

1 zero mills represented a decrease in the property tax levy of 100 percent under the rollback
2 rate of 0.855 mills.

3
4 WAIVER OF THE READING OF THE ENTIRE PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

5 On a motion by Ms. Swan, seconded by Mr. Smith and carried by a vote of 4-1, the NLCHD
6 board approved waiving the reading of the entire proposed Resolutions 2021-01 and 2021-
7 02.

8
9 Mr. Sullivan voted no.

10
11 PUBLIC COMMENT – RESOLUTION 2021-01 FOR SETTING THE MILLAGE

12 Ms. Kirste read the title of Resolution 2021-01 as follows: “RESOLUTION OF THE
13 NORTH LAKE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION
14 OF THE MILLAGE RATE FOR THE 2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR.” She noted that it
15 would be zero mills.

16
17 The Chairman opened the floor for public comment.

18
19 Ms. Karen Frank, a resident of the City of Eustis, said that she was confused by the actions
20 of the Board, relaying her understanding that the Board’s mission or purpose was to fund
21 indigent care in Lake County, and that this was established by the Florida Statutes and
22 voted on by voters to continue through 2026. She indicated an understanding that this was
23 an antiquated system and may need to be replaced, but there was currently no alternative
24 method of funding in place. She said that she was pleased to see that the clinics were going
25 to be funded at their requested amounts; however, she was concerned that the hospitals
26 would only be receiving about 25 percent of their requested funds and only about 50
27 percent of the actual funds that were used from October 1, 2020 to September 15, 2021.
28 She opined that with zero revenue from the millage, the \$4.8 million surplus would be used
29 in its entirety, and she relayed her understanding that the Board would have to levy the tax
30 again for the 2022-2023 year or there would be no funding going forward. She expressed
31 concerns for people living at or below the poverty level; therefore, she thought that
32 discontinuing funding for indigent care at zero millage was not in the community’s best
33 interest.

34
35 Ms. Jane Hepting, a resident of the City of Eustis, relayed that she had recently been
36 informed by a retired doctor who volunteered at one of the clinics of a low income patient
37 with suspected cancer; however, she opined there was no place to send them for testing,
38 and an emergency room would not help because the patient was not considered an
39 emergency. She asked the Board to reinstate full funding and to provide funding for more
40 care in the county for items such as testing, specialists and a surgical center. She opined
41 that the Board’s loyalty must be to the law that created the Board, Chapter 2012-258, Laws
42 of Florida, which placed upon the Board the duty of providing a means to pay for indigent
43 care delivered by local hospitals and clinics. She opined that this duty transcended any
44 loyalty that the Board may feel to a political party or caucus, and she urged the Board to
45 rescind the zero millage vote.

46

1 Ms. Martha Taylor, a resident of the City of Fruitland Park/Town of Lady Lake area and
2 President of the Tri-City National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
3 (NAACP) Branch, discussed the impact if the Board chose to eliminate this funding. She
4 relayed her understanding that each of the providers stated in their requests that the number
5 of clients served in the past year was likely lower due to COVID-19, and that at the time
6 when the requests were written, there was promise that the pandemic was waning. She
7 hoped that things would get better over the next several months so that patients would
8 return to attending to their medical and mental health needs; however, as this happened,
9 new clients affected by the pandemic would likely also need this care. She also expressed
10 concerns for the disregard for the care and well-being of black and brown residents, the
11 mentally challenged, substance abusers, and poor people in the county. She opined that
12 these programs did more for this population than just provide healthcare and reduced price
13 or free medication; furthermore, they provided whole person care. She recalled that in the
14 2016 election, over 50 percent of county voters wanted to keep this funding for another 10
15 years, and she expressed concerns for groups going against the voters who elected them to
16 office. She opined that if the Board felt that this was not the best way to provide these
17 services, then they should take some time to come up with alternatives, noting that they
18 had five more years. She also questioned the rush to eliminate funding for charity care.

19
20 Ms. Patricia Bennett, a resident of Lake County, provided copies of House Bill (HB) 1299,
21 which was passed in 2012, and the companion bill, State Bill (SB) 2016. She opined that
22 the Board could not get rid of their auditors, noting that they audited the actual bills and
23 invoices; additionally, they went to the clinics periodically, were Health Insurance
24 Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant, and went through the bills. She
25 also opined that the Board could ask the auditors to see the bills, and she mentioned that
26 the auditors were in the state law. She opined that the NLCHD should have been sunsetted
27 in 2017, but recalled the voters voted by referendum to continue it; furthermore, the bill
28 also gave a provision for an additional referendum for another 10 years. She commented
29 that the companion bill added that if the NLCHD was going to transition to the Board of
30 County Commissioners (BCC), then it needed to be transitioned by the NLCHD. She
31 relayed her understanding that the BCC had invited the NLCHD to meet with them to
32 transition this, but that this had been ignored. She also indicated an understanding that
33 every other county in the state handled this differently.

34
35 Mr. Ken Bragg, a resident of the City of Fruitland Park, relayed his understanding that the
36 Board could not change the millage at the current meeting. He asked about long range
37 planning, how far the funding allocated at the current meeting could go, and when the
38 funding must be used by.

39
40 Ms. Sykes-Amos explained that the Board's date for operating was October 1 through
41 September 30; however, one could say that Board's fiscal year was behind by one quarter
42 because they could not perform the agreed upon procedures and pay a September 30
43 reimbursement by that date. She elaborated that what the clinics just finished would get
44 submitted and be paid in January 2022.

1 Mr. Bragg then asked if the allocations that the Board would make at the current meeting
2 would be spent by June 30, 2022, even though the reimbursement would come later for the
3 quarter ended June 30, 2022.

4
5 Ms. Sykes-Amos clarified that the budget at the current meeting was for submissions by
6 the clinics from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 and that they would be paid between
7 January and September 2022.

8
9 Mr. Bragg relayed his understanding that the Board's next opportunity to assess a millage
10 would be September 2022. He inquired if there would be any funding for clinics from June
11 30, 2022 to September 2022.

12
13 Ms. Sykes-Amos replied that this was not known yet because the 2022-2023 budget would
14 have July 1, 2022 through September 30, 2022 in it. She added that the Board's reserve
15 would be for the 2021-2022 year, which would carry them through June 2022 submissions;
16 additionally, the September 2022 submissions would not go in until the 2022-2023 budget
17 year.

18
19 Mr. Bragg then opined that the Board would have an opportunity to institute a millage prior
20 to that time; therefore, the timeframe of June 30, 2022 through September or December
21 2022 would not be unfunded.

22
23 Ms. Sykes-Amos said that this would not be in the current meeting's actions.

24
25 Mr. Bragg inquired if the Board chose in September 2022 to retain zero millage, then could
26 that reimbursement not be there, and Ms. Sykes-Amos said this was correct. Mr. Bragg
27 also asked the Board to consider a public workshop, opining that there was a
28 misunderstanding among the public for how this was working. He mentioned that it was the
29 Board's responsibility to develop a transition plan, and he urged them to take public input.

30
31 Ms. Price recalled that at the previous NLCHD meeting, she had suggested that the Board
32 have some workshops to figure out where they could go and make the system better.

33
34 Reverend Michael Watkins, Pastor of Friendship CME Church in the City of Tavares who
35 spoke via Zoom Webinar, noted that voters had voted, and he questioned why the Board
36 would go against this. He opined that the Board had an opportunity to help the citizens of
37 Lake County who were less fortunate, and he opined that it was not good to rescind funding
38 and cause people to not have services which could benefit them. He asked the Board to
39 consider honoring the vote of the people.

40
41 There being no one else who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the
42 Chairman closed the floor for public comment.

43
44 On a motion by Ms. Swan, seconded by Mr. Smith and carried by a roll-call vote of 3-2,
45 the NLCHD Board approved Resolution No. 2021-01 setting the millage rate for the FY
46 2021-2022 budget year at zero mills.

47

1 Ms. Hooper and Mr. Sullivan voted no.

2

3 PUBLIC COMMENT – RESOLUTION 2021-02 FOR ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET

4 Ms. Kirste read the title of Resolution 2021-02 as follows: “RESOLUTION OF THE
5 NORTH LAKE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION
6 OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE 2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR.”

7

8 Ms. Sykes-Amos remarked that this resolution was done so that it would spend the entire
9 carryforward. She recalled that the Board had previously said to work it out so that the
10 clinics and LifeStream Behavioral Center were fully funded, and that the two acute care
11 hospitals split the remaining difference. She mentioned that the Board had to pay the Lake
12 County Property Appraiser fees for the current year, and that the resolution indicating that
13 the Board would spend \$4,805,501 was based on the worksheet provided to the Board.

14

15 The Chairman opened the floor for public comment but no one wished to address the Board
16 regarding this matter.

17

18 Mr. Sullivan said that because the Board had passed a millage of zero mills, there would
19 not be any Lake County Tax Collector fees. He also asked about this in the following year
20 if there was a collection.

21

22 Ms. Sykes-Amos replied that it was a two percent commission on collections. She said
23 that the Board would likely be paying a bit in the current year because of the installment
24 plan, delinquents, and tax certificate sales, noting that they could receive miniscule
25 amounts of money.

26

27 Mr. Sullivan relayed that the Tax Collector could possibly reimburse them for collected
28 funding that the Board did not anticipate, though it would be a minimal amount of money
29 in this budget.

30

31 Mr. Bragg relayed his understanding that zero millage meant that in November 2021,
32 taxpayers would pay zero millage, and that if it was reinstated in the future, then taxpayers
33 would pay a reinstated rate in November 2022. He inquired if these funds would be
34 unavailable until January 2023.

35

36 Ms. Sykes-Amos explained that the Tax Collector would start sending out the funding as
37 he collected it, and that the submissions for September would be turned over to be reviewed
38 in about November 2022; however, the NLCHD would not have another meeting until
39 January 2023 for the auditor to provide the report so that the Board could approve the
40 payments.

41

42 Mr. Bragg indicated an understanding that there would be no funds coming in from June
43 30, 2022 to January 1, 2023.

44

45 Ms. Sykes-Amos clarified that if there was a millage in 2022, then by November 2022,
46 each week the Tax Collector would disburse what he collected.

1 Mr. Sullivan commented that the majority of taxes were collected in the November-
2 December timeframe because there was a discount if this was done.

3
4 Ms. Hooper noted that the Board was going to try to use the approximate \$4.8 million in
5 the current year, and in the following year they would have to decide the millage. She
6 asked if the \$4.8 million would fund everything they had currently.

7
8 Ms. Sykes-Amos responded that it would not fund all of the requests, but that it would use
9 all of the funding. She added that there was about \$10.7 million in requests but that they
10 could only fund about \$4.7 million of this.

11
12 Ms. Hooper thought that at the previous meeting, the Board had decided what they were
13 going to fund.

14
15 Ms. Sykes-Amos confirmed this and said that it was on the worksheet. She reiterated that
16 it included all of the clinics and LifeStream Behavioral Center, and that the difference was
17 split between the two acute care facilities.

18
19 Mr. Sullivan made a motion to approve this item, hoping that the public would understand
20 that this was funding that the Board had to work with based on zero millage.

21
22 On a motion by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. Swan and carried unanimously by a roll-
23 call vote of 5-0, the NLCHD Board approved Resolution No. 2021-02 adopting the
24 proposed budget for FY 2021-2022 at the funded level of \$4,805,501.

25
26 LETTERS OF AGREEMENT

27 Ms. Sykes-Amos mentioned the letters of agreement in the Board's packet and explained
28 that instead of sending the funding to the hospitals, the letters of agreement amounts were
29 below what the Board had just approved as funding; therefore, there was no issue with the
30 dollars in them. She elaborated that this low income pool (LIP) would send the money to
31 the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) in the City of Tallahassee, and that
32 AHCA would add a bit of federal funding and send it on its way. She stated that the
33 hospitals received a bit of leverage out of doing this, and that she needed the Board's
34 approval of the LIP agreements for UF Health Leesburg Hospital, AdventHealth
35 Waterman, and LifeStream Behavioral Center.

36
37 On a motion by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Smith and carried unanimously by a vote
38 of 5-0, the NLCHD Board approved the low income pool letters of agreement for UF
39 Health Leesburg Hospital, AdventHealth Waterman, and LifeStream Behavioral Center.

40
41 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR ACCOUNTING SERVICES

42 Ms. Sykes-Amos stated the person she had been training to take this position over was no
43 longer there, which left no one in their firm to do this. She indicated that she had written
44 a request for proposal (RFP) for the accounting services and had asked the Board to review
45 it, and that her plan was to run a legal advertisement in October 2021. She added that she
46 was also going to send a letter to local firms, and she hoped that the RFP cutoff would be
47 January 3, 2022. She mentioned that on January 4, 2022, she would send the responses to

1 the Board members, though the Board could not discuss them amongst themselves. She
2 commented that at the January 20, 2022 NLCHD meeting, those respondents could attend
3 and the Board could interview them and select someone; furthermore, she could work with
4 that person for a month. She said that she had been doing this for the NLCHD Board for
5 30 years and that she had all of the budgets and minutes to pass on.

6
7 Mr. Sullivan clarified that this was an RFP, and that it was not like they were not going out
8 to bid. He said that this was for professional services; therefore, there was a process that
9 the NLCHD would be following by the law.

10
11 Ms. Swan asked if the Board was bound by the dates that Ms. Sykes-Amos had included,
12 and she expressed a concern for conducting an RFP over the holidays.

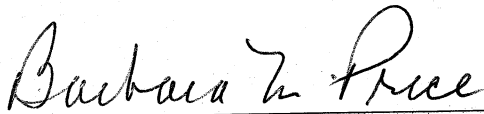
13
14 Ms. Sykes-Amos opined that a certified public accountant (CPA) firm would not want an
15 RFP in tax season. She then stated that she would not put the advertisement in the
16 newspaper or on the website until the week of October 11 or 12, 2021. She asked the Board
17 to email her if there was anything they wanted to change or add.

18
19 Ms. Price thanked Ms. Sykes-Amos for her service.

20
21 Ms. Sykes-Amos commented that the next meeting would be on January 20, 2022 at 5:30
22 p.m.

23
24 ADJOURNMENT

25 The meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

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Barbara Price, Chairman