

May 12, 2015
Statesboro, GA

Special Called Meeting

The Board of Commissioners met for a called meeting at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Room of the North Main Annex. Chairman Nevil called the meeting to order and welcomed staff.

Mrs. Olympia Gaines, Clerk of the Board, performed the roll call of the commissioners and staff. The following commissioners were present: Chairman Nevil, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Mosley, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Gibson, and Commissioner Ethridge. The following staff were present: County Manager Tom Couch, Assistant County Manager Andy Welch, Chief Financial Officer Whitney Richland, Chief Accountant Kristie King, Management Analyst Cindy Steinmann, EMS Director Doug Vickers, Fire Chief Chris Ivey, Training Officer Ben Tapley, Public Safety Director Ted Wynn, Public Safety Deputy Director Lee Eckles, Statesboro-Bulloch Parks and Recreation Director Mike Rollins, Sheriff Lynn Anderson, Chief Deputy Jared Akins, Probation Director Christie Black, Accounting Tech Carol Waters, 911 Director Kelly Barnard, Shelter Manager Wendy Ivey, and Animal Control Officer Joey Sanders.

After Roll Call, Chairman Nevil asked for a motion to open the floor for budget interviews to begin. Commissioner Mosley offered a motion to open the floor for the budget interviews to begin. Commissioner Rushing seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously with Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Thompson and Commissioner Mosley all voting in favor of the motion.

Mr. Couch discussed the general agenda for the budget interviews and stated that the proposed budgets and supplemental requests had been prepared with the intent to provide the governing authority and the general public an opportunity and a mechanism to gain information concerning the purposes for which local revenues are proposed to be spent; with further intent to provide appropriate information to assist the governing authority and other elected officials of the County in carrying out their lawful responsibilities; and, with further intent to provide for the collection and reporting of information so as to assist local policymakers and taxpayers in understanding and evaluating county government service delivery and operations.

Mr. Couch called on Sheriff Anderson and Chief Deputy Akins to begin their presentation for the Sheriff's office and its sub-budget components to include: Patrol/Administration), Jail, Crime Investigation, Crime Suppression and Courthouse Security. Sheriff Anderson began by stating that he and Chief Deputy Akins spent a lot of time preparing the budget report and believed that it captures the various components of the Sheriff's office. Chief Deputy Akins began by discussing the services provided by the Sheriff's office and the department's impact upon the county. He discussed the Sheriff's office, Jail, Crime Investigation, Crime Suppression and Courthouse Security sub-budgets in great detail. Chief Deputy Akins reported challenges with shortages in retaining patrol deputies, which affects the department's ability to maintain appropriate support, affects the costs of overtime payments, and presents a safety concern when a limited number of deputies are available with the increase in population and service calls. Chief Deputy Akins stated salaries at the entry level and for dispatchers have lagged behind area norms and as a result retention has become a critical issue as the department is constantly hiring and training new employees because of resignations.

Chief Deputy Akins stated they have utilized alternate sources of funding such as inmate commissary, inmate phone accounts, and housing of federal inmates to pay for vital and unexpected needs, but these revenues cannot be counted on because of fluctuation. He stated the revenues from the inmate phone account will cease in the near future due to pending changes put forth by the Federal Communications Commission on inmate phone accounts. Chief Deputy Akins stated as a result of these challenges faced in FY2015, their supplemental request for the FY2016 Budget includes the following: (1) 8 certified patrol deputies equipped with vehicles and necessary equipment; (2) replace funding for critical services from the inmate phone account with funding from the General Fund; (3) raise dispatcher (Grade 12) pay to equate to patrol deputy (Grade 14) pay; (4) increase starting salaries for jail deputies; (5) replace aging vehicles in a fleet of nearly 100 vehicles to keep maintenance costs down; (6) develop a Public Safety Planning Group with the Commissioners to ensure that all public safety staff have an effective voice in long term planning for growth; (7) add training (for travel, tuition and ammunition) and K-9 line item accounts to current budget.

Chief Deputy Akins stated long term goals included: (1) looking at additional expansion for jail and administrative office space within the next 3-5 years; (2) planning for growth of the department's level of activity and operation in the coming future; (3) long range planning

between Public Safety, staff and the Commissioners remains critical in the coming years. Sheriff Anderson and Chief Deputy Akins answered questions relating to their budget presentation and thanked the Commissioners for their time and continued support.

The meeting was reconvened after a recess for lunch. Chairman Nevil called on Mr. Wynn to present the next presentation. Mr. Wynn and Mrs. Barnard described the E911 program and the services the department provides. Mr. Wynn stated that Bulloch County is one of the few non-metro counties in Georgia that is self-sustaining from surcharge and contract fees alone. Mr. Wynn stated E911 supplemental requests were as follows: (1) purchase a new copier with an estimated cost of \$3,000; (2) purchase a new CAD anywhere program which will allow any responding agency to view open case cards for their department, obtain times on open cases, or print or view closed cases that are needed for their reports, and have the ability to see Bulloch's map program from their computer, iPad, tablet or smart phone. The current system has the option to have CAD anywhere and the estimated cost will be \$5,400 with E911, EMS and County Fire splitting the cost among the three departments; (3) replace carpet in E911 center with an estimated cost of \$2,000; (4) re-certify dispatchers in Emergency Medical Dispatch, which will allow dispatchers to give pre-arrival instructions to a 911 caller. The previous certification company went out of business and the department would need to re-certify dispatchers under a nationally known EMD system, with an estimated cost of \$8,000 to \$12,000.

Mr. Wynn stated that other supplemental budget request includes replacement of the 911 telephone system with an estimated cost of \$195,000 for a new system; this will include 5 years of service and supports. He stated the current radio system also needed to be upgraded and the department was currently using an 800 MHz P-15/Analog system for which service and support would expire in 2017. The estimated cost to upgrade is \$1.5 million plus the cost of radios. Mr. Wynn recommends expanding the 700 MHz P-25/Digital system, which is the highest radio standard in public safety. He stated the County could save about \$3,000 per month by constructing a new tower near the Stilson Elementary School Recreation Department area. The estimated cost to expand this system is \$2.6 million plus the cost of new radios. Mr. Wynn stated that lastly they are requesting a radio console upgrade as current consoles were purchased in 2000 and will need to be replaced by 2017 to support either the 800 MHz or 700 MHz radio systems. The estimated cost will be \$510,000.

Mr. Couch called on Mrs. Black to present the budget report for the Probation Department. Mrs. Black stated that they are requesting \$40,000 in supplement requests to include: (1) \$900 for education and training of staff; (2) \$5,000 for 6 new computers and 3 new monitors; (3) \$30,000 for a new vehicle to replace the two current vehicles. Mrs. Black stated by downsizing this will save the County the cost of maintaining auto insurance, vehicle maintenance and repairs for two vehicles; (4) \$800 to purchase 8 lobby chairs; (5) move \$1,000 to rental equipment to offset some of the rental equipment costs; (6) \$1,500 for rental equipment costs; (7) \$500 initial cost for shred company agreement; (8) \$300 to purchase updated accounting software; (9) an additional \$2,000 to cover phone costs; (10) \$500 for increased cost of postage for probationer notification. Mrs. Black stated that they would like to implement a cash fee to probationers for copies of documents to offset the cost of paper and toner.

Mr. Couch called on Mr. Vickers and Mr. Wynn to present the budget report for EMS. Mr. Wynn provided a brief overview of EMS services and its impact upon the County. Mr. Wynn stated that EMS supplemental requests include the following: (1) reclassification of personnel by reclassifying 3 current supervisors to the title of captain and the addition of 3 lieutenants with an estimated cost of \$2,000 in uniform changes and an additional \$200,323 in salaries and fringe benefits for four additional full time personnel; (2) \$3,600 for internal audit expenses to check the level of service billed, crew documentation, signatures, and ALS/BLS modifiers used to ensure accuracy; (3) \$4,000 for finger reader security system needed to document who, when and what employees are accessing in a secured area; (4) \$150,000 per unit per year for the next 3 years for new ambulances; (5) \$29,000 per unit per year for the next 3 years for 12 lead monitor equipment; (6) \$25,000 for a new pickup because the current vehicle is not reliable and is needed to transport equipment and personnel; (7) \$5,000 for server upgrade.

Mr. Couch called on Mr. Sanders and Mr. Wynn to present the budget report for Animal Control and Humane Enforcement. Mr. Wynn gave a brief overview of the department's services and its impact upon the County and City. Mr. Wynn stated the department's supplemental requests include the following: (1) \$3,000 to assist with the cost of striping and transferring existing equipment to the new vehicle; (2) \$4,800 for equipment such as traps, snares and tranquilizer equipment; (3) \$1,200 for ongoing training for personnel.

Mr. Couch called on Ms. Ivey to present the budget report for the Animal Shelter. Ms. Ivey gave a brief overview of the services the Animal Shelter provides and its impact upon the

County. Ms. Ivey stated the supplemental request includes the following: (1) \$6,950.40 added per year to the salary line for Danielle Mercer to compensate Ms. Mercer for the duties she performs; (2) \$5,000 for building maintenance to restore the old shelter building for euthanizing purposes; (3) \$600 for ongoing training to stay abreast of changes in laws concerning animal protection; (4) \$1,045 for security cameras for supply and outside areas as there have been issues with theft of dog and cat food by community volunteers; (5) \$4,950 for additional cameras to ensure full grounds security; (6) \$1,000 to establish a department website to attract and bring more community wide awareness of services; (7) \$1,500 for 3 new desktop computers. Ms. Ivey stated going forward in the coming years, the animal shelter will need to upgrade the current Shelter Pro program at a cost of \$1,750 per year, hire a new shelter attendant at a cost of \$18,000 per year, purchase an industrial washer and dryer at a cost of \$4,000, and look at beginning an animal registration program which would draw in possible revenue for the County.

Mr. Couch called on Mr. Wynn to present the budget report on Public Safety. Mr. Wynn provided a brief overview of services. He stated the supplemental requests include the following: (1) \$1,000 added to the current travel line item to attend the National Emergency Management Conference in Miami. Mr. Wynn stated that looking ahead, the department will need to replace the current vehicle for the Assistant Director as it is 8 years old and having mechanical problems from time to time. He stated another option would be to look at the hand-down option in which the Director's vehicle would be handed down to the Assistant Director, and the Assistant Director's vehicle would be handed down to 911 Addressing as these vehicles typically have low mileage and this would extend the life of all vehicles.

Mr. Couch called on Chief Ivey to present the budget report on Fire and Rescue. Chief Ivey gave an overview of fire and rescue services. He stated the supplemental requests include the following: (1) hiring 18 firefighters over a 3 year period by hiring 6 firefighters at a time; (2) hiring a secretary at a cost with benefits of \$28,634.33 to help with administrative functions and reduce the amount of overtime for Training Officer Ben Tapley; (3) requesting an additional \$3,700 for education and training, and to assist with community outreach programs; (4) 3 new fire engines over a three year period or more with an estimated cost of \$900,000; (5) 50 sets of turnout gear over a three year period with an estimated cost of \$60,000; (6) 100 breathing air bottles over a three year period with an estimated cost of \$80,000; (7) new fire hose over a three year period with an estimated cost of \$60,000; (8) portable Cascade System with an estimated

cost of \$150,000; (9) 10 new laptops with an estimated cost of \$7,000; (10) 3 new sub-stations over a three year period with an estimated cost of \$90,000; (11) command vehicle; (12) new rescue tools and equipment estimated to cost \$90,000.

Mr. Couch asked Fire Chief Tim Grams with the City of Statesboro to provide an overview of the City's challenges. Chief Grams stated that the City was facing similar challenges to the County and has had issues maintaining staff in order to meet ISO requirements. He reported that they currently have money earmarked for a third station, but the location had not been determined. Chief Grams stated in June or July of this year there will be a presentation on long hose lay which he recommends participants attend for educational and training purposes. He stated that incorporating this long hose lay could help the ISO rating. After some discussion, Mr. Couch thanked Chief Grams for his time and participation in the meeting.

Chairman Nevil asked for comments and questions concerning the information that had been presented. Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Nevil adjourned the meeting.

J. Garrett Nevil, Chairman

Attest: _____
Olympia Gaines, Clerk