

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Eric K. Maxwell, Chairman  
Randy Ognio, Vice Chairman  
Steve Brown  
Charles W. Oddo  
Charles D. Rousseau



## FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Steve Rapson, County Administrator  
Dennis A. Davenport, County Attorney  
Tameca P. White, County Clerk  
Marlena Edwards, Deputy County Clerk

140 Stonewall Avenue West  
Public Meeting Room  
Fayetteville, GA 30214

# MINUTES

## Special Called Budget Workshop

May 24, 2018  
5:00 p.m.

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### 1. Call to Order

Chairman Eric Maxwell called the May 24, 2018 Special Called Budget Workshop meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. A quorum of the Board was present. No members were absent.

### 2. Acceptance of Agenda

Commissioner Steve Brown moved to accept the agenda as presented. Vice Chairman Randy Ognio seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

### 3. County Administrator Steve Rapson and Chief Finance Officer Mary Parrott will provide update regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2019 Budget.

Chief Finance Officer Mary Parrott begin the budget highlight presentation.

#### Economic Outlook:

She provided the Board the latest statistics regarding employment and governmental practices. In 2017 the personal income increase was 3.8% and cost of living adjustment was +2.0%. The new housing starts for Fayette County increased 4.4% over the last two years and the county's unemployment rate dropped from 4.1% in 2017 to 3.6% in 2018. Recruitment of qualified personnel and staff/leadership development were ranked highest in importance for state and local governments.

#### Budget Principles:

Mrs. Parrott stated that the finance department worked with a forecasting model to make sure that the revenues are realistic based on trending from the information gathered. Only current revenue can be used to pay current expenditures. She stated that an example of that was grants. The final budget principle dealt with investment and capital purchases.

#### Planning Guidelines:

Mrs. Parrott reported that there was no deficit budgeting, that the county had delivery of outstanding customer service with no property tax increase, the 2018 millage rate rollback savings provided \$599,966 to the taxpayers and a cumulative taxpayer savings of over \$21.5 million since 2013.

County Administrator Steve Rapson stated that if the millage rate was the same as it was in 2013 there would be \$21.5 million more to enhance services, fund additional services, people and capital. He stated that the county was an anomaly regarding how other counties function. He continued that it was predominately in part to the department heads, constitutional officers and the elected officials. He stated that it was unusual to have 26 department heads all going in the same direction. He stated that there

was not a position request put forward that was not justified. He stated that it was humbling to have department heads lobbying for other department heads to get the positions that are needed. He stated that \$21.5 million was a big deal.

Commissioner Brown stated that we were not getting across to citizens the correlation between an increase in the tax assessments and what was paid in taxes. There was the perception that if the assessments are going up then the taxes were going up and that was not necessarily true. He stated that it would be good to put that in a press release, once everything was finalized, to help explain it to citizens.

Ms. Parrott gave kudos to staff for submitting very reasonable budget considerations. She stated that department heads were working well together.

The county will continue the rolling 5-year capital improvement program (CIP) that totaled \$6,358, 858 and it was assigned within the General Fund balance. Fayette County was the only fully funded DB plan in the State of Georgia at 124.7%. The county will continue to fund the DB Plan at 1.4%, although 0% was required, in case of any "hiccups" in the system. Staff will continue to pursue grant opportunities, which have more than doubled in the last five years.

**Benefit Highlights:**

The county will continue to offer two medical plan coverage choices: Traditional Open Access POS Plan serviced by CIGNA LocalPlus Plan and the HSA- Health Savings Account Plan. The county pays 100% of the Critical Illness and Accident Plans have been added for those enrolling in the HSA plan to offset concern of large claim impacts. Currently there are less than 20% of employees on the HSA plan. Benefits also include basic life, accidental death and disability and long-term disability plans. The benefit highlight also included non-tobacco user discounts, wellness initiatives, spousal surcharge, dental insurance and vision benefits.

**General Fund Balance Financial Projection:**

The Stabilization fund was updated based on the expenditures and represents three months of working capital. The Capital Improvement Plan was updated to \$6,358,858. Mrs. Parrott stated that the total Fund Balance would increase by \$633,000 at the end of fiscal year 2018.

**Budget Summary:**

Mrs. Parrott highlighted fiscal year (FY) 2019 budget and pointed out the top four funds that are tax generated:

**General Fund:**

Revenues	\$52,662,339
Expenditures	\$52,122,089

Positive impact to Fund Balance: \$540,250

**911 Fund:**

Revenues	\$3,848,600
Expenditures	\$3,279,986

Positive impact to Fund Balance: \$568,614

**Fire Fund:**

Revenues	\$11,490,400
Expenditures	\$9,715,328

Positive impact to Fund Balance: \$1,192,372

In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, accommodations are available for those who are hearing impaired and in need of a wheelchair. The Board of Commissioners Agenda and written material for each item is available on-line through the County's website at [www.fayettecountyga.gov](http://www.fayettecountyga.gov). This meeting will be telecast on Comcast Cable Channel 23 and on the internet at [www.livestream.com](http://www.livestream.com).

**EMS Fund:**

Revenues	\$3,670,800
Expenditures	\$3,577,687

Positive impact to Fund Balance: \$93,113

Mrs. Parrott stated that the Juvenile Supervision showed a negative impact to the Fund Balance of \$10,000. She stated that the Fund Balance was \$95,000 currently, so staff was not overly concerned with this impact and would continue to work with them to ensure that this Fund Balance remained healthy.

She stated that there was a new Animal Control Sterilization Fund and that Animal Control Director Jerry Collins was doing a fine job making sure the revenues were collected.

**Enterprise Fund:**

Water System-	
Revenues	\$19,433,219

She stated that the transfer of the \$2,470,000 was to fund the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). She stated that the reason there was not an impact to Fund Balance was because the expenditures included a line item that was a transfer to R&E, which was like the Fund Balance for the Water System. The transfer was for \$1,381,718 that would be placed in R&E, which meant that was the amount that revenues were over the expenditures.

*Solid Waste and Recycling-*

She stated that there was an estimated loss of \$124,787 and currently there was over \$508,000 in that Fund Balance, so the county would be able to absorb the loss. She cautioned that it was not sustainable moving forward. She stated that staff was conducting analysis and comparisons and the county's prices are in line with others. Staff continued to research to determine what can be done to bring this fund to the positive.

Mr. Rapson stated that the inert landfill was restricted and the rates and fees would be brought back to the Board. Commissioner Brown asked if the fees from the municipalities would go toward this fund. Mr. Rapson stated that it would. Commissioner Brown stated that it might be a good legislative topic to add to the county's legislative package.

**Capital Budget:**

Vehicles/Equipment-	
Funded	\$1,475,000
Expenditures	\$2,854,523

Mrs. Parrott stated that this was more than what was being funded, but that there was a healthy balance in this fund currently.

Commissioner Brown stated that he would also include any line item for any future Stormwater maintenance. Mr. Rapson stated there was \$500,000 in the capital fund to fund Stormwater this year. He stated that it was incorporated in the budget.

Mrs. Parrott stated that a large part of the revenues came from property taxes; approximately \$29,900,000. Sales tax; \$13.6 million, Other taxes; \$789,000-most of this amount included Occupational Tax and penalties and interest charged on property returns that are not filed timely. Licensing Permitting was a little over a million dollars. She stated that the Intergovernmental Agreements was \$1.2 and that it included the LMIG grants for paving. Charges for services was for overhead and recreation fees. She continued to give an overview of funds.

She stated that public safety was number one under expenditures at 39.1%, representing \$20,400,000; Sheriff, Animal Control, Coroner and Emergency Management. General government at 18.9%, representing \$9.8 million, which was all departments and more. Public Works at 14%, Court System at 11% and Debt Service at \$3.3 million for the annual payment of the Justice Center.

### **Personnel Changes:**

#### *Full-time new positions-*

Mrs. Parrott stated that in the budget there were 14 full-time positions added at 1.89% compared to last year. She stated that the positions included: Human Resource (HR) Technician (Human Resource), Systems Analyst (Information Technology), Engineering Technician (Public Works), Contract Administrator (Purchasing), Youth Services Officer-Investigator (Sheriff-CID), Appraiser I-Residential (Tax Assessor), FF/EMT (Fire), FF/EMT (EMS) and Engineer (Water System).

#### *Part-time new positions-*

Adoption Counselor (Animal Control), Administrative Assistant (Commissioners), Elections Clerk (Elections), Sr. Financial Analyst (Finance), Library Assistant I, (Library) and Deputy Clerk I (Superior Court)

#### *Personnel Job Reclassifications-*

Equipment Operator I to Lead Mower Equipment Operator I

#### *Personnel Transfer (Lateral)-*

Superior Court Clerk to Administrative Assistant in Magistrate Court

Mr. Rapson stated that the following were retreat discussions that were not funded in the budget: Magistrate Court Law Clerk (\$63,325) or part-time Law Clerk (\$20,293), Superior Court Deputy Clerk I (\$46,617).

He stated that the workload was not enough to justify a full-time or part-time, but it was there to justify the administrative person moving over. He continued that the Superior Court Deputy Clerk I was not funded and that he was optimistic that Clerk of Courts Shelia Studdard could work with the judges to keep the calendars on schedule.

Commissioner Brown stated that it was his understanding that currently the way they are doing things was not in line with what was required. Mr. Rapson stated that he suggested using the law clerks in superior court or to ask the attorneys to write the order. He stated that these two ways should be exhausted before funding this position.

Other requests not funded:

#### *Salary/Supplement-*

Superior Court Judges Supplement (\$7,000), State Court Judge DUI Supplement (\$6,000), State Court Judge Stipend (\$3,600)

#### *Agencies/Non-Profit*

Senior Services- Saturday Hours (\$32,000) and non-profit funding including Bloom.

He stated that over \$74,000 was funded for Senior Services, but that it did not include the cost for Saturday hours. He stated that the Board had not taken action for the non-profit and so funding for Bloom was also not included in the budget to be consistent with Board direction from the previous year.

Mr. Rapson continued the presentation with a break-down of the cost for supplements for the Judge's supplements from \$43,000 to \$50,000.

Vice Chairman Ognio stated that for the Griffin Judicial Circuit cost, the county's cost would be \$15,252, he asked if the other counties would pick up the remainder. Mr. Rapson stated that last year they agreed to do the \$50,000. He stated that he was not confident that the request had been made to them again this year, but he was confident that if asked, that they would say yes. Mr. Rapson stated that he could ask that question.

Commissioner Charles Rousseau asked if State Court was state funded or grant funded. Mr. Rapson stated "yes". He stated that state law allowed for a \$6,000 allocation to all Superior Court Judges for running a DUI or drug court. He stated that was currently what was happening and the State Court Judge was not receiving that allocation, which was the reason for the request.

#### *Alternate Pay & Classification Scale*

Mr. Rapson stated that staff mirrored what was done last year regarding the merit pay on a bell-curve. He stated that the budget included \$25,000 to true up the pay-scale. He stated that the county had a graded scale (5-26) based on classification. He stated that each of the grades had eighteen steps and each step was worth 2.50%. He stated that staff was proposing to take the eighteen steps and create a step between each one to take the steps from eighteen to thirty-five steps, which would reduce the value of a step change from 2.50% to 1.25%. This would give more flexibility for merit increases and promotions. He stated that the proposal was to use the same approach for the merit increase. He stated that instead of a 5% merit increase it would be 0%, 1.25%, 2.5% and 3.75% increase. He explained the bell-curves; 10-70-20 curve and the 15-35-35-15. He stated that staff believed 15-35-35-15 was a better choice.

Commissioner Brown stated that he would suggest a side-by-side comparison at the next presentation. Mr. Rapson stated that it was identical from last year.

### **Maintenance & Operations (M&O)**

#### *Property Casualty Insurance*

Mrs. Parrott stated that Property/Casualty Insurance increase of 3% was included in the budget.

Enhancement of general aggregate from \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000

Cyber/Data Breach increased from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000

Flood and Earthquake Coverage increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000

#### *Vehicle/Heavy Equipment Replacement*

Continued funding to ensure future funding. Fire and EMS were significantly increased based on increased pricing and implementation of new EMS Zone #6. The existing net position was \$8,240,237.

#### *Road Department*

Mowing services expanded for state route rights-of-way and local roads from 3-4 times annually to 5-6 times annually. Proposal to increase the Seasonal Worker starting pay from \$11.90 to \$13.80/hr to get applicants to apply.

Other M&O considerations included in the budget were: County Website Enhancements, SAGES Software Automation Improvements, GIS Services, Qpublic Hosting Enhancements, Security Awareness & Office 365 Training, Digest Valuation Enhancements, Paramedic Training Program, Employee Wellness, Countywide Needs Assessment and Outside Agency budgets (Senior Citizens Center).

Mrs. Parrott stated that Fayette County was 18 out of 19 regarding the millage rate. She stated that last year the county was 14 out of 19. She stated that both Fayette and Forsyth have AAA ratings along with Cobb and Gwinnett counties.

She reminded the Board of the upcoming public hearings for the budget:

First Public Hearing – June 14, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Second Public Hearing and Request for Budget Adoption – June 28, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

#### **4. Questions & Answers**

Commissioner Brown stated that he would like for staff to take a serious look at a part-time Magistrate Law Clerk. He stated that he would like to see some alternatives.

Mr. Rapson stated that his evaluation was that it was not warranted and if the Board wanted to fund the position, there was \$540,000 in Fund Balance to fund the position. He stated that in his mind it was not a funding issue, but rather an operational concern and that it was something that the Board would have to weigh in.

Commissioner Brown stated that the Magistrate Judge should be present at the next meeting. He stated that he supported the position because he felt it was something that needed to be done.

Mr. Rapson stated that staff supported the supplement for the DUI Court. He stated that positions hired under a grant are terminated after the grant goes away. He stated that if there was a supplement it would go away when the program went away.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that when talking about the health, welfare and vitality of a community and the issue of attracting families, the \$4.6 million for cultural and recreation and \$1.7 million for health and welfare, was dismal for a county like Fayette County. He stated that the amenities and services could be enhanced and he would like for the county to look at making an investment in those two particular areas. He continued that they were critical to the health and vitality to the Fayette community.

Commissioner Brown asked when a significant percentage of our consumer population using the services was coming from other counties, could we request funds from the state to assist with the funding.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that the county was mandated by the state to provide the service and so anyone who resided in Georgia can go anywhere to these facilities. He stated that he would like to consider, with border counties, that if Fayette County was going to share residents, perhaps we could share a complex or facility for people to get the services needed. He stated that it would be a unique and innovate way to approach this situation. He stated because the staff and service delivery in Fayette County was so good, people prefer to come to Fayette County.

Commissioner Brown stated that he believed that was worth going to the state to address and/or to ACCG.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that the county needed to think out of the box and strategically.

Mr. Rapson stated that there was a cultural recreation plan funded in the budget for \$45,000. Commissioner Rousseau stated that before adopting the budget he would like to see what was done from 2003 to now with the plan that was paid for in 2003.

Commissioner Brown stated that the additional money for the mowing program, that it was an esthetic thing that made citizens feel better about the appearance of the county, but that it was very much an economic development issue.

#### **5. Closing Comments**

#### **6. Adjournment**

Commissioner Brown moved to adjourn the May 24, 2018 Budget Workshop meeting. Vice Chairman Ognio seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

The May 24, 2018 Budget Workshop meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

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Tameca P. White, County Clerk

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Eric K. Maxwell, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of May 2018. Referenced attachments are available upon request at the County Clerk's Office.

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Tameca P. White, County Clerk