



DeKalb County Government

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

Minutes - Draft

FAB-Finance, Audit & Budget Committee

Tuesday, May 10, 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: 3:30PM

Attendees: Commissioners Rader, Cochran-Johnson, Johnson, Bradshaw, Patrick, Davis Johnson

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

I. MINUTES

2022-1581 Commission District(s): ALL
Minutes for the April 26, 2022 Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee

MOTION was made by Larry Johnson, seconded by Lorraine Cochran-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

New Agenda Items:

[2022-1537](#)

Commission District(s): ALL

CO - Change Order No. 1 to Contract No. 1089899 for Maintenance and Support of Benchmark Court Case Management Software: for use by DeKalb County State Court. Consists of providing computerized maintenance and support of Benchmark Court Case Management software. Awarded to Pioneer Technology Group, LLC. Amount Not To Exceed: \$147,070.00.

MOTION was made by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, seconded by Larry Johnson, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 5/24/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

-information provided by CPO Horner, Clerk Mary Bell

-Question LJ: will this system allow you to track repeat offenders?

M Bell: As it currently stands there are search capabilities; we can work with the vendor to accommodate that; this relates to the traffic violations

III. STATUS UPDATE

Code Compliance - Courts Resources

-information provided by Chief Judge Anderson, Solicitor General Coleman-Stribling, Public Defender Saari

-Question LJ: getting these resources will help you move the cases faster - is that in the proposal?

Chief Judge Anderson: absolutely; additional information provided by the Judge

-Question LJ: will the state of Georgia provide resources in this proposal as well?

Judge Anderson: the monies are not available for Magistrate Court; significant was given to Superior Courts across the state, but that has not trickled down to Magistrate Court; so we find ourselves in need and coming to the County

-Question JR: do you expect the 2 year backlog to completely clear?

Judge Anderson: I would hope that we are out of the woods by July of next year; the request today is for a mid-year request

-Question JR: is this all of the area that you see a deficiency in service?

Judge Anderson: this is the only area that I'm aware of today because it is an area of great need, regarding Magistrate Court

-LCJ: I'm happy to move forward on this expeditiously. I would also ask COO Williams, have you had the opportunity to review these documents? What is the position of the Administration?

-Question JR: so you're proposing to establish this as a separate division of the court. How many divisions would the court have?

Judge Anderson: yes this is a separate division. All of the divisions named earlier are all housed in different buildings

-LJ: I'm interested right now in the backlog and understand how the budget request will help deal with the backlog; I want to hear that this funding will do that, but also allow the court to do their normal work and be efficient

-information provided by Clerk Bell on the processing standpoint

-information provided by Solicitor General Coleman-Stribling

-Question LJ: how much is the backlog, and what will these additional positions do to address the backlog in terms of percentage and the number of cases? Is that possible to know how fast we can get through the backlog with this budget request?

D Coleman-Stribling: part of it may be to include how many additional calendars we may have. It may be helpful for the court to provide 'if we were able to get x amount of judges, how many additional cases could be calendared'.

-LJ: that would be good. Would a mediator - someone before they get to this process, be used in some sort of mediation process before the backlog occurs?

Judge Anderson: the matters that may fall under mediation, are circumstances such as nuisance and abatement cases; but that may mean additional resources needed as well for the mediators

-JR: what we're really looking for is a conclusive adjudication to clear the extended processes involved

-information provided by County Attorney Ernestes

-information provided by Public Defender Saari

-JR: Mr. Williams could you tell us where you all are with evaluating and working with the constitutional officers to address this request?

Z Williams: I've seen the request and met with Judge Anderson, the Public Defender, the Solicitor General, and Ms. Bell back in April and we discussed this in length. We have discussed the need to repair our code compliance system; in order to do that we need to work on the front end, which is technology, and on the back end, which is the court room adjudication. What is being proposed today, the establishment of a single division, solely dedicated to hearing these code enforcement and animal control cases makes perfect sense. I envision a future whereby if we are processing cases quickly, that we are serious and they will not continue to cause eyesores in the community and impact quality of life negatively. Over the next few weeks I anticipate us refining this request, so that for the midyear budget we'll be prepared to recommend moving forward.

-Question JR: can we use ARP funds for this for the term of its availability?

Z Williams: we will absolutely be looking into that

-Question LJ: when they are up and running with the addition of attorneys, will our Law department also need additional attorneys since there are additional cases to deal with? The same for hiring more code compliance officers? When you add more on one side, you have to add to the other if you want to stay ahead of the game

Z Williams: I think we're at a point where if we can feed the code compliance system, we can manage in a way that dramatically improves the quality of life.

-JR: Central Staff please put this back on the FAB agenda prior to midyear budget, so that we get an update on how the approach is going to go toward code compliance across the board and then we'll look forward its integration into a formal appropriation

IV. DISCUSSION

Financial Statements

-information provided by CFO McNabb

-JR: going forward I have asked Central Staff to work with the Finance office on reviewing these documents prior to committee review so that anomalies or areas of interest may be highlighted and allow the committee to move through this more quickly. Central Staff and finance work on a summary to provide answers to things that we may have questions on prior to the meeting.

American Rescue Plan - Tranche 2 Funding Plan

-information provided by CFO McNabb on the current tranche 1 reserves

-JR: the Commission's obligation, when we accepted this grant we simultaneously appropriated it;

Therefore the Administration is authorized to make commitments of those funds that would be similar in impact to the Commissioners' formal agenda items. That would also be an item that we would track. In other words, I can see clearly how we can get to that for Commission-directed funds, but it's not as clear that there is a threshold we cross when the Administration decides this is the strategy undertaken under the appropriation authority that the Commission is assigned. Is there a threshold that could be commensurate with the administratively designated funds? I think we need more clarity on where those plans have been made, and we simply haven't gotten to the point of a contract or purchase order to act as a threshold

-Z Williams: a number of these that were budgeted were a 2 year allocation or longer; what we can do in future reports is find a way to demonstrate the spending relevant to the timeline. In order to identify 'red, yellow, green' categories, that would tell a story that would allow you to determine if you should be concerned or not. It sounds like you would like a rolled out report

-Question LCJ: regarding the time sensitivity, I want to understand that more. What is our deadline in terms of allocation of these funds?

Z Williams: it goes beyond year's end

D McNabb: the end of 2023 or 2024

Z Williams: what we can do in future reports - a rolled out report of how much is spent and other factors, I will work with the team to make this happen

-JR: an area to indicate how the administration is allocating its assigned authority, being spent consistent with grant authority

Z Williams: we will need to devise the process and clearly define and track how we finish spending these funds, but also how we've responsibly responded to the pandemic

-D McNabb: we may be able to use the PIP process

-Z Williams: we will also circulate an update on the Commission specific allocations; regarding tranche 2 we are working with the Federal Government to get the application in for tranche 2; we should have some news soon

-JR: we will bring this back to the agenda when that information is ready; we should also think on Central Staff on idea generation to the extent of increasing capacity to process the funding and accurately identify places to put it. If we've gotta flush it we would know what to do, such as for capital needs

-LJ: we have to have a plan b strategy for projects that fit into other categories such as mental health

Meeting Ended At: 5:01PM

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