

Samia Ferraro began the Final Public Hearing to adopt the Millage and Budget for the Children's Services Council of Martin County. It was stated that the rolled-back rate is .2968 and the proposed millage is .3337, which is an increase of 12.43% over the rolled-back rate.

Regarding the adoption of the millage rate for FY 2005, Samia Ferraro read Resolution #05-003 (refer to Council Packet). The floor was open for public comment.

Public Comments:

Bill Bee, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Martin County, addressed Council and handed out a letter regarding non-profit budgetary issues on rendering a decision on the millage and not rolling it back, which would ultimately have a negative impact on the community's providers.

Danny Lyons, Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County, also asked Council to keep the millage rate at the current rate, due to funding impact of the hurricanes on all non-profit agencies. Leaving the millage at the current rate will allow CSCMC to create additional dollars, which will be needed tremendously need next year.

David Cardno of Martin County Healthy Start Coalition's Father & Child Resource Center wanted Council to be aware of the impact that the hurricanes have had on community's charitable contributions with United Way cutting grant budgets by 18% because of more contributions going directly to hurricane relief.

Keith Muniz, Executive Director of The ARC of Martin County, is looking for CSCMC to be proactive in assisting them enhance the quality of their programs. Also, many of the community organizations are Medicaid funded, and they are concerned about the Medicaid reform possibly affecting funding. Mr. Muniz agreed with his colleges to keep CSCMC millage at its current rate.

Lisa von Seelen, Executive Director of PACE Center for Girls, reported to Council that they are one of the agencies that will be affected by United Way funding decreases. Ms. von Seelen thanked the Council for being very supportive of services in the community, and she encouraged CSCMC to continue to be the leader in the community by stepping up and funding children's programs to stay ahead of the curve with our growth.

After all public comments, Samia Ferraro called for comments and discussion from Council on both setting the millage rate and adopting a budget.

Karen Ripper felt the millage rate should be kept at .3337, especially because the agencies will be strapped due to other funding cuts. Ms. Ripper would also like to see new programs being developed by CSCMC and using our budget to fund prevention programs, especially looking at what law enforcement has to budget to fight community problems.

Tony George wants to look at how much of a budget increase is reasonable for the size of our staff, currently funded programs, and anticipated program needs. He is not in favor of a full roll back of .2968 but would like to go half way back to roll back.

Michael DiTerlizzi stated that he would not be supporting the motion to keep the millage at its current rate. Although he supports the programs that CSCMC offers, he has set a personal philosophy to try to get half way back to roll back. He agrees with Mr. George.

Council had a discussion on Mr. George's proposal. Mr. George proposed a roll back of the millage to .3153, which would generate a budget increase of only half of the proposed 15.8% increase and would require using Budget Reserve. Referring to Genevieve Guido's handout on the summary of funding plans with a proposed budget with a millage rate of .3337, Ms. Ripper disagreed, as she felt that the budget enhancements and new services are certainly worthwhile of a .3337 millage rate. Ms. Ripper also would not want to see any of the listed programs that are beneficial to our community's children being up for debate to be cut in funding. Mr. DiTerlizzi is not interested in using reserves because he strongly believes that they will bring CSCMC to the next level as far as a facility and staffing are concerned. However, he feels that we would be able to put off funding some enhancements this year and still be able to complete our 5-year plan on time. Dr. Sara Wilcox confirmed that, if we would roll back the budget half way, an increase to the budget would still occur. Ms. Ferraro reported, if that were to happen, Council would have to decide where the proposed budget would have to be adjusted with cuts made.

Marian Carpenter stated that, in order to improve as an organization, we are going to have to add more funds in the budget, especially in conjunction with the Council-approved 5-year plan's enhancements. Because we are a progressive community, Ms. Carpenter also said that we need to move forward and keep the proposed millage at the current rate so that CSCMC can do the best for the children who are our future and help them in every way possible.

Laurie Gaylord supports keeping the millage at the current rate because CSCMC is advocates for children in this community, and she strongly believes in early intervention and early prevention. When we put our money upfront, it may prevent at-risk children from being a burden to taxpayers for the rest of their lives.

A motion was made by Karen Ripper and seconded by Marian Carpenter to adopt a millage rate for fiscal year 2006 of .3337 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, as presented in Resolution #05-003. (6) Council Members voting in favor of the motion included: Samia Ferraro, Karen Ripper, Marian Carpenter, Laurie Gaylord, Laurel Hopper, and Dr. Sara Wilcox; (2) Council Members opposed to the motion included: Michael DiTerlizzi and Tony George; Hon. Steven Levin abstained from voting according to CSCMC By-Laws. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Marian Carpenter and seconded by Laurel Hopper to adopt a budget of \$8,872,201 for fiscal year 2006, as presented in Resolution #05-004. (7) Council Members voting in favor of the motion included: Samia Ferraro, Karen Ripper, Marian Carpenter, Laurie Gaylord, Laurel Hopper, Hon. Steven Levin, and Dr. Sara Wilcox; (2) Council Members opposed to the motion included: Michael DiTerlizzi and Tony George. The motion carried.

Samia Ferraro closed the Final Public Hearing for Fiscal Year 2006 and reopened the Regular Council Meeting at 5:56 p.m.

★ ★ ★

A motion was made by Dr. Sara Wilcox and seconded by Laurie Gaylord to approve the minutes of August 22, 2005, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

A second motion was made by Laurel Hopper and seconded by Michael DiTerlizzi to approve the minutes of September 13, 2005, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

- A. The Executive Director's annual leave was discussed by Council. Genevieve Guido reviewed her memorandum on the comparative director's benefit packages, as requested by Council. Samia Ferraro spoke with Sherry Westerfield, Judge Hershey, and Attorney Steve Fry who were on the Council in 1992. Harry A. Yates contacted former Council Member Pamela Roebuck, Attorney Steve Fry, and former employee Louise Auclair, and (5) cassette tapes of PRC recorded meetings were reviewed. Tony George stated that he was concerned with current Council Members making a determination on what happened on the 1992 Executive Director's Employment Agreement, and too many years have passed to now bring up a compensation issue on vacation back pay. Mr. George was not comfortable addressing an issue that is over ten years old and several contracts ago, correcting what had previously not been found wrong, and trying to pick up and award salary compensation for it.

Attorney Johnathan Ferguson reported that the issue brought forth was to determine if there merely was an oversight in the Executive Director's contract to award Harry A. Yates annual leave of 20 days per year for year five and thereafter. If so, does an equitable remedy exist by this Council that it wants to correct, or does Council feel it too awkward of a position to second guess what all parties were intending every couple of years when they were renewing the contract and 20 vacation days were not addressed? The decision is left to what Council wishes to do at this point in time based on what history has been given. Mr. Ferguson stated that the contracts are not ambiguous, as specific annual leave days are stated within the contracts, and the Council is under no obligation or contractual agreement to compensate for back pay for 20 days paid annual leave not given.

Hon. Steven Levin agreed with Mr. George that 20 days paid annual leave are not in the past contracts, and the past contract language leaves Council with little choice with changing past contracts that are now over. However, he agrees with Johnathan on doing what is right and fixing the problem now. It was clarified for Council that Harry A. Yates' contract for the period October 1, 2005, through September 30, 2006, includes 20 days paid annual leave per year.

No Council action was taken.

- B. PACE Center for Girls supplemental funding update was presented by David Heaton. Modification of this program will allow a positive outcome of reaching a younger-age group of girls with more of a prevention focus and dealing with issues earlier. Lisa von Seelen, Executive Director of PACE Center for Girls, answered Council's questions. Dr. Wilcox appreciated the opportunity to have School District staff participate in working through this issue, and she feels that this recommendation is the best alternative in being preventive by working with the girls earlier. **A motion was made by Dr. Sara Wilcox and seconded by Michael DiTerlizzi to approve moving the PACE Center for Girls' Reach Program from the Spectrum Alternative School to Stuart Middle School and approves of this program modification, as recommended by staff. The motion passed unanimously.**
- C. The Program Reserve Policy draft was presented by Elizabeth Whittles. In answer to Tony George's concerns, Elizabeth reported that the language needs to address three issues: 1) determine what type of applicants request Program Reserve, which led to the term urgent need; 2) point out that Program Reserve is not intended for agencies that missed the annual funding cycle deadline; and 3) Program Reserve is also not intended for agencies that were not awarded funds through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The definition of urgent need could be broadened for flexibility to allow for a larger number of qualified applicants and not be so restricted as presented in the draft.

Attorney Johnathan Ferguson reviews the policy issue as to which type of applicant to be considered as those that: 1) are already receiving program dollars, 2) have no involvement with CSCMC, and 3) have applied but were turned down by TAC. Mr. Ferguson requested that a determination be made, if the third category comes in with a different program than what was turned down, in what category would they fall. Mr. Ferguson stated that Council should determine in which of those three categories a request falls; then, once the category has been identified, Council must determine what they will consider funding.

Samia Ferraro requested that all Council Members send comments to Elizabeth Whittles. Then, Elizabeth will work with Tony George and Attorney Johnathan Ferguson on language for the Program Reserve Policy. The Council will vote on this policy at the 10/24/2005 Council Meeting.

- D. The Audit Committee recommendation was offered by Karen Ripper and Genevieve Guido to approve the proposed contract and fee schedule. **A motion was made by Dr. Sara Wilcox and seconded by Marian Carpenter to approve the Audit Committee recommendation for a contract with Proctor, Crook & Crowder, Certified Public Accountants & Associates, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

New Business:

- A. The Performance Review Committee (PRC) assignments for next year's annual evaluation of the Executive Director were asked to be made by Samia Ferraro. Early assignments to the PRC will allow time to find an evaluation instrument that may be more acceptable to the Council and improve the process. PRC Members included: Michael DiTerlizzi, Tony George, Karen Ripper, and Samia Ferraro. A PRC Chair will be assigned at the first PRC meeting.
- B. The Children's Services Council of Florida, Inc. (FCSC) Business Plan was summarized by Samia Ferraro, as CSCMC will have to spend more funds if Council votes to join this plan. The FCSC group includes eight independent CSCs in accordance with Florida Statute and other CSCs who are attached to the county governments. Ms. Ferraro reviewed the plan's purpose (Page 1) and informed Council that FCSC wants to hire an Executive Director, administrative staff person, and intern to work with contracted professional services and lobbying firm(s) to have more aggressive and vocal presence in Tallahassee during the Legislature and Committee Meetings to promote children's issues. Currently, working staff members from the various CSCs, including CSCMC's Elizabeth Whittles, travel to Tallahassee to promote children's programs. FCSC feels that lobbyists are more affective in Tallahassee than individual CSCs or social service providers. The plan will concentrate on only three Legislative priorities this year (refer to Page 5).

Costs are listed on the plan's Pages 8-10 with CSCMC's first-year share at \$8,000 and a \$9,300 annualized share thereafter. Page 11 states that amounts would be adjusted upward if not all CSCs participate in the FCSC Business Plan.

In answer to Samia Ferraro's question, Harry A. Yates reviewed the risks on Page 3 of the plan. Harry also pointed out that, because only (10) CSCs are contributing to the FCSC Business Plan, one pulling out would increase the costs even more. The other concern of Harry's is that CSCs were developed to work as county-based initiatives and are paid for by county taxpayers dollars; therefore, if FCSC focuses on a statewide level, local children issues specific to Martin County may not be a priority.

Council and staff had a detailed discussion. Council had the following concerns and comments:

- 1) Request by-laws to review.
- 2) Concerned with using our taxpayers dollars to push new CSCs in other counties, as our Council is concerned with getting involved in some other county's political process.
- 3) Will legislative issues important to Martin County be passed over by the lobbyist due to our small contribution versus larger CSCs paying more who may have different needs?
- 4) What happens to legislative issues of the smaller CSCs who do not have the funds to join the FCSC Business Plan?
- 5) If one of the CSCs pulls out of the plan, how much will our costs rise?
- 6) Rent and other hidden costs need to be disclosed, as our Council is concerned that this plan has the opportunity to expand costs greatly, especially since FCSC cannot build additional CSCs without someone actively developing more throughout the state.
- 7) Our Council wants an answer regarding the concern of the risk of "investments in this plan could be viewed as non-service related" (refer to Page 3 of plan).
- 8) Need legal opinion to review the Florida Statute language in our authorization to verify if our participation in funding the FCSC Business Plan is legal (staff will investigate if one of the larger CSCs has already did this; if not, CSCMC Legal Counsel can research).

Harry stated that, to determine the effectiveness of the FCSC Business Plan, we would have to make a minimum 3-year commitment.

Ms. Ferraro requested that Council review the entire FCSC Business Plan to determine a consensus on CSCMC proceeding as a partner in this venture. She also asked Harry and Elizabeth to follow up on Council's concerns of this plan. Harry stated that they could be discussed at the statewide FCSC Conference on October 17. If Council is not in agreement, CSCMC will bow out and FSCS will have to readjust their budget. Ms. Ferraro supports the FSCS Business Plan because it has the same philosophies that have been discussed at CSCMC to move us into the future and influencing the Legislature on children's issues.

(Note: Marian Carpenter left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.)

- C. The Human Services Associates' program modification was given by David Heaton. This request has been made due to Medicaid policy changes. Barbara Brockmeier and Atreece Bailey were available to answer Council questions; no comments made. **A motion was made by Tony George and seconded by Karen Ripper to approve the request for a contract modification of their Challenger Mental Health Program to change from unit-cost reimbursement to line-item reimbursement, as presented by staff. The motion passed unanimously.**

Staff Reports:

A. Executive Director/Staff Report:

The Executive Director/Staff Report was given by Harry A. Yates. Council consensus was not to include the monthly use of the conference and training rooms in this report. Samia Ferraro thanked Elizabeth Whittles for her participation in the Treasure Coast Coordination Coalition's 2005 Legislative Summit, as she received comments that it was incredible and attendance was high.

B. Financial Reports:

The Financial Reports were given by Genevieve Guido. No Council comments or questions were given.

Council Member Comments:

Samia Ferraro recognized David Heaton for his 15 years of services at CSCMC since August 12, 1990. Harry reported that Dave was also involved in helping create CSCMC.

Michael DiTerlizzi reported that Reporter Geoff Oldfather of The Stuart News is doing community-interest articles and suggested to contact him if anyone has a person or program of interest.

Public Comments:

Olan Faulk, Executive Director of the Early Learning Coalition, encouraged Council to participate in the FCSC Business Plan if possible, as they need a voice in Tallahassee for children's issues since they are not lobby in any way as recipients of federal funds.

As no further Council comments or questions were made, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Samia Ferraro, Chair

Harry A. Yates, Executive Director