



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FINAL OFFICIAL MINUTES

Board of County Commissioners Committee of the Whole

Stephen P. Clark Government Center
Commission Chambers
111 N.W. First Street
Miami, Florida 33128

July 16, 2013
As Advertised

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Clerk's Summary and Official Minutes
Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners
Committee of the Whole
July 16, 2013

The Board of County Commissioners convened as the Committee of the Whole in the County Commission Chambers of the Stephen P. Clark Government Center, 111 N.W. First Street, Miami, Florida, at 10:00 a.m., July 16, 2013. There being present: Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, Vice Chair Lynda Bell, and Commissioners Bruno Barreiro, Esteban Bovo, Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Sally Heyman, Barbara Jordan, Jean Monestime, Dennis Moss, Javier Souto, Xavier Suarez, and Juan Zapata (Commissioner Audrey Edmonson was absent).

In addition to members of the County Commission, the following staff members were also present: County Attorney Robert Cuevas; First Assistant County Attorney Abigail Price-Williams; and Deputy Clerks Christopher Agrippa and Mary Smith-York.

County Mayor Carlos Gimenez was also present at today's (7/16) meeting.

Chairwoman Sosa asked the County Administration to formally present the proposed preliminary budget before she opened the public hearing, and recognized Mayor Gimenez to come forth.

Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez noted the published proposed budget continued his promise to keep taxes low and maintain current service levels. He stated that based upon feedback from residents and community leaders, no public support for a tax rate increase existed, adding that this sentiment was validated in discussion he had with several Commission members. Emphasizing his commitment to listening to the residents of this County, Mayor Gimenez advised that he was amending his proposed budget plan to keep all forms of County operations millage rates flat, including Countywide, Fire, Library, and Unincorporated Municipal Service Area (UMSA). He referenced the initial FY 2010-11 combined operating millage rate of 11.0498 and noted the current revised combined property rate of 9.2539, which resulted in a reduction of 16.25 percent from FY 2010-11. Mayor Gimenez noted this forced the County to absorb \$34.5 million in increased expenditures imposed by the State Legislature a \$39 million increase in the County's contribution to employee healthcare. He said he believed this proposal was fiscally responsible and respectful of the community's desire to balance tax rates with levels of service and the will of the voters to support Animal Services. Mayor Gimenez stated the proposal utilized the savings from the May 2013 Special Elections. Additionally, he noted the results of a successful Court ruling last week reduced the County's obligation to the State Department of Juvenile Justice payments for next year enabling the County to support the beginnings of a "No Kill" policy for Animal Services without raising tax rates. Mayor Gimenez indicated that reducing to flat the millage rates for Library and Fire would result in reduced hours of service and closure of up to ten store front libraries and up to 12 other libraries. He noted the reorganization in the Fire District's administration would result in the elimination of two Division Chiefs, 14 Chief Fire Officers, including nine Battalion Chiefs, several civilian positions, and a number of sworn positions would be returned to direct service. Mayor Gimenez informed that a maximum of six units would be closed, resulting in the elimination of

149 filled positions from the Fire Department and 251 from the Library System. He added that a total of 413 frozen, unfunded vacancies would also be cut from the budget, for a total of 813 fewer positions. Mayor Gimenez noted this proposal continued his pledge to reduce the size of County government and that this proposal did not fund restoration of current employee concessions, but did not request that more be added. He stated in deciding the impasses with the collective bargaining units today and while contemplating millage rates to adopt for purposes of advertising the Truth in Millage (TRIM) notices, Commissioners should be mindful that the millage could not be increased in the first budget hearing, without re-noticing taxpayers, and not increased at all in the second budget hearing. He emphasized that the County's elected officials must balance the residents' desires to pay less in taxes with the County's desires to maintain/improve services. Mayor Gimenez stated the County's hardworking employees must also be considered during this decision-making process; however, the local economy had not improved enough to accomplish all the components. He reiterated that the people were unwilling to pay more for public services at this time and stated that he would continue working with staff throughout the summer to review the proposed budget in an effort to identify ways to reduce the number of layoffs and lessen the service impact to the residents. Mayor Gimenez invited questions from members of the Commission.

Chairwoman Sosa commended Mayor Gimenez on his efforts toward streamlining the budget and for presenting an alternative to his original proposal for the Board's review and approval. She opened the floor for questions from her colleagues.

In response to Commissioner Moss' question as to whether the stations that would be closed had already been identified, Mayor Gimenez stated a maximum of six stations would be closed.

At Chairwoman Sosa's request, the list identifying specific fire stations scheduled to close would be provided at the conclusion of the public hearing.

Commissioner Jordan expressed concern that the information provided to Board members had not been provided to the public, which could impact their presentations; particularly the report identifying 22 libraries that were being closed.

Discussion ensued among Board members regarding whether the libraries and fire stations targeted for closures should be published prior to the public hearing.

Chairwoman Sosa pointed out that public hearings customarily occurred prior to the Commission members' discussion and noted the magnitude of issues before this Board today, displaying the large number of speaker request cards submitted. Following providing guidelines for speaker to adhere to the prescribed rules pertaining to time and decorum, Chairwoman Sosa opened the public hearing, and the following individuals appeared:

- 1) Mayor Michael Pizzi, Town of Miami Lakes, appeared before the Board and noted he represented the many residents who requested that he appear on their behalf. He asked that the County not spend money it did not have and that taxes not be increased.

- 2) Mr. David Lawrence, Jr., 2800 Toledo Street, Coral Gables, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of funding for Pet's Trust.
- 3) Mr. Ron McGill, 13105 SW 107th Terrace, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of funding for the Pet's Trust.
- 4) Captain Rowan Taylor, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (MDFR), 8000 NW 21 Street, Doral, appeared before the Board with regard to the Fire Rescue (FR) millage rate issue. He noted 28 military veterans and 12 other brave men and women currently training to become fire fighters, were awaiting the Board's decision on the FR millage rate. Captain Rowan stated these trainees were informed that approval of a flat millage would eliminate their jobs within a few weeks of completing training and would place over 100 firefighters in danger of losing their jobs. He emphasized the fact that a flat millage would not properly fund the MDFR, stating six rescue trucks would need to be taken out of service which would reduce paramedic and fire services. Captain Rowan explained that the millage increase initially proposed by Mayor Gimenez did not provide any new benefits to fire fighters; however, insurance premiums would increase due to decreased amounts paid by the County. He noted the MDFR had operated with the same revenue as in 2006 and the same personnel costs as 2008; however, requests for services had increased by approximately 10 percent annually. Captain Taylor stated that two years ago MDFR cut its concessions by \$20.4 million in an effort to comply with the requested amount of \$20.6 million. He stated the department was now being asked to cut services and lay off 149 firefighters. Captain Taylor provided details pertaining to the components that comprised the \$15 million deficit still facing the department as follows: \$5 million due to reduction of revenue; \$4 million due to increases by Florida Legislative mandates; and \$3 million due to increased fees charged from the General Fund. He stressed the point that a flat millage would force the Fire District to shut down 6 units and asked Commission members to consider how long a minute could be when faced with an emergency. Captain Taylor urged Commission members to set the millage at the appropriate rate today, which would allow time to analyze how the proposed cuts would impact the community. He stated a poll of 14,000 tax payers was done last night, after the Mayor revised his proposal, and of the 793 respondents, 85 percent were not in favor of cutting Fire Rescue services. He added 47 percent of those surveyed said yes to paying \$20.00 more per year (\$.06/day) to maintain current services; 42 percent said no; and 11 percent were undecided. He reiterated his request that the Commission set the appropriate millage rate to allow time over the summer to hear from residents before making a final decision.

Chairwoman Sosa recognized Mr. Alberto Carvalho, Miami-Dade Public School Superintendent, present in connection with Agenda Item 12A1 of the Board's Regular Agenda.

At Chairwoman Sosa's request, Mayor Gimenez provided a brief overview of the intent of Agenda Item 12A1 on the County Commission's Regular Meeting Agenda, a resolution that expressed the County's intent to develop a formal partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) with the goal to jointly establish new industry-focused schools of choice. He stated his focus was on strengthening the economy by re-enforcing existing economic pillars

enhancing and developing new sectors like information technology and entrepreneurship in alignment with the Beacon Council's "One Community, One Goal" Initiative, which he co-chaired. Mayor Gimenez explained the concept for preparing today's (7/16) students for leadership positions and noted the County's administration was working closely with MDCPS and the Beacon Council to create new education options to attain prescribed goals. He stated work needed to begin on the following concepts to serve the youth countywide: 1) a school focused on tech-entrepreneurship; 2) a logistics and international trade magnet school in collaboration with the airport and seaport; 3) performing arts industry high school in collaboration with the Arsht Center; and 4) a magnet high school at Zoo Miami that builds the science-based middle school focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Mayor Gimenez informed Board members on how this resolution would enhance the County educationally and economically and requested their support. After expressing his appreciation to the individual organizations involved with this partnership effort, Mayor Gimenez recognized MDCPS Superintendent Alberto Carvalho to make his presentation.

12A1 Miami-Dade County Public Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho appeared before Board and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to appear. He provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the foregoing resolution detailing the proposed partnership between the School Board and Miami-Dade County in collaboration with the Beacon Council and other government partners. Mr. Carvalho stated education was essential to creating an economically viable community and noted primary efforts should focus on determining what the emerging areas of business development and trade were for this community and training young men and women in those areas. He noted the Beacon Council, through its One Community One Goal initiative, had identified the seven key industries that would require a highly skilled workforce in the near future. Mr. Carvalho indicated that smart government partnered to ensure that young men and women had the opportunity to engage in those training programs and be competitive in those key industries. He elaborated on the issues of technology and entrepreneurship, the valuable assets at the Seaport and Miami International Airport, Zoo Miami, and the Arsht Performing Arts Center. He stated this partnership was a continuation of the 2006 compact between Miami-Dade County Commission and Miami-Dade County Public Schools and served as an opportunity to cement the fact that education was a precursor to economic development and viability and partnership.

Chairwoman Sosa expressed her appreciation to Superintendent Carvalho for his support and noted that once the BCC reconvened, this item would be considered.

- 5) Ms. Harriet Sklar, 5005 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet Trust and pointed out that the people who voted in favor of the "No Kill" Shelter were aware that this would require a tax increase.
- 6) Ms. Patty Accursio, 25855 S.W. 194th Avenue, Homestead, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust "No Kill" Shelter and read into the record a letter she said accompanied a video she sent to each Commissioner portraying a dog named Chance that she rescued.
- 7) Ms. Patricia Sullivan, 2201 Overbrook Street, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of Pet Trust No Kill Shelter.

- 8) Ms. Maria E. Prio, 1550 Tigertail Avenue, Miami, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.
- 9) Ms. Adriana Rodriguez, 3868 NE 169th Street, Miami, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.

Commissioner Diaz stated that it would be sufficient for those persons who filled out cards but did not wish to speak, to raise their hands in support of the subject on the card.

- 10) Ms. Pamela Michaels, 6621 SW 77th Terrace, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter; with respect to the proposed cuts to the Fire Department, noted that was short sighted; and regarding the partnership with the School Board, recommended keeping libraries open.
- 11) Ms. Dennise Sleeper, 26330 SW 131st Court, Homestead, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter, keeping Fire Stations and libraries open, and the partnership with the School Board. She noted she was willing to pay more taxes.
- 12) Mr. Aniss Boussolo, 4388 SW 10th Street, Miami, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.
- 13) Ms. Dahlia Canes, Director, Miami Coalition for Breed Specific Legislation, 6448 W. 11th Lane, Hialeah, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.
- 14) Mr. Ron Book, 18851 NE 29th Avenue, Aventura, appeared before the Board on behalf of the Pet Trust Leadership Organization and suggested discussion remained focused on the issue to the millage rates. He noted he received a large volume of phone calls regarding the vote to increase the millage to support the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter. Mr. Book concurred that straw ballots were nonbinding; however, he stated that implying that the public did not understand what .1079 mils meant with respect to increasing property taxes was incorrect. He pointed out that the people who voted for this property tax increase were aware of what they were voting for.
- 15) Ms. Rita Schwartz, 7100 SW 133rd Street, Miami, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.
- 16) Deniz Ozel, 13100 SW 92nd Avenue, Miami, graduate student of Florida International University, appeared before the Board and in support of the Pet's Trust funds issue.
- 17) Madam Renita Holmes, Executive Director, Women's Association of Alliance Against Injustice and Violence, 5800 NW 7 Ave, Miami, appeared before the Board in opposition to increasing the millage rates and property taxes to support a No Kill Shelter for pets and stated that those funds would be better utilized to support the women and children who were victims of gun violence in this community.
- 18) Ms. Laurie Bloom, 11000 SW 62nd Avenue, appeared before Board in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.
- 19) Michael Rosenberg, 13030 N. Caluso Club Drive, Miami, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet Trust No Kill Shelter. He noted he initiated the ballot question which voters passed in the election and noted he received numerous phone calls asking why their votes did not count. Mr. Rosenberg requested that millage rates be increased to fund the No Kill Shelter as the people voted for.
- 20) Ms. Mirta Estrada, 851 E. 16th Place, Hialeah, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet Trust and asked the Board to follow through with the proposed \$19 million

- 21) Ms. Anna Bueno, 5401 NW 179th Terrace, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 22) Ms. Maria Pilar Borrás, 9750 SW 210th Street, Cutler Bay, representing Miami Coalition Against Breed Specific Legislation, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 23) Ms. Gina Stabile, 5363 Lagorce Drive, Miami Beach, appeared before the Board in support of No Kill Shelter Plan funding.
- 24) Mr. Carlos Planas, 9132 Harding Avenue, Surfside, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 25) Ms. Charlene Grall, 2500 SW 13th Street, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust and expressed her appreciation to Commission members for their support.
- 26) Ms. Susan Gregory, address withheld pursuant to Florida Statute, appeared before the Board mainly in support of funding for the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter; however, she requested the Board to also fund Fire Rescue and the Libraries
- 27) Mr. Bernie Alfonso, Director, Pet Partners Rescue Home, 9555 SW 42nd Street, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 28) Mr. Daniel Brown, 2 Grove Isle Drive, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 29) Ms. Deanna Villalobos, 4830 NW 128th Ave, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 30) Ms. Cindy Porter, 1586 Goldeneye Lane, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 31) Ms. Zoila Mendoza, 7280 W. 35th Avenue, Hialeah, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 32) Ms. Carmen Ergracio, 300 NW 62nd Court, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 33) Ms. Ivette Dilan, 15037 SW 158th Court, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 34) Mr. Karl Harry Rosenberg, 11216 NW 15th Court, Miami, Vietnam Veteran and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) Volunteer, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.
- 35) Ms. Jeanette Jordan Schiavone, 11111 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, representing South Florida Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SFSPCA), appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust No Kill Shelter.
- 36) Ms. Elizabeth Alvarez, 3820 SW 120th Avenue, Miami, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 37) Ms. Kerstin Milner-Stubbs, 1330 S. Audubon Drive, Homestead, appeared before the Board and spoke in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 38) Ms. Aniss Boussolo, 4388 SW 10th Street, Miami, appeared before the Board in support of funding for the Pet's Trust.
- 39) Ms. Nadine Lettermen, 1708 Adams Street, Broward County, appeared in support of the Pet's Trust and noted, for the record, that there were currently no "No Kill Shelters" in Broward County.
- 40) Ms. Suely Caramelo, 1165 98th Street, Bay Harbor Islands, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.

- 41) Ms. Alessandra Skichter, 3140 Fairways Drive, Homestead, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 42) Ms. Lisa Howe, 1401 Ortega Avenue, Coral Gables, appeared before the Board in support of the Pet's Trust.
- 43) Mr. Fred Frost, 10961 SW 155th Place, Miami, representing Miami Economic Sustainability Alliance, appeared before the Board and expressed concern with the Mayor's revisiting his initial budget proposal with the intent to keep the millage rate flat. He spoke in opposition to this behavior and provided statistics for taxes paid in Miami-Dade County.
- 44) Ms. Omayra Hernandez, Registered Nurse, Jackson Memorial Hospital, 901 Swan Avenue, Miami Springs, appeared before the Board and asked that consideration be given to homeowners with respect to property taxes.
- 45) Mr. Greg Blackmon, 2701 Ponce De Leon Blvd, Coral Gables, appeared before the Board and asked that the millage rate be increased specifically to keep the public libraries open and allow a possible lowering of the millage if necessary at a later date.

Seeing no other persons appear wishing to be heard, Chairwoman Sosa closed the public hearing and opened the dais for discussion among members of the Commission.

Commissioner Moss expressed his appreciation to the constituents for attending tonight's (7/16) meeting and providing their input. He requested the Mayor to identify those Fire Rescue units scheduled to close should the millage rate remain flat.

In response to Commissioner Moss' request, Fire Chief David Downey, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, noted the following six units were targeted for closures: Rescue 78 servicing Eastern Shores & North Miami Beach; Rescue 70 (second rescue unit servicing Cutler Bay) would be transferred to Coconut Palm's new station; Rescue 72 in Homestead & Florida City; Platform 21 (second suppression unit at Haulover and only platform unit in the County); Engine 27 servicing North Bay Village; and Engine 5 servicing Goulds. He noted Commissioner Moss was correct in stating that three of the targeted units were in District 4 and the remaining three were in South Miami-Dade County.

In response to Commissioner Moss' request that the 22 libraries targeted for closure, along with their respective districts, be identified, Mr. Raymond Santiago, Library Department Director, provided the following breakdown of the libraries scheduled to be closed if the budget remained flat:

DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 9
California Club (commercially leased facility)	Country Walk (commercially leased)
Opa-locka	
DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 10
Golden Glades	Concord (commercially leased)
	Sunset (commercially leased)

DISTRICT 3
Civic Center Kiosk
Lemon City Branch
Little River
Model City
Culmer

DISTRICT 5
North Shore
Shenandoah
South Shore

DISTRICT 6
Fairlawn Branch (commercially leased facility)

DISTRICT 7
Virrick Park

DISTRICT 11
Lakes of the Meadow (commercially leased)
Tamiami (commercially leased)
West Kendall Regional (commercially leased)

DISTRICT 12
Doral Branch (commercially leased)
Hialeah Gardens (commercially leased)

DISTRICT 13
Palm Springs North (commercially leased)

Commissioner Moss noted he was concerned that people might not realize the impact on the aforementioned services by keeping the millage flat. He stated that he supported funding for the areas of Fire Rescue, Library, and Animal Services/Pet's Trust. He asked that the Board set the millage rate today (7/16) and allow the public to voice their positions on the issue before making a final decision, in September, on whether to increase taxes. Commissioner Moss stated that he was willing to pay the \$100 additional taxes reflected in the Mayor's original proposal and hoped that others would be willing to enable the Fire Rescue, Library, and Animal Services to continue.

Commissioner Jordan asked the County Attorney to provide clarification on what the Board's vote meant today with regard to the millage rate.

County Attorney Robert Cuevas advised that upon reconvening as the County Commission and considering Item 8G1, the Board would set the millage rate to be utilized for the Truth in Millage (TRIM) notices that would go to all County taxpayers. He noted the consequence was that once the millage rates were set, the Board would be unable to increase that rate, in the course of the budget hearings, without re-mailing notices of that change to all tax payers. Mr. Cuevas explained that this method could be done legally, but was difficult as a practical matter, as the top millage rate for the upcoming Fiscal Year was being set.

Commissioner Jordan questioned whether adoption of the flat millage rate proposed today increased the possibility of losing the 22 libraries and six fire stations versus adoption of a higher millage rate that could be revisited at a later date.

Mr. Cuevas stated that was correct in that a flat millage rate would limit the amount of revenue that was available for those particular uses.

Commissioner Jordan referenced the Mayor's opening comments on the number of libraries (22) and fire units (6) was the maximum amount that would be proposed for closing. She questioned

what the minimum amount was and what mechanism for determining what would be cut was being used. Commissioner Jordan expressed concern with Opa-locka being the poorest community in the County and its only library being scheduled to close; as well as the five libraries located in District 3, also one of the poorest communities. She asked her colleagues to give the Board maximum flexibility to consider this issue further by setting the millage rate for the TRIM notices informing taxpayers of the potential rate, which could be lowered later. She pointed out that the Pet Trust issue had great representation today because it was properly advertised; however, she had not received any notices listing the 22 libraries and six fire units scheduled to be closed as presented today. Advising that Commissioners had just received the revised proposal, Commissioner Jordan expressed concern that Board members were being asked to decide today on whether to adopt a flat rate after being given a different rate initially and after being assured that the Pet's Trust would be funded in the amount voted for of \$19 million, which was now being decreased to \$4.5 million. She noted she cared about animals and previously owned dogs; however, she stated that she must put the needs of people before those of animals. She pointed out that the answers to several pertinent questions should be provided before the Board decided whether to adopt a flat millage rate, including what total number of layoffs would occur and what other services would be impacted. Commissioner Jordan reiterated her request that the Board not adopt a flat millage rate today but to base its decision on a professional recommendation that was in the best interest of the community. She stated that the amendment she made previously, which was seconded by Commissioner Bovo, provided for the Mayor with the choice to not take just the tax increase, but also the flexibility to decide what percentage to allocate to animal services for the No Kill Shelter.

Commissioner Heyman noted she concurred with the comments made by her colleagues and expressed her appreciation to those members of the public for their attendance today. She noted she had never entered a budget process with a philosophical position such as: "no tax increase no matter what," as this would restrict the full assessment of costs and the will of the public. Commissioner Heyman emphasized the point that once the millage rate was set, it could be lowered but not raised and noted she disagreed with the sentiment of "no new taxes." She stated she would support a millage rate increase with a commitment to maintaining quality services and achieving the "No Kill" goal. Commissioner Heyman stated that she had not received any calls from the public requesting to not increase taxes and that 252 people stated they would support a tax increase to maintain services. She noted she would support the millage increase originally proposed, pointing out that it could be lowered later if necessary, but could not be raised. She stated she would not support a budget with a millage that did not sufficiently address fire, library, and the funds set aside for a "no kill" goal in Animal Services.

Chairwoman Sosa thanked Mayor Gimenez for presenting the flat millage rate budget proposal and noted more people have expressed their concerns regarding tax increases this year than in the past.

In response to Chairwoman Sosa's inquiry as to the Library Department's total budget last year, Ms. Jennifer Moon, Office of Management and Budget Director, advised that the adopted budget for the Library in FY 2012-13 was \$57, 792,000. She reported that the proposed flat rate budget for FY 2013-14 was approximately \$36 million. Pertaining to Chairwoman Sosa's request for clarification regarding increased property assessments and decreased budget allocations, Ms.

Moon stated that in FY 2012-13, the Library Department's budget was primarily supported by Carryover funds from the prior year, which was no longer available.

In response to Chairwoman Sosa's inquiry about the process used to determine which libraries would be cut, Mr. Santiago explained the criteria used in determining which libraries to cut included geography, proximity to adjacent facilities, lease payments, operations cost, and level of use. He stated libraries were currently open either five or six days per week and the number of staff for each library was based on the size and needs of the library.

Chairwoman Sosa stated she would request a report identifying alternatives to closing libraries that would accommodate the proposed budget reduction. She noted further analysis of the Fire Department also needed to be done to minimize the impact from budget reductions on employees more so than buildings.

In response to Chairwoman Sosa's question regarding this year's proposed debt service millage rate, Ms. Moon stated the proposed rate was .422 mills.

Mayor Gimenez stated that an additional \$4 million was being allocated to the Animal Services Department in response to Chairwoman Sosa's inquiry regarding the nonbinding ballot question relating to the "No Kill" shelter.

Chairwoman Sosa noted funding for projects was generally done in a tiered manner and asked how the additional 40 percent would be acquired to implement the Animal Services project.

Mr. Alex Munoz advised that the additional \$4 million would provide funding of the following: initiation of approximately six new programs and expansion of six existing programs; initiation of one fully funded community spay and neuter program allowing for 16,000 surgeries; and initiation of a feline trap, neuter, and return program. He stated approximately 15,000 dogs and 16,000 cats were received at the Animal Services shelter annually. Mr. Munoz noted the Mayor directed staff to include in the services funded through the referendum every component referenced in the ballot language, including the start of a surrender prevention program and the ability to work with the Humane Society, the Cat Network, and animal rescue groups. Additionally, he stated this funding would initiate a grants program to work with rescue groups to assist with the most at-risk dogs.

Commissioner Bovo noted he chaired the Finance Committee and held several meetings with department directors to discuss their budget projections. He stated that during those meetings, he did not recall department heads mentioning any shortfalls or seeing any red flags warning of future concerns. He strongly recommended that the Commission get more engaged in the budget process next year to avoid the need to eliminate staff and services. Commissioner Bovo explained that the property values in his district (Dist. 7) had decreased and addressed the impact this decrease had on segments of the population. He expressed concern with animals being euthanized at the shelter; however, he pointed out that the question voted on by the public was a nonbinding poll. Commissioner Bovo questioned how the County could honor the fund a No Kill Shelter without increasing taxes. He asked whether alternative funding sources had been considered for this initiative and recommended regulating pet sales and enforcing proper

licensing and chip insertion. Commissioner Bovo suggested inserting a notice in TRIM notice envelopes soliciting contributions from Pet Trust supporters and recommended that staff initiate programs that made it difficult for owners to abandon their pets, such as counseling during intake. He recommended the County research every possible funding resource to address the budget issues and stated his commitment today (7/16) to volunteer and engage in aggressive fund raising efforts for these issues.

Commissioner Diaz addressed the issue of the “No Kill” nonbinding straw vote and read, into the record, language from the ballot question entitled Funding Improved Animal Services Programs:

“...Would you be in favor of the County Commission increasing the Countywide General Fund millage by 01.79 mils and applying additional ad-valorem tax revenues generated thereby to fund improved animal services, including:

- * decreasing the killing of adoptable dogs and cats (historically approximately 20,000 annually);
- * reducing stray cat populations (currently approximately 400,000); and
- * funding free and low-cost spay and neutering programs, low-cost veterinarian care programs, and responsible pet ownership education programs.”

Commissioner Diaz noted the people were well aware of what they were voting for and said that he lobbied in his district (Dist. 12) informing residents that taxes would be increased. He expressed his support for the Pet’s Trust “No Kill” program; however, he stated more than one issue was being supported today. He presented his position with regard to Commissioner Bovo’s comments regarding fund raising efforts and responsible pet owners. Commissioner Diaz concurred with the comment that animal sales needed to be regulated; however, he noted his belief that this was currently being done. He advised that a portion of the goals in place for the Animal Services Department were already being implemented and commended the staff for their work. He noted, last year, the Mayor included funding in the budget for a new shelter in accordance with the “no kill” goal and displayed a timeline for completion of a new shelter to accomplish that goal. Commissioner Diaz expressed his support for the Fire Rescue Department, the Police Department, and the Corrections and Rehabilitation Department and noted he received an equal number of calls in opposition to a tax increase as those in support of the No Kill plan. He expressed concern that a balanced budget must be in place by September, stating that he wanted to ensure the Fire Department remained intact to avoid slower emergency response time and that the “no kill” plan went into effect. Commissioner Diaz stated, because there were no longer carryover funds in the budget, the County must consider increasing the millage if necessary.

Commissioner Bell pointed out that the Board had just received the information in the Mayor’s adjusted budget proposal today that would be used to set the millage today. She requested clarification on the term “Units out of Service.”

Fire Chief Downey explained that there were three Rescue and three Suppression Units; each Rescue Unit equaled 13 personnel and each Suppression Unit equaled to 18 personnel, plus relief teams, for a total of 104 personnel. He advised that when a unit was taken “out of service,” it was completely out of service and no longer available for use.

In response to Commissioner Bell's question as to whether up to six units were proposed, Mayor Gimenez stated six was the maximum amount of units proposed and the Administration would continue working, based on the Board's decision, to mitigate this and minimize the impact. He noted there was currently a \$15 million gap in the Fire Rescue budget which equated to the referenced number of personnel. Mayor Gimenez stated there might be different alternatives to consider; however, major work will need to be done with union.

Responding to Commissioner Bell's inquiry of the location of the three targeted Rescue Units, Chief Downey stated that the area reflected in the report next to Units 70, 72, and 78 were the areas where the units were located. He noted other units were in close proximity to Units 70 and 72; however, Unit 78 was the sole unit in a station in North Miami Beach which would be closed. Chief Downey listed the factors considered in deciding which units to eliminate, including close proximity, multiple units within stations, and total call volume. Continuing, he explained that a Suppression Unit was a fire truck, the majority of which were equipped with paramedics and advanced life support equipment.

Commissioner Bell called forth the Mr. Santiago, Library Director, to address her concerns regarding the proposed closing of 22 libraries.

Mr. Santiago noted the libraries that were commercially leased were generally store front structures. In response to Commissioner Bell's inquiry as to use of computers versus books, Mr. Santiago noted the County's libraries provided over a million hours of Internet access last year. He described the Library's role in community workforce and economic development, including providing people with guidelines for preparing resumes, etc. and online access to Section 8 housing applications, employment applications, and free public Wi-Fi.

In response to Commissioner Bell's question as to whether the number of libraries proposed for closing was the threshold amount, Mayor Gimenez reiterated that the number proposed was the maximum, advising that this number was less than the number of libraries initially proposed to close. He noted staff was looking within its budget for other areas to make changes and avoid personnel cuts; however, he pointed out that the age of books was waning with the dawn of electronic media and that libraries must adjust to that trend.

Commissioner Bell recommended Mayor Gimenez consider looking into public/private library partnerships that was being done in other cities and states, which could help alleviate the debt to taxpayers. She then called forth Mr. Munoz to address her concerns relating to the Animal Services Department. Commissioner Bell commended Mr. Munoz on his accomplishments with the various animal adoption events and described a recent spay/neuter event that was conducted in her district (Dist. 8). She requested that no future straw polls be conducted since it caused confusion; rather place the question on a regular ballot for the public vote.

In response to Commissioner Bell's question of whether the additional \$4 million in the proposed Animal Services budget would provide for the end goals of providing service and meeting need, Mr. Munoz stated that amount would help move the department forward with the amount of animals coming in and being euthanized at the shelter. He noted the funds would enable the department to create new adoption programs and expansion others and possibly

launch a community spay/neuter program that could do approximately 16,000 animals. Mr. Munoz noted that the concerns of the advocates for the inclusion of veterinarian spay/neuter clinics in the plan were addressed and that the goal was to develop partnerships with that component to help accomplish the no-kill goal.

Commissioner Bell expressed her concern with people who purchased pets, saying “Don’t Shop; Adopt.”

Commissioner Souto addressed the comments from the community regarding the issues that had come before the Board within the past few days. He informed Board members that he conducted two town hall meetings each month to allow constituents to express their issues and concerns. Commissioner Souto referenced the various issues currently facing the County and State of Florida, stating that elected officials should use caution with taxes. He spoke in support of the issues addressed today, including the animal no-kill shelter, emphasizing the importance of Fire Rescue and all the services. Commissioner Souto emphasized the need to consider the impact on the community that closing a functioning library would make and recommended reducing the hours of operation instead. He recommended that the Mayor crunch the numbers more to allow those services to continue operating and to not increase property taxes.

Commissioner Monestime noted the objective of every decision the Board made was to add value to the lives of the citizens of this County, which included building better infrastructures; approving funding for the Pet’s Trust, social services, and unfunded mandates by the State of Florida; and returning employee concessions. He stated that the Board also had certain priorities it must address and expressed the need for flexibility to make decisions. Commissioner Monestime addressed the proposed increase to water service fees and the referendum to cover the cost for improvements to Jackson Health Systems. He questioned how all those proposed increases would be accomplished in one year.

In response to Commissioner Monestime’s question regarding the amount of revenue generated by the 3.1 percent increase in property value, Ms. Moon stated the increase generated approximately 30 million. She noted that across the entire budget, the actions of the State Legislature related to the Florida Retirement System (FRS) rates and Medicaid was approximately \$100 million and for the tax-supported portion of the budget, approximately \$34.5 million. Ms. Moon explained this was approximately \$8 million for Medicaid paid from the Countywide General Fund and, amongst the four taxing jurisdictions, the remainder of that was the FRS rate adjustment consisting of \$22 million in a combination of Countywide and UMSA, approximately \$4.3 million in the Fire District, and slightly more than \$100,000 in the Library.

Regarding Commissioner Monestime’s inquiry as to the aggregate cost to return the entire five percent to the County employees, Ms. Moon stated that the FY2013-14 nine month value would be \$55 million. She advised that the agreement provided that employee concessions would be brought back for discussion to determine if they could be returned. In response to Commissioner Monestime’s question regarding the Mayor’s originally proposed Fire District millage, Ms. Moon clarified that the original millage increase proposed was approximately 1.4 mils, a tax increase of \$21.20 for a \$150,000 home. With respect to the Library, Ms. Moon stated the original millage increase was .1268 mils, which equated to \$19.00. She confirmed

Commissioner Monestime's comment that a 48 percent increase was originally proposed for the debt services millage rate and noted the total debt service payment this year totaled approximately \$75 million, consisting of the remainder of Safe Neighborhood Parks Program, General Obligation Bond (GOB), Criminal Justice, and the Building Better Communities Bond. She noted the 48 percent increase would increase the FY 2012-13 debt service millage to \$72.6 million. Pertaining to the balance in the GOB, Ms. Moon stated over \$1 billion in bonds had been issued to date and noted that the Board authorized staff to enter into a type of commercial paper program which provided a line of credit that when a specific amount was spent, would trigger the issuance of debt to repay that line. She noted the County did not anticipate issuing new debt in the GOB program this year and pointed out that the millage increase was proposed to pay the debt services amount currently outstanding.

Discussion ensued between Commissioner Monestime and Ms. Moon regarding the reason for proposing specifically 48 percent, versus a different percentage amount, to the debt service millage rate rather than a different percentage. Ms. Moon explained that a portion of the increase would address the anticipated issuance of debt in 2013-14, adding that staff conducted a workshop 18 months ago in which a detailed description of how the money in the bond programs was spent.

Commissioner Monestime expressed concern with the proposal to close libraries and fire stations. He stated he was supportive of a flat millage rate; however, for the sake of having flexibility, he would probably decide on a higher millage to allow the Administration to come back with better numbers. Commissioner Monestime noted in light of increased property values and considering all the other issues the residents were being asked to fund, the Board must use caution against setting the threshold too low. He stated although he was not advocating for a tax increase, he spoke in support of having the flexibility to revisit the numbers proposed.

Mayor Gimenez clarified that the proposed debt service millage would pay for the debt service.

Commissioner Suarez noted that the issues before the Board had been adequately addressed and explained that only part of a saying he quoted was printed in the newspaper article today and explained that the missing portion, "...Even a wise man sits on an anthill" actually contained a compliment. He yielded his time to his colleague and advised that he would later address the impasse issues with the labor unions when that item was before the Board.

Commissioner Zapata commended Mayor Gimenez for rethinking his position and expressed his agreement with comments made by the Finance Committee Chairman, Commissioner Bovo. He suggested that next year, to alleviate the unexpected adjustments, perhaps the Administration should prepare alternative budget proposals, i.e. Plans B or C. Commissioner Zapata noted he shared Commissioner Souto's position on items costing more when purchased through the County's procurement process than from a private vendor. Regarding UMSA, he stated he would have supported the Mayor's previous recommendation that the UMSA millage be increased to invest in the areas and stated this should be considered in the future. Commissioner Zapata commended the advocates of the Pet's Trust on the amazing job they have done pushing this issue forward; however, he stated timing was the point of disagreement and noted he voted against the issue.

In response to Commissioner Zapata's question how this year's total Fire Rescue budget compared with that of FY2006-07, Ms. Moon noted the proposed budget of FY2010-11 was \$20 million less than actual expenditures.

Chief Downey advised that the Fire Rescue Department's operating expenses was \$402 million in FY 2008-09 versus the current \$357 million.

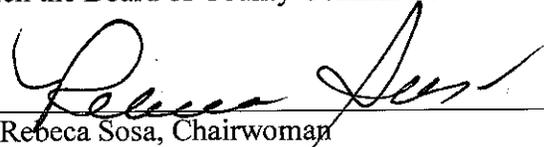
Commissioner Zapata commented on the need to make some adjustments to the Administration's demands on the department with respect to internal transfers.

Mayor Gimenez stated the Administration would revisit his proposal to identify opportunities to further minimize the impact to County departments/personnel. He again reiterated the point that the proposed closings was the maximum number being considered and staff would be working to minimize as many service cuts as possible.

Commissioner Zapata noted the budget report indicated that a flat millage rate would result in a \$39 million increase in tax dollars representing three percent of the revenue. He pointed out that even with a flat millage, the County would collect nearly \$4 million additional dollars. Commissioner Zapata noted he felt it was good policy to limit the growth of government ensuring that costs decreased over time. Referencing information he received indicating that the personal income growth of the average citizen in Miami-Dade County increased 2.4 percent, he stated he preferred using that as a guidepost for determining government growth. Commissioner Zapata emphasized the importance of ensuring that, moving forward, every year our government growth should be less than the average citizens' personal income growth. He expressed his support of the foregoing adjusted proposal and noted he looked forward to working with the Administration on greater efficiencies next year.

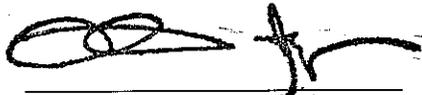
There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole, it was moved by Commissioner Suarez that the meeting be adjourned. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Bell, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a unanimous vote of the members present.

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m. after which the Board of County Commissioners resumed its regular session.



Rebeca Sosa, Chairwoman

ATTEST: HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK



By: Christopher Agrippa, Deputy Clerk