



The Leon County

LINK

Connecting Citizens with Leon County Services

Leon County Braces for Service Reductions in the Wake of Amendment 1



Just hours after the passage of Amendment 1, the Leon County Board of County Commissioners met on Wednesday, Jan. 30, to discuss how to handle the almost \$13 million shortfall caused by the constitutional revision. Commissioners

grappled with the difficult task of examining each of the services provided by the County and ranking them in order of importance.

Statewide, Amendment 1 passed with a reported 64 percent approval of voters; however, in Leon County, only 36 percent of voters supported the amendment. Out of the 67 Florida counties, only Gadsden County had less support of Amendment 1 at 35 percent.

In anticipation of the statutory rollbacks imposed by the legislature in 2007 and the state-mandated reductions caused by Amendment 1, the County has been under a hiring and travel freeze since February of last year. The Board also approved a capital project freeze, which affected projects such as the Eastside Library, the new Miccosukee Community Center and the Tharpe Street widening project. However, these savings will only have a marginal effect on the \$12.8 million loss of revenue.

At the workshop, the Board made the first step in identifying where the County will need to make cuts in the upcoming budget process. The Board took a surgical approach, examining the levels of revenue program by program, to identify reductions with the least impact on services most critical to the core functions of County government.

The workshop began the long budget process for the coming year, and the Board invites Leon County citizens to be involved. Staff will present a budget calendar to the Board in February, which will outline this year's budget process. The calendar will include the dates of public hearings with opportunities for citizen input.

"We are committed to abide by the will of the people," stated Chairman Jane G. Sauls. "We will have to make some very tough decisions in the coming months as we prepare a balanced budget for next year, but we will do our best to continue as many services as possible with the least impact on the quality of life here in Leon County."

For more information, please contact Assistant County Administrator Alan Rosenzweig at 606-5300.

Community Unites for 'Make A Difference Tallahassee'

VolunteerLEON and community partners are hosting "Make a Difference Tallahassee 2008" on Saturday, Feb. 23, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event aims to bring community members and students together and to provide volunteer opportunities so people can see the difference they can make. More than 500 local volunteers and as many as 40 nonprofit agencies are expected to participate.

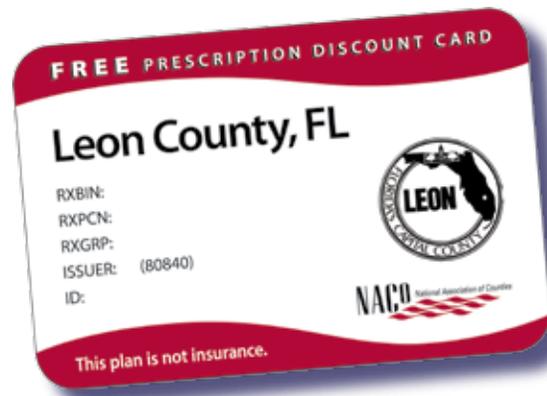


"Make A Difference Tallahassee 2008" will kick off at the FSU Oglesby Union Ballroom, located at the corner of Woodward Avenue and Tennessee Street. Participants will then disperse to more than 40 different service locations to address a wide variety of community issues, including animal services, arts and culture, children and youth, crisis services, environment, hunger and homelessness, and more. Participants are asked to pre-register by Feb. 15 to choose where they would like to volunteer. The day of service will culminate with a time for reflection, recognition and a celebration at the FSU Oglesby Union Ballroom.

Community partners include: VolunteerLEON, Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, Florida A&M University Office of Student Activities, Florida State University Center for Leadership and Civic Education, Florida State University Service Corps, Keiser University, Tallahassee Community College, and United Partners for Human Services. For more information, please contact VolunteerLEON at 606-1970 or visit www.volunteerleon.org/madt.

Save on Medications With the Leon County Prescription Discount Card

Leon County residents can now save an average of 20 percent off the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs with free prescription drug discount cards available through a program offered by the Board of County Commissioners and sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo). The cards may be used by all County residents, regardless of age, income, or existing health coverage.



There will be no cost to County taxpayers for NACo and Leon County to make these money-saving cards available to residents.

"County residents who have prescription coverage can save money by using the card for drugs that their health plan doesn't cover," said Chairman Jane G. Sauls. "However, this program is especially beneficial for people who are underinsured or uninsured, and they do not have to be in the Medicare program to participate."

Cards are available at the Leon County Courthouse, all of the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System libraries, the Division of Health & Human Services, Bond Community Health Center, Neighborhood Health Services, Tallahassee Memorial Hospital and Capital Regional Medical Center.

More than 40 local pharmacies will accept the prescription discount cards, including Albertsons, CVS, Harvey's Supermarket, Kmart, Publix, Target, The Medicine Shoppe, Wal-Mart/Sam's, Walgreen's and Winn Dixie.

In addition to these benefits for our residents, pet owners may also reap the benefits of the cards. If your pet has been prescribed a medication, you may receive a discount on the medication by taking the prescription to a participating retail pharmacy.

The discount card program is administered by Caremark Rx, Inc. For more information, please visit www.leoncountyfl.gov or contact the Health & Human Services Division at 606-1900.

County Hosts Legislative Delegation

The Leon County Board of County Commissioners will host the Leon County Legislative Delegation for a public hearing on Tuesday, Feb. 19, at 6 p.m. in the Commission Chambers on the fifth floor of the Leon County Courthouse. The Legislative Delegation includes State Senators Al Lawson and Charlie Dean, and State Representatives Lorraine Ausley, Marti Coley and Curtis Richardson. This annual hearing provides an opportunity for citizens and local officials to address the Legislative Delegation regarding the issues and concerns of Leon County. Citizens will also be able to watch the meeting live on Comcast Channel 16. The 2008 Legislative Session will convene on March 4. For more information, please contact Ken Morris, Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinator, at 606-5300.

February 2008 Board of County Commissioners Schedule

- 12 Board of County Commissioners Meeting, 3 p.m.**
Public Hearings, 6 p.m.
Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Commission Chambers
- 19 Legislative Delegation Meeting, 6 p.m.**
Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Commission Chambers
- 25 Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting, 2:30 p.m.**
Intergovernmental Agency Meeting, 3 p.m.
City Hall, 300 S. Adams, 2nd Floor, Commission Chambers
- 26 Board of County Commissioners Meeting, 3 p.m.**
Public Hearings, 6 p.m.
Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Commission Chambers

The Link is produced by the Leon County Public Information Office, 301 S. Monroe St., Suite 502, 606-5300.