

The Budget Meeting of the Oconee County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday April 8, 2008, at 9:00 a.m., at the Commissioners Meeting Chambers, Oconee County Courthouse.

Members Present:

Chairman Melvin Davis
Commissioner Jim Luke
Commissioner Donald H. Norris
Commissioner Margaret S. Hale
Commissioner Chuck Horton

Staff Present:

Administrative Officer Alan Theriault
County Clerk Gina M. Lindsey
Finance Director Jeff Benko

Media Present:

Vinnie Williams, The Oconee Enterprise
Blake Giles, The Oconee Enterprise
Adam Thompson, Athens Banner Herald

Human Resources: Malinda Smith, HR Director, presented the budget request for Human Resources for FY2009, noting no changes were requested.

Ms. Smith reported she had recently received confirmation there would not be an increase in the premium for the County's health insurance program for the next plan year. In addition, two benefit enhancements have been added to the plan: (1) coverage for dependents who are full-time students was extended to age 26, and (2) the \$30 co-pay for specialty care physician diagnostic/x-ray/lab was eliminated.

Board of Elections: Elections Superintendent Pat Hayes presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for the Board of Elections. Requests for FY2009 included reclassifying a part-time Election Assistant position to a full-time position, the purchase of two Express Polls and an increase in Contract Labor due to the Presidential Election and new advance voting requirements.

Tax Assessor: Chief Tax Assessor Allen Skinner presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for the Tax Assessor's Office. Mr. Skinner requested a new Tax Appraiser II position, the promotion of an Appraiser II position to an Appraiser III position and two laptop computers to be used in the field.

Mr. Skinner reported he estimates a 9% increase in the Tax Digest this year. A rural re-evaluation this year had added close to \$25 million in assessed value to the Digest, resulting in a \$175,000 increase to the county's revenue. Mr. Skinner said this year's tax assessment notices will go out on April 18, 2008.

Tax Commissioner: Tax Commissioner Harriette Browning presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for the Tax Commissioner's Office. Requests for FY2009 included the purchase of two work stations, an additional network computer to be used for homestead exemptions, property tax and mobile home tax transactions, a tag storage cabinet and the replacement of two network computers in the life cycle management plan.

Probate Court and Law Library: Probate Judge David Anglin presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Probate Court and the Law Library. Judge Anglin requested a part-time Assistant to the Traffic Court Coordinator position and the replacement of four computers and two printers in the life cycle management plan.

Judge Anglin noted there was no change requested for the Law Library.

Magistrate Court: Magistrate Judge Eric Norris presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Magistrate Court. Judge Norris requested a \$100/month increase in the Court Prosecutor's supplement and a \$250/month increase in the Defense Attorney's supplement.

Superior Court: Clerk of Courts Angie Watson presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Superior Court. The request for FY2009 included the replacement of the current printer in the Courtroom, \$3000 to increase the supplements for three secretaries, and \$1500 to increase the supplements for three law clerks.

Clerk of Court: Clerk of Courts Angie Watson presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Clerk of Courts. Ms. Watson requested an additional printer for her office.

Juvenile Court: Juvenile Court Judge Sara McArthur presented the budget request for Juvenile Court for FY2009, noting no changes were requested. Judge McArthur reported she hears approximately 350 cases a year and there has been a slight increase in juvenile traffic cases this year.

District Attorney: District Attorney Ken Mauldin presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for the District Attorney's Office. Mr. Mauldin said there are currently 3 positions funded jointly by Oconee County and Athens-Clarke County. He requested Oconee County fund the entirety of these salaries in FY2009 – two Assistant Attorneys and one Investigator.

Mr. Mauldin reported he was exploring the possibility of moving the District Attorney's staff to the State payroll through the Prosecuting Attorneys Council.

Code Enforcement: Code Enforcement Director Steve Hansford presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Code Enforcement. Mr. Hansford requested two computers in the life cycle management plan.

Planning: Planning Director B.R. White presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Planning. The request for FY2009 included the purchase of City View Software to aid in project management and three computers in the life cycle management plan.

Mr. White proposed an increase in fees for Hardship Variance, Special Exception Variance, Preliminary Site Plan, Subdivision or Road Name Change after Preliminary Stage but before Final Plat and Revised Final Plat Review & Recordation including Name Change on a Subdivision or Road Name after Final Plat is approved.

Strategic Long Range Planning: Strategic and Long Range Planning Director Wayne Provost presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Strategic and Long Range Planning. Mr. Provost requested funds for an Impact Fee Study and Farmland Preservation Program funding.

Civic Center: Civic Center Director Shawn Wheeler presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for the Civic Center. FY2009 requests included painting and structural repairs, replacement of tables and chairs, sound system renovations and stage lighting instruments.

Mr. Wheeler proposed adding a rate to the Fee Schedule for the use of a lighting technician.

Economic Development: Economic Development Director Rusty Haygood presented the budget request for Economic Development for FY2009, noting no changes were requested. Mr. Haygood's budget includes the \$132,000 annual payment for Gateway Business Park.

Tourism: Economic Development Director Rusty Haygood presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for Tourism. Mr. Haygood requested funds to host the Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers, an upgrade of the Tourism website and one computer in the life cycle management plan.

Extension Service: County Agent Henry Hibbs presented the budget request for the Extension Service. Mr. Hibbs requested an increase in travel stipends due to increased fuel costs.

Information Technology: IT Director Paula Nedza presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for the Information Technology Department. Requests for FY2009 included the purchase of Websense Web Filtering to block users from inappropriate websites, Gfi MailArchiver to archive email in a central location for easier search, a Plotter and a high speed Copier/Fax machine.

Ms. Nedza also requested funding for an aerial fly over of Oconee County. She said there was trouble with the original vendor and the aerials taken in February 2006 were disturbed by a cloud cover in an area of the county that is significant to economic development.

Senior Center: Senior Center Director Marian Nolley presented the FY2009 budget request for the Senior Center. Ms. Nolley said the Senior Center expects to move into its new facility in June, 2008. Personnel requests included changing the part-time Van Driver position to a full-time position and the addition of an Assistant Director position, a part-time Van Driver position and a part-time Kitchen Aide position. Other requests included the addition of an arbor terrace at the new facility. Ms. Nolley noted there were outside revenues to assist with this cost.

Health Department: Dr. Claude Burnett presented the budget request for the Health Department. He requested a \$35,000 increase in the county's allocation to the Health Department due to new services and duties required of the Health Department by Federal Regulations.

Library: Branch Manager Clare Auwarter presented the FY2009 budget request for the Library. Personnel requests included the addition of a part-time Library Assistant position and salary increases for the Computer Specialist/IT Technician position and the Children's Coordinator position, based on job descriptions and required skills. One-time purchase requests included the replacement of 25 computers; hand dryers and dispensers for the public restrooms; roof repair, refurbishment of the Children's Area, a new a/c unit and restroom repairs at the Watkinsville Library; and repairs to the parking lot at the Bogart Library.

Ms. Auwarter noted now is the time to be looking at a new facility for the Watkinsville Library and an addition to the Bogart Library facility.

Department of Family and Children Services: Donnie Barrett presented the FY2009 budget request for the Department of Family and Children Services. Mr. Barrett requested a 10% increase in the county's allocation to Oconee County DFCS. He reported the local county funding enables DFCS to benefit from state matched dollars to employ a full-time Program Assistant, a part-time Program Assistant and a full-time Social Services Case Manager.

Public Defender: Western Judicial Circuit Public Defender Tom Killeen presented the budget request for the Western Judicial Circuit Public Defender Office. The budget request for FY2009 is \$128,526. Mr. Killeen reported the 3% increase is the result of an increase in Oconee County's caseload.

Commission and Customer Service: County Clerk Gina Lindsey presented the FY2009 requests for unfunded expenditures for the Commission and Customer Service. Ms. Lindsey reported the Customer Service budget was decreased 28% due to full cost accounting measures. There were no significant changes noted for the Commission budget.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

County Clerk

Chairman

Date