

**FINAL**  
**BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
City of Fort Lauderdale  
100 North Andrews Avenue  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33301  
May 27, 2010 - 6:00 p.m.

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Keith Cobb, Chair	P
June Page, Vice Chair	P
Bud Bentley [6:22]	P
Marc Dickerman	P
Nadine Hankerson	A
Sam Monroe	A
Fred Nesbitt	P
Alan Silva [6:07]	P
Anthony Timiraos	P
Ray Williams	P

**City Staff**

Norm Mason, Staff Liaison, Assistant Budget Director  
Shonda Singleton-Taylor, Acting Director, Office of Management & Budget  
Phil Thornburg, Director, Parks and Recreation  
Terry Rynard, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation  
Kim Clifford, Parks and Recreation Budget Analyst  
J. Opperlee, ProtoType Services

**Communications to the City Commission**

None

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Chair Cobb called the meeting of the Budget Advisory Board to order at 6:04 p.m.

**2. Discussion of Parks and Recreation Activity Based Presentation**

Ms. Page asked how Park Rangers were different from Police. Mr. Thornburg explained that Rangers provided “preventive maintenance” such as helping with the homeless, soccer moms and enforcement of park rules. They also ensured that the

restrooms were open, and monitored areas where fights among kids were likely to break out. In the evening, the Rangers monitored activities and then locked facilities down and shut the lights. Rangers were capable of issuing parking citations, and if an issue escalated sufficiently, they would call the Police.

Ms. Rynard referred to the information the Board had been provided and stated the Rangers had responded to 4,700 incidents last year. She noted the savings in potential Police calls this represented. Ms. Rynard informed Mr. Dickerman that there was a phone number residents could call to report an incident and request a Ranger respond.

Mr. Williams remembered discussing potential overlap with other City departments at their last meeting, and asked Mr. Thornburg if he had investigated this. Mr. Thornburg said this was something they would look at operationally and noted that Parks and Recreation and Public Works worked very closely. He said they had discussed getting together to determine how they could become more efficient.

Mr. Silva asked about meters located near parks. Mr. Thornburg stated they used to have an employee collect an entrance fee at Snyder Park but now they used an old parking meter. Mr. Silva asked if they could find a way to charge for parking that would help cover the cost of park/beach operations and maintenance. Mr. Thornburg said charging for parking, and determining where revenue collected from parking was distributed, was a policy decision. Mr. Thornburg thought the City Commission would soon be considering user fees and he felt there were areas they could increase the fees. He said they must be careful of their "tipping point" because there was competition in the private sector.

Mr. Williams asked if Mr. Thornburg had "a thought in mind of how you're going to get input to the value of your programs" if the Commission determined that cuts must be made to programs. Mr. Thornburg stated they did not yet know what their budget number was, so they had not started to consider cuts yet. Mr. Williams remarked it was possible to set priorities prior to knowing the budget.

Mr. Williams noted the Commission worried about the public's priorities, and he felt Parks and Recreation was very close to the people they served and asked if they felt comfortable setting priorities they believed matched the residents'. Ms. Rynard felt comfortable explaining programs, their costs, and the impact of eliminating them, but thought the priorities were a matter of policy.

Ms. Page asked about savings from cutting back on maintenance. Ms. Rynard explained that they had lost 25 positions in maintenance this year and the time between

scheduled maintenance of parks and medians had been increased. They believed this change had an impact on the City's aesthetics, but not on residents' safety.

Mr. Silva asked if the new parks coming online could be "low or no maintenance." Ms. Rynard said the new parks were all passive and would have no athletic fields. Regarding medians, Ms. Rynard said the City hated to say no if the State was willing to develop a new median. Mr. Thornburg said median design and maintenance were policy decisions.

Mr. Bentley said there had been discussion of gating parks. He said he would be interested to know how much revenue they could generate using meters. Mr. Thornburg said if the Commission wished to generate revenue, he felt the meters were a good idea.

Mr. Williams asked if they had considered outsourcing some of their activities and support services, such as maintenance. Ms. Rynard said she had re-calculated costs for mowing, and having City personnel perform this task was less expensive than outsourcing. She reminded the Board that there were other advantages to utilizing City employees: flexibility, a sense of ownership and the ability to shift resources as needed. Ms. Rynard was confident in declaring that costs to utilize City employees were competitive.

Mr. Silva asked if they had considered outsourcing Park Police to Wackenhut and contracting out recreation activities. Mr. Thornburg said they already contracted out a lot of programming in recreation. He was not a fan of utilizing Wackenhut because this would not provide the personal involvement and knowledge the Rangers offered. Mr. Thornburg stated Wackenhut was fine if there was no public interaction, but this was a big part of what their Rangers did.

### **3. Budget Staff:**

- **Clarification of Collective Bargaining Agreements/Board Discussion/Future Implications**

The City Manager was not present to address this.

Mr. Silva said the Board wanted to know what impediments the collective bargaining agreements impose on combining departments or reducing the work force.

Mr. Nesbitt had asked about the City's fee structure. The Commission had recently discussed fees for service and made a commitment to look at the fees and recovery

issues and to develop a methodology for adjusting fees. Mr. Nesbitt said currently, 80% of the revenue came from 20% of the fees.

Mr., Nesbitt had also asked about the \$12.5 million budget line item called "Other General Government." Ms. Singleton-Taylor explained some of the items covered in this line item included social contributions/donations, the salary increase for Police and Fire, retiree health benefits, the computer replacement plan, outside legal counsel and tuition reimbursement. Chair Cobb asked Ms. Singleton-Taylor to provide the Board with a detailed explanation of this budget item.

Mr. Williams asked if anyone had ever examined how outsourcing analyses were performed, especially regarding the residual costs of the Fire and Police contracts. Mr. Nesbitt said there had been disagreement regarding this and staff was supposed to refine a proposal for what was included and excluded in costing out a program.

#### **4. Board Discussions**

- **Quality Management/Quality Assurance proposal**

Ms. Page referred to a handout she had distributed and emailed titled Budgeting for Outcomes and Quality Management. This was one of the recommendations the Board had made the previous year that had never been acted upon. She requested feedback from Board members.

Ms. Page reminded the Board that the Community Services Department had been forced to return \$2 million to HUD because they had never followed through to measure the success of a program. She said the City should have a measure for outcomes of all of the top programs the City offered.

Mr. Nesbitt said he would like to allow for more input from employees regarding better ways to do their jobs and make them more efficient. Ms. Page stated this was a different issue. Mr. Nesbitt felt it worked in tandem with quality management.

Chair Cobb felt this should be a top specification for the new City Manager. Mr. Nesbitt believed the Commission was more inclined to act when the Board made very specific recommendations.

Chair Cobb said they had learned from the presentations that the type of management process Ms. Page's handout described was not currently in place. Mr. Williams said this should be a criterion for the new City Manager. Mr. Williams suggested the Board could edit this document at their next meeting and send it to the City Commission as a recommendation to add to the selection process for the new City Manager.

Mr. Silva suggested the Commission should seek a new City Manager who would implement performance-based budgeting.

- **Incentives for Counter Government Waste**

Mr. Williams said they must develop a better way to incentivize City employees to improve productivity. Mr. Nesbitt said they were working on this, but one huge flaw was that the fact that the only way an employee received a financial incentive was to make a recommendation for another department. The current plan also did not allow for a group of employees to work together on a concept.

Mr. Silva stated the ICMA had a wealth of information on these types of programs throughout the United States that they could use as a model.

#### Other Discussion Items

Mr. Nesbitt said the Board had a question about Business Enterprise funds. At a Commission meeting, Ms. Singleton-Taylor had explained that some programs, such as the Aquatic Center, were losing money and perhaps the City should look at this. Vice Mayor Rogers had indicated he felt they should not undertake any new capital improvements. Mr. Silva stated CIPs were normally financed every year, but the City had chosen not to finance them this year. He said not financing the CIPs for two years led to problems because there might not be enough money in the pipeline for existing projects.

Mr. Bentley wanted to discuss how they would evaluate the budget recommendation when it became available.

Chair Cobb said there had been a request for clarification on the NGIF on the budget policy. Mr. Silva said staff was supposed to re-write the part that dealt with their concerns and the Board was going to review it and give their suggestions because this was the one part of the budget policy that was still outstanding. Ms. Singleton-Taylor said they were working on this. She recommended discussing this at the next meeting. Mr. Silva said they wanted to have an idea whether or not they were on target with revenues that would allow them to make needed corrections. Mr. Nesbitt said the Commission understood all of this; it was just a matter of getting the wording to explain it.

Ms. Singleton-Taylor said they monitored the budget on a monthly basis and staff presented a monthly financial report that included where they were at a point in time and where they had been the previous year, which gave an indication of where they

should be. She stated they had agreed with the Commission on this but it was a matter of fine-tuning the language. Mr. Bentley suggested staff could deal with this after the budget was complete. Mr. Williams remembered the City Manager was concerned about the wording, and they should ask him for a recommendation.

Mr. Bentley said one approach the Board could take after the budget was issued was to “stay at the big picture” and see how much of the reserves were being consumed. If this was an acceptable amount they could “not deal with the service levels or the mix between departments.” Alternately, the Board could “understand how the budget’s been adjusted, what programs are being suggested to be reduced and cut back...and to see how much of it’s smoke and mirrors and how much are true reductions, how much are... one-time money being spent to cover ongoing expenditures.” Chair Cobb said he would rather not deal with departments’ line item budgets.

Mr. Silva said after listening to the recording of the City Commission meeting, he remembered that a year ago, everyone agreed that they would not use reserves and now it seemed “everyone is all of a sudden getting back into the idea of we’re going to use the reserves again.” He was concerned because using reserves would get them to an unsustainable point over the long term.

The Board discussed a date for their July meeting and decided to keep the July 21 date.

Mr. Bentley suggested they wait until the budget came out to start the analysis.

## **5. Communication to the Commission**

None

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at **7:57** p.m.

**Next meeting:** June 16, 2010

[Minutes prepared by J. Opperlee, Prototype, Inc.]