Board of County Commissioners
Agenda Request 9

Date of Meeting: 4/15/2003
Date Submitted: 4/10/2003

TO: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board
FROM: Parwez Alam, County Administrator
Vincent Long, Assistant County Administrator
SUBJECT: Allocation of funds pursuant to the " Dori Slosberg Driver`s Education Safety Act" (Leon County Ordinance #2002-20).

Statement of Issue:
This agenda item presents information on the additional civil traffic penalty funds collected pursuant to Leon County Ordinance #2002-20 and seeks Board direction on the appropriation of these funds.

Background:
At their regularly scheduled meeting on September 24, 2002, the Board held a public hearing and adopted Ordinance #2002-20 providing for an additional $3.00 civil traffic penalty in Leon County effective October 1, 2002. At that time, the Board did not specify how these funds would be appropriated (Attachment #1).

On January 21, 2003, the Board of County Commissioners held a Workshop to discuss the alternatives available to expend funds collected under Ordinance #2002-20, or the " Dori Slosberg Driver`s Education Safety Act." At that time the Board accepted the findings of the workshop and formed a A Driver`s Education Committee" (Committee), led by Commissioner Thaell, to further analyze opportunities for driver`s education in Leon County. The Committee was also directed to develop an expenditure plan that included the Leon County Public School system, the Partners for Highway Safety and any other companies or schools that could enter into a public/private partnership with the Board for expenditure of these funds. The Committee was requested to report back to the Board within sixty days with its findings and recommendations. The Board of County Commissioners ratified their actions taken at this Workshop during the Board`s regularly scheduled meeting on February 11, 2003 (Attachment #2).

Analysis:
The Committee held its first meeting on January 30, 2003 to begin the further analysis of additional opportunities for driver`s education in Leon County and to develop a plan for the expenditure of these funds. In addition, Committee members have met repeatedly over the past sixty days with Commissioner Thaell and with staff to further analyze these issues and to develop their expenditure plan. The Committee`s findings and proposed expenditure plan are presented in this analysis section, below, for the Board`s consideration and approval.

Updated Budget Estimate for FY 2002/2003:

One of the first issues that the Committee reviewed was the budget estimate for the remainder of the current fiscal year. Staff had previously presented an analysis to the Board estimating that a full year of normal receipts from the additional civil traffic penalty would generate just more than $100,000 for use on driver's education in Leon County. However, as FY 02/03 is the first year of implementation of the additional civil traffic penalty, staff estimated that receipts would be slightly less than normal and recommended that the Board not approve a budget for more than $75,000 (Attachment #2, page #5).

There have been five months of receipts of the additional civil traffic penalty collected in accordance with Leon County Ordinance #2002-20. Therefore, the FY 02/03 budget estimate for this additional civil traffic penalty for driver's education has been updated for the Board's consideration. Table #1, below, presents an overview of these actual receipts and provides an estimate for collections during the remainder of the current fiscal year. This estimate represents the level of revenue that can be conservatively anticipated during FY 02/03 through collection of the additional $3 traffic penalty.

Table #1: Leon County Civil Traffic Penalty Receipts and Budget Estimate for FY 02/03:

FISCAL YEAR 2002/2003	RECEIPTS	CUMULATIVE SUBTOTAL
October 2002 (Actual)	$1,590	$1,590
November 2002 (Actual)	$4,845	$6,435
December 2002 (Actual)	$5,992	$12,427
January 2003 (Actual)	$7,472	$19,899
February 2003 (Actual)	$7,783	$27,682
March 2003 (Estimate)	$7,500	$35,182
April 2003 (Estimate)	$7,500	$42,682
May 2003 (Estimate)	$7,500	$50,182
June 2003 (Estimate)	$7,500	$57,682
July 2003 (Estimate)	$7,500	$65,182
August 2003 (Estimate)	$7,500	$72,682
September 2003 (Estimate)	*$7,500**	*$80,182***
Total FY 02/03 Estimated Budget:		**$72,682**

** Each month's receipts are posted into the account after the first week of the following month. For example, October 2002's receipts were not reflected in the Driver's Ed Account, until early November*

of 2002. Therefore, the last actual receipt to be applied to the account during the current fiscal year, will be August's collections and will occur in early September 2003.

*** In order to protect against the cash flow issue described above, staff estimates for total cumulative receipts in FY 02/03 to stop after the August 2003 collection estimate. Receipts from September 2003 will be applied to the FY 03/04 budget.*

According to this analysis, staff estimates that the Board can conservatively anticipate receipts of just more than $72,000, during FY 02/03, for the new driver's education program. Staff recommends that the Board not expend or budget for more than this amount during the current fiscal year.

Committee Expenditure Plan-Overview:

Leon County Ordinance #2002-20 clearly states that all funds collected under the additional $3 civil traffic penalty will be used to fund traffic education programs in public and nonpublic schools. The Board has previously expressed that these funds should be used solely for Leon County residents at these public and private schools. Previous analysis on this issue presented various methods by which the Board may expend these funds to Leon County residents, including potential expenditures to Leon County Public Schools (LCS), the Partners for Highway Safety Foundation (PHS), and other public and non- public schools in Leon County.

After substantial review, the Committee determined that their proposed expenditure plan for the County's new Driver's Education Program would consist of two parts. According to this plan, total County expenditures would be split between LCS and PHS, as explained in detail in separate sections, below. The plan would direct a third of the County's total expenditures for driver's education to PHS (approximately $24,000 for the remainder of FY 02/03) and two-thirds of total County expenditures to LCS (approximately $48,000 for the remainder of FY 02/03). The following sections present an overview of the Committee's proposed expenditure plan for the County:

Leon County School Board (LCS) Proposed Expenditure Plan:

LCS currently offers drivers education programs for 1,297 students, annually, at each of its five high schools across Leon County (Leon, Rickards, Godby, Lincoln, and Chiles High Schools). The LCS program is an elective for qualifying students (students 15 years or older who have a learners permit), is available to home school students year round at the high school of the child's choice and is available as a fee-based summer course to other Leon County private school students. Funding for the LCS driver's education program has been very limited. For the current fiscal year funding for the operating and capital outlay portions of the program's budget for every school, combined, will total an estimated $10,000 (Funds for the instructor's salaries are located in separate parts of each school's budget). In essence, each school has only $2,000 each year to purchase, maintain and operate its vehicle fleet, purchase books, videos and other class materials and buy cones, signs, or communication equipment for the driving range. However, maintenance costs of the operational vehicles normally consume up to 80% of the program's total operating budget at each school.

Behind the wheel instruction is confined to small driving ranges at each high school. A student's time on the range is also limited as there are (under current best-case scenarios) only two working cars at each school and many of those have significant maintenance problems. Therefore, in a class of many students, behind the wheel instruction is limited to a small amount of time during any given week of overall driver's education course work. Other range problems include minimal funding for cones, bullhorns and (significantly) for additional cars and/or car simulators (Additional information about the

existing LCS driver`s education program can be found in Attachment #2, page #6).

The Committee worked with the LCS to generate a plan that would improve their driver`s education program by increasing the amount of behind the wheel instruction and improving the quality of the educational materials used in the system. Toward this end, LCS presented a three-year action plan that outlines how additional funding for driver`s education would be expended (Attachment #3).

For the remainder of the current fiscal year, additional funding would be directed toward the purchase of one additional " contemporary" vehicle at each of the five schools. This would increase the number of operating driver`s education range vehicles at each school by 50% and is expected to result in a corresponding increase in the number of students behind the wheel instruction. Once the objective of increasing the volume of vehicles on the LCS driving ranges is achieved, future year expenditures could be directed toward the purchase of new textbooks, instructional videos and related equipment, computer monitor driving simulators and toward improvement of the existing driving ranges.

To insure LCS expenditure accountability to the Board, the Committee recommends that a quarterly billing cycle be implemented as part of the Board`s contract with the LCS. Under such a contract, a quarter of the total contract amount would be directed to the LCS upon disclosure of purchases made and benchmarks reached through the previous quarterly County disbursement. In addition, an annual report that comprehensively details total LCS expenditures and program performance to the Board of County Commissioners is recommended by the Committee.

Upon Board direction, staff could immediately begin negotiation of a contract between the Board of County Commissioners and the Leon County School Board for an amount of $48,000. This contract would exist from May 1 to September 30, 2003, and would include two disbursements for the purpose of purchasing up to five vehicles for use on driving ranges at five area high schools and for related improvements to the existing Leon County Public Schools Driver`s Education Program. The contract would also comply with all of the provisions of Leon County Ordinance #2002-20. Staff also recommends that the Board authorize staff to prepare the appropriate budget action to realize the determined budget amount in the FY 02/03 budget (Please refer to Option #2 on Page #6).

Please note: Although the LCS proposal calls for the purchase of five contemporary vehicles at a cost of $15,000 per vehicle (totaling $75,000 for FY 02/03), the Committee suggests that all or nearly all of the " benchmark" five requested, contemporary vehicles could be purchased for just less than $10,000 per vehicle, or for the staff recommended FY 02/03 budget amount of $48,000. LCS could accomplish this purchase through increased utilization of public/private partnerships with local automobile dealerships, or by purchasing low-mileage, previously leased vehicles as opposed to " new" vehicles. Based on the Board`s direction, the contract between the Board and the LCS would be brought back before the Board for approval no later than the Board`s first regularly scheduled meeting in May.

Partners for Highway Safety (PHS) Proposed Expenditure Plan:

The Partners for Highway Safety Foundation (PHS) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) youth traffic safety organization that was founded in Leon County in 1992. The organization has created a number of educational, training and driver instruction programs that target improving teenage driving skills. PHS offers its behind the wheel programs at closed, large driving ranges, such as the driving range at the Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy and on local roadways, based on the driver`s skill level and development. The focus of every PHS program is on improving the driving skills of teenagers by using current and practical driving methods and teaching material. This is also achieved through utilization of a high level of on-the-road practice and instruction. PHS programs have improved the driving skills of

an estimated 10,000 Leon County teenagers over the past decade.

The Committee also worked with PHS to generate a plan that would increase the utilization of their driver's education programs by reducing the cost of these programs to qualified Leon County residents. Under the Committee's proposed plan, the Board of County Commissioners would provide $100 vouchers to Leon County residents participating in PHS driver's education programs, until the total budget amount for the contract period or fiscal year is reached (Attachment #4).

For the remainder of the current fiscal year, the Committee recommends that PHS funding be set at the level of $24,000 thereby granting vouchers to 240 Leon County teens through the end of September. These vouchers would reduce the cost of the PHS Novice Driver Program from $295 to $195 and would reduce the Collision Avoidance Training (CAT) Program cost from $195 to $95. Such price reductions are expected to result in an increase in the number of Leon County teens that utilize and benefit from the PHS behind the wheel, program instruction. *Please note:* the proposed County funding would not offset any PHS operational costs. County funding would only reduce, on a dollar for dollar basis, the total cost of PHS programs to Leon County residents.

To insure PHS expenditure accountability to the Board, the Committee recommends that a monthly billing cycle be implemented as part of the Board' s contract with the PHS. The Committee also recommends that such a contract with PHS include an affidavit of Leon County residency to be signed by each PHS program participant. Each PHS participant that signed such an affidavit would receive the $100 discount by PHS. Then, on a monthly basis and until the total budget or contract amount is reached, PHS would bill the County for the number of Leon County residents it served during the month by submitting copies of that month's affidavits. In addition, the Committee recommends that a comprehensive annual report to the Board of County Commissioners also be required of PHS to analyze program performance.

Upon Board direction, staff would immediately begin negotiation of a contract between the Board of County Commissioners and Partners for Highway Safety for an amount of $24,000. This contract would exist from May 1 to September 30, 2003, and would include the PHS-requested initial disbursement of $8,000. Subsequently, a monthly billing cycle would commence that would reimburse PHS for the 81st through the 240th Leon County resident it serves in an amount of $100 per sworn resident. The contract would also comply with all of the provisions of Leon County Ordinance #2002-20. Staff also recommends that the Board authorize staff to prepare the appropriate budget action to realize the determined budget amount in the FY 02/03 budget (Please refer to Option #3 on Page #6).

Additional Public/Private Partnerships:

Public/private partnerships between government agencies and local businesses and organizations have formed in other counties to further improve driver's education programs. For example, the Palm Beach County School Board has created a partnership with local gas stations to provide free servicing to their drivers education vehicles. In Liberty County, the School Board has partnered with the Sheriff's Office to borrow used vehicles for the school ranges. Although no formal public/private partnership has been formalized in time for this agenda item, the Committee recommends that the Board, the LCS and PHS continue efforts to form public/private partnerships in order to reduce costs, increase utilization and improve the quality of drivers education programs in Leon County.

Contract Recommendations:

To expend the funds collected under Leon County Ordinance #2002-20, the Board may choose to direct

staff to negotiate one contract with the Leon County School Board and one contract with the Partners for Highway Safety, as recommended by the Committee. These contracts would exist for the remainder of FY 02/03 in order to provide expanded and improved driver's education programs in Leon County. Should the Board select the Committee's recommended action plan, staff recommends that the Board direct staff to negotiate these two contracts in the manner and in the amounts specified in Options #2 and #3, below. Under this scenario, staff would also recommend that the contracts delineate that these drivers' education programs be available to all public, nonpublic (private) and/or home-schooled students that live in Leon County and that the contract otherwise be in accordance with Leon County Ordinance #2002-20. Based on this direction, staff would negotiate these two contracts immediately and bring them back for Board consideration and approval on or before the first regularly scheduled meeting in May.

Name Designation of New Leon County Drivers Education Program:

During their regularly scheduled meeting on April 8, 2003, the Board of County Commissioners discussed naming the new Leon County program for Driver's Education after Greg Burris. Greg Burris was a Leon County teenager and active high school student who tragically passed away in 1992, succumbing to injuries he received in an automobile accident. As testimony to and in memory of his late son, Mr. Paul Burris created the Partners for Highway Safety Foundation to improve the skills of young and learning teen drivers. Since its incorporation in 1992, PHS has improved driver safety for more than 10,000 teens across the region and state, has helped reduce the number of area teen traffic fatalities, and has earned awards of excellence for its numerous achievements.

Pending Board approval, Leon County's new program for driver's education (as codified in Leon County Ordinance #2002-20) will be renamed " The Greg Burris Memorial Program for Expanded Driver's Education."

Options:

1. Accept the Committee's findings as presented in this Agenda Item.

2. Direct staff to negotiate a contract between the Board and the Leon County School Board in accordance with Ordinance #2002-20, from May 1, 2003 through September 30, 2003, in the amount of $48,000 for the purpose of purchasing up to five vehicles for use on driving ranges at five area high schools and for related improvements to the existing Leon County Public Schools Driver's Education Program, as presented in the Analysis Section above and authorize staff to prepare the appropriate budget action to realize the determined budget amount in the FY 02/03 budget.

3. Direct staff to negotiate a contract between the Board and the Partners for Highway Safety in accordance with Ordinance #2002-20, from May 1, 2003 through September 30, 2003, in the amount of $24,000 for the purpose of offering $100 discounts to up to 240 qualified Leon County residents that participate in existing PHS driver's education and safety programs, as presented in the Analysis Section above and authorize staff to prepare the appropriate budget action to realize the determined budget amount in the FY 02/03 budget.

4. Rename Leon County's new program for driver's education (as codified in Leon County Ordinance #2002-20) "The Greg Burris Memorial Program for Expanded Driver's Education."

5. Do not direct staff to negotiate a contract with another public or nonpublic school or schools for FY 02/03 for expanded direct driver education programs, in accordance with Ordinance #2002-20.

6. Board Direction.

Recommendation:
Options #1, #2, #3 and #4.

Attachments:
1. Leon County Ordinance #2002-20, relating to Additional Civil Traffic Penalties

2. February 11, 2003 Agenda Item: A Ratification of Board Actions Taken at the January 21, 2003 Workshop on the Allocation of Funds Pursuant to the " Dori Slosberg Driver's Education Safety Act" (Leon County Ordinance #2002-20).

3. February 12, 2003 Letter from Ricky Bell, LCS Director of Interdivisional Support Services, to Commissioner Cliff Thaell

4. March 27, 2003 Letter from Paul Burris, PHS President, to Commissioner Cliff Thaell

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