

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

May 14, 2024  
4:30 PM

Commissioners Present: Rob Grant, Susan Andrews, Bobby Irions (arrived at 4:43 p.m.), Scott Lightsey, Greg Gantt. Staff Present: Andrea Dzioba, Interim County Manager/County Clerk; Elizabeth Barfield, Chief Financial Officer.

**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 24/25.

**Administration** - Andrea Dzioba advised that the items that were not typically in the budget were expenses related to the salary survey being conducted by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, technical expenses for hr the electronic records management system. She further stated that Administration has been split differently this year and that the Administration budget includes the County Manager position, the Human Resources Generalist, and the Administrative Assistant and that other positions are now included under the Board of Commissioners and the Finance Departments.

**Animal Control** - Brian Griffith stated that the only items that were taken out of the budget were an additional Animal Control Officer and another truck. Mr. Griffith advised that call volumes continue to rise and that they will eventually need to expand personnel and the facility. He said that between the two items removed that the most important would be the truck for this year.

**Board of Commissioners** - Andrea Dzioba advised that the County Clerk has been added to the Board of Commissioners budget. Elizabeth Barfield stated that additionally auditing, accounting and legal services have been moved from Administration to the Board of Commissioners.

**Board of Equalization** - Clerk of Superior Court Stacey Haralson advised that there are no changes.

**Clerk of Superior Court** - Clerk of Superior Court Stacey Haralson stated that the budget has increased a little bit due to an 8% increase in case management system and it was included. Additionally, she said that \$4,500.00 has been included in small equipment for a new server and that \$4,500.00 probably won't cover it but that any additional funds needed can be paid from their technology fund. Ms. Haralson said that she had asked for an additional employee but that since real estate filings have gone down that they don't need another employee at this time.

**Superior Court** - Clerk of Superior Court Stacey Haralson advised that there is a small increase in technical services by \$5,000.00 which includes court reporters and interpreters. In addition, she said that small equipment was raised to \$3,500.00 for new podiums and chairs, especially in the old courtroom.

**Community Center and Recreation** - Recreation Director Ashley Marston and Mike Fuson, Assistant Director of Recreation, advised that they would like dues and fees be bumped up to \$5,000; that contract labor will need to be increased to \$40,000 (would be recouped in part from the fees paid with a 70%/30% split) as they have had a large increase in swimming lessons; that they would like to add an Aquatics Coordinator due to difficulty getting lifeguards and with this position it would help so that they would have coverage when there are no lifeguards and that position would be able to help train and certify lifeguards; that an increase in pay for lifeguards (\$14.00 minimum) is needed although they are aware that this will be included in salary survey and that this summer rates are currently at \$15.50 per hour as approved by the County Manager; that they would like to have the cleaning machine (\$7,500) that was removed last year also; that they need a new pool scoreboard (\$25,000); that they would like to add funds for a 5-Year Master Plan for Recreation using \$20,000 from the amount included for the ballfield lighting which has been moved to SPLOST; that they would like an increase from \$4,500 to \$20,000 for pond management at Ellerslie Park; that they would like \$50,000 added to Repairs and Maintenance-Site due to increases in maintenance; that they would like an additional \$8,000 added to Repairs and Maintenance - Vehicles; that they are requesting an additional \$5,000 in General Supplies - Janitorial; and that they would like funds rolled to this budget that were for the Moultrie Park ballfield lights. Discussion with the Board included that the County may be able to partner with the School District on the pool scoreboard.

**Community Development** - Community Development Director Brian Williams advised that there are no significant changes; that their budget is about the same; that they have actually reduced expenses overall; and reviewed items included in the fee schedule and explained the addition of a fee to allow an RV/camper to be used while a home is being constructed on increments of 90 days which covers the needed inspections. Mr. Williams also stated that he will be requesting a new vehicle next year.

**Coroner** - Coroner Joe Weldon discussed the need for \$150,000 for a morgue facility and advised that after December 31, 2024 that there will be a 40-45% increase in the cost for coolers due to new "green" laws that will be going into effect.

**Emergency Medical Services** - Chief of Emergency Services Bucky Searcy advised that his budget is pretty much the same and reviewed some of the increases already included in the budget and capital items included in SPLOST.

**Information Technology** - Information Technology Director Alex Santiago advised that cybersecurity is the largest increase in his expenditures. He stated that he did request a new vehicle this year but can forego that for now.

**Tax Assessor** - Chief Appraiser Shalee Mallory advised that she would like to obtain an additional vehicle (\$36,000) for their department, that at least a week out of every month they are short a vehicle and that they have realized additional revenue of \$75,000 in tax penalties for breaches in CUVA, \$290,000 that was determined to have been owed by the chicken plant and was paid in March of 2024, and \$47,000 for 2023 personal property taxes from Waverly Hall Telephone.

**Emergency Telephone System Fund** - 911/EMA Director Melissa Price advised that she would like \$11,552 additional included in Technical Services-Maintenance Agreement, \$3,000 added to Technical Services-Computer, \$3,000 added to Repairs and Maintenance-Equipment, and \$2,500 added to Gasoline/Diesel/Oil because the \$2,500 that is listed isn't enough. Additionally, Ms. Price advised that she asked for two new positions - Training Coordinator and another Assistant Director; and that EMA and 911 together is a lot; that another Assistant Director and each Assistant could focus on 911 and EMA respectively; and that when she is away for classes and training that they would have adequate coverage.

**Solid Waste Fund** - Interim Solid Waste Director Joey Stanford reviewed the capital items included in the budget which were a new solid waste truck and additional commercial dumpsters to use as replacements. Mr. Stanford stated that the funds for the road around the transfer station were removed in the amount of \$135,000 and transfer station building improvements to replace base angle and some of the side panels that are starting to rot out in the amount of \$150,000.

Chairman Grant requested that the Board review the fee schedules included in the proposed budget so that they are all prepared to discuss them as well as credit card processing fees.

**REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Chairman Grant said that he had a need for an executive session to discuss personnel.

**RECESS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Chairman Grant made the motion to go into Executive Session for personnel at 6:09 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Irions and passed unanimously.

**RESUME REGULAR SESSION.** The motion to go back into the Work Session was made at 6:27 p.m. by Commissioner Lightsey, seconded by Commissioner Irions, and passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further need for discussion, the motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Gantt, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.