

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET WORK SESSION I**

May 15, 2018
5:00 PM

Board Members Present: J. Harry Lange, Susan Andrews, Martha Chewning, Becky Langston, Jim Woods. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk.

Others Present: Stacy Haralson (Clerk of Superior Court), Clyde "Bit" Geter (Animal Control), Jeff Culpepper (Water Works), Stephen Waskey (Recreation), Cynthia Nelson (Prison), Bucky Searcy (EMS), Jimmy Carver (EMS), Mike Brown (Public Works), Thomas Lakes (Probate), Clint Chastain (Finance Officer)

CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Lange called the meeting to order and said the purpose was for the discussion of the proposed budget for FY 18/19. He ask Randy Dowling, County Manager, to review same.

Overview. Mr. Dowling said that this is the proposed recommended budget for FY 18/19; that it is on the County's website; that overall, it's \$39.4 million, which is a decrease of \$6.7 million (14.5%) from FY 17/18; that the General Fund is \$22.4 million, which is a decrease if \$1.8 million (7.5%) from FY 17/18; that the General Fund does not contain a tax increase but is balanced by transferring funds from Water Works (\$150,000), Solid Waste (\$1.4 million) and \$554,583 from General Fund; that Special Revenue Funds decreased by \$982,156 (42.4%) from FY 17/18 and include Confiscated Assets, Jail Fund, Law Library Funds, Drug Abuse Treatment & Education Fund, Emergency 9-1-1 Fund, and Hotel/Motel Tax Fund; that the E-911 system is balanced by a transfer of \$550,274 from the General Fund, which is a decrease of \$377,505 (40%) from FY 17/18; that Capital Project Funds decreased \$9 million (53.7%) from FY 17/18, and include the Public Improvements Authority Fund, SPLOST 2004, SPLOST 2014, TSPLOST 2013, Economic Development Project Fund, and Rails to Trails Project Fund; and that the Debt Service remains the same as FY 17/18; that the Enterprise Funds increased by \$3 million (30.1%) from FY 17/18 and include the Airport Fund, Solid Waste Fund, and Water Works Fund. There being no questions or comments from the Board, Chairman Lange suggested that the Board hear from the Constitutional Officers/Department Heads in attendance. There were no objections.

Board of Equalization (Department 53). Stacy Haralson, Clerk of Superior Court, appeared before the Board and said there were no changes from FY 17/18.

Clerk of Superior Court (Department 07). Stacy Haralson, Clerk of Superior Court, appeared before the Board and said that the vendor who indexes instruments (deeds, liens and plats) has increased their fee from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per instrument; that cost for jurors remains the same; that Printing & Binding, while initially requested to increase, has resulted in a slight increase over FY 17/18; that a mandate regarding efilng goes into effect January 1, 2019, and the County will receive \$2 for each case filed, and she would like to amend her technology agreement with the County to allow her to retain the fees and control the use of same; that she has used such funds to preserve her oldest deed book (which she displayed to the Board) and the cost for doing so was \$5,800; and that she wants to continue the preservation process with her other books that are required to be kept. In response to a question from Commissioner Chewning as to why the juror fees are included in "dues and fees", Clint Chastain, CFO, said that the Chart of Accounts indicates that such payments to jurors are considered "fees".

Superior Court (Department 22). Stacy Haralson, Clerk of Superior Court, appeared before the Board and said that this department is basically the same as last year; and that it includes the salaries of current judges as well as two retired judges.

Law Library (Department 38). Stacy Haralson, Clerk of Superior Court, appeared before the Board and said that there are no changes from FY 17/18 and urged the Board to visit the courtrooms to see the technological improvements that have been made.

Animal Control (Department 21). Clyde "Bit" Geter, Animal Control Officer, appeared before the Board and said that he would like to have a part-time person to work on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday; that he had requested the paving of the drive for ADA purposes since it is difficult for some people to traverse the gravel; that the two storage buildings are needed - one to use for housing cats and kittens and the other for storage; that they receive free dog food from Meriwether County, who gets more than they can use; that both storage buildings would need some HVAC in order to keep the cats/kittens comfortable and to prevent the dog food from molding; that two vehicles will be most beneficial in allowing him and Anna Donaldson to respond to animal issues; and that he works 10 hours days and Ms. Donaldson work 8 hours days and each work every other weekend. In response to a question regarding the storage buildings, Mr. Dowling said that he had not yet followed up with the high school construction class about constructing the storage buildings but that possibly the Facilities Maintenance crew could construct them. In response to a question regarding the food obtained from Meriwether, Cynthia Nelson, Warden, said that Meriwether gets the food through a grant and offered to share it. Chairman Lange commented that the Board realizes there is a need for a part-time employee to help at the Animal Shelter.

Water Works (Department 93). Jeff Culpepper, Water Works Director, appeared before the Board and said that he is not opposed to the water department paying its share of the administrative costs of about \$150,000; that he is opposed to and cautions against transferring water funds to balance the General Fund (another \$150,000); that they send out about 8,400 water bills; that the costs for various upcoming projects really depend on the size of pipe needed; that with the US 27 widening, GDOT may or may not assist in funding the water line relocation. Chairman Lange commented that Water Works funding needs to be kept viable for various water emergencies.

Community Center (Department 28). Stephen Waskey, Recreation Director, appeared before the Board and said that staff will be educated on the playground equipment; that he plans to create a magazine to advertise recreation programs and events; that the lights in the gym have been converted to LED and they are working on conversion in the pool area; that the pool heater needs an enclosure of some sort; that the fitness equipment has daily issues and servicing is difficult because parts come from Europe; and that he plans to have furniture in the pool patio area, which is a vacant area, and will consist of bolted down round picnic tables, benches, and a grill. Discussion regarding membership included that there are possible 3,000 members; that some type of invoice needs to be sent to members regarding the renewal of their memberships; that a survey was sent out and only 50 responses have been received, but a computer will be set up on the check-in counter so that more responses can be obtained. Mr. Waskey said he is considering opening on Wednesdays during the summer and to charging \$5 per person to use the facility if they are not a member.

Recreation (Department 32). Stephen Waskey, Recreation Director, appeared before the Board and said that he plans to have Ellerslie Park open during the next fiscal year; that he hopes to apply for a grant for playground equipment; that his employees will be trained on field maintenance through the GRPA; that there are fencing issues at Moultrie Park particularly with four backstops that are collapsing; that regarding Pine Mountain Valley Park, there are no plans for improvements, other than for maintenance to take place more often than it has, to replace the basketball goals, that the Pine Mountain Chamber of Commerce appears to be more interested in replacing the tennis court with batting cages rather than improving the tennis court, and that Koch Foods will be providing new picnic tables that will be concreted in place; that portable pitching mounds will allow C Ball to use the fields when the coachpitch baseball is not using the fields (they don't use mounds) and give him more flexibility in scheduling of fields; that the portable mounds have field turf on them; that he would really like to have four mounds, but two would help; that he has requested two field groomers to properly prep the fields and to replace the one that barely functions;

Prison (Department 15). Cynthia Nelson, Prison Warden, appeared before the Board and said that while the budget is basically the same as FY 17/18, there is an increase in repair and maintenance of equipment because such is in constant need of repair; that dues and fees increased due to the upcoming PREA audit, which occurs every three years; that the CCTV system project is progressing; and that the water system heater is needed because the current one is going to fail sooner or later and repairs are costly.

EMS (Department 08). Bucky Searcy, Assistant Chief, and Jimmy Carver, Chief, appeared before the Board. Due to Mr. Carver's voice issues, Mr. Searcy discussed the EMS budget. He distributed and reviewed statistical information to include billed runs, non-billed runs, revenue, collections, write-offs, and ambulance data. He said that they have chosen not to fill four full-time positions and will use part-time employees instead, therefore, salary and benefits have been reduced as a result; that another admin vehicle is needed because the two shift supervisors share a vehicle; and that the jaws of life tools range in age from 10 years to 24 years and new ones are necessary.

NEXT BUDGET WORK SESSION. Randy Dowling, County Manager, announced that the next two Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for Tuesday, May 22, and Tuesday, May 29, beginning at 4:00 PM in the Commission Chambers (Room 223) of Courthouse.

ADJOURNMENT