

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR



Parvez Alam
County Administrator
606-5300
AlamP@leoncountyfl.gov

The County Administrator is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the Leon County Board of County Commissioners.

Parvez Alam serves as the chief executive officer of the County, and it is his responsibility to implement all decisions, policies, programs, and motions approved by the Board. This implementation is done through department directors and administrative personnel, who report directly to the County Administrator.

Additionally, the County Administrator's Office recommends an annual County operating and capital improvement budget to the Board of County Commissioners and coordinates the Board's meeting agendas and workshops. Parvez Alam has served the citizens of Leon County for more than 20 years.

Contact:
Nan Swain
Senior Executive Assistant
606-5300
SwainN@leoncountyfl.gov



MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

It is with great pleasure that I present the 2009 Leon County Annual Report. This past year was one of the toughest that our nation has seen in quite some time. However, Leon County was able to remain in good financial standing by prioritizing service and taking actions to limit costs in order to place the community in a position to weather the current economic recession.

Recent property tax reform and the constraints placed on levying property taxes presented unprecedented challenges to the Board of County Commissioners, so last year the Board prioritized County services in an effort to determine future funding priorities. Subsequently, an economic recession developed intensifying the challenges to fund necessary County services.

The recession affected not only property taxes by lowering values but also statewide and local sales tax collections. Given these conditions, policy decisions will need to be made next year related to additional budget reductions, an increase in revenues and/or the use of fund balances.

Over the past three budget cycles, the Board has taken prudent and decisive actions regarding the use of available resources to achieve the long-term goals of Leon County. Through an ongoing hiring freeze and a restructuring of the capital funding program in FY 2008, the Board has achieved stability so that the County is able to continue to provide necessary services.

During the period of increasing property values, Leon County did not add operating expenses, which allowed the Board to provide adequate resources to established programs without having to make drastic personnel reductions like other Florida local governments.

No employee layoffs have occurred in the past three years; and because of the hiring freeze, the County was able to create vacant positions, which saved salary dollars and allowed the County flexibility in moving employees from program areas that were reduced or eliminated.

In addition, the Board has directed that diversified revenue resources be explored and that the County work with the City

to functionally consolidate similar services. This was successfully achieved with the Fire/EMS merger, and County and City officials hope to mimic this type of consolidation for other government services in the future.



Beginning with the Board retreat in December 2008, and continuing through the FY 2009/2010 budget development process, the Board has continually looked for ways to stimulate the local economy through capital funding to ameliorate the effects of the current recession.

The benefits of accelerating capital funding are two-fold: one, it provides immediate opportunity for construction job creation and two, the current competitive nature of the market is offering reduced pricing for the taxpayers.

Instead of waiting for the adoption of the FY 2009/2010 budget, the Board ratified actions taken at the June budget workshop and authorized moving forward immediately with a \$14.3 million local stimulus package.

The package included the purchase and reuse of the Huntington Oaks Plaza Shopping Center for the purpose of expanding the Lake Jackson Branch Library; the construction of the County's first LEED-Certified Building, the new Southeast Branch



Public Safety Communications Board

The Public Safety Communications Board (PSCB) is responsible for the oversight of the radio communication system and the consolidation of the dispatching of law enforcement and emergency personnel within Leon County and Tallahassee. The members serving on the PSCB include:

- Leon County Administrator Parwez Alam, Chair
- Tallahassee City Manager Anita R. Favors Thompson, Vice-Chair
- Leon County Sheriff Larry Campbell
- Tallahassee Police Department Chief Dennis Jones
- Tallahassee Fire Department Chief Cindy Dick
- Leon County Emergency Medical Services Chief Tom Quillin

The PSCB has been charged with the responsibility of overseeing the creation of the Joint Dispatch Center and other various public safety communication concerns. Presently in Leon County, the dispatching of law enforcement and emergency personnel is operated by two separate entities – the Sheriff's Office and the Tallahassee Police Department. The Sheriff's Office dispatches Sheriff's deputies and Emergency Medical Services personnel, and the Tallahassee Police Department dispatches police officers and fire services personnel of the Tallahassee Fire Department and local volunteer fire departments. The consolidation of the dispatching entities will allow for a more efficient handling of both emergency and non-emergency calls and more effective deployment of resources.

During the past year, the PSCB has achieved many accomplishments for public safety. For example, the PSCB recommended that the County and City Commissions purchase a new digital radio communications network. The County and City Commissions authorized the purchase of the digital radio in December 2007, and the system became fully operational in the fall of 2009. The digital radio system significantly improves communication for public safety and non-public safety entities.

The PSCB also recommended that the County and City Commissions proceed with the construction of the Public Safety Complex. The Public Safety Complex will house the consolidated dispatch services, City of Tallahassee Transportation Management Center, Leon County Emergency Medical Services, City of Tallahassee Fire Administration, and Leon County's Emergency Operations Center. This facility will be located next to the new American Red Cross building in order to create a campus environment. The PSCB continues to work toward improving communications among public safety entities to enhance the safety of the community.



Library, which will replace the 2,000-square-foot rental facility; expansions to the two most heavily used branch libraries, the Northeast and B.L. Perry branches; and funding to complete the improvements for Buck Lake Road.

In addition to the above, the County has previously committed funds to the Public Safety Complex that will house the Joint Dispatch Center, the County's Emergency Operations Center, the State's Regional Traffic Management Center and the headquarters for the functionally consolidated Fire/EMS Department. Based on an analysis performed through the Economic Development Council, the total construction job creation will be more than 800 full-time equivalents.

Additionally, the Board created the 2010 Citizens Census Committee in an effort to ensure that all residents are counted. The number generated by the Census will determine how revenue resources are allocated by the state and federal governments.

The Board also convened the first Citizen Charter Review Committee to review the Charter and reflect upon its strength and try to improve its weaknesses. This review and the subsequent citizens' vote concerning any modifications will set a path for future Commissions.

Leon County also made a determination to close the Solid Waste Facility to the public for the disposal of Class III waste and began contracting with a private vendor to recycle that waste. This change allowed the County to restructure landfill operations and eliminate seven positions at the Solid Waste Facility for a savings of more than \$280,000. Furthermore, it assisted the County in reducing the amount of Class III waste disposed at the facility overall and expanded the recycling and reuse of that waste.

In conclusion, the Board has provided a long-term template to provide County services for years to come. Future Commissions will have a strong base from which to continue to improve the community and the quality of life it provides to its citizens.

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