

Brevard County Board of County Commissioners

*Commission Chambers, Building C
2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
Viera, FL 32940*



Minutes

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

1:00 PM

Budget Workshop #3

Commission Chambers

Rollcall

Present: Commissioner District 1 Katie Delaney , Commissioner District 2 Tom Goodson, Commissioner District 3 Kim Adkinson, Commissioner District 4 Rob Feltner, and Commissioner District 5 Thad Altman

B. CALL TO ORDER: 1:07 P.M.

C. Budget Overview

Jim Liesenfelt, County Manager, advised staff has one presentation to go through; he will try to talk slower than normal, but it is not a very long presentation; and then staff will bring it forward to the Board for discussion.

Chair Altman asked before this is done, to do a quick Pledge of Allegiance.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Adkinson led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL, RE: COMMISSIONER GOODSON TO PARTICIPATE VIA TELEPHONE

Commissioner Delaney asked if the Board needs to vote on Commissioner Goodson.

Chair Altman replied affirmatively; and he has a lot of support on this Board to keep him inline.

The Board approved for Commissioner Goodson to participate via telephone.

Result: APPROVED

Mover: Katie Delaney

Second: Rob Feltner

Ayes: Delaney, Goodson, Adkinson, Feltner, and Altman

C.1. Budget Overview (continued)

Meeting went into Recess

Meeting Reconvened

Meeting went into Recess

Meeting Reconvened

Mr. Liesenfelt continued by saying with the slides, they are going to be going over a few subjects, the Board direction, Charter Cap language, impacts, County comparisons, the finding of critical need process, and some General Fund critical needs for the Board to look at; they also did add in additional revenue options for it to look at; and then questions and Board discussion. He commented at the March 19th workshop, the Board directed staff to evaluate what steps would be required to reset the General Fund millage rate to a level that would generate the revenue needed to address the County's infrastructure and other critical needs; staff is going to give the Board a little background on the millage rate, and some possible methods to look at in the critical needs; and then, as the Board instructed, they are going to show it steps, they are going to present the steps that are required to reset the General Fund millage. He went on to say, this chart the Board has seen a number of times, is a reminder for all it has underneath the Charter Cap; he or she will see the definition coming up; but underneath the Charter Cap, the County is limited to Consumer Price Index for all Urban

Customers (CPI-U), or three percent, whatever is less; as the taxable values, which is the redline, increases, the Board is going to see the millage rate drop, which is the blue line, so there is the examples staff has had for the last seven fiscal years; this is the chart staff uses to determine the Consumer Price Index (CPI); its CPI is the CPI-U, and it is the average of the 12 months previous; when looking at the chart, the blue line is the CPI that staff has been using to increase the revenue; the way the Charter cap works, looking at last year's revenue, and it can increase by the CPI; and looking in 2015, the County's revenue increased by 0.12 percent. He stated this coming year, which is all the way to the right, the County will be able to increase by 2.63 percent; the dash green line is the cap, the County is not allowed to go above three percent; those three fiscal years in '21, '22, and '23, the Board can see the inflation rate was higher; staff was only allowed to go up to three percent, so the years that the costs went up eight percent, the County only captured three; by looking at this year's inflation rate, he already went through March at 3.3 percent; the CPI is up at four percent; and he wanted to point that out because if the Board remembers the 2.63 percent is a number from last year, 2025, but it applies to the budget that starts October 1, 2026, and runs through '27. He noted if the County starts facing four percent inflation as of now through the end of the next fiscal year, it will only be going up to 2.36 percent; it is always a lagging number, because that is the way it is set up in the Charter and how it deals with the CPI, so it is just a reminder; and if gas prices do not go down and some of the other inflationary impacts, staff will not be able to address them in the next fiscal year's budget.

Commissioner Feltner advised he is going to point out the same thing the Board talked about the other day; that is the CPI, so one can call it the inflation that government admits to, but at the Federal level; that is compounded; and it is a little misleading when one sees the peak and it sort of goes down because each of those years is compounded from the prior one.

Mr. Liesenfelt explained he cannot give the Board perfect math, because if it is done based on the three percent, it has to do new constructions and some other things, but those three years that they are maxed at the three percent, staff was able to recapture about 9.27 percent increase when the overall inflation rate was like 1.17, so it lost about eight percent, and that compounds years after year; once it is lost, the County cannot gain it back because it can never go above the three percent; in those three years, it had an impact; and he has a fear the County is going to see that later this calendar year and in the next fiscal year that it is not going to be able to keep up with the inflation. He went on to say this goes back to the previous chart; this is where the County's millage rate has dropped by 27 percent since February 2019; looking at the bottom of the chart, those are the comparison counties staff looks at when putting together the County's budget, that it has the lowest millage rate of everybody else; if 2019, the millage rate was 3.9 percent, of the other seven peer counties that was looked at, only one had a lower millage rate even before it started going down in 2019; but that gives the Commissioners an idea of what other folks are looking at; and only three counties have decreased over the last seven years, three counties that have increased, and one has kept their millage rate the same. He pointed out when the millage rate is kept the same, if taxable values go up eight percent, that means the County captures eight percent; taxable values go up here eight percent and the County has a cap of 2.6, it only goes up 2.6 percent; and it is just a reminder of what the County is facing compared to other counties. He advised there is the exact definition of the finding of critical need; what the Board really needs to see is in the middle where it talks about paragraphs (a) and (b), it has to go to its Charter and look that up; but if a supermajority of the Board concurs in finding that such an excess is necessary because of emergency or critical need, that finding shall be set forth the ultimate facts upon which it is based and shall be valid for one single budget year; in the packet staff also included, and he will talk about it again briefly, but staff included the last two times the Board found critical need in the Resolutions in there; if he or she reads through it, one of them were quite detailed

describing all the different critical needs; if the Board went so far as that, that is the type of resolution staff would be presenting to let it decide what it wants to do; but if critical needs is declared, it has to be pretty well defined and it has to follow the Charter. He stated the date process for that is staff is going through the February through May budget workshops and getting Board direction; staff will be turning in their Department budgets early May-ish, like May 4th or something, somewhere in that neck of the woods, that is where they put it together; then staff sits down, the County Manager, Assistant County Managers, and Budget Office go through all of the requests; they sit down with staff, each Department will be presenting Memorial Day week and the first week of June; then they start putting their heads together, start developing the balanced budget; they put the budget message together for the Board; July 13 is the date staff will be sending a proposed budget; and when staff does is because July 21 is the Board's tentative millage, so July 13 is when staff has the draft agenda out, so they will have the proposed budget put together for the Board by then. He went on by saying there are two major dates on here, the first one is in green; July 21, the Board sets the tentative millage; if the Board decided to go to critical needs or anything else, it sets the millage then; the Board does not go lower than the millage one sets as the tentative millage then; there is a process where it can go above it; it is not worth talking about because it has to send out a new Truth in Millage (TRIM) notices; but the Board would have to set that millage rate at the meeting. He commented that gives the Property Appraiser enough time to put out the TRIM notices and mail that out to all the property owners throughout the County; the second important date is in September, and that is where the Board adopts the tentative and final millage after the first budget hearing; if the Board does not adopt after the first budget hearing, it cannot raise the millage rate at the final budget hearing; those are important dates; and basically, the Board cannot go above on July 21, and it cannot go above after the first September meeting. He explained they laid out the dates they put the budget together, talked about critical needs, so the question is if the Board decided to do critical needs and had a resolution, when would it vote on and adopt the resolution; he hates to say the answer is it depends, but the two times it has been done, it has been done two different ways; the first time, the Board adopted it September 13, 2016, and then again on July 23, 2019, which was the tentative millage; and he reiterated there are a couple of different ways, and staff follows whatever the Board would tell them, or whatever the method the Board would like.

Commissioner Delaney asked what makes the determination between July or September.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied he has no idea, they kind of went back and looked and the Board decided to do one in July and one in September.

Commissioner Delaney remarked so there is just no rhyme or reason.

Commissioner Feltner inquired how the TRIM process affects that.

Mr. Liesenfelt responded if the Board declares critical needs, it is going to go above the Charter Cap; and therefore, in July the TRIM notice has to be sent out with the higher, above the cap millage.

Commissioner Feltner asked if the Board were to give that direction, because of the TRIM notice, it would have to get that to the Property Appraiser in July so she can send it out in August.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied affirmatively.

Jill Hayes, Assistant County Manager, explained that is correct; just to add to that, the Board

could set that proposed millage in July at the higher rate; then it can adopt the critical need in September, which is what that was done in that first instance; and that finding of critical need is not really related to TRIM other than the County has to set that higher millage rate in July.

Mr. Liesenfelt added that works for any millage, not just the General Fund; if the Board wants to declare critical need on any millage, it has to make sure it meets the same timelines as staff is showing here; and he keeps saying General Fund, but it would apply to any of the non-voter approved millage rates. He noted staff is going to go over some of the highlights of what could be critical needs and the impact; these are the needs and the impact; these are the slides, or the areas the Board heard from the last budget meeting where staff went through all of the definitions of all of the different needs; there is infrastructure, public safety, general/Countywide, and staff has some numbers up there; they could be higher, they could be lower, but that was some of the items staff could identify pretty quickly; there is about \$47 million they could show the Board, and it has to decide whether that is a critical need or not; in red, he wants to point out that the ad valorem because this has come up, ad valorem taxes do not fund the utilities or solid waste infrastructure or operations; and those are funded through user fees and not include any finding of critical need or the millage rate set. He remarked what they did as staff was they went through and called them options for lack of a better way; these are just examples to show the Board different ideas for critical needs; he will go a little bit backwards; by looking at Option 3, if the millage rate was, it is 3.0486, that was from two fiscal years ago; if the Board decided to go reset the millage rate to two years ago, that would generate about almost \$23 million; and an impact on a taxable value home of \$200,000 would be about \$36. He went on to say down below, the Board can see Option 3, where it says 18.43; that is the increase per \$100,000 of taxable value; if somebody had a taxable value of \$500,000, he did not write the math down; he did it last night, the tax increase would be about \$90; Option 1, if the Board goes back three years, the fiscal 22-23 rate, which is 3.2619, the impact to a \$200,000 taxable value home would be just under \$80; that would generate about \$39 million; Option 2, they picked something somewhere in the middle just so it helps them with the math; if the Board wants to look at an impact of \$50, that generates, they backed into that millage rate of 3.11; that would estimate about \$28 million; and he has the slide up to try to give the Board some sample impacts, some sample amounts of revenue that different millages can generate for everything. He advised this is a little bit more detailed on some of the possible ways of critical needs; the board has seen the slide, the information on the left it saw at the March 19th meeting; the \$1.5 million was restored for resurfacing; on the right the Board can see that staff asked Public Works to put together some of the projects if the Board declared a critical need; if it declared a critical need for Public Works, those are some of the projects staff would start on immediately in fiscal year 27, just to give an idea what the needs are across the County; and they are pretty much across the County itself. He stated a little different information the Board has not seen; the jail, staff talked about some of the capital for the jail, the doors, the tents, or the spring structures, HVAC, coolers; below the Board can see this is the cost increase or the costs have been increasing, they include the jail operations and the facility CIP; the jail is pretty old; he has been here 35 years; it was old enough when he got here, and it has been added onto since then, so the County is facing some jail needs that will be coming up in the next handful of years; this is information that the Board has seen before, that is all of the facilities being maintained by Public Works through the Facilities group; but all of this has been talked about in March between the north area, central area, and south area; he forgot in one of the briefings, staff was asked if the south area includes Viera, so when one says south, it is looking at Viera south; central is between here and SR 528; and then the north area is above SR 528. He stated it is not a bad way to divide up the assets across the County are not distributed evenly, but that comes pretty close to the dividing each County in thirds based on the assets; same information that the Board saw last time about Parks and Recreation; this is just to let one know that the County has needs coming up in the next few

years; same thing, the millage that will be the last one will be paid off; the debt millage will be paid off this year; but the voters voted on 2000 and 2006, so the Board is looking at structures, parks, and infrastructure that has been built 25 years ago; and those are just the ones with the referendum. He pointed out it does not include some of the County's older parks, so it does have quite a bit of needs coming back and forth on parks that will be facing and adjusting to for the next handful of years again; IT on the same slide, it is in there just to point out that staff will have some yearly costs starting in '27, down below, for the County's storage in its systems and working on its networks; they are small numbers compared to what one sees in Public Works or the jail; he wants to add, IT is infrastructure; the County cannot get anything done without its IT and they have been pretty good with staff working on their budget; but the County does have some needs coming up. He noted the Sheriff's Office has the same issues, infrastructure, equipment, and operations; infrastructure, there is a lot on the jail; the equipment, they have, he believes, over 500 vehicles in the fleet; he is an old Transit guy, so he knows there is a lot of turnover every year, a lot of needs on their equipment; then operation, staff has a lot on the County jail; there is inmate food services, medical care, and both of those, as Commissioner Feltner pointed out, the CPI that they are admitting to, everyone has been to the grocery store; he would love for his groceries to be at 2.6 percent; but he does not believe that number for groceries; medical care, same thing, that is not a 2.6 percent, that is a much higher number; and the Sheriff's Office is facing the same issues there as in the County's budget. He went on to say Public Safety, he is going to kind of go counterclockwise on the slides; on the upper left-hand corner that is in orange, what staff wanted to point out to the Board is Public Safety is the number one priority; they have been following through that the last handful of years; Public Safety, which includes Sheriff, Fire Rescue, and the Medical Examiner; the share of the General Fund has gone from a little over 53 percent to just under 60 percent in the last five or six years; when taking a look at the Fire Rescue side, one can see, and he is not criticizing or anything like that, but he is just pointing out there is an investment the County made with its firefighters; last year in 2025, their compensation and benefits of \$71 million are expecting this coming year to be \$91 million; that is all part of their Contract that they just recently agreed to; when looking at the upper right-hand corner, as is called the blue side, the Emergency Medical transfer, their amount of funding went up a little over \$10 million in the General Fund; the Board told staff to focus on Public Safety; and that was the balanced budget staff delivered to the Board last year showing what some of the impacts were. He mentioned staff talked briefly with the Sheriff about medical care, but do not forget the County is an employer as well so it is facing the same pressures that it is getting on both health insurance and on the risk management; homeowners see it through their homeowners insurance; the County sees it through its property insurance, worker's compensation, auto liability, and all those regular insurance things that everyone faces; the Board can see that the balance forward, basically the money in the bank for employee benefits, has dropped from \$40 million to about \$23 million; on the risk management side, \$20 million down to \$4 million; and he explained at the last meeting that staff is going to take a closer look at how the County allocates the cost, how it comes up with the cost, how it deals, and how it deals with everything. He stated he has this slide to point out to the Board that health insurance needs to be raised by 10 percent; that is 10 percent more on the Fire Rescue budget, 10 percent more on the Sheriff's budget, so what the County has to do is to stop the bleeding on employee balance forward; it needs to start balancing out because eventually it is going to run out of money; and it will then be putting it on the backs of the Departments, but it is funding the Departments with its own money, so it has to pay this no matter what, whether they put it in their budget or to shore up the fund.

Commissioner Feltner asked if he can ask one technical question, what happened to sovereign immunity this session, or are they not done with that.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied 300 or 500, sovereign immunity went up, and he asked Melissa Powers,

Human Resources Director, to answer that.

Ms. Powers responded House Bill 145 was passed by the legislature; her understanding is it never got signed, but it never got vetoed, so it is law; she will repeat herself; House Bill 145 did get passed by both the Senate and the House; it was not officially signed, but not vetoed by the Governor, so her understanding it is going to be law effective October 1; and the limits are increasing to she believes 350,000 per incident, 500,000 per event.

Mr. Liesenfelt advised that will increase the County's premium on its risk management side, so it will be facing this cost.

Ms. Powers noted the County is self-insured up to limits currently, and then have excess coverage as well; the County's excess coverage costs will likely go up; but its claim costs in that self-insured portion is going to go up dramatically as well.

Mr. Liesenfelt stated the point he really wanted to make with employee benefits and risk management, those funds affect all budgets, whether it is the Board, Constitutional Officers, General Fund, Enterprise Fund, and Special Revenue Funds, it affects across the board.

*The Board recessed at 1:30 p.m. and reconvened at 1:31 p.m.

Mr. Liesenfelt advised the Board he has a couple more slides; the bottom chart is the Florida Retirement System (FRS) rates; the blue is the regular and the orange is special risk; just pointing out as the FRS rates increase the County's costs, a one percent FRS rate is the same thing as a one percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase, so the County has to fund those; and those rates are set by the State. He stated staff added two different examples of other taxes because they talked about revenues, public service tax, and gas tax at the last workshop; what staff did here, and it is not perfect math, if the Board is interested, they would have to go more detailed, but basically, what they did was pulled out a sample tax bill of an employee's Florida Power & Light (FPL) bill, what their current bill was, and then did a five and 10 percent on the bill; like he said, it is not perfect, staff will do better math if the Board is interested, but it gives it an idea of a five percent increase on a public service tax; the impact to this customer would be about \$76 a year, a 10 percent increase would be somewhere in the \$150 range, and what it would do is generate between \$16 and \$33 million; they just did this so the Board can see what \$30 million in property tax, what is the impact to a homeowner; \$30 million tax on a public service tax, and what does that do to an average homeowner; staff brought that out as an example; and it is not his bill, his bill came out today during lunch, so he was doing the math during his lunch break as well, with the same one. He commented last but not least, staff just have fuel taxes up there; they have the ninth-cent fuel tax and then the Local Option Gas Tax (LOGT) of one to five cents; if the Board will look in the light blue there, the consumer went through, they did 50 gallons a month; he went through a few studies; it looks like the average monthly consumption per vehicle is about 48; he saw a couple of say 48 to 50, it is dropped from 55, so he asked the Budget Office to put it together based on 50 gallons just for the easier math; if the County increases the gas tax by six cents, that would be about \$3 a month, \$36 annually, and that is per vehicle; if there is more than one vehicle in the household, it will be higher; that would also affect all of the County's lawn services, delivery services, and whatever else may be using different fuel taxes; it generates about \$9 million; but that would only take care of transportation critical needs, it would not take care of infrastructure critical needs; and the Board had discussion on both items at the last workshop, so staff just wanted to show a couple of examples on that. He stated after that, the Board indicated it wanted to discuss it, so staff is here for questions, whatever they can do to help, and then any direction the Board wants staff to bring back at the July tentative millage setting meeting.

Commissioner Delaney stated she would like to ask either Mr. Liesenfelt or Ms. Powers, if with the insurance, she has spoken to the School Board because they are doing some different things with clinics, trying to do different things as far as early treatment and that kind of thing, early detection of medical needs and whatnot; they say it is saving a lot of money for them when it comes to pharmaceuticals and prescriptions; and she asked if the County looked into that, creative things that could bring in savings.

Ms. Powers replied yes, she has been speaking to the School Board, and they are expanding; they currently have a couple of clinics; they are looking to expand that; they have asked the County, through her, if it would be interested in joining them, because obviously, the more lives involved, the more leverage one has to negotiate better prices; she definitely indicated the County would be interested; her understanding is he had some meetings, she thinks about a week ago, so she needs to follow up and then bring it back to the Employee Benefits Advisory Committee; and obviously, they make recommendations that staff brings to the Board.

Commissioner Delaney asked just from Ms. Powers' initial conversation, if she thinks that could be a possible direction the Board could go, or if there are other things out there that people are doing that are bringing savings to the insurance.

Ms. Powers responded right now the current status of the industry is there is a lot of push towards direct contracting with providers as opposed to going through negotiated rates with insurance companies; and they definitely are exploring options there, and this is one piece of that.

Commissioner Delaney commented she guesses she will just throw out her thoughts for different things that are on her mind; one of them is the idea of bringing back the Save Our Indian River Lagoon (SOIRL) plan that the County has right now, she is not talking about the renewal, but the plan it currently has with dollars it already has, and seeing if there are any infrastructure projects or land acquisition projects that the County could implement through those fund that would still work within the SOIRL plan that could help in this because it is funds that have already been raised; even if taxes do need to go up, it may be the County could make them not have to go up quite so much, if the Commissioners make some different choices as far as the SOIRL plan goes; another thing she was thinking about was employee salaries, the raises, and the possibility of looking into a tiered situation rather than across the board; she does not know exactly how that would look; but she just figured it is something the Board could talk about. She advised those are just a couple of things; she will open up the floor to anybody else; and she probably has more thoughts going on, but she will let other feedback come in as well.

Commissioner Feltner asked since staff still has the presentation up about the gas, if the County buys gas in advance so it is buying at today's prices versus what is going to happen a month from now; he stated when one sees things with airlines who are in serious trouble because they sold a ticket at a certain price and then gas has gone up; and he asked how the Board does it, or how it can do it, because he knows the County is going to use a certain amount of gas.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied he is sure it is today's prices; as a Transit guy, back, he cannot remember when it went up, he had a spreadsheet, he budgeted 83 cents a gallon for diesel and he got to a dollar and he was panicking; at that point, the County was paying \$5 a gallon for diesel; there was quite an especially independent transit agencies, it can work, and oftentimes it also does not work that it does its future contracts; Southwest Airlines was famous for doing it; they had a

couple of years of savings, but when their future contracts came due, their prices went way up; that is something to take a look at; knowing the transit agencies, he does not know if anybody that really came out ahead in that; and when talking about future contracts, one is talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Commissioner Feltner pointed out the County's situation is certainly in the short-term; and it is not a stretch of the imagination that gas costs will continue to go up in the short-term and how to possibly mitigate that. He asked on the employee insurance, the Board is looking at, is it \$15,000 a year to insure.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied affirmatively; he stated the employer's share is \$15,000.

Commissioner Feltner reiterated the employer's share of it is \$15,000; he stated those costs will only continue to go up; he was thinking about what Commissioner Delaney said regarding the clinics and such, he thinks the new model around here seems to be, because of the Rockledge Hospital situation and Health First is building a standalone Emergency Room (ER), is it does not make sense that everybody goes to the big hospital ER when he or she has simple things; they can do triage there; if one needs to go to a hospital, one can go ahead and go to the hospital; he thinks the County will see a lot more clinics in the future; and he asked if the School District is doing an in-house clinic or how that work.

Commissioner Delaney advised from what she understands, she thinks they have a contract with some smaller groups; she asked if that is correct; and she stated she thinks it is more in-house.

Ms. Powers explained the clinic model is basically setting up employee clinics, so it is care that is only for employees of the organization and is intended to be primary care; and if more specialized care is needed, they can either have the capacity to do that with contracts with specialists or refer them out if they do not have the capacity.

Commissioner Delaney stated she thinks the idea is if there is a place in-house, in the buildings, then employees are more likely to go to the doctor early on before diseases and illnesses get to a more serious and expensive place.

Ms. Powers noted that is definitely one piece of it; the other piece is usually prices are negotiated for that directly with the provider as opposed to going through negotiated rates with insurance companies, so one would not be paying that overhead and all of that with the insurance companies; there is kind of a multi-level of benefits to it; and typically, the hurdles have been the upfront cost to establish brick and mortar clinics; and if there is a way to do it, which she thinks the School Board is looking to do with established groups, that not having to build buildings or purchase buildings, that it could be more feasible and less upfront costs.

Commissioner Feltner stated if the County could share it with them across the street, it has a lot of employees here and the School Board is across the street; it is interesting, and Chair Altman will remember this very well, the doctor of the day in the Legislature during session; they have a doctor of the day; and when the doctor of the day was not there due to travel or whatever, there was always a couple of members who were also doctors, so they became the doctor of the day; he certainly remembers one time going in to Dr. Ronald 'Doc' Renuart, and he told him he had the crud; he provided him a Z-Pak; and just that fast, he was off to Walgreen's and it didn't cost anybody any money, so for the easy stuff like that.

Chair Altman stated on Page 15, Parks and Recreation, it is unfunded infrastructure needs; and

he asked are those numbers required if the County went to the voter-approved millage, or how much of that millage rate would it have to go to, to fund those parks unfunded needs, a total of \$29 million.

Mr. Liesenfelt stated staff is literally trying to figure out the math.

Keith Neterer, Interim Budget Office Director, stated depending on where those are because each millage represents a specific area; and kind of depends on where these projects are in terms of what millage would have to be levied to raise the amount.

Chair Altman replied right, so staff has not really evaluated what it would need to do for millage rates if the County were to meet that number, the \$29 million.

Mr. Liesenfelt commented if the Board is interested to give staff some time, not a whole lot of time, and they can bring that back to the Board.

Chair Altman noted he thinks that would be good because the County fell far short of the voter-approved millage when it did that last year, and he would love to know what it would be; secondly, in the second half of that slide, in the categories, community nature, senior center, the three line items, and the approximate age of those facilities estimated replacement cost; he will use the first line, community nature, senior citizens senior centers, eight sites, list those at 30-plus years, the estimated replacement cost of \$40 million; that is not very old, 25, 30 years; he asked if the County would have to do total replacement costs; would that be replacement cost or renovation; and what does that number reflect.

Budget Overview (continued)

Ian Golden, Parks and Recreation Director, explained staff actually, when they were putting this slide together, they do ongoing upgrade and maintenance costs as part of the annual budget; this was looking at as it gets to 30-plus years of age on structures, major systems starting being lost; as the County starts doing that, the trade-off between the cost of repairing it versus replacing it starts to blur; and what staff was looking at projecting forward was what the cost would be for replacement.

Chair Altman asked total replacement, tearing down and replacing it.

Mr. Golden replied affirmatively.

Chair Altman asked what the need would be to do that, and what an example is of that.

Mr. Golden responded the answer to that, an example would be maybe not even one of the facilities the County has, and he does not have it with him right now, but the County has facilities that are older than these that were built with referendum dollars; some of those facilities that were built in the '70s or '80s and are approaching 40 or 50 years of age, again, it is getting to the point where the County is having to do multiple replacements of systems within the buildings; it is HVACs, ceilings, floors, and potentially other structures within those buildings themselves; and when that amount of money is starting to be spent, staff looks at starting to plan for replacement of an entire structure.

Chair Altman stated that seems to be pretty low; he asked with a 25-year old structure, what kind of structures is the County building if it cannot last 25 years; it kind of loses a lot of credibility with him, because . . .

Mr. Liesenfelt stated this is also part of an illustration, because a debt millage and operating millage was voted for; the debt millage is building the facilities; the facilities, even before replacement or repair, the County is paying it out of the operating millage; if all of a sudden a thousand different buildings need replaced, once it starts being replaced, the County does not have that debt millage anymore that it can use the funds for it; there is no ability to issue new debt to replace those buildings or approve those buildings, it is all going to come out of the operating funds; and that is going to cause new pressure that has never been seen with parks because that those millages until the year 2000 did not exist. He advised it is not a tomorrow issue, but this is an issue the County is probably going to be facing over the next five or 10 years, and how it does that.

Chair Altman commented he guesses he is having trouble, let him say a nature center that is 25 or 30 years in age and an estimate replacement cost is put on it; he asked if that is the total replacement cost of a building of only 25 years; and he stated he understands if it was the air conditioners or the roof.

Mr. Golden stated again, the ideas was staff was trying to project out, not maybe for next year; they were projecting out for the next five or 10 years; the other thing being thought about with structure and facilities is that through Parks and Recreation Department is the sheer number of people who are going through those facilities; people have asked staff why it costs so much for a pavilion or bathroom repair, replacement when it costs one 'X' to get it done, where a friend did it in his house, put a pavilion in his backyard, that friend does not have thousands of people using that pavilion every year, they do not have thousands of people going through a bathroom every year, and they do not have the same American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, for example, that staff does for those facilities; and this was just trying to get a handle on, when staff projects out what the replacement costs could be for those facilities as the years wear on.

Commissioner Delaney inquired what about the foundation and structure of the buildings, is that something that is still sound in most of these buildings, or is Mr. Golden saying that there is possibly foundation and structural issues.

Mr. Golden replied, it depends it is a projection; and there is the potential to do footprint replacements where a footprint is left if those structures are salvageable.

Commissioner Delaney asked like to gut it.

Mr. Golden responded that could be an option; again, this would just be a matter of an exercise, to project out costs; the other thing to take into account looking down the road is there are potentially some offsets; as technology improves, the roofs that were put on or systems that were put in place years ago, if they are upgraded; the same thing staff always does when they go in and potentially retrofit and do repairs, they could extend the life of buildings also, it is all of those things; again, this was just kind of an exercise to get at if the county needs to and to look 10 years down the road with these types of funding issues; and as Mr. Liesenfelt pointed out, the fact that there are no referendum dollars left, it is coming out of basically operations, having to do long-term planning, very long-term planning.

Commissioner Adkinson stated this is her talking out loud while she is thinking; the County has parks that it has to maintain, tear down and rebuild buildings, because it has all of these things that it has to pay for, ADA compliance, toilets that could last through hundreds of thousands of people; and she asked how many parks does the County have that are actually in cities or towns.

Mr. Golden advised he does not have that off of the top of his head exactly, but he does know there are quite a few; there are some, such as within the City of Titusville that are actually part of an Agreement with the City; and there is an Interlocal in place that allows the County to actually charge the special district fund against the City population to help fund repairs, maintenance, and operations at those City parks.

Commissioner Adkinson asked what if the County just gave those city parks to the cities and let them maintain it, and somehow say it always has to be a park, the cities cannot sell or give them away; and then the County does not have that ongoing maintenance, and the County could be assured, if the cities wanted them, honestly.

Mr. Golden pointed out he would have to ask the County Attorney's Office to review the Interlocal, but his guess would be that if he was a city that is putting their tax bases, tax dollars into repair and maintenance, they would want those tax dollars back, so they would remove themselves from that special district; and the County would not potentially see any cost savings, because the cities would want to have those dollars that their current residents were putting into that special district.

Commissioner Feltner asked if the County was also giving them a liability and a future expense.

Commissioner Adkinson noted maybe cities or towns would want their park to be the things that they want; she is just thinking of Melbourne Beach, which she knows is not a great example, but it has a particular kind of community, and they may want . . .

Commissioner Feltner interjected by saying he does not disagree with the sort of thought process, but his experience, the prior Board tried some of that, and they were not looking to take on an expense; and he understands the cities are dealing with the same kinds of burdens that the County is.

Commissioner Adkinson commented but they are not constrained by the cap like the County is.

Commissioner Feltner stated he understands that, too; he will stop talking in one second; something he was thinking about, Chair Altman when he is talking about, and he is with him, the whole building does not need to be leveled because it needs a roof on it, but one of the things right here in this District in the center part of the County, is the Zoo Linear Trail; it is completely outdoors and it will not be long in the future before all of the surface will have to be recovered; he cannot remember how long it is, it is over a mile or something; it is hard to know what that expense will be in the future to resurface all of that with the new decking; and that is one that does not have the benefit of the roof, indoors, and out of elements, all of that. He asked if that would be an example of something definitely not going to make it to 25 years before . . .

Mr. Golden replied it would, plus the County has probably miles of boardwalk.

Commissioner Feltner stated that is what he means, not specifically.

Mr. Golden mentioned a lot of things that are outdoors, playgrounds for example.

Commissioner Feltner stated especially over on the beach; he lived over on the beach for a number of years; even plastic can rust over there; and if one has anything that is metal on the beach, he or she will have to replace it.

Mr. Liesenfelt stated for Commissioner Adkinson, for more information, there are three cities the County maintains their parks, Titusville, Cocoa, and Rockledge; Cocoa and Rockledge is with the Special Recreation District 4; that is what District 4 was way back in the day; staff just negotiated a new contract with Cocoa that they were pretty tough on to make sure that above \$5,000 costs; it took two years to get that contract done to make sure that more of the burden is put on the cities; their contract, he believes Rockledge's expires in '31; he forgets which tax the County shares with the City of Titusville; but the County maintains with the City of Titusville the same way; it collects the tax and spreads that money out; it has given or returned, whatever the proper word is, a number of parks, Pineda Regional, which is known as Fred Poppe; that was just before he got up here, that was five years; and with the agreement with the cities, the County funded five years, or gave them enough money for five years of transition. He advised he knows Palm Bay is now struggling with those parks, that has come up; there is a gun range in Titusville; that was one of the first ones the County gave to the folks without a reverter clause; a lot of that is because there was a lead, and yes, the County does not want that back; if the County gets the cities to work with it, it also wants to be careful on the reverter clause, he is not saying Palm Bay is doing this, but if a park is given to Palm Bay, in 10 years they may not be able to afford it; and then they hand it right back to the County. He pointed out that was a lot of negotiation with the City of Cocoa; if the County handed the parks back to the City of Cocoa, they wanted to make sure they were properly maintained the way they were at that beginning; the same thing if somebody hands it back to the County; it is not as easy, but it is something; but he thinks the range is the last time the County has transferred any property to a park or private group that the County used to maintain.

Mr. Golden commented yes, without a reverter clause.

Mr. Liesenfelt noted that is the first time he knows of without a reverter clause.

Chair Altman stated community nature centers, 25, this building here is 25 years old, relatively new buildings; one would not propose tearing this down; looking at the Melbourne Library, it is 35 years old, and one would not dream of tearing that down; he can understand if it is an open air boardwalk at the ocean or something like that; but he thinks the Board needs a lot analysis for those numbers to be valid than what it has.

Mr. Liesenfelt advised staff is not coming to the Board saying there is a need to address this now; this is just a demonstration; this building is 35 years old, and rehabbing the bathrooms is pushing a million dollars to do all of the bathrooms in this complex; and the Parks are going to be facing the same issue as they all age as well.

Mr. Golden commented but again, he will emphasize, this was a projection, this was not saying just because they were 25 or 30 years old, they had to be replaced; and this was they were 25 or 30, they are on the radar as 10 years down the road, maybe longer, it is something the County has to start planning for.

Mr. Liesenfelt pointed out this is from the last presentation, because staff talked about infrastructure; they talked about roads and bridges, drainage, infrastructure is IT, they talked about buildings, but Parks has over 1,000 buildings and facilities; everyone forgets about Parks; they spend a lot of time on rehab, building, and repairing; and what he learned is parks are parks, parks is the ground, and the facilities recreation is what the programs should provide, so parks take a lot of money to keep up and maintain.

Chair Altman stated he has another question in general; staff did a phenomenal job on this; this

is really concise, understandable, and simple presentation; it really does capture what the County's needs are; and he asked if the Board were to take a look at the unfunded needs that need to be funded to keep the present level of service, all of the needs being talked about here in terms of County General Fund infrastructure, public safety, what millage rate would the Board need to pass to fund what staff has presented here; he stated he is talking about the County jail, historic courthouse, central and south area infrastructure needs, and the whole shooting caboodle; and he again asked what the Board would be looking at in terms of the millage rate.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied the Board would be looking at Option 1, rolling, resetting the millage back to three years ago, the 3.2619 that would generate somewhere around \$39.8 million.

Chair Altman asked if Mr. Liesenfelt thinks Option 1 would fund these needs.

Mr. Liesenfelt responded it would get the County there; he has slides; there is Option 1, but if the Board looks at the previous slide, it generates \$39 million; staff is showing there could be about \$47 million in critical needs, so that gets the County close; what this does is give the Board the funding for the next year and the year after, because not everything would be able to be addressed all at once; and this gives staff a chance to work through some of the issues.

Commissioner Delaney advised she knows he mentioned the firefighter Contract, but the Sheriff's Contract was pretty substantial as well from what she understands; and she asked it that includes those increases as well.

Mr. Liesenfelt responded affirmatively, and stated that is part of his operations.

Commissioner Delaney inquired over the three years.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied yes, he cannot tell Commissioner Delaney all of it, but yes, it will help cover that too.

Chair Altman noted to him that is a doable thing; the County is basically going back to the millage rate that it had not in the too past future; if indeed these needs are something that need to be funded, he thinks that is not a big ask; that is where he kind of is coming from, the need to try to keep County services provided at the level that they are, including the parks; and he would have additional questions on those numbers. He went on to say he knows there are other issues out there that staff did not mentioned that are needed; he was going to bring up a point in particular; he knows if Circles of Care has not already spoken to staff, they will be; they are having trouble with staffing 100 percent of their beds, and they are looking for a recurring number, a little bit over a million a year, which would enable them to drawdown around \$1.2 million in Federal funds; the County is leaving a lot of money on the table that it could drawdown to match that; he certainly would be willing to take a look at how the County can try to meet those treatment dollars; he is not advocating anything, he is just bringing it to everyone's awareness if staff has not already talked, they will be coming to staff, and they have probably talked to staff; he mentioned to staff that the Board at least have discussion of the service tax revenue stream that would have to be voted on by the voters, so it would be something the County could not raise; but the Board could definitely give the voters the option to vote on that, the public service tax; and the nice thing about that is one does not have to go to the Public Service Commission for a review of the ballot language, it could be put on almost at any time as long as the County met the ballot language deadlines. He pointed out he thinks the County could also use that to reduce some property taxes if it wanted to give some property tax relief; virtually, every city in the County levies that fee, and that would only bring the County

to the level of the other cities and maybe provide some necessary property tax relief, and at the same time help meet the backlog; it is pretty clear, the County is extremely a low-tax County; a lot of necessary improvements have been kind of kicked down the road; if the Board does not address them soon, it is going to cost the County a heck of a lot more money than it would if it continues to delay; and he is coming from a place of trying to meet these unfunded needs.

Commissioner Adkinson commented she is going to pass out the same thing she passed out at the last budget meeting where she said she was going to bring this back for discussion; for anybody out there who is writing an article, she is not suggesting that the County get rid of lifeguards or crossing guards, she is not suggesting any of those things; she is simply saying these are the things that the County provides, the services that they provide that the County is not required to; if the Board is talking about raising taxes here, it needs to start looking where it could saving money; this is not a happy list, this is not fun, and nobody likes it, but she thinks she would like to discuss some of it; it certainly will not get the County the amount of money it needs, she thinks it needs to do a little bit of saving and maybe bringing in some more funds, she is not sure; and she asked why the School Board could not pay for their crossing guards.

Commissioner Feltner stated to let him speak to this because he has worked hard with crossing guards, along with Matthew Wallace, Public Safety Director; when he got here, Viera Elementary down there is like the Berlin Airlift happening every day, and he gives them a lot of credit, they make it work; as the Board knows, he is working on a light down there, and asking the Legislature every which way he can to get that done; but it has been hard to get crossing guards, paying them; the idea the County will have them if it does not pay them is just not going to happen; the question he is going to ask, because he asked this question before, too; and he asked how did that become a County function. He continued by saying he thinks at one time it was Schools; he believes it went to the Sheriff, and then it came to County; he agrees somehow they are connected, Schools and crossing guards; it is the County's situation and part of its Public Safety Department; he wishes that there was more revenue going toward that specifically; and he has to tell the Board that is the last thing, that and the lifeguards, that he is going to . . .

Commissioner Adkinson interjected by saying she is not saying to get rid of lifeguards.

Commissioner Feltner stated he just wanted to say that because has lived it.

Commissioner Adkinson stated that is the thing, if the Board is not willing to cut anything, then the Commissioners have to say out loud that he or she is willing to raise taxes, or the Board just does not do anything and lets the capable staff decide.

Commissioner Feltner commented he did not say that, he is just living that with the County's schools, and for now, it is its responsibility.

Commissioner Adkinson inquired if it could be the responsibility of the Board, the Sheriff, and the Schools; and she stated she does not know as she is just throwing things out there for the Board to talk about.

Commissioner Feltner advised when he was a kid in Ohio, part of detention was one had to go there and be a crossing guard, and he asked if high school juniors could do it; the thing of it is, he thinks they want to be paid; he asked about service learning hours because they all have to that for Bright Futures; the School Board could probably get there with them, but he does not think the County cannot have someone the age of 18, even with its lifeguards who are oftentimes many of them high school students, they are always with a lieutenant lifeguard who

is 18 and over; and he asked if that is correct.

Commissioner Adkinson remarked then again, she is not saying for the Board not to fund lifeguards.

Commissioner Feltner stated no, he is just taking the crossing guards as an example.

Mr. Wallace mentioned those public safety functions, 18 years and older is really for liability sake and where the County draws the line.

Commissioner Feltner stated the County has sort of peeled the onion on that one, and it is extremely difficult; he is sorry, he did not mean to interrupt Commissioner Adkinson; and he just wanted to say on that one issue that right here where there are seven school zones, it is lived every day.

Commissioner Adkinson noted since Commissioner Feltner brought up lifeguards, the other thing is she is not saying that the County not fund them, she is asking if the Tourist Development Council (TDC) can do it.

Commissioner Feltner advised well it does, the County is continuing to shift the cost because as the Board knows, Brevard's property owners paid 100 percent of the lifeguards and tourists paid zero percent of the lifeguards, so even he petitioned the Legislature to turn that around so the County could use tourism tax to pay for the lifeguards; expanding the services, or the area, is what made the bill go up sharply; he was there with the prior Board; and he cannot remember how much Peter Cranis, Tourism Office Director's budget for this year is.

Mr. Cranis explained they currently have \$1.5 million in this fiscal, and right now going into next year, he has budgeted \$1.6 million; none of that, by the way, is coming from the Beach Fund, which is always an option; of course, that is a little concerning because that fund has to go to paying Army Corps of Engineers projects; and the County does not want to dig too deep into that.

Commissioner Feltner stated this was being talked about Friday when he came up; probably in the next few years the County gets there 100 percent, and zero percent paid by Brevard residents; he thinks the County has to get there; a couple of steps that has been taken since the prior Board, it took a big half step, and he thinks it has a few more steps to get there the rest of the way to pay; his motive in there when the County was at an impasse with the firefighters because of trying to move costs out of their silo, Ocean Rescue is part of Fire Rescue; and that was the end because of having an increase of coverage and those expenses happening quickly.

Mr. Cranis stated just one quick thing to add on and then he will sit down; in the next couple of years, the hope is that the County will hit \$30 million in revenue, in which case it can ask for an extra penny of tax, which would allow then \$6 million additional dollars; and then Tourism could cover a lot more of it at that point.

Commissioner Feltner stated that is in the law that before a County can ask the voters if he or she wants to tax the voters one more penny, it has to get to \$30 million in collection; and with some new hotels coming, and if tourism continues to happen, the County may look at that in the next two years.

Commissioner Delaney asked if it is \$1.9 plus the \$1.5.

Commissioner Feltner advised that is the difference he thinks; and he asked if that is right.

Jill Hayes, Assistant County Manager, replied in the current fiscal year the General Fund is funding approximately \$1.9, and then Tourism is just over \$1.5 million as Mr. Cranis stated.

Commissioner Feltner asked if the County just raised lifeguards.

Mr. Wallace replied yes, with some initiatives internal to the program, the County moved the starting salaries up to \$20 to be competitive with the local areas and local counties.

Commissioner Adkinson stated she knows the \$14 million is not an accurate number completely; but she asked if staff can tell her a little bit about the idea of eliminating funded vacant positions, what that looks like for the County.

Commissioner Delaney advised she has an extension to that question if she may; and she asked if that includes public safety like Fire Rescue, or any of the other ones that sometimes are not necessarily part of . . . what that includes, the \$14 million.

Mr. Liesenfelt responded he does not know if that includes the \$14 million, as that is Commissioner Adkinson's number; he will get to the positions, but it gave him a segue; he can tell the Board, as a County staff what they will be looking forward to the Departments; they are going to be looking through their balance forwards this year, what they have projected balance forward, their vacant positions, and their positions; they are going to be looking at that; they have already, in past years, everybody that received General Fund got to budget three percent; this year, they already knocked it down to 2.6; but they will be looking at all budget positions; and when talking about public safety, lifeguards are part of public safety. He stated what they did is they came back with their funding is with vacant positions that is not being filled, and putting that money towards the employees; that is a little bit different, but they are going to look at different positions and vacancies; he will say this out loud because then the other ones will hear him, as a Department Director, he had vacant bus driver positions, other positions that he knew he was not going to fill, and he did not have enough General Fund to fund whatever he needed for the budget, he eliminated a position or two each year, whatever was necessary for him to present a balanced budget to the County Manager. He mentioned that is the sort of the stuff that he will be looking at as County Manager, what can be done on that; staff needs to look everywhere; the Board will not see that machination going on; but that is what they will be doing as staff.

Commissioner Feltner stated he is going to say he thinks the Board knows staff has a position in the County Manager's Office that Mr. Liesenfelt has held off in hiring; everyone is cutting where necessary; and as an example, there is a position on the other side of this wall that is vacant.

Commissioner Delaney stated she knows the Board had talked briefly about vehicles, and it was something the County Manager was going to look into possibly.

Mr. Liesenfelt commented the Budget Office has developed a different method on how they are going to be reporting purchasing of vehicles, replacement versus expansion; he goes back to his lizard brain in Transit and vehicles, if a Department gets a new vehicle, expansion is expansion; a Department has 10 vehicles and need a new vehicle for expansion, and they should have 11, but if they are replacing two vehicles, he or she should not have a fleet of 11 again, so staff would be looking at trying to compare those numbers; some of these are

multi-year things, they are going to be looking at a balance forward, where they are on projects, the vacant positions, and what positions are not being filled; on the other note, the lower of the percentage; and with vehicles, some of these are . . . and what they are going to do with health insurance, and how the County bills on risk management that is going to be a multi-year, risk management thing is as staff goes through; and vehicles will be included in there. He stated even last year not everybody got their vehicle requests that they requested.

Commissioner Delaney asked what about, and this is going way into the minutiae and she knows that, what about things like, of course, she brought up the stoves in the park buildings, like some of the things like that that, if there is opening to not saying getting rid of what the vision is, but does it have to be the premier commercial blah, blah, blah; knows what she means, does it have to be the \$14,000 stove or can it be the \$6,000 stove; she knows that is pennies in a billion dollar budget; but when adding all of those pennies together through everywhere, that could add up.

Budget Overview (continued)

Mr. Liesenfelt pointed out the County has to buy the equipment necessary to get the job done; he is looking at the carpet, but it was kind of cheap to begin with; staff is careful with how the money is spend; if a Toyota Corolla does the job, they are not buying a Jaguar; Departments when they present their capital equipment along with their CIP projects, they have to show it and justify it to the County Manager; and it is something to be keeping an eye on.

Commissioner Feltner stated he wants to sort of piggyback on what Commissioner Delaney said; taking the example of the stoves in the County parks, he imagines that there are some parks where the pavilion has a kitchen attached there; it is used a lot; Wickham Park has got one where they have events seemingly every weekend; but there may be some other places that do not; he asked if that is a way to split it; he noted he imagines Mr. Golden probably looks at something like that; even though a stove is older in a certain facility, it does not get that use, and so therefore . . .

Mr. Golden interjected by saying they do look at usage, but they also look at sometimes the more expensive avenue is the better for longevity; for some of those stoves that are \$6,000 versus \$14,000, the first thing is staff budgets for \$14,000; that does not mean staff is paying \$14,000 . . .

Commissioner Delaney interrupted by saying they were budgeted at \$25,000.

Mr. Golden advised he does not remember off the top of his head, but that just gives one an example that what they budget is not what they always pay for the item, because they do look at getting quotes, and piggybacking to see if the County can get the best possible deal if there is another city of county across the State that has negotiated better rates; they do try to maximize those savings; but they do have to look at what the usage is; one of those stoves was for the Gibson Center where there is a school in place; they are doing meals for school five days a week plus they are running activities on the weekends; and like Commissioner Delaney said, there are some that potentially do not, and so they do take that into account.

Commissioner Delaney stated to give an example, the Tom Statham building now has commercial refrigerators and stuff in there, so she does not know if that is totally necessary.

Commissioner Feltner stated he does not disagree with Commissioner Delaney in situations where there are offsite caterer that is coming in to do whatever that may be, and that is a beautiful park and that facility, but if a wedding is being done there or something and an offsite

caterer comes, he imagines that they make plans for cooking their food themselves and storing everything; and maybe some of these facilities do not necessarily need that because of that reason.

Mr. Golden noted again, sometimes they brought vehicles earlier; when they do vehicles and they look at those, they look at what the peak need is, and they have to purchase to whatever that peak need is because when staff needs it, he or she cannot not have it; and it is the same with vehicles that potentially have higher clearance rates for Environmentally Endangered Lands (EELs) if they have a washout and need to get to something, it is those types of things that they have to plan for.

Commissioner Delaney stated for instance, like the Clerk, they kind of check out vehicles and turn them back in as needed; she wondered with some of the larger vehicles if that could possibly be an avenue where like the everyday could be a more economical vehicle; but then, she asked if they need to check out a larger vehicle for those things if that could be possible.

Mr. Feltner stated every time he drives one he wants to say he wants a car, he does not want to drive a truck, so he imagines there are other people working for the County who are like that as well; going back to Ms. Hayes probably, on the estimated impact of resetting the General Fund Millage slide, so that the Board is clear; and he asked if it is not exceeding the Charter Cap, at the final column that she has Charter Cap FY 26-27 estimate, and if he is reading that right.

Ms. Hayes replied correct and that is based on very preliminary estimates; staff will not receive the actual property values from the Property Appraiser until the beginning of June, so they were doing some preliminary estimates; but what the Board is seeing there is because of the Charter Cap that millage rate goes down based on estimating that property values will go up; and with a lower millage rate, and again all these comparisons are based on just a \$200,000 taxable value, so that would be staff's estimated millage rate at the Charter Cap.

Commissioner Feltner pointed out he will not vote to exceed the Charter Cap this year; so staff understands where the County is, staff will be working this summer to prepare a budget; the Board has talked about it many, many times in this building and they know that; and he is just saying that for the rest of the people in this meeting so the Board can prepare accordingly.

Commissioner Delaney asked with that being said, could the conversation be opened back up about the Save Our Indian River Lagoon (SOIRL) dollars because she knows the Board had talked about funding . . . she knows the Board did not necessarily say it would be out of SOIRL dollars, but doing something with flooding, especially for North Brevard.

Commissioner Feltner advised he thinks the Board has to; he said to Commissioner Delaney he would work on things in the north end of the County, and he is going to make good on that; he thinks whether she is talking about wetland restoration type projects that also has the benefit of flood control but with the primary focus on keeping that runoff out of the Indian River, he thinks that is how the Board gets there, and he thinks it has to do some things; this Board had not very long ago a settlement agreement on a Bert Harris case, and it was able to work something out that, he suggested some things and the Board all agreed where SOIRL could buy a piece of the property, EELs bought some property, and all together it was able to get something done where they are going to get stormwater retention, flood control in Merritt Island, disparately needed, and able to settle that case, so it does not have to continue to be litigated; he suggests to Commissioner Delaney that he thinks going forward the Board has to do things like that; and he does not think it is even a question really.

Commissioner Delaney mentioned one of the things that was brought to her by a couple of residents in District 1, Laurilee Thompson and Vince Lamb, and there was a property in Titusville that they were talking about that people have tried to rezone over the years and it has never gotten support to get it rezoned; part of the reason is because it has massive amounts of wetlands there; they showed her a presentation about the effects that would have and possible benefits to keeping water from heading to the Lagoon; the other thing that she was thinking about was Fay Boulevard and some of the other places in Port St. John; there are some broken drainage pipes with steel plates on them; and if the County were to fix those drainage pipes, it would also keep the water going to where it is supposed to be rather than tunnel down the street to the Lagoon.

Commissioner Feltner stated with the EELs portion, he had talked with the EELs folks even back when he was a candidate, and now as a Commissioner, that looking at EELs properties, he has suggested to them the thing that is less painful for the County if it considers taking value off of the tax roll; but if there are properties that are not paying that much in tax, and then they become an EELs property, as far as future tax rolls, that is less painful for the County; Commissioner Delaney is talking about some property that maybe does not have a high value on it because it is problematic anyway; and as far as cannibalizing the tax roll, that is less painful in the future.

Commissioner Delaney commented off of Singleton, there is all of that land there that is low-quality wetlands; and that is something that would be astronomically expensive to develop, but could give benefit for protection.

Commissioner Feltner advised they have done the Hundred Acre Hollows; the Board voted on that a couple of times; that is going to be the best EELs property in his mind in this District, because there just is not much opportunity for that; if the Board remembers at an earlier meeting when it first was brought to the Board, he said he wanted to reserve the right to put stormwater there if needed because ironically, it has four basins that was originally going to be a packing plant 35 years ago, and it never turned into that; there is not that kind of problem along Viera Boulevard, but if there was that is the perfect place to send stormwater; while that is an EELs property, if stormwater goes there in the future, that is where the County gets two uses out of the same property; and he thinks the County has to do that in the future, it is just being pragmatic.

Commissioner Delaney pointed out if the votes are not there to do what is needed to reset the millage, that could be a way to get some infrastructure projects done; and it would make all sides a little happier.

Commissioner Feltner noted again, he does not think the County has a choice in the future, he thinks it has to.

Commissioner Delaney stated she is going to bring up an uncomfortable topic of the employee salaries, doing a tiered system; she does not know if anyone had considered doing something like that; but she knows the County has some salaries that are \$200,000-plus; not that the Board does not value its employees, it certainly does; and when considering a resetting of the millage, it is hard to go to the voters and say that while also there are considerable raises that could happen when going up percentage-wise.

Commissioner Feltner expressed his apologies to Chair Altman for not going through him, but it is a less formal in a workshop; he advised it seems to him that in his mind the more fruitful thing to do is looking at the vacant positions, maybe have a tiered approach to that; that might actually net the County more money; he knows it is a painful thing when talking about covering

positions and such, but the County is in a financial situation, everybody is; if the County is living without certain high administrative staff, just as an example, it just foregoes that for a while; Mr. Liesenfelt is living without Karen Conde; he is sure he would like her up here today; but he is doing that; and he thinks if one looks at it that way in the vacant positions and the Board all agrees that on the bottom half of those vacant positions, are things it really does need. He stated the County does really need folks out there fixing things every day; and from a Board Policy position, and how the Board gets through the budget, it may have to go in that direction.

Mr. Liesenfelt explained that Commissioner Goodson is disconnecting, he has an appointment he has to make.

*Commissioner Goodson's absence is noted at 2:30 p.m.

Mr. Liesenfelt continued by saying the raises are, he guesses it can be called tiered; they are three percent or a dollar an hour; everyone that cut off is somewhere around 60-some thousand dollars; everybody less than that will be making a dollar an hour; he does not know how to define it in the budget message, he is trying to thread the needed; his Contract says he gets the same things as employees, so he will be cutting off raises at some point so he does not get it; and he does not want to interfere with the Assistant Medical Examiners, that still has to be figured out.

Chair Altman asked with Commissioner Goodson gone, does that mean the Board needs to end its meeting soon.

Mr. Liesenfelt replied no, he is fine.

Chair Altman stated he thinks staff has done a really good job in highlighting what is called critical fund needs for the County's infrastructure needs, the jail, serious problems; there are three tents that need to be refurbished; the Government Center Courthouse, he has toured that facility, it is in really bad shape, and almost a public embarrassment; there are roads, drainage problems; the Board knows about a problem; public safety, and not to mention fire; everyone knows that problem; the Sheriff Operations, Jail Operations, disaster response, and then Countywide, keeping the doors open in the County, health insurance, auto insurance rates, retirement requirements, and so forth; and that is a \$47 million hit. He continued by saying the County can fund these critical needs with no problem with a millage rate of 3.2 percent, which takes the County back where it was, he thinks a couple of years ago; that millage rate is lower than virtually every other County of its comparable size in comparison; and in some cases, that millage rate is less than half of the rate of some of those counties, so the County can be financially responsible. He commented the Board can really be watchdogs of the taxpayers' dollars; but what is just as important is the County needs to fund the critical needs of its residents so it can provide the necessary services to have a county that is operating in a healthy way, which ultimately, from an economic point of view, is even more important. He stated if the County loses that, it loses everything, but it can do that with a 3.2691 millage rate; that is Option 1; Seminole County has 3.7, St. Lucie County 4.2, Osceola County over twice that 6.7, Indian River County higher, Pasco County over twice that at 7.4, Martin County over twice that at 6.5, which has a high assessed value; it is probably more comparable to what Brevard County than Osceola, and then Lake County at 5.3; to him, the question is, is Brevard County being financially responsible; the County is keeping the millage rate in a manageable form, that make the County competitive, still the lowest of any millage rate of any of those counties that are comparable size and nature; and Brevard is meeting the critical needs. He pointed out just so it is clear, that is where he is coming from; he knows there is a lot of esoteric arguments about rollback, but he thinks what the bigger question is, is what is being fiscally

responsible, and what is providing the responsible revenue that it needs to provide healthy County services; ultimately, that is the goal and responsibility; and he reiterated that is where he is coming from. He mentioned he does not know if the Board will have the votes to do that, but he just wanted to make that infinitely clear.

Commissioner Feltner asked if any of those other counties have a Charter Cap; he stated he is not trying to be difficult, but that is what has allowed that situation in other counties where they are much higher than Brevard County is; it is something he respects; and the voters put it there, and he knew that when he was seeking this office, and he does respect it.

Chair Altman explained there is a provision to penetrate the caps, and he thinks the County is at that critical nature; obviously, the County still has a millage rate substantially lower than those other counties; but he thinks there is a reason they put that ability to penetrate for those critical services.

Commissioner Adkinson stated from her perspective, the County has a cap that the voters voted on; the County has a critical need; but she does not feel like she is hearing a lot of conversation about cutting costs; it is hard for her to be comfortable going with Option 1, or raising it as high as the Board can, if she does not feel like it is having a good conversation about cutting costs; staff is still working on this; and that is where she is. She pointed out she is just not comfortable with asking people for money if she cannot tell them the Board has cut as it can; in fact, it has cut things that have upset the taxpayers, or almost got there; and she reiterated that is where her brain is at the moment.

Chair Altman stated he thinks the Board needs to fund critical needs, that does not preclude the County's constant desire to cut where it can cut, and does not cut to the bone, so he is not saying that is a bad thing; he is just saying the Board has got to fund these critical needs; and that is where he is coming from there.

Commissioner Delaney asked if some of these things could go to the ballot as far as infrastructure needs or whatever; the County has its infrastructure sales tax and transportation sales tax; and she asked if there is one just for facilities.

Chair Altman stated that is a very good point, and that is one of the reasons he asked staff to include the service tax, because if the Board chooses to maintain the millage below the cap, the Charter does provide for the Board to ask the voters; it could put that one on the ballot giving them a choice to see if they wanted to fund those critical needs; the public has been very responsive to that; and that would be an easy one to put on the ballot.

Commissioner Delaney asked if the service tax could be spent on anything, or if that just goes into the General Fund.

Ms. Hayes noted the public service tax would be considered General Fund, so that could be used for any of those critical need purposes; she believes Commissioner Delaney was speaking of the infrastructure sales tax, which had been discussed previously; it would have to go through the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) review and all of that; and she believes the County is past that period to revisit that until potentially 2028.

Commissioner Delaney asked if there was another one; and she stated she knows there is Emergency Services, hospital, there is like six or seven of them.

Ms. Hayes advised there is a transportation surtax that is specific for transportation needs.

Commissioner Feltner asked just as a technical question, if some of those are split with municipal governments, and it does not all go with the County.

Ms. Hayes responded that is correct for the infrastructure sales tax; and the Charter transportation system surtax, that one she believes it would come to the County, but then there could be interlocal agreements with the municipalities if she is remembering that correctly.

Commissioner Delaney inquired if the service tax one goes directly to the County.

Ms. Hayes explained the public service tax would just be in the County, and that would be in unincorporated Brevard; she thinks someone earlier mentioned that all of the municipalities in Brevard County are already levying that; and the County is unique in that the Charter states that for it to levy that tax, it would have to go out to a ballot in a general election.

Mr. Liesenfelt commented he did not explain fully; staff is showing an example on the electric bill; the cities also put it on the gas bills; some have it on the water bill; and he believes it can even be put on kerosene as well; the example staff showed the Board is just the electric bill; but the \$33 million is the total number.

Chair Altman stated what he likes about that is those people that are driving electric cars and not paying fuel taxes have to pay their fair share, which being one of those, he thinks that is a good thing.

Commissioner Adkinson advised she drives 26,000 miles a year, and she does not have one.

Chair Altman pointed out he thinks people like him should pay his or her fair share.

*The Board recessed at 2:41 p.m. and reconvened at 2:52 p.m.

Chair Altman noted he wanted to mention one other unfunded need, he knows people have probably been reading about it and hearing about it on the news regarding the recent drownings; but, another critical need, and that falls into the life safety element of what the County does, and that is lifeguards; certainly, that is going to need to be a part of the Board's discussions when it looks forward into the budget and funding critical needs; and he asked if there are any questions or comments from the Board.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Stel Bailey stated she was watching the previous budget meeting, and she does not feel there has been enough discussion on fraud, waste, and abuse; just some examples of that is \$100,000 promotion raise for the County Manager, seven salaries over \$200,000, \$30,000 promotion for Assistant Managers, and most importantly, because she is dealing with this in her own neighborhood, redoing sidewalks while there are silver plates all over most of Fay Boulevard; she does not think the County has built a convincing argument to the public that it needs to bust the cap; she does have two questions that she would like answered after she is finished; she asked if the three percent is warranted for the assumption of salary; on page 16, what makes that a critical need under field upgrades and additions and lighting; she noted those are her two questions; and she appreciates Commissioner Adkinson doing the list and actually trying to find areas to cut waste.

Sandra Sullivan, Waves Action, commented when talking about the Consumer Price Index

(CPI), it is currently 2.63 percent, which is less than three percent; maybe, the County should not bust the cap, which is three percent; when looking at other counties, this is the County's own presentations that it has done on the budget, the transportation tax, other counties, that is what they use; most counties have that, which means everybody is paying; and the tourists that come here are paying, the renters are paying, the people that own their property are paying, et cetera. She went on to say the Board talked about it needed to give some more money to Circles of Care; she asked why the Board gave opioid money to affordable housing when it knew this was needed; staff prepared a budget without looking at the impact of a vote that it is going to be taking, which is the impact fee feasibility study; that was supposed to take nine months, and people have not seen anything about that in this budget; she asked what impact will that have; she advised Save Our Indian River Lagoon (SOIRL) promised to pay Aerated Wastewater Treatment System (AWTS); and people are going to see rate increases. She stated this is double taxation, they are paying for it twice; she did a records request to Space Florida and got a copy of the draft agreement; it does not have any funding coming from Space Florida to pay the number that was mentioned as \$130 million that was needed to upgrade that plant for Space Florida in the December meeting; and that is not represented. She stated in addition to busting the cap, citizens are looking at higher water and sewage, which was updated also in 2022; she was thinking it was 22 percent aggregated over the few years; they were looking at a potential new service tax fee, an increased gas tax; if the Board is going to increase Parks and Recreation, it should be to a referendum and not just busting the cap as the County has done in the past years; and people are looking at increased stormwater assessment at another County Commission meeting, it has not talked about that to address the flooding. She stated when looking at SOIRL, it should be an infrastructure surtax as Florida Statute 212.055; they were made promises to match safe funding for AWTS and other things that has not been fulfilled; she looks at that as a stormwater, septic, and sewer tax that should be for infrastructure, but it is not; in the end, the people are paying for the cost of development for all of the growth that is happening in Brevard, largely because it has kicked the can down the road for 25 years on impact fees; and then the public did not see organic conversation here at this table about cutting costs. She continued by saying it was brought up like a conversation, so it can say it did, but there was no real conversation; for example, the County doubled the budget for the Economic Development Council (EDC) from about \$700,000 to \$1.4 million, and it did not deliver on the results to get the funding for Space Florida; that is an easy one to cut right here; that about sums up what she wanted to say; and she would like to see some serious cost cutting, and would like to see not all of the burden put on 'we the people'.

Rick Heffelfinger remarked he is getting a little confused, and maybe because he is new to this big budget; the County has a large outfit; the Board is talking about the General Fund millage rate, but it is also talking about a lot of other people; he asked the Board to correct him if he is wrong because he is just trying . . . that have their own millage rate, not just the General Fund; he asked if that is right; he stated it has one; if the County busts the cap on that, that is one thing, but does the aggregate, the millage, when the County decides whether it actually broke the cap; the County could bust the cap, correct him if he is wrong, he does not know, it could bust the cap on the General Fund, but still come in under because the other guys held the line; and he asked if that is true. He stated that is a question the Board can answer, because a lot of this discussion, he thinks they have their own millage; and he asked if that is right. The County is talking about those guys busting the cap, too; maybe if the Board tried to solve all these critical . . . he asked does the Sheriff have a millage; is that all . . . he is paid for out of the General fund. He stated his time is kind of going . . .

Jill Hayes, Assistant County Manager, advised the Charter Cap applies to each individual millage except for those voter-approved millages; where the aggregate comes into play is more of a Truth in Millage (TRIM) requirement; that is where one is looking at how the final budget

meeting is advertised; the cap applies to each individual millage rate except for those voter-approved millages, which are primarily, and the Board had discussed this last year, and the Board actually rolled up some of those voter-approved Parks and Recreation millages; the Fire Control Multiple Services Tax Unit (MSTU) was also voter-approved millage; and the Law Enforcement MSTU is not voter-approved, so that one is subject to the cap.

Mr. Heffelfinger asked if the County busts the cap on the General Fund, could the taxpayers be getting TRIM notices on a bunch of others that the County is addressing for critical needs; and how many TRIM notices does the Board think he is going to get.

Chair Altman replied he will get one TRIM notice and that includes everything.

Mr. Heffelfinger asked so it might not just be a rollover or a going above on the General Fund; he might see some of the MSTU, he does not know; he mentioned there is a big list of stuff that the Board hits him, he does not know, initially, the County, but the St. John's Water gets him, too; but there are individual little things that are kind of, he guesses, they are fenced funds or they are targeted; the General Fund, he does not know, it is to somehow supports those two; he asked if that is right; he stated those guys if they got critical needs, he would expect their millage rate to go up, too, if they are going to try to cover . . . you know, he thinks facilities is just about all General Fund, that could be wrong; although, and then some Parks and Recreation . . . he asked does Parks and Recreation get their own money for facilities, or does the General Fund pay for some of that under facilities; and he is confused. He noted he is concerned that the Board just talked about General Fund, and it says, "hey, this is you know, this is the only one that's going to bust the cap;" but he stated he hears things that are going across the board, the jail; he asked is that General Fund or does the Sheriff pay for the jail, he does not know what that comes from; he stated he is scared and he is not sure that he understands that the Board is not addressing some of these things that are going to also bust the cap; the last thing to kind of do is, Commissioner Adkinson brought up that wonderful list; the Commissioners kicked it; she brought it up, he is glad she did, he wanted to hear about that; and the Board cannot make a decision today. He stated he understands that, it is not voting on stuff; but as Commissioner Goodson said, the Board can kind of vote to direct staff to complete some of those analysis on those cuts, because by some statements in here, that was not completely done by staff, so that \$12 or \$13 million dollars of unfilled billets, people do not know who that will impact; Commissioner Delaney made a good point that the Board does not want to just say the fire department guys are already understaffed, they cannot be filled, so the money is being pulled back, do it with what guys it has now; but if the County has Parks and Recreation . . . he is going to pick on them just as an example, just because he knows they had some rollover a while back; if there are maintenance guys that the billets cannot be filled for, and they have been sitting on the books for three years, and they have been getting by, the money can be clawed back; and he asked if that is right. He pointed out without direction to staff, the Board is already putting together a plan right here; Option 1 does not account for any of those things that may contribute; and he is concerned about that.

Upon consensus of the Board, the meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

ATTEST:

RACHEL M. SADOFF, CLERK

THAD ALTMAN, CHAIR

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA