

MEETING: BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, VISIONING

A. CALL TO ORDER: February 13, 2001, at 9:47 a.m., in the Okeeheelee Park Nature Center, Palm Beach County, Florida.

A.1. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS AND OFFICERS PRESENT:

Chair Warren H. Newell
Vice-Chair Carol A. Roberts
Commissioner Burt Aaronson
Commissioner Addie L. Greene
Commissioner Mary McCarty
Commissioner Karen T. Marcus
Commissioner Tony Masilotti
County Administrator Robert Weisman
Deputy Clerk Carl Zettelmeier

B. INTRODUCTION

C. BUDGET

C.1.

FIVE-YEAR HISTORICAL AND FUTURE OUTLOOK OF BUDGET (LEVEL OF SERVICES, STAFFING, CONTINGENCY RESERVES, ETC.). DISCUSSED WITH DIRECTION 2-13-2001

County Administrator Weisman introduced the budget topics, reporting that the millage rate of 4.60 mils has been maintained for fiscal year 2001, and indications are that it will continue unchanged for another two years. Projections suggest that, for Fiscal Year 2004, the millage rate will need to be increased to 4.90, he said. Mr. Weisman said staff did not anticipate any changes involving the Library Department and would discuss the Fire-Rescue Department later in the morning. Projections for growth in the number of county employees, Mr. Weisman continued, mirror the county's rate of population growth.

The outstanding growth in property tax and other revenues had to be set off against uncertainties involving state funding. At this point, Mr. Weisman said, there was no way to determine what changes the state might make and what the impact of those changes might be on the county. As an example he cited the loss of intangibles tax revenues, the cost of unfunded mandates, and yet further cuts in revenue.

The Parks and Recreation Department and the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office both played a large role in driving the budget upward, Mr. Weisman said. The sheriff's budget alone accounted for more than half of the annual increase in the county's operating budget. The capital budget was also critical, he continued, since it funds such items as computer needs, improvements to facilities, and construction of infrastructure. The election matter, he assured the board, was not a significant factor in the budget. The estimates ranged from \$6 million - 12 million over two years to install optical scanning or touch-screen voting. Funding for these changes would come from either the general budget or short-term financing. The impact for financing these costs would run to about \$1 million per year and did not require a great deal of the board's attention, he continued.

C.1. - CONTINUED

The larger issues - economic development, Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) funding, and future mass transit costs - were the issues to consider at this meeting, Mr. Weisman observed. The county had not allocated significant funds to either economic development or CCRT activities over the past few years, he continued, though the board had provided \$3 million to Palm Tran, in addition to the taxes historically paid to that agency for the last six or seven years. Unless the costs for specialized transportation needs or gasoline increase significantly, Mr. Weisman predicted the county could hold mass transit spending at current levels.

Commissioner Masilotti asked whether consideration had been given to making the sheriff's office a municipal services taxing unit (MSTU) with a line item of its own in the budget and giving the sheriff control over ad valorem tax rates and total budget amounts. Such a change, he suggested, would allow the county to concentrate on services over which it has more actual control. Mr. Weisman said such a move had been considered in the past. In fact, he continued, Commissioner McCarty had recently requested a review of the board's options on that matter. Even with the change, Mr. Weisman said, the sheriff's budget amount would still be part of the county's cap, but the taxpayers could recognize the tax rate for the sheriff's budget as one set by that agency.

A second question asked by Commissioner Masilotti was whether, in making projections for the increases in fire protection, staff had used the cost of housing built in the past two years or had they used a more historical figure.

Richard Roberts, director of the Financial Management and Budget Department, responded that staff had used a lower, more conservative number for increases in the overall values of property in the county. The last couple of years had shown healthy increases in property values, he said, and the year-to-year increases in property values had gone up because of revaluations and new construction. It had been about 6 percent the last two or three years, Mr. Roberts added, so staff had used an increase of 5 percent.

Commissioner Masilotti asked whether there was a possibility of applying that factor to existing housing and then anticipating what the growth rate would be with the new property values. Mr. Roberts said that was possible, though he said the results would be the same as far as total overall increases were concerned. The question was whether this would affect the individual taxpayer. Mr. Weisman added that staff was concerned about the possible effect of a recession on revenues. Commissioner Newell reminded the board that it was once proposed that all the constitutional officers be placed on the tax bill as separate line items. Mr. Roberts suggested that there may be legal problems with such a listing. Commissioner McCarty said it would be a good idea to list the budgets of constitutional officers separately but there would be a problem with allocating the cap among all the entities. Commissioner Roberts said the question would have to be put to the voters.

Commissioner McCarty also expressed a need for the board to have information on the budget in terms of actual dollars received from property taxes rather than millage rates. Reporting figures in terms of dollar amounts would make it easier to track allocations of funds, she said. Mr. Weisman pointed out that the figures she requested were available.

C.1. - CONTINUED

Commissioner Marcus said it would be possible to use the tax-bill mailer to identify the portions of the budget allocated to the various constitutional officers. She recommended posting the revenues of each constitutional officer and including as well the amounts by which the county subsidized their budgets. Commissioner Marcus also expressed her concern about prioritizing county spending. She suggested tying levels of service to goals and then focusing spending accordingly. The example of the State of Maryland was a useful one to follow, she noted. There, the governor outlines spending plans and warns county and local government not to seek state aid for spending outside those guidelines.

Commissioner Aaronson said he did not see the gloom and doom that he was hearing expressed around him. The county had held the line on millage rates for six years (with a projection) when the original plan had called for five. The disadvantages facing the county included the 3 percent annual tax cap and the unfunded mandates forced on it by the state. Whether the constitutional officers are separated from the county, accountability rests with the board. The remedy, he suggested, is in being prudent, in prioritizing; and the way to accomplish that is to look at things in terms of levels of service. Without a tax cap, he said, it might be possible to lower taxes.

Commissioner Marcus suggested learning from the problems that the City of Orlando is now faced with. Orange County is now, much after the fact, having to identify funding for mass transit to reach already-constructed facilities such as its convention center. Better planning would have avoided this problem in Orlando and can avoid similar problems in the county, she said. Prioritizing community needs is the key to intelligent planning. Use such resources as the CCRT to improve communities and raise the tax base, she recommended.

Agreeing with the suggestion on CCRTs, Commissioner Roberts took it a step further and recommended promoting the annexation of revitalized areas by the municipalities. It was important to study the effect of annexations on the county budget. She also agreed that the tax bill mailing should break out the budgets of the constitutional officers.

Commissioner Masilotti asked whether staff had a definitive figure for the value of a home being constructed today if it is to recover through tax revenues the costs of operations and services provided by the county. Mr. Weisman said staff used an average figure in the \$140,000 range. Mr. Masilotti then asked whether it was fair to assume that, as long as new construction exceeded \$140,000 in value it would generate a surplus. Commissioner Aaronson challenged that figure, saying a figure of \$135,000 was for a house in the urban area; outside that area, the value would have to be \$350,000. Commissioner Marcus said not all the service costs were included in these calculations, and Commissioner Masilotti asked staff to recalculate them to make the value/cost-of-service calculation as inclusive as possible, breaking down the figures by costs per capita and per unit, with an average of 4.2 occupants, with and without a homestead exemption.

C.1. - CONTINUED

Mr. Weisman said the costs of services are very geographically specific but that staff would attempt once again to derive an average figure. Commissioner Marcus suggested that perhaps the consultant hired to perform full cost accounting could be asked to develop this average. Some discussion ensued about the difficulty of arriving at a single meaningful figure since countywide tax funds did not reflect total costs.

Commissioner Masilotti also agreed with the idea of breaking out the budget figures for constitutional officers, saying that, since the county could not control the spending of these entities, then each should at least be answerable directly to the public for those costs.

Commissioner Newell said there was a need to find ways to increase the existing tax base. Annexation, he observed, does not work productively in the county's system. Commissioner Roberts pointed out that an area in her district was being revitalized with the idea that the City of West Palm Beach would eventually annex it. Commissioner Newell maintained that annexation had never worked as well as it might have. Mr. Weisman said staff sees the CCRT system as the new tool that works toward this end.

Commissioner Marcus mentioned the governor's Commission on Growth Management, which allows counties to use gasoline tax monies to fund local infrastructure. Commissioner Masilotti asked whether it was legal for the county to set standards and conditions for annexation.

Commissioner Greene recommended providing incentives to builders who would work on urban redevelopment. Mr. Weisman said the county had been unsuccessful in offering incentives even for general redevelopment.

Commissioner McCarty raised the possibility of withholding recreation funds and beautification funds as leverage against those cities resistant to annexation. Commissioner Roberts insisted that the county needed to create incentives for the annexation issue as she had done in her district. Commissioner Newell pointed out that, because the residents can refuse to be annexed, the burden of persuading them lies with the cities, not the county.

Mr. Weisman cautioned that there were relatively few budget dollars available to allocate to these concerns, especially if there should be an economic downturn, in which case these very areas would be cut to meet other needs.

No backup submitted.

C.2.

SET BUDGET PRIORITIES (VOTING MACHINES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDING, CCRT FUNDING, MASS TRANSIT/SPECTRAN, BROWNFIELDS, ETC.).
DISCUSSED WITH DIRECTION 2-13-2001

County Administrator Weisman repeated his opinion that the issue of voting machines, with its \$1 million per year price tag, was a minor item. Commissioner Aaronson asked for an update on the sale of the old voting machines, and Mr. Weisman said a letter to the state was being drafted to obtain permission for this disposition. Commissioner Newell said the state was recommending that counties lease voting equipment for the 2002 and later elections. Mr. Weisman said staff could not understand the economics of that recommendation, and Commissioner Newell said he had voted against it. Mr. Newell explained that the state was not going to provide funds for these leases and, further, expected the technology would change within five years to a touch screen. Eventually, Commissioner Newell concluded, there would be a three-way funding split for the purchase of voting machines involving federal, state, and county sources.

Commissioner Aaronson said, given the lack of funding assistance, the county would be prudent to proceed on its own with the leasing of machines for the 2002 election. Mr. Weisman reminded the board of the role the supervisor of elections was empowered to play in selecting voting equipment. Commissioner Roberts pointed out that the state had not certified the touch screen because there is not a current possibility for a paper trail.

Commissioner Masilotti observed that there was no mention of hurricane shelters in this budget item. He requested a report on the shelters created within the last four years and an indication of where a need for shelters existed.

Commissioner Newell polled the board on continued funding for economic development. Commissioner Roberts urged its continuance, and Mr. Newell summarized his understanding of the board's position as favorable to retaining the \$1 million in funding and relying on reserves for additional worthy projects.

On the continued funding of the Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT), the board supported additional funding in that area. Mr. Weisman said any surpluses in the capital budget could be applied to CCRT efforts but priorities would be necessary. Commissioner Newell requested some indication of the impact on tax revenue of CCRT projects in a given area. He recommended contacting the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council for assistance in developing this cause/effect relationship.

Commissioner Newell also asked the board for its position on mass transit/Spectran funding. Commissioner Roberts suggested targeting areas in which service needed to be improved. Commissioner McCarty said the public needed to learn that mass transit would be provided within defined corridors. Those residents who must rely on mass transit would then move into those corridors. Commissioner Masilotti said there was a need for public education on the mass transit system. He said he was not willing to increase the budget for mass transit, however.

C.2. - CONTINUED

Both Commissioners Roberts and Aaronson indicated support for increased mass transit funding. Commissioner Roberts said additional planning was necessary, and Commissioner Aaronson called for an improved marketing effort involving mass transit. Commissioner McCarty approved an increase in mass transit funding but insisted that it be applied to the construction of shelters and to the posting of intelligible schedules. She recommended the creation of focus groups to inform the public on how to read bus schedules. Commissioner Greene seconded the emphasis on public education. Commissioner Aaronson recommended using a marketing strategy that would provide free bus passes for a limited time to encourage riders to try out the service. Commissioner Roberts called for an analysis by staff of where additional funding might best be applied.

Commissioner Newell said the county had not had success in the area of brownfield mitigation. Frank M. Duke, director of Planning, said he had earlier met with representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency and, as a result, had identified parties interested in the area of brownfield mitigation. Commissioner Roberts suggested a report from staff on what the board could afford to spend on brownfield mitigation and to identify that as one of the board's lower priority items.

As a final note on these items, Mr. Weisman pointed out that funding had gone to service delivery rather than to increasing the size of county government.

No backup submitted.

D. LEVELS OF SERVICE

D.1.

FIRE-RESCUE. DISCUSSED WITH DIRECTION 2-13-2001

County Administrator Weisman noted that in 2006 millage for Fire-Rescue was projected to rise from the current level of 3 mils to just short of 4 mils. This increase will occur, Mr. Weisman insisted, unless the board changes policies on Fire-Rescue or unless the economic projections developed by staff are entirely wrong. He reviewed an earlier report on the department's six-year plan by Fire-Rescue Administrator Herman W. Brice that predicted a 59 percent increase in Fire-Rescue costs in contrast to a 19 percent increase in population. The board would have to review its standards on response time, Mr. Weisman said, balancing off response time against the number of calls.

Turning to the Fire-Rescue union contract, Mr. Weisman reported on a calculation he had requested that revealed a paramedic with 10 years' service would earn \$60,000 by next summer, at the end of the current contract. Commissioner Newell pointed out that extending the projections beyond 2006 demonstrated an ever-increasing cost. He asked how costs could be controlled. Mr. Weisman said one consequence of this increase would be the withdrawal of cities from Fire-Rescue service contracts. He also said the board had to ask whether it would build fewer new stations and whether it would continue to be as generous as it is currently in future contract negotiations.

D.1. - CONTINUED

Commissioner Newell suggested holding the Fire-Rescue millage rate constant for the next several years as a policy decision. But, Commissioner Aaronson responded, this would affect response time. Building joint facilities with the sheriff's office would provide some savings, he then suggested.

Commissioner Masilotti speculated that equipping police vehicles with defibrillators might work to reduce response-related costs. Commissioner Marcus said it was important to determine what was driving up costs in each area of the budget. The initial focus should be on levels of service and quality of service, she suggested.

Commissioner McCarty said it would be important to determine what the county was willing to pay for the services of Fire-Rescue personnel. Commissioner Roberts recommended basing the budget on response time. She asked if there was a national average for levels of service. Steve Delai, battalion chief, said there was not one, though the National Fire Protection Association was in the process of developing such an average. Adopting such a standard might require the hiring of additional Fire-Rescue staff in order to comply, he cautioned.

Commissioner Aaronson asked what the average salary was in Florida for fire-rescue personnel in counties comparable in size to Palm Beach County. Assistant County Administrator Brad Merriman said the average was \$50,000. Commissioner Aaronson said he wanted to see figures from other counties relating salaries to response time. Commissioner Roberts requested a workshop on Fire-Rescue salary and response time issues, and Commissioner Newell asked County Administrator Weisman to arrange one. Commissioner McCarty said she wanted to see an end to the county's subsidies to municipal fire-rescue services.

No backup submitted.

D.2. MASS TRANSIT

(CLERK'S NOTE: Mass transit budget issues were discussed under item C.2. See pages 5-6.)

E. REDISTRICTING. DISCUSSED WITH DIRECTION 2-13-2001

Assistant County Administrator Verdenia C. Baker said the county had contracted with Florida Atlantic University and its Geographic Information System laboratory on the matter of redistricting. Commissioners Newell and McCarty insisted that the board be given the opportunity to provide input on the process at all stages. Commissioner McCarty pointed out that the School Board would be involved during this redistricting cycle and asked that consideration be given to its concerns. Dominic Sims, executive director of Planning, Zoning and Building, said involving the School board would affect the amount of the contract. Commissioner McCarty clarified her suggestion, saying that she wished staff, not the consultant, to be involved with the School Board.

Commissioner McCarty recommended considering the court cases since 1991 to ensure compliance with the law in the current redistricting effort. Ms. Baker said Assistant County Attorney Leonard Berger was working on the matter with administration.

E. - CONTINUED

Mr. Sims said staff would bring the choice of consultant before the board for approval on March 13, 2001, and return to the board for final adoption of the consultant's report by the middle of October. Mr. Weisman noted that census figures would not be available until some time in April.

No backup submitted.

F. PROTOCOL BETWEEN COMMISSION AND STAFF. DISCUSSED 2-13-2001

County Administrator Weisman welcomed telephone calls from board members to himself, his assistants, department heads, and, generally, division heads. He reminded the board that it was not appropriate for commissioners to give direction directly to staff but that requests were entirely correct, as was the asking of questions. Commissioner Newell referred to the non-interference ordinance, which authorizes direct contact only between members of the board and Mr. Weisman, the county attorney, and the internal auditor.

No backup submitted.

G. REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

G.1. HOUSING. DISCUSSED WITH DIRECTION 2-13-2001

Planning Director Frank M. Duke presented a slide show that outlined the history and projected future of the redevelopment issue in the county. His presentation considered all aspects of redevelopment, ranging from infill to areas requiring extensive redevelopment, and brownfield sites. The vast majority of the county's work in redevelopment was in the area of revitalization, he continued. The critical element in revitalization efforts was working with the neighborhoods, he said. This year's focus on home revitalization would be in the Royal Palm Estates neighborhood, he noted. The end result of these efforts, he observed, was a reduction in crime. A big lesson from this activity so far, he said, was the need to break areas down into smaller units before addressing their revitalization needs. If the county could start over, Mr. Duke said, the Lake Worth Corridor would have been broken down into smaller segments, which would have resulted in a better concentration of resources.

Displaying the slide of a boarded-up house on Lake Worth Road, Mr. Duke pointed out the complexities of such a site, noting that without sewer and water utilities, commercial redevelopment was not an option; the absence of drainage was a further limitation. When land use amendments were attempted, transportation concurrency issues came into play. Commissioner Masilotti asked whether it was possible to create incentives for developers by waiving certain traffic performance standards. Mr. Duke said that was one of the recommendations made by the governor's Growth Management Study Commission.

Commissioner Masilotti asked whether there was money in the budget to support such activities as Paint Your Heart Out and Christmas in April. Mr. Duke replied that such efforts were essentially voluntary, though roughly one-quarter of the Planning Division staff was working on revitalization and redevelopment issues. The only money in his budget was the \$1 million earmarked for capital projects, Mr. Duke said.

G.1. - CONTINUED

Commissioner Greene urged intergovernmental cooperation and coordination as a way to ease the administration of revitalization programs. Commissioner Marcus recommended a more global perspective in approving redevelopment initiatives.

Commissioner Newell requested a report of countywide tax base revenue broken down by commercial/industrial versus residential, which would enable the board to determine the revenue available from sources not under the 3 percent cap.

Using the City of Boca Raton as an example, Commissioner McCarty praised the planning effort in that community for creating a comfortable mix of residential and commercial/industrial uses that allows for high-quality services without an undue burden on residential taxpayers. She suggested adding personnel to the staff of the Planning Department who had detailed knowledge of the areas they would be assigned to work with in the expectation that, eventually, they would be able to develop the same sort of mix of uses in their areas of responsibility.

Commissioner McCarty also cited the creation by the City of Delray Beach of the position of neighborhood coordinator, responsible for assisting in the formation of homeowners' associations and other community functions. Mr. Duke said there were two such positions in the county, and Commissioner McCarty suggested dividing the county into smaller segments and assigning a neighborhood coordinator to each of these.

Commissioner Roberts called for a reevaluation of the funds spent in each district on redevelopment and/or beautification. She pointed out that certain districts did not have the luxury of spending the \$1 million allocation on beautification alone because redevelopment needs were so great. Commissioners Newell and Masilotti suggested substituting the term "revitalization" for redevelopment. Commissioner Roberts called for a workshop on the use of beautification funds and the effect of those uses on the tax base.

Citing the example of the additional acreage sought by Donald Trump to expand his golf course, Commissioner Aaronson observed that, were the property zoned Light Industrial it would have a far more favorable impact on the tax base than it can have as a golf course. He said the county needed to assess all the property it owns in an effort to derive as much revenue as possible from each parcel offered for lease. Commissioner Masilotti pointed out that nothing had been done in his district about the revitalization ideas that were first discussed a year ago. Mr. Sims suggested designating the Glades a gateway community to make it eligible for Everglades Restoration dollars.

Commissioner Masilotti recommended a focus on projects the county could authorize on its own. Mr. Duke reviewed the number of overlays that had been initiated as examples of steps taken under the county's own authority. At the same time he conceded that more projects need to be undertaken. Mr. Duke also explained that the suggestion of a year or so ago to develop a Chautauqua-type community in the Glades was stalled by the need to create the necessary infrastructure there. The suggestion to designate the Glades as a gateway community might, he concluded, permit access to state and federal funding for the purpose of building that infrastructure.

G.1. - CONTINUED

Commissioner Marcus recommended making additional funds available to each district so that commissioners would not have to scrimp on beautification in order to attend to revitalization needs. Better prioritization would enable the county to make such an allocation, she said and property values would increase as a result. Mr. Weisman protested that the county did not have much money to allocate.

Commissioner McCarty recommended involving Water Utilities in a study of where water and sewer services might most productively be installed in the county. She further suggested consideration of Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) road-building projects ahead of others as a means of coordinating the efforts of Water Utilities and Engineering and Public Works. Commissioner Marcus cautioned that statute did not currently permit allocation of gasoline tax revenues to such projects.

Commissioner Newell stressed the importance of coordinating housing improvement projects with the projects undertaken by the CCRTs. Approval of low-income housing projects in or adjacent to CCRT projects had the potential to diminish the value of the CCRT's work. The first priority should be given to CCRT proposals, he insisted. Mr. Weisman pointed out that there had not been a funding source capable of being coordinated with CCRT efforts. Impact fees, for example, could not be directed to CCRT work, he said. Mr. Duke recalled the board's direction to prioritize projects under the managed growth program with the Financial Management and Budget Department in terms of those that were essential, those vital to public health and safety, and those necessary to maintain levels of service for development. The board's direction had been to do those projects prioritized by CCRTs first, followed by desirable projects focused in CCRT areas, he concluded.

Deputy County Administrator Verdenia Baker explained the spending over the years 1998, 1999, and 2000 (and recommendations for 2001), saying \$3.2 million had been allocated to Limestone Creek, Kennedy Estates, West Jupiter Community Center, Westgate-Belvedere Homes, Okeechobee, and the Lake Worth Corridor. Commissioner Newell observed that none of these was a CCRT, and Mr. Weisman pointed out that these would have been designated CCRTs but revitalization began before that designation was available. Commissioner Newell remarked that the areas that had received funding were not necessarily those most in need. He concluded with the recommendation that more funding was required, along with prioritization of areas most in need and an increase in staff. He also suggested creating a management position at the assistant county administrator level to oversee redevelopment/revitalization activities.

Mr. Weisman countered the chair's recommendation with the suggestion that the county continue use of an adequately funded CCRT mechanism before abandoning it for newly created staff positions. The CCRT mechanism provides an adequate umbrella both to marshal and to coordinate the activities of various offices such as Planning, Engineering and Public Works, and Water Utilities. Only a lack of money impeded the CCRT effort, Mr. Weisman concluded. Commissioner Marcus objected that the \$750,000 spent on sector planning in the western communities could more effectively have been spent on redevelopment. There is money available, she maintained; the board simply had to prioritize and redistribute the funds.

G.1. - CONTINUED

Commissioner Roberts insisted that it would not be productive to stop the work on Westgate and Limestone Creek since they were only now nearing completion. The county needed to move forward and address other areas of need, she continued. Commissioner Masilotti said the board needed to decide what it was willing to forgo in order to undertake revitalization. He asked Mr. Duke what amount would be required to address revitalization needs in the county, and Mr. Duke said the figure was \$68 million. Two-thirds of this amount was for the construction of sanitary sewers, Mr. Weisman added.

Commissioner Newell suggested a reevaluation of the CCRT effort in two years after which, if it was deemed unsuccessful, departmental reorganization and creation of staff positions would take place. Commissioner Marcus recommended a report in one year.

Commissioner Aaronson suggested turning the \$68 million into a bond issue. Declare the zoning for every area on which funds were to be spent so as to have a better idea of return in the form of tax revenue, he recommended, which would make the proposition as businesslike as possible. Commissioner Marcus called for the involvement of the CCRT staff so that these areas would receive the aid necessary to turn them into genuine neighborhoods once infrastructure was in place.

Commissioner Roberts endorsed the bonding suggestion made by Commissioner Aaronson and recommended a staff study of bonding out these costs to see whether they would in fact begin to pay back in 5 years, with 15 years to recoup bonding costs. Mr. Weisman noted that the bond would require a \$6 million annual cost for debt service. This might be accomplished using a general revenue bond if the board did not wish to submit a referendum to the voters, he said.

Commissioner Newell asked whether the remaining Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) funds were adequate to finish the projects slated for completion. Mr. Weisman said an allocation of general funds would be necessary to supplement the MSTU funding. He also pointed out that MSTU funding is typically shared with residents. Any decision to allocate additional funds would have to be made with an eye to whether certain projects would be fully subsidized or whether cost sharing with residents would continue, he said. County Engineer George T. Webb reminded the board that some CCRT projects included MSTU funds. Commissioner Aaronson mentioned that partnerships with the private sector were also potentially fruitful areas to consider.

Commissioner Newell recalled a discussion that had included using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to pay off a long-term debt by bonding money up front and asked to be reminded of the details of that discussion. Director of Housing and Community Development Remar M. Harvin corrected the chair, saying that the funds were Housing and Urban Development Section 108 monies, on which he would be reporting in May 2001. Mr. Harvin said these funds could be applied to everything that was covered under CDBG regulations. The total amount available would be nearly \$40 million, he said. He also clarified the nature of Section 108 funds, identifying them as a loan. Commissioner Aaronson emphasized that his intention in encouraging private/public cooperation was to invite already capitalized private ventures to become partners with the county in revitalization.

G.1. - CONTINUED

Commissioner Roberts said the county had to be careful to arrange for repayment of Section 108 funds, which would otherwise attach future CDBG allocations, effectively denying the county access to that funding source. She recommended allocating the increased tax base in the manner done by community redevelopment agencies.

Commissioner Newell summarized the discussion as follows:

- ! MSTU funding increase
- ! CCRT funding increase
- ! Staffing increases and empowerment
- ! Studying uses of Section 108 money
- ! Identifying funding sources for these improvements

Commissioner Marcus paraphrased the summary, saying that redevelopment was now a priority for the board and that staff needed to identify the choices involved, which the board was willing to make.

Commissioner Masilotti emphasized the need to be careful about the nature of assistance provided for economically challenged areas. The board should do nothing, such as issuing density bonuses, that would hasten the decline of such areas, he insisted. Commissioner Aaronson suggested that cooperatives might be useful in such instances. Commissioner Masilotti also stressed the need for senior housing, wanting to know whether staff was clear about the board's intentions for low-income housing in economically depressed areas. The chair said he felt that staff understood the board's wishes.

Mr. Harvin clarified the county practice, which was to subsidize what he termed "market-rate housing" rather than low-income housing. He predicted that the board would be pleased with the new criteria being recommended by the Committee on Affordable Housing.

Commissioner Marcus recommended that board members tour each other's districts in order to develop a clearer idea of the conditions throughout the county. Mr. Weisman was directed to arrange tours over the course of the following two or three months.

Commissioner Greene reported having taken a six-hour helicopter tour of the county, courtesy of Parks and Recreation Department Director Dennis Eshelman, that had given her an adequate perspective on the condition of the county and made it unnecessary for her to join the other commissioners on their bus tour. She recommended the helicopter as a useful vehicle for gaining the knowledge the board required on the status of the county.

No backup submitted.

G.2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

(CLERK'S NOTE: Discussion of item G.2. was part of item G.1.)

G.3. TRAFFIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS. DISCUSSED 2-13-2001

Commissioner Masilotti asked whether staff was comfortable working with the new Traffic Performance Standards Committee. County Engineer Webb said he thought staff had a clear idea of the board's position on the subject and was prepared to let the committee develop its recommendations. He said no meeting had so far been scheduled, pending the outcome of today's visioning session. He also said staff thought the committee should focus on developing ideas rather than on a finished project, which would best be done by encouraging dialog among the board, the committee, and staff.

No backup submitted.

4. REDEVELOPMENT OF THE LAKE WORTH CORRIDOR

(CLERK'S NOTE: Discussion of item G.4. was part of item G.1.)

H. GROWTH

H.1. PAST AND FUTURE GROWTH TRENDS

(CLERK'S NOTE: Discussion of item H.1. was part of item C.1.)

H.2. TRAFFIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

(CLERK'S NOTE: Item H.2. was discussed under item G.3.)

H.3. MASS TRANSIT (INCREASE IN ROUTES, ETC.)

(CLERK'S NOTE: Item H.3. was discussed under item C.2.)

I. UNSCHEDULED COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

I.1. COMMISSIONER AARONSON

I.1.A. ILLUMINATED STREET SIGNS. DISCUSSED 2-13-2001

Commissioner Aaronson commented on his purchase of illuminated street signs with a portion of the \$1 million in beautification funds allotted to him. Given the absence of municipalities in his district, he pointed out that it was not possible for him to share this cost with them as it was for other commissioners whose districts included municipalities.

No backup submitted.

I.1.B. TRAFFIC SIGNAL VISIBILITY. DISCUSSED WITH DIRECTION 2-13-2001

Commissioner Aaronson mentioned that the traffic signals on Federal Highway and Palmetto Park Road in Boca Raton were especially brilliant and, therefore, more visible than the usual traffic signal. He suggested that George Webb evaluate the possibility of using such signals in the county.

No backup submitted.

I. - CONTINUED

I.1.C. AVAILABILITY OF COUNTY STAFF TO CARRY OUT THE DIRECTIONS GIVEN AT THE VISIONING MEETING. DISCUSSED 2-13-2001

Commissioner Aaronson noted the heavy workload that county staff was already coping with and asked County Administrator Weisman if the directions given during the meeting could be addressed without making it necessary to neglect already assigned, ongoing work. While it would not be easy, Mr. Weisman said, he was confident that staff could carry out the assignments.

No backup submitted.

I.2. COMMISSIONER MASILOTTI

I.2.A. AVAILABILITY OF PLANNING STAFF FOR REVITALIZATION EFFORTS. DISCUSSED 2-13-2001

Commissioner Masilotti asked whether staff assigned to work on the sector plan would soon become available for reassignment to work on revitalization. Planning Director Duke said completion of sector plan work would probably require another year or so.

No backup submitted.

J. ADJOURNMENT

The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

ATTESTED:

APPROVED:

Clerk

Chair