

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF MARTIN COUNTY

## First Public Hearing

Wednesday, September 12, 2007, 5:30 p.m.

### MINUTES

Having a quorum, Karen Ripper, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and took roll.

Council Members present: Karen Ripper, Chair  
Debbie Crowder, Vice Chair  
Marian Carpenter  
Samia Ferraro  
Laurie Gaylord  
Anthony D. George, Jr.  
Laurel Hopper  
Dr. Sara Wilcox

Council Member absent: Michael DiTerlizzi and Hon. Steven J. Levin

Public present: None

Staff present: Scott Berry (Manager of Research and Evaluation), Rebecca Galante (Executive Assistant), Darla Graves (Contract Manager), Genevieve Guido (Director of Administrative Services), David Heaton (Director of Operations), Frances Kaleta (Administrative Assistant I), Stephanie Macera (Administrative Assistant II), Ellen Pethic (Systems Financial Analyst), Elizabeth Whittles (Director of Program Development), and Johnathan Ferguson (Legal Counsel)

Invocation was given by Marian Carpenter, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**A motion was made by Marian Carpenter and seconded by Laurie Gaylord to adopt the Agenda to include addressing CSCMC's current building lease after the public hearing is adjourned. The motion passed unanimously.**

Regarding the attorney's letter on Public Hearing to set tentative millage, Attorney Johnathan Ferguson corrected his letter to read the proposed rolled back rate is a decrease instead of increase in Item (1), Paragraph 2.

Mr. Ferguson also clarified the odd process of adopting the millage rate first to then be able to also adopt a new budget; however, the millage is dependent upon the budget discussion. Because of this, Mr. Ferguson recommends for procedural purposes that Genevieve Guido be allowed to make her presentation on the millage and the rolled back rates; next, let Genevieve give a presentation on the budget; at that point have a Council discussion; and then open up for public comments on either the millage or the budget. Once public comments are completed, the public hearing would be closed, and then Council would go through and adopt a millage and a budget with two separate motions.

Genevieve Guido presented her 09/07/2007 memorandum that included a proposed millage rate of .2972 (a decrease of 3% from the rolled-back rate of .3064) and a tentative budget of \$10,802,658 for Fiscal Year 2008. Genevieve reported that CSCMC is in compliance with the State Legislature. Genevieve also reviewed tentative budget documents, which included 88% of the total budget going to program services.

Debbie Crowder reviewed the handout from Cody & Associates, where they will charge an additional \$4,085 to provide requested back-up data for their contracted salary report, where they recommended implementing salary adjustments of \$6,775 for CSCMC staff. Council voted to accept the report at the 8/27/2007 Council Meeting but did not vote to implement Cody's salary recommendation. Ms. Crowder wanted to clarify for Council that this tentative budget incorporated the \$6,775 Cody implementation; therefore, approving a tentative budget tonight will also approve the implementation of the Cody recommendations at a cost of \$6,775. Genevieve further clarified that historically the budget is passed and salary increases are implemented on October 1. Staff has waited for this salary study for three years now; although internal studies were done, staff was told that formal studies had to be conducted before adjustments could be made. Council had a detailed discussion on Cody's cost for back-up data and implementing this plan for staff. Attorney Johnathan Ferguson stated that, if this rate is adopted in the budget, it could be implemented and be made retroactive to October 1, as proposed by Cody & Associates, or Council would have options on how to implement the salary increases within certain budget constraints or return the monies to Program Reserves. Council consensus was not to spend an additional \$4,085 to obtain back-up documentation from Cody & Associates. The Cody & Associates' salary implementation will be placed on the September 24, 2007, Council agenda. No motion needed per Mr. Ferguson.

Karen Ripper opened the floor for public comment; however, no public were in attendance. Therefore, Ms. Ripper closed the public forum for discussion.

**A motion was made by Tony George and seconded by Dr. Sara Wilcox to adopt Resolution #07-001 with a tentative millage rate of .2972 for Fiscal Year 2008. The motion passed unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Samia Ferraro and seconded by Tony George to adopt Resolution #07-002 with a tentative budget of \$10,802,658.00 for October 1, 2007, through September 30, 2008, for Fiscal Year 2008, as presented by staff. The motion passed unanimously.**

As no further discussion existed, the first public hearing was adjourned by Karen Ripper (Chair) at 5:55 p.m.

Karen Ripper reopened the meeting to discuss the amended agenda item above.

David Heaton discussed the offer to extend our lease for an additional five years. The Building Committee met on September 6 and determined to pursue a purchase of property, which would take approximately five years to develop the land properly; therefore, the Building Committee was very comfortable executing this lease at the rates provided on the second page of the handout.

Attorney Johnathan Ferguson reported that the Building Committee has given him direction to put together an offer to present a contract on a piece of property located on Central Parkway for the Council's review and approval at the September 24, 2007, meeting. An extended due diligence period would be in place, so the only money out of pocket would be any of the expenses of doing the due diligence, which be laid out fully for Council review. No obligation to move forward with purchasing the property would take place until the due diligence is completed and Council is comfortable with the purchase.

Mr. Ferguson stated that most of the negotiations would not occur within the Sunshine Law but would be done at staff level of which there are temporary exemptions from public records law that allow you to negotiate such land purchase contracts until it is finalized in the event that anyone would want to find out. All information would be brought back for full Council review. At that time recommendations will be identified for those items to part of the due diligence and an approximate cost, so the Council is completely informed of what they are agreeing to and what a contract would entail.

Dr. Sara Wilcox wanted to know if there is an ability to make some determinations from property information already available regarding wetlands and actual buildable areas on the site. Mr. Ferguson reported that staff would not be attempting to research this, as it would be part of an initial expenditure to hire the appropriate personnel to do the required due diligence. The complete due diligence will be discussed at the September 24 meeting.

Mr. Ferguson believes that exercising the option for the 5-year lease is a good idea, as the terms are very reasonable with rents being at, if not a little bit below, market rent. A 5-year window also gives Council full opportunity to make a fully informed decision on what it wants to do 5 years from now.

Debbie Crowder stated that buying this land would be an asset to CSCMC, even if a new CSCMC office is not built and renting is found to be more cost effective.

**A motion was made by Marian Carpenter and seconded by Dr. Sara Wilcox to renew the 5-year lease in the current CSCMC building with Southcoast Incorporated, as presented by staff. The motion passed unanimously.**

In answer to Dr. Sara Wilcox's question regarding the Center for Child Development, David Heaton reported that the funded program's staff is no longer working for the Center for Child Development but Helping People Succeed (HPS), and CSCMC is funding HPS. Dr. Wilcox informed staff that they are having trouble with two staff members per Head Start. David will investigate this issue and has a meeting scheduled with Kathy Derringer of HPS.

Regarding Harry A. Yates retirement gift, Debbie Crowder stated that Council consensus was that each Council Member would personally donate toward the gift, as opposed to using Council funds for the purchase. Ms. Crowder asked if Laurie Gaylord would purchase the GPS system for Council from the information that Laurie brought forward for sale at Costco for \$349.99 online, not including tax and shipping. Karen Ripper would like the gift divided equally.

A retirement reception will be held for Harry on Thursday, September 20, 2007, here in the CSCMC conference room from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. with light hors d'oeuvres, cake, and punch at no cost to participants, due to donations that Elizabeth Whittles collected.

As no further discussion existed, the meeting was adjourned by Karen Ripper (Chair) at 6:17 p.m.

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Karen K. Ripper, Chair

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Deborah B. Crowder, Interim Executive Director