

PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

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Meeting Date: October 16, 2007

() Consent (X) Regular
() Ordinance () Public Hearing

Department:

Submitted By: County Administration
Submitted For:

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Motion and Title: Staff requests motion to approve: A) A public input budget process to include forums hosted by Palm Beach County staff in order to more completely incorporate taxpayer's input during the early stages of the FY 2008/2009 budget process, and B) Staff providing a program level budget review process for the Board after the public input is received.

Summary: In preparation for the FY 2008/2009 budget process, it is proposed that Palm Beach County host a series of public budget forums in to be held in separate regions of the County to obtain public comments and suggestions early in the budget process. The forums will be scheduled during a two-week period beginning in mid January, 2008, and will be held after normal working hours to allow for maximum participation. The forums will consist of a presentation from staff regarding the calculation of Property Tax bills and an explanation of County services and expenditures, followed by comments and questions from the public.

Attendees of the forums will be encouraged to complete a survey that will serve as a mechanism for taxpayers to voice their opinion and specific areas of concern on how budget dollars should be spent. The results will be compiled and included in a report to be presented at a Board of County Commissioners meeting prior to the final budget process. A minimum of three options for submittal of the survey will be available to participants including; completion and submittal at the forum, completed later and mailed to the County, or completed online. The forums will be publicized through a wide range of media outlets to ensure optimal involvement from the public.

The program budget information will allow the Board to prioritize specific services and consider budget reduction impacts.
Countywide (PFK)

Background and Justification: Preliminary projections provided by the Office of Financial Management & Budget Office show countywide tax supported department budgets for 2008 may need to be reduced approximately \$10-15 million. Efforts to obtain public input in the budget process are currently limited to comments from taxpayers that speak during the various budget workshops/public hearings that are conducted at the Government Center. These forums would encourage greater participation from taxpayers to document their input for the Board's review during the budget preparation process as an enhanced alternative to an appointed advisory committee.

Attachments:

- 1. Budget Forum Proposal
- 2. Budget Projection Memorandum

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Recommended by: _____

Department Director Date



10/2/07

Approved by: _____

County Administrator

Date

II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Years	2007	2008	2009	2010
Capital Expenditures	_____	_____	_____	_____
Operating Costs	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is Item Included In Current Budget? Yes _____ No _____

Budget Account No.: Fund _____ Agency _____ Org. _____ Object
Reporting Category N/A

B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:

III. REVIEW COMMENTS

A. OFMB Fiscal and/or Contract Administration Comments:

[Signature] 10-5-07
OFMB
OPW 10-5-07 CN 10/4/07

[Signature] 10/9/07
Contract Administration
[Signature] 10/9/07

B. Legal Sufficiency:

[Signature] 10/9/07
Assistant County Attorney

C. Other Department Review:

Department Director

Palm Beach County Public Input Budget Forums Proposal

Purpose:

1. To inform taxpayers regarding the calculation of their property tax bill in relation to County-wide tax supported services and expenditures
2. To obtain taxpayer input regarding County-wide services for the Fiscal Year 2009 budget preparation process
3. Results of the public input will be recorded and summarized and presented to the BCC prior to March 2008
4. BCC direction to be incorporated in the Budget planning process distributed to Departments and Agencies for Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Preparation

Summary: In order to incorporate public comment earlier and more completely into the budget process, Palm Beach County will host a series of forums in 5 regions of the county to solicit comment and suggestions on the Fiscal 2009 Budget. The forums would take place in a two week period starting in mid-January. There would be one forum per region during the evening, in order to allow for maximum participation by the public. These forums would consist of a presentation from staff, followed by comments by the public to County representatives. The County representatives would include B.C.C. members, Administration, Legislative Affairs and Budget staff.

Survey: Attendees of the forums would be encouraged to complete a survey which would be incorporated into a report to be presented to the BCC in a workshop. The survey would be written and the results compiled by Public Affairs. The survey would be developed to give taxpayers a mechanism to voice their opinions as to how they think County budget dollars should be spent. There would be at least three options for submitting the survey; they could be filled out and handed in at the forum, filled out later then mailed to the County, or filled out online via the County's homepage. A written and online version of the forum presentation would be created to inform a larger audience than just those who attend the forums. Additionally, budget documents will be posted on the County's website for public viewing. The website will contain information and current and years past budgets.

Outreach and Locations: The forums would be publicized through a wide range of avenues to ensure the greatest involvement possible from taxpayers. Outreach to include:

Newspaper announcements; media alerts for local press to pick up on; Channel 20 Bulletin Board notice; Website notice, notification to municipalities; notification to Homeowner's Associations, civic groups; South Florida Fair County Exhibit Booth, and the county libraries.

Locations will be determined; options include PBCC North Campus Auditorium, Ag Center, Wellington/Royal Palm Beach Centers, Glades area, South County Civic Center

Palm Beach County Public Input Budget Forums Proposal

There would be an effort to reach out in this two week period to as many taxpayers as possible. Even after the two week forum period is over, the County website would play a role in facilitating questions from the public to the Budget staff. Public Affairs would coordinate the forums, the surveys and all public outreach. Public Affairs would assist in creating materials for the forums and any reports by OFMB and the Legislative Affairs staff.

Timeline:

October 16, 2007	Presentation of Plan to the BCC
January 14 – 25, 2008 (January 21 st – Martin Luther King Day)	Forums would take place in the 5 regions
January 18 th – January 27 th	South Florida Fair Exhibit Booth
January 28 th – February 8 th	Public Affairs would compile survey data
February 11 th – February 22 nd	A report would be generated by OFMB and Public Affairs that puts the public survey results and comments into a budget perspective
February 26, 2008	Report presented to B.C.C.

Board of County Commissioners

Addie L. Greene, Chairperson
Jeff Koons, Vice Chair
Karen T. Marcus
Mary McCarty
Burt Aaronson
Jess R. Santamaria
Robert J. Kanjian



County Administrator


Robert Weisman

Office of Financial Management & Budget

301 North Olive Avenue, WPB, FL 33401

DATE: September 27, 2007

TO: Robert Weisman
County Administrator

FROM: Richard Roberts, Director 
Office of Financial Management & Budget

RE: Preliminary Projections for 2008-09 Budget

We have prepared preliminary projections for our 2008-09 countywide tax supported budget, assuming the proposed "tax reform" referendum does not pass (or does not happen) and there are no modifications by the legislature that would impact our revenues and expenditures.

We have assumed that the BCC will approve the maximum levy permitted by a simple majority vote (current year taxes plus taxes on new construction, increased by a percentage equivalent to the rise in per capita net income). For purposes of our projection, we have assumed 3% increase in new construction and 2.5% increase in per capita income. Other major assumptions include the following:

- ◆ Sheriff will get a 10% increase over FY 2008 (\$42.4 million)
- ◆ 5% increase for other constitutional officers
- ◆ New funding for capital projects of \$25 million
- ◆ Increase in revenue bond debt service for additional Scripps bonds, jail facilities, and Max Planck Society
- ◆ The County will appropriate the \$16 million that was set aside in a special reserve in the current year for use in FY 2009
- ◆ We will draw down our undesignated reserves by \$23 million (from \$123 million to \$100 million)

ATTACHMENT #2

Preliminary Projections for 2008-09 Budget
September 27, 2007
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Based on these and other assumptions, our countywide tax supported department budgets will have to be reduced by approximately 4.0% (\$13.8 million) from the 2008 budget. Our departments would have to absorb all salary, benefit, and inflationary increases, and make further reductions so that in total, department budgets would be 4.0% less than the current year.

If you have any questions please contact me.