

A photograph of a beach scene. In the foreground, there are sand dunes with intricate, wavy patterns of sand. To the left, a dense patch of tall, golden-brown grasses grows on the dunes. In the background, the ocean waves are visible, and the sky is a clear, pale blue. The overall lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

READER'S GUIDE

Photography donated by Bob Thompson

WAKULLA COUNTY

FISCAL YEAR 2010 FINAL BUDGET

READER'S GUIDE TO THE BUDGET

The Wakulla County budget document is intended to provide information in such a manner that the lay reader can understand the operations of Wakulla County. The budget document is also intended to serve as a policy document, financial plan, and operating guide for county programs. The reader's guide provides basic budgeting information. This section is a layout of what the budget document consists of as well as an explanation of forms that the reader will encounter while reading the budget document.

The following is a brief description of the information included in each section of this document.

BUDGET MESSAGE

This section includes the County Administrator's Message, which summarizes the recommendations made to the Board during the budget process and provides an overview for the implementation plan of Board policy. Additionally, this section summarizes the County's financial standings by its service area expenditures, its funding source revenues, as well as by program/department budgets.

BUDGET BY FUND

This section details the County revenues and expenditures by discreet funds. Funds are presented in numeric order from Fund 001 (General Fund) to Fund 440 (Solid Waste).

BUDGET SUMMARY & ANALYSIS

This section includes a summary of the budget, analysis of trends, finances, staffing, and other analysis. The analysis of trends evaluates the community's economic profile and compares Wakulla County to like-sized and surrounding counties. The financial analysis examines the financial indicators and major revenues. It also provides an illustration of revenues and expenditures, plus it categorizes expenditures by function and revenues by source. Other analysis examines the County's estimated fund balance, long term debt structure and schedule of transfer.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Board of County Commissioners appoints the County Administrator to manage and supervise all County departments. The departments are:
Legislative/Administrative
Planning and Community Development
Public Safety
Public Services
Public Works

The following information is included for each program/department area:

Program Description
Accomplishments
Goals
Information Relative to Budget
Key Measures

ELECTED OFFICIALS

All elected officials, including the Board of County Commissioners, administer a specific function of County government and are directly accountable to the public for its proper operation. The Board funds all or, in some cases, a portion of the operating budget of the other elected officials. The elected officials are:

Constitution Officers:

Clerk of Courts
Property Appraiser
Sheriff
Supervisor of Elections
Tax Collector

Judicial Officers

OTHER BUDGETS

This section summarizes the funding of county programs that are not unique to one department but generally benefit the entire community.

DEBT PROFILE

This section includes summary information on the County's debt status.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Capital Improvement Program represents a five year plan designed to meet the capital improvement needs of Wakulla County. This section includes a summary and a five-year plan for capital projects by fund and functional type. Further detail can be reviewed in the detail plan in the accompanying FY 2009/2010 thru FY 2013/2014 Capital Improvement Program document.

APPENDIX

This section lists the line item budgets for all General Fund supported departments including the Constitutional Officers.

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DEFINITIONS

Accrual Basis of Accounting - Under the accrual basis, revenues are recognized when they are earned and become measurable. Revenue is earned when the government has provided the service. Expenses are recognized when they are incurred, if measurable. For an expense to be incurred the item purchased must be received and used or the service purchased must be performed. For an expense to be measurable, the amount must be determined. This determination is typically made when the invoice is received.

Ad Valorem Tax – A tax levied on the assessed value or real property (also known as “Property taxes”). These taxes are the primary source of revenue for the County.

Adjusted Final Millage – Under Florida law, the actual tax rate levied by a local government when tax bills are issued. The rate is adjusted for corrected errors in property assessments for tax purposes and for changes in assessments made by property appraisal adjustment boards in each county. Usually, such changes are very slight and the adjusted millage sometimes does not change from the levy set by the taxing authority.

Adopted Budget – The financial plan of revenues and expenditures for a fiscal year as approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

Aggregate Millage Rate – A rate obtained by dividing the sum of all revenue generated by ad valorem taxes levied by the governing body (Board of County Commissioners) by the taxable value of all assessed property in the County. This represents a weighted average tax rate expressed in mills. State law limits the aggregate rate for a county or municipality to \$10 per \$1,000 of assessed taxable value.

Appropriation – A legal authorization granted by a governing body (Board of County Commissioners) to incur obligations and make expenditures for specific purposes.

Assessed Value – A valuation set upon real estate or personal property by the County’s Property Appraiser as a basis for levying taxes. The assessed value less any exemptions allowed by law is the “taxable value”.

Board of County Commissioners – The legislative governing body of Wakulla County composed of five

persons elected Countywide. Also referred to as the “County Commission”.

Bond – A certificate of debt containing a promise to pay a sum of money on a specified date at a specified interest rate as authorized by ordinance and detailed in the bond document. Bonds are typically used to finance capital projects.

Bond Refinancing – The issuance of bonds to obtain better interest rates and /or bond by paying off older bonds.

Budget – A comprehensive plan of financial activity for a specified period of time indicating all planned revenues and expenses for the budget period.

Budget Adjustment – A revision to the adopted budget occurring during the affected fiscal year as approved by the Board of County Commissioners by an amendment or transfer.

Budget Amendment – An increase in the budget from a source not anticipated in the budget and received for a specific purpose, including but not limited to grants, donations, and reimbursement for damages. Any change which decreases the budget requires a budget amendment.

Budget Calendar – The schedule of key dates involved in the process of adopting and executing an adopted budget.

Budget Document – The instrument used to present the comprehensive financial plan approved by the governing body upon the completion of the two public hearings required by Florida Statute. Includes planned revenues and expenditures as well as narrative descriptions of programs.

Budget Hearing – The public hearing conducted by the Board of County Commissioners to consider and adopt the annual budget.

Budget Message – General discussion of the budget presented by the County Administrator in writing as part of or a supplement to the budget document. The budget message explains principal budget issues and provides policy recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

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Budget Transfer – A transfer of appropriations or revenues between two or more accounts within the same fund. The budgeted fund total is not changed.

Capital Equipment – Fixed Assets with a value in excess of \$750 and an expected life of more than one year such as automobiles, computers, and furniture.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) – A five-year plan for capital expenditures to be incurred each year over five years to meet anticipated capital needs arising from the County's long-term requirements.

Capital Improvement Project – A non-recurring expenditure of \$50,000 or more for the construction, installation, or acquisition of capital facilities, or the acquisition of interests in land including the time frame for completion, the location, description, the estimated total expenditure, and the proposed method of financing.

Capital Outlay – Expenditures which result in the acquisition of, or addition to, fixed assets such as buildings, land and roads.

Capital Project Fund – A fund established to account for financial resources to be used for the acquisition or construction of major capital facilities (other than those financed by Proprietary or Trust Funds).

Comprehensive Plan – Required under Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes, the Plan shall prescribe principles, guidelines and standards for the orderly and balanced future economic, social, physical, environmental and fiscal development of the County.

Contingency – Funds which are set aside to cover emergencies or unforeseen events that occur during the fiscal year, such as new federal mandates, shortfalls in revenue and unanticipated expenditures.

County Administrator – The Chief Executive Officer of the County appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.

Debt Service – Payment of interest and principal on an obligation resulting from the issuance of bonds or other forms of debt.

Debt Service Fund – A fund used to account for the accumulation of resources for, and payment of, general long-term debt principal and interest.

Deficit – The excess of budgeted expenditures over estimated revenues and receipts.

Department – Wakulla County's organizational structure groups programs or divisions into departments by functional similarities. Departments report to the County Administrator.

Department Special District – A special district whose governing body or whose budget is established by the governing body of the County to which it is dependent, i.e., Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU), Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU).

Dependent Taxing Districts – Taxing Districts that appear separately on the bill and are under County control, i.e., Library and Fire Services.

Depreciation – Expiration in the service life of fixed assets attributable to wear and tear, deterioration, action of the physical elements, inadequacy, and obsolescence. Depreciation is a requirement in proprietary type funds (such as enterprise and internal service funds).

Division – Divisions are the units of government, which provide services directly to the public and other agencies. Divisions are organized within Departments by functional similarity.

Encumbrance – The commitment and setting aside, but not yet expended, of appropriated funds to purchase an item or service.

Enterprise Fund – A fund established to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business. The intent is that the full cost of providing the goods or services be financed primarily through charges and fees, thus removing the expense from the tax rate i.e., Water and Wastewater charges.

Exemption – A reduction to the assessed value of property. The most common exemption is up to \$50,000 homestead allowed if the owner uses the property as the principal residence. Other exemptions apply to agricultural land and property owned by widows, the blind, the permanently and totally disabled people who meet certain income criteria, disabled veterans, and non-profit owned property.

Expenditure – Decreases in fund financial resources through actual payments or transfers for the

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procurement of assets, or the cost of goods and/or services received.

Final Millage – The tax rate adopted in the final public budget hearing of a taxing authority.

Fiscal Year – A twelve-month financial period used by the County, which begins October 1 and ends September 30 of the following year?

Fixed Assets – Assets of a long-term character which are intended to continue to be held or used, such as land, buildings, improvements other than buildings, i.e., recreation facilities, parking lots, etc.; machinery and equipment with a life expectancy of one year or more.

Franchise Fee – A fee levied on a public service corporation in return for granting a privilege or permitting the use of public property. These fees are usually passed on to the corporation's customers as a cost of doing business. Services to franchise fees include but are not limited to electricity, telephone, and natural gas.

Function – A major class or grouping of tasks directed toward a common goal, such as general government, public safety, physical environment, etc. For the purposes utilized in budgetary analysis, the State of Florida has established these categories of functions and financial reports must be grouped according to those established functions.

Fund – An accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts, which are segregated for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives, in accordance with special regulations, restrictions, or limitations.

Fund Balance – The excess of fund assets over liabilities available within a fund at the close of a fiscal period, which can be carried over as non-recurring revenue for the upcoming fiscal period.

General Fund – The governmental accounting fund supported by ad valorem (property) taxes, licenses and permits, service charges, and other general revenues to provide countywide operating services.

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) Uniform minimum standards of and guidelines for financial accounting and reporting. They govern the form and content of the basic financial statements of

an entity. GAAP encompass the conventions, rules and procedures necessary to define accepted accounting practices at a particular time.

General Revenue – The revenues of a government other than those derived from and retained in a Proprietary, Special Revenue, or Trust and Agency Fund.

Grant – A contribution of assets (usually cash) by one governmental unit or other organization to another. Typically, these contributions are made to local governments from the state and federal governments. Grants are usually made for specified purposes.

Gross Budget – The total of all items shown on the revenue and expenditure side of the budget, including transfers, internal services, cash balances, non-expendable trust funds, and amounts carried forward from prior years.

Impact Fee – A charge to a developer and /or owner/builder to offset the cost of providing capital facilities to meet growth demands. The County assesses impact fees for county owned capital facilities for parks, fire-rescue, library, law enforcement, public buildings, school and roads.

Incorporated Area – That portion of the County, which is within the boundaries of a municipality.

Independent Taxing Districts – Taxing districts that appear separately on the tax bill and are not under County control.

Indirect Cost Allocation Plan – A document, which includes a formula for charging costs to other funds, e.g. enterprise funds, for their share of central administration costs.

Indirect Costs – Costs associated with, but not directly attributable to the providing of a product or service. These are usually costs incurred by other departments in the support of operating departments.

Interfund Transfers – Budgeted amounts transferred from one governmental accounting fund to another for work or services provide. These represent duplicate expenditures. Therefore, these amounts are deducted from the total County operating budget to calculate the “net” budget.

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Internal Service Fund – A governmental accounting fund used to account for the financing of goods or services provided by one County department/division to another on a cost reimbursement basis.

Liability - Debt or other legal obligations arising out of transactions in the past, which must be liquidated, renewed or refunded at some future date. The term does not include encumbrances.

Line item – A specific item or group of similar items defined by detail in a unique account in the financial records. Revenue and expenditure justifications are reviewed, anticipated and appropriated at this level.

Long-Term Debt - Debt with a maturity of more than one year after the date of issuance.

Millage Rate – The amount of tax levied for each \$1,000 of taxable valuation: one (1) mill equals \$1.00 of tax for each \$1,000 of taxable value.

Modified Accrual Basis of Accounting – Under the modified accrual basis, revenues are recognized when they are both measurable and available. Revenues are considered measurable if the amount of the transaction can be reasonably determined. Expenditures are normally recognized when the related liability is incurred. All governmental funds and Expendable Trust Funds are accounted for using the modified accrual basis of accounting.

Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU) – A special district created to provide for projects and/or services to a specifically defined area of the County and financed by a special assessment to only those citizens receiving the benefits of those projects or services.

Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) – A taxing district covering a segment of the unincorporated area of the County, with individual assessed values and millage rates, which provides municipal-type services such a fire-rescue, or road and street improvements to residents of the area.

Net Budget – Represents the net new appropriations for expenditure in the coming year. To obtain this figure, cash balances, non-expendable trust funds, internal services and internal transfers (which otherwise would be double counted), and prior year project budgets (usually for capital projects) carried forward are subtracted from the gross budget amount.

New Construction – The value of improved property added to the tax roll within a jurisdiction during the tax year.

Non-Ad Valorem Assessments – Charges that are not based on property value but are levied for specific services on each parcel of property. Examples include charges for solid waste disposal, lighting, drainage and water.

Non-Operating Expenditures - The costs of government services, which are not directly attributable to a specific County Program or operation.

Examples include debt service obligations.

Non-Operating Revenues – The incomes received by the government, which are not directly attributable to providing a service. An example is interest on investments.

Non-Tax Revenues - The revenue derived from non-tax sources, including licenses and permits, intergovernmental revenue, charges for service, fines and forfeitures, and various other miscellaneous revenues.

Object Code – An account to which an expense or expenditure is recorded in order to accumulated and categorize the various types of payments that are made by governments. These are normally grouped into Personal Services, Operating Expenses/Expenditures, Capital Outlay and other categories for budgetary analysis and financial reporting purposes. Certain object codes are mandated by the State of Florida Uniform Accounting System.

Operating Expenditures – Expenditures directly related to service activities which are not for personnel costs or capital outlay costs.

Personal Services – Items of expenditures in the operating budget for salaries and wages paid for services performed by County employees, as well as the incidental fringe benefit costs.

Property Appraiser – The elected county official responsible for setting property valuations for tax purposes and for preparing the annual tax roll.

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Property (Ad Valorem) Taxes – Revenue, which is collected on the basis of a tax rate, applied to the taxable valuation of real property.

Proposed Budget – The budget submitted by the County Administrator to the Board of County Commissioners 15 days after the certification of the ad valorem tax roll by the Property Appraiser.

Proposed Millage – The tax rate certified to a Property Appraiser by each taxing authority within a county. The proposed millage is to be sent to the County Property Appraiser within thirty-five days after a county's tax roll is certified and listed on notices sent to property owners. No taxing authority may approve a tax rate that is larger than the one it originally proposed.

Proprietary Fund – A set of segregated revenue and expenditure accounts, set up for the purpose of showing net income, financial position, and changes in financial position. Enterprise funds and internal service funds are proprietary funds.

Real Property – Land and the buildings and other structures attached to it that are taxable under state law.

Reserve – An account used to indicate that a portion of a fund's balance is legally restricted for a specific purpose and is, therefore, not available for general appropriation.

Retained Earnings – An equity account reflecting the accumulated earnings of an enterprise fund, internal service or similar trust fund.

Revenue – Funds that the government receives as income. It includes such items as tax payments, fees for services, receipts from other governments, fines, forfeitures, grants, shared revenues and interest income.

Revenue Bonds – Bonds usually sold to finance the construction of a capital project. Reliable revenue other than ad valorem taxes is pledged as the source for funding to pay bond principal and interest.

Revenue Estimate – A formal estimate of how much revenue will be earned from a specific revenue source for some future period, such as the next fiscal year.

Rolled-back Rate – The millage rate which, exclusive of new construction, will provide the same property (ad valorem) tax revenue for each taxing entity as was levied during the prior year. The rolled-back rate accounts for changes in the market value of property and represents “no tax increase.” The only source of additional tax revenue under the rolled-back rate is taxes levied upon new construction.

Special Assessment – A compulsory levy imposed on certain properties to defray part, or all, of the cost of a specific improvement or service deemed to primarily benefit those properties.

Special Revenue Fund – A governmental accounting fund used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes.

Statute – A written law enacted by a duly organized and constituted legislative body.

Statutory Reserve – FS 129.01 (2) (b) requires revenues to be budgeted at 95% of reasonably anticipated receipts.

Tax Base – The total property valuation on which each taxing authority levies its tax rates.

Tax Rate – Amount of tax stated in terms of a unit of the tax base. For example, 5 mills yield \$5 per \$1,000 of taxable value.

Tax Rate Limit – The maximum legal property tax rate at which a taxing authority may levy a tax. The limit may apply to taxes raised for a particular purpose or for all purposes.

Tax Roll – The certification of assessed/taxable values prepared by the Property Appraiser and presented to the taxing authority by July 1 (or later if an extension is granted by the State of Florida) each year.

Tax Year – The calendar year in which ad valorem property taxes are levied to finance the ensuing fiscal year budget. For example, the tax roll for the 2008 calendar year would be used to complete the ad valorem taxes levied for the FY 2008-2009 budget.

Taxable Value – The value used for computing the ad valorem taxes levied against property. The taxable value is the assessed value less any exemptions.

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allowed by law. This value multiplied by the millage rate equals the property amount.

Taxes – Compulsory charges levied by a government for the purpose of financing services performed for the common benefit. Does not include user fees or special assessments.

Tentative Budget – The budget which, after amendments to the proposed budget is approved by the Board of County Commissioners is approved at the first public budget hearing as required by Statute.

Tentative Millage – The tax rate adopted in the first public budget hearing of a taxing agency. Under state law, the agency may reduce, but not increase, the tentative millage during the final budget hearing.

TRIM Notice – The Florida Truth in Millage Law of 1980 requires a notice be sent annually to property taxpayers explaining any changes in the millage rate of each taxing authority from the prior year. The notice also includes the time and place of public hearings on proposed millage rates and is designed to keep the public informed about the taxing intentions of the various taxing authorities.

Trust and Agency Fund – A fund used to account for assets held by the County in a trustee capacity or as an agent for individuals, private organizations, other governments, and/or other funds.

Unencumbered Balance – The amount of an appropriation that is neither expended nor encumbered. It is essentially the amount of funds still available for future needs.

Uniform Accounting System – The chart of accounts prescribed by the Office of the State Comptroller designed to standardize financial information to facilitate comparison and evaluation of reports.

Unincorporated Area – That portion of the County, which is not within the boundaries of any municipality.

User Fees – The payment of a fee for direct receipt of a public service by those individuals benefiting from the service.

Voted Millage – Property tax levies authorized by voters within a taxing authority. Bond issues that are backed by property taxes are a common form of voted millage in the State of Florida. Such issues are called general obligation bonds.