

The Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia met in a Special Called Budget Workshop on Thursday, March 2, 2006, at 8:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room, Suite 100, at the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Greg Dunn, Chairman
Linda Wells, Vice Chair
Herb Frady
Peter Pfeifer

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Venice, County Administrator
Carol Chandler, Executive Assistant
Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk

DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007:

SOLICITOR'S OFFICE

Solicitor Jamie Inagawa appeared to discuss this budget. He said he prosecutes all of the misdemeanors in the County as well as all of the traffic violations. He said he also handles the Magistrate Court misdemeanor bad check cases as well as attend Administration License Suspension hearings. He said his office receives cases from the Fayette County Sheriff's Office, Fayetteville Police Department, Peachtree City Police Department, the Marshal's Office and County agencies, Tyrone Police Department, Georgia State Patrol, Department of Natural Resources and citizen warrants.

Commissioner Wells said she would be in favor of hiring an investigator here and using the 5% money.

Mr. Inagawa expressed concern with the indigent fund being reduced too much and the money for the investigator coming out of that account.

Commissioner Wells felt this fund could pay for the investigator and would not involve taxpayers' money.

Chairman Dunn said the Board would review this budget and make a decision later.

JUVENILE COURT

Phyllis Harris and Judge Schell appeared for discussion of this budget.

Chairman Dunn said one new court clerk was being requested in this budget.

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Judge Schell remarked that business in the Juvenile Court was growing and this was not a good sign but a reality of the times. He said this was a result of the increased population and an epidemic of the drug meth. He commented that the parents as well as grandparents were meth addicts and foster care becomes the next alternative for these children. He said they currently had three judges in Juvenile Court and court was meeting more frequently to hear these cases. He said this resulted in more paperwork and additional clerical responsibilities. He remarked that the Public Defender's Office had also been added to this and this resulted in increased litigation. He said he saw no end to this situation. He said they had been operating behind since 2002 and this was without the additional position.

Chairman Dunn remarked that there was no standard for indigency anymore in the State of Georgia. He felt this would just be on the increase because there was no standard.

Judge Schell remarked that before the Public Defender's Office something was built into their system based upon the County's guidance an affidavit that people filled out under the threshold income. He said if someone fell below that threshold income then the court would consider appointing an attorney for you. He said this also applied to Superior Court, State Court and Municipal Courts. He said with the advent of the Public Defender's Office this was removed from the judges. He said for a while he was seeing things that troubled him and he understood that there had been some corrective measures. He said there was also an increased cost for guardian ad litem. He said if both parents were addicts then a guardian ad litem would have to be appointed and usually this was another attorney. He said until then he had been going by the guidance that was prescribed by the County Commission with an affidavit for threshold income. He said they did not have any control over that.

Chairman Dunn said the County Commission did not either. He said the State law determined what the thresholds were and also what the form would be. He said the County had been assured when it first got into this that they would check into the true indigency of the person but over time the County learned that this was not being done. He said all they do now is have somebody sign a form, ask for an attorney and that was it. He said this was why the County was being dragged down with this problem. He said this Board certainly agreed that everybody is entitled to a proper defense and there was no problem in bringing in the indigent defense from the State of Georgia if it was being run properly. He said this has turned out to be easy for the applicant in that they fill out a form and that was all.

Judge Schell said this really brings more people to wanting to have a trial because with an attorney there was a false impression that the person could get off with a technicality.

Chairman Dunn pointed out that in this County there were three attorneys on a panel who, when someone was determined by a judge to be indigent, then they would find one of the local attorneys to sign the papers. He felt this worked a lot better than the current system.

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Judge Schell said he was one of those attorneys who had been appointed indigency cases as part of his work. He said now that Attorney Joe Saia had been appointed the Public Defender he would be speaking to him about dependency and competency. He said Juvenile Court's case load was increasing every day and the added position for a Court Clerk I would be a tremendous help.

Commissioner Wells remarked that the numbers that were put in the justification were impressive. She said with the current case load for Juvenile it would come to approximately 1,515 hours per person and this barely left room for anything else not to mention emergencies.

Chairman Dunn interjected that the justification for this position was excellent and was just common sense.

Court Clerk Phyllis Harris said she would like to comment on the indigent defense. She said this month they had collected and turned back to the County approximately \$3,000. She said this was because these people were not indigent and they had filed contempt of court charges and gotten these funds for the County.

Commissioner Wells said she would like Mrs. Harris to send the Commissioners the documentation for this. She said the Board might want to send this documentation to the Indigent Defense Council and to the Superior Court Judges to show them that this was possible.

TAX ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Ellen Mills was present to discuss this budget.

Ms. Mills said she was requesting a lead appraiser position in business personal property. She said the personal property appraisers appraise boats, airplanes, golf carts, heavy duty equipment, mobile homes and motor vehicles. She said there were over 3,500 boats in the County that were registered to Fayette residents. She said there were 236 aircraft, 4,288 businesses, over 10,000 golf carts most of which were exempt, and 1,346 mobile homes registered in Fayette County. She remarked that there were two appraisers who evaluated all of this property. She said mobile homes were a separate class of property and that digest was submitted separately to the Tax Commissioner in November. She said an assessment must be made of the mobile home in September and another field inspection has to be done in January. She said this equated to two field inspections for every mobile home in the County. She also remarked that there were 93,000 motor vehicles in the County and assessors must handle appeals that come to approximately 100 motor vehicle tax appeals every year.

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Commissioner Wells remarked that work was currently being shared by an appraiser II and III. She questioned the lead appraiser position.

Ms. Mills replied that the lead appraiser would be a supervisor over the other two appraisers. She said they would have to be a level III or level IV appraiser. She remarked that an appraiser III would be fine in this position. She said this person would be performing audits and also managing the office and workflow in that department.

Commissioner Wells said her concern was that Ms. Mills was asking for field personnel and she was asking for a supervisory position.

Ms. Mills remarked that it was her intention to have the lead appraiser and the two people in that office to move up a position and bring in somebody less experienced at the level II position and let them do the paperwork. She said there was actually an appraiser III and IV who were very experienced auditors. She said the current level II appraiser was an actual auditor.

Commissioner Wells asked Ms. Mills if these people were moved up if there would be promotions.

Ms. Mills said this would actually be creating a new position.

Commissioner Wells asked if the people who would be moving up would be getting an actual promotion.

Ms. Mills replied yes, that she would fill the positions from within.

Commissioner Wells clarified that the salaries for these employees would increase.

Ms. Mills responded that two employees' salaries would increase. She said if she was only approved for an appraiser III position, then one person would move up and she would fill that vacancy with an appraiser II. She said the appraiser II could do the bulk of this data management evaluation of boats and airplanes and this would leave the two top appraisers to audit.

Chairman Dunn remarked that Ms. Mills had not asked for promotions.

Ms. Mills responded that she did not need a promotion for employees. She said she needed a new position. She said she did not need two people to be promoted.

Chairman Dunn said this would still result in promotions and would be part of the decision making process for the Board.

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Ms. Mills said she would fill the new position in house.

Commissioner Wells said this would cause a ripple effect.

Chairman Dunn said he understood Ms. Mills to be asking for two promotions as well as a new position.

Ms. Mills said she did not think it would be correct to say that this would be a new position and also promotion. She said the position was in and of itself an issue and then there would be the potential for one promotion.

Commissioner Frady asked if this required more money.

Ms. Mills said this person would make more money.

Commissioner Frady said the Board was just trying to determine what was being requested. He said Ms. Mills was asking for more money than a person.

Chairman Dunn said Ms. Mills had described this as needing a new position and then promote two other people.

Commissioner Wells said she was concerned with another level of supervision and would be inclined to approve a "worker bee" position.

Ms. Mills remarked that she needed an appraiser III at the minimum and would be pleased with that.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE - ADMINISTRATION

Linda Jones appeared to discuss this budget.

Ms. Jones remarked that the work load had increased and this was the 11th year that they had not had an additional person in this position. She said the current staff was just not adequate to provide records and information daily in a timely manner. She felt the statistics data supported the justification for this request.

Chairman Dunn remarked that this Board would be approving a certain amount of money for clerical positions at the Sheriff's Office and it would be up to the Sheriff if he wanted to approve a clerical position. He said this position would ultimately be the Sheriff's decision. He said the request was for five additional clerks but the Sheriff would decide where the money would actually go. He said he had no problem with this request. He noted that Ms. Jones had been documenting this request for several years.

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Commissioner Wells said the Board would fund this position but the Sheriff would make the final decision.

Commissioner Wells questioned Ms. Jones on the actual on 2005 regarding criminal histories and things of that nature. She said there was a decline estimated for employee status for 2006.

Ms. Jones said this fluctuates because of position openings. She noted that this year they had received a tremendous number of applications for certain job openings but she did not estimate that large of a number of applications coming in next year.

Chairman Dunn said other departments were reporting the same thing with huge numbers of applications coming in for advertised positions. He said this was indicative of the economy.

Chairman Dunn asked the Board if there were any further questions and there were none. He thanked Ms. Jones for her presentation.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE - JAIL OPERATIONS

Major Glaze appeared to discuss this budget. He said he was requesting four records clerks and one jail maintenance worker.

Chairman Dunn questioned the request for a maintenance worker when Major Glaze could call the County Maintenance Department for assistance.

Major Glaze responded that they did call the Maintenance Department for some things but they also needed someone on the inside who was really familiar with the every day operations of the alarm systems, sprinklers, doors, hot water heaters, and things of that nature. He said in a jail environment these individuals were not the best housekeepers. He said the position would be for an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. shift to begin with.

Chairman Dunn clarified that there was currently one jail maintenance worker and Major Glaze was requesting an additional position and Major Glaze agreed.

Major Glaze discussed the request for the records clerk. He said they currently process over 4,000 and close to 5,000 records every year. He stated these records include sentences and releases of inmates and was pretty complex. He said there was currently only one records clerk and a detention officer that also worked in that capacity on the day shift and had done so for a long time. He said detention officers handle this job at other times of the week and he felt like they did not give it enough detail or attention that was required. He said the position also involved the entry of G.C.I.C. records regarding

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warrants and so forth and this involved training. He said if there was a specific record clerk in this position, then that person would be trained just for that position and the detail and attention would be there for the records.

Commissioner Wells asked if a records clerk had ever been hired in this position.

Major Glaze replied that several years ago they had converted a kitchen worker to this position. He noted that this person was still there in the records clerk position. He said he would like to have a permanent person in this position that was specifically trained for it.

Commissioner Wells clarified that Major Glaze had said that the detention officers currently staffing these positions would be moved back to detention officer duties and cell blocks F and C could be opened. She questioned the need to open those cell blocks at this time.

Major Glaze replied that it would be nice to open these even with less inmates. He noted that cell block C was a maximum security jail and it would be nice to open a portion of cell C.

Commissioner Wells clarified that this was not a bed space problem but just a suggestion to open these cells. She asked how many inmates Major Glaze was estimating would go to the maximum security cell C.

Major Glaze replied that cell C could hold 75 inmates but there were normally only 30 inmates at any given time. He noted that cell block F was just a dormitory and it was vacant right now because there just were not any inmates.

Commissioner Wells questioned what the detention officers would be doing since there was no one in cell block F and not that many in cell C and then a records clerk would be handling that job.

Chairman Dunn clarified that there were currently 220 inmates and 440 beds leaving the jail at half capacity. He noted that the new jail was built for the future when numbers were going to rise. He said by having all of the pods open was totally dysfunctional from the budget standpoint because there was only half the workload.

Commissioner Wells questioned the number of detention officers currently.

Major Glaze responded that there were 56 officers. He said he was fully staffed right now and there were no positions open. He said this was the first time in three years that this had occurred. He said the total number of positions at the jail was 95.

Commissioner Wells questioned the number of workers currently other than administration who work in the jail.

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Major Glaze replied that there were 95 people working there, 56 detention officers and the other 35 were acting as supervisors/detention officers.

Connie Boehnke clarified that there were 65 detention officers and not 56.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the prison population averaged 250 inmates.

Major Glaze discussed the promotional requests. He said he was requesting one lieutenant to captain, one corporal to sergeant, three deputy sheriffs to corporal and ten detention officers to deputy sheriffs.

Commissioner Pfeifer commented on deputies on road duty and those deputies working in the jail.

Major Glaze said if the Board had any further questions on his budget that he would be glad to answer them.

Chairman Dunn said the Board appreciated Major Glaze being so thorough and the presentation he gave on his budget.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

County Administrator Chris Venice remarked that this department had originally requested an accounting tech and an inventory clerk. She said yesterday this request was changed to just an accounting tech.

Ms. Venice said it had been her recommendation to approve an inventory clerk.

Human Resources Director Connie Boehnke interjected that the accounting tech was four pay grades above the inventory clerk.

Commissioner Frady said he did not understand how the inventory clerk would be incorporated in the Finance Department and felt this position should be in the Purchasing Department.

Ms. Venice remarked that this issue was part of the entire management issue that U.G.A. would be reviewing. She pointed out that the Finance Department had grown tremendously from seven positions to twelve positions in the last three years.

Commissioner Frady said this would all be straightened out after U.G.A. completed its management review of County departments and personnel.

Ms. Venice remarked that the requested position would help in getting a handle on County inventory.

Commissioner Wells questioned the need for two people to do County inventory.

Ms. Boehnke remarked that the clerk could be the primary person going from office to office. She felt it was important to find the imbedded items in the County.

Chairman Dunn felt things were being processed correctly now. He asked if the consensus of the Board was for an inventory clerk full time and the accounting clerk was already taken care of.

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve a full time inventory clerk grade 19 for the Finance Department. The motion carried 4-0.

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

Chris Venice said the Purchasing Department was requesting a contract administrator. She felt Mr. Jones needed someone with expertise to assist him.

Chairman Dunn said he would have favored approving a buyer for Purchasing rather than a contract administrator.

Commissioner Wells said she had not favored either one because the request was predicated on when and if the constitutional officers come on line then the positions would be needed.

Ms. Venice said the Purchasing Department would get one position and that would be for a contract administrator. She pointed out that requisitions had already doubled in this department.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the Purchasing Department needed to be the first step in the purchase of County items. He said Mr. Jones was at the beginning and the end of this process.

Commissioner Frady agreed that there needed to be somebody who could assist Mr. Jones. He said if Mr. Jones left or retired, there was absolutely nobody in the wings who could take over the Purchasing Department. He said succession of management was very important.

Chairman Dunn asked for the Board's pleasure on this budget.

On motion made by Commissioner Frady, seconded by Commissioner Wells to approve a full time contract administrator at grade 31 for the Purchasing Department. The motion carried 4-0.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Chairman Dunn felt this department needed to get out of crisis mode.

Ms. Venice remarked that the need was for an IS technician to handle day to day work orders. She commented on the system analyst position and said this would depend on how the Board wanted to approach management whether some aspects would be outsourced or expertise hired inside to manage it. She said unless the County was willing to hire someone to handle just the servers and things of that nature, then the current employees would be doing multi tasks.

Chairman Dunn questioned the new person actually doing system analyst work.

Commissioner Wells expressed concern that the new person would not totally be an analyst because this department was in crisis mode.

Commissioner Frady felt an expert needed to review the structure of the Information Systems Department.

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Pfeifer to approve a full time systems analyst at grade 32 and an IS technician at grade 30 for Information Systems. The motion carried 4-0.

On motion made by Commissioner Frady, seconded by Commissioner Wells to direct the County Administrator to investigate the possibility of having an expert to analyze the Information Systems structure. The motion carried 4-0.

TAX ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Commissioner Wells said the position would be for an appraiser III and would be a pay grade 29.

Ms. Venice asked if the Board was interested in discussing the part time request and the Board consensus was not at this time.

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Pfeifer to approve a full time tax appraiser III at grade 29 for the Tax Assessor's Office. The motion carried 4-0.

SOLICITOR'S OFFICE

Commissioner Pfeifer said he agreed with the justification for this position.

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Pfeifer to approve a full time investigator at grade 29 for the Solicitor's Office to be funded from the victims assistance surcharge fund. The motion carried 4-0.

PROBATE COURT

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve a part time Court Clerk I at grade 19 for Probate Court. The motion carried 4-0.

JUVENILE COURT

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve one full time Court Clerk I at grade 19 for Juvenile Court. The motion carried 4-0.

MARSHAL'S OFFICE

Chairman Dunn said he agreed with the Chief Marshal that more deputies were going to be needed in the new park but he did not feel it was this year.

Commissioner Wells said she would be in favor of adding one deputy marshal.

Ms. Venice suggested the Board could approve one deputy marshal now and another deputy marshal position in January, 2007.

Chairman Dunn said the park would be opening and personnel needed to be trained and ready.

Commissioner Wells clarified that the Board was not approving the corporal and the sergeant positions and the Board agreed that was correct.

On motion made by Wells, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve one full time deputy marshal effective July 1st and one full time deputy marshal effective January, 2007. The motion carried 4-0.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve two full time record clerks at grade 19 for the Sheriff's Office. The motion carried 4-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Pfeifer to approve six full time communication operator positions at grade 24 for the E-911 center. The motion carried 4-0.

LIBRARY

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Chairman Dunn to approve one part time library page for the Library. The motion carried 4-0.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Chairman Dunn to approve one Lieutenant Emergency Management Inspector position at grade 33 for Fire and Emergency Services Department. The motion carried 4-0.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chairman Dunn felt the Board needed to make a decision on the capital decision of removing the aerial unit and going to the two quint units. He said it would need to come out of the capital improvement plan if the Board was going to approve the two quint units. He said he liked the idea of the quints and commented that these units were much more functional. He said the manpower for a quint was more than for a fire truck. He said Chief Krakeel needed one more person per shift twenty-four hours per day.

On motion made by Commissioner Frady, seconded by Commissioner Wells to remove the aerial unit as listed in the C.I.P. and replace it with two quint fire trucks and add six full time fire apparatus operator positions for the Fire Department. The motion carried 4-0.

STATE COURT

On motion made by Commissioner Frady, seconded by Commissioner Pfeifer to approve the additional five hours to the State Court Clerk I part time position in State Court. The motion carried 4-0.

E-911 COMMUNICATIONS

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve the three promotions communication operators to senior communication operators for E-911 center to go from a grade 24 to a grade 25 as requested. The motion carried 4-0.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

On motion made by Commissioner Frady, seconded by Commissioner Wells to approve the promotions of eight firefighters/EMT's to paramedic positions. The motion carried 4-0.

MARSHAL'S OFFICE

Chairman Dunn commented on the Lieutenant position going to a Captain position. He said he was not in favor of that right now.

It was the consensus of the Board that this be considered next year.

SHERIFF - CID

Commissioner Wells said this budget request had been withdrawn.

SHERIFF - JAIL

Commissioner Wells said the Board did not know the structure of the jail.

Chairman Dunn commented that every shift currently had a corporal.

Commissioner Frady said he recalled the request being for a corporal for every shift.

Commissioner Wells said the corporal request was just for one shift. She said nothing had been addressed regarding moving other people to the position.

The Board briefly discussed the warrant clerk position and the justification that had been provided.

WATER SYSTEM

Chris Venice remarked that the operator II and operator III could perform the bacteria testing.

Chairman Dunn suggested the Board wait on making a decision on this request until a policy on promotions was solidified.

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Commissioner Frady said he would like to make a motion to approve one plant operator position. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Wells interjected that there were currently seven levels.

Chairman Dunn interjected that there was an operator at the Crosstown Plant and another one down at Antioch Road. He said if they needed a bacteria test somebody from either of these plants could go to the other plant and take a sample.

Commissioner Wells said there were some operator positions that were up for promotion this year because of completed certifications.

Ms. Venice said it would be easier when the promotions policy was in place.

Commissioner Wells remarked that there was a request for the communication equipment operator promotion.

On motion made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve the promotion of one communication equipment operator to a customer service representative position at grade 20 for the Water System. The motion carried 3-1 with Chairman Dunn opposing the motion.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Dunn adjourned the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk

Gregory M. Dunn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 22nd day of June, 2006.

Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk