFP which is already on the street; the committee suggested they separately solicit medical options, combination medical, and Pharmacy Benefit Management (PBM) options; he likes the combination of medical and PBM having all of the medical and pharmacy data in one place with one carrier because it gives them a lot of actionable data they can work on; they are going to require whoever provides the County the PBM services can extend those services, like the County has today, from the single PBM to everybody in the County program regardless of which health plan they enroll in; and he wants to continue that process. He continued to say they have talked about the plan simplification and the committee was saying to consider the number of options but maintain the competitive model; that is something staff is very key on, they want to be able to have those options and not fall into a trap where people are subject to the direction of particular hospital systems or health plans might take that would be adverse to them; he wants options so the County can take care of its people in those situations; one of the other plan design options was to create that core or base plan and then buy up options; and they will explore all of that through the RFP process. He stated they have talked about the option of maybe doing something different with the Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs); today the HRA is tied to a particular health plan and it only covers the expenses related to the plan; the consultants are advising that they have the ability to possibly separate the HRA from the health plan; it looks very similar to a flexible spending account; once that is done, it opens a door that now allows those HRA dollars to be used in lots of other places beyond just what is immediately inside the health plan so they can, in effect, improve the buying power of the workforce by breaking the HRA away from the Group Health Plan; and financially that is something they are interested in and they will explore aggressively. He noted the committee asked staff to look at the over-age dependent situation; Federal Laws require them to cover dependents to age 26; State Law requires them to provide coverage from age 27 to 30; the County has been doing that for quite some time and they have been treating those 27 to 30 year olds as dependent children; and there has really been no additional premium assigned to that. He added that has not really been working out for the County financially because they are generating adult level expenses and he feels like those should have adult level premiums to support that; the committee evaluated that and they were not comfortable going as far as a full adult premium and asked staff to look at the possibility of surcharges for over-age dependents similar to the surcharge the County has for working spouses; that is an option they will be looking at as well; and it is not a lot of revenue but it does start to erode that subsidy gap from where the County is today and ultimately where it would need to be. He mentioned they have explored the opportunity of moving it to narrow networks; today the County has a contract with urgent cares so when its people go to an urgent care it charges them a \$30 co-pay and the County picks up the difference; he likes those notions; and staff is looking at opportunities to expand that to diagnostic imaging, potentially out-patient surgical centers, and they are looking at opportunities to partner with schools so maybe they can go together with additional lives on that.

Chair Lober inquired if that is contemplated as applying as well on the PPO side or just on the HRA.

Mr. Visco responded absolutely, it would be across the Board. He went on to say those would almost behave as they were outside the health plan; they could just be set up as simple co-pay as opposed to something where people would have to meet their deductibles in order to obtain; speaking of deductibles, the County has been in a tier deductible program for a while so they are going to relook at the necessity to stay in that tier deductible where they take that upfront \$250 and then the deductible on the back end; if they decide to do that however he would caution everybody if there were reduced deductibles in the future, then he thinks they also need to have a corresponding deduction in HRA credits because he does not want to be in a position where HRAs are funded in excess of what out-of-pocket deductibles would be; and all of those are the significant Group Health Plans that staff is going to wrestle with. He noted they hope to bring a plan where the County can continue to maintain the rate structure that people are currently enjoying. He stated now for recruiting and retention, the County Manager mentioned early on the Evergreen studies that were done about a year and half ago, 94 classifications were evaluated, 24 counties, and 26 cities were in the comparison; the broad stroke results of that show Brevard County is about 10.7 percent average salary below the average minimums of those other surveyed organizations; 40 of Brevard County's classifications were greater than 10 percent below the midpoints; the County knows where it is at competitively and these are issues that have to be addressed; and he noted the County has made several Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) over the last couple of years to continue to erode at that. He stated the County Manager has already suggested to the Board that it is looking to do another two percent this year; those are things that are going to help with the retention; there are still gaps that have to be closed but the County is wrestling with its financial realities of what can be done and how fast it can be done; they will be making those efforts; Utilities spoke about career ladders; and as an organization the County has created 23 career ladders and there is another 15 underway. He commented career ladders are another great way to retain talent that have acquired skills over the years that have created value for the organization; instead of having somebody locked into a flat position as a Mechanic they can now have a Mechanic I, Mechanic II, III, and IV and people can be paid on the skills they have acquired to add value to the organization; he sees that as a tremendous tool for the County to continue working with; and recruiting is a huge issue. He advised there is 2.8 percent unemployment and that is a tough market to recruit in; the County is doing a lot of things to get there; the County is actually recruiting right now for a recruiter; they are going to bring somebody on staff full time to put a lot of energy into how to fill vacancies; and they have hired a volunteer coordinator so he or she can handle some issues there as well. He continued they have responded to the Citizens Budget Review Committee recommendations that were made during the course of the year; one of those recommendations was to expand internship programs in high schools and college students, and hire seniors to fill vacancies; the County is doing something in all of those areas and very aggressively now; the County has a contract with a group called Employ You who is working with the schools to place all types of students; they are willing to place students on the spectrum from special needs to gifted; and there has been some success in taking those students and placing them into workplace operations for the County. He added the County has a subscription service with a group called Local Job Network that takes the County's vacancies and provides targeted recruiting into key areas for the County and include agencies that specializes in placing female candidates, minority candidates, and veterans; the County is getting much more aggressive in that end of the recruiting than in years past; they have developed relationships and partnerships for recruiting pipelines with community-based organizations, like Bridges, to place some of those clients; there are relationships established with the universities systems, UCF in Orlando, Eastern Florida, and FIT; they have reached out to Patrick Air Force Base; they want to get to those transitional service members who are leaving military servicing and have them come to the County in critical areas; and they work extensively with CareerSource Brevard in their community work experience program and in partnership with AARP Program that helps place seniors in the County's workforce, and with

subsidies from CareerSource so it is not completely out of the County's pocket. He reiterated the County is responding to those recommendations; they are going after the kids and the seniors; he has had communications with the School Board members and he will be invited to their industry days; he will get into the high schools where they have their certification programs to get face to face with the career educators and those students to show them there are opportunities for employment with the County; they will place people with Utility Services out of these programs; there are five or six certification programs that are directly related to what the County does; and he is very excited about those opportunities. He noted what his priorities have been is group health affordability and sustainability in filling those vacancies; hopefully they are on the right road; and the Board will see more of that as the County moves forward in this year's budget.

## **Transit Services**

Jim Liesenfelt, Assistant County Manager, stated for an update on the shelters, when the TPO did the bus stop and bus shelter study in 2018 there were 66 shelters in the County; in 2019 there were 81 shelters; Transit Services is in the process right now of building 14 more shelters; and at the end of 2020 there would be 95 shelters built which is an increase of 40 to 45 percent for shelters across the County. He added Transit Services has budgeted for about the same amount for the next fiscal year. He mentioned when FDOT does the reconstruction and rehabilitation they will go out and build bus pads; the next one they are working on is Merritt Island on S.R. 520; therefore, above and beyond the shelters there are pads going up. Transit Services is also in discussions in the County Attorney's Office with two different bus bench companies about placing bus benches; there is a permitting process; and it is honestly going to take a while for full ADA compliance and he needs to talk about that. He added there are somewhere in the neighborhood of 340 bus benches out there; 40 to 45 percent of the bus stops which is about 950 across the County, have shelters or benches; there are a number of other ones getting pads put in place; they have done a pretty nice job; and he pointed out a lot of the shelters that were built were the easier ones so the ones Transit Services is focused on now are a little more comprehensive. He noted it is not just putting the shelter in the ground, it has to be engineered, if there is not an accessible path one needs to be built, and even with the Merritt Island Library the crown of the roadway is higher than the sidewalk so they have to work with the slope; and that is what they are working on. He mentioned last year the Board decided to fund two additional paratransit routes so paratransit has brought route expansion; this slide is in priority order; Transit has to put together a 10-year plan for Transit planning needs; and these are the next expansion areas in terms of priority. He noted it says central Titusville but more accurately would be center Titusville; the main route up there is mainly around the perimeter of Titusville so it misses DeLeon and Barna Avenue; there are a lot of customer request up there that models pretty well for a transit market; in comparison of population Cocoa/Rockledge have just about the same amount of people as Titusville; Cocoa/Rockledge has five different routes served by nine busses; and Titusville has three routes served by four busses. He continued by saying in terms of service coverage and hours Titusville is underfunded so that would be the first priority; South Beach Connector, Route 26, operated from 12th street in Cocoa Beach all the way down A1A to 192 to the Melbourne airport, and the bus comes by every two hours; that is pretty poor service; and over the years Transit has not figured out how to make it better because the only real way to make it better is by adding another bus route to it; and the idea there is to add a second bus to it and make it two separate routes by keeping one on the beach up and down A1A then put one on the mainland and make some kind of connection across the causeway. He stated headway is the term of how often a bus comes by so it would be reducing the headway from two hours down to one hour; there is one other route that is above an hour but every other route in the system they have been able to get to one hour or less, so this one really needs to be worked on; and lastly is Port St. John

where the only service in the area is up and down U.S. 1 with no service around west of U.S. 1. He noted honestly that would be a little more service area as to ridership; there is not a whole lot of commercial there; 10 years ago they modeled Grissom Boulevard, it modeled pretty well but he is not sure if that was the connections in Cocoa and Rockledge or just Port St. John; there are a lot of people who move out to U.S. 1 to get to the bus route, especially the Camp Road area so that would help as a service area; it would help quite a bit with the route up and down U.S. 1 because it is a little heavily used and it takes time to board everybody; and it would disburse the ridership a little bit and run a little better on time. He mentioned on the South Beach route, with all the discussion on the crosswalks and lowering the speed limit, that affects the busses too; he was playing around with that a little bit too; to lower the speed limit from 45 to 35 means that route is going to cost it 15 to 20 minutes a day; and when trying to operate loops every hour or every two hours, that would actually kick into a second route or they would have to cut out some of the service area. He stated Scott Nelson, Transit Services Director, has been talking with FDOT, FDOT has what they call service development program where they will fund up to 50 percent of the costs minus the fare box for mostly two years, sometimes one; Mr. Nelson has been lobbying; they have funding available for 2021; it is competitive but they were given some pretty good news; if the Board is interested it can give heads up and they can put together a grant application for the Board to review; and he mentioned if FDOT funds it, the funds will be available in 2021. He continued by saying honestly it would take Mr. Nelson a little bit of time to accrue; and it works with expansion busses versus replacement so they have to make sure they have the proper equipment and get the people hired.

Chair Lober asked if Mr. Liesenfelt would like a motion for that.

Mr. Liesenfelt responded affirmatively.

Chair Lober asked how he would want the motion phrased.

Mr. Liesenfelt responded that is up to the Board on how many it wants to apply for either one, two, or three routes; staff's recommendation is that is the priority of the recommendation for the service.

Chair Lober inquired if he thought it would not take much time to put the grant application together.

Mr. Liesenfelt stated if the timetable is still the same as when he was there, they will have to get it to FDOT by April; he knows it is crazy being 15 months before the money shows up; however, they have to put it in their five-year plan so they would be coming to the Board in March or April.

The Board directed staff to prepare the grant applications to accommodate the Central Titusville, South Beach Connector, and Port St. John Routes.

**Result:** Approved

**Mover:** Rita Pritchett

**Second:** Bryan Lober

**Ayes:** Pritchett, Lober, Smith, and Isnardi

**Absent:** Tobia

### III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Fusscas stated he would like to address the staff budgets of the Board of County

Commissioners; they are unequal and in spite of the fact that all of the duties and responsibilities of the Commissioners are the same; this has been a contentious problem in the past for as long as he can remember; and he thinks it is probably time to revise that policy. He noted currently each Districts staff budget varies, there are five different budgeted amounts for various reasons, and in his opinion each District should have the same budgeted amounts given the same duties and responsibilities that the Board members share; the problem is two-fold, County staff works for the Board of County Commissioners and should not be burdened with arbitrating different budget amounts between the staff budgets for the people they work for; and secondly staff should not have control or determine the individual Commissioners personnel budget. He added oversight according to law yes, amount no, and this should not be a County government responsibility. He went on to say it is like the tail wagging the dog and financial control is on the wrong end of the dog; in order to limit these exceptions, the Board should consider an ordinance or a charter review; he would like to bring this before the Budget Review Committee this year; and he respectfully requests the Board consider this in its budget deliberations. He noted he really thinks because it has been so contentious in the past that it is probably time to have new policy and he would appreciate the Board's consideration.

Chair Lober stated he looked at this pretty in depth prior to starting in November; what he saw at the time, and he may be wrong, or things may have changed since then, but at the time he believes every other Commissioner had three full-time staff; he thought, while he understands that some view it as a full time job and some view it as a part-time job, but if he is serious about serving as a Commissioner he does not need three full-time staff; he would rather hire and compensate more fairly two full time staff and one part time to save on the benefits part-time and be able to treat everyone a little bit better; and frankly he liked having that flexibility. He went on to say he understands that at least for most individuals it is viewed as a part time job in which case three full time staff is probably appropriate; he reiterated he likes having that flexibility; he does not have a problem with having the amounts set identically for each of the Districts; however he does have a concern if someone were to say that there is a capping or a floor for salaries because people have a different view of what is appropriate in terms of their own time; he does not mind spending more time than other Commissioners may but he does not want to be penalized for spending more of his time in the position which allows him to treat his employees perhaps a little differently by making the modification that he mentioned; and he does not know how the other Commissioners feel but that is where he is at.

Commissioner Pritchett when she took over she kept the same budget that she was given; she moved around with people so if they had longer skills they received more; that is how she regulated the funds; she thinks everyone did that; Chair Lober moved funds around the same way; and maybe if the Commissioners were going to raise their budgets more than a certain percentage then maybe the Board should come back and have a discussion. She mentioned she thinks the Board has been pretty responsible so far; maybe one of the Commissions before it may have been a discussion; she has another job and if she did not she could not afford to do this job; not that she is complaining but she has to have more income; therefore, she has to have a staff that knows what they are doing. She commented her staff gets calls on roads and all kinds of items; that is the first level they get, then they move to the County staff; they are doing a great job and have been able to get her some great resources and information so that she can do this job the best that she can; she would guess the other Commissioners have the same thing; and she does not know if she pays them enough considering all the pressure that she puts on them and what they do to serve in their capacity for her District; she would not mind having that conversation if the Board wants to; maybe if the Board goes over a certain amount then it could be done; and she noted what happens as soon as the Commissioner raises one employees wages then the rest of the Chief of Staff are going to think they are not

loved and not being paid that amount; she thinks it is leveled out at this point; and that is her in-put on this.

Commissioner Isnardi stated with each Commissioner in each District, each role is unique; Chair Lober may have a staffer who is required to do X, Y, and Z versus somebody else; one of her staffers has been with the County for several years before she went to work with Commissioner Anderson before her; there has to be some value to that rather than to say her job title is worth a certain amount; the Board's budget is all approved by the Board so they are not only accountable to the Board they are also accountable to the people they represent in their specific Districts, the taxpayers; and the Commissioners' budgets are available, it is not hidden, it is not anything that was snuck into the County Manager for approval, it has to come before the Board. She added any adjustments to that budget has to be brought before the Board; if someone does not like the budget or what the Board is paying its employees then that is something it is accountable for; she can easily say and with full justification that her staff, she tries to take care of them but, they are not overcompensated; and they are compensated for the job they do based on their experience, degrees, etcetera.

Mr. Fusscas commented that is very good and he appreciates what Commissioner Isnardi is saying but when he was in the Legislature each Representative had their own budget; and each budget was the same except for leadership.

Commissioner Isnardi advised on the flip side of that if there was somebody that was not worth X amount of dollars and somebody's cap was say \$350, she is just going to go bump up each one of her employees to that just because that is the cap; and essentially it could go both ways.

Mr. Fusscas commented he is not sure that he would have appreciated anyone telling him how to spend his personnel, who to hire, and what to pay; and he had a lot of interns and a lot of free people working on his behalf.

Commissioner Isnardi stated she would not even be opposed to a cap but as far as set positions with set salaries, it cannot happen because people have longevity; she reiterated she has a long time County employee that was making far less than some of her equivalence; and she asked what Mr. Fusscas would do at that point.

Mr. Fusscas responded the cap is only for the current Fiscal Year; the next Fiscal Year the Commissioner can either raise it, lower it, or however she wants to do it.

Commissioner Isnardi stated that almost makes the rules arbitrary, someone could just come in and request an adjustment; she noted she appreciates what Mr. Fusscas is doing; she does not have a problem with it; she is just stating it could easily be changed with future commissions; and his efforts and intentions could be for nothing.

Chair Lober stated one of the other things is in his office one of the things he uses Fritz for relies on the fact that he does have a JED and he has practiced law longer than he himself has practiced law; he knows Ms. Bentley, County Attorney, and her office are probably tired of all the emails and communications he has with them; he thinks there was something that came out in response to a public records request that showed he had more emails with Ms. Bentley than every other Commissioner combined; however, it would be even worse than that if he did not have someone else who was licensed to practice law right in the office. He continued by saying that is not to say that he has used his in house counsel on a daily basis but there are a lot of things that he will run by Fritz and if he did not have him there in that capacity he would have to run by the County Attorney's Office; with the compensation he would just echo what

has been said in the terms that he is not fond of limiting it to the particular positions; he thinks, as Commissioner Isnardi said, if there is a cap that is set for the office as a whole, he can see that being reasonable; and he would like to be able to work within that cap in a way that fits his schedule with the people he trusts to work in the office.

Mr. Fusscas stated that is the objective of the recommendation; he believes each Commissioner's budget should be equal and within that cap the Commissioner can spend it any way he or she chooses; each Commissioner could hire one person, two people, three people, or five it does not make any difference; however, the Commissioner Districts should be equal not only in position and responsibility, but in the budget.

Commissioner Lober stated if that is what is being asked for, and he apologized if he misunderstood, he could support something like that if someone wants to bring a motion; he would like to have a conversation with the Human Resources Director, Mr. Visco, to hammer out some concerns, some of which occur to him now and some of which may occur while he processes this a little bit more; he is not opposed to that; and he thinks it is an interesting idea.

Commissioner Smith stated when he was elected he was told by the County Manager at the time, Stockton Whitten, that he had \$150,000 budget for his office; he could hire anyone he wanted as Mr. Fusscas is saying; if he had three people he could pay one \$50,000 or he could pay all three \$50,000, but he could not go over \$150,000; he could pay one person \$100,000 and the other two \$25,000 a piece, it was his call; he has worked on that over the five years he has been in office; and he gives his people raises accordingly while trying to keep them within a specified number.

Commissioner Pritchett stated each Commissioner inherits a budget that is approved by the Board; when a Commissioner wants to change, it goes up; like Commissioner Isnardi said it comes up in the next budget cycle and the Board has to vote on the increase; otherwise they are operating within it; one thing that happened in her office is she had a girl that left in December and she has not even tried to hire because they are entering into the slow season; and she figured she would try to save a little bit of funds until she needs to build up when they start working towards the budgets and stuff. She commented she thinks she understands what Mr. Fusscas is saying but she does not know how the rest of the Board feels or if they have needs, but she thinks they are pretty frugal; and with this group she feels good unless there needs to be some changes in differences, she is not real sure; she thinks they are all very aware of what each other is doing because they are all accountable to one another; and she thinks that answers the question. She explained the Board has a current year budget and if someone tries to up that it has to come through the budget process and the Board will vote on it.

Mr. Fusscas commented that is as it should be; the disparity currently goes from \$314,000 to \$345,000; what he is saying is it should be the same; if it is done on the low end some Districts are going to have to cut personnel or reduce salaries or it is made that everybody gets \$345,000.

Commissioner Pritchett stated maybe some people do not go in their offices as much and do not spend as much time as others.

Mr. Fusscas noted that is fine then they do not have to spend their money.

Commissioner Pritchett agreed and noted they could bring it up and say they need more funding or just quit spending as much money because they do not need as much funding; she

thinks for the elected officials they are the ones who need to figure that out; she would guess there is a balance going across; from what she has seen no one has broken the budget they were given; and most people are under the budget they were given at the time.


Chair Lober stated another question that comes along with that is whether that number includes benefits because part of the reason he picked someone to work part-time was so he would have more flexibility without the five digit benefit cost associated with the person who already had benefits through their spouse; he does not know if that number includes it or not; and he would definitely want to make sure whatever was proposed would be apples to apples so that it includes the benefit numbers when it is an actual real cost to the County.


Mr. Fusscas advised he has been associated with the County now for 10 or 12 years and this is the best Board of County Commissioners that he has ever experienced; this Board thinks out of the box, it discusses things, it shares its experience, and it has great leadership in the County; if six states had this Board running it, they would not be bankrupt; and he noted he thinks they are doing a great job.

Chair Lober commented he is going to ask Mr. Fusscas to come back when Commissioner Tobia is in attendance so he can repeat that.

Upon consensus of the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
SCOTT ELLIS, CLERK

  
BRYAN LOBER, CHAIR  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Approved by the Board May 5, 2020.



## Kimberly Powell

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**From:** Kimberly Powell  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2020 3:59 PM  
**To:** Commissioner District 1; Commissioner District 2; Commissioner District 3; Commissioner District 4; Commissioner District 5; Eden Bentley; Sally Lewis  
**Subject:** 02-20-2020 Workshop Draft  
**Attachments:** 02-20-2020 Workshop Draft.rtf

All,

Attached are the draft minutes from the February 20, 2020 Workshop, to be considered by the Board on May 5, 2020.

If there are any changes to be made please let me know prior to the meeting date.

Thank You,

Kimberly Powell  
Clerk to the Board  
(321) 637-2001  
[Kimberly.powell@brevardclerk.us](mailto:Kimberly.powell@brevardclerk.us)

