



MEANS BUSINESS

HARDEE COUNTY



Annual Report 2002/2003



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

From Left to Right—Standing: Nick Timmerman, Walter Olliff, Jr. Seated: Bobby Ray Smith, William R. Lambert, Jr., Gordon Norris

Hardee County is our home and as such if you think of it as your home, think of the changes that have been occurring as remodeling. Nothing can ever always stay the same and much of the focus of this and previous county commissions has been to bring economic development and diversity to Hardee County. We learned years ago that we had a need for infrastructure such as road improvements, water and sewer, industrial parks, quality of life improvements, such as recreational areas and other projects such as these. As such, this Board is determined to turn these identified needs into reality.

We have been persistent and insistent in the acceleration of major road improvements such as the U.S. 17 corridor and improvements in other secondary roads. We have recently completed phase one of a water and sewer project that we hope will span, when it's completed, between Wauchula and Bowling Green and Wauchula and Zolfo Springs. Much of our communication systems have finally moved into the 21st century, especially with the installation of the new switch by Sprint for the City of Wauchula. We have encouraged and nurtured a partnership of private sector business interests to bring a major named brand hotel to the community.

We have taken our courthouse, the center of our government activity, and remodeled and restored it to a condition that creates a sense of pride, and have done it in large part with county employees. We've taken the initiative to provide a county wide garbage collection that, while not perfect, will hopefully lead to us becoming a cleaner community, another source of pride. We have stood firm in our quest for what we believe was a rightful return of a larger return of severance taxes to the citizens of Hardee County and have requested it be earmarked for further infrastructure and economic development, and in so doing, will avoid placing a burden of these projects on the ad valorem tax base. We stayed proactive in the location of the community college and helped make it a reality. We have worked out arrangements

with housing groups and have created new housing opportunities that will hopefully also give us an increased sense of pride. We have taken the initiative to procure land for an industrial park and we have every expectation of creating job diversity and economic opportunity for Hardee County citizens with this project. We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go. We must be wise stewards in the application of the severance tax money. We must complete a redefining of our relationship with the phosphate industry that builds partnerships that give them reasonable opportunities to continue mining here, but also provides for a future before and after they are gone. Global changes in our economy are forcing us to look for other economic diversity to bolster our agricultural traditions and to integrate new job opportunities for our citizens.

It has been shameful that we remain near the top in negative demographic categories and we have every expectation as a Commission and as a community, and simply for pride, to change that. On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners the commitment to do whatever is necessary to accomplish these goals remains firm. As long as the airport project remains viable, and we are prepared to keep it viable, it will remain the pinnacle of our recovery/remodeling strategy.

We encourage each of you to take an active role in this recovery/remodeling. We invite each of you to take an inventory of your community pride and we solicit a commitment from everyone to move together hand in hand, as a community.

Hardee County means business and we ask that you make it your business to stay informed.

William R. Lambert, Jr.
Chairman

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Commissioners

William R. Lambert, Jr., District I
Gordon R. Norris, District III
Walter B. Olliff, Jr. District V
Clifton N. Timmerman, District II
Bobby Ray Smith, District IV

Constitutional Officers

Supervisor of Elections Dean Cullins 315 N. 6th Avenue, Suite 110 Wauchula, FL 33873 Phone 863-773-6061 Fax 863-773-6813	Tax Collector Zee Smith P.O. Box 445 Wauchula, FL 33873 Phone 863-773-9144 Fax 863-773-9679	Clerk of Courts B. Hugh Bradley P.O. Drawer 1749 Wauchula, FL 33873 Phone 863-773-4174 Fax 863-773-4422
Sheriff J. Loran Cogburn 900 E. Summit Street Wauchula, FL 33873 Phone 863-773-0304 Fax 863-773-4593	Property Appraiser Carolyn Coker P.O. Box 877 Wauchula, FL 33873 Phone 863-773-2196 Fax 863-773-0954	

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County Manager's Message

In preparation for writing this message I reviewed the contents of this annual report. Even though I had no doubt that staff had been very busy in the past year, there were several activities completed that I was reminded of over the months documented in the report. Certainly many of the accomplishments were of routine nature and accomplished our basic function of delivery of services to the citizens of Hardee County. But many were of a progressive nature that reflect the Board of County Commissioners continuing goal of expanding our opportunities for the future by focusing on economic development that is both diversified and sustainable.

As the theme of last year's annual report reflected, Hardee County is "Paving the Path To A Promising Future". This "Paving" actually began in the 00/01 year and will continue into future years. The Board believes a very important component of that "Path" to be availability of infrastructure, primarily water and sewer. This year we put into operation the Vandolah Wastewater Treatment Plant and the operational date for the Wauchula Hills Wastewater Treatment plant was just a few weeks after the close of this year. The provisioning of water from the Wauchula Hills facility was also completed this year. With the availability of water and a temporary arrangement with Orange Blossom RV Park to process sewage, and with the completed road improvements on Highway 17 and Sauls Road, the new campus for South Florida Community College was able to start classes as scheduled in August. Also by year-end the Country Manor apartment complex was nearing completion and began accepting lessees shortly after year-end. This is another project that was enabled due to the availability of water and sewer which helps to meet another goal,

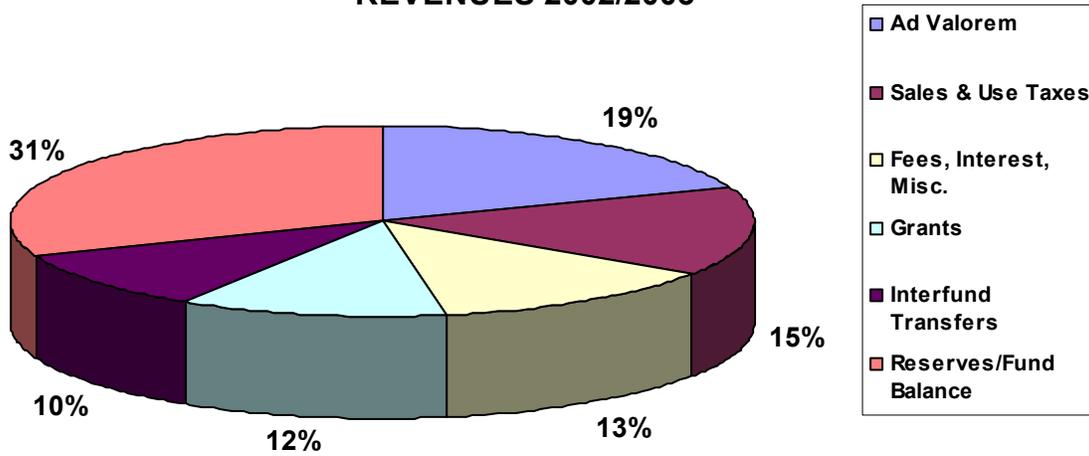
that of providing affordable housing. Not only are we already reaping the benefit of these infrastructure projects as noted above, but also there are a number of other development proposals under consideration for the coming year.

The theme for this year's annual report is "Hardee County Means Business" and we did get down to business. Although a number of obstacles were encountered, we have put into place the beginning of the necessary infrastructure to attract new businesses. The Board's desire is to develop a comprehensive water and sewer system that connects all existing systems from the northern boundary of Bowling Green to the southern boundary of Zolfo Springs. This is truly a long-term goal, but we are at the place where this can begin. There will be many hurdles, both political and financial, but the end result can be achieved by the county and the municipalities working together. Another courageous decision made by the Board this year was to finance the purchase of 160 acres of land adjacent to the Wauchula Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant to be developed as an industrial park. Developing and marketing this park will be a challenge, but with the county working conjointly with the Industrial Development Authority we will make it happen.

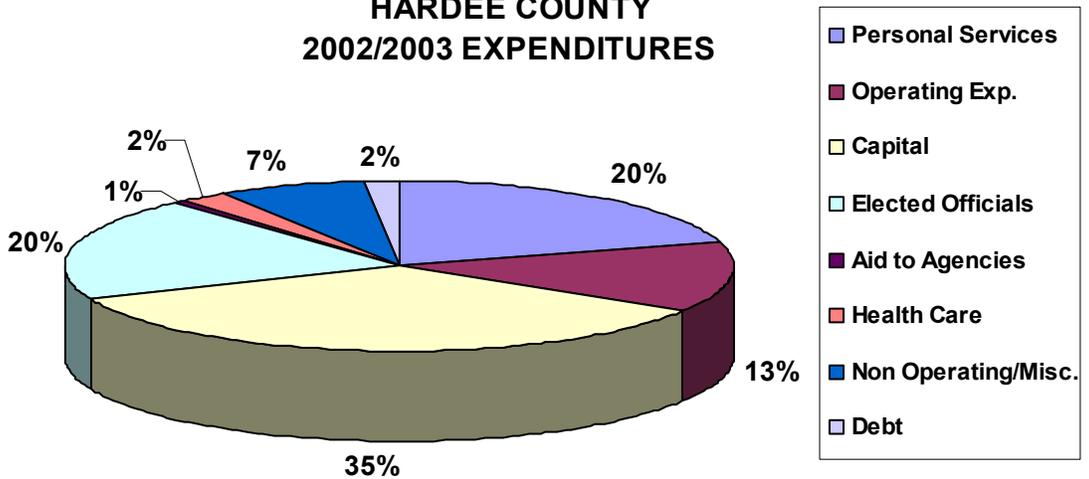
One major accomplishment of this year was the passing of the severance tax bill. The Board was tenacious in its pursuit of obtaining a greater return of the severance tax to the county. Even though the administration of this money has its challenges we will all work together, (County staff, the Board and the community) to ensure these monies further our goals of economic development. The receipt of these funds alone will not finance our planned infrastructure needs, so we will continue to seek additional revenue resources. It was disappointing that the '03 Legislative Session resulted in zero funding for wastewater projects, but it is our goal to fare better in the '04 session.

As we continue to focus on the tools for economic development, let me assure you we will not lose sight of our basic responsibilities to serve the citizens of Hardee County. I believe as you take the time to read this report it will be evident by the information provided by the various departments that we have strived to meet the needs of our community, we will continue to improve on our processes and services, and to seek more cost-efficient and effective methods of delivering these services. . By working together and staying focused, we will continue to ensure that the needs of our community are met and that Hardee County has a prosperous future.

HARDEE COUNTY REVENUES 2002/2003



HARDEE COUNTY 2002/2003 EXPENDITURES



Revenues

Ad Valorem	\$	8,274,945.41
Sales & Use Taxes	\$	6,644,936.36
Fees, Interest, Misc.	\$	5,519,420.39
Grants	\$	5,151,390.48
Interfund Transfers	\$	4,313,555.91
Reserves/Fund Balance	\$	13,454,009.94
Debt Proceeds	\$	1,600,000.00

Total \$ **44,958,258.49**

Expenditures

Personal Services	\$	7,247,664.42
Operating Exp.	\$	4,784,043.63
Capital	\$	12,311,061.79
Elected Officials	\$	6,958,709.79
Aid to Agencies	\$	225,564.49
Health Care	\$	775,013.08
Non Operating/Misc.	\$	2,592,833.21
Debt	\$	561,753.09

Total \$ **35,456,644**

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Historical Overview

The Board of County Commissioners appointed the first Budget Officer for Hardee County in December of 1985. Pursuant to FS 129.025, Counties have the authority to appoint a Budget Officer to oversee fiscal issues pertaining to the Board. Prior to 1985 the Clerk of Courts was responsible for Budget-related activities. The duties of this office include, but are not limited to, preparation of the budget and budget amendments, investment of excess funds, preparation of the annual report, and other related duties as assigned by the County Manager. Our Department functions in the capacity of internal auditors, ensuring that laws and procedures pertaining to budgeting and finance are carried out in the appropriate manner.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to properly manage the County's finances in accordance with state regulations and to ensure that there are sufficient fiscal resources available to improve and develop services that will enhance the quality of living in Hardee County.

Activities and Accomplishments

Taxable Value and Millage Rates

In fiscal year 2002/2003, the Board assessed a millage rate of 8.25 mills and the taxable value in Hardee County was \$1,031,968,263. The total amount of Ad Valorem taxes collected was **\$8,274,945** with **\$3,209,851** credited to the General Revenue Fund and **\$5,065,094** credited to the Fine and Forfeiture Fund. This fiscal year the Board reduced the millage rate from 8.50 mills to 8.25 mills. The millage rate has gradually been reduced over the years due to additional revenues received through the one cent small county sales surtax, increase in assessed taxable value, and availability of a surplus in fund balance. However, as we take measures to improve public services and focus on economic



OMB Staff

development, we will be faced with the need to seek additional revenues to fund various programs throughout the county.

Budget Process

In April of 2003, the Office of Management and Budget conducted a departmental workshop to assist Departments with the development of their budgets. Each Department received a packet with instructions on the proper development of their budget. All departments were able to electronically enter their budget requests through the county's network system. This process, once again, proved to be extremely beneficial to the departments. The calculations are formatted in the budget program and entering the data online ensures that there will be virtually no errors in calculations, therefore less time is dedicated to manual calculations.

In July of 2003, the Property Appraiser delivered the certification of taxable value which is the official beginning of the budget process according to state regulations. The taxable value increased by 25% for a total taxable value of \$1,285,637,304.

The Office of Management and Budget developed the budget for fiscal year 2003/2004 and presented it to the Board in July. For a period of five full days, the Board carefully analyzed the proposed expenditures and made adjustments where feasible.



During this past year's budget process for the adoption of the 2003/2004 fiscal year budget the Board increased millage to 8.75 mills. Though the taxable value increased, during the prior year reserves were utilized to fund courthouse improvements, preliminary design work for Wauchula Hills Wastewater/Water Plant, and various increasing operating expenses such as salaries and insurance benefits. As these reserves were utilized, it became necessary to seek additional revenue sources.

Legislation Affecting County Budget

Through the direction of the County Manager and the Board, our office is responsible for the development of the legislative packet for Hardee County's Legislative Delegation Hearing. Through this document, the County is able to voice our local and regional concerns to our legislators and formally request assistance with various projects for the County. This document has become an effective means of communicating our local issues to our State Legislators.

During the 2002 Legislative Session, the State allocated \$1,600,000 to Hardee County for the continuation of improvements to the Wauchula Hills Wastewater Treatment Facility. These funds were utilized to assist with the completion of the Wauchula Hills Wastewater Treatment Facility. The State also allocated additional funding to the Road and Bridge Department through the Department of Transportation's Small County Road Assistance program for improvements to Crewsville Road and Murphy Road. In addition, the State reinstated funding for the County's Primary Health Care Program which has been successful in addressing health care needs within the community.

In October of 2003, during a special legislative session, the State passed legislation revising the distribution formula of the severance tax proceeds. For a number of years, the county has worked diligently to secure a more fair distribution of the severance tax proceeds. The approved distribution grants those counties that have been designated by the Governor as a "Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern" with 15% of the total proceeds remitted to the State Trust Fund in 2003 and 13% in 2004.

Though no specific legislative changes which occurred during the 2003 Legislative Session had a significantly negative impact on the County's local budget, there continue to be issues which will eventually have an affect on local governments. Some of those issues include increased costs of the County's share of Medicaid, reductions in county recycling grants and library assistance programs, reduction to local assistance for housing, and the restructuring of state mandated court costs—Revision 7 of Article V.

The County has retained the services of a consultant that provides us with legislative assistance to ensure that our voice is heard in Tallahassee. Through our consultants and our own local efforts, we will continue to seek assistance from our legislators to ensure that legislative changes which may significantly impact our county are addressed.

HARDEE COUNTY

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Legislative Delegation Hearing
November 12, 2003

Representative Baxter Troutman Senator J. D. Alexander
Sixty-Sixth District Seventeenth District

COMMISSIONERS
William R. Lambert, Jr.—District 1
Clifton N. Timmerman—District 2
Gordon R. Norris—District 3
Bobby Ray Smith—District 4
Walter B. Olliff, Jr.—District 5



Special Assessments

Hardee County's Fire and Waste Special Assessment Program is administered through the Office of Management and Budget. We work closely with the Property Appraiser's Office and the Building and Zoning Department to identify the residential units and commercial units that are assessable through the Special Assessment Program. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy by the Building and Zoning Department, owners of newly constructed units are routed to our office to pay a pro-rated portion of their special assessment fees. The fees collected are deposited into the Fire Control Fund and the Solid Waste Fund and are utilized for the operation of each of those departments.

This year the Board increased Special Assessment fees for Fire Services. Individual mailings were submitted to all property owners and public hearings were conducted to set the new rates.

Investments/Debt

Interest earnings on excess funds were extremely low during the 2003 year. As the County moved forward with a number of projects, we had only a minimal amount of excess funds available for investments. Most of the interest earnings throughout the year were earned locally without investing our excess funds in certificate of deposits. The total interest earned for all funds throughout the year was \$187,500 as opposed to \$521,000 earned in 2002.

In 2001 the Board borrowed \$4,000,000 through the Florida Local Government Finance Commission to assist with major road and bridge improvements throughout the County.

The majority of those funds have been utilized with only a couple of proposed projects remaining to be complete. Throughout the year, the funds that have not been expensed on construction have been invested with the Florida Local Government Investment Trust (FLGIT). Though interest rates have been extremely low, during the year we earned over \$50,000 in interest earnings and paid a little over \$61,000 in interest on the loan. This year we paid our first principle payment in the amount of \$500,000 toward this debt.

In addition, the County was approved to borrow \$5,000,000 through the Florida Government Finance Commission for improvements for wastewater/water projects. We have initially drawn only \$2.5 million and have utilized these funds for improvements to the Wauchula Hills Water Plant and are hopeful that the State will assist with additional funding through legislative allocations for further improvements to wastewater.

The County also purchased 160 acres for \$1.6 million for the development of an Industrial Development Park on SR 62. The funds to purchase the land were borrowed through Wachovia National Bank and will be paid back over a ten year period.

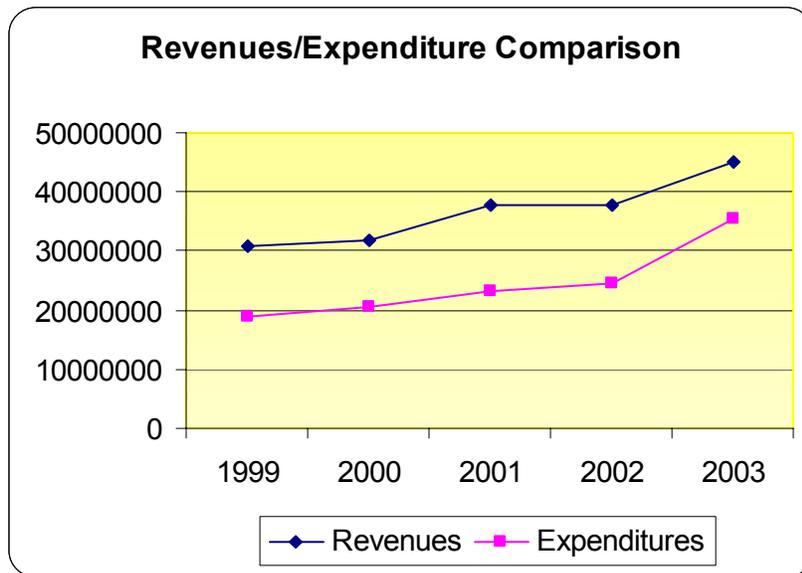
Revenue/Expenditure Summary

Total revenues collected during 2002/2003 including fund balances and debt service were \$44,958,259 and expenditures were \$35,456,644. At the beginning of 2003, there was a total of \$9,501,615 carried forward for use in fiscal year 2004. Of that total, 28% is

Revenues		
Ad Valorem	\$	8,274,946
Sales & Use Taxes		6,644,937
Fees, Interest, Misc.		5,519,420
Grants		5,151,390
Transfers		4,313,556
Reserves/Cash Fwd.		13,454,010
Debt Proceeds		1,600,000
Total	\$	44,958,259
Expenditures		
Personal Services	\$	7,247,664
Operating Expenses		4,784,044
Capital Expenses		12,311,062
Elected Officials		6,958,710
Aid to Agencies		225,565
Health Care		775,013
Non Operating		2,592,833
Debt		561,753
Total	\$	35,456,644

excess debt service reserved for road improvements and wastewater treatment improvements. In addition, 15% is reserved for landfill closure, 18% is associated with the General Revenue Fund, 28% is available in the Solid Waste Fund, and the balance remaining is set aside for various miscellaneous funds.

The Chart below shows a pattern of revenues and expenditures for the past five years. As indicated in the chart, overall the County has maintained sufficient funds to cover expenses and has maintained an approximate cash forward balance of \$11,000,000. As reported last year, though the overall balance is significant, of some fifteen established funds, the only fund without some restrictions is the General Revenue Fund.



Goals and Objectives

For 2004 the Office of Management and Budget will take a synergistic approach in seeking new and improved methods to:

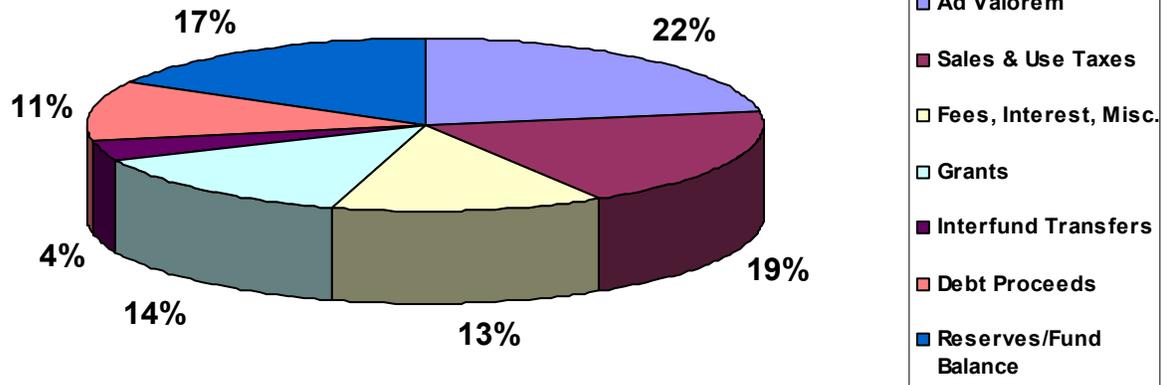
- Develop and manage the County Budget;
- Compile and disseminate the Annual Report;
- Manage investment activities;
- Administer the Special Assessment Program;
- Conduct Indigent Health Care activities;
- Direct and manage debt related activities.

Some of our goals for the upcoming year include:

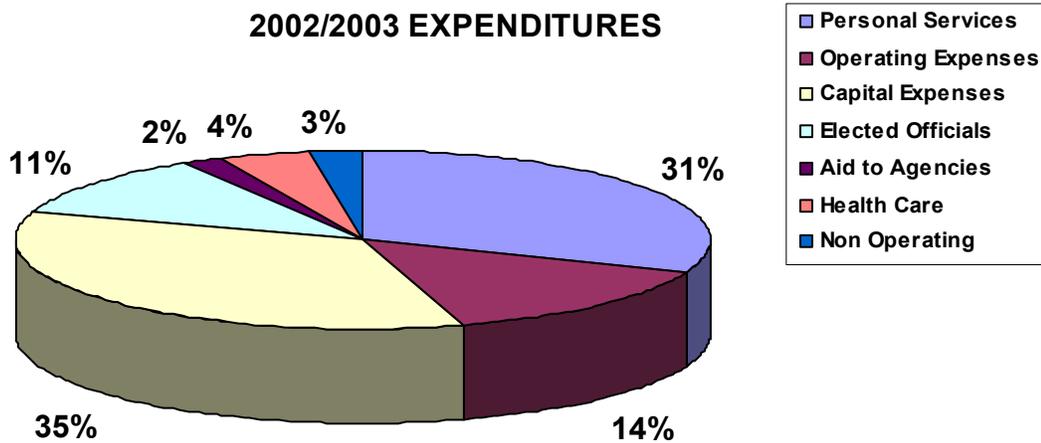
- Finalizing the Capital Improvement Policy and 3-5 year Capital Plan;
- Implementing a Budget Policy with specific timetables for the budget process;
- Developing a system during the budget process that marks timelines for the completion of capital projects;

Our Department will continue to strive to excel in all of our endeavors and we are looking forward to a positive and productive year.

**GENERAL REVENUE
2002/2003 REVENUES**



**GENERAL REVENUE
2002/2003 EXPENDITURES**



Revenues

Ad Valorem	3,209,851
Sales & Use Taxes	2,681,288
Fees, Interest, Misc.	1,854,443
Grants	1,967,621
Interfund Transfers	534,286
Debt Proceeds	160,000
Reserves/Fund Balance	2,395,702
Total	\$ 14,243,191

Expenditures

Personal Services	3,863,614
Operating Expenses	1,805,230
Capital Expenses	4,337,267
Elected Officials	1,427,259
Aid to Agencies	225,564
Health Care	530,274
Non Operating	317,429
Total	\$ 12,506,637

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resource Department consists of three full-time employees whose responsibilities are to ensure employees are employed in a fair and safe working environment. In addition, the Human Resource Department



assures that all disciplinary matters, employment and other labor issues are properly handled in accordance with Hardee

County's Rules and Regulations and with State and Federal Laws.

This department is also responsible for the investigation and processing of all insurance related claims such as Worker's Compensation, Auto, Property and Liability. During FY 02/03, we conducted safety training classes for County Departments in order to reduce accident claims in our attempt to control expenditures. Our department works closely with Hardee County's insurance carrier and legal counsel to achieve this goal.



Mission Statement

The Human Resource Department's mission statement is to provide support to all County Departments, to ensure the Board

of County Commissioners' employment practices and benefits are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners.

Activities and Accomplishments

During the past year the Human Resource Department conducted 41 interviews for employment. Hardee County successfully hired 34 new employees. Hardee County continues not to have a large turn over of employees. With the installation of the security system in the County Courthouse the majority of the new hires were associated with the protection and monitoring of security.

In reviewing the current benefit package available to employees, an area of concern was Health Insurance. The Human Resource Department, along with the County's Insurance Committee, was successful in the negotiation and selection of an improved health plan for County employees.

The Human Resource Department continues to play a proactive role in providing safety training for employees to reduce the risk of accidents. The Safety Committee meets monthly to review and make corrective recommendations to ensure the safety of County employees.

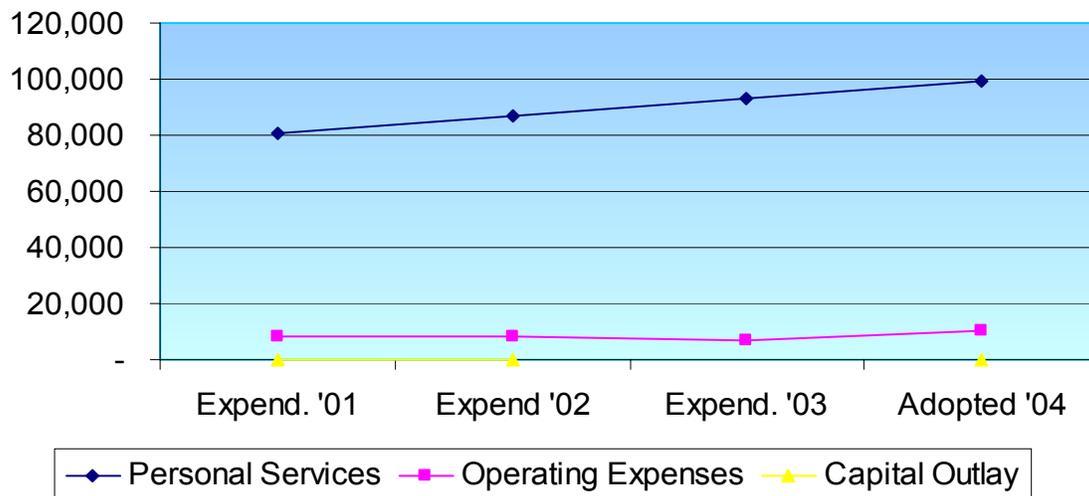


The second annual benefit fair was a huge success. This is a great opportunity for employees to discuss benefits with the appropriate representatives.

Goals and Objectives

The Human Resource Department along with the labor counsel will continue the task of updating the Hardee County Rules and Regulations for Personnel Management. There are significant changes occurring in the field of Workman's Compensation, therefore the Human Resource Department will be conducting training sessions for all County Departments to ensure that new regulations are followed. Hardee County Human Resources, in association with the Florida Association of Counties, will be conducting training for supervisors in various areas of their responsibilities as a managerial employees.

Human Resources



Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	80,737	86,904	93,196	99,484
Operating	8,228	8,588	6,922	10,100
Capital	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 88,964	\$ 95,492	\$ 100,119	\$ 109,584

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Board of County Commissioners' restructuring of county organizations in March 2001 established an Economic Development Office to assist with complicated economic development issues, projects and related ad hoc committees. By creating this department under the county umbrella, sound, efficient management practices and fostering advancement of economic priorities were streamlined. The position of EDO Director, which during most of this earlier period wore the dual hat of Assistant County Manager, became a fulltime, dedicated position in the latter third of the 2002 fiscal year. The EDO provides managing and administrative support to the County's Industrial Development Authority (IDA), Enterprise Zone Development Agency (EZDA), Airport Task Force (ATF) and the Range Cattle Station and Research Center Steering Committee (RCSRC-SC). The EDO Director in 2003 assumed the additional responsibility of infrastructure enabling manager for the County's new water and wastewater utilities system.



Mission Statement

The Hardee County EDO focus is oriented not to "grow" Hardee County but to diversify our economic base, and recruit quality primary jobs for local citizens, which will provide sustainable economic development to meet the needs of the



present citizens without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, while preserving or seeking to improve our quality of life.

The EDO screens prospects with these conditions in mind, coordinates all possible assistance in relocation to qualified candidates and provides facilitating support to existing businesses throughout the county and its municipalities.

Activities and Accomplishments

The 2003 fiscal year was marked by continued economic uncertainties including business slowdowns and tight budgets. Hardee County's Board of County Commissioners and County Manager have remained steadfast throughout in their creation or support of policies and activities leveraging resources to best meet the County's foreseeable economic development needs. To this end, the EDO has recognized tremendous progress in facilitating infrastructure availability and continued its most challenging focus on efforts to develop an environment and place where businesses can locate and prosper.

Hardee County, in a twist of fate, has seen little of the pain and consequence

experienced by other counties. Ironically, Hardee County, with its leading historical annual unemployment rates in the state, has shown a decrease in unemployed; Hardee County, who just last year was recognized in Congress as the only county in the U.S. southeast with an historical out-migration of population is now seeing controlled growth; Hardee County, with a strong history of conservative spending and saving, is this year fully positioned to leverage an aggressive infrastructure improvement approach with interest rates low, available grants and legislated funds to achieve greater return on investment dollar than at any other time in history.

The EDO acknowledges the unprecedented accomplishments realized this past year through foresight, leadership and tireless, concerted efforts of the County "Team". Many projects have been in the plans for considerable time and were effectively orchestrated this past year, while other needs have moved from concept, through funding, to development or execution in record time. Some activities of particular impact this fiscal year include:

- Monumental steps were taken toward



expanding economic development basic infrastructure in constructing Wastewater Treatment Plants at Vandolah Road and near Wauchula Hills, as well as a potable Consecutive Water System along a significant commercial corridor of U.S. 17 and S.R. 62. Of particular note was the successful City of Wauchula and County

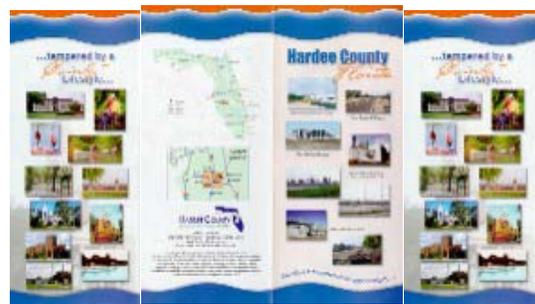
partnership in executing interlocal agreements for the Operation & Maintenance of the three plants upon construction completion.

- Site selection, funding, purchase, and conceptual design and planning was achieved for the future Hardee Industrial Park. This park, through the Industrial Development Authority and staff efforts seeks to leverage adjacent infrastructure expansion using available funds to provide opportunity for quality job creation.
- Construction completion and occupancy of the South Florida Community College Adjunct Facility was accomplished. This economic development



basic element will allow workforce training partnerships to expand business potential and job creation.

- Gas distribution line was negotiated and constructed along a seven mile C.R. 663 corridor from the transmission facility north of S.R. 62 to the intersection of Vandolah Road. This gas line project provides economic development infrastructure expansion through potential future business taps and partnership with the line owner.



EDO Marketing Brochure

The line owner has committed to provide funding and other assistance in feasibility analysis and business development.

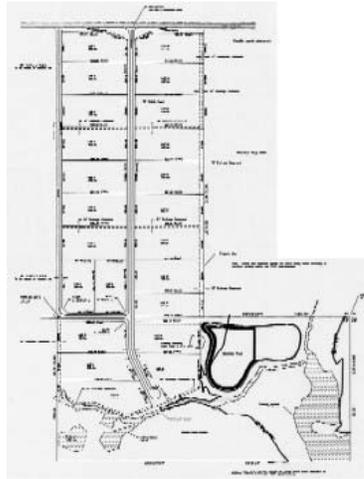
- County EDO Marketing Brochure creation and web site improvements were funded through a grant provided by the Florida's Heartland Rural Economic Development Initiative and its many sponsors. These are basic ED tools for relaying information to potential site selecting entities and also assist in communicating available resources and activities to existing community businesses.
- Construction of the split pair U.S. 17 project through Wauchula to Zolfo Springs commenced this year. Business awareness meetings and owners were contacted early in the construction phase to allow them sufficient contingency and opportunity planning.
- Expanded quality housing opportunities are ongoing. The Farm Labor



Housing 58-unit Complex construction was completed this year and fully occupied. Ground breaking and significant construction continues with the new 120-unit Country Manor Apartments.

- New telecommunication switching stations with expanded capabilities were constructed and under test throughout the county. This economic development basic infrastructure will enable opportunity for

- businesses previously not considered.
- Extensive lobbying and negotiating efforts were taken on to increase Hardee County's share of mining activities legislated severance taxes. This increased share to the county, as supported by the phosphate industry could significantly increase funding for basic infrastructure planning, availability, and capacity providing stimulus to ED controlled growth far into the future.



- Business assistance visits were performed during the year to provide information on such incentives as the Enterprise Zone corridors. This past year--the first realizing applicants from the county--saw \$11,693 in sales tax credits from the state. Also, the EDO provided assistance to nearly 80 separate client requests for information over the fiscal year, including over a dozen startup or expansion businesses in various phases of development.

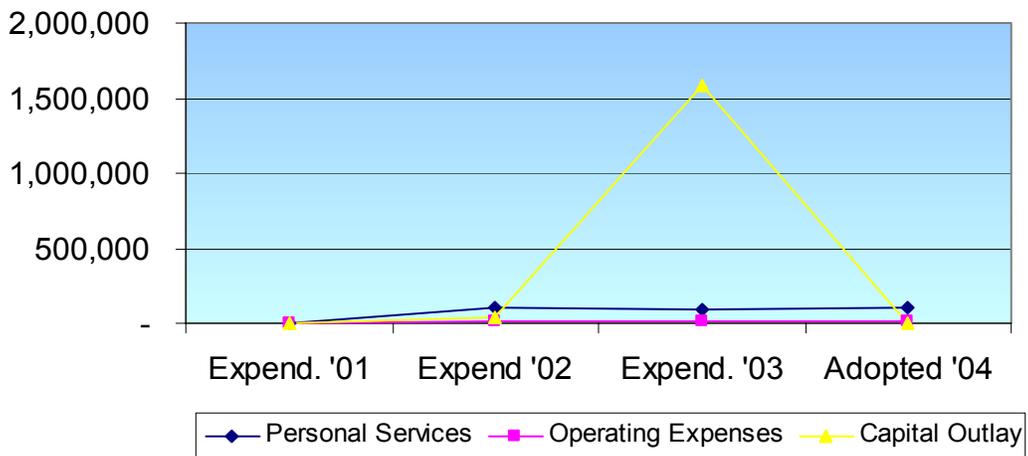
Goals and Objectives

The phase I completion of the water and wastewater plants and funding to achieve phase II are necessary precursors to the future utility success and industrial park build out. Subsequent phase funding will necessarily require acceleration should the 2004 legislature commit to funding a new Hardee K-8 school. Work efforts continued or programmed from the EDO for the 2004 FY include: facilitate the water and wastewater utility

system creation and initiate/improve management processes; continue design, permitting and development efforts for the Hardee Industrial Park; increase internet business and tourism visibility of the County, including an ED information database; continue business assistance with vision and incentives awareness; participate in County and State fairs and other opportunities to specifically market Hardee County attributes and incentives; move forward in soliciting ad hoc community and business committee strategic planning and marketing efforts; remain supportive in the possibility of initiating development of a cargo based airport. A prominent aspect to the future ED of the county is an understanding and supported bond among business people and citizens of the desired community we want to be. The EDO intends to fully use all available ED-related committees (i.e. IDA, EZDA, RESRC-SC, ATF) and organizations (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, Main Street) to define needs and move forward in consensus.

The EDO sees each day as full of new possibilities as we diligently continue our mission, seek out partnerships and alliances with organizations influential in enhancing opportunities for community growth, development, and safety with a focus toward enhancing economic diversity.

Economic Development Chart



Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	-	97,919	94,293	106,543
Operating	-	9,106	8,112	16,625
Capital	-	35,681	1,584,611	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ 142,706	\$ 1,687,016	\$ 123,168

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS/ PARKS & RECREATION

The Buildings & Grounds and Parks & Recreation Departments are directly intertwined as they share management staff as well as salaried personnel. Between these Departments is a staff that



consists of the Director of Facilities, 26 full-time employees and 4 part-time employees.

One new full-time position, Security Guard, became necessary as the need arose to provide a more secure environment for the Courthouse staff. The



Security Guard monitors all persons entering or exiting the Courthouse with the help of an x-ray machine, which was placed in the Security Vestibule of the Courthouse.

These departments are responsible for the maintenance of all County owned Buildings and Recreational Areas. These responsibilities require a great amount of diligence on behalf of our staff as maintenance of the buildings and their

adjacent grounds is a tremendous responsibility. In addition, there is continuous renovation of existing buildings and construction of new structures. In-house personnel is utilized for maintenance, as well as all phases of construction. This eliminates the need for outside contractors which benefits the County monetarily.

Mission Statement

It is the goal of these departments to provide a clean, safe, and comfortable environment for all County Staff as well as for the general public that visits facilities and recreational areas. The desire of these departments is to meet the needs and expectations of a continually growing and changing community.

Activities and Accomplishments

This year again has been extremely busy. Renovations were completed on the Courthouse 1st and 2nd Floors and Annex I. These departments played an essential role in relocating the Courthouse and Annex I Staff to their appropriate locations. A sewer system was installed at Pioneer Park, with assistance from the Road & Bridge Department. Construction was begun on the otter pen at the Animal Refuge, as well as installation of a pool in both the otter pen and the bear pen. Plans for the construction at Hardee Lakes Park have also been prepared.



Several maintenance projects were completed including installation of a new roof at Resthaven, and at the Office of Community Development.

Other significant non-routine maintenance tasks include: finishing the radio room at Emergency Operations Center, completion of the generator at the Courthouse, installation of air conditioning in the Pavilion Building at Pioneer Park, repairs on the restrooms at Magnolia Manor Park, and repairs on the roof at the Sheriff's Office.

Pioneer Park is host to a variety of community events.

Pioneer Park Days, held the first full weekend in March, features a flea market, antique tractors, engines and cars, and a variety of



entertainment presented daily from both



people in and outside of the community. Thousands of people come each year to visit and enjoy Pioneer Park Days, providing an important boost to the economy of our community. The Heartland Dog Show, held the third weekend of April, is a great event for animal lovers to enjoy watching some of the finest breeds of dogs compete. The annual 4th of July celebration was again a success, providing a variety of entertainment, and once again offering an opportunity for the community to tour our beautiful Animal Refuge for free. The celebration came to a close with a spectacular display of fireworks. In November 2002 the Annual Godstock event, a Christian music festival, was held, providing a wide variety of music from Christian Rock to Southern Gospel at no charge to the public.

The Animal Refuge is a great asset to Pioneer Park and to the community. The

Refuge features a boardwalk 1200 feet in length, winding through the natural surroundings that the animals call home. Along the boardwalk, there are five viewing nodes, which provide a place for visitors to observe the animals and read the informational placards for each exhibit. The Refuge houses 2 bears, 2 cougars, 3 ostriches, 6 raccoons, 3 foxes, 4 alligators, 5 deer, 6 turkeys, and 1 river otter, and entertains approximately 1,300 guests each month. This facility makes visiting the animals a much more pleasurable experience for visitors and the animals, who now live in a natural habitat, which has proven to be advantageous to their mental and physical welfare.

At Hardee Park on Sunday afternoons the Hardee County Soccer league plays on a regular basis.

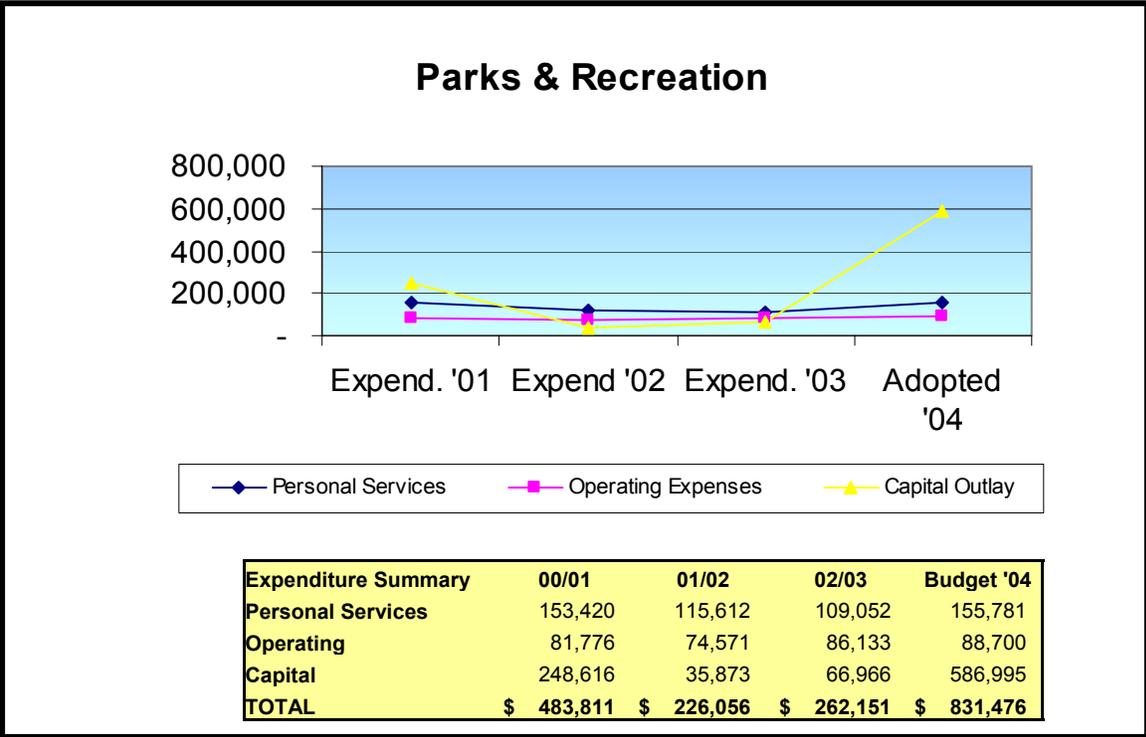
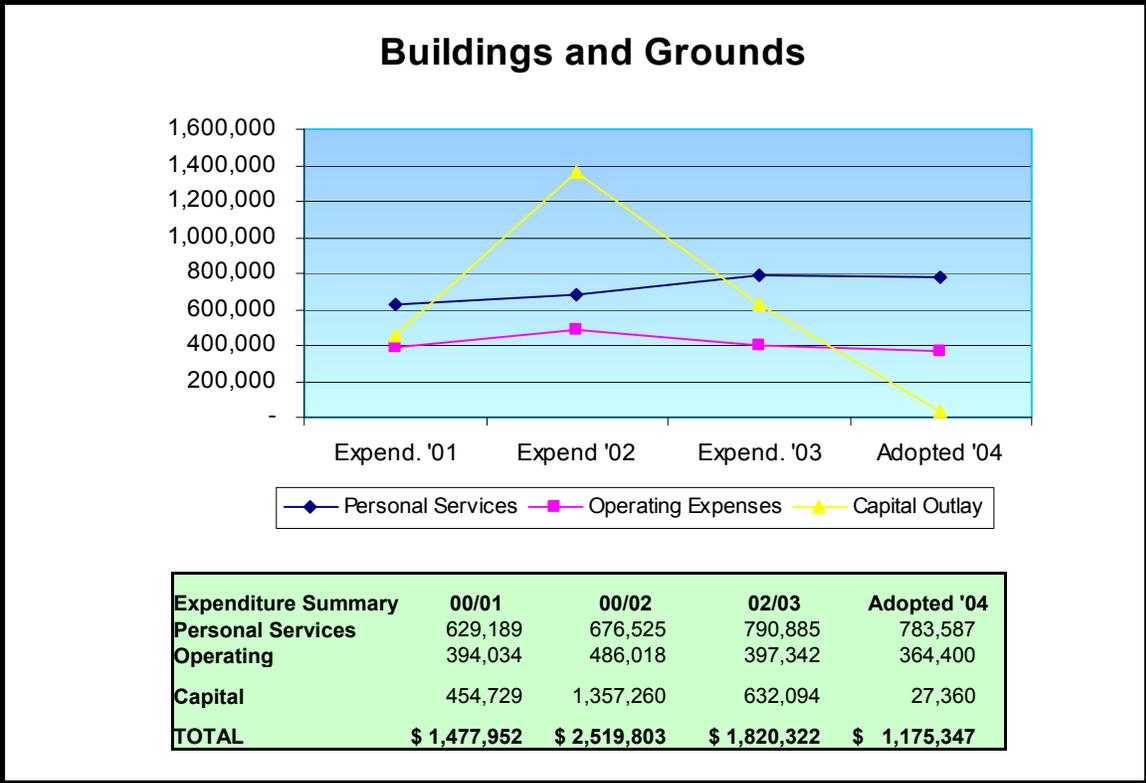
Goals and Objectives

As in years past, these departments will continue to maintain a strong working relationship with the Board of County Commissioners, as well as all other Departments within County Government. We will continue to strive to maintain the morale of our employees at the highest level possible at all times, and to enable our departments to meet the expectations and needs of those who depend on us to make their time at work as safe, comfortable and convenient as possible.

Again this year our staff will be directly involved in several projects. At the Animal Refuge, construction of the Otter Pen, Bob Cat pen and possibly a pen for Red Fox, will be completed. A walk-in cooler will also be installed.



At Hardee Lakes Park, construction of the Park Manager’s House, public rest-rooms, three boat ramps with docks, and three fishing piers will be constructed. With assistance from the Road & Bridge department, a road system will be built through the park, giving more efficient access to all areas of the Park.





OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Community Development evolved in October 1997, as a result of the spin off of the Building and Zoning Department, which formerly administered the housing grants for Hardee County. As the importance of new infrastructure was recognized, so too was the need for further grant funding to ensure the growth of our Community. Since our development, several grants have successfully been obtained to achieve the goals set forth by the Board of County Commissioners. Further, in most instances, the administrative expenses of this department are offset by grant funds. Effective as December 2003, this office will be the core of all grant activity for the County.



Mission Statement

To further develop the infrastructure within our community and to improve the quality of life for the low-and moderate-income citizens of Hardee County through grant funded programs.

Activities and Accomplishments

◆ Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

A CDBG Housing Grant in the amount of \$750,000 was awarded to OCD in January 2002. The grant targeted very

low to low income families.

The grant was completed by September 30, 2003 with the assistance to a total of 32 housing units. A new application will be submitted to apply for more funds in January 2004.

◆ Hardee County Health Care Task Force

The original Primary Care Challenge Grant award for fiscal 02-03 was reduced from \$103,000 to \$77,250. Despite the budget cut, the Health Care Task Force was able to provide unduplicated services to approximately 941 underserved and uninsured clients.

In our commitment to continue to provide quality health care services to the residents of Hardee County, a Primary Care Grant Renewal Agreement was entered into between the State of Florida, Department of Health, and the Board of County Commissioners for the amount of \$103,000, provided the appropriation of funding. The agreement will end on June 30, 2004.

In March, 2003, an application was submitted to the department of Health, on behalf of the Hardee County Health Care Task Force, applying for the Closing the Gap Grant Program for FY 03-04. This was to address the racial and ethnic disparities in primary care, targeting specifically diabetic patients. The proposal was approved for funding in May 2003 and a grant award in the amount of \$111,811 was issued. A diabetes control program has been established with said funding to provide ongoing education to persons with diabetes.

◆ Courthouse Renovations

The restoration activities that began in October 2001, through funding provided

by the Division of Historical Resources in the amount of \$350,000, were complete. The Courthouse has been in function since May 2003.



OCD is currently administering another grant from the Division in the amount of \$27,360 to repair the stucco.

◆ **Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)**

The yearly allotment of \$20,150.00 from the Community Services Block Grant, through the Manatee Opportunity Council (MOC), is received and administered by OCD to 2 (two) separate Hardee County agencies. Hope of Hardee receives its disbursement to fund a combination of Homemaker Services and Home Delivered Meals to elderly residents of Hardee County. Redlands Christian Migrant Association is the other agency receiving reimbursement of a percentage of 4(four) full-time, low-income employee's salaries.

◆ **Pioneer Park Animal Refuge**

The next phase of construction to provide a bird aviary and to further enhance several of the existing animal enclosures began in October 1, 2003. Our plan is to use the \$75,000 award to build an otter pool (see picture below), an otter pen, a bobcat pen, a bear pool, a fencing bobcat house, and boardwalk for Animal Refuge at Pioneer Park. Several of these projects (the bear pool for instance) have already been completed. We expect the completion of all necessary constructions to be no later than June, 2005.

◆ **Cracker Trail Museum**

A general operating support grant request was made through the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources.



The project was recommended for \$3,250.89 grant-in-aid assistance from the Operating Trust Fund, contingent upon legislative appropriation. Sadly enough, state funds were withdrawn, and the award was reduced to \$1,625.44.

◆ **Hardee Lakes Park**

In September 2003, OCD received confirmation of grant award in the amount of \$66,775 from the Florida Boating Improvement Program to construct boat ramps and boat docks in Hardee Lakes.

This, so far, represents a \$416,775 construction task, which began in May 2003.



◆ **Housing Programs - State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP)**

The State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) is an entitlement program of \$350,000 to Hardee County each year. The Local Housing Assistance Plan was revised as of July 2003 as required by the state every three years. The program includes strategies for rehabilitation, home purchase assistance and disaster recovery. Previously there was a separate strategy for Emergency Repair with a housing unit limit of \$3250. Many emergency repairs are exceeding that limit with the rising costs of material and labor. The Emergency strategy has now been included within the rehabilitation

strategy, which has a maximum limit of \$15,000 per housing unit. This grant includes strategies for owner-occupied, single-family units where the total income and assets of the household meet the SHIP program requirements.

The following table is provided to indicate by Program, the number of individual housing units served by the SHIP Program for the last two fiscal years.

The rehabilitation Program assists qualified homeowners with housing repairs to provide a healthy and safe living environment. This includes elimination of code violations, safety and/or sanitation issues, and to provide alteration to accommodate physically challenged household members. In general, all repairs within the limit of the program are to prevent further deterioration of the housing unit. For this past FY, 68 applications were processed.

The Emergency Repair Program provides expedited repairs to eliminate an immediate health and safety hazard such as water line

	FY 01-02	FY 02-03	Total Units To Date
Rehabilitation	34	31	277
Emergency	50	19	401
Home Purchase	16	8	78
Total	100	58	756

breaks, wiring or circuit breaker hazards, termite or rotted joist repairs, etc. In general, all repairs within the limit of the program are to prevent further deterioration of the housing unit. 22 applications were approved in 02-03.

Under both the Rehabilitation and Emergency Repair Programs, alterations are made to the housing units to accommodate physically challenged household members. All modifications made are in accordance with ADA guidelines.

The Homeownership Assistance Program provides financial assistance toward down payment and closing costs for first time homebuyers that qualify. Previously, the three income categories for assistance received the

same amount of assistance. As of July, the strategy has been revised to assist more people getting into a house of their own. Number of applications processed for 03-03 is 45.



Economic Development - Vandolah Road Sewer Service Area

The Vandolah Sewer Service Area project, that included the construction of Vandolah Waste Water Treatment plant, has finally been made complete and is fully operational. The plant has the capacity to treat 75,000 gallons per day. Although the award was in the sum of \$1.6 million, the project was completed under budget at \$1.1 million.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Development also provides assistance for clients with outside programs for which they may be eligible. Use of office space is coordinated with other agencies to meet with clients here locally.

♦ Centro Campesino Farmworker Center, Inc.

Centro Campesino provides many services to several of our clients through many different program funds they receive. They serve several different counties with the following federal grant programs: Weatherization Assistance Program, Low Income

Emergency Home Repair Program, and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Centro Campesino serves many homeowners with mobile homes in our county, which are not eligible under our programs.



Centro has provided assistance to many of our clients (44 this year) for wheelchair ramps, windows and doors, assistance which is used as leverage funds in our grant programs.

◆ **Manatee Opportunity Council**

Hardee County is a member of the Manatee Opportunity Council, which also provides assistance for our local residents. One significant service they have provided to our clients is foreclosure counseling and assistance.

◆ **Polk County Council**

Hardee County is also assisted by Polk Opportunity Council for which Community Development act as liaison for programs such as Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

◆ **Heart of Florida Legal Society, Inc.**

Legal assistance in the areas of family law and victims of domestic violence is provided free for qualifying low-income persons. Heart of Florida utilizes our office space on a monthly basis to assist Hardee County residents.

◆ **Florida Rural Legal Services — Lakeland**

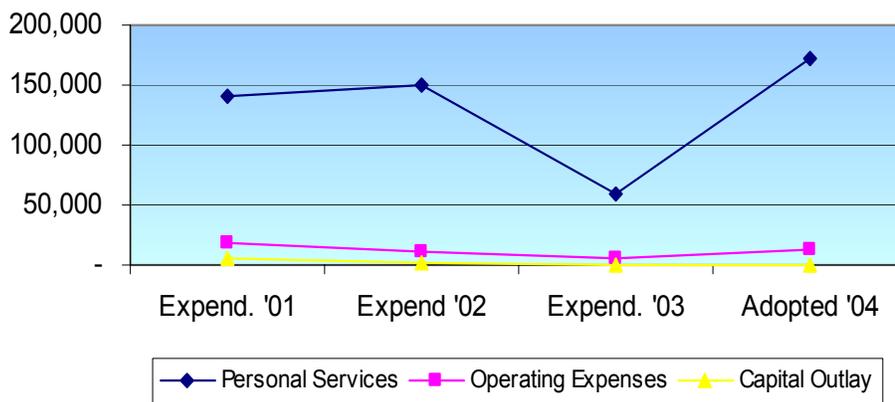
Other types of legal assistance including real estate issues and credit counseling are provided to income eligible residents by Florida Rural Legal Services. Approval for 4 mortgages were obtained.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

OCD's goal for 2004 is to pursue additional grant funding to further develop our Community. Below are projects that we have targeted to ascertain grant funding for:

- Development of a soccer field
- Development of non-motorized trail for Hardee Lakes
- Health Care assistance program Grants for the Health Care Task Force (HCTF)
- General Operating Support for Cracker Trail Museum

Community Development



Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	141,620	149,664	59,731	172,187
Operating	18,195	11,890	5,400	13,350
Capital	4,741	2,149	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 164,556	\$ 163,703	\$ 65,130	\$ 185,537

BUILDING & ZONING

Mission Statement

The mission of the Building & Zoning Department remains that of providing quality service in an efficient manner to the citizens of Hardee County and to the Builder/Developer seeking to construct new projects within Hardee County; to manage growth in an orderly manner in accordance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code; to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of Hardee County by ensuring that all structures are constructed according to adopted codes and ordinances.

Activities and Accomplishments

Of the 2,401 permits issued some of the projects were: Burger King; Country Manor Apartments; SunCoast Schools Federal Credit Union; Taco Express; addition to Panda Restaurant; Graham Tax Office; Colon Law Office; Pete's Pharmacy; Wastewater Treatment Plant (Hwy 62); Remodel for City of Wauchula offices; and Wells Insurance Agency.



The FY 02-03 Budget included one Building/Zoning Official, one Office Manager, one Executive Assistant, one Permit Technician, one Building Inspector and one Code Enforcement Officer. In FY 02-03 the Building Department issued 2,401 permits and conducted 1,831 field inspections, 5 of which were re-inspections and over 114 courtesy inspections to determine structural stability and/or repairs necessary to bring the structures up to minimum housing code. The Zoning Department processed requests for Special Exceptions, Exceptions to Policy L1.15 of the "Comp Plan",



Temporary Special Use Permits, Site Development Plan approvals and Re-zones for the FY 02-03.

Of particular interest, there has been successful rezoning of 1,206.95MOL acres from A-1 to P-R for Hardee Lakes; 10MOL acres from F-R to R-3 on Martin Luther Jr. Avenue for a group home; .523MOL acres (Cannon) and 17.5MOL acres (Chapman) North Hwy 17 and REA Road for the future development of a hospital; 9.73MOL acres from F-R to R-3 on or about South Florida Avenue for the future development of a 116 unit apartment complex.



A request for rezoning of 582.33MOL acres from A-1 to F-R on or about Vandolah Road (German Florida Citrus) for the future development of a Planned Development Unit is presently being heard by the Planning/Zoning Board and the Board of County Commissioners.



There has been successful rezoning of 40MOL acres from F-R to A-1 and Major Special Exception to construct and operate a pre-cast concrete manufacturing plant on State Road 62 (Faust); and there has been successful rezoning of 9.36MOL acres from A-1 to I-2 and a Major Special Exception to locate a storage facility for marine signal flares on State Road 62 (Petty).



Major Special Exceptions have been successfully processed for the construction / operation of a construction

materials recycling plant, ready-mix concrete plant and a concrete block plant on 40MOL acres on State Road 62 (Carlton/Manfull), and for the operation of a pre-cast concrete plant on 10MOL acres on State Road 66 (Faust/Big Lake). One of the major services of the Zoning Department provides to the general citizenry is zoning determination / information data sheets. Those sheets answer specific questions and cite regulations from the Unified Land Development Code

in an effort to help inquirers know what can be done with a parcel of land before development plans are made.

In FY 2002-03 the Code Enforcement Officer evaluated 1,091 cases; 361 complaints filed; 110 citations issued; 366 door hangers; 108 stop work orders issued; 488 follow-up inspections were conducted and 382 cases were closed; \$18,725 in fines were paid from citations; \$6,025 filed in liens from unpaid fines. The Code Enforcement Officer also conducted 35 pre-inspections for pre-owned mobile homes.

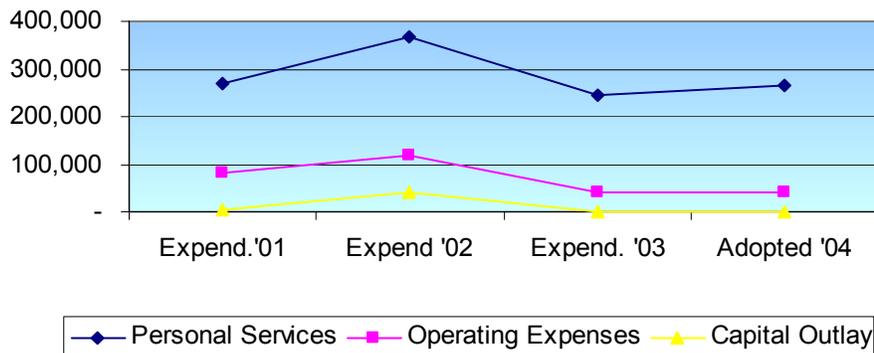
<u>STRUCTURES</u>	<u>ISSUED</u>	<u>COLLECTED</u>
SFR DETACHED	081	\$4,931,039.00
SFR ATTACHED	004	\$ 329,386.00
MANF. HOME	004	\$ 398,000.00
FIVE OR MORE FAM.	009	\$4,115,000.00
MOBILE HOMES	080	\$2,575,891.00
AMUSEMENT, SOCIAL	001	\$ 529,750.00
OFFICES, BANKS, PROF.	001	\$ 86,535.00
PUBLIC WORKS / UTIL.	001	\$ 436,768.00
SCHOOLS/ OTHER ED.	001	\$ 0.00
STORES / CUST. SERV.	001	\$ 350,000.00
OTHER NON-RESID.	012	\$ 397,588.00
STRUCTURES NOT BLDG	042	\$ 118,028.00
RESIDENTIAL ADDTNS	416	\$2,219,462.00
NON-RES. ADDTINS	222	\$1,619,056.00
MOBILE HOME ADDTN	145	\$ 324,973.00
HOTEL/MOTEL/ TOURIST-CABIN	002	\$ 11,800.00
TOTAL VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION		\$18,443,276.00
DEMOLITION		
S/F DWELLING	008	\$ 25,200.00
INDIVIDUAL PERMITS AUTHORIZING CONSTRUCTION VALUED AT \$500,000+		
	009	\$ 4,642,750.00
TOTAL PERMITS:	2,401	

BUILDING PERMIT	378	\$111,798.32
SURCHARGE	199	\$ 3,784.49
ELECTRICAL PERMIT	390	\$ 5,866.00
PLUMBING PERMIT	148	\$ 315.00
MECHANICAL PERMIT	195	\$ 3,858.00
ROOFING PERMIT	147	\$ 9,571.00
MOBILE HOME/PK. MDL	081	\$ 17,110.22
MOBILE HOME ADDTN	003	\$ 178.00
MOBILE HOME PREINSP.	035	\$ 3,500.00
COMMERCIAL HOOD	004	\$ 518.00
MISC. PERMIT	022	\$ 2,095.00
LATE FEES/ PENALTIES	013	\$ 250.00
DOUBLE PERMIT FEES	013	\$ 222.00
GAS PERMIT	019	\$ 90.00
ALARM PERMIT	019	\$ 937.00
PLANS REVIEW FEE	494	\$ 22,576.00
SLUDGE	001	\$ 500.00
DEMOLITION PERMIT	008	\$ 400.00
REINSPECTION FEES	005	\$ 160.00
MISC. (COPIES, ETC.)	004	\$ 196.60
SWIMMING POOL PERMIT	003	\$ 430.00
RE-ZONE	006	\$ 1,200.00
EXCEPT. TO POL. L1.15	025	\$ 7,390.00
TEMP. SPECIAL USE	004	\$ 1,050.00
SITE DEV. PLAN	002	\$ 150.00
MINOR S/D PLAT	018	\$ 1,770.00
VARIANCE	001	\$ 200.00
APPEAL	002	\$ 350.00
MAJOR SPECIAL EXCPT.	010	\$ 3,000.00
SPECIAL MSTR. FEES	004	\$ 2,398.00
FIRE PLANS REVIEW	034	\$ 2,550.00
COMPETENCY CARDS	106	\$ 5,210.00
COMP. CARD LATE FEES	008	\$ 72.50

BLDG. INSPECTIONS PERFORMED:	COUNTY	1,443
TOTAL REVENUE GENERATED:	COUNTY	\$ 184,368.08
BLDG. INSPECTIONS PERFORMED:	CITY OF BG	135
TOTAL REVENUE GENERATED:	CITY OF BG	\$ 5,502.98
BLDG. INSPECTIONS PERFORMED:	COW	286
TOTAL REVENUE GENERATED:	COW	\$ 15,228.85
BLDG. INSPECTIONS PERFORMED:	TOWN OF ZS	162
TOTAL REVENUE GENERATED:	TOWN OF ZS	\$ 4,596.22
TOTAL INSPECTIONS:		1,831
TOTAL REVENUE:		\$209,696.13



Building & Zoning



Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	269,869	368,843	243,202	266,040
Operating	79,675	118,745	40,098	42,811
Capital	4,855	39,363	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 354,399	\$526,951	\$ 283,300	\$ 308,851

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Emergency Management is an ALL HAZARDS department responsible for the Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery of all types of natural and man-made incidents. This department is also responsible for Emergency Management in Wauchula, Zolfo Springs and Bowling Green. Planning for wind events, large fires, hazmat, terrorism, agricultural incidents, weather events and everything in between is the primary role of our department. Interaction with all local municipalities is crucial to ensure that all agencies involved in the incident are working on the same plan.



The department personnel are William J. Muhlfield, Director and Amy Dubberly, EM Coordinator.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Emergency Management Department is to reduce the vulnerability of people and communities of Hardee County, to prevent loss of life, injury or damage and loss of property resulting from natural, technological, and man-made emergencies and to reduce the vulnerability of the infrastructure of the County and its cities.

Activities And Accomplishments

During the past year, the Emergency Management Department has been very active. We have been involved in a wide variety of incidents ranging from large scale fires to a Presidential Declaration for

flooding in the west side of the County. Planning has taken a new sense of priority. Due to the events of 9/11, Emergency Management has been in high gear. The EM Director was also appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Local Emergency Planning Council this year. This committee is responsible for maintaining hazardous materials within 5 area counties.

Mitigation:

The acts of reducing or eliminating the effects of an event.

Plenty of time was spent on reducing the effects of flooding, hurricanes, tornados, agriculture events, wildfires and terrorism. The new Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) was created and is being reviewed for acceptance by the State Department of Emergency Management and FEMA. This document gives direction for the entire County on how to eliminate or reduce the damage from a catastrophic event.

The Local Mitigation Strategy Plan was also another large accomplishment for the department. With the acceptance of this plan, all agencies involved in mitigation now have a tangible resource to assist their departments. The final FEMA approval should come by the Summer of 2004.

Other Mitigation Projects Include:

- Storm Ready County Designation from NOAA.
- River Monitoring and Awareness
- Road signs on the rivers bridges visible from the river to verify location.
- Family Disaster Plans
- 100% inspections of sites with hazardous Materials (Extremely Hazardous Substances)
- Monitoring of Hazardous Materials being transported through Hardee County
- Shutter Retrofit of 2 School buildings and 3 Schools Pending.
- Purchase of a 30 kw generator for the school board.

Preparedness:

Planning and training how to respond in case an emergency or disaster occurs and working to increase resources available to respond effectively.

Emergency Management spent considerable time in this area for the year 2003. The focus this year has been weather preparedness. With the Storm Ready designation and the Hazardous Weather program for the schools, the message is getting out. Emergency Management has also helped prepare families involved in this years flooding to mitigate or prepare for a similar type of event. This included raising a home 48 inches.



Daniel Noah and Russ Henes, NWS; Bill Muhlfeld, EM

Based on world events, Emergency Management has been busy with the unfortunate task of planning for terrorism events. We have been very busy creating comprehensive plans for all types of events. We have received unprecedented support from all of the Departments, Agencies and Municipalities within Hardee County. Emergency Management created the following plans for the year 2003:

- Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan- Review and Approved.
- Terrorism Annex to the CEMP- Reviewed and Approved by the State, FEMA and DHS.
- Local Mitigation Strategy Plan- Reviewed by State and FEMA- Revisions needed.

- Continuity of Operations (COOP)- In the construction phase- Creating plans for Emergency Management, Fire Department, EMS, Sheriff's Office, E-911 and Public Works.

Other Preparedness Projects Include:

- Storm Ready County
- Hazmat Tabletop Exercises
- Emergency Management Training of 10 County Employees
- Creation of Citizen Corps
- Flood Preparedness
- All municipalities are now on the State-wide Mutual Aid Plan
- Part of the Florida Fire Chiefs Association Mutual Aid Response Plan.

Response:

Activities during and immediately following a disaster. They are designed to provide emergency assistance to victims of the event and reduce the likelihood of secondary damage.

Emergency Management along with Fire Rescue and Law Enforcement, responded to a multitude of calls. The primary role of Emergency Management was to support the first responders. That mission was accomplished on several occasions. We were able to support and provide for additional man-power and equipment on some of the larger incidents within the County. Assistance was also rendered to Law Enforcement in several area, securing communications being the primary goal.



Some of the major incidents this year included:

- Train Derailment
- Flooding
- Hazmat Incidents
- Large Area Power Outages

Recovery:

Return vital life support systems to minimum operating standards. Long term recovery is completed when the entire area is completely redeveloped, either as it was in the past or for entirely new purposes that are less disaster-prone.

This year's recovery efforts were on a larger scale than the previous. Families were displaced and considerable property damage took place this year.

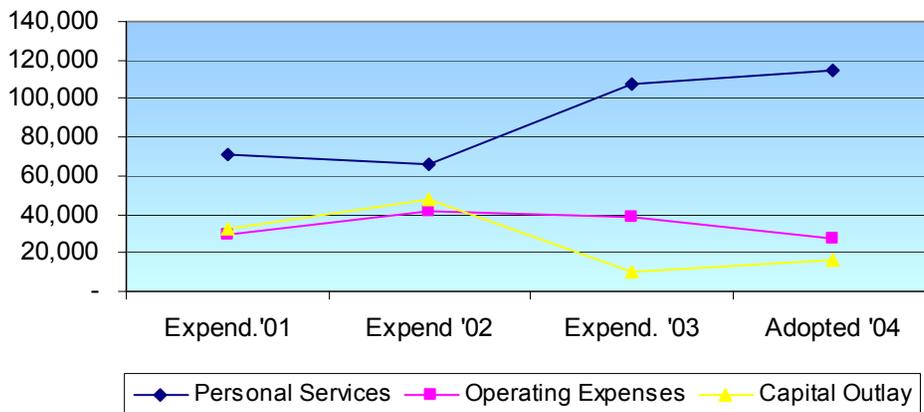
Assisting citizens that required Federal assistance was the toughest mission for the year. With help and cooperation of the State DEM and local volunteer agencies, every request for recovery assistance was honored.

Goals and Objectives

- Prepare for prompt and efficient response and recovery activities to protect lives and property affected by emergencies
- Respond to emergencies using all systems, plans, and resources necessary to preserve and protect the health, safety and well being of the citizens of Hardee County.
- Recover from emergencies by the rapid and orderly implementation of restoration and rehabilitation programs for the people and property affected from emergencies.

Emergency Management is looking forward to another banner year. The plans and visions that are in place will ensure that Hardee County will be a much safer place to live.

Emergency Management



Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	70,827	65,543	107,836	114,846
Operating	29,807	41,335	38,922	27,512
Capital	32,647	47,432	10,380	16,485
Other			93,012	8,200
TOTAL	\$ 133,281	\$ 154,310	\$ 250,150	\$ 167,043



R to L: Lauren Wickstrom, West Palmer, Elizabeth Serdynski and Doug Knight

MINING DEPARTMENT

Recognizing the need to place the focus on the future of Hardee County, the Board of County Commissioners formed the Hardee County Mining Department in 1999.

The Mining Department was restructured in 2002 and the current staff consists of: Mining Coordinator Doug Knight, Permitting Specialists West Palmer and Elizabeth Serdynski, and Executive Assistant Lauren Wickstrom.

The Mining Department reports to the Director of Planning and Development.

MISSION STATEMENT

To protect the health, safety and well-being of the citizens of Hardee County while safeguarding the quality of our land, water, air and help ensure long-term ecological, social and economic benefits; the Mining Department also promotes coordination with other State and Federal agencies to assure timely and quality reclamation through the regulation of the phosphate mining industry.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Public Education was the focus for our department. The Mining Department held a workshop for clay waste disposal alternatives. In addition, the Economic Impact Study presented by Dr. Grace Johns, Senior Associate for Hazen and Sawyer, P.C. along with the supplement which models the potential economic benefits of land/lakes reclamation became the foundation for further community education.



Clay Waste Disposal Area

Following this, the Mining Department created the “No Clay Benefits” document and began educating the public throughout the region.

The Mining Department completed an intensive review of all the documentation contained within the department related to permitting and completed a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners on the history of clay waste disposal in Hardee County.

The Mining Department continued to research and investigate the developing technology of alternatives for mining and reclamation. The Mining Department participated in the Florida Institute of Phosphate Research meetings and mining conferences. Education and sharing of information and new ideas continued throughout the year at various Board of County Commission Planning Sessions and regular Board meetings. On behalf of this Department the Mining Coordinator, with assistance from the staff, has served as guest speaker to various local civic organizations and other groups.



Routine Water Sampling

- The Mining Department reviewed Phase A of the Draft Site Comparative Analysis for the University of South Florida—Lakeland Campus Master Plan.
- We have received the pre-application from Cargill Crop Nutrition. They will be seeking a DRI for 12,000 acres located in northern Hardee County.
- The Mining Department staff has obtained certification from Mining Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and dam inspection certification.

- Completion of a “New” Draft Mining Ordinance which required a review of the past Ordinances, Land Development Regulations, and Development Orders.
- Completion of the Draft IMC Ona Mine Staff Report.

In conclusion, the Mining Department met all of the goals and objectives established for 2003 in which they had control over.

The Mining Department appreciates the Board of County Commissioners for their persistence and attention towards the adoption of Bill 18-E which increased the Mining Severance Tax from \$1.32 to \$1.62 per ton of phosphate rock severed from Hardee, Hillsborough, Manatee, Polk and Hamilton counties.

Goals and Objectives

The Mining Department continues to have five goals:

Goal 1: Monitoring the effects on the environment caused by mining.

Objective 1. The Department will obtain water sampling certification.

Objective 2. The Department will conduct water sampling in areas that are affected by the phosphate industry.

Objective 3. The Department will continue to conduct dam inspections of all Clay Waste Disposal Areas within the County.

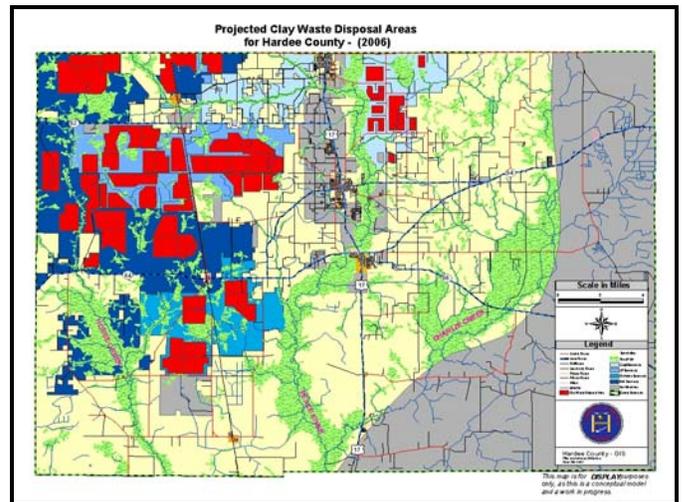
Goal 2 : The Mining Department will ensure the timely reporting of the results of monitoring and mining.

Projected Clay Disposal Areas for 2006

- Adjacent map will show the projected clay waste disposal areas for the year 2006.
- This is based on information received by County Staff from CF Industries, Inc. and Cargill Fertilizer, Inc. (this is not to imply their proposed locations of clay waste disposal). County Staff projected the size and placement based on current industry practices.
- Total Acreage (30,250) in Clay Disposal.

3/14/2004

7



Objective 1. The Department will continue to oversee that accurate and useful monitoring is conducted by the industry.

Objective 2. The Department will continue to coordinate with regulatory agencies concerning monitoring results and inspection reports..

Goal 3: Mining Department staff will recommend revisions to existing mining plans as necessary to ensure the phosphate industry uses the “best management practices” and developing technology for the control of pollution and other adverse impacts of such activities.

Objective 1. The Department will continue to research and investigate developing technology of alternatives for mining and reclamation compared to the existing practices.

Objective 2. The Department will continue to review the phosphate companies mining units and determine that they are contributory to economic diversity.

Goal 4: Ensure reclamation of the affected areas contributes to the development of economic diversity.

Objective 1. The Department, in coordination with the GIS Department, will begin mapping the status of reclamation for each mining company.

Objective 2. The Department will coordinate with the individual mining companies to ensure that the County has accurate and current Master Mining Plans.

Objective 3. Continue to coordinate with each company and all regulatory agencies prior to initiation of reclamation and during the creation of each reclamation area.

Objective 4. Inspect all released reclamation units and ensure that an 80% survival rate has been maintained.

Objective 5. The Department will ensure that the proper procedures are followed for the release of reclaimed lands.

Goal 5: Ensure that it is in the public interest of the citizens of Hardee County to allow specific mining activity.

Goal 5 continued:

Objective 1. Utilize the Land Suitability Index to assist in determining the value and contribution of post mining soils to the economy and future growth of Hardee County and to further assist in determining the lasting effects on soils and future uses thereof as a result of mining and reclamation.

Objective 2. The Department will continue to assess whether the current Mining Ordinance, Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan is being adhered to.

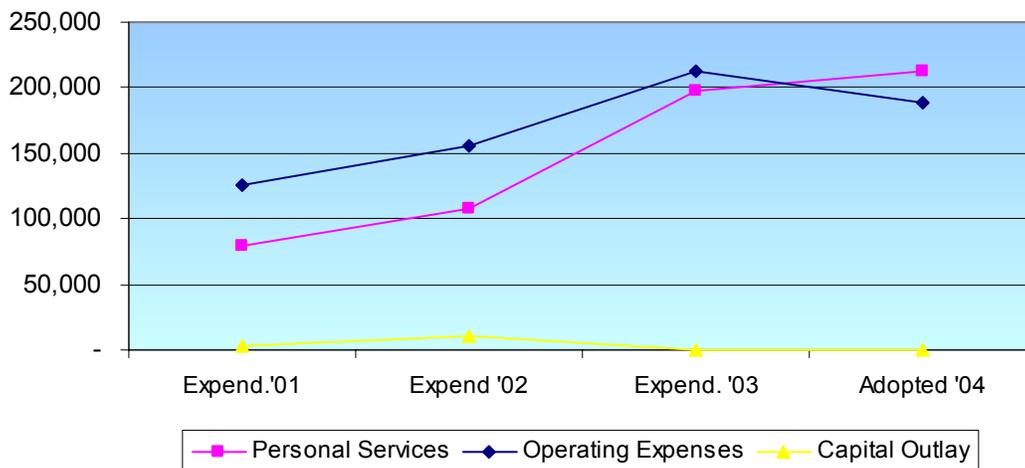
Objective 3. Assist in the adoption of a “New” Mining Ordinance.

Objective 4. The Department will continue to educate the citizens of Hardee County.

Objective 5. The Department will assist the Director of Planning and Development in any necessary changes to the Draft Staff Report for the IMC Ona Mine.

Objective 6. The Department will assist in surveying of the Cargill South Fort Meade Mine and participate in the pre-application process.

Mining



* Expenses of the Mining Department are funded through Mining Fees paid by phosphate companies

Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	79,335	107,905	197,486	213,269
Operating	126,338	156,127	212,037	188,530
Capital	2,717	10,227	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 208,391	\$ 274,259	\$ 409,523	\$ 401,799

VETERANS SERVICE

Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs of Hardee County is to inform the Veterans and/or their dependents of benefits to which they are entitled, and to assist them in obtaining those benefits by filing claims and supporting documents that will justify their claims; to file for the above without regard to race, gender, nationality or religious preference, preparing an honest claim, presented in the best terms and maintaining the client's confidentiality; to maintain the highest standards of honesty, integrity, impartial conduct and judgment; to work with Veterans organizations within Hardee County, with the State of Florida, with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and with other agencies and entities as necessary to assist the Veteran or dependent.

Activities and Accomplishments

For the FY 02-03, the office of Veteran's Service provided the following:

- service to 380 Veterans and/or dependents
- preparation 2,063 documents pertaining to claims and/or supporting documents justifying claims
- telephone calls in and out totaled 2,280
- attended four meetings with Congressional Caseworkers at Bay Pines Veterans Medical Center
- attended County Veterans Service Officer Spring and Fall Training Conferences
- attended ten American Legion meetings

There were 2,080 Veterans and/or Veterans dependents receiving total VA expenditures of \$2,164,828.00 for this Fiscal Year in Hardee County. The total number of military retirees in Hardee County is 113 receiving gross pay of \$1,640,160.00.



Since the inception of the Veterans Office, the total number of Veterans that have received service thru this office is 4,559. Currently this office has 340 active files. The number of new Veterans/dependents added to the files since October 1, 2002 totals 57.

The following benefits are available to Veterans:

- Compensation benefits - monthly payments to veterans and to dependents of deceased service persons or to veterans whose medical conditions were incurred in or aggravated by active service in the line of duty. Medical evidence is required to determine the need for increased compensation.
- Pension benefits - pensions are available to wartime veterans who are disabled due to non-service-connected disabilities. Pensions are also available to widows and children of wartime veterans whose death were not related to their military service.
- Disabled Veterans benefits - some disabled veterans are entitled to State of Florida identification cards, exemption from real estate taxation, special hunting and fishing licenses, driver's licenses without fees, handicapped parking and toll permits,

occupational licenses and tax exemptions. Funding for specially adapted housing and motor vehicles is available.



- Medical benefits - qualified veterans may be treated in Veterans Administration hospitals for both service-connected and non-service-connected illnesses. Nursing home care is available to eligible veterans in VA nursing homes, state nursing homes, and private nursing homes under contract with the VA.
- Burial benefits - an eligible veteran is entitled to interment in a National Cemetery and an American flag. Also available to those qualified is the burial allowance of \$450 to \$1,500 and a headstone.
- Educational benefits - benefits for attendance at colleges, universities, and vocational schools may be available. Vocational rehabilitation is available to qualified disabled veterans. Scholarships and assistance are available for dependent children of a veteran or service person who dies or became 100% disable from a disease or disability resulting from service during a period of war or in connection with the Iranian rescue mission, service in Lebanon or Granada, the crash in Gander, Newfoundland, while returning from Mideast peace-keeping duties in the Sinai Desert, the Iraqi missile attack on USS Stare, Operation Just Cause, Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Dependent children of a service person classified as a POW or MIA during the Korean conflict or Vietnam era who has not returned alive or whose remains have not been recovered may also qualify.
- Employment benefits - employment assistance is provided by the Office of Veterans Service in cooperation with

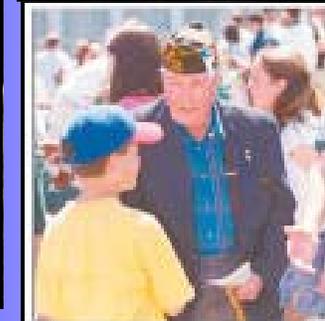
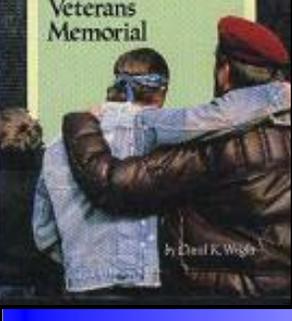
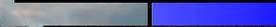
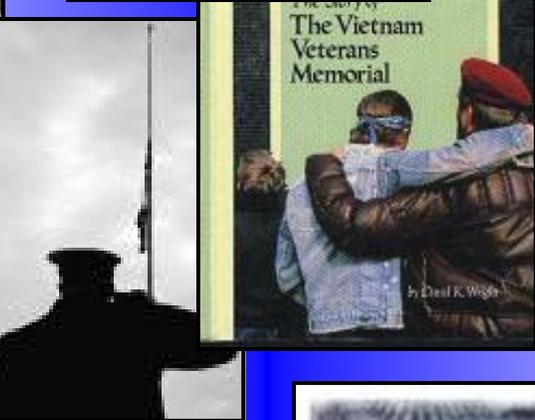
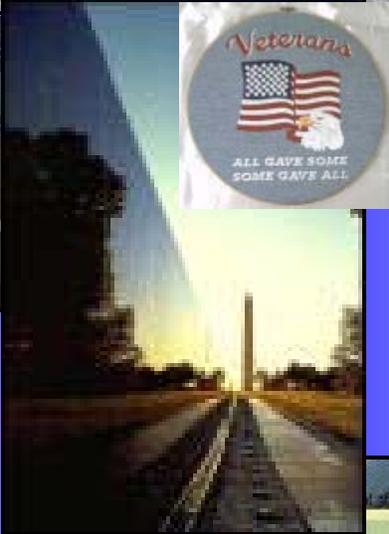
the Florida Job Service. Veterans are given job preference when applying for City, County, State, and Federal jobs. Unemployment compensation is available to some veterans who have been recently released or discharged from the Armed Forces.

- Real estate benefits - home loan guaranties are available to eligible veterans and the widows of some veterans. For veterans wishing to pursue careers in agriculture, farm loans are available.
- Shelter for homeless veterans - homeless veterans and their families are provided shelter, food, and assistance in stabilizing their lives and reentering the mainstream of society.
- Motor vehicle tag benefits - special Florida motor vehicle tags are available to veterans who are 100% disable, Medal of Honor recipients, Survivors of Pearl Harbor, and ex-POW's.

NO VETERAN RECEIVES BENEFITS AUTOMATICALLY. YOU MUST APPLY FOR ALL BENEFITS.

The Veterans Service Office is also responsible for bimonthly distribution of commodities. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) has a contract with Hardee County to distribute commodities. The annual contract term is from October 1 through September 30 each fiscal year.

As the administering agency for TEFAP, this office is responsible for ordering, allocating and ensuring accountability for all TEFAP commodities. We also handle reimbursement request for expenses, where applicable.



A household may receive USDA donated commodities under the TEFAP if they are eligible for one of the following programs:

1. Food Stamps: Proof of eligibility is a Notice of Decision. The household may be certified only for the period specified in the notice.

2. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC): Proof of eligibility is a Notice of Decision or a copy of the AFDC check. The client may be certified for a maximum of one year.

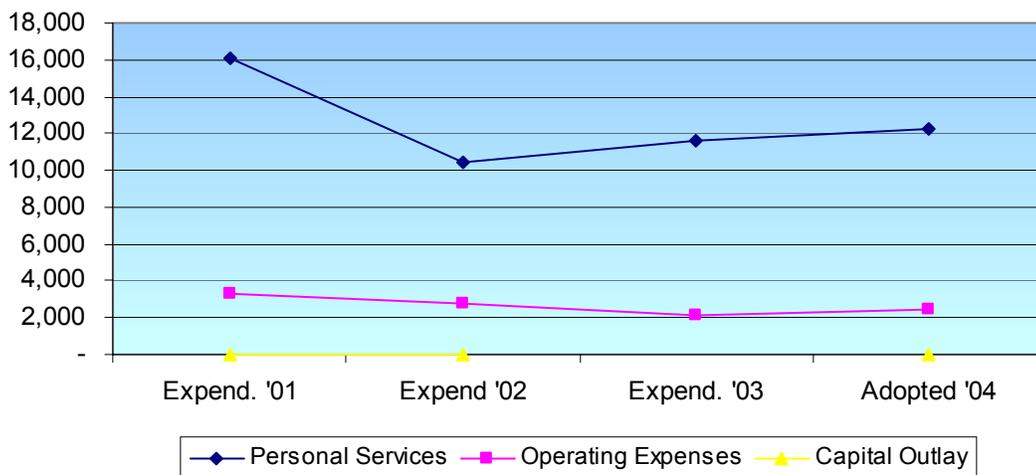
3. Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Proof of eligibility is a Notice of Decision for Medicaid Eligibility or a copy of the SSI check. The client may be certified for a maximum of one year.

4. Residence in Public Housing funded by Municipal, County or State Government: Proof of eligibility is a housing project ID card or the address listed on a Florida driver's license/ID, rent receipt or other appropriate documentation of residence. A client may be certified for the period of time listed on the approval for public housing or up to one year.

Goals and Objectives

The continuing goal of the Veterans Service office is to provide caring, knowledgeable and professional service to the Veterans and residents of Hardee County.

Veterans



Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	16,053	10,424	11,585	12,206
Operating	3,252	2,787	2,103	2,450
Capital	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 19,305	\$ 13,211	\$ 13,687	\$ 14,656

HARDEE COUNTY EXTENSION

The Cooperative Extension Service is a three way partnership of Federal (USDA) State (University of Florida) and County (Hardee BOCC) government created by the Smith-Lever Act. This partnership was established in order to insure that useful



knowledge generated by research units be interpreted for and delivered to the people of Hardee County. The primary extension programs are in agriculture, (beef cattle, dairy cattle, citrus, horticulture and vegetables) 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences and energy information. This budget includes the agriculture agent, family and consumer sciences/4-H agent, Para-professional extension program assistant and one full time administrative secretary. The citrus and dairy programs are carried out by multi-county agents who are not funded by the county. In addition to this staff, the local extension office has a grant paid Food and Nutrition program assistant.

Mission Statement

The Hardee County Cooperative Extension Service provides research based educational information and services in the areas of agriculture, family and consumer sciences and 4-H youth without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicapping conditions or national origin.

Activities and Accomplishments

Over 180 Extension programs were conducted by the extension personnel in our facility.

These programs include:

- Basic Goat Management
- Artificial Insemination of Beef Cattle
- Reproductive Management School
- Beef Cattle Herd Health
- Winter Supplementation Program
- Herd Bull Selection
- Hay, Forage and Grazing Options
- Water Quality BMP's for Cow-calf producers
- Mole Cricket Control Field Day
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention (weekly class)
- Financial Planning-Budget Box (monthly classes)
- Family and Consumer Sciences Council (monthly)
- Family Nutrition Program
- 4-H Leader Training (monthly)
- 4-H Youth County Council (monthly)
- 4-H Club Meetings (8 clubs meeting monthly)
- Annual 4-H Workshop and Demonstration Event
- 4-H Shooting Sports
- 4-H Sport Fishing Program



2003 Hardee Leadership School Participants

The multi-county citrus agent has conducted education programs in the following areas:

- Citrus Production School
- Pesticide License Review (6 per year)
- Worker Protection Standards Training (3)
- Pesticide Safety for Ag Workers
- Equipment Safety Training (2)
- Pesticide Handler Safety Training
- Sprayer Program & Demonstration
- Tractor Driver Safety
- WPS – Train the Trainer

The multi-county dairy agent has conducted programs in the following areas:

- Dairy Herd Business Analysis
- Dairy Quiz Bowl Training

Highlights from 2003

The County Extension Service conducted the 4th Annual Hardee County Leadership School with 25 participants. It is anticipated that this school will be continued with enrollment limited to 25 persons per session.

The County Extension Director is involved with projects involving goat research, mole cricket research and herbicide trials.

The 4-H Program continues to grow with a total enrollment of 280 youth and 103 adult volunteers working directly with its members. Six members of the Shooting Sports club received honors at the State Invitational Contest and qualified to compete in the National 4-H Invitational Contest held in Raton, New Mexico in July. Two senior delegates to the District Council were elected to the offices of President and Chaplain. 4-H staff and Family and Community Education volunteers worked together to conduct a six week, 12 session Summer Day Camp for local youth 6-18 years of age. There were 26 youth and 8 adult volunteers involved this first year.



4-H'ers participate in Community Service Projects

The Family Nutrition Program reached 4,616 children, youth and adults with the message of good nutrition during 2003.



Extension Agent Carolyn Wyatt instructs seniors in good nutrition practices

Goals and Objectives

- Continue to expand the Hardee Leadership School teaching leadership concepts to 25 county residents per session.
- To provide nutrition education programs to individuals and families from pre-school to adults in Hardee County.
- Teach 7th and 8th grade at-risk girls about Teen Pregnancy Prevention through a weekly after-school program.

- Develop a Hardee County Youth Leadership School.
- Provide training and assistance for two adult volunteers starting a new Sport Fishing club for 4-H members.
- Continue to work with volunteers developing a Dog Obedience Program for 4-H'ers.

- Phone calls in excess of 3500 requesting specific information.

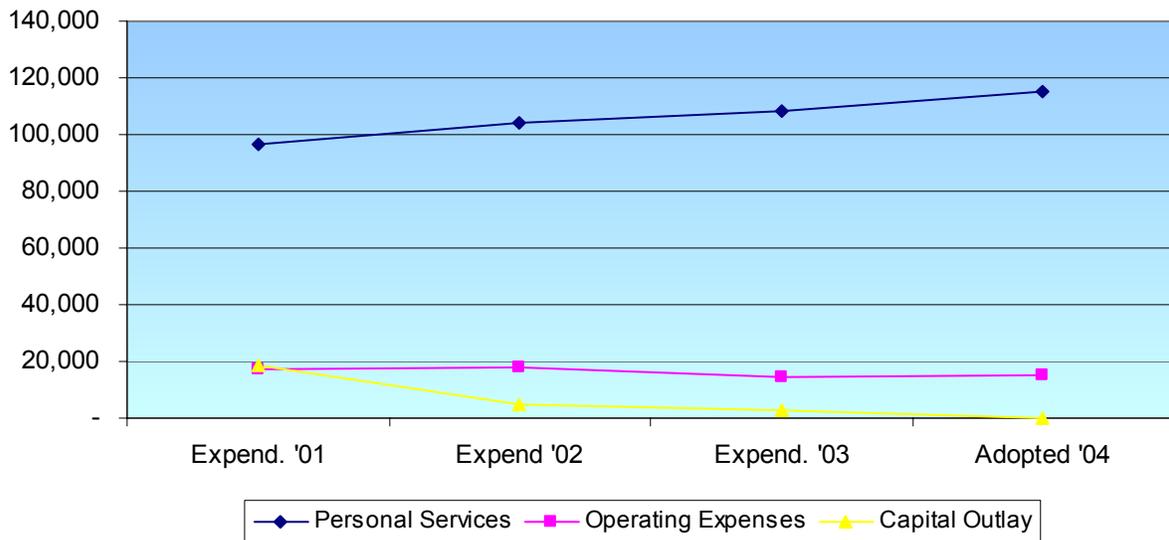
- Walk-in clientele 680

Publications distributed 3250 On-site visits by agents and staff totaled 355. The Extension office staff produces monthly newsletters in the areas of Agriculture/Beef, Citrus and Family and Consumer Sciences with a monthly circulation of 1240, and a 4-H Newsletter produced on an as needed basis with a circulation of 350.

Summary

The Extension staff and faculty continue to provide a high level of service in all areas of programming offered by IFAS and the University of Florida. In the past year:

County Extension



Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	96,751	104,042	108,012	115,130
Operating	17,352	18,141	14,289	15,300
Capital	18,878	4,579	2,513	-
TOTAL	\$ 132,981	\$ 126,762	\$ 124,814	\$ 130,430

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology Services Department (ITS) was created in FY 01-02 under the Office of Planning and Development. It includes Information Technologies and Geographical Information Systems. The purpose of this Department is to implement, support and maintain the County's computer network and digital systems.



Prior to the creation of the ITS department, each department was individually responsible for its computer systems, internet access, security, and other network systems. This resulted in a plethora of different configurations, procedures, connections, software systems, and also created budgetary inefficiencies and security issues.

The GIS Department performs numerous digital mapping functions including maintaining various map layers, such as: county roads, land parcels, land use, pioneer park, mining, topography, aerial photography, commission districts, voting districts, enterprise zone, and many specialty map layers used for permitting, planning, grants, emergency response, and other purposes. Site data and evaluations for economic development projects are also provided by this Department.

With the creation of the ITS Department,

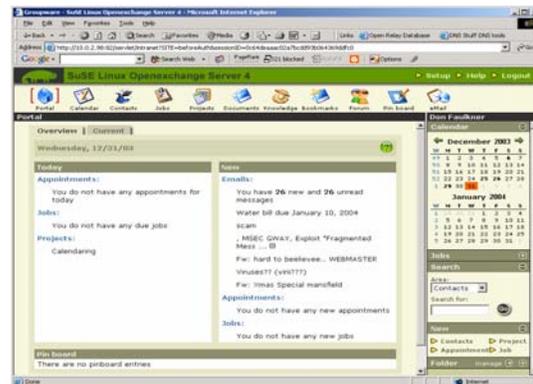
each department was integrated into a single contiguous computer network. Each department benefited from this consolidation through:

- Utilization of a high-speed internet connection;
- Establishment of a centralized email system;
- Implementation of a wireless LAN (network) connecting the computer networks of remote departments;
- Increased security and email anti-virus and spam protection;
- Standardization of equipment;
- Reduced management and maintenance;
- Greatly reduced overall costs of providing technologies, as compared to services provided.

The ITS Department is also responsible for repair or replacement of defective equipment, troubleshooting hardware/software problems, technologies purchase consulting, and security issues.

Mission Statement

The mission of the ITS Department is to support, maintain, and enhance network infrastructure and informa-



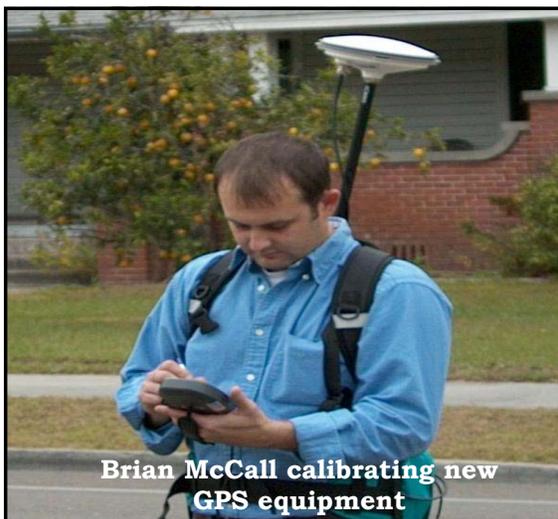
tion services to all county departments, and to provide security and security policies to protect the network and data.

Activities and Accomplishments

In FY 02-03 the ITS Department replaced numerous failing, or outdated computer systems with new systems. The County's aging email system was also replaced with a new server running SUSE Open Exchange Email Server Software with advanced calendaring and web-based email system. The calendaring software is planned to be ready early in 2004.

A major project of the ITS Department in 2003 was assisting in courthouse renovation and other office moves. This involved the relocation amounts of computer equipment to and from the Clerk of Courts (Courthouse), and County Probation offices, County Manager's office, Office of Management and Budget, and Office of Community Development. Maintenance of the Courthouse Camera Security server also was added to the ITS responsibilities.

In



fiscal year 2002-2003 the GIS Department received new digital parcel map data from the Property Appraiser's office. The Department also developed updated road centerlines, enterprise zones, city and county boundaries, zoning, and other digital land resource information. The GIS

Department purchased Sokkia High-Precision GPS (Global Positioning System) equipment, completed training, and is now in the process of using this equipment to improve the accuracy of existing maps, and creating new map data and digital management systems including drainage inventory (culverts, bridges, etc), fire hydrants, communications towers, landmarks, and other infrastructure. GIS project support has been provided to Emergency Management, Economic Development, Engineering, and other County departments. The GIS Depart-



ment provided considerable support to the Mining Department on numerous phosphate mining related issues. GIS also assisted the Hardee County Sheriff's department by supplying detailed area maps. A County Map Book Atlas was created for planned release in 2004.

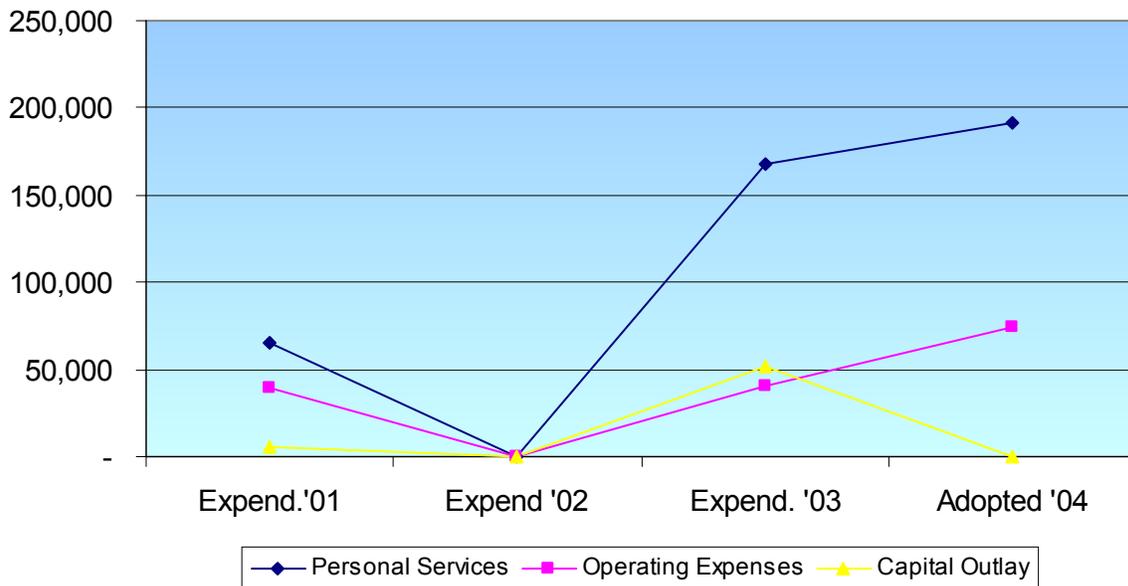


LIVE PICTURE OF THE BOARD ROOM

Goals and Objectives

In 2004 Pioneer Park, and possibly the Zolfo Fire Department Annex, will be added to the County's wireless network, providing Internet, email, and multimedia to those departments. Installation of security cameras in the Public Works building and the Animal Refuge at Pioneer Park is also being planned. Most exciting is the Internet-based "Land Resource Data System" which includes interactive, on-line mapping, information searches, and land use analysis. This resource will provide "cutting-edge" business and economic development research resources via the Internet.

Information Technology Systems



Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	65,049	-	167,437	191,085
Operating	39,947	-	40,878	74,492
Capital	6,168	-	52,231	-
TOTAL	\$ 111,164	\$ -	\$ 260,545	\$ 265,577

01/02—Expenditures were captured with Building & Zoning

NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION SERVICE

The Hardee Soil and Water Conservation District, was voted in by Hardee County as authorized by Chapter 617.05, Florida statutes. The Service was organized in 1946 as a Governmental subdivision of the State of Florida, to allow local Districts to develop and carry out a program of conservation for Florida's soil and water resources. The District along with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides assistance to government and private landowners on environmental subjects such as wetlands, endangered and threatened species, nutrient and pest management, soils, and technical help in managing the natural sources.

Hardee Soil and Water Conservation District (Hardee SWCD) has an arrangement with the Hardee County School Board whereby the County makes a donation of \$2500 to the School which in turn provides a student who works in conjunction with their school duties.

A close working relationship exists between the district and the United States Department of agriculture natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Mission Statement

The mission of the National Resources Conservation Service is to provide local leadership, administrative programs to help citizens conserve, and improve and sustain our natural resources and environment.

Activities and Accomplishments

In the past year the Hardee SWCD acted as a sales agency for Hardee County Plat Books and survey flags, with the proceeds



used to provide educational programs for students of the county. The department participated in the Tri-County Land Judging Contest with Charlotte and DeSoto counties, held in DeSoto County, with FFA and 4-H teams represented in the contest. NRCS also assisted the 4-H and FFA County Envirothon for Hardee County, and provided assistance to the Regional Contest.

We assisted approximately 280 customers, with 5,000 acres planned to resource management system, 790 acres planned to cultivated cropland, 3,000 acres applied to resource management system, and 2300 acres applied to grazing land.

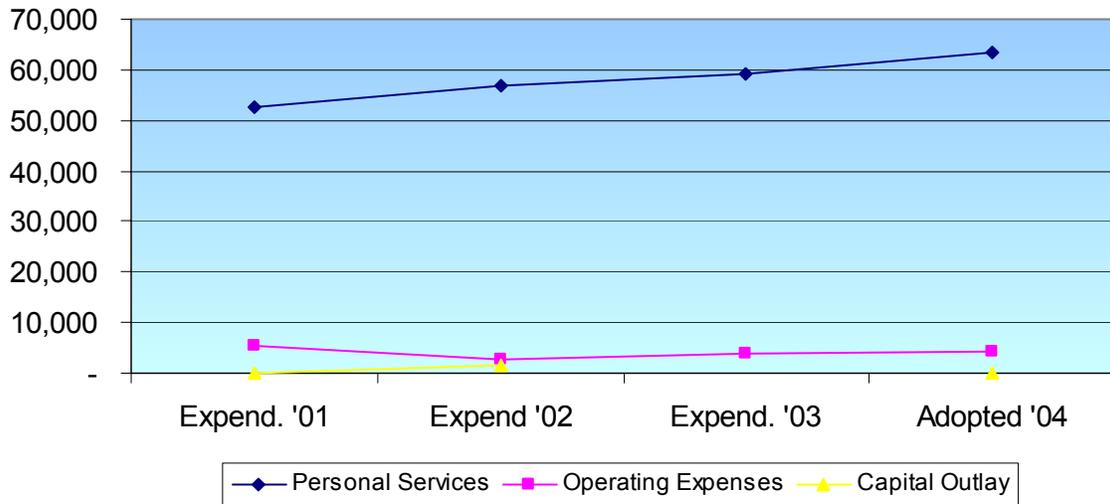
Other conservation treatments were irrigation management 6,523 acres, nutrient management 6,000 acres, prescribed grazing 3,300 acres, wildlife habitat management 2,200 acres, field borders 559 acres, and 2,249 acres of pest management systems.

Financial assistance provided to local farmers for conservation treatment by the USDA was \$201,070.

The Hardee SWCD and NRCS will continue to serve the landowners, government, and educational bodies of Hardee County with any natural resource problems that come about.



Soil Conservation



Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	52,650	56,660	59,185	63,365
Operating	5,375	2,837	3,842	4,175
Capital	-	1,553	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 58,026	\$ 61,050	\$ 63,027	\$ 67,540

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

The Purchasing Department was originally serving only the Road & Bridge, Parks & Recreation, and Buildings & Grounds departments with three full time employees. In the early 1980's the County went to Centralized Purchasing, serving all the departments under the Board of County Commissioners. At present time we serve approximately 33 departments. We currently have four full time employees: Purchasing Director, Buyer, Purchasing Specialist and Stores Manager, plus one employee on loan to us from Transportation Trust. We have over fifty years of combined experience in our purchasing department.

Mission Statement

The primary role of the Purchasing Department is to serve all departments under the Board of County Commissioners to ensure that proper purchasing procedures are followed according to County and State laws.

Activities and Accomplishments

Our purchasing staff is responsible for obtaining the best and most competitive price with public funds for purchasing supplies, equipment, materials and services. We must deal fairly and consistently while developing a working relationship with all vendors, suppliers, and contractors and to maintain a current vendor file deleting those vendors who do not respond or deliver as requested. To maintain our present inventory in the stockroom of over 3000 items with a value of \$285,544.36 and to improve on it as needed.

We locate, order, receive and issue goods and services ordered by other



departments as needed. We, also, inform accounting when a purchase order is complete and invoices are ready for payment.

Purchasing maintains a current list of all buildings and properties owned by Hardee County. We purchase and track capital improvements for the Board of County Commissioners. This includes issuing 26 Invitations to Bid and Request for Proposals, overseeing pre-bid meetings, bid openings, tabulations, issuing purchase orders and all pertinent paper work. This is in addition to the day-to-day purchases for the different departments.

In FY 02/03, the Board approved an a new purchasing manual that this department completed and published to serve as a source of instruction to all County divisions, departments and employees regarding the Purchasing policies and procedures of Hardee County.

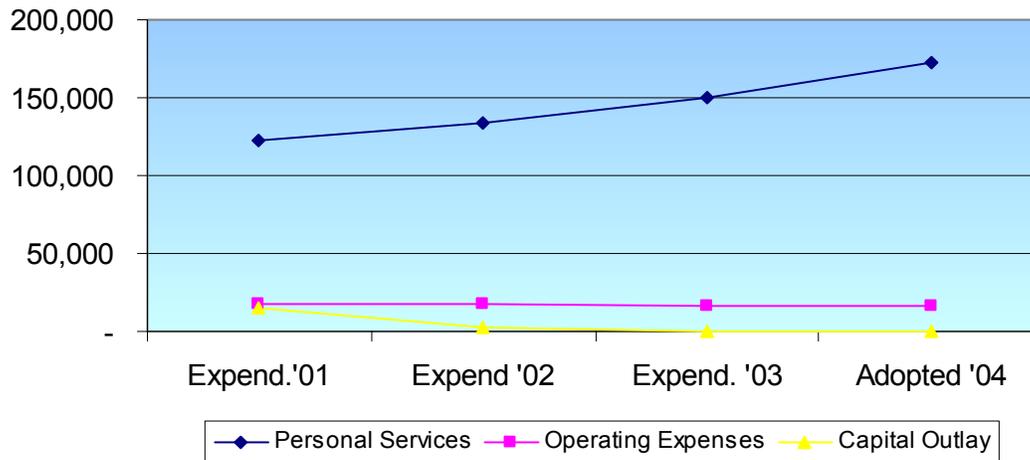
Also, the Purchasing Card program is up and running. Built-in features make the program easy to control and reduces processing costs at all levels by minimizing the number of procurement related invoices and checks. This program will provide a cost-efficient method for purchasing small dollar goods.

Goals and Objectives

In FY 03/04 we will be monitoring the overall performance of our Procurement Card Program, adding other departments and reports. We are also working the fixed assets into the American Data system. We will continue to be as efficient and knowledgeable as possible for the benefit of Hardee County.

<u>FIXED ASSETS PURCHASED UNDER BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FY 02/03:</u>	
BOOKS	\$ 27,791.20
LAND/BLDGS	\$2,651,341.85
ROAD & BRIDGE	\$1,025,105.68
EQUIPMENT	\$1,231,456.84
DISPOSALS	<u>\$ -210,303.18</u>
TOTAL	\$4,725,392.39

Purchasing



Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	122,085	133,626	150,075	172,710
Operating	17,078	17,359	15,691	16,825
Capital	14,690	2,517	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 153,852	\$ 153,502	\$ 165,766	\$ 189,535

LIBRARY

The Hardee County Public Library was created by the adoption of resolution 84-21 in September 1984 to be governed by the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners. The county signed an inter-local agreement to join the Heartland Library Cooperative on October 1, 1997. The State Library entered into a Grant Agreement with the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners on September 8, 1998 to expand the Library from 5,800 square feet to 13,200 square feet. Expansion was completed January 2000. The State Library of Florida awards State Aid to Libraries funding to Hardee County, including operating grants and equalization grants to supplement local funds, based on the level of effort expended by Hardee County.

Mission Statement

The mission of the library is to provide quality customer service to the public; including providing increased access to information, collection development and resource sharing.

Activities and Accomplishments

Children's programming remains a priority of library staff. Weekly story hours are held for preschoolers. Programs are available for home-school youngsters and elementary school classes in the library.



The summer Florida Library Youth Program provides a unique approach to reading and library activities.

The State Library Born-to-Read Grant, designed for teaching the importance of reading to infants and young children, was offered again this year. We provided guest speakers and programs to



benefit and educate new parents about library resources and the advantages of reading to their children. With Pioneer Medical Center as our health partner, the program is providing health education to teen parenting classes at the high school.

The library continues to offer basic and advanced classes in the use of computers with a portable lab consisting of twelve laptop computers in the Meeting Room.

The library automation system allows



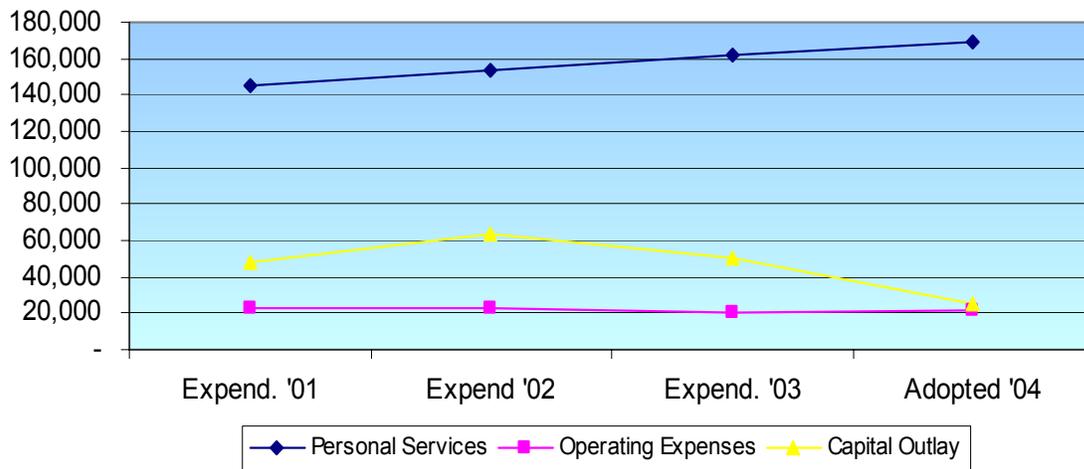
patrons access to the library from home to review their accounts, reserve and renew materials through the web site www.heartlineweb.org.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Library is to continue to provide quality service to county residents and to maintain the integrity of the current collection with current and relevant material.



Library

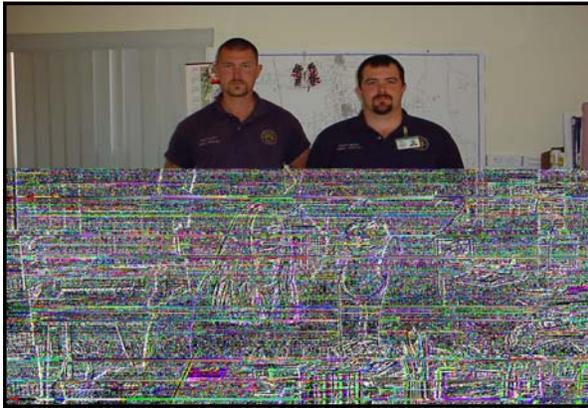


Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	145,686	153,074	162,075	169,252
Operating	22,418	22,267	20,771	21,569
Capital	48,115	63,645	50,556	24,895
TOTAL	\$ 216,219	\$ 238,986	\$ 233,402	\$ 215,716

ANIMAL SERVICES

Mission Statement

The mission of the Animal Services Department is to provide Hardee County with the humane capture and impoundment of unwanted or nuisance domestic dogs and cats through the legal procedures listed in both State and Local laws and to educate the public in regards to the overpopulation of unwanted domestic dogs and cats, promote adoption of unwanted dogs and cats and to enforce county ordinances and state statues pertaining to the proper rearing of domestic dogs and cats.



Hardee County Department of Animal Services was formed in 1995 by the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners to provide the services of the humane capture, impoundment and, if necessary, euthanasia of unwanted or stray domestic cats and dogs.

This department consists of two Animal Control Officers, one Administrative Secretary and a Director that is shared with the Solid Waste Department. The Officers split their time between operating the kennel on an every day basis and the field service work for the entire unincorporated county.

Strict state and local policies and laws must be followed in this process. Major components consist of educating the public of policies and regulations, investigative work for neglected and dangerous dogs and cats, dog and cat bites or attacks, strict record keeping procedures, the humane capture and impoundment and care of animals, adoption promotions, chemical capture, and euthanasia procedures. This department has begun to explore their potential involvement in Disaster Animal Relief Training, as well. It is also extremely vital that this department maintain excellent public relations and good working relationships with local veterinarians, local Health Department and hospital, local Police Department, Sheriff's Department and Zoning Department. In addition, we have strived to establish and maintain a relationship with large county facilities that provide the benefits of experienced guidance and advice, support and training and donations of excessive food for our kennel.

Activities and Accomplishments

Animal Services answered 1,354 complaints resulting in the impoundment of 1,580 animals: (including 872 dogs, 697 cats and 11 chickens). There were a total of 157 adoptions, 1,284 euthanized, 78 redeemed to their owners and 70 died in the kennel or escaped.

The total amount of revenue generated from this department was \$10,043.79: (including \$5,973 in adoption fees, \$2,280 in kennel fees and \$652 in donations and \$1,138.79 in reimbursement for supplies used by the City of Wauchula). Capital cost included the purchase of a new pick-up truck and dog box at a cost of \$30,770.



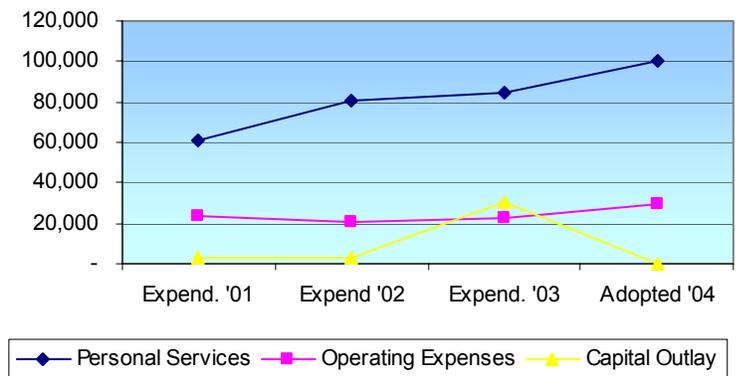
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Animal Services will work toward building resources, and relationships with other local, state and national agencies. In addition, we will continue to strengthen public relations through an improved educational program. We hope to establish a volunteer program to assist with promotion of adoptions. This will include volunteers from the high school who will be responsible for working with specific animals to improve social skills, grooming and photographing the animals and posting them on promotional web sites, in newspapers, at schools, and at participating commercial vendors to promote their adoption. In return the students will receive community volunteer credits toward their Bright Futures Scholarships.

As always we will continue to improve our standards in professionalism, kennel procedures, adoption promotions and public education and awareness.



Animal Control



Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	60,642	80,282	84,543	100,815
Operating	23,929	20,334	23,036	29,550
Capital	2,497	3,410	30,770	-
TOTAL	\$ 87,068	\$ 104,026	\$ 138,348	\$ 130,365

ENHANCED 9-1-1

Fully enhanced 9-1-1 systems provided by the local regulated telephone companies provide three features, which have proven to be of great value in reducing response time for emergency calls.

A. Selective Routing: Selective Routing has been purposely listed first because it is considered to be the most important feature of a fully enhanced system. Calls are routed directly to a 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Each telephone main station in the county is electronically tagged with an Emergency Service Number (ESN). Each ESN defines for that particular main station the following:

1. The responsible law enforcement agency.
2. The responsible fire department.
3. The responsible EMS rescue agency.

No matter how complicated the configuration of a county, the ESN's generally enable the selective routing computer to direct a call to the right place.

B. Automatic Number Identification (ANI): The ANI signal is received with the call and the caller's telephone number is displayed immediately.

C. Automatic Location Identification (ALI): ALI supplies the PSAP with the following:

1. Telephone Subscribers name
2. Telephone Subscribers address; other location information
3. Law Enforcement Agency
4. Fire Department
5. EMS Rescue Agency



Activities And Accomplishments:

The Enhanced 9-1-1 Coordinator maintains the addressing database and the county is the addressing authority for all addresses within Hardee County. All 911 calls received by the PSAP are reviewed for any record not found (RNF). This last fiscal year we are proud to report that not one RNF was received.

Statistics - Fiscal Year 2003

1. Assigned 297 new addresses.
2. Prepared 339 documents, memos, notices, or e-mails to various agencies that needed address updates for their files.
3. Phone calls in and out totaled 1799.
4. Attended one quarterly 911 coordinators database meetings.
5. Attended APCO/NENA spring and fall conferences.
6. Average monthly active phone land-lines total 10,070
7. Reviewed 8,996 PSAP 911 calls for address accuracy.

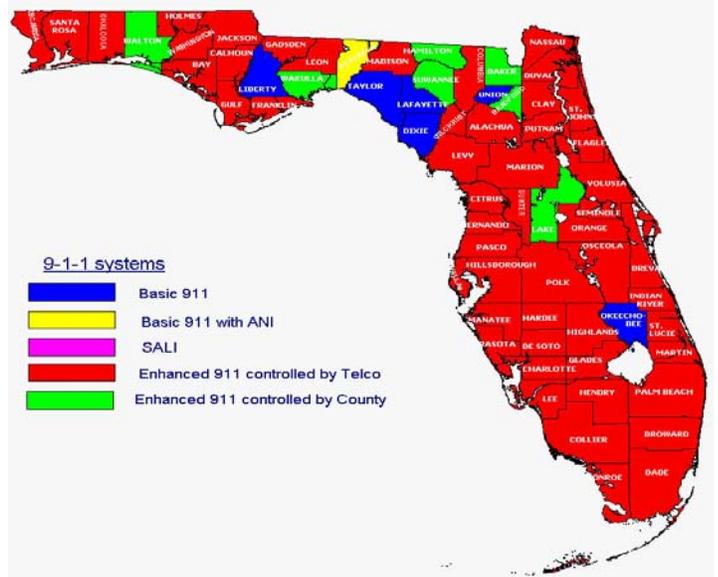
Mission Statement

The mission of the Enhanced 911 and Addressing Department of Hardee

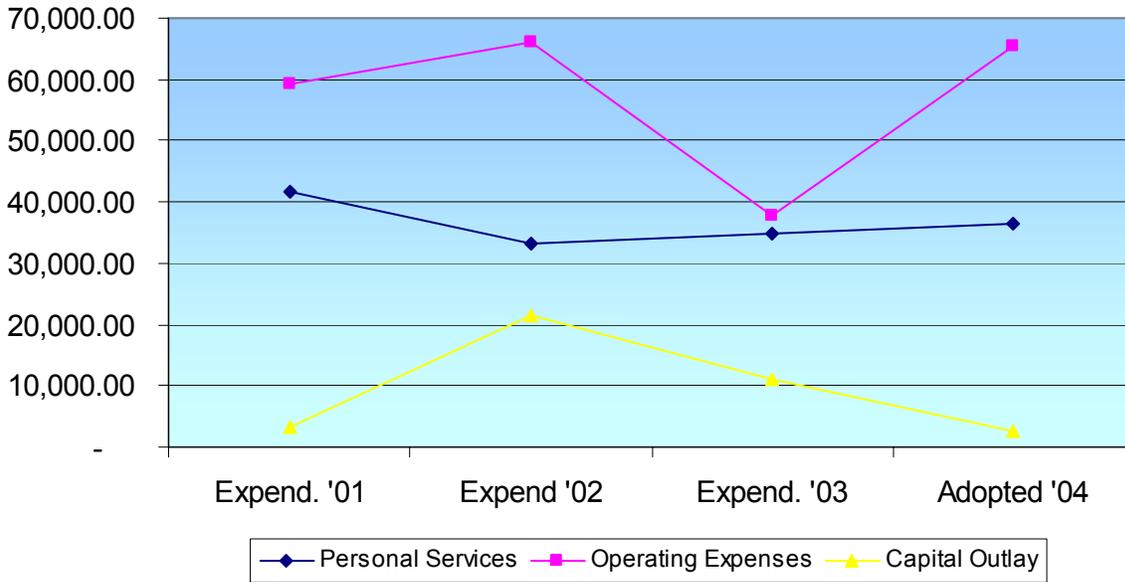
County is to foster the technological advancement, availability and implementation of communications and addressing to help reduce the time it takes a person to reach the appropriate safety agency. In any emergency situation, whether its police, fire, or medical; those seconds count.

Goals And Objectives

In carrying out our mission, the Hardee County Enhanced 911 Department promotes research, planning, training and education. The protection of human life, the preservation of property, and the maintenance of general community security are among these department objectives.



E-911



Expenditure Summary	00/01	00/02	02/03	Adopted '04
Personal Services	41,777	33,174	34,753	36,614
Operating	59,123	66,148	37,689	65,600
Capital	3,325	21,644	11,017	2,686
TOTAL	\$ 104,225	\$ 120,966	\$ 89,377	\$ 140,100

MISCELLANEOUS

Total expenses in the Miscellaneous Budget during fiscal year 2003 were \$796,162 which represents a 26% increase over expenses in 2002. This budget includes expenses related to Auditing, Insurances, Medical Examiner (autopsy and pathology costs), FHREDI, Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Chamber of Commerce, Housing Authority, County Recreational Complex, CHNEP, Housing Authority, EPCA Program, City of Wauchula CRA, Independence Day Celebration, etc. The primary increases in this budget can be attributed to increases in insurance premiums, legislative assistance fees, CRA Distribution and a supplement to the Vandolah Economic Development Fund.

In addition to the routine projects and expenses relating to the Miscellaneous Budget, this year the Board of County Commissioners was successful in securing grant funding in the amount of \$1,600,000 for the development of a wastewater treatment facility in the Wauchula Hills area. Though the expense of construction is not reflected in this budget, legislative assistance fees are. The County currently has a contract with Craig Smith and Associates for assistance in securing grants and legislative appropriations. They were successful in assisting us to procure these funds and pursuant to our contract were compensated for their assistance through this department.

Also, as reported last year, the County contributes to the Housing Authority for administrative expenses on an annual basis. Though this contribution is minimal, the efforts of this Board have resulted in the development of a fifty-two unit Farm Worker Housing Complex. The Housing Authority received funding from USDA Rural Development and Florida Housing Finance Corporation for the construction of the complex. Construction was complete this year and housing units are now occupied.



HUMAN SERVICES

Services in this budget are all under the umbrella of Health and Social Services. Some of the contributions to these organizations enable them to apply for grants which results in a substantial return on the dollar. Some costs are mandated to be paid by the State of Florida, others can be funded depending on the level of service the Commission can provide.

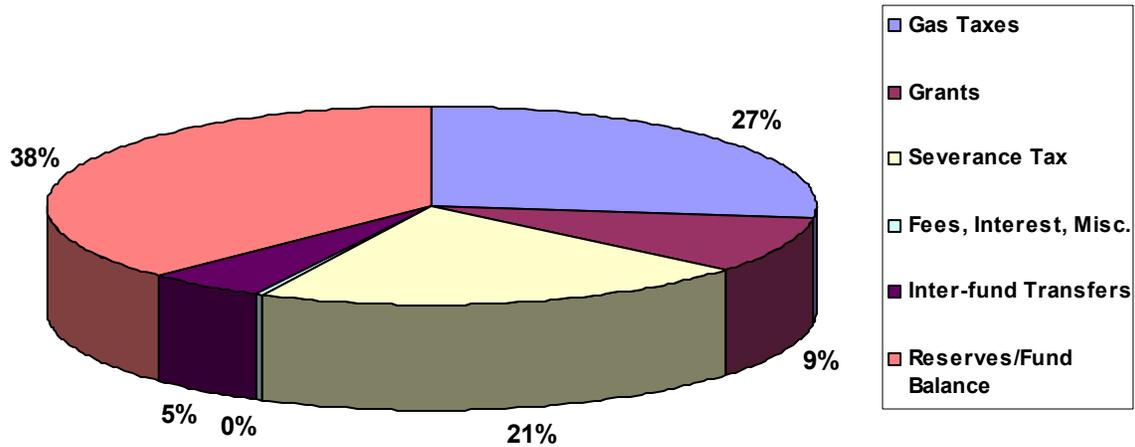
Total expenses in this budget during fiscal year 2003 were \$752,713. Organizations which receive funding under the Human Services budget include: County Public Health Department, Indigent Health Care (HCRA) - mandated by the state to budget \$4 per capita, Medicaid Matching for Nursing Home and Hospital, Peace River Center for Personal Development, HOPE, Resthaven, Florida Hospital, Indigent Burials, Community Services Block Grants for Hope and RCMA, Tri-County Addictions and Transportation for Disadvantaged - Planning and Trips.

The Board has faithfully provided assistance in the area of Human Services and will continue to do so in order to ensure that the needs of our citizens are met.

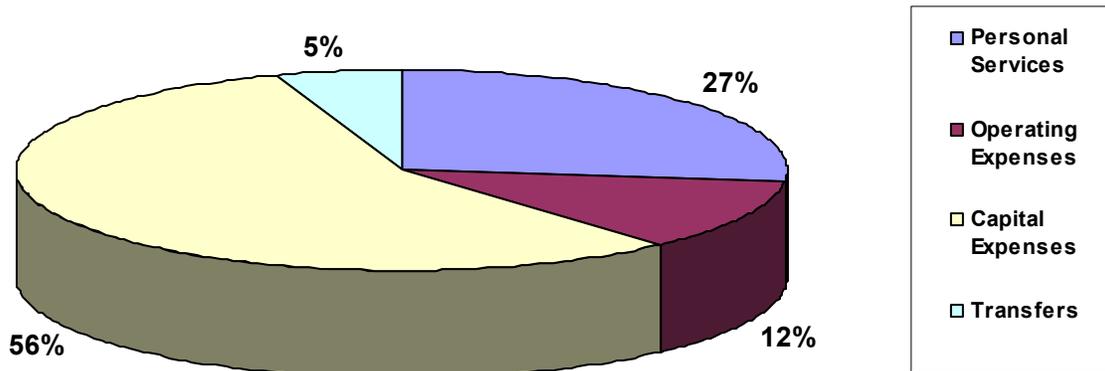




TRANSPORTATION TRUST 2002/2003 REVENUES



TRANSPORTATION 2002/2003 EXPENDITURES



Revenues	
Gas Taxes	1,976,908
Grants	683,526
Severance Tax	1,540,102
Fees, Interest, Misc.	32,742
Inter-fund Transfers	356,441
Reserves/Fund Balance	2,757,120
	\$ 7,346,838.54

Expenditures	
Personal Services	1,933,337
Operating Expenses	842,593
Capital Expenses	4,087,697
Transfers	385,123
	\$ 7,248,750.67

EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

The Equipment Maintenance Department's main purpose is to provide safe, dependable equipment to the operations departments. This equipment is to be maintained at the lowest possible maintenance cost and with the least interference to the operations departments. To date we have 325 units, 79 of which are emergency vehicles.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Maintenance Shop is to ensure that all work activities and programs of the maintenance division are efficiently coordinated with other County work programs and projects.

Activities and Accomplishments

The Maintenance Shop is responsible for all maintenance activities under the Board of County Commissioners and the Sheriff's office. The Maintenance Department consists of nine employees. In addition to routine maintenance activities, we reconstruct, engineer and modify equipment for County use. Maintenance also does itemized billing and provides technical assistances to all departments as requested. All activities are recorded daily into a dossier fleet management system. The system provides point of entry for all service work on vehicles entering or exiting the shop. It also updates scheduled and episodic maintenance computer records.

Staff training this year will consist of Multiplexed Electrical Systems, Hydraulic Troubleshooting and Allison Transmissions.

Goals and Objectives

Our goal is to increase the training and knowledge of our staff so that the highest level of efficiency and technical skill can



be achieved. Our commitment to manage the maintenance facility is by predetermined actions rather than unplanned reactions. Although the county and its departments have grown, we are proud to say that we have not increased our staff number in the past ten years.

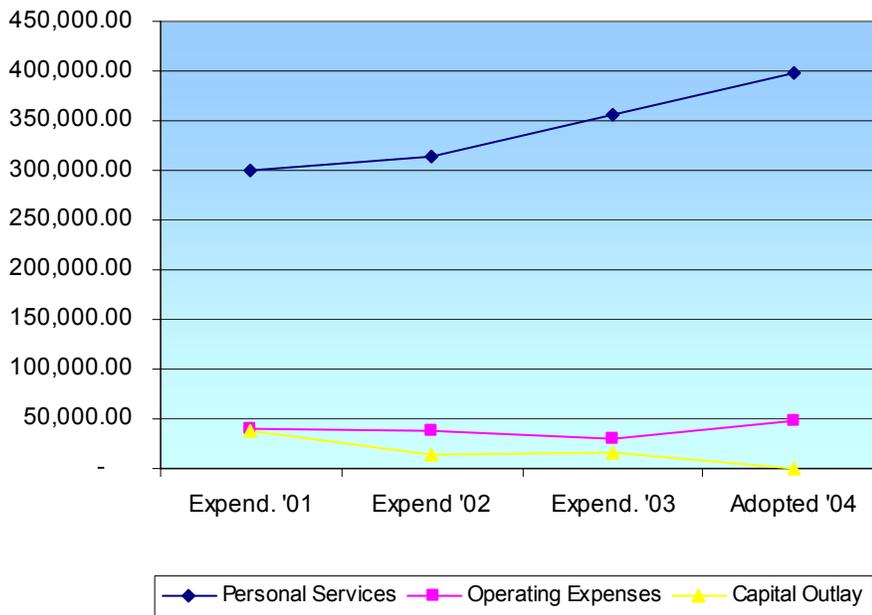
Activity Report For 2003

Total Repair Orders Performed
For 2003 - 2,106

Ambulance Dept	RO 63
Bldg & Grounds	RO 247
Fire Rescue	RO 139
Land Field	RO 192
Law Enforcement	RO 336
Road & Bridge	RO 1,129
Workman's Comp	Zero Claims
Staff Increase	Zero over 10 years



Shop



Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	299,413	314,698	355,291	398,471
Operating	40,083	38,651	30,851	47,420
Capital	38,641	13,357	15,014	-
Transfers				
TOTAL	\$ 378,138	\$ 366,706	\$ 401,156	\$ 445,891

ROAD & BRIDGE DEPARTMENT

The Road & Bridge/Public Works Department is the largest department within the County, responsible for the construction and maintenance of the county system of roads, bridges and streets. Within the county there are 305.90 miles of paved roads and 205.70 miles of unpaved roads. The department handles and issues permits for telephone, culvert, electrical and private utilities, provides sign, ditches and culvert repair/maintenance.

Mission Statement

The Road and Bridge Department serves to maintain the County's transportation system of roads and bridges, provide a



safe system, and protect the investment in that system; to develop and provide high levels of service by planning, scheduling, and controlling work.

Activities and Accomplishments

2002/2003 fiscal year was busy for paving projects. Before a road is paved, it must be evaluated for right-of-way requirements, drainage needs, sight distance, and other design factors. Once these factors have been evaluated and a design for the road is complete, then the necessary environmental permits or permit exemptions must be obtained.



The following is a list of right-of-way, new construction, and resurfacing projects the Road and Bridge Department accomplished:

- Acquired 6.37 total acres of Right-of-Way from Dallas McClellan Road, Ten Mile Grade, Sasser Road and Ralph Johns Road.
- Completed .64 miles of new construction on Sauls Road.
- Base preparation and drainage was completed on Dallas McClellan Road.
- Two of the four bridges on Steve Roberts Special Road were replaced.
- Murphy Road bridge was replaced at a cost of \$308,922.77.
- 29.27 miles of resurfacing completed on the following roads: Fish Branch Road, East Broward Street, CR 664A, Carlton Street, Louisiana Street, Chamberlain Blvd., Dink Albritton Road, Dixiana Drive, Ratliff Road, Ralph Smith Road, Dena Circle, James Cowart Road, Link Street, Libby Drive, Ridge Street, Hill Street
- FDOT SCRAP Program: Lake Branch Road (2.40 mi.) and West Main Street (5.90 mi.).
- Tropical Storm Gabrielle Repairs: 37 sites completed - Cost \$3,250,000.00.
- Crewsville Road: widen and reconstructed 9.47 mi., replaced bridge with culvert headwalls, project 85% complete.
- Site preparation for SR62 Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Goals and Objectives for 2003/2004

Construction should begin on:

- Hardee Lakes Park: roads, parking lot, boat ramp
- Completion of Crewsville Road (9.3 mi.),
- Completion of Steve Roberts Special construction (two bridges and pave approaches)
- Murphy Road improvements
- 9.3 miles from SR64 to Limestone - obtain right-of-way, widen, re-surface, drainage and replace culverts and headwalls.
- Industrial Park: drainage, roads and retention pond
- Sauls Road: construction of full opening US17 and corrective action on road deficiencies (.64 mi.)
- Torrey Road: new construction .84 mi. and June Storm Damage Repairs: \$991,347.71. Fed Share: \$743,510.79, County Share: \$123,918.46, State Share: \$123,918.46. This work includes 31.36 miles of shell, culverts, headwalls and ditch work.

The Road and Bridge Department purchased six pieces of new equipment as follows:

- (1) ea. Gradall on a Lease Purchase
- (1) ea. 15' Batwing Mower
- (1) ea. 1/2 Ton Pick-up Truck
- (1) ea. Wood Chipper
- (2) ea. Bush Hog Mowers
- Total \$347,737.00**



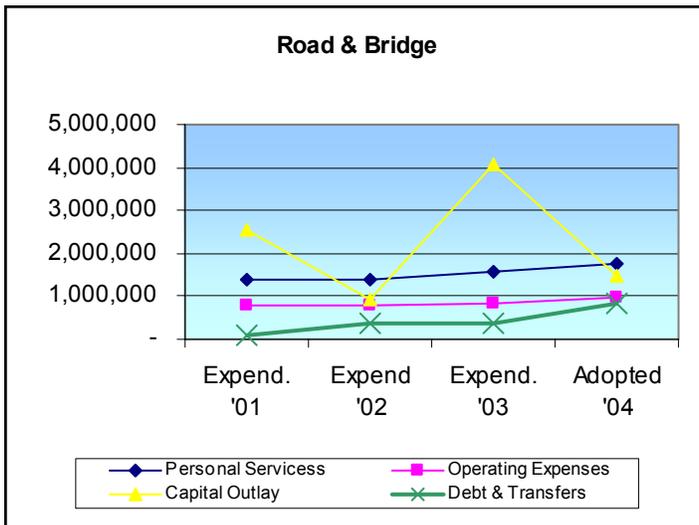
Gradall



Wood Chipper

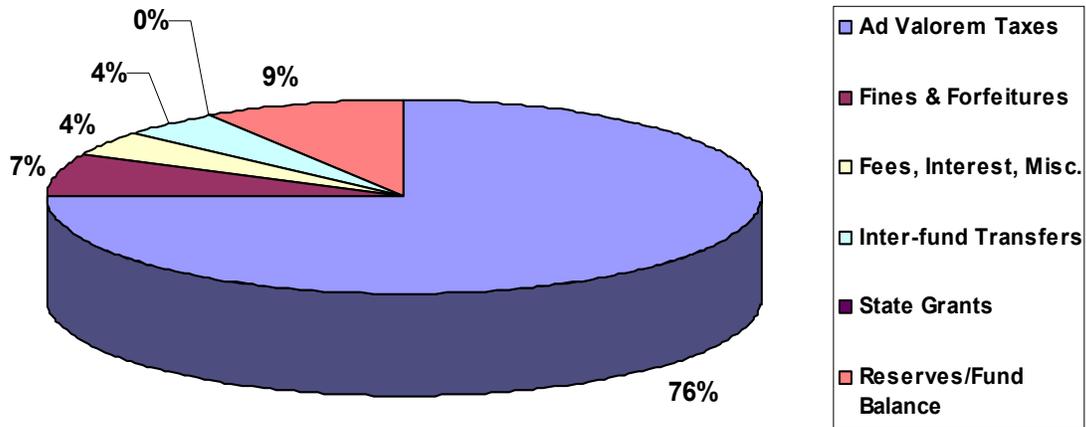


Batwing Mower

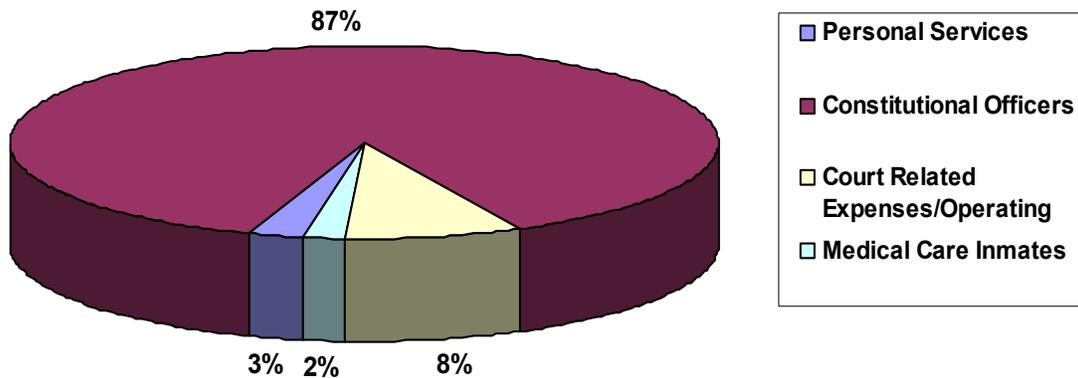


Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	1,389,720	1,389,547	1,578,046	1,769,299
Operating	804,156	791,341	811,743	958,750
Capital	2,568,880	919,202	4,072,683	1,463,726
Transfers	101,168	370,000	328,377	774,975
TOTAL	\$ 4,863,924	\$ 3,470,090	\$ 6,790,849	\$ 4,966,750

**FINE & FORFEITURE
2002/2003 REVENUES**



**FINE & FORFEITURE
2002/2003 EXPENDITURES**



Revenues		Expenditures	
Ad Valorem Taxes	5,065,094	Personal Services	165,734
Fines & Forfeitures	486,880	Constitutional Officers	5,531,451
Fees, Interest, Misc.	282,771	Court Related Expenses	503,943
Inter-fund Transfers	289,903	Medcial Care Inmates	122,560
State Grants	11,172		
Reserves/Fund Balance	616,359	Total	\$6,323,688.17
Total	\$ 6,752,178.06		

FINE AND FORFEITURE FUND



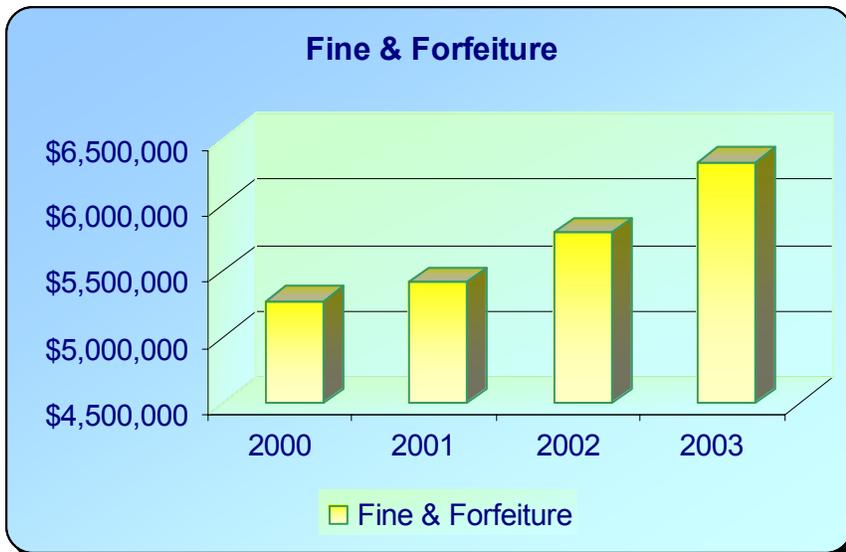
Courtroom

The Fine and Forfeiture Fund is primarily made up of the court system and law enforcement mandates. With the exception of the County's responsibility to Court Facilities and various communications expenses for the court system, this year is the last full year that the County will be responsible for court related expenditures. The burden of support for the Courts will become the responsibility of the State in July, 2004. This major revision to the funding of the court system has come about through Revision 7 to Article V.

EXPENDITURES	
Clerks Fees & Commissions	234,807
Sheriff 's Department	4,973,885
Medical Care of Prisoners	122,560
Clerk's Circuit Court Exp.	212,200
Clerk's County Court Exp.	194,900
Miscellaneous FF Exp.	29,964
Circuit Criminal Expenses	201,221
Circuit Judge	8,933
State Attorney	7,785
Public Defender	5,899
Guardian Ad Litem	1,677
County Judge	7,789
County Court Criminal	16,536
County Probation	132,271
Circuit Court Juvenile	173,260
Total	\$5,793,236

Prior to this revision, the Board had little control over the expenditures in this fund.

Currently the expenses include costs of operating the Sheriff's Department, Public Defender, State Attorney, Clerk of Courts - County and Circuit, witness fees, Official Court Reporter fees, Court Appointed Attorney Fees, Medical Care of Prisoners, utilities for jail, repair and maintenance of Sheriff's vehicles, etc.



PROBATION OFFICE



The Probation/Community service Department has been in existence since August 1977. The purpose of this department is to monitor and supervise court defendants placed on misdemeanor probation and community service in Hardee County. This department is under the direction of the County Manager, County Finance Director, and County Judge.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Probation/Community Service Department is to provide supervision services to the court system for misdemeanor cases in Hardee County. These services are provided in such a manner as to ensure compliance with court ordered obligations. Services are provided to ensure probationers assistance in living a worthwhile life style, thereby enabling them to stay in society and contribute, without putting extra burdens on the jail and welfare system.

Activities and Accomplishments

During the 2002/2003 fiscal year the Probation Office monitored probationers to ensure compliance with court ordered conditions of probation. As part of the supervision, the staff performed background investigations along with a complete criminal history check on each probationer. Also obtained in each file are re-

ports on probationer's offenses from local law enforcement agencies, and complete detailed records are kept on any contact with or pertaining to the probationer.

The probation staff is also responsible for ensuring that probationers attend any mandatory treatment and counseling services. The Probation Department also ensures that fines, restitution, and probation fees are paid, and that proper provisions are taken when the orders are not complied with. Another responsibility of the staff is to ensure that probationers follow court orders of, no contact with victims, in the appropriate cases.

The probation staff attended all court sessions relating to the office, and kept good liaison with the jail personnel and law enforcement officers. This office also provided the court interpreter services for the county.

For the FY 02/03 this office received 256 new probation cases. Out of those cases, 138 warrants were issued for non-compliers and there were 103 cases revoked and given different sentences. The Probation Department is responsible for collecting probation fees from probationers, and this department received \$51,520.00 for cost of supervision from the probationers.

The Probation Department is responsible for ensuring that probationers/community service workers complete court ordered hours. For FY 02/03 there were 3,184 hours completed at the Hardee County Road Department, and Hardee Pioneer Park. These hours calculated at minimum wage would have cost the county, \$16,397.60 to secure. There were additional community service hours provided to the community at various non-profit organizations throughout the

county.

Between probation fees collected and community service provided to the county departments, \$67,917.60 was generated for the county. During FY 02/03 the Probation Department had no pertinent capital improvement projects, and there are no planned capital improvements for the next Fiscal Year.

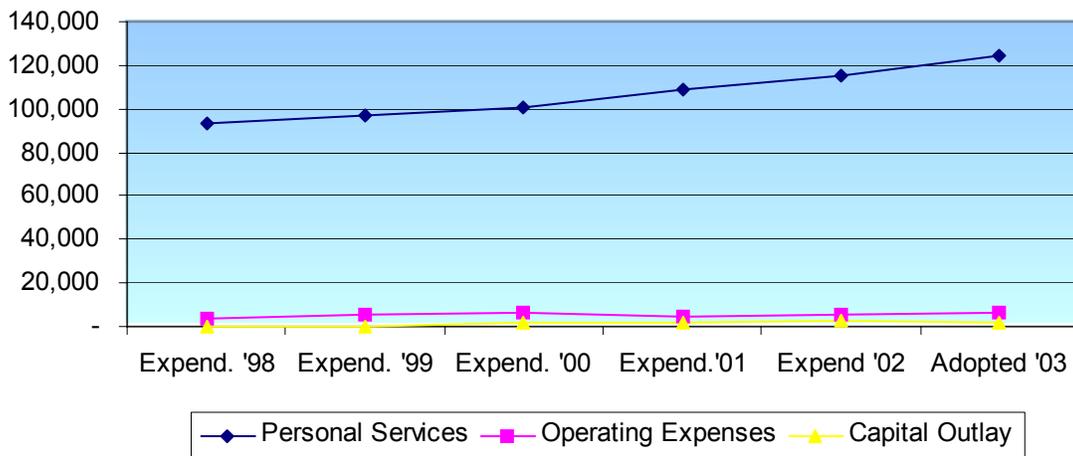
The Probation Office, as of 04/01/03, moved into their newly renovated offices

in the main courthouse. We are very happy with our new location

Goals and Objectives

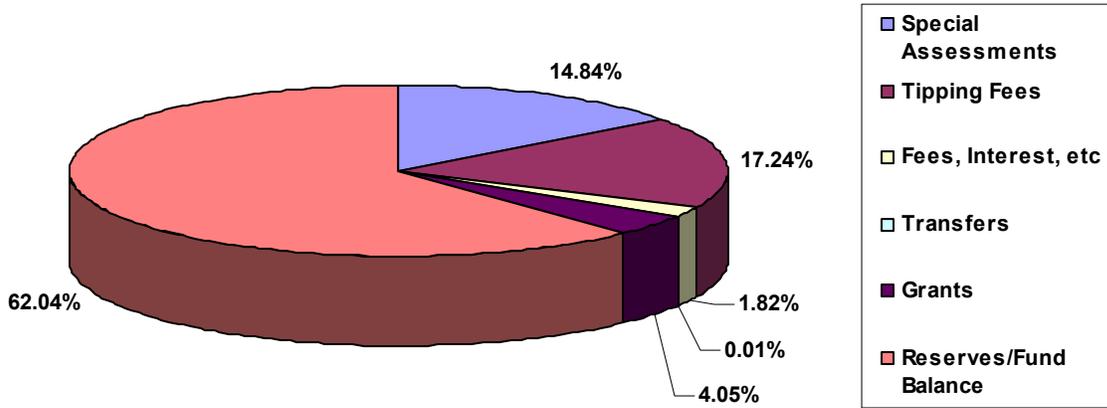
The Probation Department’s goal is to continue to provide professional and courteous service to all court related personnel, county personnel, and the public. We plan to ensure that the best assistance is given in the judicial system and in providing assistance to probationers to obtain any help that they may need.

Probation

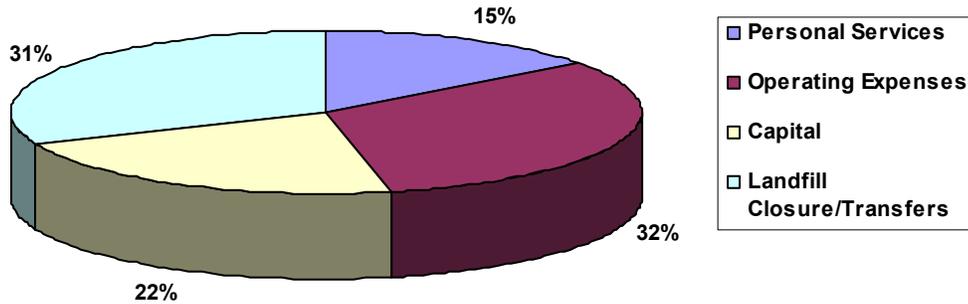


Expenditure Summary	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	00/02	Budget '03
Personal Services	93,245	96,931	100,697	108,786	115,233	124,033
Operating	3,629	5,298	6,262	4,668	5,749	6,775
Capital	-	-	1,929	1,504	2,577	1,500
TOTAL	\$ 96,874	\$ 102,228	\$ 108,888	\$ 114,958	\$ 123,559	\$ 132,308

**SOLID WASTE
2002/2003 REVENUES**



**SOLID WASTE
2002/2003 EXPENDITURES**



Revenues

Special Assessments	774,736
Tipping Fees	900,019
Fees, Interest, etc	95,107
Transfers	669
Grants	211,564
Reserves/Fund Balance	3,239,087
Total	\$ 5,221,180.99

Expenditures

Personal Services	378,890
Operating Expenses	819,318
Capital	565,812
Landfill Closure/ Transfers	810,000
Total	\$ 2,574,020

SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT LANDFILL

Mission Statement

The mission of the Solid Waste—Landfill Department is to provide for the proper management of and disposal of solid waste generated within the borders of Hardee County, using practices that ensure the sanctity of the counties' environment and that are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners.



The Landfill portion of the Solid Waste Department is responsible for the proper disposal of solid waste generated within the borders of Hardee County. Solid Waste disposal at this facility includes waste generated from commercial and residential units as well as wood and yard trash and construction and demolition debris.

This department also manages specialized programs such as the Notification and Verification Program, the Household Hazardous Waste Collections Program and Household Sharps Disposal Program. (Waste diversion, reduction and recycling programs are managed through Solid Waste—Recycling, a separate division of the Solid Waste Department.)

This department acts as a resource agency for county residents and businesses on the proper management and disposal of any type of waste that they may generate. It also provides the County Manager and the Board of

County Commissioners with information on disposal and management options available for current and future planning.



Activities and Accomplishments

The Solid Waste Department processed 21,314.79 tons of waste, segregating waste into the following categories:

Class I Waste:	17,229.11
C & D	1,686.95
Wood and Yard Trash	1,474.78
Waste Tires	112.75
Recyclables	803.82
Hazardous Waste	7.38

The Landfill continued contracts with Clean Harbors for the collection, transportation and proper disposal of hazardous waste, and with Central Florida Regional Planning Council for the Notification/Verification and Pollution Prevention Program which assisted county businesses by educating them on the proper management procedures for hazardous materials. Further the Landfill continued their contract with Short Environmental Laboratory for the sampling and testing of leachate and groundwater and with the City of Wauchula for the proper treatment and disposal of leachate.

The Solid Waste Department utilized engineering services from SCS Engineers for preparation and submittal of the Class I Landfill Operational Permit renewal. SCS was also issued a work order to begin the design and permitting of a 10-acre expansion of the Class I Site.

The Solid Waste Department is responsible for accounting practices used for the collection of the tipping fees and for applications and management of various state grants. This past fiscal year, we collected and managed the following funds:

Tipping Fees	\$694,862.47
Grant Reimbursements	135,199.00
Recycling Revenues	27,569.13
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	<u>12,618.35</u>
TOTAL	870,248.95

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives for this department include the continued evaluation of how the Solid Waste Department can best meet the future needs of the county based on economic changes and the growth of both commercial and residential units and perhaps the needs of future industrial growth. We will evaluate new and innovative methods and techniques for waste reduction, disposal and recycling in hopes of reducing the management and disposal cost of particular materials.

This department will continue to move forward on a 10-acre expansion of the Class I Landfill. 2003-04 activities for this expansion will include design, permitting, bid

document development and bid procedures. In addition, we conduct several projects listed as improvements and required under the operational permit from the State. Improvements include, installation of down chutes on the Class I Site used to divert storm water away from working areas, repair a damaged leachate collection line, install a permanent landfill gas venting system in the South East corner of the landfill and install a permanent underlined ramp on the East side of the landfill for access to the top disposal cell. Further, we will begin the closure permit for the existing site and construct an all weather access road around the Wood and Yard Trash Site. 2004-05 activities are currently planned to include the following: Completion of the Closure permit and actual construction of the 10-acre expansion, (Closure of the existing cell will coincide with the certification and opening of new cell.) However, construction of the closure will continue after we have moved into the new cell.



SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT RECYCLING

Mission Statement

The mission of the Solid Waste Recycling Department is to reduce the amount of solid waste disposed of in the Class I Landfill by following practices of volume reduction through baling, diverting recyclable materials from the waste stream, and by promoting education on waste reduction, reuse,



and recycling.

The Recycling portion of the Solid Waste Department is responsible for recycling and waste/volume reduction activities. Recycling is achieved by evaluation of the market availability and the economics of a particular material and by evaluating the level of difficulty to generate and manage that particular material. Waste reduction is often achieved through educational programs provided to the public and volume reduction is achieved through the baling process conducted at the Material Recovery Facility. This department also seeks to provide recycling alternatives to prohibited and /or restricted waste.

This department acts as a resource agency for the county residents and businesses on the availability of local recycling programs and available mar-

kets. It also provides support to the County Manager and Board of County Commissioners for the management options available for current and future planning.

Activities and Accomplishments

The Recycling Department continued contracts with Florida Tire Recycling in the amount of \$119.50 per ton for the collection and processing of whole waste tires, Consolidated Resource Recovery for the processing of wood and yard trash at a cost of \$9.75 per ton and with Hardee Correctional Institution for supplying a six man inmate work squad and one Corrections Officer at a cost of \$45,957.

New Markets were sought for recyclables and we added a program for recycling old wooden pallets. Revenues for

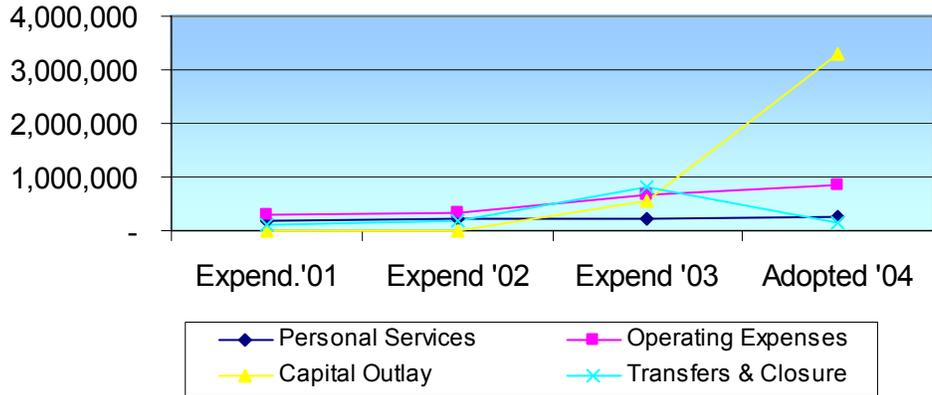


recyclables have increased approximately 35% from seeking new markets and allowing local vendors of specific traits to bid on specific products for reuse.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

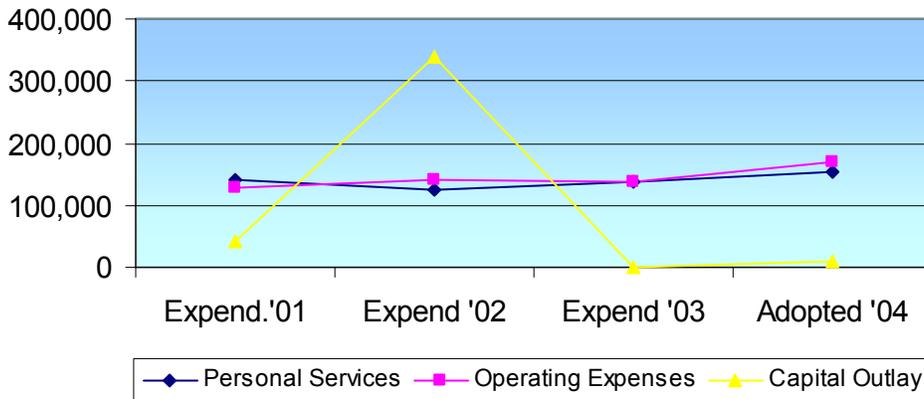
Goals include securing innovative, new and/or better markets for recyclables. We will evaluate the feasibility of adding plastics back to our recycling program.

Landfill



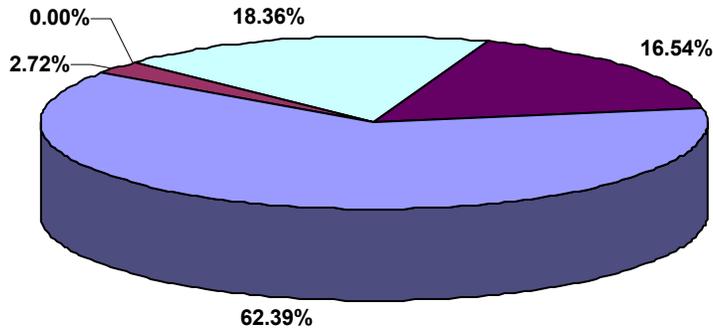
Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	184,808	216,889	240,062	276,244
Operating	277,952	344,350	681,818	843,194
Capital	8,363	2,060	565,812	3,311,000
Reserves /Develop.	118,234	175,000	610,000	110,000
Contingency	-	-	-	2,081,601
TOTAL	\$ 589,357	\$ 738,299	\$ 2,097,692	\$ 6,622,039

Recycling



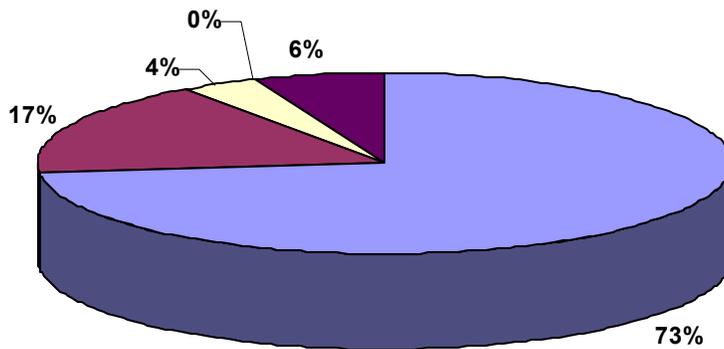
Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	139,501	123,715	138,829	152,618
Operating	129,312	142,044	137,500	170,902
Capital	41,004	337,942	-	10,000
TOTAL	\$ 309,818	\$ 603,701	\$ 276,328	\$ 333,520

FIRE CONTROL 2002/2003 REVENUES



- Special Assessments
- Interest, Transfers, Misc.
- Grants
- Transfers
- Reserves/Fund Balance

FIRE CONTROL 2002/2003 EXPENDITURES



- Personal Services
- Operating Expenses
- Capital
- Debt

Revenues

Special Assessments	670,425
Interest, Transfers, Misc.	29,191
Grants	0
Transfers	197,257
Reserves/Fund Balance	177,768

Expenditures

Personal Services	740,944
Operating Expenses	170,460
Capital	36,331
Debt	0
Non Operating/Transfers	62,881

Total **\$ 1,074,640.73**

Total **\$ 1,010,615.24**



FIRE RESCUE/ALS

Hardee County Fire Rescue was created in 1987 following a merge of the Wauchula Fire Department and Hardee County EMS. The Department was initially staffed with seven firefighters per shift, an operational staff of 21, and call volumes were at 1900 per year. Since that time, we have shown a 50% increase in our annual call volumes. Today we are involved in much more than just fire-fighting and answering medical calls, we ensure the safety for every county resident.

Mission Statement

The mission of this department is to prevent the loss of lives and property due to fire, life-threatening emergencies and disasters. Our fire department will bolster its mission by providing fire prevention and safety education to our schools and citizens alike. Our emergency response shall be rapid with the deployment of highly trained, professional firefighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics. Our department's dedication to the community extends to the mitigation of all emergencies using the most efficient and effective means available.

Activities and Accomplishments

The Department's staff of 35 is made up of a Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, Fire Prevention Officer, Executive Assistant, Billing Specialist and 30 Line Firefighter/EMT's and Paramedics.

The Fire Rescue Department is required by the NFPA (National Fire Protection Agency) to conduct one live-fire exercise per year. This year we have spent a considerable amount of time training on Hazardous Materials, averaging 80 to 90 man-hours of training each week.

The training hours have paid off, as we were faced with some high profile calls in 2003. There were 3,183 total calls this year and we have been challenged with several Hazmat incidents as well. We have been able to handle them all without relying on outside agencies. There have been many serious fires, vehicle accidents and medical calls this year. Our fire protection and medical care is comparable to any of the larger municipalities, but what we are most proud of is our service.

The department's Special Operations Team has completed Confined Space training, and are certified to perform rescues below grade and in very tight spaces. The team has also completed Swift Water Rescue training, important in this area as there were several river rescues this past year when the river flooded over its banks. The training ensures safer working environments for our firefighters and a safer rescue for the victims.

The Hardee County Fire Chief, Michael Choate, currently the youngest career Fire Chief in the State of Florida, belongs to the Florida Fire Chiefs Association, an outstanding organization providing the opportunity to learn and fellowship with other Fire Chiefs in the State, as well as offering 100 hours of continuing education credits for each conference attended.

Hardee County Fire Rescue was involved in a national fire training film production, called F.E.T.N. (Fire Emergency Training Network), shown in fire departments all over the world. F.E.T.N. is responsible for training videos that are



sold worldwide. For three days company representatives were in Hardee County, riding with the firefighters, filming emergency calls and reviewing the ICS (Incident Command System). It is a tribute to the county and the department that the Hardee County team was chosen over large departments such as the one in Phoenix, Arizona, a close runner-up.

The Fire Rescue Department is also very proud to have been included in a nationally published magazine called "1st Responder". We enter stories with pictures of our scenes which are posted monthly

and can be viewed on the web at www.1stresponder.com.

An unbelievable working relationship with the industrial community of Hardee County exists, including successful alliances with the power plants, packing houses and others throughout the county.

Equipment purchases for 2003 consisted of a new engine and tanker. A 1986 and a 1976 engine, both of which were unreliable with firefighters inside a burning building, were traded in to assist with the funding of this purchase.

In 2003, the Hardee County Employee of the Year, (Paramedic/Firefighter Faustino Vasquez) was selected from our department, a first for our department.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

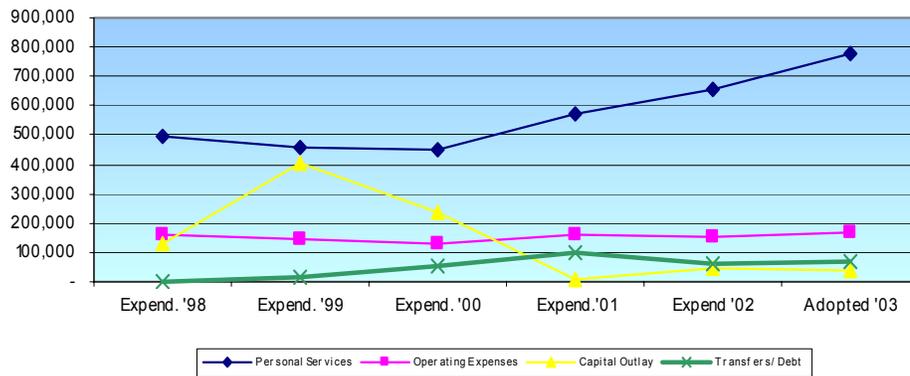
This year provides a host of challenges for the Fire Rescue Department. It is our primary goal to carefully enlarge our staff, build outlying fire stations and purchase the equipment to meet the needs of the county



citizens. As the county population increases and the societal perceptions of our role changes in the community, this department will continue to be called upon to mitigate, rescue, extinguish, prevent and educate at an increasing level. We strive to attain these goals while delivering our service in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Hardee County Fire Rescue's success will be measured in the coming years, not only in our ability to manage the quantity of the calls to which we respond, but the quality of the response we deliver.



Fire Control

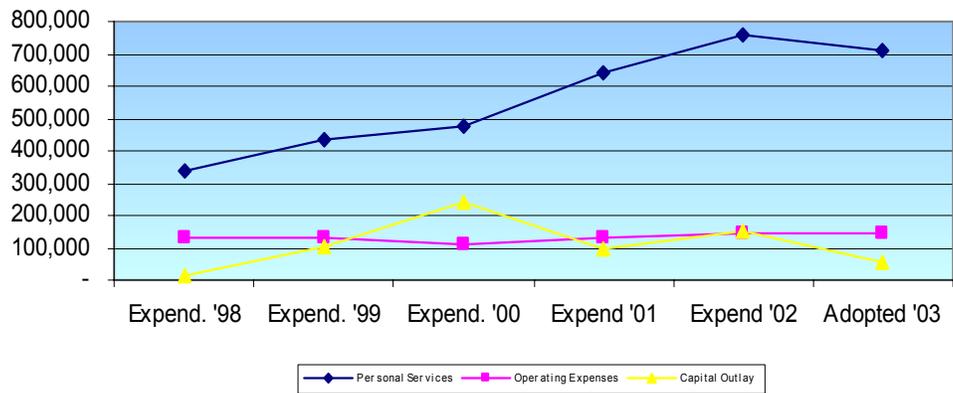


Fire Control

Expenditure Summary	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	00/02	Budget '03
Personal Services	492,904	455,880	449,219	573,064	652,754	777,739
Operating	162,987	145,540	132,023	158,895	153,665	166,131
Capital	131,777	406,719	239,138	7,162	49,549	39,650
Transfers/Misc	-	16,098	54,098	100,881	62,881	65,381
Contingency	-	-	-	-	-	41,453
TOTAL	\$ 787,668	\$ 1,024,237	\$ 874,479	\$ 840,003	\$ 918,848	\$ 1,090,354



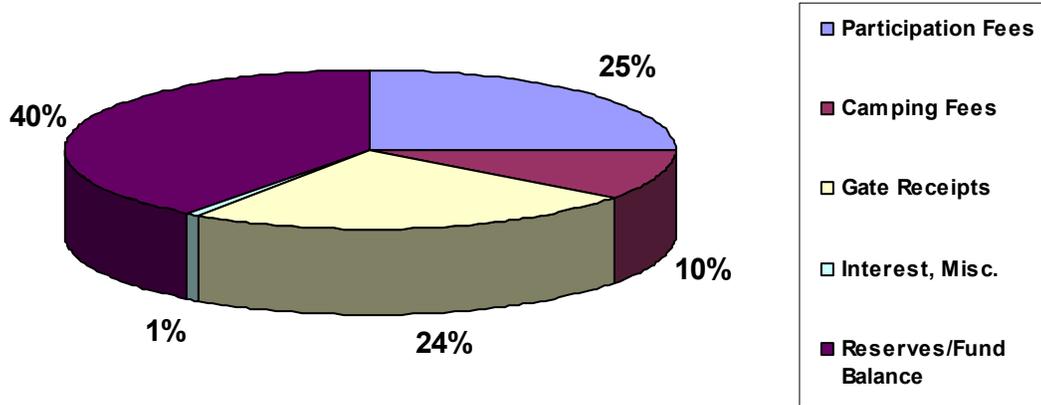
Ambulance



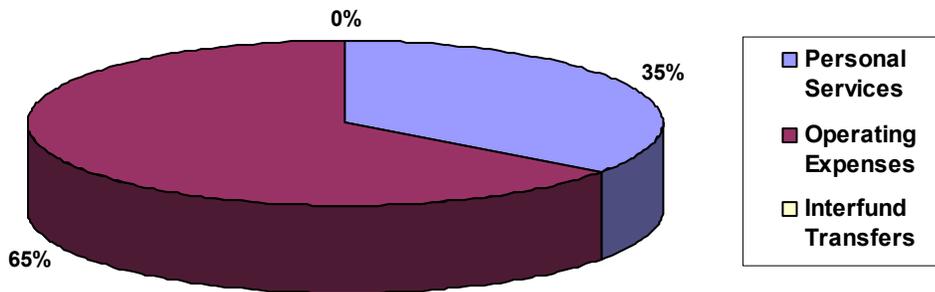
Ambulance Department

Expenditure Summary	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	00/02	Budget '03
Personal Services	335,949	435,236	475,944	638,680	756,181	710,750
Operating/Transfers	134,070	127,908	113,190	127,751	148,052	144,850
Capital	12,484	312,320	259,156	112,473	170,523	70,098
TOTAL	\$ 482,503	\$ 875,464	\$ 848,289	\$ 878,904	\$ 1,074,755	\$ 925,698

**PIONEER PARK DAYS
2002/2003 REVENUES**



**PIONEER PARK DAYS
2002/2003 EXPENDITURES**



Revenues	
Participation Fees	60,450
Camping Fees	25,299
Gate Receipts	58,729
Interest, Misc.	1,683
Reserves/Fund Balance	96,520
Total	\$ 242,681.05

Expenditures	
Personal Services	31,193
Operating Expenses	57,624
Capital	0
Total	\$ 88,816.84

PIONEER PARK DAYS

Pioneer Park Days is coordinated each year by the Human Resource Department with various County Departments providing assistance. It continues to be one of the largest exhibits in the Southeastern United States with exhibitors and vendors attending from all areas of the United States and Canada. The year 2003 marked the 35th annual presentation of Pioneer Park Days.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Pioneer Park Days is to provide revenue from the annual show to continue to assist in the funding of park improvements for the benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of Hardee County.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Once again, the 2003 show was a success. The profit from this show will enable future improvements to be accomplished in County owned parks. In the past, the profits have enabled Hardee County to build the Pioneer Park Animal Refuge, the Nickerson/Ullrich building, and purchase property for a parking lot on Highway 64. Future instrumental plans include improvements in Hardee Lakes Park on O. R. Roberts Road to provide enjoyment to the citizens of Hardee County.

Pioneer Park currently has 490 spaces for vendors in the flea market area. All the spaces were sold out for the 2004 year.

Antique engines and tractors were filled to capacity. The antique car exhibitors showed an increase from previous years.



An added attraction this year, were craft demonstrations, which were located at the east end of the park adjacent to the Museum. Our goal was to attract more people to visit



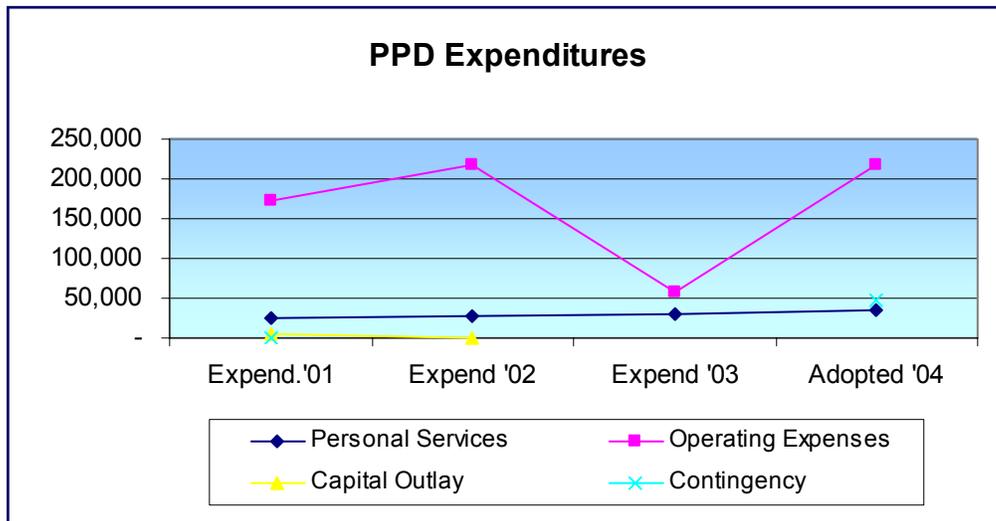
this end of the park to see the demonstrations and visit the Pioneer Park Museum. The museum had 1,698 registered visitors for the week of the show. The staff at the museum were dressed in pioneer attire for the festivities. Many visitors came to watch the Model-T car demonstration, which consisted of the Model-T car being put together in a matter of minutes in front of the museum.

The animals in the Animal Refuge participated by putting on quite a show for those who chose to take a walk on the boardwalk. Many compliments were received on the improvements to the Animal Refuge.



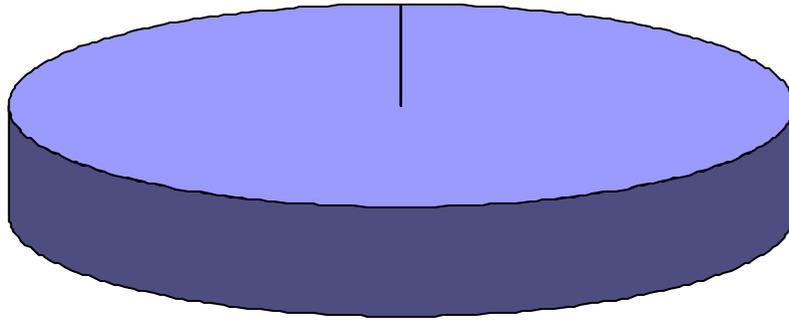
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Pioneer Park Days show consists of detailed planning, purchasing, and communications with all participants and the public to ensure an enjoyable visit by all. As in the past, the Hardee County Pioneer Park Days continues to receive rave reviews. We continue to keep in mind the family atmosphere, which is enjoyed by all. The Pioneer Park Days staff has maintained, and will continue to maintain, a high standard of quality to ensure the tradition of the show continues year after year.



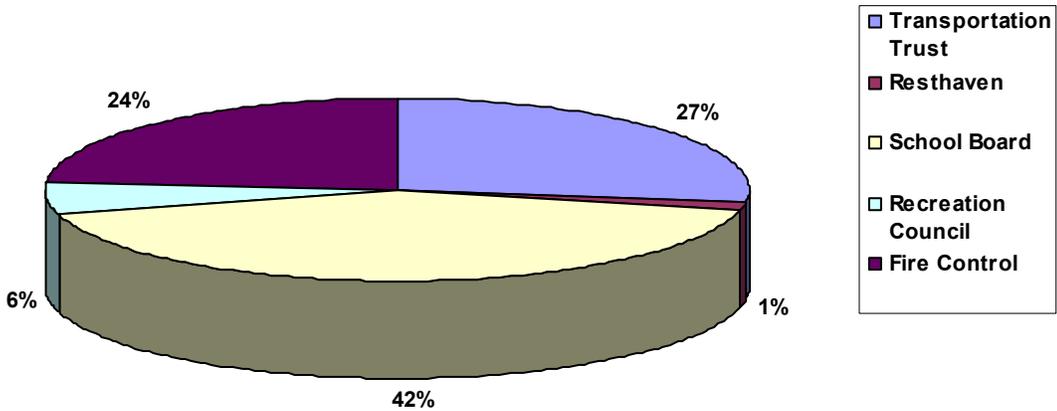
Expenditure Summary	00/01	01/02	02/03	Budget '04
Personal Services	25,026	26,863	31,193	35,719
Operating	171,366	216,404	57,624	216,502
Capital	4,996	-	-	-
Contingency	-	-	-	47,579
TOTAL	\$ 201,387	\$ 243,267	\$ 88,817	\$ 299,800

**RACE TRACK
2002/2003 REVENUES**



**Pari-Mutuel
Funds/Interest
100.00%**

**RACE TRACK
2002/2003 EXPENDITURES**



Revenues

Pari-Mutuel Funds	446,639
Total	\$ 446,639

Expenditures

Transportation Trust	121,000
Resthaven	6,625
School Board	187,375
Recreation Council	26,500
Fire Control	105,000
Total	\$ 446,500



RACE TRACK/JAI ALAI

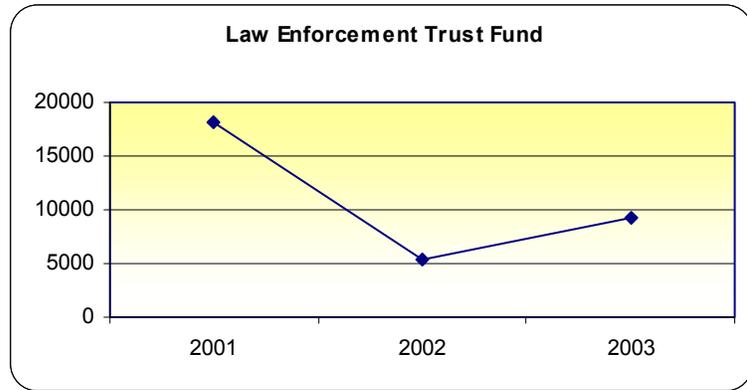
These funds were previously generated through license fees and taxes related to pari-mutuel wagering, however these funds are currently generated through sales tax funds due to recent changes by the legislature.

Each county in the State of Florida receives \$446,500 annually. The use of these funds are controlled by General and Special Law in the Florida Statutes. Special law currently mandates that the first \$45,000 received in Race Track Revenues is to be distributed to Hardee Memorial Hospital District Board for payment toward the construction bond of the hospital. The bond was paid in full in April of 1999 and these funds are now available to be used at the Board's discretion. When the hospital bond was redeemed, a two year reserve was accumulated in the Race Track Fund for future uses.

In fiscal year 2003 funds were disbursed as follows:

School Board	\$ 187,375
Transportation Trust	\$ 121,000
*Recreational Council	\$ 26,500
Resthaven	\$ 6,625
Fire Control	\$ 105,000
Total	\$ 446,500

Expenditure Summary	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03
Hardee Memorial	-	-	-	
Resthaven	6,625	6,625	6,625	\$6,625
School Board	187,375	187,375	187,375	\$187,500
Recreation Council	26,500	26,500	26,500	\$26,500
General Revenue	5,000	5,000	-	-
Transp. Trust	176,000	221,000	150,000	\$121,000
Fire Control	-	91,000	76,000	\$105,000
TOTAL	\$ 401,500	\$ 537,500	\$ 446,500	\$446,500



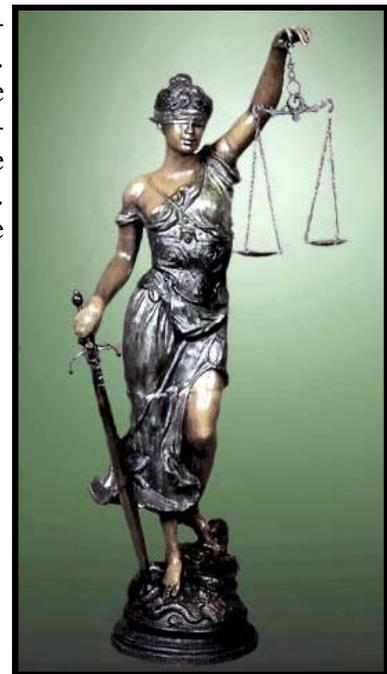
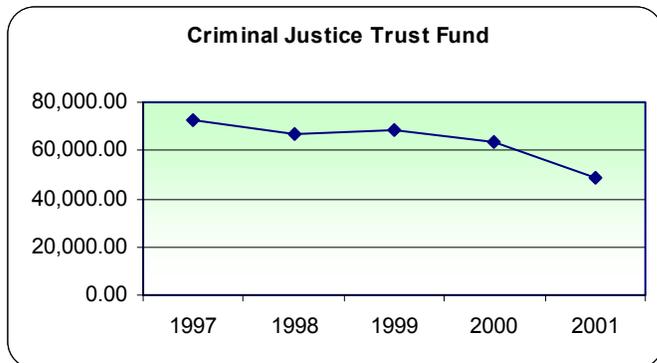
LAW ENFORCEMENT TRUST FUND

These are funds generated by the Sheriff's Department for confiscated properties and interest. Florida Statutes mandate how this money can be spent. The Sheriff must requisition for these funds and state how he wishes to spend them. The Board of County Commissioners must approve the request.

LETF Summary	ACTUAL 2001	ACTUAL 2002	ACTUAL 2003
TOTAL	\$5,000	\$5,306	\$9,250

CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRUST FUND

These revenues are collected by the Clerk under direction of the Judge when sentencing certain violators. Criteria is set by Statute and the Court System. These funds can be used to upgrade the court facilities or related needs as set by Statute. The funds can also be used to defray costs in the Fine and Forfeiture Fund. Funds are accumulated annually and transferred to the Fine and Forfeiture Fund.



CJTF Summary	ACTUAL 2000	ACTUAL 2001	ACTUAL 2002	ACTUAL 2003
TOTAL	\$63,812	62,001	\$48,537	\$57,833



**HARDEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
2003**

