

**COMMITTEE
MEETINGS
MINUTES**

Claiborne County Public Budget Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Members present: Zach Bunch, Haley Barker, Tim Shrout, Zach Mullins, Mitchell Cosby, Rosemary Barnett, Sherry McCreary, Quinton Rogers, and Dustin Wilson

Others present: Joe Brooks, Eric Pearson, and Letha Peters

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. Letha Peters called roll and all were present except for Zach Bunch. Zach Bunch did arrive at the Budget Committee meeting at 6:35 pm.

The election of the chair and vice-chair was discussed among the committee. The floor was open for nomination since the previous years' chair & vice-chair are no longer serving on the Budget Committee. Dustin Wilson made a motion to elect Mitchell Cosby as chairperson along with Sherry McCreary as vice-chair and Quinton Rogers second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Zach Mullins made the motion for the approval of the agenda and Sherry McCreary seconded the motion.

Zach Mullins made the motion for the approval of the minutes from June 20, 2023 Claiborne County Public Hearing on the 2023-2024 budget and Sherry McCreary seconded the motion.

The committee reviewed the line item budget amendments for Fund 101 & Fund 116. Eric Pearson distributed the line item budget amendment spreadsheet and discussed each line item. Some adjustments were to cover increased medical insurance costs, and others were for increased dues and memberships and travel expenses. Dustin Wilson made a motion to approve the line item budget amendments and Tim Shrout seconded the motion.

There was a discussion on the calendar and timelines for the FY 2025 budget adoption. The following dates are set for the future budget meetings at 6 pm in the large courtroom. Eric Pearson proposed a draft budget committee calendar. Dustin Wilson made a motion to approve the following schedule for the budget meetings and Haley Barker seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- March 4th - Review budget
- March 7th - Review Budget
- March 19th - Public input, review budget
- March 26th - Public input, review budget
- April 9th – final committee meeting for approve budget to forward to County Commission

Other important deadlines

- April 19th – Submit proposed budget to newspaper
- April 24th – Publish proposed budget to newspaper
- May 1st – Publish proposed budget to newspaper

- May 20th- Budget Committee Public Hearing on budget and County Commission Budget Adoption
- May 28th- Budget submitted to Comptroller
- June 2024 – Committee meeting, Approve 2024 Budget Amendments

Items for Discussion were presented by Eric Pearson.

The budget background was discussed covering the budget process, proposed budget advertisement, proposed budget public hearing, proposed budget, continuation budget, and appropriations and amendments. In addition, the state requirements were discussed as to the state must approve the county budget, balanced budget, state required budget forms; county must fund official’s salaries per statutory requirements and state recommendations. The county must meet all maintenance of effort requirements which includes Education MOE, Sheriff Law Enforcement MOE, Highway MOE, Election Commission MOE, and Assessor minimum staffing, Public Library MOE, and 911 Board MOE.

Eric presented the required and optional county services that the state and federal law requires counties to provide the following services:

Required Services

- Ambulance (one ambulance service must be available within a county)
- Education (K through 12 grade)
- Emergency Management
- Courthouse and courts (including judges)
- Constitutional Officers and Fee Officials
 - Mayor
 - County Commission
 - Assessor
 - Trustee
 - County Clerk
 - Register of Deeds
 - Clerk and Master
 - Circuit Court Clerk
 - Sheriff
- Growth Management Policy
- Health Department
- Law Enforcement
- Jail facilities
- Medical Examiner
- Roads and Bridges
- Solid Waste (convenience centers and site for batters, used motor oil and tires)
- Elections

Optional Services

- Animal Control*
- Code Enforcement
- Fire Protection*
- Transit
- Recreation
- Sewer and water systems
- Support for non-profit/charitable organizations*
- Workhouse*
- Zoning

***denotes funded in previous budget year**

Eric presented the budget issues and challenges for the budget committee. He provided detailed information and presented a 2024-2025 budget goals for the need to improve the General Fund balance.

A draft of 2024-2025 budget was presented. The draft budget represents the starting point that will be adjusted by the budget committee.

Tax Rate and Value of Penny

It was noted these are preliminary estimates and projections and the numbers will change.

The estimated value of one (1) penny for 2024-2025 was \$67,680.

The preliminary estimated property tax rates for 2024-2025 is 2.404 cents.

Other discussion items

Joe Brooks mentioned the upcoming requirements with ADA compliance for county buildings. The county will have to open a bid package for the ADA improvements in the near future.

The Committee discussed the current wheel tax for the jail debt. The \$25 wheel tax for jail debt can be ended after December 2024 as this will provide sufficient fund balance in the Debt Service Fund to pay the remaining jail debt.

There was discussion about the need to provide funding for ambulance services in the General Fund in the FY 2025 budget as the escrow account for this expense will be exhausted at the end of June 2024. The estimated ambulance expense for FY 2025 is \$365,000.

Another item discussed was the TNT Fire Department request for additional monies in the upcoming budget. There was general discussion about ambulance and emergency medical services in the County.

Mitchell Cosby made a motion to adjourned at 7:04 pm and seconded by Dustin Wilson.

Claiborne County Public Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 4, 2024

Members present: Zach Bunch, Haley Barker, Tim Shrout, Zach Mullins, Mitchell Cosby, Sherry McCreary, Quinton Rogers, and Dustin Wilson

Absent member: Rosemary Barnett

Others present: Joe Brooks, James Estep III, Eric Pearson and Letha Peters

Mitchell Cosby called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approve the agenda, seconded by Tim Shrout.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approve the minutes from February 15, 2024 budget committee meeting, seconded by Haley Barker.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approve the line item budget amendments for the County Clerk(**52500**), General Sessions(**53300**), Sheriff's Department(**54110**), and Local Health Center (**55110**) as requested from February 20, 2024 line item budget amendments draft.

Fund 101 Summary:

Mr. Pearson went over the information on Fund 101 that holds numerous offices and departments with the largest county fund by 45.5% of total county budget and 80% of county tax levy (excluding Schools from the totals).

Primary increases for the upcoming budget are from these expenditures:

***denote mandatory funding items**

- **ADA Building Improvements: \$1,000,000**
- **Ambulance Services: \$365,000**
- Sheriff's vehicles, 9 to 10 replacement patrol vehicles: \$300,000
- **Medical Insurance: \$98,544**
- Maintenance Truck for courthouse building maintenance: \$75,000
- **County Official salary and benefit increase: \$57,588**
- Permit Inspector new position: \$55,109
- **Vehicle & Property Insurance rate increase: \$53,863**
- **Worker's Compensation Insurance rate increase: \$19,972**

- Economic Development Director, including grant writing experience, salary increase: \$19,953
- Fire Department Maintenance Pit contribution: \$11,000

Mr. Pearson also discussed the property tax increase of Fund 101 with the tax levy of \$8,270,213 that is an increase of \$600,927 or a 7.8% increase to the current budget.

Primary increases for the upcoming budget are from these expenditures:

***denote mandatory funding items**

- **Ambulance Services: \$365,000**
- **Medical Insurance: \$98,544**
- **County Official salary and benefit increase: \$57,588**
- **Vehicle & Property Insurance rate increase: \$53,863**
- **Worker's Compensation Insurance rate increase: 19,972**

The discretionary items for Fund 101 are about \$213,504 or 35.5% of the increase to include the following line items:

1. Maintenance Truck: \$75,000
2. Sheriff Vehicles: \$52,422
3. Permit Inspector new position: \$55,109
4. Economic Development Director increase: \$19,953
5. Maintenance Pit for Fire Departments: \$11,000

Review General Fund Functions:

53100 – Circuit Court

A total proposed draft of \$497,790 was presented to the Budget Committee for review. Jackie Rosenbalm and Diana Arnwine were present to address any questions on the budget. Mr. Pearson informed the committee of the increased cost of dues/memberships, operating lease payments, and maintenance agreements. The increase of maintenance agreement is with the contract by Local Government.

Motion made by Zach Bunch to approve the budget without raises, seconded by Haley Barker. A roll call was taken with the following votes:

Yes

1. Zach Bunch
2. Haley Barker
3. Mitchell Cosby
4. Sherry McCreary
5. Quinton Rogers

No

1. Tim Shrout
2. Zach Mullins
3. Dustin Wilson

Motion passed with five to three to approved the budget without raises.

54110 – Sheriff Department

A draft budget of \$3,259,602 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

The budget has several grant funded line items, including the VCIF and SRO grants. The budget does include one additional deputy for a total of \$41,000 for salary position.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approve as drafted, seconded by Sherry McCreary. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

54220 – Workhouse

A draft budget of \$4,006,934 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

Another new grant for the budget year is the ELCG grant for the workhouse program.

The EBJPP grant program with the inmates also continues in FY 2025.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approve as drafted, seconded by Zach Bunch. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

51100 – County Commission

A draft of \$199,426 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

Mr. Pearson noted the increase cost of the audit services by the Comptroller and the increase TCCA membership dues.

Motion made by Zach Mullins to reduce the Senior Citizens Committee Meetings to **four** meetings or **quarterly** as needed, seconded by Dustin Wilson. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Motion was amended with further discussion to reduce meeting to **twice** a year by Zach Mullins, seconded by Tim Shrout. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Tim Shroul to reduce the Buildings & Grounds Committee meetings from **six to four**, seconded by Zach Bunch. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

51210 – Board of Equalization

A draft budget of \$7,025 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approve as drafted, seconded by Sherry McCreary. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

51220 – Beer Board

A draft budget of \$2,500 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

The beer board consists of three board members that are paid \$175 per meeting. Meetings are held once they receive a beer board application from the County Clerk's office.

Motion made by Zach Bunch to approve as drafted, seconded by Quinton Rogers. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

51230- Budget and Finance Committee

A draft budget of \$35,232 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

Motion was made by Zach Mullins to approve as drafted, seconded by Haley Barker.

Motion was made by Dustin Wilson to amend the motion to cut medical insurance coverage and to approve as amended, seconded by Haley Barker. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

51300 – County Mayor/Executive

A draft budget of \$228,316 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

Mr. Brooks noted the increased travel expenses for mileage and hotel expenses for required and necessary meetings to effectively perform his job duties as county mayor.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approve as drafted, seconded by Zach Mullins. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Review Drug Control Fund Functions (FUND 122):

54150- Drug Control

A total proposed draft of \$61,200 was presented to the Budget Committee for review.

Motion made by Dustin Wilson to approved as drafted, seconded by Haley Barker. A roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Other Items for Discussion

Mr. Brooks will give a copy of the contract services with the ambulance service in the upcoming county court packet for review.

By 2028, the county buildings will need to be ADA compliant.

The permit inspector would provide essential services in the community to review new homes and remodels that require building permits. The purpose is to ensure required building permits are issued and to provide protection to the homeowner, increase the value of properties, and decrease insurance costs.

No other additional items were presented for discussion.

Motion made by Zach Bunch to adjourn at 8:01 pm, seconded by Quinton Rogers.