Summary of Citizens’ and Employees’ Feedback

March 10, 2011
Palm Harbor University High School

March 15, 2011
Dixie Hollins High School

April 6, 2011
eTownHall: Budget 2012

Suggestions
January 1 to April 15, 2011
Citizen Emails
Employee Suggestions

Online Survey
April 25 to April 29, 2011
Budget 2012 Public Outreach

**Summary of Citizens’ and Employees’ Feedback:** January 1 to April 15, 2011

Documented Participation
- Palm Harbor Public Meeting 104
- Dixie Hollins Public Meeting 44
- eTownHall 10,674
- Citizen Emails 34
- Employee Suggestions 27
- Online Survey 2,937

Pinellas County embarked on a multi-faceted outreach program in January to solicit feedback from citizens concerning the FY2012 budget year. The emphasis on the outreach efforts – to ascertain the public’s priority of county services – was approached through multiple channels in order to reach a wide audience.

Following the direction of the Board of County Commissioners, two public meetings were held in the community, one in north county and one in south county, with a total of 148 attendees. Commissioners personally spoke to citizens and public comments were duly recorded. In addition, a presentation on the budget process, shown at the meeting, was later posted to the Citizens Guide to the Budget website.

On April 6, eTownHall: Budget 2012 brought an interactive online event to the public that included a blog and telephone components. More than 10,000 contacts were made with the public, which included Web views, blog entries and phone participants.

Email is another alternative for providing direct feedback to officials. A contact list, accessed from various county website pages, leads citizens to a form for comments which is sent directly to the intended receiver. The emails are captured, logged and categorized. The collective comments regarding budgetary issues are summarized in this report to offer additional insight into the public’s preferences.

Another tool in obtaining constructive ideas is a connection with the staff of the county, many of whom are front-line employees who interact with the public or who have a unique understanding of the county’s operations. To give employees a channel to the administrator, A Better Way became the anchor to the administrator’s internal website page, with an invitation to staff to offer cost reduction and revenue-raising ideas.

The following report is a compilation of the comments collected from these avenues of budget outreach for the time period from January 1 to April 15, 2011.
Public Budget Meetings
March 10, 2011 Palm Harbor University High School 104 Attendees
March 15, 2011 Dixie Hollins High School 44 Attendees

Commissioners hosted two public meetings in the community to give county citizens a chance to personally share their views about the budget. The meetings held were on March 10 at Palm Harbor University High School and on March 15 at Dixie Hollins High School. The community meetings were scheduled in the north and south areas of the county to give ample opportunity to residents who live or work in different parts of the county to attend.

The meetings were designed to allow citizens personal interaction with their county commissioners and to afford the opportunity for education about the budget process. The two meetings followed the same format and started with the presentation of a video featuring an overview of the budget process by Office of Management. The open house format that followed gave ample opportunity for residents to speak with commissioners. The county administrator, assistant county administrators and other key staff members were available to provide information about the departments under their supervision.

Returning to a structured format, the citizens were then invited to make a two-minute comment; the comments were documented by the board reporter in minutes of the meeting. Attendees were also requested to answer a brief meeting evaluation to make recommendations about the meeting format, and many included written comments as well. These documents are included in this report.
MARKETING

Promotion of the two public budget meetings and the eTownHall was accomplished simultaneously, which allowed for an efficient use of funds while effectively getting the word out so that citizens could fully participate in the process. The marketing campaign employed a combination of paid advertising in the St. Petersburg Times and local publications, both print and online; conventional flyers that were displayed and distributed electronically; social media and mainstream media coverage.

FY 2012 Public Budget Meetings / eTownHall $5,301.50

Online Advertising
• TampaBay.com 4 weeks $2,000
• TBNweekly.com 6 weeks $150
• Power Broker 1 week $420
• E-zine $119

Print Advertising
• St. Petersburg Times 1,711.50
• C&N Publications $200
• Tampa Bay Newspapers $420
• Weekly Challenger $270
• Gulfport Gabber $130

Other
• Variable message signs, two per meeting, no charge
• School marquees, no charge
• Sandwich signs $176.86
• Posters/flyers $88.80
• Spanish translation (agenda, comment card, evaluation form) $175
• Misc. supplies $22

Media
• News releases
• Web postings
• PCC-TV
• Facebook/Twitter/YouTube
• Public information networks (websites, etc)
• Homeowner association newsletters (CONA)

Coverage Included:
• Feathersound News March edition
• Tampa Bay Newspapers print and online March 3
• East Lake Blister March 5
• St. Petersburg Times March 7, March 13
• Largo Patch March 7
• Gulfport Patch March 15
• C&N April 1
• WMNF April 5
• ABC Action News April 6
• Bay News 9 March 14, April 6
• Suncoast News April 14
• Alliance for Innovation April 18
COST BREAKDOWN
The following summarizes the amount of time involved in completing projects for the events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliveries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Displays</td>
<td>16.00</td>
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<td>Flyers</td>
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<td>Media contacts</td>
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<td>News releases</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCC-TV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signs</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. support (BTS, County Attorney)</td>
<td>23.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total 309 hours and 18 minutes
Staff Value: $9,049

Palm Harbor University High School
Dixie Hollins High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ads</td>
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<td>Misc. graphic elements</td>
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<td>News releases</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCC-TV</td>
<td>53.50</td>
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<td>Photography</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Posters</td>
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<td>Report</td>
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<td>Speaking points</td>
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<td>Survey</td>
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<td>Web updates</td>
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Total 282 hours and 7 minutes
Staff Value: $7,815

eTownHall Budget 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliveries</td>
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<td>Displays</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 309 hours and 18 minutes
Staff Value: $9,049
BUDGET MEETING EVALUATIONS

Palm Harbor University High School
March 10, 2011
Evaluations Completed 25
Total Attended 104
A total of 24% of those attending completed the evaluation cards.

The format of the public budget meetings included the presentation of a video explaining the budget process, an openhouse format that allowed residents to speak to commissioners and meet key staff members about county services, and a forum for citizens’ comments, which were recorded by a board recorder.

How did you hear about this budget meeting?
Website ........................................................... 6
Newspaper .......................................................... 6
Friend ............................................................. 4
Sign on Belcher Road ........................................ 2
Posting ............................................................. 1
Poster ............................................................. 1

Radio ............................................................. 1
County Email .................................................. 1
St. Pete Times ................................................ 2
Bay News 9 ..................................................... 1
Crystal Beach Email Blast ............................... 1
Civic Club ....................................................... 1

What are your main areas of interest?
✓ Property Taxes ............................................... 16
✓ Social Services ............................................... 8
✓ Environment/Recycling ................................... 6
✓ Transportation ............................................... 7
✓ Utilities ........................................................ 7
✓ Parks and Trails ............................................ 12
✓ Code Enforcement ........................................ 2
✓ Other: ................................................................ 8
  • Reduction of spending
  • All of the above
  • Budget process
  • Why Pinellas County has joined ICLEI-a
    United Nations Agenda 21-and agreed to be
    governed by its charter
  • EMS
  • Libraries
  • Cut back on social services, environment/
    recycling and parks and trails

2012 Budget Meeting Evaluation

How did you hear about this budget meeting?

What are your main areas of interest?
✓ Property taxes
✓ Environment/recycling
✓ Utilities (water/sewer/solid waste)
✓ Other

Was this meeting helpful?
✓ Yes
✓ No

Would you like to suggest added for future meetings?

Would you like to receive budget updates via e-mail?
✓ Yes
✓ No

Optional:

Name ____________________________________________
Phone __________________________________________

Additional comments are welcome. Please use the back of this form.

Funded and produced by the Communications Department. 200 copies were printed at a cost of $2.66 or $0.013 each. Pinellas County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. To obtain accessible formats of this document, please call (727) 464-4600/TDD (727) 464-4062. Printed on recycled paper. Printed 3/11.

10.6% Transportation 10.6% Recycling
9.09% Environment/Recycling 12.12% Social Services
12.12% Code Enforcement
24.24% Property Taxes
18.18% Parks & Trails
3.03% Code Enforcement
12.12% Other

AREAS OF INTEREST

 бюджетных заседаний: Оценки
Was this meeting helpful? 22 responses/20 positive-2 negative

**YES: 20 (91%)**

- Keeps me informed and allows me to get involved
- I was able to talk to the boss (LaSala)
- It was nice to meet officials and hear how changes affect me directly
- Because it makes you aware of concerns
- Insight of distribution of money
- For the commission making themselves available to the public
- It, perhaps, is/are insights into taxpayer sentiments re: taxes
- The commissioners show their willingness to listen
- Got to see positive thinking people and talk to them
- Very informative
- Just seeing an overview of the process was helpful
- Yea! Found out Brooker and the parks won’t charge!
- This represents Good Government!
- Information provided
- Resource and general information
- You learn more every day
- New to the area; helped identify some community concerns
- To hear from other constituents
- Very important to hear what my neighbors think
- Sunshine is the best disinfectant

**NO: 2 (9%)**

- Citizens not staying on the subject the purpose of the meeting
- The feeling of the public was never made clear

What would you suggest be added for future meetings:

- Show where the money is going and how much special interest groups are getting.
- Stop the program until the economy is going strong.
- One page handout that breaks down the budget (pie chart)
- Too long of a time for “Meeting your Commissioners”
- I would like to find a way for the meetings to stay on the topic – not add more, just stay on the subject.
- Like your format with the break in between so I could talk one-to-one to some of the officials.
- Publish the agenda ahead of time.
- Break out additional budget categories and identify mandated vs. discretionary services.
- Flooding concerns; drainage issues
- Overlay for smart growth; sustainability with all the details
- Results of previous meetings’ concerns brought up by open discussions; may be a good starting point for the Q & A; ask for information about attendees (i.e., business owners, residents, etc.); great job recognizing the veterans; would be a good idea to recognize at the start of the meeting; why not a prayer or pledge at the start of the meeting?
- An explanation of who made the decision to join ICLEI; how deeply its policies have been implemented and why there has been no public notification of this.
- That Commissioner Latvala, who is our representative, be at meetings that are this important; her absence is inexcusable.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

**Budget:**
- Heavy Administration. Too many chiefs vs. employees. Private industry has cut back and found production did not always suffer. Families have cut down in purchases, etc. “Live below your means – purchase what you need, not what you wish.”
- We are fortunate to have dedicated people working for us; our county is beautiful. We wish the economy was better. The conservative approach is necessary now until we see prosperity return “soon.” Our home budget also has constraints and adjustments made; we had to tighten our belts. Good luck and thank you.

**Animal Services:**
- Laws and ordinances should not be on the books unless they are enforced. We had to get rid of our cat because our house is open (no central A/C) and the animal services said “keep cat in the house.” Turned out it was not our cat. Many other cats roam the yards in our neighborhood.

**Utilities:**
- Water: dishes are marked and glazed. County said it was the soap. Soap companies admitted less phosphate, but blamed the county!

**Law Enforcement:**
- Process convicts sooner – don’t get rid of death penalty
- I really liked Col. Dixon’s idea of prisoner labor. Perhaps they could clean picnic restrooms or do other maintenance.

**Parks:**
- If there was a $1 charge per car to enter county parks, the county would take in a significant amount of income to help maintain the parks!
CITIZEN COMMENTS (2 minute comments)

Palm Harbor University High School: March 10, 2011, Public Budget Meeting: Citizen Comments Overview

Issues:
County Budget .....................................6
Transportation ......................................3
Taxes ....................................................4
Education/Schools ...............................1
County Administration ..........................1
County Commissioners .........................2
Parks .....................................................5
Staffing ..................................................3
Planning ...............................................1
Utilities ..................................................2
Sheriff ...................................................3
Environmental .......................................6
Fire/Ems ...............................................2
State Budget ........................................1
Jolley Trolley ........................................1

County Budget:
• Since the incorporation in 1912, Pinellas County budget grew $875 million by 2003. In 2003-2004, the County’s budget jumped approximately $325 million to $1.2 billion. From 2004-2008, budget went from $900 million to approximately $2.2 billion, representing a 90 percent increase. I saw the surplus. I have asked the BCC for last two years, where is the surplus money? Are all staff doing their job efficiently and effectively; consider what services lend themselves to being fee-based; perhaps some willing to pay to use the library, don’t close all the libraries; don’t close the parks; don’t eliminate the street sweeping – you can’t charge a fee; but cut the waste.
• Smaller, more efficient government, less regulation - result in lower taxes; prioritize and right-size government.
• Over-funded slush funds that you have in reserves are perfectly legal and authorized; take some of reserves to spend down to balance the budget; get back to the basics - when the economy grows again, we grow in the right way, instead of just throwing more money and computers and people without a real plan. Review budget-is it really something that really does support our purpose; get rid of redundancy.
• Cut out a lot of grant money that’s going out (i.e., Dali Museum that we gave some of our tax money to this past budget; that was $2.5 million and they already got $10 million from Bill Young, his appropriations and paying the MPO almost $2 million, for what?) Provide the necessary services supposed to provide, period. Everything else can go away.
• Don’t duplicate services; don’t duplicate your grants. Make sure that you all are not paying for the same service that is already being provided through the state, through the federal government, or through other cities.
• I’m sorry, but if anybody in County government is making over $20,000 month - and there is somebody sitting at this table right now who is making over $20,000 a month, $250,000 - it’s excessive and maybe we need to cut there, too.

Transportation:
• Take the train off the table, period. Take it off. We do not want it.
• PSTA, the buses - sell all the buses and get minivans; noticing two and three people on a bus. Maybe keep one or two buses for the busy hour and get minivans. It would provide jobs and takes less room to store.
• Transportation Task Force; there is nobody in the community, the common folks that are on the task force. You have people from the Sierra Club. All these people that were put on here that are all stacked for the train; we don’t want the train. We’ve said it. How many millions of dollars have we spent studying the light rail? We don’t want it. It’s not feasible.
Taxes:
- Do not assume that people are not willing to pay higher taxes for good government - assume that we're not willing to pay for bad government; reduce the waste, inefficiency, any redundancy and things like that.
- User fees - when I launch my boat, I'm glad to pay a fee as long as it's on the honor system and doesn't have a lot of overhead to do it. If we want to use it, we pay for it rather than just throwing broad brush tax dollars at it.
- Cut the freebies. I support user fees. If you want to launch a boat, pay a launch fee. If you want to use a park, pay a park fee.
- I live on the water, I am paying higher taxes, and I don't see that I get a lot of additional services for that additional value.

Education/Schools:
- Encourage high school students, especially those in civics and political science classes, to attend these types of meetings

County Administration:
- Suggest annual management review of all employees in every department; reviewing job descriptions, evaluating duplicating of jobs and budget reviews. No overtime, use part-time employees possibly retired personnel, proper training to do job more effective and efficiently, etc.

County Commissioners:
- Thank you for doing a great job
- You should pool your secretaries. There are a lot of dollars involved with your secretaries. Although it’s a grain of salt to your budget, but I think it helps with morale with your staff throughout and your other departments who have cut to the bone and I haven’t seen the County Commissioners make any strong sacrifices that I think you should. I think it sets the tone.

Staffing:
- Why do we spend money on staff here taking pictures?
- Have you been looking into using less consultants and using staff rather than going out and spending $300,000 or $1 million for consulting fees for some of the things that are coming up? You have a very strong staff, well educated, and I think they can come back with some of the numbers that we need to be looking at.
- I am totally against cutting any more of the office personnel. I can’t speak to pooling your secretaries, but I know that the regular people in the offices are already overworked and they are not being paid a fortune either, so I don’t see where that’s really cost-effective to make that anymore of a burden ultimately on the taxpayers when we can’t get our services.

Parks:
- Get volunteers involved; possibly get organizations to “adopt” a park or part of the trails or roads
- Parks are a concern if a person is not a resident - I’ve lived here since 1971 and when I go to some of the parks and I see people from other counties using our parks - we pay for those parks with our taxes, if people want to come from other counties, let them pay for it. I don’t think it should be a burden on us.
- Park system - I’d like those services to continue in operation and not be closed down.
- Library being an active part of our lives, as well as the Palm Harbor Historical Society; not to be cut as far as Palm Harbor Historical Society or services to the parks.
- Park fees - we have a thing called Fort DeSoto, which is a historical site. We just gave $2.5 million to the Dali Museum. Why can’t we change the wording in the Tourist Development Tax, which includes museums, and change the Fort, Heritage Village, these things that are like museums, change them into a museum and use that money that you’re forcing us, that you pushed upon us and tourists and fund it there; that’s one way that we can cut some of our government. We already have that tax, so let’s use it for our parks. I don’t want to have to pay to go fishing at Fort DeSoto, we already pay property tax, and we shouldn’t have to pay to go.

Planning:
- The Quality Communities Code-this nonsense is going to be coming up; it’s part
of the green sustainability movement and will take 20 years or so to spend millions and millions of dollars on the green agenda, abrogating people’s private property rights all the same. Urban planners, by nature, make a career out of telling other people what to do with their property. This is private property. This does not belong to the government. So keep your hands off my private property, as far as the landfill goes.

Utilities:
- I cannot find marked storm drains; where are they? Where do they go – into the gulf?
- Wastewater management, do not tax Lake Tarpon for drainage. We have no problem or very little problems on Lake Tarpon concerning drainage. We have a lot of people that make a little more money which will affect raising our taxes to attend to the wastewater. Taxes should not be raised for those on the lake, Lake Tarpon; we have little or no problem and do not wish to pay for something not needed.

Sheriff:
- Commended for cuts they’ve made in sheriff’s department
- Prisoners could possibly do cleanup work on the roads, trails and parks
- Sheriff’s Department, unfunded state mandate $6 million for PJAC(Pinellas Juvenile Assessment Center.) He has to spend $6 million? Our Pinellas Delegation needs to be aggressive and go after that mandate and get rid of that. We shouldn’t be blowing $3 million at PJAC that we don’t need to blow; that’s just wasteful.

Environmental:
- Trash - moving to Pinellas County is like moving to a 3rd world country - you’ve got too many companies driving big heavy trucks, destroying roads and making too much noise. Given the technology, everybody can recycle like it’s done in other states - cardboard, paper and plastic.
- Issue with the County is the same as it’s been for the past several years, and that is Lake Tarpon and the deplorable condition that it’s in.

- Garbage collection a big issue. I don’t want the government telling me what to do with my healthcare, I certainly don’t want them telling me who I’m going to pick for a trash company.
- Recycling - government shouldn’t have anything to do with recycling. You don’t own my aluminum cans. I recycle with my church. I give my aluminum to my church.
- If Lealman area can have the trash pickup, there’s nothing wrong with Palm Harbor getting it. If the Lealman area is getting away with millions of dollars or whatever they’re getting, why can’t Palm Harbor have the same thing as the Lealman area? We’re all unincorporated.
- Garbage - please leave North County alone. We have no need for the government to help us in garbage collection. We have a very good capitalistic system in our area, North County.

Fire/EMS:
- We have a bulky system here. I know everyone’s aware of it. It’s a political hot thing to deal with - but maybe just setting aside, like our Congress did on our deficit commission so they don’t have to feel the heat, set some people aside, non-partisan, come back with some recommendations as to how to streamline this. Something happens, fire trucks shows up, SunStar shows up and you’re thinking, all this equipment sitting there. It’s time to look at which one is more economical. If SunStar is there and we could expand SunStar because their overhead is less, we need to eliminate all those EMS tax dollars that are going to all the fire stations around the County. There is no reason to spend that money and duplicate those efforts.
- Ambulance, has a strangle hold on emergencies. The fire departments have been trying to provide the service. They have been stopped and I believe something to do with our state legislature.

State Budget:
- Look for Governor to be cutting the budget at the state level which will affect all counties.

Jolley Trolley:
- There is no room on the trolley for my handicap chair; it is against the ADA.
BUDGET MEETING EVALUATIONS

Dixie Hollins High School
March 15, 2011
Evaluations Completed 22
Total Attended 44
A total of 50% of those attending completed the evaluation cards.

How did you hear about this budget meeting?
Website ................................................. 4
Tea Party Group ....................................... 1
Newspaper .............................................. 1
On The News .......................................... 1
Email From Outside Group ....................... 1
County Email ........................................... 1
TV Advertisement ..................................... 1
Website ......................................................... 4
Tea Party Group ........................................... 1
Newspaper .............................................. 1
On The News .......................................... 1
Email From Outside Group ....................... 1
County Email ........................................... 1
TV Advertisement ..................................... 1
Lealman Association Meeting .................. 1
Weedon Island/Cgcas Email ..................... 1
912 Meeting Site ....................................... 1
Poster at Work ........................................ 1
Flyer ..................................................... 4
Sign ..................................................... 2

What are your main areas of interest?
- Property Taxes ...................................... 20
- Social Services ..................................... 7
- Environment/Recycling .......................... 10
- Transportation ..................................... 6
- Utilities .............................................. 8
- Parks and Trails .................................... 13
- Code Enforcement ................................. 2
- Other .................................................. 6

- Layoffs
- Reducing the government
- Volunteering
- Communities
Was this meeting helpful? 22 responses/16 positive – 7 negative (one marked both)

**YES: 16 (73%)**
- Could voice opinions and concerns – but not sure if there will be any positive results
- Anytime the public has a chance to hear from and speak to its commissioners, it’s a good meeting
- Face-to-face contact with commissioners keeps them accountable
- The ability to mingle with commissioners
- Met lots of people who can help our business
- Understanding more of total picture re: county budget decisions
- Talk with Assistant County Commissioner and let Commissioners know concerns
- Get an idea of what other citizens are thinking
- Opportunity to speak
- To put commissioners in front of the public with interaction and staff info data
- Able to speak to commissioners and agency heads
- More understanding of how our governments (works?)
- Learning about the process
- I am not as informed as I would like to be; I learned some things at this meeting.
- Shows why everything must self-adjust
- The commissioners make themselves available for the citizens

**NO: 7 (30%)**
- We need a way to keep people on task regarding what the meeting is for – suggestions on how to trim the budget not what the people want to keep.
- Started too early for working people; unable to make it in time for presentation
- Same as last year – all cuts and no plan for bringing in $
- People gave comments of what they wanted to save, not what they wanted to cut
  - No real budget information available
  - No feedback/input from the commissioners

**What would you suggest be added for future meetings:**
- Think hard about how to increase tourism in Pinellas County. If you make it attractive, they will come! Your parks and trails could be better assets to you – like Heritage Village.
- A list of proposed cuts.
- Recycling containers
- Have more central location to center of county/eTownHall meeting conference not especially for older residents who are unfamiliar and many probably will not participate
- Later start time; many people work at least until 5:00 p.m. More (any) feedback from Administrator and commissioners on public ideas and their own opinions.
- Taking written comments would be helpful for those who don’t want to stand in front of crowd with suggestions
- More input; what about pensions?
- Very little information at stations. Next meeting needs to be in a location where the parking is not at the opposite end of the campus from the meeting room. Future meetings should be held in communities without red light cameras.
• More time for people to voice their opinions
• Outline budget with real expenditures listed. I know it’s big, but then that’s part of the problem. Government is too big.
• Budget summary/overview by the board – key areas of focus.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Budget:
• I would like to see an accounting of the revenue taken in 2005-2008 above expenditures. If these funds were spent on items to line pockets of organizations or people then we need to know. A full accounting needs to be made for this extra revenue that was taken in.

Parks:
• No fees for parks
• No commercialization of parks
• Defer further spending on new parks amenities and new trails until better economic times.
• Purchase property for parks and preservation when available, but defer development.

Law Enforcement:
• Cut back on the toys and high tech gadgets for law enforcement

County Administration:
• Cut commission salaries to the median income for Pinellas County

Real Estate
• Charge developers for the full impact on infrastructure and resources
• Assess beach property owners for the cost of beach renourishment. As residents of inland communities we are not welcome on our beaches and should not have to support those who derive their income from them.
• Add pine trees to the protected species list to prevent the deforestation of large parcels such as Bay Pines MHP and Toy Town vicinity properties.

Traffic:
• Ban red light cameras that are unwelcoming to the visitors that we spend huge amounts of money trying to attract and take dollars out of Pinellas County to make out of state contractors wealthy.

Animal Services
• Support animal services, they should not suffer or die due to lack of funds.

Business Technology Services:
• Limit spending on social media and technology - nice but not essential.
CITIZEN COMMENTS (2 minute comments)

Dixie Hollins High School: March 15, 2011, Public Budget Meeting: Citizen Comments Overview

Issues:
Budget ...................................................2
Taxes .....................................................1
PSTA ......................................................1
Sheriff ....................................................1
Affordable Housing ................................2
EMS .......................................................1

Building/Permitting ................................2
Parks .....................................................3
Staffing ..................................................1
Garbage .................................................1
Utilities ...................................................1

Budget:
• The way to cut spending is not increase spending; don’t undertake the proposed over-reaching land development code update changes - it’s not fiscally sound.
• We’ve heard the budget shortfall is because of falling home prices, reduction in property taxes, the doubling of homestead exemption-not a word about past overspending and growing of county government.

Taxes:
• Go back to ’06 tax bracket and eliminate Amendment One.

PSTA:
• Proposed installation of Wi-Fi at three hubs (Clearwater, Williams Park, Central Avenue) a waste of funds; need to return to a nation of needs, not of wants.

Sheriff:
• Senate Bill 372 - if it passes it will mandate only indigent inmates will be eligible for supervised ROR; will increase tax responsibility to citizens due to these eligible inmates to be released cannot be released unless they have no financial access, therefore the number of inmates will increase.

Affordable Housing:
• Support and assist in funding services for the over-60 population.
• Cuts would be good in social services dealing with rent control and day care assistance; to get better qualification on people that are applying for that is needed.

EMS:
• Why do we have two systems of transport? Seems inefficient and a big portion of our budget.

Building/Permitting:
• There’s an increase in licensing requirements - we need less. It’s costly in time and energy to implement.
• Overly stringent building codes will raise the cost of county building projects as well as private; infrastructure improvements called for in the plan will add a fortune in spending to the county budget at a time when we need cuts.

Parks:
• Four years ago there were 23 employees at Heritage Village - now there’s two; Pinellas County Historical Society is paying for a third person. Volunteers work events, maintenance, serve as docents and work projects to raise money. Petition was distributed representing 3,792 residents and visitors to save the Village. Support the Village.
• Subsidize parks with annual passes, naming rights for wealthy donors or fund programs, etc. Entrance fees for Ft. DeSoto, Brooker, etc.; don’t continue to cut their staff. We need boots on the ground rather than bodies at desks and volunteers can’t do it all – they need staff support.
• Charge $5 a carload at Ft. DeSoto; you don’t get something for nothing. Perhaps develop a schedule for people that can afford to pay more, charge more.

Staffing:
• Consolidate services like police, fire, garbage, etc.; easiest way to realize savings.

Garbage:
• East Lealman has garbage collection; west Lealman has five different services. It’s very inefficient and costly – we’d like the same as east Lealman; wish government would take this over.
Utilities:
- There’s been a fee to increase trailers at the solid waste, an approval for an increase to stormwater and now talk about increasing fees on grease collection; cutting the budget is good, but I don’t like this way.
Budget 2012 Public Outreach

eTownHall
April 6, 2011

The eTownHall: Budget 2012 live event successfully engaged more than 10,500 Pinellas County residents. The event consisted of various forms of traditional electronic communications and social media outreach including web-streamed video, blogging, telephone, Twitter and television cablecast.

Blog
- Readers 540
- Average Duration 1 hour, 43 minutes

Telephone
- Total Participants Reached 10,134
- Total Telephone Participants (60 seconds or more) 5,757
- Average Call Duration 4.5 minutes

Web-Streamed Video
- Participants 511

The eTownHall offers an electronic format for communicating with citizens about a variety of topics. For this year’s budget outreach effort, the Communications Department, assisted by BTS and the County Attorney’s office, expanded the established eTownHall format by adding telephone and Twitter components to the blog, Web-based video and television event.

This year’s eTownHall event spanned three days, beginning on Monday, April 4, with the opening of the blog for posts at 9 a.m. Accessed via the eTownHall website, the blog remained open through the live event which began at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 6, closing at 8 p.m. The Pinellas Public Library Cooperative provided assistance designating computers in libraries in north, mid and south county locations during the live event. A toll-free number was also provided for citizens who preferred to participate by telephone.

The 1 ½-hour live event on Wednesday, April 6, opened with an 8-minute introductory video explaining the current budget situation and process. Afterwards, the Board of County Commissioners and the county administrator answered selected citizen questions posed by moderator Al Ruechel, senior anchor with Bay News 9.

Total Documentable Event Participants: 10,674
MODERATOR’S QUESTIONS

During the event, the Board of County Commissioners and the county administrator answered selected citizen questions posed by moderator Al Ruechel, senior anchor with Bay News 9.

- A cross-section of questions were selected
- Questions were selected for their broadest interest and relevance to the current budget challenges
- When there were multiple questions on the same subject, the selection of a representative question was made
- Many posts were commentaries and were, therefore, not included in the final selection nor posed to the panel

24 questions were posed by the event moderator.

Top respondent categories were:

- Salaries/Overspending/Consolidation ........................................................ 17% (4 respondents)
- Parks/Preserves/Recreation ....................................................................... 13% (3 respondents)
- Increased/Decreased Taxes, Fines, Fees ................................................... 13% (3 respondents)
- Public Safety/Sheriff’s Office .................................................................... 13% (3 respondents)
- Economic Development ............................................................................... 8% (2 respondents)
- Social Services ............................................................................................ 8% (2 respondents)
- Garbage/Recycling ....................................................................................... 8% (2 respondents)
- Foreclosures ................................................................................................. 4% (1 respondent)
- Animal Services ............................................................................................ 4% (1 respondent)
- Transportation .............................................................................................. 4% (1 respondent)
- Vacant County Buildings ............................................................................ 4% (1 respondent)
- Environment ................................................................................................. 4% (1 respondent)
Comment From Blog - Marilyn Hall
Monday, April 4, 2011, 12:15 pm
Along the Pinellas Trail in Palm Harbor there seems to be severe lack of brush clean up and weed control. Any chance of cleaning up this jewel of Pinellas County? Could various programs be arranged with the local high school for students to earn community service points for working/cleaning on the Trail?

Comment From Blog- Tim Bryce
Monday, April 4, 2011, 2:20 pm
Has Pinellas County performed an organizational analysis to study how effective the current organization satisfies the business mission of the county? Are we too bloated, too lean, or don’t we know? - Tim Bryce, Palm Harbor, FL
Bob LaSala

Comment From Blog – Dave S.
Monday, April 4, 2011, 5:04 pm
Do you plan to reduce Pinellas County Property Taxes (millage rate)?

Comment from Blog - Lance O Bates
Monday, April 4, 2011, 9:31 pm
Publicly request the elected constitutional offices like Tax Collector to reduce spending and operating costs putting more money in the general fund.

me: Comment From Blog - Lance O Bates Monday 10:06
Go after public housing fraud, I am tired of seeing the parking lots of public housing filled with new cars, if you can afford a new car you can afford rent. Make the housing for the people who need it not those who abuse it.   PUBLIC HOUSING – BOSTOCK
Sent at 6:45 PM on Wednesday

me: Phone Callers press zero to ask Q
Sent at 6:46 PM on Wednesday

me: Comment From Blog - Paul Ishman Monday 9:11
Pinellas public Boat Ramps fees. You offer an annual pass discount for seniors but nothing for military or ex military personnel. Seems to me you should consider our military since one of the ramps is in War Memorial Park.   BOAT RAMP FEES – BRICKFIELD
Sent at 6:49 PM on Wednesday

me: Comment From Lance O Bates : Monday April 4, 2011 9:27
Reduce the number and salaries of Exempt employees. They are a luxury we can’t afford.  (SALARIES AND EXEMPTS – BOB)
Sent at 6:50 PM on Wednesday
me: Comment From Art: Monday 10:19
With 65% revenues from property tax and only 7% from sales tax, I encourage more consideration of an increase in a sales tax or a tourism tax. Foreclosures may be decreasing, but county residents are still feeling the effects of the recession. Leave the Penny Program alone, and don’t add a local option gas tax!!! SALES TAX – TOURISM TAX MORRONI
Sent at 6:53 PM on Wednesday

me: From the Phone Phyllis
Wants to know more about the possible cuts... For Bob???
Sent at 6:57 PM on Wednesday

me: Comment From Dr. Douglas B. Yarbrough:
I am concerned about the lack of maintenance of the “Butterfly Garden” area of Howard Park in Tarpon Springs. Why has it fallen into such a poorly maintained state? What are the plans to resume care for this area? Monday April 4, 2011 11:29 ROCHE
Sent at 6:58 PM on Wednesday

me: From the Phone Phyllis
Wants to know more about the possible cuts... For Bob???
Sent at 7:00 PM on Wednesday

me: From blog Duane
What is Pinellas County doing to promote new business growth LATVALA / SEEL
Sent at 7:01 PM on Wednesday

me: Comment From Blog Ken Jezek:
What progress has been made in consolidating services across the county (fire, police, etc) as a means for reducing overall budgets? Tuesday 8:20 CONSOLIDATION - BOSTOCK
Sent at 7:04 PM on Wednesday

me: From Phone David wants to know:
Of all the houses that are going into foreclosure, who is paying the taxes, the bank or citizens (taxpayers)??? BOB???
Sent at 7:08 PM on Wednesday

me: Comment From Blog Dorothy Book: Tuesday April 5, 2011 8:05 I am so thankful that our County Commissioners decided not to get involved in the service of garbage collection to the Unincorporated Area. I would like to know how much the cost is to the County to give this service to the Lealman area? LEALMAN/GARBAGE COLLECTION - WELCH
Sent at 7:11 PM on Wednesday
I am writing as a resident and tax payer of Pinellas County. I have followed the severe budget cuts that Pinellas County Animal Services has experienced over the last 2 years. I feel that they’ve been overly drastic in this very important area, the welfare and second chance of our companion animals. There are many other opportunities for budget cuts that do NOT involve reducing the chance at life for homeless animals. Please focus this year’s cuts in those other areas and do not make any more budget reductions to Animal Services!  

ANIMAL SERVICES – SEEL  

Sent at 7:12 PM on Wednesday

When the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office gives their assistance to other Police Departments in our county, do they charge for these services that are too costly for a small Department to provide to their city?  

S.O.'S OFFICE - BRICKFIELD  

Sent at 7:14 PM on Wednesday

Please consider offering free, curbside recycling. I would recycle if it was picked up for free. Free because we do the sorting work, so we should not have to pay to have it picked up. It could be picked up with our regular trash pickup to save fuel.  

CURBSIDE RECYCLING - ROCHE  

Sent at 7:21 PM on Wednesday

If Governor Scott obtains all the cuts he is seeking, how will the loss of revenue affect the Pinellas County residents? ie - the elderly/disabled/etc.  

LATVALA  

Sent at 7:33 PM on Wednesday

Why not eliminate most of the street landscaping done by the county?  

BOSTOCK  

Sent at 7:39 PM on Wednesday

How many county-owned buildings are sitting empty? Are they up for sale? CAN the county sell them? What kind of shape are they in?  

BOB  

Sent at 7:43 PM on Wednesday

It strikes me that the county and the state have not been very aggressive about going after construction-related, federal stimulus money (bridges). What can be done to ‘prime the pump’ for getting more of those monies at work in our area?  

WELCH  

Sent at 7:45 PM on Wednesday
me: TO PHONE CALLERS:  
If you’re on the phone and we don’t get to your question... please stay on the line and you can leave a voicemail.... leave your name and email address and we’ll get back to you  
Sent at 7:47 PM on Wednesday

me: Comment From Blog  Lance O Bates : Monday April 4, 2011 9:44  
Aggressively go after Pill mills and pill pushers drup dealers, seize their property and bank accounts make them pay for policing themselves. (PILL MILLS – LATVALA)  
Sent at 7:48 PM on Wednesday

You Discontinued spaying for weed control on the Lake and now it is getting out of control. This will be a very costly mistake for the county not to spray and maintain this lake. I do not know whose idea it was to cut this out of the budget but it was the wrong one. We live on the lake and pay our fare share of our taxes Lake Tarpon should be maintained,after all a lot of fisherman bass fish on this lake you do not want them going to other counties and spending their money. Thank you BRICKFIELD  
Sent at 7:50 PM on Wednesday

me: From Twitter  
How much does the county pay for all their vehicles?  Wednesday April 6, 2011 11:36  BRICKFIELD  FLEET - BRICKFIELD  
Sent at 7:52 PM on Wednesday

me: Receiving many questions about adding entrance fees to parks and Heritage Village PANEL  
TO PHONE CALLERS: If you’re on the phone and we don’t get to your question... please stay on the line and you can leave a voicemail.... leave your name and email address and we’ll get back to you  
Sent at 7:55 PM on Wednesday
ONLINE BLOG
The blog was opened at 9 a.m. Monday, April 4, conducted on www.pinellascounty.org/etownhall. During the live event, the blog and the live video were viewed on the website.

133 budget-related ideas/suggestions were gathered via the program blog

Top respondent categories were:
- Salaries/Overspending/Consolidation........................................ 28% (37 respondents)
- Parks/Preserves/Recreation.................................................. 17% (23 respondents)
- Public Safety/Sheriff’s Office........................................ 8% (11 respondents)
- Increased/Decreased Taxes, Fines, Fees............................. 8% (11 respondents)
- Animal Services................................................................... 8% (11 respondents)
- Social Services................................................................. 5% (6 respondents)
- Water/Waste Water Treatment........................................ 4% (5 respondents)
- Misc. .................................................................................. 22% (29 respondents)

Miscellaneous categories include trash/recycling, environment, volunteers, budget structure, unfunded mandates, transportation, Internet communication, vacant county properties, economic development, energy efficiency and consumer issues.

Activity was light to moderate for the first two days with an average of 20 posts per day. Participation accelerated as Wednesday approached, with 51 posts received prior to the live event. Once the live event was under way, more than 65 posts were received for a total of 156 published posts for the overall event.

Four blog posts were received via Twitter. Media and marketing materials requested that Twitter users include a hashtag, #pinellasbudget, in their tweet so that blog staff would be able to find their posts.

During the live event, new posts were reviewed by Communications staff and selected questions were relayed to the moderator.

Spanning the three-day event:
- The blog was viewed by 540 readers
- The average reader duration was 1 hour and 43 minutes
- There have been 266 replays of the blog to date
The blog is now open! Please submit your Budget 2012 questions and comments for the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners. The LIVE video event will begin Wednesday, Apr. 6, at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time. Please join us!!

Monday April 4, 2011 9:01

Blog entries are limited to 650 characters, including spaces. Blog entries received with embedded active hyperlinks will be edited to remove hyperlink capability before posting to the blog.

Monday April 4, 2011 9:10

Re: Pinellas public Boat Ramps fees. You offer an annual pass discount for seniors but nothing for military or ex military personnel. Seems to me you should consider our military since one of the ramps is in War Memorial Park.

Monday April 4, 2011 9:11

Why are we spending all of this money unnecessarily? We MUST cut, cut, cut for our childrens futures...Ms. Latvala Mr. Brickfield and Wiliams, this is aimed toward you!

Monday April 4, 2011 9:23

Trash pickup should be cut back to once a week. If anyone has a larger family, give them another garbage can!

Monday April 4, 2011 9:24

Reduce the number and salaries of Exempt employees. They a luxury we can’t afford.

Monday April 4, 2011 9:27

Publicly request the elected constructional offices like Tax Collector to reduce spending and operating cost putting move money in the general fund.

Monday April 4, 2011 9:31

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners wants your valuable input during the eTownHall: Budget 2012. The LIVE video event will begin Wednesday, Apr. 6, at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time, and will be moderated by Bay News 9’s senior anchor, Al Ruechel.

Monday April 4, 2011 9:36
Lance O Bates:
Aggressively go after Pill mills and pill pushers drup dealers, size their property and bank accounts make them pay for policing themselves.
Monday April 4, 2011 9:44

Lance O Bates:
Go after public housing fraud, I am tried of seeing the parking lots of public housing filled with new cars, if you can afford a new car you can afford rent. Make the housing for the people who need it not those who abuse it.
Monday April 4, 2011 10:06

Art:
With 65% revenues from property tax and only 7% from sales tax, I encourage more consideration of an increase in a sales tax or a tourism tax. Foreclosures may be decreasing, but county residents are still feeling the effects of the recession. Leave the Penny Program alone, and don’t add a local option gas tax!!
Monday April 4, 2011 10:19

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog
For current information on the projected budget for Pinellas County, select the “FY2012 Budget Basics” from the Links menu on the left.
Monday April 4, 2011 10:30

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog
The blog is open! Please continue to submit your questions and comments.
Blog entries are limited to 650 characters, including spaces. Blog entries received with embedded active hyperlinks will be edited to remove hyperlink capability before posting to the blog.
Monday April 4, 2011 11:00

Monica Craig:
The cuts to our County Parks are causing so many avoidable problems, we really need an entrance fee-that would stay IN THE PARK!!- to the most popular parks like Fort De Soto and Fred Howard.
Monday April 4, 2011 11:20

Ken Jezek:
I also agree that the wonderful county parks need additional funding. I’d support a fee but only if an annual pass were an option.
Monday April 4, 2011 11:28

Dr. Douglas B. Yarbrough:
I am concerned about the lack of maintenance of the “Butterfly Garden” area of Howard Park in Tarpon Springs. Why has it fallen into such a poorly maintained state? What are the plans to resume care for this area?
Monday April 4, 2011 11:29
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Username</th>
<th>Message</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ken Jezek</td>
<td>It strikes me that the county and the state have not been very aggressive about going after</td>
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<td>getting more of those monies at work in our area?</td>
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<td>Robert S</td>
<td>What is going on with Lake Tarpon?</td>
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<td>Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog</td>
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<td>Become a part of the budget process! Select the “Citizens Guide to the Budget” from the Links</td>
<td>April 4,</td>
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<td>menu on the left and submit questions for your Pinellas County commissioners.</td>
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<td>lake and pay our fare share of our taxes Lake Tarpon should be maintained,after all alot of</td>
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<td>fisherman bass fish on this lake you do not want them going to other counties and spending</td>
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<td>Marilyn Hall</td>
<td>Along the Pinellas Trail in the Palm Harbor these seems to be sever lack of brush clean up and</td>
<td>Monday</td>
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<td>weed control. Any chance of cleaning up this jewel of Pinellas County. Could various programs be</td>
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<td>2011</td>
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<td>Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog with Twitter</td>
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<td>Join in our Budget 2012 discussion using Twitter! Send in your questions or concerns by including</td>
<td>April 4,</td>
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<td>#pinellasbudget in your tweet.</td>
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<td>Lance</td>
<td>I am hearing a lot of complaints about reduced service and upkeep of parks it seems the county</td>
<td>Monday</td>
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<td>cut the employees at the “wrong end” cut the Exempt management positions. They and outside</td>
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<td>consultants lead us into this mess with wasteful spending. Why should we the citizens have</td>
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<td>reduced service while Exempts live high on the hog.</td>
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Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Panelists

The panelists for the eTownHall: Budget 2012 event are the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners and County Administrator Bob LaSala. The LIVE event, moderated by Bay News 9’s senior anchor, Al Ruechel, will begin Wednesday, Apr. 6, at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time.

Monday April 4, 2011 2:15

Tim Bryce:
Has Pinellas County performed an organizational analysis to study how effective the current organization satisfies the business mission of the county? Are we too bloated, too lean, or don’t we know? - Tim Bryce, Palm Harbor, FL

Monday April 4, 2011 2:20

Tom:
How do you justify the use of outside consultants or the existence of high paid Exempt employees appointed by “political favor” in many cases, while forcing us the residents to accept deduced service or paying higher fees. We pay are taxes don’t cheat us, while you live in luxury.

Monday April 4, 2011 2:22

Larry:
To those of you who don’t know Pinellas county has two classes of employees “Exempt” (Management) appointed by the appointing authority and “Classified” (Workers) hired only after applying for and testing in an competitive process by the Uniformed Personnel System, Exempts are paid higher with the justifications being “that they are more likely to loose their employment in time of hardship”. This has not happened hundreds of classified employees have been laid off and service has been cut while Exempt keep their jobs,

Monday April 4, 2011 2:56

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog

The blog is open. Please continue to submit your questions and comments. Because this is a moderated blog, you may not see your message post immediately. We appreciate your patience.

Monday April 4, 2011 3:06

Dave S.:
A simple “Yes” or “No” answer please. Do you plan to reduce Pinellas County Property Taxes (mil rate)?

Monday April 4, 2011 5:04

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog

Overnight suspension –Will resume at 8 a.m.

Because this is a moderated blog, posting to the blog will be temporarily suspended overnight. Please continue to submit your budget questions and comments overnight through this blog or using Twitter by including #pinellasbudget in your tweet. Blog posts will resume at 8 a.m. tomorrow morning; all posts received overnight can be viewed at that time.

Monday April 4, 2011 5:09
Andrea Barlow:
I am writing as a resident and tax payers of Pinellas County. I have followed the severe budget cuts that Pinellas County Animal Services has experienced over the last 2 years. I feel that they've been overly drastic in this very important area, the welfare and second chance of our companion animals. There are many other opportunities for budget cuts that do NOT involve reducing the chance at life for homeless animals. Please focus this year's cuts in those other areas and do not make any more budget reductions to Animal Services!

Tuesday April 5, 2011  8:01

Dorothy Book:
I am so thankful that our County Commissioners decided not to get involved in the service of garbage collection to the Unincorporated Area. I would like to know how much the cost is to the County to give this service to the Lealman area?

Tuesday April 5, 2011  8:05

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog
What Counts to You?
The blog is now open! Please submit your Budget 2012 questions and comments for the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners. The LIVE video event will begin Wednesday, Apr. 6, at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time. Please join us!!

Tuesday April 5, 2011  8:10

IDB:
First visit to this webcast.. just looking

Tuesday April 5, 2011  8:15

Ken Jezek:
What progress has been made in consolidating services across the county (fire, police, etc) as a means for reducing overall budgets?

Tuesday April 5, 2011  8:20

Laura Dyer:
Hello....as a volunteer at the Pinellas County Animal Shelter I work along many wonderful people that do a fantastic job helping the animals and people of the community. Please, do not cut their budget any more, we desperately need them here to do the job at hand. And that is to help the animals and people of Pinellas County!

Tuesday April 5, 2011  8:40

Bill:
Yesterday on WUSF a GOP member of the Bi-Partisan budget committee said that US citizens will be paying lower taxes this year than at any time since WW II. My property taxes have plummetted over the past three years. Why do you continue to cow-tow to those who insist that taxes be cut further, yet have absolutely no clue as to how our money is spent other than a knee-jerk notion that it's all waste?? Keep the budget revenue neutral and stop cutting services!

Tuesday April 5, 2011  9:32
What Counts to You?

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners wants your valuable input during the eTownHall: Budget 2012. The LIVE video event will begin Wednesday, Apr. 6, at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time, and will be moderated by Bay News 9’s senior anchor, Al Ruechel.

Lance:
Ask for more cuts constructional offices like Tax Collector they have about 253 employees, 37 of them are high paid Exempt employees. It not like the Classified employees do not have a supervisory positions? Who in charge of protecting our money? Our taxes pay for service like parks, roads, animal services and police protections. Why are we being asked to accept reduced service while the office in charge of property taxes collections spends excessively on hireling friends by creating so many Exempt employees as political favor.

Lance:
Investigate and stop Pinellas county organization from “reorganizing” under the pretensions of saving money then Exempt management getsassigned new titles and granting themselves pay rises for promotions,

Dorothy Book:
When the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office gives their assistance to other Police Departments in our county, do they charge for these services that are too costly for a small Department to provide to their city?

Linda:
On the recommendation of a previous Better Way suggestion Utilities eliminated their Contracts Department. We are now finding out that Public Works had the same situation but did not eliminate the employees whose positions were being paid for twice (the second charge was allocated through purchasing)

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog

Become a part of the budget process! Select the “Citizens Guide to the Budget” from the Links menu on the left and submit questions for your Pinellas County commissioners.
Monica Craig:
Since the severe budget cuts are affecting all departments, perhaps we should all be willing to volunteer at the departments we are particularly concerned about. If you don’t like what you see at the butterfly gardens, donate your time to fix them! Too much brush down near the Pinellas Trail? Grab some gloves and pile it up so it can be easily removed! Complaining won’t get us anywhere! I started my volunteering with the Parks in 7th grade and registered with the county almost 2 years ago. Now I have over 800 recorded volunteer hours, I’m helping to fix the problem I see in the County Parks, you can too!

Mike Foley:
Stop adding fluoride to our drinking water to save money and avoid the adverse health effects of this hazardous and harmful poison. Save money, save lives.

Elizabeth:
I volunteer at PC Animal Services and I agree with Monica, people should help out whenever possible. That being said, volunteers can only do so much and Animal Services has taken some huge hits the past couple of years. The elimination of Sat. adoptions and the Animobile are two examples, not to mention losing officers on the street to help with animal cruelty, strays, and enforcing laws like the new anti-tethering law. What good are laws with no one to enforce them? Please don’t cut any more from PCAS and if at all possible, bring back the Animobile and Sat. adoptions. Thank you!

FLORIDER:
WHY DON’T THE COUNTY CUT MIDDLE MANAGEMENT. SOME DEPT HAS 48 EMPLOYEE AND EIGHTEEN OR PROGRAM CORDINATOR, SENIOR WORKERS, OR SUPERVISOR. WHY SO TOP HEAVY AT THE TOP? AND WHY DOES THE COUNTY KEEP HIREING AND NOT GIVING EMPLOYEES IT GOT A RISE?

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog
For current information on the projected budget for Pinellas County, select the “FY2012 Budget Basics” from the Links menu on the left.

Bob Croslin:
I’m Bob Croslin, asking on behalf of both the Pinellas County Historical Commission and the Pin-MAR Antique Car Club. Some of you know me and I’m not sure if that’s good or bad, but I’d like to hear your thoughts on the future of Heritage Village. Specifically, will staff be reduced further (it’s only 2 now), and are you willing to consider an reasonable, low admission in order to keep it open and fund the 3rd position now being underwritten by the Historic Society? I’m led to understand that most similar facilities around the United States do charge a small admission fee, so why not us if the alternative could be closure?
Lance:
Why is the focus only on reduced service to the citizen tax payer? We pay our taxes, we deserve what we paid for no less. You should concentrate on the cost of administrating government, that is what is out of control. Make the necessary cuts in management consolidate redundant positions and departments. Have all departments justify the existence and salaries of all Exempt employees and outside consultants adjust were needed, limit Exempts to no more than ten percent of any organization or department and review that need every two years to keep spending in check, that is how we can get though this and future budget shortfalls.

Tuesday April 5, 2011  1:23

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012
What Counts to You?
You are invited to participate in the Budget 2012 LIVE event by sharing your valuable input with your Pinellas County commissioners. Participate now by blogging in your questions, or on Wednesday, Apr. 6 at 6:30 p.m. by calling 1- 888-886-6603 ext. 16403#, or viewing PCC-TV on Bright House Channel 622, Knology Channel 18 or Verizon Channel 44. You may also participate using Twitter by including #pinellasbudget in your tweet.

Tuesday April 5, 2011  1:44

Larry:
Why do some county offices a an Agency Administrator and Assistant Agency Administrator anywhere from three to four Supervisors? Then there are more than one office location so they need a number of Exempt employees to manage the monument. It is so ridiculous and wasteful spending. While we have to endure reduced service in parks, upkeep of our roads, and animal services. Please who are you kidding?

Tuesday April 5, 2011  2:06

Judy Dailey:
I would like to see more money go into Heritage Village, the county’s best and greatest historical museum. A lot of school children and guests from other states and counties come here to learn Pinellas County history. We cannot lose our history. Heritage Village needs to remain alive! If we cannot get more money for the Village, perhaps we can charge a nominal admission fee. As a volunteer there, people keep asking why we don’t charge any admission and I can’t answer them.

Tuesday April 5, 2011  3:11

Lester Dailey:
I believe that “mothballing” or closing Heritage Village would be false economy because the relatively small amount of money that would be saved would likely be more than offset by the loss of sales tax and bed tax revenue from tourists who might stay home if we close Heritage Village and other Pinellas County tourist attractions. Tourism by middle-class couples and families has long been a mainstay of the county’s economy, and we need to provide something for the tourists to see when they get here.

Tuesday April 5, 2011  3:26
Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Panelists

The panelists for the Budget 2012 event are the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners and County Administrator Bob LaSala. The LIVE event, moderated by Bay News 9's senior anchor, Al Ruechel, will begin Wednesday, Apr. 6, at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time.

Tuesday April 5, 2011 3:42

Ann:
Please do not cut library or the parks budget. Thank you.

Tuesday April 5, 2011 3:46

Ann:
Please consider offering free, curbside recycling. I would recycle if it was picked up for free. Free because we do the sorting work, so we should not have to pay to have it picked up. It could be picked up with our regular trash pickup to save fuel.

Tuesday April 5, 2011 3:54

Andrea Barlow:
As a resident and tax payer of Pinellas County, I would like to see my money go to an area that is extremely important to me, Pinellas Co Animal Services. Please, no more cuts to the Animal Services budget. I have seen how the budget cuts have hurt animal services, and therefore hurt the innocent animals that need our help! There are less officers out there to follow up on abuse calls and to enforce the laws, like the anti-tethering law. The adoption hours have been cut back, as well as many crucial personnel. The shelter needs more help, not less. I would also like to ask for the Animobile back. It is so important to the community! Thank you!

Tuesday April 5, 2011 4:09

PinellasCoNews: Why not Tweet? You can send Tweets to the eTownHall, which goes live Wednesday 6:30-8 p.m. Please include #pinellasbudget. [via Twitter]

Tuesday April 5, 2011 4:09

Les:
You could save money by downsizing or closing the Veterans Service Office. As a Vietnam-era Army veteran, I have never had an occasion to use its services because it seem to duplicate programs that are available locally through the state and federal Departments on Vererans Affairs

Tuesday April 5, 2011 4:59

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog

Overnight suspension –Will resume at 8 a.m.

Because this is a moderated blog, posting to the blog will be temporarily suspended overnight. Please continue to submit your budget questions and comments overnight through this blog or using Twitter by including #pinellasbudget in your tweet. Blog posts will resume at 8 a.m. tomorrow morning; all posts received overnight can be viewed at that time.

Tuesday April 5, 2011 5:02
Tony:

As a volunteer at Pinellas County Animal Services, I would like to see a program implemented that includes home visits after adoption. I know that budget is a major concern, so I’d like to suggest a starting a volunteer program to handle this. Additionally I want to say that I really do not want to see any more reductions at the shelter. This is a last resort for the homeless animals that come there. This is their life! Please don’t continue to reduce the budget, thereby reducing the number of adoptions.

Phil N.:

I am emailing as a life time resident and tax payer of Pinellas County and am aware of the severe budget cuts that Pinellas County Animal Services has experienced over the last several years. I have several friends that dedicate their time, efforts and love – as volunteers UNPAID - to help out the homeless animals of Pinellas county. I am sure there are many opportunities for budget cuts that do not involve reducing the chance at life for homeless animals that will be adopted as a life time companion. Please focus this year's cuts in those other areas and do not make any more budget reductions to Animal Services!

Marisa Armington:

Why don’t we let fire departments transport patients to the hospital. The Mic Gunderson report that the couty administrator is in love with is full of holes and misinformation and there are more than a few departments that want to transport. This would give EMS funding some relief. It is time to consider FD transport.

Norman Pickett:

I agree with Larry’s post as follows, “Larry : Why do some county offices a an Agency Administrator and Assistant Agency Administrator anywhere from three to four Supervisors? Then there are more than one office location so they need a number of Exempt employees to manage the monument. It is so ridiculous and wasteful spending. While we have to endure reduced service in parks, upkeep of our roads, and animal services. Please who are you kidding? Tuesday April 5, 2011 2:06”
Norman Pickett:

Wednesday April 6, 2011 8:23

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012

What Counts to You?

You are invited to participate in the Budget 2012 LIVE event by sharing your valuable input with your Pinellas County commissioners. Participate now by blogging in your questions, or on Wednesday, Apr. 6 at 6:30 p.m. by calling 1-888-886-6603 ext. 16403#, or viewing PCC-TV on Bright House Channel 622, Knology Channel 18 or Verizon Channel 44. You may also participate using Twitter by including #pinellasbudget in your tweet.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 8:56

Lance:
It time to face the fact that the housing boom is gone property taxes are down. It is time to stop passing budgets that ignores that issue. Pinellas County needs to reorganize, consolidate and eliminate unnecessary top heavy management. Making cuts to service and workers only worsens the problems. We will need the best parks and other county service to attract tourist. who in turn will spend money that may revitalize our economy. We are surrounded by beauty and warm weather lets not neglect it. The only thing left to cut is management, you have tried everything else for the last five years and ware has it gotten us?

Wednesday April 6, 2011 8:57

Deb:
Do you actually know what the barebones constant expenses are of the county?

Wednesday April 6, 2011 9:37

Tom:
Pass a resolution and impellent it immediately limiting the number and pay of Exempt employees and use of outside consultants. They may be your friends and peers but you are there to represent the tax paying residents interest, not the interest of peers and friends. ACT NOW save this years money too.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 9:38

Deb:
I found the numbers GFF FUND 0101 .

Wednesday April 6, 2011 9:46

Tom:
Re; Deb, No I don’t know what the “barebones” consultant fees are for the county. I do know that the “Classified” employees that were laid off to save money deserved better. Outside consultants should have been the first to go.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 9:47
The blog is open. Please continue to submit your budget questions and comments. Your budget questions will be answered during the LIVE event. Repetitive submissions will be answered once in the interest of time.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  9:54

Lance:
How do anybody justify the expense of even one side consultant when basic service to tax payers like weed control and animal services, or parks are being cut to save money? This is the mentality that got us into this mess.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  10:09

The panelists for the Budget 2012 event are the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners and County Administrator Bob LaSala. The LIVE event, moderated by Bay News 9’s senior anchor, Al Ruechel, will begin Wednesday, Apr. 6, at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  10:23

Martyn B.:
I’d like to suggest increasing adoption fees, rabies tags & other fees to prevent further budget cuts at Pinellas Co Animal Srvs. The increased revenue could not only prevent more cuts, but support bringing back more personnel & services, increasing adoption hours & supporting treatment for problems/illnesses which would make more animals adoptable. The current fees are unbelievably low & there is no reason not to raise, for ex., adoption fees to $75-$100. With all it includes (vaccines, spay / neuter), that’s still very low cost. And it may discourage adoption by people who may abuse or cannot financially support a pet.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  10:29

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog

REMINDER!
Blog entries are limited to 650 characters, including spaces. Blog entries received with embedded active hyperlinks will be edited to remove hyperlink capability before posting to the blog.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  10:39

ArtsAdvocate:
I don’t envy the Commissioners as they work to keep services alive without substantially raising taxes. As I read over the Guide the Budget, I was dismayed at the choices to be made. It’s time to bite the bullet, folks - we simply cannot sustain the quality of life we have without raising more money (i.e., taxes). Why are some people willing to spend $$$ on luxury cars, designer shoes, and cosmetic home improvement, but not a few more tax dollars on libraries, animal services, arts & culture, parks & recreation, and basic services like waste management, EMS, law enforcement and fire departments (not to mention education)!? (more to come)

Wednesday April 6, 2011  10:43
ArtsAdvocate:
We complain about paying taxes, then complain when services go away. You can’t have it both ways. I’m willing to spend more to have a great life here. That being said, the way arts and culture has been gutted is despicable for a county that prides itself as a tourist destination. (more to come)

Wednesday April 6, 2011 10:44

ArtsAdvocate:
Surely we can at least keep a Local Arts Agency alive here? You’ve done away with the Arts Council, then the Cultural Affairs Department, and now all we have is a committee who wants to throw a big event to raise money?? Has anyone on that committee spoken to the various entities in the county already planning or doing events to raise money in the wake of County cuts? There seems to be no communication. Please let us keep the arts conversation alive among all agencies. Thanks for listening.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 10:44

Deb:
The CONSTANT that the County spends Grants and AIDS is $20.1 million. These must be eliminated and the budget must be out of Taxpayer funds only. The County has no right to just give the taxpayer money to Foreigners for Dance Recitals, Museums and Extension services in times of INDEBTEDNESS.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 10:49

Deb:
General Fund Forcast shows a BALANCE of $99.7 MILLION DOLLARS estimated for 2012!!! A BALANCE IS NOT A SHORTFALL.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 10:55

Dawg:
I totally agree wth ArtsAdvocate. Even though my property value has declined over the years so has my taxes. This is the least amount I’ve spent in in the 16 years I’ve lived here. It’s a tragedy what the BOCC is forcing the Sheriff’s Office to do. The Sheriff was ridiculed for saying “Carnage in the streets”. Well people....look at the headlines! Support the Sheriff’s Office!

Wednesday April 6, 2011 11:18

ArtsAdvocate:
Arts and Culture support does not mean giving millions of dollars away to foreigners to see dance recitals. Last year, the county granted only few thousand dollars for the arts. The arts attract intelligent people to our county to work and contribute to tax rolls. They provide our children with valuable resources. They employ thousands of citizens and generate millions of dollars of indirect spending in the county. All I’m saying is that they should not be left out completely when evaluating what’s important to the county.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 11:18
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BN9:</td>
<td>Have some ideas about Pinellas County's 2012 budget? You can use Twitter to speak your mind tonight: <a href="http://bit.ly/ieTuJ1">http://bit.ly/ieTuJ1</a> #pinellasbudget [via Twitter]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquaserpent_01:</td>
<td>#pinellasbudget We need to increase taxes before most of our infrastructure, Teachers, Police, &amp; Fire Fighters are gone or destroyed. [via Twitter]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Allan:</td>
<td>Comparing this budget year to budget year 2004:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Allan:</td>
<td>What were budgeted revenues and budgeted expenditures for 2010 vs 2004? Are growth of the two consistent with inflation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Begins at 6:30 p.m. TONIGHT!</td>
<td>What Counts to You? The LIVE event begins at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time. Please continue to submit your budget questions and comments through this blog or by dialing 1-888-886-6603 ext. 16403# during tonight's event You may also participate through Twitter by including #pinellasbudget in your tweet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citizen:</td>
<td>#pinellasbudget How much does the county pay for all their vehicles?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Dawson:</td>
<td>Please don’t start entrance fees to the county parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest:</td>
<td>Will the Sheriff be held accountable for his own budget? Will there be penalties for not coming up with the majority of his cuts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Petty:</td>
<td>Please don’t make further cuts to Animal Services. Failing to provide an economic, accesible form of spay/neuter will just cause greater problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AllAboutHelp:</td>
<td>#pinellasbudget How much is spent on county vehicles? [via Twitter]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mark Mueller:
Please consider maintaining/improving funding for county parks/preserves via increased visitor entrance fees with an option for a discounted residential pass/card, as previously proposed by Administrator LaSala. Thank you.

Larry:
Focus on and develop cooperation and participations of all forms of government within Pinellas county to cut the budget. Board of County Commissioners, and Elected Constructional offices. If the elected constructional will not participate make that public knowledge, I believe 2012 is an election year for most of them.

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog
The blog is open. Please continue to submit your questions and comments. Because this is a moderated blog, you may not see your message post immediately. We appreciate your patience.

Lance:
Do we need so many Tax collectors offices? With an high paid Exempt Agency Administrator and Assistant Agency Administrator in each? Can’t they consolidate Agency Administrators to just one per office to save tax payer money? Then there an Exempt employee in charge of the all the Agency Administrators and another in charge of operations.

Mike:
What unfunded mandates do you foresee coming from the budget reductions in Tallahassee that the County will have to make up?

pinellas taxpayers:
Having read the internal audit report on Printing Services, how is it that the appointed directors have allowed to let the manager Steve Twardowski continue to waste thousands of taxpayers money on a yearly basis? when is enough enough?

Tom:
The Tax Collector stated last year that she can not cut her budget because of Driver License and the demands of the federal Real ID Act. I find that hard to believe because the state dose it with a third of the management and Real ID dose not complicate drivers license but simplifies it. Really dose she expects us to go without proper police protections or other county service because what she dose is so important more than law enforcement. It is our tax dollars she just handles the money.
Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 begins at 6:30 p.m. TONIGHT!

What Counts to You?

The LIVE event begins at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time. Please continue to submit your budget questions and comments through this blog or by dialing 1-888-886-6603 ext. 16403# during tonight's event. You may also participate through Twitter by including #pinellasbudget in your tweet.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 1:48

C. M Davis:
I'm concerned about the Pinellas County libraries getting their funds cut again. Please know how much our libraries mean to us. I go to the East Lake Library and even though they are having additional space put in, it's not enough! I hope that the funding will be adequate enough to sustain or improve library services within our county. We LOVE our libraries! Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 1:55

Emma:
Folks - The libraries - the PPLC - is not funded in by this budget.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 2:52

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Blog
For current information on the projected budget for Pinellas County, select the “FY2012 Budget Basics” from the Links menu on the left.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 2:56

Pinellas County: Welcome to the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 TONIGHT!
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Wednesday April 6, 2011 3:48

Kim S:
Please do not make increase budget cuts in animal services. We need to have low cost resources to help with animal concerns and issues.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 3:50
Tee Corbo:
I see the best way to give the taxpayers of this county their tax dollars worth is to NOT CUT EMPLOYEES but to NOT HIRE ANY ADDITIONAL EMPLOYEES AND REDUCE THE WAGES/SALARIES OF ALL COUNTY WORKERS INCLUDING THE COMMISSIONERS, REQUIRE THEM TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEIR RETIREMENT AND HEALTHCARE. EVEN I, WHO IS A RETIRED COUNTY EMPLOYEE AM WILLING TO HAVE MY HEALTHCARE COST, CURRENTLY TAKEN OUT OF MY RETIREMENT CHECK BE INCREASED. I LOVE THIS COUNTY AND DO NOT WANT TO HAVE TAXES INCREASED WHEN THOSE WHO DO NOT PAY TAXES GET FREE SERVICES AND BENEFITS. I AM WILLING TO DO MY SHARE.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 4:21

Attilio Corbo:
I already have submitted a statement of wants to this blog. BUT LET ME SAY MORE. AS A RESIDENT OF THE EASTLAKE/PALM HARBOR UN-INCORPORATED AREA OF THE COUNTY I, AND MANY OF US HERE BELIEVE THAT WE DO NOT SHARE IN THE BENEFITS OF OUR TAX DOLLARS. WE BELIEVE, AND PLEASE PROVE ME WRONG, THAT OUR TAX DOLLARS ARE USED IN THE SOUTH COUNTY AND WE GET SCRAPES. COME ON COMMISSIONERS AND ADMINISTER, PROVE US WRONG AND THAN WE WON'T COMPLAIN ABOUT OUR TAXES.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 4:24

Gypsy Gallardo:
Commissioners - I urge you not to make cuts to social services and to services impacting at-risk youth and children. I am aware that you will have to make hard choices this year, but please be especially mindful of dollars that impact delinquency prevention, ex-offender re-entry, arts and other after-school programs for at-risk children. All of the leading research demonstrates that these programs save taxpayers a lot more than we invest in the long-run. Thank you.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 4:31

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 Panelists
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Wednesday April 6, 2011 4:42

Trudy Wade:
To save the parks, maybe the county could charge cars $1.00 to enter, walking in should still be free. I don’t think people would mind $1.00.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:03

DRoss:
The Budget for EMS and fire rescue has been cut too far. Let the Fire Dept Transport EMS patients to save a little money.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:16
Marilyn Layman:
“Garbage Service” Currently, using the “Free Market System,” the least expensive garbage service in our unincorporated area of West Lealman costs $25.00 per month. If the county contracted with a service for our entire area, the cost would be reduced to about $15.00 per month. This would be a savings of $120.00 per year for every household. Please help us save this money (and wear an tear on our roads) by contracting with a garbage service for this area.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:20

Marilyn Layman:
This goes with the previous paragraph about “Garbage Service” An efficiently run government is worth money in everyone’s pocket.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:22

miki:
If the taxpayers must cut their budgets to a shoe string, so should Local, Sate and Federal officials and their agencies.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:23

Marilyn Layman:
Marilyn Layman

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:23

M. Abbott:
Clearwater has had huge success with their Jolly Trolley doing a loop of the area. This low cost, fun looking type of transportation within dense business, shopping and tourists areas could cut down on cars on the highway. Perhaps lots could be created for general parking and commuters, shoppers, etc. would use trolley while in the high density areas when possible.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:27

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Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:29

Guest:
The parks should be strongly supported. They are an asset to ALL residents, whether they frequent parks or not. Nominal fee for the regional pks, with resident discount, and let the visitors help to support the parks they visit.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 5:43
Guest:
To help support the parks, greater effort to get citizens involved in helping maintain, etc. the parks. VIP & CC may be more of commitment some can make, perhaps a monthly/quarterly “help the parks’ day at each park.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  5:45

M. Abbott:
Having the ability to input about issues and concerns via this on line blog and other internet approaches is a great way to save gas, time, staff, utilities, etc. It is a long way to Clearwater for the PCC meetings with many long lights. The more we can do via the web, the better! This is a great idea and service. Thank You!

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:00

Pinellas County: The LIVE portion of the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 will begin shortly.

What Counts to You?
Please stay tuned for eTownHall: Budget 2012! The LIVE eTownHall event begins at 6:30 p.m. eastern standard time.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:01

Lance:
Please don’t offer excuses us about the limitation on what you the persons trusted to lead Pinellas County and handle our tax money can do. Act these are channeling time that require superior leadership and action. How do you plan to be remembered?

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:28

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 is LIVE!

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Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:30

Sharon:
I cannot speak highly enough of this e-meeting. Please have more in the future. Especially good are the introductory links and files explaining the budget. I’ll list my “wish list” soon, but let it be known, electronic meetings are GREAT for people like me who can’t afford to attend meetings in person. Thank you again.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:33

roysyank:
how many more times are the county employees going to lose there jobs and benefits to helps balance the budget, and do we really need the amount of management, there are more supervisors per employees now in public works then there were before the layoffs started.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:34
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mike Seel</th>
<th>Could we cut the FOG facility? It loses money every year and makes bad business sense to keep it open.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kris</td>
<td>Please understand that the proper role of government is to facilitate basic county, state and federal mandates and services. Government’s role was and is not to facilitate the “wants and conveniences” of the citizens, no matter the petitions signed or the constituent attendance. Even “we the people” need to be reminded what the proper role of government is. And that reminder can most certainly come from the Board of County Commissioners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>Why don’t you create an inexpensive resident card to use facilities like the parks, environmental lands, libraries, etc., creating a defined pool of money to take care of those specific operations. Add a charge for tourists and visitors to enter our parks, etc., thus creating additional revenue from those who are not paying property taxes for services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rosysyank</td>
<td>People seem to forget the lower the taxes the more programs lost, the amendment the state passed put us where we are now, and most taxpayers didn’t save enough to make up the loss of programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>What agency addresses those who are physically and/or mentally disabled in Pinellas county? My biggest fear is that budgets will be slashed on these programs, and those who need it most can’t speak for themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Shelly</td>
<td>Can we save money by having the Sherriff’s Department handle the Accident Reports rather than the State Troopers?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pinellas Concerned:
continued 6. What regional support will be available in a local disaster? 7. Are there regional reserves of any kind? 8. What is the role of state reserves in a local emergency? 8. Have Pinellas reserves been used to reduce millage? 9. The FL Legislature is considering County Government Funding: CS/SB 1432 and HB889. Explain the need in relation to the above. Did you or your Association of Counties lobby for this?

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:51

ms.anita:
Question for the County Administrator: Do you value loyalty over productivity? The Housing Department had a critical audit by the Clerk’s Office and then made a less than steller presentation to the Board. Since Housing Assistance isn’t a vital County function, why not delete this entire department and provide those funds to libraries and parks?

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:51

Austin:
Can the abandoned, foreclosed homes somehow be used to house the homeless on a temporary basis?

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:51

Pinellas Concerned:
Reserves 1. How much is required by law and how regulated for counties? 2. Are any county reserves “designated”? 3. How are county reserves invested? Can they be used as collateral? How readily accessible? 4. What is the role of county reserves in emergencies? 5. In case of a declared disaster, how much county reserves will be drawn down vs. federal relief? to be continued

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:52

Pinellas Concerned:
continued 6. What regional support will be available in a local disaster? 7. Are there regional reserves of any kind? 8. What is the role of state reserves in a local emergency? 8. Have Pinellas reserves been used to reduce millage? 9. The FL Legislature is considering County Government Funding: CS/SB 1432 and HB889. Explain the need in relation to the above. Did you or your Association of Counties lobby for this?

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:52

Cathy:
Re boat ramp question - you’re kidding, right? People are living in cars and you’re concerned about a discount for your boat? And this is not about veterans who deserve our respect & gratitude, it’s just about revenue and where it should go. Using a boat creates an environmental impact in the quality of our waterways - consider your fee as you doing your part to clean up that impact and keep our water and wildlife from being negatively affected.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:52
Pinellas Concerned:
If PBCC charges residents to use parks, EVERY USER OF THE PINELLAS TRAIL AND ALL RECREATIONAL LAND AND WATER USERS MUST PAY THE CHARGE IN ADDITION TO EXISTING FEES! ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE WELL CONNECTED TO PINELLAS POLITICIANS and cause FORCED MANDATES ON TAXPAYERS BY LOBBYING POLICY-MAKERS. Environmentalists can now return to the taxpayer overdue gratitude for being granted tax-exempt status by us. to be continued

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:57

Pinellas Concerned:
continued Environmentalists can take advantage of this opportunity to use their tax-exempt revenue to pay for maintenance of nature in the parks. This diversion of their tax-exempt funds in support of the environment will reduce the environmental impact of emissions resulting from environmentalists traveling throughout the country to lobby.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:57

Kris:
How many Board members would back a light-rail, commuter rail system with a 1 percent increase in the sales tax?

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:58

Guest:
Since more than half of all companion animals impounded by Animal Services are killed at a great expense to taxpayers... would it not be time for a paradigm shift toward stopping littered litters from irresponsible citizens which we all have to pay (at the expense of other critical services lost?). Even for those who don’t n’ t care about saving lives?). By not making spay/neuter affordable, available and mandatory,

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:58

Guest:
How much property does the county own. how much does it lease. How much is empty, and from whom do we lease the most property from.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:58

Linda Nelson:
Some neighborhoods are being overrun by investors/landlords that are buying up homes and then turning them into section 8 housing. These landlords are billing the county for an amount that isn’t reality. A same or better home two houses away, rented by the owner to the general public would rent for $400 less!

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:59

Duane:
What is Pinellas County doing to promote new business growth?

Wednesday April 6, 2011  6:59
**Sharon:**
Any chance of coordinating with the colleges and universities in the area, and turning volunteer activities into some sort of college credit? I know a lot of people who want to retrain for new careers, but can’t afford the tuition.

**Liberty Belle:**
Question to Commissioner Latvala: TRAVEL, EXPENSES...............Recently Commissioner Latvala traveled to Germany to promote local tourism. How much did Commissioner Latvala’s trip to Germany cost the tax payers of Pinellas County?

**Cathy:**
Question for Commissioners Bostock and Roche: Do you see transit options within Pinellas County as a vital program for attracting economic development and create choices for our citizens in the struggle against ever-increasing gas prices?

**ATTILIO CORBO:**
BASED ON WHAT I HAVE HEARD SOFAR A QUESTION COMES TO ME. IF YOUR LOOKING TO POSSIBLY CUTTING PROGRAMS AND NOT INCREASING TAXES THAN: HOW CAN YOU CUT PROGRAMS AND NOT CUT PEOPLE (FRONT LINE AND MAGT.) OR CUT WAGES AND BENEFITS? WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS SO WE CAN BETTER CONTRIBUTE?

**Pinellas Concerned:**
Disclose total cost of sustainable development mandating rail, limited property rights, promoted by appointed conflict-of-interest stakeholders. It’s U.N. driven. PBCC refuses to debate SD publicly. There is no constituent demand for SD in America. PBCC paid $4500 to ICLEI, twice. Patrick Moore, Greenpeace founder, exposed the purpose of SD in THE MAKING OF A SENSIBLE to be continued

**Pinellas Concerned:**
continued ENVIRONMENTALIST: abandoned science hijacked by political and social activists, anti-capitalism globalization, not climate change ecology, SD would be far worse, cooling is what we should fear. Environmentalism is political ideology, not science. PBCC has fallen for the spin; we pay. PBCC owes it to constituents to examine the scientific facts. One source, DemocratsAgainstUNAgenda 21.

**Fed Up:**
Does anyone on the BCC have the courage to tell the residents of Pinellas County how much they have cut the Sheriff’s Office budget. All of these lovely places to go...how nice. Hopefully the bad guys aren’t there also. The BCC is not doing its duty to keep the residents safe.
Guest:
Since more than half of all companion animals impounded by Animal “Services” are killed at great taxpayer expense... would it not be time for a paradigm shift to save money (even for those who don’t care about saving pet’s lives)? Littered litters from irresponsible owners cost all of us immensely in funds that are desperately needed elsewhere but literally go up in smoke (in the crematorium). If you feed or shelter... you must alter along w/ “Sterilization or Citation” to all but licensed breeders would

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:06

Guest:
Are you telling me that we pay companies to TRAIN their own people with OUR tax dollars.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:06

Maureen O'Neil:
If Governor Scott obtains all the cuts he is seeking, how will the loss of revenue affect the Pinellas County residents? ie - the elderly/disabled/etc.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:10

Cathy:
Next to a mortgage, residents’ power bills are the second largest payment we make. What is the county doing to promote programs that create mechanisms for energy efficiency upgrades and retrofits - businesses that also creates local jobs and the demand that encourages manufacturers to locate in Pinellas County.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:13

Mike Seel:
We need to cut back on the lab located at the Logan Facility. Our lab charges almost twice as much as private companies. Which in turn cost facilities like South Cross and Dunn alot more than private companies cost.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:15

Guest:
Commissioner Roche: You said Pinellas County wants volunteers. Civic involvement. That’s great! What is the BCC doing to support that? There must be a cost. What is the cost/benefit?

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:17

Chuck:
When will serious cuts be made in upper management? Too many ACA and Department heads.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:19

Bob:
If the Gov. wins his bid to get rid of the many consumer protections we have such as the requirement for an auto repair shop to give an estimate in writing and stick to it, are you ready to pass emergency legislation that will at least re-instate these protections for Pinellas county so that we are not at the mercy of the many unscrupulous people that before the law existed preyed on our people and will return in full when it is removed.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:21
Emma:
I’m a supporter of local, smaller businesses. I think most of the money stays in the county. Do you think this is true? What are you doing to support small business development?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:21

Andrea E. Wells:
Since more than half of all companion animals impounded by Animal “Services” are killed at great taxpayer expense... would it not be time for a paradigm shift to save money (even for those who don’t care about saving lives)? Littered litters fr: irresponsible owners cost all of us immensely in funds that are desperately needed elsewhere but literally go up in a crematoriums smoke. If you feed or shelter... you must alter + “Steralization or Citation” to all but licensed breeders would fund pet over-population solutions.
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:22

LIBERTY BELLE:
I will ask my question again. To Commissioner Latvala regarding Travel Expenses. How much did Commissioner Latvala’s trip to Germany cost? Was she successful and what were the benchmarks that were used to gauge if the trip was successful?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:23

Cathy:
Have you consolidated county fleet maintenance with the Sheriff’s department fleet maintenance? Likewise, the legal departments of the county and the sheriff’s office? Why would the Sheriff’s Department need its own fleet maintenance & legal?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:24

dave palm harbor:
given so,e of you were in of fice during the deficit spending, why now are you talking budget correction to attack the deficit?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:25

Pinellas County: The Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 LIVE!
Continue to participate in this Budget 2012 discussion by blogging, tweeting with #pinellasbudget or calling during tonight’s LIVE event at 1-888-886-6603 ext. 16403#.
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:28

Kris:
To Commissioner Bostock and Roche: Knowing that there are State and Federal unfunded mandates that the county “must” fund and facilitate. Are you willing to look at the levels of current service and lower those levels for cost savings?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:29

Guest:
Between 2004 and 2006, on a straightline basis, Pinellas County took in between 3.5 and 5 Billion Dollars in UNEXPECTED revenue, where did it all go.
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:29
John:
Is there anything in the works concerning going to a metro-type of police agency to save money for all taxpayers county wide instead of so many departments in such a small area?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:29

Louise:
How many county-owned buildings are sitting empty? Are they up for sale? CAN the county sell them? What kind of shape are they in?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:29

Jessica:
Being a representative of Surfrider Foundation, we would like to applaud Andy Squires on the recent publication for Managed Retreat consideration on Honeymoon Island. What, if any, consideration is being made for the other 7 critically eroded beaches? Why asking, Managed Retreat is a long term solution to budget and beaches.
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:29

Cynthia G.:
Pinellas County parks and preserves may not seem very important in these hard economic times but it is very important to keep our environmental lands in order. This is especially true for our largest piece of undeveloped land, Brooker Creek Preserve. I believe maintaining the properties by managing the land is just as important, if not more important than keeping the properties open to the public. What good is a preserve if there is no money to manage the land properly with prescribed fire, etc?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:30

Margaret:
I know there is opposition but I think a small county park permit is a good idea. I’ve lived in other locations where that has been a practice for YEARS. Tourists would pay a SLIGHTLY elevated price to enjoy our resources. What say you THIS year?
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:32

Guest:
Recently, the board was asked to consider creating another utility, namely Stormwater. Currently, Tampa Bay Water provides most of the Blended Water to the County. As we flush the contaminants out of our system, put there by Tampa Bay Water, WHY should Pinellas County pay to clean up Tampa Bay Waters problem.
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:34

Amber:
I think it is critical that environmental lands and preserves be maintained.
Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:34
Garry:
What is the real outlook for the Toytown Landfill property? Being sensitive land as far as developing on top of a fragile clay cap only 2 feet deep how can there be heavy development of buildings, sewars and infrastructure built on it. Wouldn’t it be better served as recreational low impact property?

Larry from Largo:
Is the county still considering the closing of Heritage Village? Those buildings do have some expense, but they belong to us and generations to come. Don’t be short sighted and close that facility!

Guest:
Green jobs! YES! Let’s be ahead of the curve! We’ll attract more cutting edge business that way! Go go go!

Larry from Largo:
In light of last December’s water main break, will the county have enough money to maintain the infrastructure?

Fed Up:
How about the BCC take a pay cut...

Kris:
How are you going to educate the general public with regards to what the budget cuts are going to look like when they are going to see a “Green Energy House” (funded by a federal grant) being built and possibly a pedestrian walkway being built over the Courtney Campbell Causeway (funded by the Florida Department of Transportation). Neither of these projects are being funded by property taxes but the general public will not know this. They will simply see “tax dollars being spent.”

Ralph:
Intoxicants are legal and culturally accepted. Alcohol can and will kill you if you ingest to much. Undeniable medical fact says that in all respects Marijuana is less harmful and CAN NOT kill you. Why has the county not insisted that the laws against it be removed. The money saved would be enough to take care of the Fire and Police dept. needs for years.

Gordon:
Are religious organizations taxed for their schools. Many of them receive vouchers. It seems anything that doesn’t hold religious services should be taxed. I asked this by phone, but rec’d no answer. Thanks
**Pinellas County: The LIVE portion of the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 will end shortly.**

After the conclusion of tonight’s eTownHall: Budget 2012, we will no longer be able to accept new blog posts, phone calls or tweets. Please submit all of your questions and comments prior to the end of this LIVE event.

Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:45

| **Margie:** Boarded up homes and abandoned residential properties: Aside from the owners and banks, does the County work to keep them presentable? It is a shame that some have been like that so long they’ve become landmarks when you are giving friends directions to your house! |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:50 |

| **Ralph:** I dare the commission to comment on this and address how they can support it in light of the undeniable medical facts that it is the safer intoxicant over alcohol. Lets stop wasting money on injustice. Maybe stopping the pill mils a REAL dangerous drug instead of a harmless one. |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:51 |

| **Bob:** We could build wind turbines in the Gulf and generate power, why not? Put so many out there will be no room for dangerous oil rigs. |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:53 |

| **Maria:** What are you doing to generate income to offset all these budget cuts. |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:54 |

| **Larry from Largo:** Why can’t we put toll booths on the bridges coming into Pinellas and on US 19... imagine the money we could get from people coming to stay at our beaches and in our hotels! |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:54 |

| **Joe Barbara:** With the property value in the Tampa bay area going up near 200% from the years of 03 to 06 & all the million of $ from impact fees paid to the county during those years from new construction. While for the most part all the infrastructure was already in place to accommodate the new construction in Pinellas co. there should have been a huge surplus of funds available. Even though the property value is way down the past few years there are 100s of thousands of new homes in Pinellas to collect taxes from how can there be such money shortages? Why is Pinellas in such financial trouble? |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday April 6, 2011 7:58 |
Pinellas County: The LIVE portion of the Pinellas County eTownHall: Budget 2012 has concluded.

Thank you for your participation in this eTownHall: Budget 2012. To view a replay of this event, please visit www.pinellascounty.org/etownhall.

Wednesday April 6, 2011  7:58
TELEPHONE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

Cold calls
Utilizing proprietary software provided by the vendor, Telephone Town Hall Meetings, 65,000 Pinellas County residents were cold-called at the beginning of the live event on April 6 inviting them to participate in a county budget discussion.

- A total of 48,326 residents were reached with an answered - call rate of 74%
- Of the 10,134 residents accepting the call:
  - 5,757 stayed on the call more than 60 seconds delivering an accepted call rate of 57%
  - The maximum number of people on the call at any one time was 1,066 with an average call duration of 4.5 minutes
- 62 of those called asked a question
- 22 participants called in a question

Those questions were acquired in a text format, reviewed by Communications staff and selected questions were relayed to the moderator by electronic means during the live event.

For the incoming calls top respondent categories were:

- Increased/Decreased Taxes, Fines, Fees......................................................20% (12 respondents)
- Transportation ...............................................................................................13% ( 8 respondents)
- Schools..........................................................................................................13% ( 8 respondents)
- Salaries/Overspending/Consolidation.............................................................11% ( 7 respondents)
- Parks/Preserves/Recreation.............................................................................10% ( 6 respondents)
- Budget Structure .............................................................................................8% ( 5 respondents)
- Misc. .............................................................................................................25% ( 23 respondents)

Miscellaneous categories include economic development, animal services, volunteers, social services, public safety, foreclosures, water treatment and group purchases.

*# phone number has been redacted

1) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   Need to eliminate the all the perks that govt employees receive- Need to start holding Obama`s feet to the fire- Florida needs to set an example-

2) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   79 years old- Can`t afford to register a car- Costs for car and driver`s license too much!

3) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   What is the purpose of cutting the budget? What will be gained?

4) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   Question about animal control

5) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   Would be budget friendly to open up firefighters and police to have volunteers with them-

6) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   What is the rate of growth for budget expenses over the last 5 years, and have they matched income?

7) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   Feels that the money that comes into the state is being used toward projects for the rich, and always cut the poor....

8) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   Should put low fees in place to enter the county parks- Has this been considered?

9) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
   She is concerned about education, and how budget will affect this in her county

10) Unknown, ,,Unknown,,,*#
    Are after school programs going to be effected by these budget decisions?
11) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Will you be building a new pier? What is going on with Tropicana field?

12) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Put more taxes on sales of alcohol and cigs!!

13) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Wants to hear more about what is proposed to be cut?

14) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Concerned about property taxes and school programs. There are supposed to be no children left behind, but feels all of them are with budget cuts

15) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   The fundamental schools and public schools should both be holding parents accountable—Need to be using the same code of ethics....

16) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   What kind of services will you be providing to the children of Pinellas County?

17) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Lived in Tampa, comes from NY. Why has this area not committed to utilizing the waterways to connect to other regional metropolitan areas? Makes more sense than roads and trains

18) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   What PTSA stand for?

19) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Why can’t EMT bills be included as part of our taxes?

20) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   When they will fix the flooding problems (roads....)?

21) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   If you could get the insurance companies to go back to their old way of doing things, maybe some of the real estate could be released to use—would create a better tax base—

22) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Of all the houses that are going in to foreclosure, who is paying the taxes on those; the bank or the citizens?

23) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   County commissioners seem to be having no problem getting their paychecks—Has noticed road crews, etc. have alot of workers standing around—Need to be monitored—

24) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Are religious school vouchers taxed??

25) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Why no discussion on EMS—Need to do what Janet Long wanted to do—Would save lots of money

26) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Has enjoyed listening—Glad to have this—We are all in this togetherwww

27) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   How can you win back the confidence of the people? Always chop the poor people—what about the wealthy?

28) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   How do you report lazy or terrible county employees? Feels like there is no way to get rid of bad gov’t employees.

29) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Other more economical ways could have been used toward the beautification projects instead of taking the money away from the schools—

30) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   How are disabled people supposed to survive on what funds they are given??What can be done?

31) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   If the state doesn’t have the money to combat the prescription drug problem—why can’t the county do something about it?

32) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Why can’t we take a look at the Penny for Pinellas to replace the lost revenue from the milege rate?

33) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
   Since we are trying to cut services to save money for the city, can we cut flouridation of the water supply since it is unhealthy anyway?
34) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Will there be any attempt of the county to make the bus system more user friendly especially for students- (schedules....)

35) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
www.teletownhall.com (877)-536-0565 page 7 / 13. What is the progress that has been made on the homeless shelter across from the Pinellas Police Department, how has the community reacted, and where will addition funds come from to maintain it

36) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
What roll, if any, would the county have in increasing bus service in Pinellas or having lite rail?

37) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
What part of Starkey Road in Largo will have the improvements?

38) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
If you would partner with other counties and cities to purchase insurance it would be cheaper.....

39) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
If the governor obtains all the cuts he`s asking for, how will impact the community?

40) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Do you have the courage to go back to the pre 2000 govt levels?

41) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Will any one in government ever have the guts to tell sports stars to stop tapping in to government taxes for sports stadiums?

42) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Governor made a mistake in taking away the lite rail- Would like to ADD the 1 percent tax- Will create more employment....

43) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Need to charge to USE the parks and boat ramps- Charging for parking to watch the sunset!!
Will you curb future hikes to county employees?

44) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Will you curb future hikes to county employees?

45) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Bank foreclosures on his street- How does that affect the value of his house?

46) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Question about Pennys for Pinellas: Wasn’t the program extended for teacher’s pay? Do the teacher’s want more?

47) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Are you really going to hold the Sheriff’s feet to the fire when you haven’t already?

48) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Why hasn’t the county put more money into the transit system??

49) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Can you make a deal with the Salvation Army to work on the Pinellas trail as part of their community service?

50) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
What are you doing to make sure that all regulations are being met by small business? What percentage do the county employees contribute to their healthcare, or does the county pay it all?

51) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Have you looked at having an emergency fee to help you thru the budget crisis?

52) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Tourism tax great idea- Gambling should be taxed- Should watch money laundering from small business, etc.

53) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
Is it correct that individuals are receiving free cell phones funded through tax payer money?

54) Unknown, „Unknown„, *#
She feels that what is being discussed is fairy tales. We need to talk about children more (obesity problems, loss of park land, etc.) Wants more charity money given to children.
55) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   What is the current status of the libraries??
   Will they close? Are there plans for a new
   community center? Can you extend the
   library hours?

56) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   Why is the county saying they don`t have
   money when the housing boom brought in
   lots of taxes until recently?

57) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   If taxes are going down and the millage
   has stayed the same, why has my taxes
   increased?

58) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   Will the property value going up over the last
   few years, and all the fees paid, shouldn`t
   there have been a huge surge of funds
   available; why are there such great money
   shortages in the county?

59) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   What kind of usage research has been done
   on the Pinellas trail and if none, why not?

60) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   Have there been any changes in the macro
   elements of the budget. He`s frustrated
   specifically about the discussion of the micro
   level (i.e. toilet paper use, etc.). Thinks policy
   should be #1

61) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   Alot of mishaps on water- Need to have a
   license to run your boat- good revenue!

62) Unknown, ,,Unknown,, *,#
   Seems that financial problems are pandemic,
   nationwide, and she thinks that the
   politicians are the over-spenders.
Citizen Emails

Pinellas County citizens can email their commissioners or county departments to request a service, report a problem or offer an opinion through the Pinellas County website.

Citizens can also offer their ideas on the budget through a special budget mailbox on the Citizen Guide to the Budget page on the Office of Management and Budget website. Clicking on the Submit your Suggestions icon brings them to an email form where they can submit their budget ideas.

Last budget season, 213 citizen suggestions were received through this budget mailbox.
CITIZEN EMAILS

From January 1 to April 15, 2011, 34 citizen emails were sent to the county through the suggestions link on the Citizens Guide to the Budget website, for a total of 55 budget-related ideas/suggestions. Some emails contained multiple suggestions.

The top five respondent categories were:

- Parks/Preserves .................................................................22% (12 respondents)
- Sheriff’s Office/Law Enforcement .................................13% (7 respondents)
- Transportation .................................................................9% (5 respondents)
- Animal Services ..............................................................7% (4 respondents)
- Government Salaries ......................................................5% (3 respondents)
- Misc. .................................................................................44% (3 respondents)

Miscellaneous responses include trash/recycling, volunteers, foreclosed homes, backyard chickens, environment, enforced/increased fines and fees, tax breaks for businesses and sale of vacant government properties.
February 19 - 25, 2011

- The Sheriff’s Office budget is too high!!! Sheriff Rice continued to jack up the budget without commission dissent. The Sheriff’s Office budget should be reduced. --rtripka@hotmail.com (Robert Tripka)

- Eliminate the county Extension Service. And take a close look at the salaries of the upper administrative staff in parks. Some of them are quite high.

- Can there be any revenue generated from the creative sales of the empty houses to investors? Perhaps offer 50% discount on taxes for 2 years. It is better than receiving nothing now. --jeannie113@tampabay.rr.com (Jean Field)

- Try Nexidia’s advanced speech analytics solutions. This company’s product has the ability to search live or recorded speech for specific words or phrases. It could be used to analyze speech to improve customer support for 911, CIC, Information Desk or to replace clerks’ transcripts for recorded meetings.

February 26 - March 4, 2011

- Please preserve all of the county’s parks and preserves. They are the crown jewels of our quality of life. Encourage volunteerism. Visitors come from near and far to enjoy these jewels and spend their dollars here!

- Please think about allowing chickens in Pinellas County. They are inexpensive to feed and house and they produce eggs that are needed so we can save money. It would be smart to only let hens be allowed. Then there wouldn’t be any rooster fighting and there wouldn’t be tons of chicks being sold. Please look at the benefits for letting chickens into Pinellas. They kept our ancestors and elder relatives alive. They produced eggs that can be made for breakfast, put into baked goods and can save money. Our younger generation can learn how to handle chickens and can pass on their knowledge one day.

- It is a fact that Sheriff Jim Coats was given an informal bid to handle the entire medical needs of the Pinellas County Jail inmates by a private company. The retired sheriff of Hillsborough County, Cal Henderson, gave Sheriffs Coats the estimate that stated the bidding group could provide the medical services for $3 million, yes $3 million, a year cheaper than Sheriff Coats can do it “in house.” Coats ignored this. You need to address this and seek the bids yourselves if need be. You can save $3 million annually by simply moving the inmate medical healthcare to this private firm for whom a 3-term retired sheriff of a major city works and most of future lawsuit exposure from inmates will be borne on this private firm, not the Pinellas County BCC (taxpayer funds). If Pasco County’s Sheriff White can get by with $85 million per year to keep 439,000 people safe who live or work in his jurisdiction, than why can’t Pinellas County’s Sheriff Coats take the same $85 million for a year? Yes, the Pinellas County jail has twice the inmates, but other money pays to bed many of them and Coats only has to keep 300k of the 900k Pinellas residents safe since all but his 300k to keep safe live in municipal police department districts within Pinellas County. You guys are getting hosed by Sheriff Coats on his annual budget with or without retired sheriff Cal Henderson’s $3 million savings offer on inmate healthcare!
March 5 - 11, 2011

- I am writing over concerns I have with the proposed cuts at the PCSO. It seems like there are a few “double dippers” employed there. It would seem to me that if anyone is to lose their job, it should be the persons who already have retired and are now coming back to make money on top of the pension we are already paying them. --lynnecnm@tampabay.rr.com (Lynne Dollar)

- I don’t know how much it would save, but do trash pickup once a week instead of twice. Recycle every two weeks.

- How about an “Adopt a Park” program like the “Adopt a Highway.” This could involve cleaning and maintenance.

- Please do not make any changes affecting our wonderful county parks. They need to remain open, adequately staffed and free for all citizens of the county. In these difficult financial times, visiting our parks is one of the few remaining affordable recreational activities.

- The reason a lot of people voted for the Penny of Pinellas was for parks and preserves. If you go to messing with that, you will have a hard time getting a penny passed again. Some of the smartest people live and work here in Pinellas. You all can figure this out. --tbower@tampabay.rr.com (Thomas Bower)

- Quit funding so called “traffic calming.” Quit repaving and re-doing streets that do not need it. We do not need fancy stop lights at every corner and digital highway signs. If we have them, they should be solar.

- Reduce enforcement against personal use of marijuana. If there are people in jail on marijuana charges that do not involve dealing or violence, let them out early to save on jail costs.

- Quit constantly re-pruning and replacing vegetation. What is wrong with the natural look? This activity is mostly too aggressive in many areas anyway and does not really result in “beautification.” Mow less.

- Step up enforcement of higher level drug offenses (prescriptions, meth, heroin, etc.) and take more property.

- Impose heavier/harsh fines for pollution and litter offenses, especially for companies, and step up enforcement to collect more fines.

- Maybe institute larger fines and more enforcement for illegal water usage. Maybe fine by the volume of water used.

- Reduce the number and use of government autos and trucks. Instead of buying more vehicles, use more confiscated vehicles from drug busts.

- Sell or scrap vehicles, equipment and properties that are not being used.

- Quit paying for things that should be paid for by private organizations and companies. Quit throwing money at large corporations like Jabil. Jail inmates (including juveniles) do not need “services” and activities that make their experience at the jail “not so bad.” Limit visits, Internet access, sports equipment, etc. Make them not want to go there.

- Review non-tax paying properties and companies to determine if there are changes or enforcement action needed there.

- Make more county functions available to e-mail and online processing.

- Weed out illegals from receiving any kind of county funding, except a trip to the border or INS.

- Shelve remodeling and new building activity that is not necessary.
• Keep parks open, but stop paying for so called “improvements” that are NOT and stop “commercializing.” They are parks and should not need a lot of fancy equipment or employees to maintain. Restrooms are essential, but should be redesigned to be quick and easy to clean.

• Look at all foreclosures and verify standing to bring a case. Paperwork should be reviewed by a qualified person before a case is allowed to proceed or at this point, all should be looked at for what can be weeded out. Some cases are dragging on in the courts and costing money because cases were not properly filed or organizations that do not have standing are allowed to proceed or substitute counsels and other companies. It is not the courts' responsibility to let it continue on the courts' dime. Clear up the docket by dismissing all currently questionable cases and enforcing the administrative orders. Then, going forward, if there is a dispute concerning who has the right to foreclose, (MERS, servicer or ?) make them figure it out before filing a case and before being allowed to proceed in the court. Get a standard procedure/approach and verification for all foreclosure case judges to follow. --stormwindynight@hotmail.com

• (1) The county has two parcels of land in the Oakhurst Shores development off of 113th street near 56th Ave. The parcels are on water frontage (canals) and were probably kept expecting to build a bridge over the canals. That is never going to happen and there is no need for the county to retain those properties. They could be sold off for good money as waterfront property is in high demand. Right now you are experiencing maintenance cost to keep mowing that land. Why? One parcel is on Walker Avenue and the other parcel is on Grove Street looking at each other over the canal. (2) I keep hearing that any fines realized from violators of watering rules and grass cutting rules must go into the General Fund. The problem with that is that you are cutting down on expenses in the General Fund which means fewer people on the street administering those fines. What you need to do is to change the laws regarding where those monies from fines go. If they went to the department that issues the fines, then the department could be self-sufficient, in that the fines could mean more people issuing fines and keeping our waterways and streets more free of debris, fertilizer, etc. and cut down on water usage. That would mean a win-win situation for the county. Change the laws on the direction those fines take. (3) I realize that most of the street landscaping is conducted by the municipalities, but the county like has some too. Every time a grass land, tree, bush, shrub, etc. goes up along the streets, it means watering, fertilizing, cutting, in other words, additional costs. Streets don't need to be “pretty,” just functional. --dbrugman@tampabay.rr.com (Don Brugman)

March 12 - 18, 2011

• If our County Commission doesn't realize it by now, the train of green, sustainable communities, smart growth, managed growth, water regulations on nutrient and storm water pollution, ban on oil (abolition of fossil fuel) and capture of CO2 (greenhouse gases) are leading to the destruction our Bill of Rights. In America, the individual has rights; there is no collective. If you step on one individual, you have missed the target for freedom. This isn't horseshoes.

• The absolute nerve to ask how you can cut the budget is just ridiculous! You are continually buying things. Shopaholics, that's what you are, buying studies, private property and paying for grants to environmental extremists who create more spending, all based on the bogus science of climate change. The redundant agencies and councils that were created (MPO, Pinellas Planning Council, PSTA/TBARTA) that sit around and plan how to tax the hell out of us to give us everything we never asked for and told you “no,” like a light rail. I mention it because the same people are on the different councils and organizations! Will it be gasoline, the water, the garbage, fees on park visits and increases in fees? Where are the cuts while they are sucking the life out of the little family as the prices on gas and food skyrocket? People are budgeting to the max and one more cent here and there could mean foreclosures on homes and businesses. That is the projection of the UN--the elimination of private property. Get it?
• I heard a guy ask for new fees and taxes last night. You should have taken his name and told him you will take his bank account and have a great time spending it. It is utterly ridiculous, but there may be more schmucks out there, so ask for contributions.

• $2,000,000 goes to the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization). Where will you spend it? On what? Studies and Ads?

• Green print city of Clearwater spent $600,000 for what, brochures put out by MPO (it says it on the brochures) and light bulb giveaways paid for by our taxes? Clearwater can do what it wants. They have the wolves guarding the hen house. They’d better not count their chickens!

• Commissioners, do your homework! For some of you this is political, but for real patriot leaders of our county, it means something to work for the people and we see who you are and we know you want what is right for your own family as well. That seat is just for a short time. After that, you will be one of us again.

• You said you want to spend the same as in 2002. It should be easy to see what you did then and then just do it. Everything else has to go away.

• Stop the unfunded spending for bike trails and parks. We have too many to maintain. This is Agenda 21, isn’t it? Stop with the planters in the streets. Beautification makes it look like Stepford Wivesville. This is a waste of money. WE DON’T HAVE IT. I don’t want to live in Celebration, Fla. or I’d move there!!!!

• I am staying engaged and checking my facts. I am going to be ready in 2012. --DebraTonyCasoDesigns.com

• In a time of foreclosure and job losses, I think that the county needs to cut many positions, specifically in management. There are too many overpaid employees earning way more than the private sector could bear to pay. Their salaries rose like real estate, yet they still are stable while county taxes and real estate has been cut in half. Pensions and benefits have been lost or cut in most private sector jobs. The county (as public service employees) should feel an obligation to cut back all management in all departments. Obviously, Parks and Recreation, Environmental and Building would be first.

• All highly paid employees (those making higher than the average county resident they are serving) need to go. Pinellas County residents cannot afford to pay taxes to fund the paychecks of people earning more than they do. Post these jobs if needed and you will have lines of qualified people in need of work.

• Raising costs for services and parks within Pinellas would not be necessary if you CUT the FAT in county management! Your employers are watching.

• Thank you! It’s time for property tax cuts. --ozonatim@yahoo.com (Tim Fitzgerald)

• Cut 50% across the board with budget and personnel reductions. Increase pension contributions by at least 20%. Then, lower property taxes so people that still have houses can afford to keep them. I’m tired of watching 15 people fill a pothole and five supervisors watching that crew. There’s a lot of fat to cut so get to it. --brendanf@winntech.net (Brendon Fitzgerald)

• Stop kowtowing to the idiot Tea Partiers! Floridians pay some of the lowest taxes on average in the WHOLE WORLD! Stop the cuts already; you are ruining the things that made Pinellas a great place to live in the first place. Grow a darned backbone and adjust the millage rate for revenue neutrality already!

• My taxes have dropped enough. Can’t you keep current spending/revenue levels instead of even more cuts?
• I think that you should charge an entrance fee for county parks like Fort De Soto. HOWEVER, I feel that taxpaying Pinellas County residents should be exempt from this fee with proof of a valid Pinellas County ID. Tourists and seasonal residents take advantage of the beauty of Pinellas County parks and beaches and do not pay anything to help to maintain them. Then we, as taxpayers, suffer when there is no money to maintain these parks. I think a measure like this would pass with flying colors among taxpayers. Thank you for your consideration.  --marissasegundo@gmail.com (Marissa Segundo)

• Please remember, or learn for those of you who never did, that you are supposed to be elected leaders NOT panderers. I have no problem with my taxes supporting our parks and boat ramps, etc., but there’s no excuse for not charging user fees, given how few of us use most parks. Make those who use them pay a little more for heaven’s sake. It’s no different than our transit system, which benefits our citizens, environment and economy yet people squawk bloody murder about paying a few dollars a year to support a transit system that costs people $2 every time they ride. Why are user fees at parks outrageous and user fees for transit considered too low?

March 19 - 25, 2011

• I spent Sunday at the beach on the south side of the Courtney Campbell Causeway at the west end. It cost $10 per car, $15 for cars with trailers. It was packed. When I left at 3:30, there was a line of cars to get in. If this is the demand for a park that costs $10, surely the county can start charging SOMETHING for people to use its parks. Stop kowtowing to the boisterous, stingy few and do what’s right. Make the people who actually use the parks pay a little more for them!

April 2 - 8, 2011

• Eliminate funding for Pinellas County Animal Services for responding to barking dog problems. It is a big waste of money. Have the police deal with the matter rather than Pinellas County Animal Services. Animal control officers do not have the skills needed to deal with the barking dog issues, because it is not an “animal complaint.” It’s a complaint against the irresponsible dog owner.

• For those who say that the police are too busy for such matters, we submit that solving the problem once and for all with that first visit will save the department immeasurable time relative to what they will be forced to invest if the problem is allowed to fester, producing a chain reaction of animosities.

• Besides, research shows that having a uniformed police officer unexpectedly show up at the door of the inconsiderate neighbor is sometimes all that is needed to resolve the problem right then and there.

• According to public records, Pinellas County Animal Services considers the noise of a frequent barking dog to be a very low priority. But the fact of the matter is that unwanted barking dog noise is not just a nuisance, but a serious health hazard, according to the World Health Organization.

• Just look at public records and see how many folks (if any) were actually cited. Most, if not all of the time, the animal control officer will write that “no violations were observed” even if they do hear a dog or dogs frequently barking or yapping.

• Animal control is a dirty joke. The health & welfare of the citizens are not being protected. Furthermore, the barking law in Pinellas is ineffective and unenforceable and we take exception to the following provisions:

• No avenue for immediate relief from incessant barking. If a dog is barking NOW, there is no current action that the authorities can take to stop the barking immediately. Pinellas County Animal Services might speak with the offender to advise of a complaint, but the noise is
not stopped and the victim continues to suffer. The first priority should be to stop the noise. Complainants should have an avenue for relief regardless of the day of the week or time of day.

- Upon the first complaint, a police officer should call at the home of the accused dog owner. Based on our experiences, there is nothing as sure to bring a barking problem to an abrupt end as an unexpected home visit from a uniformed officer. For those who say that the police are too busy for such matters, we submit that solving the problem once and for all with that first visit will save the department immeasurable time, relative to what they will be forced to invest if the problem is allowed to fester, producing a chain reaction of animosities. The proof of blame can proceed after the immediate cessation of barking dog noise.

- The victim must provide proof
  Keeping a “bark log” is time intensive and is extremely stressful to the victim. It is not the job of the private citizen to regulate the behavior of his neighbor. We aren’t required to chase down speeding motorists or write tickets to other citizens when they park improperly. It should not fall to citizens to monitor a neighboring dog owner to make him behave responsibly. Forcing people to behave in a responsible manner is the job of the government, not the private individual.

- Two or more household rule.
  Problems with the two-or-more household rule include, but are not limited to the following:
  1) Based solely on location, one household may incur the worst of the noise. Other households may be buffered from the noise by that one house.
  2) Logs from people who work at home will not correlate with those who do not.
  3) People inherently do not want to be involved in conflict either due to fear of retaliation or lack of desire to cause conflict.

- Since the Pinellas County codes appear not to protect the citizens who are a victim of barking dog noise (if you don’t believe me, just take a look at public records), our only other course of action would be to take our neighbor to small claims court or civil court. We should not have to do that. It is the job of our local government to protect the health & welfare of all its citizens, not just dog owners. --wewantquiet@gmail.com (Barbara)

- Please don’t start entrance fees to the county parks. --dawson@sports-fun.com (Bill Dawson)

- Please don’t make more cut at Pinellas County Animal Services! The animals need help desperately! -rebecca8@tampabay.rr.com (Rebecca Sjouwerman)

- In this economy, crime, particularly that related to drug crimes, is increasing. The Sheriff’s Office is essential to protecting our citizens. Understandably, it is the largest portion of the budget, but that along with EMS and fire rescue is of utmost importance. Those should be the last budgets that get slashed at the rates that have been required.

- It has become a necessity that property taxes be increased to counter the revenues that are being lost as property values continue to drop. No one wants a tax increase, but that has become a necessity in order to continue to run county government as is necessary. When is the board going to have the wherewithal to take that step? --Belinda Peters

- I have followed the severe budget cuts that Pinellas County Animal Services has experienced over the last two years. I feel that they’ve been overly drastic in this very important area regarding the welfare and second chance at life of our companion animals. There are fewer officers out there to follow up on abuse calls and to enforce the laws like the anti-tethering law. The adoption hours have been cut back,
the Animobile was cut, as well as many crucial personnel. The shelter needs more help, not less.

• I’d like to suggest increasing adoption fees, rabies tags and other fees. The increased revenue could not only prevent more cuts, but, over time, could support bringing back more personnel and services, increasing adoption hours and providing more treatment for problems/illnesses which would make more animals adoptable. The current fees are unbelievably low and there is no reason not to raise, for example, adoption fees to $75-$100. With all it includes (vaccines, spay/neuter), that’s still a very low cost. And it may discourage adoption by people who may abuse or cannot financially support a pet.

• One other suggestion I’d like to make, because I fear for the welfare of the animals once they are adopted, is to add a clause on the adoption form that says something along the lines of “adopter agrees to periodic home visits and follow up phone calls.” I know that would be costly, but even if home visits are never actually conducted, it may scare away potential abusers. Also, as a volunteer, I’d be willing to do phone calls, and I know other volunteers would be also. If they receive a phone call, they are more likely to believe they may also get a home visit.

• There are many other opportunities for budget cuts that do NOT involve reducing the chance at life for homeless animals. Please focus this year’s cuts in those other areas! I would like to see my money go to an area that is extremely important to me, giving a second chance at life to the voiceless, innocent, discarded animals out there! --alb826@gmail.com (Andrea Barlow)

• I listened by phone to your meeting (or most of it) on 4/6. Comments were made a couple of times about volunteers. I’ve lived in Pinellas County for 50 years and just heard in the last few months that there are volunteer opportunities within the county. How do citizens in the Pinellas County community find out about volunteering to help support in a time when funding is such a critical issue?

• If possible, keep me on the list and let me know of upcoming meetings. Good job.--Twoshay727@aol.com (Sharon Born)

• What is the commissioners’ approach and ultimately their “take” on consolidating departments within the county? I would also like to know, if consolidation is an option for the budget, what approximate savings would this provide the county? Also, if consolidated, how would it affect existing services? --t.michael@yahoo.com (Tim Michael)

• My suggestion is to install banks of mail boxes in the lobbies of the branches. Employees can pick-up their sections mail as they pass by the boxes. This would ease the effect of budget cuts to Mail Services and reduce staff time.

• I think it is very important that you do not cut your beach, park and recreation Services. As you well know, many residents of our great county have lost their jobs, taken cuts in salaries and received no cost of living raises for the past three years. Living on tight budgets, where can they take their families for family outings and deal with the stress in their lives with primary worries of supporting their families, good education for their kids, how much longer can they afford to live in their homes and where will they go if they lose their homes, and prices going up for food, gas, clothing and on and on? They are going to take their families to one of our great parks, beaches and recreation areas. These folks need a break, a little peace of mind and where else can they afford to take their kids and watch them laugh and play, camp out for the weekend, and enjoy nature. Don’t take this away from them and me. --AWOLFF2@tampabay.rr.com (Toni Wolff)

• I have followed the severe budget cuts that Pinellas County Animal Services has experienced over the
last 2 years. I feel that they’ve been overly drastic in this very important area concerning the welfare and second chance of our companion animals. There are many other opportunities for budget cuts that do NOT involve reducing the chance at life for homeless animals. Please focus this year’s cuts in those other areas and do not make any more budget reductions to Animal Services! As a resident and taxpayer of Pinellas County, I would like to see my money go to an area that is extremely important to me, Pinellas County Animal Services. Please, no more cuts to the Animal Services budget. I have seen how the budget cuts have hurt Animal Services, and therefore hurt the innocent animals that need our help! There are fewer officers out there to follow up on abuse calls and to enforce the laws, like the anti-tethering law. The adoption hours have been cut back, as well as many crucial personnel. The shelter needs more help, not less. I would also like to ask for the Animobile back. It is so important to the community. The reality is there are only two solutions: spay and neuter and adoption vs. buying from a breeder.

• The legislative governance over backyard the breeder is almost non-existence, and for the few laws there are, they are not enforced and are blatantly ignored (faked health certificate, false reporting of number of dogs bed).

• My plea of humanity to you is to add to the PCAS budget, not to reduce it. I know hard times need tough decisions, but to short change the ones who cannot speak for themselves and to know that the current slaughter of pets whose short time is up, is hopefully understood by all, as not the morally right place to divert/eliminate county funding from. --luyrpet@tampabay.rr.com (Belinda Blease)

• Please institute a park fee for entrance at Fort De Soto Park. This amazing park is falling into disrepair because of cuts in previous budget years. While I understand those cuts were necessary and unavoidable, facilities at Fort De Soto Park help to generate the tourism dollars that are so vital to our local economy. We cannot continue to let them fall into a state that makes it even harder to repair. My family would be willing to pay a $5 fee to go to Fort De Soto Park, assuming that the $5 fee would be assessed by the car (not per person).

• Might I suggest that for groups planning events at Fort De Soto, that a fee could be assessed in the rental to include a certain number of parking passes at a discounted rate. We held my son’s birthday party at Fort De Soto last June, and attendance may have been a concern for us if everyone had to pay a fee to get to the party. We would have been willing to pre-purchase some discounted parking passes for our guests, if the fee structure had been in place. -- cheryl.stacks@gmail.com (Cheryl Stacks)

April 9 - 15, 2011

• As I understand, Animal Services is under consideration for budget cuts. This is a bad idea. For example, it provides free spay and neuter for residents’ animals. This eliminates the potential for another unwanted litter. These unwanted animals often find themselves on the streets, and picked up by animal control. Research has stated that with an aggressive approach to sterilizing cats and dogs, the number of unwanted litters will come down to a negligible level within five years. PROGRESS IS BEING MADE, AND WE MUST NOT REGRESS! We cannot allow for the animals to be held for less time. Even responsible pet owners lose their pets through no fault of their own, and need more time than the deadline of four days. Responsible pet owners, like me, have found their pets there, and couldn’t do it in a shorter time span. This is why their stay shouldn’t be shortened. -- Elka Zwick
A Better Way was initiated by County Administrator Robert S. LaSala during the 2009 budget season as a way to solicit money-saving ideas from Pinellas County employees. An email mailbox on the county’s Intranet site allows employees to submit, anonymously if they choose, ideas concerning consolidation, increased revenues, process improvements, new use of technology or energy savings. Ideas are collected, sent to county administration and forwarded to the departments involved. Submissions are also posted on the county’s Intranet site for others to view and compare.

During the FY2011 budget season, 561 employee suggestions were collected through A Better Way.
EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS
From January 1 to April 15, 2011, 27 employee emails were received through A Better Way.

The top respondent categories were:

- Technology ................................................................. 30% (8 respondents)
- Cost Reductions ........................................................... 22% (6 respondents)
- Human Resources ......................................................... 22% (6 respondents)
- Process Improvements .................................................. 11% (3 respondents)
- Consolidation ............................................................ 7% (2 respondents)
- Additional Revenue/Other ............................................. 4% (1 respondent)
- Energy Savings ........................................................... 4% (1 respondent)

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<tr>
<th>County Admin</th>
<th>Suggestion</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I would like to make a suggestion on how Pinellas County can increase revenue.</td>
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<td>I don’t know if it is something county government can do or not. My suggestion is to open the county up to advertisers. For example, The Utilities department and the Tax Collector’s office could enclose advertising in their mail outs. Parks and Conservation Resources and the courthouse could install small, person-height, tastefully done billboards with advertising. I have also seen advertising in restrooms around town and at airports. School offices and teacher lounge advertising, not directed at students, could also be considered.</td>
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<td>If the county does it correctly, small, product appropriate, tastefully done advertising could bring revenue with minimum distraction to the public.</td>
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### January 2011 Cost Reduction

**Facilities**
- Allow each department to "opt out" of cleaning services. I do not know how much they do in other departments, but in mine they take out the trash, mop the break room (with dirty water that makes the floor sticky), put a new toilet paper roll on the little spindle—all things that the departments themselves can take care off.

**Purchasing**
- Re-evaluate the "contract" with Office Depot. Personally, I am of the belief that we do not need to contract to a sole company for office products. Why not allow departments to shop for their needs? As an example, recently my department needed to purchase a few regular three-ring binders. Office Depot price them $8-$12 each. Walmart’s sale price was $2-$6 each. Why are we mandated to purchase only from Office Depot, thus making them rich and our county poor?

### January 2011 Human Resources

**County Admin**
- I’m already thinking about the next round of budget cuts in January. We have cut so many positions only to have to re-hire or make temp positions in some instances. This budget season, rather than adding to the unemployment rates, let’s consider one or more of the following approaches:

1. Go to a 35- or 36-hour work week across the board rather than instituting hourly pay cuts.

2. Evaluate which positions could go to job sharing to provide 40 hours service to citizens, but reduce costs to the county by converting full-time to part-time. Survey employees to evaluate if there is an interest in part-time position opportunities to allow employment to at least continue.

3. Survey managers to evaluate if part-time positions are feasible to meet budget constraints.

**HR**
- We should not subsidize an employee art show since it only includes employees interested in art. There are many talented athletes, musicians, inventors, etc. that are employed by the county and they don’t get a special show. HR should not be spending so many hours on an activity that is limited to so few employees.

### January 2011 Process Improvements

**HR**
- The new OPUS system is great. However, there is no print dialogue box for pay slips. Currently, a person must print from the Explorer window. The result is two pages per pay slip and it is not printer friendly.

- I would suggest implementing a printer-friendly way for employees to keep track of their pay slips, utilizing one sheet of paper instead of two.
| BTS          | • Perhaps it would be a good idea to schedule program upgrades after working hours with adequate training for departments PRIOR to program upgrades being installed randomly in the middle of the day while users are working in other applications. There has been no training offered on Microsoft Office 2007, and users are struggling, which is a HUGE LOSS IN PRODUCTIVITY. Somebody needs to wake up and think before continuously slamming things through to the using departments. |
| BTS          | • This is concerning the elimination of technical field support. Why not have departments in similar localities share the cost of a technical field support person? The technician would work for and be paid directly by the servicing departments, so they would be an employee of the servicing departments as opposed to BTS, but would be the liaison between the departments and the BTS Help Desk in getting computer, printer and copier issues resolved expediently and efficiently. There would be no cost to BTS, but this plan would result in a huge cost savings in the long run for departments. |
| County Admin | • Regarding the stipend for BlackBerry devices, smart phones, cell phones, etc., there is no justifiable cost savings gained by offering a stipend. Departments previously paid for and budgeted for these costs. Employees are hesitant to participate in the stipend program and many have opted to not participate at all, which has greatly hindered productivity in the county. Many managers rely heavily on these communication devices for doing work while out in the field and communicating with office staff to provide direction. Again, productivity has been greatly reduced by managers giving up their communication devices, so where is the cost savings in this new policy? |
| HR           | • Months ago, I received a Total Compensation Statement in the mail. It was custom made, double sided, in color and was mailed via USPS. With the county having this new OPUS system, and the county mandating that all employees must have access to at least a computer kiosk to not only access their personal information, but to also fill out time sheets and leave requests, couldn’t we offer this compensation packet as a link in OPUS? It would save on time, paper, printing, postage, etc. (E-mailing it to workers is not feasible as a lot of our workers do not receive or have access to county e-mail, but they all have to have access to OPUS.) |
| BTS Purchasing | • A computer cost savings for departments would be to allow departments to buy their own computer equipment from any vendor at a greatly reduced savings as opposed to paying for the HP computers through BTS at old inflated Dell rates. The cost of computers has decreased drastically over the last three years. Paying BTS just under $2000.00 annually for a three-year time frame for a desktop computer with no field support is an extreme waste of tax dollars when you could buy basically the same model computer for less than $500.00 at a one-time cost over a three-year period saving the department $5500.00 for just one computer. This would be a huge cost savings to departments. Utilize outside vendors such as the Geek Squad for technical support, since BTS no longer provides field support, and pay BTS a "one time" $120.00 fee for setting up the new computer(s) to the network. |
## February 2011 Cost Reduction

### Visit St. Pete / Clearwater
- Offer someone the opportunity to demolish the Friendship Trail Bridge. A Hollywood studio or movie director/producer can blow it up (following all mandated guidelines for compliance), clean up the debris (part of the deal, of course) and we save $4.5M.
  - What an opportunity for some great action movie footage! Sounds like a plan to me. (I’d even like to help promote it.)

## February 2011 Energy Savings

### Facilities
- I would like to see some type of window covering on the south end of the courthouse’s 4th floor, where the sun beats in. I think a covering would reduce the amount of heat coming in. This could reduce the air conditioning running all the time. It may be worth a look.

## February 2011 Human Resources

### HR
- Reduce the number of supervisors

## February 2011 Process Improvements

### County Admin
- Put out RFPs for suppliers of common essentials (toilet paper, soap, paper goods, maintenance supplies, etc.)
  - Then pick the lowest, qualified bidder to be the only one used by all the governing authorities of Pinellas County. By sheer size and volume we would have a stronger bargaining position and marketplace competition should result in lower operating costs. (It might work for capital expenses too.)
  - In addition, by setting a goal for uniform fixtures (soap dispensers, toilets, etc.) we could take advantage of volume discounts since the array of parts would be universal.
  - Qualified county employees could perform basic maintenance and repair as required. This should greatly reduce the use of outside plumbers, electricians and other expensive services.
  - A central warehouse could oversee inventory levels and distribute essential parts as requested. The utilization of bar-coding software would approach the real time inventory business model, reduce overhead and result in more efficient use of county funds.

### HR
- I understand that the county has a gym at the downtown office. I work a shift from 3-11 and there are some who work from 11 p.m. - 7 a.m. and we do not work in downtown Clearwater. With the cost of health care going up, and people trying to stay fit to stay healthy, I was wondering if the county would look into getting a contract with Lifestyle Family Fitness with a reduced rate for county employees. That way, people like me can go to a fitness center close to our homes on our off time. I understand county employees go to the county gym during their lunch time. But, some of us take our lunches on the job site and we cannot leave.
The recent changes by BTS have caused immense problems throughout the county’s various organizations. First, printers and scanners were taken away without any sort of reasonable study to determine who might actually need to use individual printers and scanners as opposed to shared ones, or where the funding for those devices comes from. Now that supervisors need to be able to run reports at their work stations to verify time entry through OPUS, they don’t have printers to do so. Each document one prints means a long walk of over 150 feet for all the employees in my department—even for a one page document. Also, with one shared printer, private or sensitive employee information is open for all to see at the shared printer until the information is picked up by the person printing the documents and if the printer goes down, the entire office is precluded from printing.

Second, the new phone systems may save BTS money, but they shift the costs to all the other departments. This is not a savings to the county’s bottom line.

Third, the new stipend program should have been transitioned over two years to allow recent contracts with cell phone providers to expire rather than cancelling them with a penalty. As it is, departments and employees with BlackBerry phones and other smart phones that are not going to be supported by the county will have to pay off contracts and still get new phones. This impacts individual employees particularly. It may be saving money somewhere, but someone else is picking up the tab.
### March 2011 Consolidation

**Admin**  
- Consider consolidating OMB, Purchasing and Risk Management, three small departments with complementary services. There should be some cost savings just in administrative changes.

### March 2011 Human Resources

**HR**  
- We have too many highly paid supervisors. This is making us top heavy and dollar poor. The workers at the bottom are running in a frenzy because they are in fear of being let go. But, the managers are sitting back with no worries and talking about everything but work all day long. Why is this allowed to be?  
- There are way too many people in the DROP program just sitting around waiting for their five years to run out. But, there are people laid off when the DROP people are double dipping. Can you look into this?

### March 2011 Process Improvements

**Parks and Conservation Resources**  
- Take most maintenance/operational functions out of Parks and Conservation Resources. Trash and bathroom clean up can remain, but mowing has been a disaster and because of the cuts to Environmental Management, there is no one to certify mitigation areas, etc. There should be one entity that performs these functions for all county ponds, etc. Public Works has qualified staff to perform these duties. This would get Parks and Conservation Resources back to their core mission and allow for more efficient operations.

### March 2011 Technology

**BTS**  
- WHY thrust Microsoft Office 2007 on us when we’re in the middle of the implementation of a countywide integration and consolidation of all financial, human resources and administrative functions under OPUS, with only online training links to help us? Why not have training classes for everyone who needs it, so we don’t have to call IT Help for assistance, then wait until someone has the time to address our ticket request (because their department is now understaffed)? This only serves to bring production to a screeching halt. Is this how things are going to be with this new “do it yourself” system?  

**Purchasing**  
- Once individuals’ printers were removed recently, pricey unused consumables were left behind. Are there any plans to collect these items and resell them for the benefit of the county, or should they be placed into the dumpsters where any passer-by can pick them out and sell them on eBay for a tidy profit?
### April 2011 Consolidation

| Public Works | Move Urban Forestry from Public Works Operations to Parks and Conservation Resources. This would be more in line with Parks and Conservation Resources and an arborist would be a huge asset to the parks and conservation areas such as Brooker Creek Preserve and Weedon Island along with all the parks throughout the county. Urban Forestry is under the parks department in a lot of the other counties and municipalities throughout the state. They have nothing in common with Public Works and Utilities along with the huge demand for forestry crews (ARBORIST) in the parks and preserve areas. The crews could be spread out throughout the county at different parks saving huge amounts on travel as opposed to workers all coming from a central location as in Public Works. The tree crews currently dump the tree chippings in the parks, used for mulch throughout, so they are already using the parks for dumping. Overhead at the parks department is less which would lead to lowering the cost for tree work. Parks already mows and oversees the landscaping of the rights of way, so trimming the trees in the rights of way as well would be in line with what they are already doing. |

### April 2011 Cost Reduction

| County Admin | I have been told that the employee's uniforms fund is no big deal, but I think it is. I have been placing uniform orders for over 20 years and I can't believe the waste of funds. I can understand the field employees getting uniforms every year due to their type of work, but the policy of office employees and the supervisors, who don’t do physical labor to get dirty, getting uniforms every year needs to be looks at. They should get uniforms every two or three years. Why can’t we go back to the time when we all wore the same uniform and color? The departments have gone wild with colors. I remember when we all wore tan, brown, white and orange. The uniform shirt and jacket had the Pinellas County emblem and United States flag. The T-shirts had the Pinellas County emblem. This saved funds when an employee moved from one department to another. Everyone was the same. We all work for the county, why does the department name have to be on the uniforms? The county vehicles have the emblem and asset number. At least we stopped color coding our vehicles. |

| Parks and Conservation Resources | The sky blue water tower at Fort De Soto campground needs repainting. The water tower is highly visible from the campground and main road to the piers, picnic areas and fort. Trade out the maintenance of the water tower for RV and camping centric advertizing. |

| Print Shop | Limit the amount of products and papers that have employee and/or elected officials names on them (i.e., brochures, signs, etc.) other than as when necessary for contact information. They become outdated regularly (election cycles) and need to be replaced when a change occurs thus costing more money. |
April 2011 Human Resources

County Admin

- Get rid of Employee Appreciation Week and give everyone two hours of administrative leave instead. First, since everyone has lost people after two years of layoffs, I doubt there is a workgroup left in the county that can afford to let everyone do some kind of activity all at once, in a time slot not of our choosing. Second, there are directors out there (mine included) who have multiple work groups under them, so they would have to schedule some time for each group, and if we, as employees, have no time to spare, I can imagine that the directors have even less. Third, we appreciate the fact that we still have jobs, believe me. The county does not need to reassure us of this with a contrived “pat on the back.” And lastly, I was told that our suggestions for activities could not include anything that might remotely expose us to Joe Public, who would complain mightily to the media about how county employees are loafing off on the taxpayer dime. This begs the question of why we should have to think of some activity that no one from the public is allowed to see and no one from the county is allowed to enjoy. So, I reiterate, give us all two hours of administrative leave and let us all appreciate the time off.

HR

- Regarding HR published Management & Supervisory Notes for April 2011 entitled “The Consequences of Failing to Appropriately Award Exceeds Performance Ratings When Appropriate.” I find that extremely ironic, since by the new annual performance review rules, 60% of the score weighted by county standards is defined in such a manner as to make each competency general/vague enough to not realistically be able to exceed in. You actually either achieve them or don’t achieve them, as they are worded.

HR

- The monthly calendar links sent via e-mail are nice, but it’s wasting the time of the person who creates/sends them.
Online Citizens Preference of Services Survey
April 25 to April 29, 2011

Pinellas County posted an online Citizens Preference of Services survey on Monday, April 25, 2011, at 8 a.m. The survey remained online until Friday, April 29, 2011, at 5 p.m.

The survey link was emailed to more than 12,000 citizens who had previously signed up for electronic communication with Pinellas County. This group included former and current Pinellas Citizen University participants.

The survey was posted on the county’s website, Facebook page and Twitter account, and a press release was sent out announcing the start of the survey. Multiple major and minor media outlets promoted the survey with positive results. The survey button was posted on the county homepage and various pages of the county website.

The survey tool utilized was Survey Monkey. This product provided a user-friendly experience with ongoing analytics throughout the week.

The online survey mirrored the statistically valid phone survey completed by HCP Associates on Friday, April 29, 2011.

The survey instrument allowed only one survey to be completed per computer and restricted its use by Pinellas County government computers.

The online survey was completed by 2,937 participants.

Results of the survey are enclosed.
# 2011 Citizen Preference Survey

## 1. Are you a resident or property owner in Pinellas County?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>98.8%</td>
<td>2,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered question: 2,936, Skipped question: 1

## 2. What is your zip code in Pinellas County?

(see attached map on page 80)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Show replies</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answered</td>
<td>2,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 3. In which of the three categories does your current age fall?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-39</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-64</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>1,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>585</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered question: 2,870, Skipped question: 67

## 4. Do you live in unincorporated Pinellas County or within a city?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unincorporated</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>1,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporated (within City)</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>1,832</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered question: 2,870, Skipped question: 67
5. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means “very high priority” and 1 means “very low priority”, what level of priority do you place on maintaining funding allocations for the following Pinellas County services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of natural land and open space</td>
<td>41.7% (1,164)</td>
<td>19.1% (533)</td>
<td>10.1% (281)</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency financial assistance to low income residents to help with utility bills and rent (Strict criteria participants have to meet)</td>
<td>14.8% (413)</td>
<td>23.5% (657)</td>
<td>24.9% (694)</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County extension educational and youth programs like horticulture and 4H</td>
<td>10.6% (296)</td>
<td>27.8% (776)</td>
<td>22.2% (619)</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing programs</td>
<td>13.7% (381)</td>
<td>23.7% (662)</td>
<td>25.0% (697)</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental services such as air and water quality monitoring and testing</td>
<td>32.2% (900)</td>
<td>23.1% (646)</td>
<td>11.0% (308)</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter and social services programs for the homeless (Projects such as Pinellas Hope, Sheriff Office's new facility at 49th St. – Safe Harbor)</td>
<td>15.0% (418)</td>
<td>25.1% (701)</td>
<td>17.7% (493)</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical services for uninsured low income residents (Program that helps people before reaching the emergency room)</td>
<td>20.2% (563)</td>
<td>24.1% (673)</td>
<td>18.3% (510)</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Control services including pet adoptions</td>
<td>15.3% (426)</td>
<td>26.1% (728)</td>
<td>19.8% (552)</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserving and maintaining County parks and trails</td>
<td>38.4% (1,072)</td>
<td>21.7% (605)</td>
<td>8.7% (243)</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>2,791</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 2,791

skipped question 146
6. One idea to reduce costs is closing certain branch offices that provide services such as driver’s licenses, paying taxes, and voter registration. Would you be willing to drive further if closing some of these locations saved the County money?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>2,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 2,790
skipped question 147

7. If yes, how much longer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 30 min</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 20 min</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>1,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10 min</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 2,240
skipped question 697

8. If reducing the number of county customer service representatives would save money, would you be willing to conduct more transactions online?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>2,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 2,789
skipped question 148

9. Have you visited Fort DeSoto Park within the past three years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>1,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>948</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 2,789
skipped question 148
10. Would you support an entrance fee to Fort De Soto Park?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>1,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 2,789
skipped question 148

11. If yes, would you be willing to pay an $8 entrance fee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>1,082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 1,946
skipped question 991

12. If no, would you be willing to pay a $5 entrance fee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td>794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 1,082
skipped question 1,855

13. What about a $75 annual pass?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>1,917</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 2,787
skipped question 150

14. What service comes to mind that the County should cut first?

(see attached graph on page 81)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Show replies</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>answered question</td>
<td>2,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skipped question</td>
<td>694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. What service comes to mind that the County should cut last?

Response Count
(see attached graph on page 81) 2,334
Show replies answered question 2,334 skipped question 603

16. How would you rate the way Pinellas County provides service to residents?

Response Percent Response Count
excellent 15.6% 426
good 60.5% 1,652
fair 20.6% 563
poor 3.3% 91
answered question 2,732 skipped question 205

17. How would you rate the way Pinellas County provides value for tax dollars?

Response Percent Response Count
excellent 8.9% 242
good 45.2% 1,236
fair 35.0% 955
poor 10.9% 299
answered question 2,732 skipped question 205
SURVEY RESPONSE BY ZIPCODE

- zipcode boundaries
- # zip code
- (#) number of responders

2011 Citizen Preference Survey
What service should be cut first?

- Economic/Community Development: 347 (15%)
- Parks/Preserves: 235 (10%)
- Public Safety: 186 (8%)
- Parks & Preserve Lands: 20% (Not directly quantified)
- Social Services: 556 (24%)
- Other: 115 (5%)
- Taxes/Salaries/Budget: 467 (20%)
- Transportation: 165 (7%)
- Utilities: 35 (1%)
- Environmental: 108 (5%)
- Housing: 80 (3%)
- Schools: 55 (2%)

Total Responses: 2,349

What service should be cut last?

- Public Safety: 37% (37/100)
- Social Services: 13%
- Transportation & Drainage: 9%
- Environmental: 6%
- Economic & Community Development: 5%
- Parks & Preserve Lands: 20% (Not directly quantified)
- Other: 2% (Not directly quantified)
- Taxes/Budget/Salaries: 4%
- Schools & Libraries: 4%
- Utilities: 2%
- Housing: 1%

Total Responses: 2,334