



**MINUTES
WORK SESSION
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
APRIL 23, 2019**

Present: Moses Bell, Jimmy Ray Douglas, Mikel Trapp, Bertha Goins, Douglas Pauley, Cornelius Robinson, Clarence Gilbert, Council Members; Jason Taylor, County Administrator; Davis Anderson, Deputy County Administrator; Patti L. Davis, Clerk to Council.

Other Staff: Laura Johnson, Comptroller; Anne Bass, Deputy Comptroller

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (e), as amended, the following persons and/or organizations have been notified of the time, date and location of this meeting: The Independent Voice of Blythewood and Fairfield, The Country Chronicle, and one hundred twenty seven other individuals.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robinson called the Work Session to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Council Member Gilbert and seconded by Vice Chair Goins to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried unanimously 5-0.***

Council Member Trapp arrived at 5:02 p.m. and Council Member Pauley arrived at 5:04 p.m.

III. INVOCATION

Council Member Douglas led the invocation.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

A. FY 2018-2019 Budget:

Mr. Taylor reported the structure tonight will consist of six departments to include EMS, Fire, Museum, Sheriff's Department, Transit/Vehicle Maintenance and WIOA. After this, budgeted projects will be listed along with unbudgeted projects in order to put together a motion list going forward {please refer to prior Exhibits from prior Budget Work Session}.

- 100-101: EMS. The department consists of 43 employees with no current personnel requests. Raises given a few years back allowed the department to attract the needed personnel. The capital requests include rescue gear (water rescue kit which is OSHA required gear), stair chairs (ability to lift any size patient with existing equipment being 12 or 13 years old), rescue tools (battery operated to replace hydraulic equipment), inventory control system (a way to control inventory because all materials expire) and enclosed trailer (24 ft. for water rescue equipment). Council Member Bell inquired if the department presently have an inventory control system. Per Mr. Taylor, this is an area of weakness, which has been discussed going forward. Council Member Pauley inquired concerning the ambulance. Per Mr. Taylor, with the hospital closing, this was addressed last year. Mr. Tanner did state that next

year a new ambulance, possibly more, will need to be purchased. The ambulances idle a lot and are driven hard.

- 100-102-010,059: Fire Service. The department consists of 8 employees, 2 full-time firefighters and 144 volunteers. Personnel request is made in the amount of \$68,087 which will be put into a fund to pay off-duty volunteers to work hours in the County in order to provide coverage. Per Mr. Pope, this will probably be off-duty firemen usually from neighboring counties to help staff daytime stations. The service is extremely vulnerable during the daytime, and this is an attempt to fill this gap. The department is still actively recruiting, but over the last 10 years, this has not been a large number. The department has applied for the SAFER Grant toward getting 6 full-time firefighters. Council Member Bell would like, as part of the efforts to make the entire fire system one overall fire department with all being members of the fire association, for the department to pay for the member benefits for the retired firefighters. This would be in place to benefit their families in the event something happened to them. He would like to look into this for next year, and Mr. Pope agrees this is a good idea. This can be considered and taken from the 1%. Chairman Robinson inquired if the new firefighters will bounce around the County. Per Mr. Pope, he has a pretty good handle on where they need to be to cover the daytime shortages. Mrs. Johnson further explained that each fire station is broken out with individual budgets which are basically for utilities and fuel. Capital requests of a brush truck (oldest in fleet – 1999 model), service truck (1990 model), skid unit for brush truck and washer and extractors (3 were purchased under the current budget, 2 purchased for this year with a total of 6 around the County). Council Member Bell asked Mr. Pope to state the findings from the study from Boston and also asked if 6 washers would be enough. Per Mr. Pope, all new hires in Boston are told that there is a 40% chance of getting cancer from the job. Further, it would be good to have a washer in every station, but they are spread out and if it's not at your station, it's right next door. Mr. Pope also stated there is a lot of training involved with new volunteers and other challenges.
- 100-149, Museum: The department has 2 full-time employees. This year the windows will need to be addressed. Per Mr. Taylor, last year a study was performed to identify the most critical needs of the building. The door was addressed last year, and the windows must be addressed this year. Council Member Douglas inquired how many people visited the museum last year, were they from out of town and does Ms. Lyles have enough help. Ms. Lyles does not have the numbers with her but most visitors are from out of town. She does get a lot of traffic for the genealogy research. She relies on help from two extra volunteers. She would like another part-time person. Chairman Robinson asked if some of the accommodations tax could go toward this, and this will be looked into as it is geared toward anything that brings people in from the outside. This tax should start with the beginning of the next fiscal year. Council Member Bell inquired what is done for Black History Month. Because of the staff situation, Ms. Lyles has run out of volunteers to produce exhibits, so instead, long-term exhibits are showcased. There is also currently not much space for exhibits.
- 100-026(058), Sheriff's Department: No personnel requests at the present time. Mrs. Johnson went over the Budget Summary information. Sheriff

Montgomery then proceeded to present his information covering the makeup of the department. The schools pay the salaries of the SRO's, but the County must pay for the equipment. Council Member Bell inquired what the Sheriff thought about stand-alone offices. Per Sheriff Montgomery, he feels this would be great if the department were twice the current size. With the size of the department, he feels we are operating well by keeping the deputies in the patrol cars. Chairman Robinson and Council Member Pauley agree with Sheriff Montgomery. Council Member Gilbert inquired if the SRO's will be included in the 6% increase. Per Sheriff Montgomery, they would be included. Council Member Pauley inquired what the starting pay for deputies would be with the increase of 6%. Sheriff Montgomery stated the request is actually for 9% and the 9% would bring the starting pay to \$38,000. Currently, there are three full-time deputy positions open, one part-time position and one SRO position. Since the end of 2018, the department has lost two deputies to Kershaw County and one deputy to Orangeburg County, all due to more money. The request is 9% salary increase, which would make the department competitive with other agencies and assist in retention. Sheriff Montgomery then showed slides concerning vehicles that are being requested. The vehicles listed were very high mileage. Council Member Bell inquired if we had considered buying the truck which was used in Ridgeway. Sheriff Montgomery was approached about this vehicle but has not looked at it and does not know if it can be used. Council Member Pauley inquired if there was a way in the future that patrol cars could be on a mileage-based system to rotate in and out as it appears most of the Sheriff's vehicles are past this point, and we are in the position of having vehicles beyond repair. Per Mr. Taylor, six were replaced last year, and he agrees that we need to get on a cycle to not let them get to this point. Mr. Anderson reported in the past there was a vehicle replacement fund. Once response vehicles got to 150,000 miles, they were replaced because this would become a liability. EMS and Fire was part of this; however, the fund has to be funded. Council Member Douglas inquired where the vehicles are located and if they will be auctioned off. Per Sheriff Montgomery, the vehicles are scattered, and they will be auctioned off using State surplus. Council Member Douglas also stated he does not feel 9% is out of range as it was agreed last year when EMS got their raise that the Sheriff's Department would be looked at next. He feels it would be cheaper to do this instead of retraining officers. Council Member Pauley also agrees we need to be competitive. Chairman Robinson voiced concerns about being top heavy, and Sheriff Montgomery stated this was taken into consideration last year when the raises were distributed. Per Mr. Taylor, Finance will determine the number at the 9% raise versus 6% to bring back to Council, and this can be put on the motion list. Chairman Robinson also requested a financial analysis of the vehicles. The capital requests were listed totaling 12 vehicles. Per Mr. Taylor, the six vehicles for the SROs are not included in the proposed budget. Council Member Bell inquired if some of the vehicles taken out of service could be used for the SRO vehicles; however, those vehicles are gone per Sheriff Montgomery. Council Member Pauley had concern over having the SROs in the older vehicles due to having to transport kids out of the County. Council Member Gilbert inquired if the School District has been approached about sharing some of the vehicle expense. Sheriff Montgomery has done this in the past

but feels it would be helpful for the Council to do this. To be clear, at this time, the budget includes 6% increase and 6 vehicles; however, the Sheriff has requested 9% and 12 vehicles. Council Member Pauley asked for more comparison information for 6% and 9% increase and 6 versus 12 cars. Council Member Pauley asked Sheriff Montgomery how long he has been sheriff and what was the starting salary for a deputy then. Sheriff Montgomery has been sheriff for five years and the starting salary was \$32,000. It was decided to break so Finance could determine the new numbers.

{Recess 6:07 p.m. to 6:17 p.m.}

Per Mr. Taylor, going from 6% to 9% would add another \$109,000 to the budget. Council agreed to discuss the increase and the vehicle situation further.

- 206-056-000 (004, 005, 050), Transit/Vehicle Maintenance. No personnel requests at the present time. Per Mrs. Johnson, Transit is funded by state and federal funds and local funds (County funds). They are basically Medicaid driven, meaning they do more Medicaid rides than local. The grant is for the local and other operational costs, so the County covers most of the costs, about 60-65% of expenditures. The Medicaid rides are under contract with Logisticare. The state's grant timeline is different from our budget time line. Based on what the numbers are, this will be adjusted by doing an amended budget. Ridership is increasing and the hope is to fill the open positions. Capital requests include three buses to be replaced due to mileage. Council Member Douglas inquired if there is a charge to transport back and forth to Columbia. Per Ms. Holmes, if this is on the public side, there is a fee; however, if it's on the Medicaid side, the contract covers it. Trips are made to Columbia three or four times a day. Trips must be made wherever the citizens need to go. Council Member Pauley is amazed the County is in this situation with the vehicles and feels that every department needs to be on some type of rotational basis with vehicles. Mr. Anderson agrees, and this policy was changed by a previous Council. He has asked Ms. Holmes and Mr. Mozie to look at this. With Mrs. Johnson's new fixed asset person, this will be another way to keep track of this. Vice Chair Goins inquired if the past system was effective, and if so, it makes sense to do this so as not to get hit all at one time. The state does provide buses from year to year but not all of them. Per Ms. Holmes, roughly there are 850 trips out of County a month. Also, Ms. Holmes is attempting to put more routes in place for local routes and also the on-demand service. Questions concerning Active Daycare and Precious Daycare, but they can only go a set number of miles, such as 15 miles. Ms. Holmes believes Council on Aging has the same rules. Council Member Douglas inquired how much income transit brings in each year. Per Mrs. Johnson, for federal this amount was \$56,090 and state \$196,494. Mr. Mozie discussed capital requests. Ms. Holmes also stated that in working closer with the Comet system for the public system, she wanted to do branding. If more public miles are done, the department can get more funding from the state. She asked Mrs. Davis to send out an email to Council requesting something to represent each district, and she asked Council to

please respond.

- 241-041 (042, 069), WIOA. Mr. Anderson explained that this is all grant funded with no personnel requests. The department has three programs, a youth program, a dislocated worker program and an adult program. Per Mr. Taylor, the grant funding notified the County that the building was not ADA accessible and that we must modify the building to be in compliance. This will be done out of this year's budget and handled mostly by the County crew. This must be done or the grant would be lost.

{ Recess 6:45 p.m. to 7:25 p.m. }

Mr. Taylor began this portion of the meeting by stating some of the projects have been discussed with each individual department and hearing no objections, these will go forward. The following is the list of unbudgeted projects which have been discussed or Council members have asked to be considered. The information will be given with questions answered, and a motion list will be put together for votes at the next Council meeting of whether or not to add these items to the budget.

- Code enforcement officer in the amount of \$55,000 to address blight. Council Member Pauley was contacted by several citizens who were complaining about vehicles being in yards with no tags and ruining the community. When he inquired, he was told that the County only had one code enforcement officer. He feels the only way to address the blight and deal with these issues is to get another officer. Council Member Douglas inquired could the other employees not perform these duties. Per Mr. Anderson, a code enforcement officer must go through level 3 training at the Sheriff's Department. There is an open (frozen) position, and this could be reactivated. We are on a call-in complaint basis, but to truly get code enforcement up to par, they need to go out and look for things and be proactive instead of reactive.
- Adjustment for in-mate pay: Currently around \$38,000 is spent, and the thought is to go from \$4 a day to \$5 a day which would cost about \$7500 a year. Council agreed the inmates do good work, and we depend on them.
- Promise Program: We have had discussions concerning the program and met with Dr. Rhames and Dr. Green. Midlands Tech initially asked for \$150,000. Dr. Green has agreed to put forth \$75,000 with the County putting forth \$75,000. Council Member Douglas would like for the building to be a campus instead of an office building. Chairman Robinson agrees, and this was addressed with Dr. Rhames. The money would be held and Dr. Rhames would have to draw out of it as needed. Chairman Robinson would also like a response concerning campus advisement and core classes. Vice Chair Goins would also like for this to be in place.
- Economic Development building. This item was stricken from the list at this time.
- 911 dispatchers: An additional 2% with dispatch totaling 5%. These are critical life/health/safety type positions and must be filled. 911 is the lowest paid out of all the life/health/safety positions.
- Two mini parks: The cost would be approximately \$100,000. Council Member Trapp stated in District 3 the mini-parks are well used. Property has

been purchased on 99 in Blair and in Blackstock for the parks. In-house crews will clean the property and building maintenance will also be utilized.

- Water and sewer: To show good faith, the County needs to purchase a site for the new sewer plant. It is estimated to be about \$400,000.
- Chamber: In relation to the accommodations and hospitality tax, the Chamber amount should be increased by \$25,000. From a formula standpoint, they will receive more money from the local taxes. Mr. Taylor has discussed this with Gene, and he is willing to allocate this back to one of our projects to build public restrooms for the Farmer's Market.
- Good Samaritan House: Last year we tried to work with Christ Central Ministries to move them to a more appropriate facility. A building swap was looked into with the old Behavioral Health building, and in doing so, the agreement was to allocate an additional \$10,000 for a set number of years toward the building swap. This was an attempt to improve downtown. Initially, Mr. Jones had agreed to the swap and then backed out.
- Ridgeway sports complex: Currently, the cost is at \$1.5M. This is based on the fact that the previous centers were half court and essentially cost right at \$1M. No one is satisfied with the half court. This project would not be completely done in the next budget year and, instead, would be a 16-18 month project. Mr. Taylor would suggest putting \$300,000 to \$350,000 for the next year which would be for engineering and design work and land clearing. Council Member Bell would like to put \$800,000 to start with in case the project gets further in the first year. Vice Chair Goins would want to see the location before voting. Council Member Pauley agrees with Vice Chair Goins and would also like to see this located near the interstate for future growth. Council Member Trapp feels each member from their respective district should decide this with input from the citizens. Per Mr. Anderson, a few years back, the RamJack building was looked at for a recreation/gym and a library. A verbal option was placed and then it was sold to RamJack. Several studies from the COG, etc., basically said somewhere in that area should have a recreation center because it's one of the fastest growing areas in the County. The intention was to put one in this area. Council Member Pauley asked if the TY-Lin study addressed recreation. Council Member Bell read a response from Mr. Gjertson contained in the study. Council Member Trapp feels if the two current buildings had been full court, they would be utilized a lot more. He also hopes Council does not get into the habit of questioning when a Council member requests something specific for their area and tries to dictate where it should be located. Vice Chair Goins agrees we need things in certain districts, but she also looks at how to connect the County to make it work. Council Member Pauley understands we are elected to serve each respective district, but we must also keep in mind the County as a whole, not only to benefit our district but the whole County.
- Discretionary Fund: Mr. Taylor explained the fund which was originally \$2,500 with \$5,000 now being requested. Also, comments have been made to possibly use portions of this money to do community meetings. Mrs. Johnson gave a history of the fund from the finance perspective. Many procedures were put into place in order to keep track of this fund, but problems still existed. An application process was devised; however, on paper everything was great, but there were always problems with receipts, in

either getting the receipt or for what the money was spent on. A committee was put in place to determine who received the money, and many people, who were irate, called the office, and in the end, everyone had to be badgered concerning receipts. It put the committee in a very uncomfortable situation. Mrs. Johnson feels if this is approved, the rules will have to be very stringent going forward. Council Member Bell stated in Richland County it is totally discretionary to the council member. The responsibility is on the council member and not on Finance. Per Mrs. Johnson, in order to give out county funds, part of being diligent with the county funds is that we need to have documentation showing where the money is going. It could require a 1099 to be issued if receipts are not provided. Vice Chair Goins thanked Mrs. Johnson for giving this very important historical information.

Council Member Douglas left the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

- 6% or 9% for Sheriff's Department: The difference between 6% and 9% would be \$109,000. The SRO cars were taken out of the budget. This would be \$263,521 to be added back in for six cars.
- Vehicle replacement fund: This could be reinstated, but this would need to be funded, possibly \$100,000 per year. The requests would still fall in the budget process, but there would be a reserve for this. Discussion ensued concerning reimplementation of the fund and how it would work.

At 8:32 p.m., Council Member Gilbert made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Trapp. ***The motion carried unanimously 6-0.***

PATTI L. DAVIS
CLERK TO COUNCIL

CORNELIUS ROBINSON
CHAIRMAN