

The Agenda Setting Meeting of the Oconee County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, May 29, 2007, in 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
County Attorney Daniel Haygood

Jeff Benko, Finance Director
Donna Norton, Budget Officer
Malinda Smith, Human Resources Director
Bruce Thaxton, Fire Chief
Wayne Provost, Strategic Planning Director
Chris Thomas, Assistant Utility Director
John Gentry, Parks and Recreation Director
Rusty Haygood, Econ Develop Director

Media Present:

Vinnie Williams, The Oconee Enterprise
Chris Butler, Athens Banner-Herald
Ingunn Mercer, The Oconee Leader

FY 2008 Budget Hearing: At 6:30 p.m., the Board held a public hearing on the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2008.

Finance Director Jeff Benko presented a power point presentation on the proposed FY 2008 Budget.

Mr. Benko reported the FY 2008 proposed Budget Highlights include a .6 mill BOC property tax millage rate reduction, Board of Education support and collaboration – capital improvements at the new North High Shoals elementary school and an updated employee salary classification plan establishing COLA's (3.3% for FY 08). The overall budget reflects a 13.10% decrease over the FY 07 budget.

Emphasis was placed in the areas of Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Parks and Recreation, Senior Center, Fire Department, Public Works Road Improvements, Central School House and Farmland Protection.

The proposed budget for the General Fund is \$20,132,631. The proposed budget for all funds is \$41,469,344.

There being no public comments, the Public Hearing was closed. The Board will take action on the FY 2008 Budget at the June 5, 2007 regular meeting.

Agenda Meeting: At 7:00 p.m. Chairman Davis called the Agenda Setting Meeting to order and began with a Moment of Silence. Commissioner Norris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Cultural Affairs and Recreation Committee Update: Kim Argo, Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Cultural and Recreation Affairs, presented a recommendation to divide the committee into two separate stand alone advisory committees – a Cultural Affairs and Tourism Advisory Committee and a Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. Ms. Argo advised both of the current subcommittees were in concurrence with the recommendation. The members feel with this division they can serve as better advisors to the Board of Commissioners. By consensus, the Board will place this item on the June 5, 2007 agenda for further discussion and consideration.

Ms. Argo also noted the Recreation Subcommittee has viewed a presentation on a proposed Spray Ground for the Oconee Community Complex.

Bear Creek 24-inch Connector, Phase II: Assistant Utility Director Chris Thomas presented the bids for construction of the Bear Creek 24-inch connector, Phase II. Mr. Thomas stated the line would run approximately 15,500 ft (2.9 miles) from Jefferson Street in Bogart to the storage tanks on Mars Hill Road at U.S. Hwy. 78 and is necessary to improve our treated water flow capability by augmenting the existing 12-inch line. He recommended the Board approve the “not to exceed” low bid of \$1,657,000 by Mid South Builders, Inc., to be funded with SPLOST funds.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Human Resources Policies and Procedures: Administrative Officer Alan Theriault reported the Human Resources Policies and Procedures states that current employees being promoted can receive either the entry level pay of the Grade they are being promoted to, or 5% of their salary, whichever is greater. Mr. Theriault stated this places current employees who should have preference in promotional opportunities at a distinct disadvantage. In order to retain and promote good qualified employees, Mr. Theriault recommended the Human Resources Policies and Procedures be amended to read as follows:

“An employee who is promoted shall receive a minimum salary increase of 5% above the employee’s current base pay, the minimum level of the range for the classification of the new position, whichever is greater; *or, if being promoted to fill a vacated position for which he or she is deemed to meet the minimum qualifications, the employee shall be compensated at a negotiated salary level up to but not exceeding the budgeted salary for the vacated position.*”

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Employee Health Insurance: Human Resources Director Malinda Smith reported the Benefits Committee met and discussed the renewal of the County’s Employee Health Insurance. After a comparison of plans offered by Health Plan Select, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and United Health Care, the committee recommended continuing with the current provider, Health Plan Select. The committee also recommended remaining with the current POS P-253 Plan and changing to the HMO H-353 Plan.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Surplus Pumper Truck: Fire Chief Bruce Thaxton recommended the sale of the surplus 1983 Ford C800 Pumper Truck to the City of Winterville, GA. The City has agreed to a price of \$5,500 to be paid over two fiscal years. Mr. Thaxton requested the Board deem the vehicle as salvage and authorize its sell to the City of Winterville.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Pumper Truck Purchase: Fire Chief Bruce Thaxton presented the bids for a new pumper truck for the Fire Department. Mr. Thaxton recommended the bid be awarded to the Sutphen Corporation, at a cost not to exceed \$314,950. He noted the specifications of the truck met the standardized prototype for pumpers.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Street Light Tax District – Harperfield Subdivision: On motion by Commissioner Norris and second by Commissioner Hale, the Board unanimously approved the creation of Street Light Tax District No. B-2W-L1 for Harperfield Subdivision. *See Documentation in Ordinances and Resolutions Book No. 16.*

Street Light Poles: On motion by Commissioner Luke and second by Commissioner Hale, the Board unanimously approved a one-time expenditure of \$135,608.18 to retire the monthly lease fees to Walton EMC for street light poles in existing subdivisions. The Board will discuss the method to recover the payment to Walton EMC at the June 5, 2007 meeting.

Indigent Defense Services Agreement: Administrative Officer Alan Theriault presented the proposed Indigent Defense Services Agreement between the Circuit Public Defenders Office of the Western Judicial Circuit, the Oconee County Board of Commissioners and the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County for FY 2008. Mr. Theriault noted there were no changes to the proposed Agreement and recommended approval.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Hwy. 53 Collection Center Lease: Administrative Officer Alan Theriault recommended the renewal of the Lease Agreement for the Highway 53 Sanitation Site with Allen Hunter for the period July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2008, at \$400 per month.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Jail/E911/EOC Facility Financing: Finance Director Jeff Benko reported project construction funds will be remaining at the completion of the Jail/E911/EOC Facility. Mr. Benko requested the funds be used to retire outstanding installment sales agreement principal.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

Meal Service for Jail Inmates: Administrative Officer Alan Theriault recommended approving the contract with Valley Services to provide meals for jail inmates, as negotiated by Sheriff Berry.

By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2007.

June 5, 2007 Agenda: The agenda for the June 5, 2007 meeting was read by County Clerk Gina Lindsey.

There being no further business, on motion by Commissioner Horton and second by Commissioner Hale, the meeting was adjourned.

County Clerk

Chairman

Date