

BUDGET WORKSESSION
DARLINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL
DARLINGTON, SC

JUNE 11, 2015

A budget worksession of the County Council of Darlington County was held this 11th day of June 2015, at 10 a.m., at the Darlington County Courthouse, 5th Floor Courtroom, 1 Public Square, Darlington, South Carolina.

NOTICE OF MEETING

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the meeting notice, giving the date, time, and place of the meeting was mailed in advance to the local newspapers, persons requesting notification, and posted on the bulletin board at the entrance to the County Administrator's Office.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Bobby Hudson, Vice Chairman Robbin Brock, Mr. David Coker, Mrs. Wilhelmina P. Johnson, Ms. Mozella "Pennie" Nicholson, and Mr. Robert L. Kilgo, Jr.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chaplain Dannie Douglas Jr. and Mr. Marvin Le Flowers.

ALSO PRESENT

County Administrator Terence Arrington, Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, Emergency Services Director Charles Stewart, Codes Enforcement Director Randy Evans, Corrections Director Mitch Stanley, Environmental Services Director Renee Howle, Recycling Coordinator Paula Newton, Tax Collector Mae Helen Burch, Planning Staff Julie Ritz, Auditor Rosa Hudson, Tax Assessor Kyle Johnson, Human Resources Director Ginger Winburn, Interim Finance Director Sherman Dibble, Interim Historical Commission Director Kay Williamson, Sheriff Wayne Byrd, Chief Deputy Sheriff James Hudson, Economic Development Director Frank Willis, Prison Farm Director Jonathan McFadden, Building Maintenance/Janitorial Director Andrew Smith, Recreation Director Ken McRae, and others.

REPORTERS PRESENT

Mr. Jim Faile of the Messenger and Ms. Samantha Lyles of the News and Press.

Chairman Hudson called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Mr. Arrington handed out Resolution No. 628 as approved by Council last year regarding the directive given to the County Administrator to prepare a balanced budget that does not incorporate the use of Fund Balance. He indicated that he was striving to follow this directive in preparing the proposed budget. Therefore, a series of cuts were made and presented in the proposed budget.

Creosote Monitoring Line Item

Interim Finance Director Sherman Dibble reported that he contacted DHEC (South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control) regarding the creosote pit monitoring to confirm that it was still being monitored. As he receives more information regarding this matter, it will be presented to Council.

Mr. Arrington recommended that the funds (\$8,000) for creosote monitoring remain in the budget to see how things play out during the fiscal year. He also mentioned that should Council move the funds into the contingency line item, should something arise, the funds could be transferred.

Environmental Services

Mr. Arrington requested Council's direction as to how the county should proceed with the operation of the solid waste collection center.

Environmental Services Director Renee Howle stated that during Council's Worksession on June 9th, Council requested the cost savings for closing all the solid waste collection sites on Tuesdays and Thursdays as opposed to keeping the three busiest sites open. The cost savings for the three sites to also be closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays were estimated at about \$16,500 in addition to the \$29,000 already included in the budget for reduction.

Mr. Coker was in favor of the three busiest sites remaining open on Tuesdays and Thursdays. However, \$16,500 in savings could be used somewhere else.

Ms. Howle pointed out that with the three busiest sites being closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays would create issues with traffic flow in those sites when they reopen.

Mr. Kilgo stated that when this matter was discussed initially, there was a concern of people from other counties dumping in Darlington County. He said the proposal would alleviate this. Therefore, he would be in favor of the recommendation to close all the sites on Tuesdays and Thursdays – treating all the sites the same.

Chairman Hudson requested the weekly tonnage for each site.

Mr. Coker suggested implementing a sticker to be placed on vehicles rather than the attendants having to ask to see individuals' driver's license as proof of residency.

It was the consensus of Council for the staff to look into a sticker system for vehicles to show proof of residency when entering the solid waste collection sites.

Employee Incentive Pay

Mr. Arrington provided a revised handout regarding employee incentive pay. He pointed out that Council members do not receive incentive pay.

Mr. Kilgo suggested that instead of adding to the incentive pay in December, the county should give every full-time employee (335 full time employees) a flat bonus in late August/early September to help cover their children's school cost. He suggested a \$200 bonus for every full-time employee, which would equate to \$67,000 plus taxes, etc.

Mr. Arrington suggested a range instead of \$200, which he would present to Council. He asked whether Council would be in support of using funds from Fund Balance as a one-time expense for the employee bonus instead of using all the funds in the contingency line item.

Mr. Kilgo emphasized that he would rather the funds be taken from the contingency line item as oppose to Fund Balance.

Detention Center

Mr. Arrington presented a copy of his response to an email he received from Corrections Director Mitch Stanley regarding overtime at the Detention Center and the Detention/Correctional Center's proposed budget. He also provided a copy of Resolution No. 628 and the budget worksheet for the Detention/Correctional Center. Mr. Arrington stated that he understood that there was a need for additional overtime and the request was reduced in order to balance the budget. He pointed out that should Council decide to fund the overtime request, it would have to come from the contingency line item in order to keep the budget balanced.

Corrections Director Mitch Stanley talked about the amount of money requested for overtime and the amount recommended. He also talked about the problem with retaining employees at the Detention Center and indicated that if the pay scale is increased, overtime could be reduced.

Councilwoman Nicholson arrived at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Stanley explained that overtime was being used to fill vacant positions, and there were about seven people in the Detention Center to approximately 200 inmates and six vacancies.

Mr. Arrington asked Council's thoughts on carrying the salary savings forward for overtime at the Detention Center.

Mr. Stanley stated that this had been done in the past. When overtime went over the budgeted amount, he would take the extra in the regular salary line item due to vacancies throughout the year and transfer it to overtime. Therefore, he would not ask for overtime in addition to the budgeted amount. He mentioned that the former interim County Administrator reduced his regular line item during mid-year. Therefore, this reduced available funds in the Corrections budget that could have been transferred later for overtime.

Mr. Arrington stated that many of the line items did not change. Therefore, he asked whether there were slush funds within the line items that could be used to help increase overtime. He also asked whether there were funds that could be carried over in order to keep the budget balanced.

Mr. Stanley indicated that he did not request equipment purchase and did not see anywhere else where he could make major reductions. He talked about activities in the Sheriff's Department that would also involve the Detention Center and overtime.

Mr. Arrington talked about the cost for the medical services contract. He asked Council for its position on overtime for the Detention Center.

Council and Mr. Stanley talked about the reasons why employees were leaving and the current pay scale. He suggested the promotion of growth through incentives.

Mrs. Johnson suggested using \$1 million from Fund Balance to do what was necessary.

Chairman Hudson wanted to know by how much would overtime be reduced if salaries are increased to the level of officers in the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Arrington suggested a staffing analysis of the Detention Center regarding how overtime is used and scheduling.

Mr. Stanley talked about the staffing study in order to be in compliance with PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act).

Mr. Arrington indicated that the county did not need to hire 10 people immediately, but have a plan and the ability to pay the employees.

Mr. Kilgo talked about having Fund Balance in case of an emergency. Therefore, he was in favor of a balanced budget. He felt that overtime was a rip-off and every employee should be paid compensatory time.

Mr. Brock suggested that whatever funds, up to \$50,000, left in the Detention Center budget be carried over for overtime. Anything above \$50,000 would go back into Fund Balance. If the carry over funds does not amount to \$50,000, Council will address that at a later time.

Mr. Arrington stated that the staff would have to wait until the year-end closeout.

Mr. Brock commended Mr. Arrington's efforts for the six month trial programs.

Mr. Arrington clarified that it was the consensus of Council for the staff to come back with a year-end report and talk about any remaining funds. If there are remaining funds, the funds could be carried over to cover overtime at the Detention Center.

Mr. Coker requested a written report on how Mr. Stanley could eliminate overtime by hiring more people.

Mr. Stanley talked about working people at straight time and not having to continue backfilling positions.

Sheriff Wayne Byrd stated that this would not be something for this budget. The staff would compile the figures and present the information at a later date.

Chairman Hudson indicated that Council would receive this as information and schedule a follow-up for more discussion.

Ms. Nicholson requested the amount of revenue the county receives for housing federal inmates.

Mrs. Johnson questioned the overtime for EMS and implementing another shift.

Emergency Services Director Charles Stewart talked about funds for mandatory overtime and overtime. Mandatory overtime was based upon the employee's work schedule. He also mentioned that other scheduling methods would provide no savings.

In reference to the Janitorial Services Agreement, Mr. Arrington stated that had Council not considered this, there would have been a gap of about \$300,000.

Mrs. Johnson presented her opposition regarding the janitorial services contract.

Darlington County Humane Society

Mr. Arrington presented the Humane Society's budget request for \$221,600 and his recommendation of \$100,350. He pointed out that all departments were requested to cut back. He wanted to know Council's position on this matter since he had received several calls and emails regarding the funding for the Animal Shelter.

Ms. Nicholson stated that the amount projected in the budget was adequate for the Humane Society's operation of the Animal Shelter.

Mrs. Kathy McDonald, of the Humane Society, handed out various informational documents. She reported that the Human Society received \$150,984 last year and requested \$188,450 for the coming year. In addition to the funds received from the county, the Humane Society spent \$221,600 from fund raising events and donations. The documents presented

included a justification for the funds. Mrs. McDonald talked about the line items for the operation of the shelter and activities at the shelter that have nothing to do with operations, which the county does not pay for. County funds are only used to pay for those things mandated by the county and state animal codes. Mrs. McDonald indicated that the increase in funds was needed to give a bigger share of their salary cost to the county. She talked about the number of employees, the amount paid, the number of animals, the total payroll, the number of people they serve, and the various forms that must be completed for each animal. She requested that Council fund the Animal Shelter to meet state and county codes.

Mr. Kilgo asked Mr. Arrington about obtaining a relay so that the Animal Shelter could save on the cost for internet services. He suggested a \$5 or \$10 per year license fee for dogs/cats to help offset costs at the Animal Shelter.

Mr. Arrington pointed out that according to Resolution No. 628, which references the preparation of a balanced budget, he presented a budget based upon available resources. He explained that everyone experienced some discomfort in reference to their budget. It was now up to Council as to what Council wants to fund, what Council does not want to fund, what line items need adjusting, etc. Mr. Arrington said the staff could compile a study regarding the license fee to present to Council.

Ms. McDonald talked about grants received, the reduction in animal population, and the number of animals put down each year.

Mr. Coker suggested that Mr. Arrington and Mrs. McDonald discuss the funding for the Animal Shelter. He did not agree with the amount of the reduction.

Mr. Kilgo felt that the only way to increase funding to the Animal Shelter would be to take the funds from the contingency line item.

Budget Ordinance Format

Mr. Arrington explained that the budget ordinance format was changed so that there would be one ordinance as opposed to seven ordinances as was done in previous years. The staff presented a budget ordinance and a fee ordinance. He explained that should Council revert back to seven ordinances, an additional meeting would have to be scheduled in order for the ordinances to receive three readings prior to July 1st. Mr. Arrington mentioned that the County Attorney had reviewed the ordinance format and was in favor of it.

It was the consensus of the members present to proceed with the new budget ordinance format – one ordinance this year and go back to the seven ordinances next year if Council wants to. Mr. Kilgo stated that Council may like this format enough to continue use it.

Since there were no other questions or concerns, Chairman Hudson asked Mr. Arrington to meet with Mrs. McDonald and see what could be worked out.

Mrs. Johnson expressed her disagreement regarding the elimination of funds for Clemson Extension Service, the reduction in funds for DSS (Department of Social Services), the janitorial services contract, the three positions that were not funded, and no funding for PDRTA (Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority). She suggested using \$1 million from Fund Balance.

Mr. Arrington questioned whether Council had any directions for him in reference to the items Mrs. Johnson mentioned.

Mr. Kilgo stated that part of the \$100,000 that Clemson Extension Service was requesting was for cell phones. He questioned why the county would pay for their cell phones. Mr. Kilgo emphasized that some of the funds to Clemson could be reduced, but it would have to come from the Contingency line item. He indicated that this could be discussed further at Council's next regular meeting (June 15, 2015).

Mr. Arrington pointed out that the budget he presented was a proposed budget, and that he was directed by County Council to prepare a balanced budget. Whatever Council chose to change would be up to Council. The budget would not be final until Council approves the appropriations at third reading.

Council members commended Mr. Arrington for preparation of the proposed budget.

Mrs. Johnson stated that the county needed a full time grant writer at a salary of at least \$50,000.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Mr. Brock to adjourn the worksession. There being no further discussion, the worksession was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. JaNet Bishop, Clerk to Council

Bobby Hudson, Chairman
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of July 6, 2015.