



March windy
Small craft advisory in effect for S winds 15-25 m.p.h. becoming N this p.m. Low in upper 60s to low 70s; high mid to upper 70s. Map, data, 2-A.

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Pasco budget finds some fat that may be absorbed

PASCO
county
commission

Pasco Times Bureau

NEW PORT RICHEY — Pasco County has \$461,151 in available funds for the remainder of the current fiscal year, Circuit Clerk **Miller Newton** told the County Commission Wednesday.

Of that amount, \$421,884 already has been committed, he said.

Last week Newton told the board that the county faced a \$6,000 paper deficit.

He said Wednesday that \$49,902 that had been placed in a general fund reserve for encumbrances was not calculated in the available fund picture at that time.

While the county now has an uncommitted reserve of almost \$40,000, Newton told the commission that possible commitments totaling \$205,407 are pending.

These include financing of the new Hudson library, county road engineering, commitment to absorb some costs now paid by the federal manpower program, purchase of an office building from the School Board, and settlement of tax claims and other miscellaneous expenditures.

The total of possible commitments could be as high as \$627,291, leaving a paper deficit of \$166,140, Newton said.

"We're not behind the eight-ball yet, but we are reaching the point where we might have to recoup money from areas where commitments have already been made," Newton said.

He told the board that he believes there are some available funds in departmental budgets that could be found through a reassessment of planned expenditures.

Newton said privately he estimates that that total is between \$250,000 and \$400,000.

The clerk said it would have to be the board's decision to re-evaluate departmental allocations for a second time. Adjustments totaling almost \$500,000 were made in January, reducing the budget for the fiscal year from \$12.5-million to \$12-million.

"It looks like we need to do some more belt-tightening," Commissioner William Hamilton observed.

"In cash terms, the county is in good shape," Newton said. "But future spending will have to be based on priority decisions."

"It is interesting to note," Commission Chairman Mike Olson said, "that of the commitments made, this board is responsible for only \$58,000 of the total. The remainder was committed by the previous board."

Pg 51

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