



DeKalb County Government

Manuel J. Maloof Center
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Minutes - Draft

FAB-Finance, Audit & Budget Committee

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

3:30 PM

This meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Simultaneous public access to the meeting will be available

(1) via live stream on DCTV's webpage,

(2) on DCTVChannel23.TV

Meeting Started At: 3:38 PM

Attendees: Commissioners Rader, Johnson, Cochran-Johnson, Terry, Bradshaw

Present 3 - Commissioner Jeff Rader, Commissioner Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, and Commissioner Larry Johnson

I. MINUTES

2022-1193 Commission District(s): ALL
Minutes for the January 25, 2022 Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee

MOTION was made by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, seconded by Larry Johnson, that this agenda item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Rader, Commissioner Cochran-Johnson, and Commissioner Johnson

2022-1195 Commission District(s): ALL
Minutes for the January 27, 2022 Special Called Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee

MOTION was made by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, seconded by Larry Johnson, that this agenda item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Rader, Commissioner Cochran-Johnson, and Commissioner Johnson

II. AGENDA ITEM

2022-1135

Commission District(s): All Districts

This Grant, in the amount of \$199,500, will have a Positive Impact on All Commission Districts at No Cost to the County. For Approval of “FY2022 Law Enforcement Training Program Grant”.

MOTION was made by Larry Johnson, seconded by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Rader, Commissioner Cochran-Johnson, and Commissioner Johnson

-information provided by Chief AB Evans, Chief Akies

III. DISCUSSION

FY22 Budget - Constitutional Offices

District Attorney

-presentation by DA Boston

-additional funding expenses not funded in the CEO's budget discussed. DA Boston discussed that the CEO may either have a budget amendment or address in midyear for these needs.

-S Boston: if we can get it addressed in this budget, we are all set, but if at mid-year it's not entirely problematic

-Discussion of enhancements related to District Attorney: real estate lease payments adjustment, restoration of 2.5% that was cut in the budget, senior grand jury position, 30 staff to address COVID impact on violent crimes projects, upgrades to evidence and storage vaults, sexual exploitation against children unit to help with caseloads, ballistic vests for investigative staff, Tyler Technologies resources.

Child Advocacy Center

-presentation by Director Chandra Wilson

-C Wilson: there are no requests for additional enhancements at this time; however additional staff requests may be made at midyear

-question JR: are there any grants programs that will expire in the coming fiscal year?

C Wilson: not at this time; we are 100% county funded right now; we are seeking grants that will assist in our efforts but don't currently have any active

Probate Court

-presentation by Judge Hargrove

-Judge Hargrove: courtroom upgrades. Initial request was for \$50,000; there is a chance that additional funding may be needed. Has spoken with Director Matelski on these

-B Hargrove: pay increase requests were not approved but is currently in understanding of this reasoning

State Court

-presentation by Mary Bell

-requests \$316,000 to amount for State Court Division A, \$139,000 for state court Division B - unincorporated

-Marshal's Office for State and Magistrate Court Security Operations: requests additional \$1,545,012 based on a 9-month salary and benefits

-information provided by COO Williams

-Z Williams: I would like the opportunity to review what Ms. Bell has just indicated to determine the appropriate funding mechanism

-LJ: requests diagram and presentation slides to help explain funding increases in court operations during COVID-19 and how this process is working, and as a piece to provide to the state to assist in funding

D Coleman Stribling: I'll assist with that as well

-Judge Anderson: the exact funds are \$110 million dollars from the federal government to courts in Georgia to assist with case backlog. To our detriment the focus has been on Superior Court; but all levels of the courts have backlogs.

-TT: Regarding court backlog, it seems our courts are doing more with less compared to neighboring counties; I wanted to recognize that work in our DeKalb Judicial system. I do think any opportunity being expressed about backlog should be a top priority.

-Commissioner Rader requests COO Williams provide a comprehensive list of grant proposals that have been made on behalf of DeKalb constitutional officers related to state ARP funding, so that the commissioners can have an idea of 'where we have gone to bat and what that batting average is in terms of that state funding'. I am looking at general requests related to opportunistic funding

-MDJ: We heard that most of the State funding is going to the Superior Court and the Magistrate court is picking up domestic violence cases overflow, are they getting funding for those domestic violence cases

-B Anderson: We are not

-Question MDJ: is Superior Court receiving the funding from the State for domestic violence cases?

-B Anderson: we do not get any direct funding from superior court to hear these cases. I'd have to address that with Chief judge Asha Jackson or Ms. Bell as she represents both courts but we can get that information to you

-TT: In response to the request to COO Williams - Judge Jackson has referenced the favorable grant application to the State because the county was matching funds - I was curious if that was the case for other Courts. If we can leverage our local ARP dollars I think we should .

JR: in summary the Administration is going to look at Clerk proposals and report back as to how they might be met? Mr. Williams you are also going to provide a comprehensive list of funds out of CRF and ARPA that had been made on state funds?

COO Williams: that is correct

Magistrate Court

-presentation by Judge Anderson

Judge Anderson: currently receiving \$150,000 for court room technology upgrades; requests 2 modifications. Requests additional funds to update audiovisual technology by \$370,000 for all 7 courtrooms; and increase that is already in the budget of an additional \$75,000 for misdemeanor mental health court shortfall for efforts related to assistance to group therapy, medication, transportation funding.

-Question LJ: How can we help speed up backlog regarding code enforcement

Judge Anderson: Upgrades to technology would be a significant help. We need to make sure we have up to date technology and the equipment needed such as laptops to

-LJ: Could you bring back to us a 2 year backlog and what the technology and commissioners can do to help decrease the backlog in March? We want to expedite this process and get these eyesores and properties back to compliance

-Question TT: I agree with Commissioner Johnson, I think the aspects of those cases are the clearest manifestation of progress in the county. Is there an opportunity to support the court and focus on property compliance issues, animal slaughter, demolitions, Brannon Hills and other issues we have been hearing about? We have constituents asking us about code compliance issues. How do you address those in order?

Judge Anderson: We are doing the best we can with the technology that we have. Regarding the abatement cases judges have to review hundreds of documents per case, this courtroom technology request will help them process cases that much quicker. Regarding bodies, we have been able to hire 3 new judges in the last 3 months to help with the backlog but more needs to be done. I may come back at new year to possibly ask for more support staff.

-TT: I appreciate to hear there have been more judges brought in. If there was an opportunity to bring in additional judges to really focus code compliance cases I'd support that.

-LCJ: whatever you need regarding nuisance and abatements - we need to have a serious conversation

Judge Anderson: we are only operating one ordinance division courtroom at this moment; that courtroom used to be closet. I need a total of \$520,000 to upgrade all seven of our courts.

-LCJ: I agree we need to get properties back on the tax roll, I would like to urge us to find the money needed to have our courts function at the highest levels possible. Is it true some individuals are opting out of virtual court to be able to have this case in person? Because that can cause significant slowing to resolving this backlog. COO Williams I'd like to see a commitment of the \$520,000 needed.

COO Williams: We will take these items back and see if we can satisfy these new needs that are coming up. We will take this and any other items that come up in today's discussion and see what we can do to come back with a recommendation and a source to fund.

-Question LJ: Mr. Williams we get hit with all of the problems on the ground and people turn to us for help. This is an urgent issue; this is a mental virus as well as a physical virus

-JR: we look forward working with OMB and Mr. Sigler's office to meet these requests

-information provided by Marshal Taylor for their efforts in working with courts and 23 unfunded positions requested for State and Magistrate Courts. The Sheriff and Marshal's office have entered into an agreement for services at State and Magistrate courts - 23 unfunded positions.

Chief Akies: The Sheriff's office is continuing our hiring efforts; the Sheriff's office is responsible for the court complex downtown Decatur, Juvenile, and other positions need to be filled

-LJ: so basically those 23 positions are new. Why didn't you keep the previous funded positions there before?

Chief Akies: for instance under the funded positions, if we say 'we'll release to you 23 positions that are funded', then the Sheriff's office wouldn't be in a position to fulfill our obligation to ensure we have adequate security for all 3 complexes. We are looking at 2022 as a year of aggressive recruiting; that's the position we were looking at it from vs. the nonfunded positions

-question LJ: Marshal you heard us discuss code enforcement. Will you be able to come back in working with Judge Anderson on the exact number you will need other than 23 positions? And COO Williams please provide how much that would cost for a full year.

-Question JR: are state and magistrate courts party to this negotiation?

W Taylor: they are aware of it but have not provided a vote on these security matters yet

Z Williams: this topics does require additional conversation. The net of this conversation is an increase of 23 Sheriff positions, and adding 23 positions to the Marshal's office. We need more conversations before we are prepared to recommend it. We will continue to talk with Marshal Taylor, and are yet to speak with the Sheriff on this

-JR: I don't immediately see the advantage of shifting this to the Marshal based on this conversation; we should better understand the structural advantages of the Marshal in this scale and benefits derived from it. We will have to figure this out before we make the commitment of wholesale transfer of responsibilities from one constitutional to another

-Question TT: regarding

Z Williams: it may be a little of both. Some may come out of General Fund, much like we did the retention bonus

-JR: We are expecting a report from Mr. Williams on this; some of these things may require further work

Solicitor General

-presentation by Solicitor General Coleman-Stribling

-Expansion of pre-trial funding for misdemeanor cases; that came from the clerk of magistrate and state courts; but that did include my office as well. It's my understanding that my budget doesn't address it, and it will add 2 positions to my office. I am requesting clarity to ensure this is something that this would provide resources for my office

-communications director: funding to make this a full time position from the part time designation

Z Williams: we are double checking those numbers from the Solicitor General, and are seeing if this was allocated in ARP last year. But we will discuss

-D Stribling: these are brand new positions

Juvenile Court

-presentation by Chief Judge Crawford, administrator Colet Odenigbo

-all enhancements have been approved by the CEO's office

-Commissioner Rader requests Central Staff work with OMB on an analysis of constitutional requests, their advisability in terms of improving service delivery, and recommendations on where the Board should go with those recommendations. Requests comprehensive input on this and guidance on whether another special called FAB meeting will be needed ahead of February 17th

-Commissioner Rader requests a proposed schedule to get the BOC to February 22nd and if there are outstanding budgetary needs, a schedule to address outstanding requests

Meeting Ended At: 5:28PM

MOTION was made by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, seconded by Larry Johnson, that this agenda item be adjourned meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Rader, Commissioner Cochran-Johnson, and Commissioner Johnson

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC