

~~ MINUTES ~~

**BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE**



Councilor Judy W. Thomas- Chairperson  
Councilor Tyson Begly- Vice Chairperson

Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen

Councilors: Councilor District 1 Seat (Vacant), Joanne Cogle,  
Charmaine Crabb, Glenn Davis, R. Walker Garrett,  
Bruce Huff and Toyia Tucker

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May 21, 2024 / 9:00 AM /  
Muscogee County School Board Chambers-  
Public Education Center  
2960 Macon Road, Columbus, Georgia 31906

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I. CALL TO ORDER - Chairperson Judy W. Thomas

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Judy W. Thomas, Vice Chairperson Tyson Begly, Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen and Councilors Joanne Cogle, Charmaine Crabb, Glenn Davis, and Toyia Tucker (arrived at 9:16 a.m.). Mayor B. H. “Skip” Henderson, III, City Manager Isaiah Hugley, Deputy City Managers Lisa Goodwin and Pamela Hodge, City Attorney Clifton Fay, Assistant City Attorney Lucy Sheftall, Finance Director Angelica Alexander, Clerk of Council Sandra T. Davis and Deputy Clerk Pro Tem Tameka Colbert.

**ABSENT:** Councilor R. Walker Garrett and Bruce Huff.

**A G E N D A**

**OPENING COMMENTS:**

Chairman Thomas stated at the beginning of the meeting that this would be the final meeting of the Budget Review Committee. She said it is also election day and voting will end at 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #1**

1. Clerk of Superior Court - Danielle Forte, Clerk of Superior Court

**SUPERIOR COURT:**

Clerk of Superior Court Danielle Forte provided an overview of the power point presentation entitled *Muscogee County Clerk of Superior & State Courts*. \*A copy is on file in the Clerk of Council's Office.

**Request(s)**

- Six (6) Deputy Clerk II - G115 \$282,588.81
- Two (2) Senior Deputy Clerk – G117 \$100,780

ADD LIST: Request for six (6) Deputy Clerk II positions in the amount of \$282,588.81  
(*Councilor Crabb placed on the Add List.*)

ADD LIST: Request for two (2) Senior Deputy Clerk positions in the amount of \$100,780.  
(*Councilor Crabb placed on the Add List.*)

**REFERRAL(S):**

- A request was made for a report showing the number of arrests and the backlog.  
(*Councilor Begly*)

**BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #2**

2. Police Department – Stoney Mathis, Police Chief

**POLICE DEPARTMENT:**

Deputy Police Chief Lance Deaton came forward with the following request.

**Request(s)**

- Special Operations Unit Asset Forfeiture Funds - \$160,050

ADD LIST: Request for Special Operations Unit in the amount of \$160,050. (*Councilor Cogle placed on the Add List.*)

### **BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #3**

3. Information Technology – Forrest Toelle, Information Technology Director

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:**

Information Technology Director Forrest Toelle provided an overview of the power point presentation entitled *Budget Presentation 05-21-2024 Department of Information Technology*.  
*\*A copy is on file in the Clerk of Council's Office.*

#### **Request(s)**

- Transfer Radio Communications Budget from the Engineering Department to IT \$671,304
- One (1) Radio System Supervisory G122 – \$60,871

ADD LIST: Request lateral move transferring Radio Communications Budget from the Engineering Department to IT in the amount of \$671, 304. (*Mayor Pro Tem Allen placed on the Add List.*)

ADD LIST: Request for one (1) Radio System Supervisory G122 in the amount of \$60,871. (*Mayor Pro Tem Allen placed on the Add List.*)

### **BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #4**

4. Tax Assessor - Suzanne Widenhouse, Chief Appraiser

#### **TAX ASSESSOR:**

Chief Appraiser Suzanne Widenhouse came forward with the following requests.

#### **Request(s)**

- Reclassify two (2) Appraisal Technicians from G113 to G115

- Reclassify two (2) Senior Appraisal Technicians from G114 to G116

ADD LIST: Request to reclassify two (2) Appraisal Technicians and two (2) Senior Appraisal Technicians in the amount of \$11,233. (*Councilor Begly placed on the Add List.*)

### **BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #7**

7. Juvenile Court – Warner Kennon, Juvenile Court Judge (*This item was called up as the next order of business.*)

### **JUVENILE COURT:**

Juvenile Court Judge Warner Kennon came forward and provided a transcript of the following requests. *\*A copy is on file in the Clerk of Council's Office*

#### **Request(s)**

- Increase from three (3) workdays to (4) workdays for Judge Dodgen -\$27,104

ADD LIST: Request to increase the annual salary for Judge Dodgen to \$104,000 at four (4) workdays per week in the amount of \$27,104. (*Councilor Cogle placed on the Add List.*)

### **BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #6 (CONTINUED)**

6. Public Works – Drale Short, Public Works Director

### **PUBLIC WORKS:**

Public Works Director Drale Short came forward and provided a transcript of the following requests. *\*A copy is on file in the Clerk of Council's Office*

#### **Request(s)**

- Reclassify One (1) Facilities Maintenance Supervisor G122 to one (1) Finance Manager G122
- Reclassify one (1) Urban Forestry & Beautification Supervisor to one (1) Public Works Crew Supervisor and transferred to Community Service.

ADD LIST: Request for reclassification of one (1) Facilities Maintenance Supervisor G122 to one (1) Finance Manager G122 in the amount of \$60,871 (*Councilor Tucker placed on the Add List.*)

ADD LIST: Request for reclassification of one (1) Urban Forestry & Beautification Supervisor to one (1) Public Works Crew Supervisor and transferred to Community Service in the amount of \$66,987 (*Councilor Tucker placed on the Add List.*)

## **BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #5 (CONTINUED)**

5. Parks & Recreation - Holli Browder, Parks & Recreation Director

### **PARKS & RECREATION:**

Parks & Recreation Deputy Director Becky Summerlin came forward and provided a transcript of the following requests. *\*A copy is on file in the Clerk of Council's Office*

#### **Request(s)**

- Ten (10) additional Recreation Program Specialist II (G117) - \$505,405
- Operating Increase of \$14,316 for Community Schools
- Operating Increase for Park Ranger costs - \$70,453
- One (1) Aquatic Program Supervisor - \$42,723.83
- One (1) Administrative Support Specialist II - \$44,932

DELETE LIST: Request to delete five (5) Park Rangers one (1) Chief Park Ranger and Operational Costs for Rangers from the proposed budget in the amount of \$417,039. (*Councilor Davis placed on the Delete List.*)

DELETE LIST: Request to delete one (1) Cruelty Investigator and all operational cost from the proposed budget in the amount of \$50,390 (*Councilor Davis placed on the Delete List.*)

ADD LIST: Request to reallocate Capital Outlay funds per Department request in the amount of \$80,000 (*Councilor Begly placed on the Add List.*)

ADD LIST: Request to Add \$60,000 to Capital Outlay to resurface tennis courts at Lakebottom Park. (*Councilor Davis presented on behalf of Councilor Garrett to place on the Add List.*)

ADD LIST: Request to add \$150,000 to the Sheriff's budget for legal fees. (*Councilor Davis placed on the Add List.*)

**REFERRAL(S):**

- A request was made to expand the discussion regarding all property maintenance, not just the jail. (*Councilor Crabb*)

**BUDGET REVIEW ITEM #8**

8. ADD/DELETE List

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #14:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Crabb made a motion to approve (Clerk of Superior Court) Addition of Two (2) Senior Deputy Clerk (G117) in the amount of \$100,780 and ADD/DELETE LIST Item #15 : Six (6) Deputy Clerk II G115 in the amount of \$282,588. and to DELETE from the proposed budget (City Manager) Marketing Coordinator G123 - \$66,988; (Public Works) Communications Officer G113 - \$44,782; (Oxbow Creek) Oxbow Meadows Subsidy - \$100,000; (Tax Assessors) two (2) Appraisal Technician G115 - \$89,564; (Bull Creek) Assistant Golf Professional I G105 - \$52,710; (Tax Commissioner) New position Technology Support Analyst G123-3 - \$64,810 (Tax Commissioner) RECLASSIFICATION Accounting Operations Administrator G127-4 to Accounting Operations Administrator G127-12 \$6,125; (Tax Commissioner) CAREER LADDER three (3) Tax Clerk II G117 to G119 - \$8,327 from the proposed budget. Seconded by Councilor Tucker.

Finance Director Alexander explained that the Assistant Golf Professional I position is not included in the General Fund. She said the Golf Authority has its own fund.

Councilor Crabb amended the motion to approve (Clerk of Superior Court) five (5) Deputy Clerk II positions. Seconded by Councilor Tucker. Chairperson Thomas declared the motion carried by a vote of four to three, with Councilors Cogle, Crabb, Thomas and Tucker voting yes and Mayor Pro Tem Allen and Councilors Begly and Davis voting no.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #7:** VOTE RESULT: Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve District Attorney – Addition of one (1) Legal Administrative Clerk (G115) in the amount of \$47,098

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #8:** VOTE RESULT: Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve District Attorney – Addition of one (1) Victim Advocate (G117) in the amount of \$50,390. Seconded by Councilor Tucker and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #17:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Begly made a motion to approve Tax Assessor – Reclassify two (2) Appraisal Technicians from (G113) to (G115) and two (2) Senior Appraisal Technicians from (G114) to (G116) in the amount of \$11,233. Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Allen and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #19:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Public Works – Reclassify one (1) Facilities Maintenance Supervisor (G122) to one (1) Finance Manager (G122). Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #9:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Public Works – Increase annual base salary for Veterinarian (G130) to \$125,000 in the amount of \$33,135. Seconded by Councilor Tucker and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #10:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Public Works – Increase Veterinary Services for medical supplies, medications, micro-chipping and vaccinations in the amount of \$107,715. Seconded by Councilor Tucker and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST (Request of Councilor Garrett): Item #12:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Public Works – Increase Fee Based Program for spay/neuter services in the amount of \$275,000. Seconded by Councilor Tucker and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #11:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Public Works – Addition of three (3) Fleet Maintenance Technician II (G118) positions in the amount of \$156,408. Seconded by Councilor Tucker and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #13:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Thomas made a motion to approve Fire & EMS – Increase Fire & EMS Chief’s total pay to \$170,980.68 in the amount of \$19,977. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #16:** VOTE RESULT: Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve Information Technology – Transfer Radio Communications’ budget of \$671,304 to

Information Technology's budget. Seconded by Councilor Davis and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilor Tucker being absent for the vote.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #18:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Cogle made a motion to approve Juvenile Court – Increase annual salary for Judge Dodgen to \$104,000 in the amount of \$27,104. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilor Tucker being absent for the vote.

**ADD/DELETE LIST (Request of Councilor Cogle):** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Cogle made a motion to approve Police Department – Special Operations Unit in the amount of \$160,050. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilor Tucker being absent for the vote.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #20:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Parks & Recreation – Delete from the proposed budget five (5) Park Rangers, one (1) Chief Park Ranger and operational costs for Rangers in the amount of \$417,039. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilor Tucker being absent for the vote.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #21:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Public Works – Delete from the proposed budget one (1) Cruelty Investigator, three (3) Animal Control Officers and all operational costs for Investigator in the amount of \$196,526. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilor Tucker being absent for the vote.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #22:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Begly made a motion to approve Parks & Recreation – Reallocate \$80,000 of Capital Outlay for Audio Visual. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilor Tucker being absent for the vote.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #23:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Parks & Recreation – Addition of \$60,000 to Capital Outlay to resurface tennis courts at Lakebottom Park. Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Allen and carried unanimously by the seven members present.



**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #24:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Sheriff's Department – Addition of \$150,000 for legal fees. Seconded by Councilor Tucker. Chairperson Thomas declared the motion carried by a vote of five to two, with Councilors Begly, Cogle, Crabb, Davis and Tucker voting yes and Mayor Pro Tem Allen and Councilor Thomas voting no.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #1:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Sheriff's Department – Increase Reserve Deputy funding by \$300,000 and increase Sworn Officer salaries by \$250,000 for \$200/day stipends for hospital work on off-days for Deputies in the amount of \$635,200. Seconded by Councilor Davis. Chairperson Thomas declared the motion defeated by a vote of three to four, with Councilors Crabb, Davis, and Tucker voting yes and Mayor Pro Tem Allen, and Councilors Begly, Cogle, and Thomas voting no.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #2:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Muscogee County Prison – Increase Training and Travel Budget in the amount of \$20,000. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #3:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Muscogee County Prison – Increase Training Budget to implement Animal Care/Training Program in the amount of \$300,000. Seconded by Councilor Cogle and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

Councilor Crabb made a motion to amend the previous motion to establish a Project Fund for the Animal Care/Training program as a one-time expense in the amount of \$250,000. Seconded by Councilor Begly. Chairperson Thomas declared the motion carried by a vote of five to two, with Councilors Begly, Cogle, Crabb, Davis and Tucker voting yes and Mayor Pro Tem Allen and Councilor Thomas voting no.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #4:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Muscogee County Prison – Increase Base Pay for MCP Sworn Officers by \$2,500 in the amount of \$346,920. Seconded by Councilor Davis. Chairperson Thomas declared the motion carried by a vote of four to three, with Councilors Cogle, Crabb, Davis and Tucker voting yes and Mayor Pro Tem Allen and Councilors Begly and Thomas voting no.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #5:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Sheriff's Office – Increase Base Pay for Sheriff Sworn Officers by \$5,000 in the amount of \$1,889,475. Seconded by Councilor Davis. Chairperson Thomas declared the motion carried by a vote of four to three, with Councilors Cogle, Crabb, Davis and Tucker voting yes and Mayor Pro Tem Allen and Councilors Begly and Thomas voting no.

**ADD/DELETE LIST Item #6:** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Fire & EMS – Increase Base Pay for Fire/EMS Sworn Officers by \$2,500 in the amount of \$1,235,902. Seconded by Councilor Davis. Chairperson Thomas declared the motion carried by a vote of four to three, with Councilors Cogle, Crabb, Davis and Tucker voting yes and Mayor Pro Tem Allen and Councilors Begly and Thomas voting no.

**ADD/DELETE LIST (Request of Councilor Tucker):** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve Public Works – Reclassify Urban Forestry & Beautification Supervisor (G124) to Public Works Crew Supervisor (G124). Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**ADD/DELETE LIST (Request of Councilor Davis):** VOTE RESULT: Councilor Davis made a motion to approve Finance Department – Delete from the proposed budget six (6) new positions in the Finance Department until there is a Compliance Update. Seconded by Councilor Garrett. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a substitute motion to amend the amount to \$100,000.

Councilor Davis amended the motion to also delete from the proposed budget four (4) Career Ladder positions for the Finance Department. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the seven members present.

**REFERRAL(S):**

- A request was made to receive a compliance update. (*Councilor Davis*)
- A request was made for an update from the Development Authority. (*Councilor Davis*)
- A request was made to have a Pickleball meeting. (*Councilor Davis*)
- A request was made to receive an update on the school zone cameras. (*Councilor Davis*)
- A request was made to put the following items listed on the proposed budget on hold: Public Works - two (2) Electricians and two (2) Heating and Air, two (2) Plumbers, one (1) Carpenter and maintenance for Animal Control. (*Councilor Crabb*)

## **PENSION PLAN**

Councilor Davis said he would like to look into reducing the contribution that employees are paying into the pension plan. He said he has spoken to the City Manager regarding this matter. He said it would be wise to listen to the actuarial and see what he has.

## **TAXPAYER BILL OF RIGHTS HEARING SCHEDULE**

June 4, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers

June 4, 2024 @ 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers

- 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Budget Ordinance

June 11, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Budget Ordinance
- 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Millage Ordinance

June 18, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers to adopt Millage Ordinance

With there being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Thomas declared the adjournment of the May 21, 2024, Budget Review Committee Meeting, with the time being 3:02 p.m.

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Tameka Colbert  
Deputy Clerk Pro Tem