



**MINUTES
BUDGET WORKSESSION
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
MAY 26, 2015**

Present: Carolyn B. Robinson, Mary Lynn Kinley, Kamau Marcharia, Marion B. Robinson, Dan W. Ruff, Billy Smith, Walter Larry Stewart, Council Members; J. Milton Pope, County Administrator; Davis Anderson, Deputy County Administrator; Shryll M. Brown, Clerk to Council

Staff: Laura Johnson, Anne Bass, Sheila Pickett, Hyatte Kelsey

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 Herald-Independent, The State, and Winnsboro Cablevision, and one hundred other individuals.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order at 8:14 P.M.

2. INVOCATION

Council Member Ruff led in the Invocation.

3. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Executive Session: Contractual Matter

*At 8:15 P.M., it was moved by Council Member Robinson; seconded by Council Member Smith to go in executive session to discuss a contractual matter. **The motion carried unanimously.***

*At 8:45 P.M., it was moved by Council Member Smith; seconded by Vice Chairman Marcharia to come out of executive session and return to open session. **The motion carried unanimously.***

In open session, Chairman Robinson reported no action was taken in executive session.

B. FY 2015-2016 Budget

Mr. Pope set forth that staff would like to give a follow up from the last work session:

1. Council had asked staff to follow up on one item, which Mr. Anderson will provide that information. Mr. Pope prefaced the follow up by saying he had recommended in the no-tax-increase budget a 2% cost of living for all county employees. There were some questions asked about removing the elected officials from that consideration. At Second Reading, the elected officials were excluded at this time; therefore, if it is Council's pleasure after the work session to add that back in, it would need to be done at Third Reading. Mr. Anderson reviewed the following documents with Council:
 - Elected Officials Compensation Procedure. The 2010 procedure covers the Probate Judge, Tax Auditor, Treasurer, Clerk of Court, Coroner and Sheriff. Item 3 of the procedure delineated that these elected officials shall receive cost of living adjustments like other employees, if adjustments are granted by County Council during the budgeting process. A copy can be provided to Council for information.

- Received email from the S. C. Association of Counties which indicates there is no data where any counties in South Carolina exclude elected officials for giving increases under the cost of living process.
- Mr. Kelsey did some research and ascertained that a lot of counties have included their elected officials in their compensation study, just like all employees.
- Survey of Elected Officials Salaries (Surrounding And Like-Size Counties). Data was distributed to Council.
- Treasurer and Auditor receive a state supplement.
- If it is Council's desire, Council can amend its policy; however, it is believed that some consideration should be given to the elected officials as they are elected at-large.

Questions and Comments:

- Thought about this since it was brought up about singling out the elected officials. Thought a consideration would be to set a certain dollar amount (such as \$70,000.00 and above) to not receive the cost of living.
- Did not know the procedure was there; however, with it being there, if the cost of living is to be given, the elected officials must receive it as well. Why was the idea conceived right before a classification and compensation study? Would it be possible to budget for the 2% COLA, but not release those funds until the figures are back from the classification and compensation study?
- Don't know what the law is about singling out regular staff either.
- Certain levels can be stipulated; however, need to ensure there's equity and no unequal treatment because of a certain category. Need to consider what is being attempted to accomplish.
- There are 4 employees who make over \$70,000.00--one of them is an elected official.
- Administration believes that, in total and in whole, the County employees are deserving of the 2% COLA as well as it can actually save money. Need to look at, as a body, some performance measures where pay is based on performance and evaluation. To implement a system like this, dollars have to be available to move ranges to ensure they are appropriate.
- The more talk, the more uncomfortable I have become with the 2% and the study, etc. Think we have gotten ahead of ourselves. If a performance-based salary system is going to be implemented where the raises come through that, maybe that is what we need to do. The other point becomes why go through a 2% and go back and do a performance-based system after.
- The 2% COLA is on the table that has been recommended. If the County were to go to a performance-based standard, it would have to come back before Council to adopt. All that is in the budget for consideration is the 2% COLA for the employees.
- If the 2% COLA is awarded now, the performance-based study would be considered long range and can be discussed in the future.
- Administration has worked on the performance evaluation instruments and plan to meet with all department heads next month to restore the evaluation system to coincide with the fiscal year. There must be education, goal-setting and training implemented.
- If the compensation study is not done, a performance-for-pay system cannot be implemented.
- There would be no increases, based upon performance, this fiscal year?
- Have you looked at a step increase system?
- In order to have steps, money has to be provided for the steps. Do not have the infrastructure right now.

- In looking at the RFP looking for bids on the cost of the compensation and classification study, there were two companies that sent in questions about that. One of the questions asked by one of the companies was is the county also seeking a company to do class and comp, but a performance evaluation tool also? How is this evaluation tool being considered?
 - The evaluation tool is currently being used, but will be re-instituted on a yearly basis.
 - The salary for the coroner really stands out, and is not in line with other counties. Last year, the majority of Council decided they needed to bring the coroner's salary in line with some of the other elected officials.
 - *It was consensus of Council to restore the cost of living increase to the elected officials for consideration in the Third and Final Reading budget.*
2. There were a series of questions sent in by Council Member Smith, and staff responded to those questions to everyone. Council Member Smith sent some follow up questions today that were not sent out to everyone. They are as follows:
- Please explain the recommended increase of 7% in salaries for the County Council Dept. *This is not a 7% increase in salaries. County Council's pay is controlled differently by statute. The chairman and vice chairman supplement that was budgeted in one particular account is not budgeted in county council salary account.*
 - Please explain the recommended appropriation of \$2,500.00 for transportation for the County Council Dept. *In previous years, some members of Council have attended the NACo conference and this dollar amount was included as potential transportation cost in the budget.*
 - In Recreation Department, I asked about the 4% recommended increase in salaries, and the response I received said that temp pay should be included in coming up with a salary figure. I didn't look at temp pay originally, but now that I have, why are the temp pay costs thought to be going down? Have we assigned more time/work to a full time employee in that department, allowing us to bring in less temp workers? *There has been quite a bit of turnover for the full-time Athletic Specialist, which resulted in an increase of hours from 1820 to 2080 or \$6,426.00 for additional job duties and restructuring of the position, and less in temporary for personal needs. The temporary account was decreased by \$7,195.00 and other adjustments in the full-time positions was \$13,881.00. The \$13,881.00 is made up of the employee that we increased the hours for (\$6,426.00); the remainder of that is \$7,455.00, which is the 2%. The combination is \$13,881.00. Has this already been done with this employee (the increase in hours and responsibility), or is this going forward? This is the turnover that happened during the year.*
 - If call work wasn't previously budgeted in the Solid Waste Dept., how was it handled? I understand part time pay is forecast to decrease, but temp pay is looking to increase just as much as the part time decrease. *The call pay has been paid in the department previously, but has not always been a part of the budget. Staff has been working with this department, where the expenditures were there before; however, staff is being a lot more strategic about how many hours are actually needed and they are budgeted now. There were some part-time employees in the Solid Waste Department. Their status was changed to temporary, effective July, 2014.*
 - Please explain the recommended increase of 9% in salaries for the Workforce Liaison Dept. *Last budget year, this position was made full time, as it was not previously. The salary was moved into the same grade as similar positions, and would receive the 2% COLA.*

- Since those were done in the past, but the money was not put in the budget to bump the pay up along with the expanded duty and hours, how have we been paying those employees at the full-time rate? Was it taken from salary or from temp pay that went down?
- Why are we going from a lot of temporary positions to full-time positions? Seems like all of these things have been front-loaded and Council has to eat it.
- The budget that was recommended, and remains at Second Reading, is a no-tax-increase budget. There was some further savings that County Council had addressed. Those came in line with some of the capital and recreation and were adjusted appropriately. The Local Option Sales Tax Credit is in the budgeted dollars. This year, staff is proposing two readings on the Millage, but not giving the third reading until September. The purpose is to get the possible numbers from the Auditor, but based upon preliminary numbers, will likely be a millage reduction similar to past year.
- Council said it would have a no-tax/no-fee increase this year; however, Council has passed a fee increase on the road use situation. Council needs to go back to find some money to cover that or have violated the original guidance.
- See the purpose of the road fee that funds for that maintenance needs to be set aside, but would rather find the funds from within without adding a fee or tax.
- I support the road maintenance fee after studying it for a while. It is a service to the community to be able to have this.
- Have been treatment on dirt roads for seven years. CTC said they would not be using any more CTC funds to take patches or correct any roads that already have surfacing on them.
- Would be more comfortable to vote for a fee if the County could find those savings (approximately \$130,000.00) elsewhere. Could this be placed in the budget dependent upon such a potential millage reduction.
- Initially, was in favor of the road maintenance fee; however, have talked with people from different areas of the County and the responses have been about half and half. There are people still paying taxes that are not driving on the roads and there are people who rent and are not paying property taxes except on their vehicle. There has to be some source of revenue every year. In favor of it at this point.
- Have we decreased the budget any further since the initial \$61,848.00? It is not a lot to ask people to pay if they live on dirt roads. In favor of the road maintenance fee.
- Would be okay with a compromise to charge \$5.00 for commercial vehicles and nothing for the residents.
- Have we figured the trash/school savings with recycling?
- Is there anything in the budget for spraying this year?
- \$123,570.00 - Anticipated Road Maintenance Fee Revenue.
- (\$102,223.00) - Current Reduction Total. Added \$8,600.00 back to that figure, for a total savings of close to \$90,000.00.
- Maybe the Road Maintenance Department could be funded a little bit more and keep the fee out.
- This is a continuous project and the County needs a source of revenue.
- *As far as having a dollar amount for this particular fund {road maintenance fee}, Administration can go back and make some strategic decisions to further reduce the budget by that amount of money to actually transfer that to an account to be able to do that, which means maybe adjusting something that has already been agreed to. Council agreed to this directive.*

3. Next Budget Work Session - Monday, June 1, 2015. The follow up item will be documentation on the road maintenance fee.

Chairman Robinson asked Council if there were any more questions on the budget.

4. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 P.M., upon unanimous approval of County Council.

SHRYLL M. BROWN
CLERK TO COUNCIL

CAROLYN B. ROBINSON
CHAIRMAN