

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

May 23, 2023  
4:30 PM

Commissioners Present: Rob Grant, Susan Andrews (arrived 4:33 p.m.), Bobby Irions, Scott Lightsey, Greg Gantt.  
Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Clint Chastain, Chief Financial Officer; Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk.

**CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Grant called the meeting to order and said the purpose was for the continued discussion of the proposed budget for FY 23/24. He stated that at the last work session that they left off at the Tax Assessor and so we will start with the Tax Commissioner's budget. Chairman Grant also advised that the Sheriff, Probate Judge and Superior Court Clerk were in attendance and that we will hear from them also.

**Tax Commissioner** - No one in attendance and no questions.

**Vehicle Maintenance** - In response to a question from Commissioner Irions about the diesel mechanic position, Randy Dowling stated that he believes that the staffing needs are adequate right now. Commissioner Lightsey would like to move away from relying on prisoners for work. Discussion included that prisoners are utilized in a lot of areas for labor.

**Volunteer Fire Department** - Discussion included reductions; stipends; that the volunteer fire departments are not shielded from inflation; that the stipend was increased last year; that a new fire training building is being built; that SPLOST funds are customarily used for fire trucks; and that there may be a need for a vehicle replacement schedule .

**Outside Agencies** - Randy Dowling advised that they are the there were no changes.

**Special Revenue Funds** - Randy Dowling has advised that the ARP funds have been collected and mostly spent and the remaining funds are to finish up the Courthouse HVAC system, broadband, and some professional services for the elevated water tank on 315. Commissioner Irions believes that maybe some of the funds for broadband could be used for GIS. Randy Dowling thinks that some might be able to be used for the 911 radio system.

**Confiscated Asset Fund** - Randy Dowling advised that this fund is revenue generated by confiscated funds and spend by the Sheriff's Office.

**County Jail Fund** - Randy Dowling advised that this fund is a pass through and that funds are received from court fees and the funds are used to pay for the County Jail and Correctional Institution.

**Sheriff's Office** - Sheriff Mike Jolley addressed the Board and would like to stay in the cycle of getting vehicles each year and that the deputies budgeted last year were not hired due to not having vehicles for them. He stated that the four additional deputies in this year's budget are in addition to the four that were budgeted last year. He can only bring deputies in if he has the vehicles to put them in. He said that he would like to have the vehicles in the rotation and that the fourteen new vehicles were to replace fourteen vehicles. Randy Dowling said that vehicles could come out of SPLOST 2019 as it is designed to do but other items would need to come out of SPLOST 2019.

**Superior Court** - Sheriff Jolley stated that the Grand Jury recommended \$150.00 per day for the daily rate of pay for bailiffs but he recommends \$100.00 per day and that the rate is \$75.00 per day currently. Superior Court Clerk Stacy Haralson did clarify that the rate per day is the same whether they work two hours or a full day.

**County Law Library Fund** - Randy Dowling advised that they are the there were no changes.

**Drug Abuse Treatment & Education Fund** - Randy Dowling advised that they are the there were no changes and that these funds are spent by the Sheriff's Office.

**Emergency Telephone System Fund** - EMA/E911 Director Monty Davis informed the Board that he would like to get repeaters; that they have had to replace some due to lightning strikes; and that it would be approximately \$50,000 total for repeaters. County Manager Randy Dowling pointed out that the repeaters would be installed on non-County owned towers and, if the County changes systems, they may not be needed. Additionally, Mr. Davis stated that a recording license would be \$15,000.

**Hotel/Motel Tax Fund** - Chairman Grant advised that this fund was discussed at the meeting last Thursday.

**Local Victim Assistance Program Fund** - Randy Dowling stated that this fund was status quo.

**Public Improvements Authority Fund** - Randy Dowling advised that this fund is simply a pass through for existing debt.

**TSPLOST 2013** - Randy Dowling advised that this fund ended in December 31<sup>st</sup> of last year.

**SPLOST 2019** - Randy Dowling stated that this fund has typically paid for vehicles each year and that this year there aren't any included because other items took the place of vehicles. He stated that this fund could possibly pay for Sheriff's vehicles if some other items were taken out.

**TSPLOST 2023** - Vice-Chair Andrews suggested that the \$40,000 be moved from General Fund into TSPLOST for a roads and bridges master plan. Staff will verify that this would be feasible.

**Economic Development Project Fund** - Chairman Grant advised that the County has been working on the business park.

**Rails to Trails Project Fund** - Chairman Grant stated that this would come from the TSPLOST once the funds built up.

**Callaway Conservation Easement Fund** - This fund has been closed.

**Airport Fund** - Chairman Grant said that if people were unable to get out to the Airport Open House that they missed out and that the rain held off and it was a really good event. Randy Dowling stated that it was a well-attended event and was made successful with the work of the Chamber of Commerce, volunteers that flew the planes, and the Volunteer Fire Departments.

**Solid Waste Fund** - There were no questions related to the amounts included in the budget. Randy Dowling stated that it will be approximately \$280,000 for a suitable replacement Solid Waste truck and that after insurance funds of approximately \$160,000 that \$120,000 still remains needed for the replacement. There was a consensus of the Board to complete a budget amendment for this year's budget and create a purchase order for the Solid Waste truck. This will be ratified at the next regular meeting.

**Water Works** - Water Works Director Jeff Culpepper requested that \$26,000 be included in his budget for one of his positions to go from part-time to full-time.

**Probate Court** - Judge Thomas Lakes thanked everyone for the investment including \$50,000-\$60,000 of rolling file storage, restructure during Courthouse renovation, and scanning of documents.

Discussion was held related to including the electric basketball winches; six vehicles for the Sheriff's office; funds for the Volunteer Fire Departments; concerns about the losing of the football field due to the renovation; possible truck for EMS and truck for Recreation instead of utility vehicle; possibly taking \$70,000 for Agricultural Complex and use for other recreation items but the need to have a plan so that you know what it will be; the need for salary adjustments in Solid Waste; and that it is important to keep salaries at market value.

**NEXT BUDGET WORK SESSION.** Scheduled for 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 30, 2023.

**BUDGET PUBLIC HEARINGS.** First Public Hearing will be held during the June 6, 2023 Regular Session, and the second will be held during the June 20, 2023 Regular Session, with adoption by resolution to follow.

**ADJOURNMENT** The work session adjourned at 6:33 p.m.