

CALHOUN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
BUDGET HEARING
AUGUST 20, 2013

PRESENT AND ACTING:

THOMAS G. FLOWERS, CHAIRMAN
DARRELL MCDUGALD
LEE SHELTON
LEE LEE BROWN
WILLIE T. GRANT - ABSENT

MANUEL HIRES, BALIFF
CARLA A. HAND, CLERK
CARLA PEACOCK, DEPUTY CLERK

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Flowers at 3:37 p.m., CT.

Chairman Flowers asked for comments from the Constitutional Officers regarding the proposed budget. There were no comments.

Chairman Flowers discussed the following budget reduction ideas:

Chairman Flowers stated the proposed budget includes varied funding requests from the Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs). He stated the majority of VFDs submitted requests for what was spent the previous year or what they would like to receive. Chairman Flowers said the County funds nine VFDs in Calhoun County and the combined budget requests in the proposed budget total approximately \$86,268.00. Chairman Flowers said the County historically funds each VFD at \$7,000 annually and he would like to increase the funding to \$7,500 per VFD. Chairman Flowers stated funding each VFD at \$7,500 would reduce the proposed budget by approximately \$17,000.

Chairman Flowers stated the proposed budget includes a budget request in the amount of \$4,700 for Calhoun County Search and Rescue. Search and Rescue equipment is stored at Carr-Clarksville VFD. Sheriff Kimbrel said the Search and Rescue team usually doesn't ask for anything, but they need gas and other equipment to aid with search and rescue activities. Sheriff Kimbrel stated Search and Rescue provides a much needed service to Calhoun County and they are always ready and willing to serve. Chairman Flowers suggested funding Search and Rescue at \$3,500 which would save \$1,200 in the proposed budget.

Chairman Flowers stated the proposed budget includes a request from the Riparian Stakeholder Coalition for \$5,000. After some discussion, the Chairman suggested giving \$2,500 in funding to the Riparian Stakeholder Coalition.

Chairman Flowers stated the monthly premium for health insurance is approximately \$523.00 for each employee participating in the County health insurance plan. Clerk Hand stated the proposed budget includes a \$550.00 per month premium for each employee and further explained currently each County employee participating in the health insurance plan contributes \$60.00 per month of the \$523 premium. Chairman Flowers stated he would like to change the maximum amount the County pays for each employee, including employees of each Constitutional Officer, to \$500.00 per month saving County employees by reducing their contribution from \$60.00 per month to approximately \$23.00 per month for their County health insurance benefit. If the Board votes to change their maximum monthly contribution to \$500.00 the County will reduce the proposed budget by approximately \$20,000.

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Chairman Flowers discussed the contracts for the County Lobbyist and County Planner. Chairman Flowers stated the County is paying the Lobbyist \$20,000 annually and the Planner \$30,000 annually. After some discussion, Chairman Flowers stated he will ask the County Attorney to advise the Board on whether they can contact the Lobbyist and Planner to negotiate for a reduced fee, or if the Board is required to advertise and take bids for these services.

Chairman Flowers made a recommendation to give all the County employees a 3% raise, including employees of each Constitutional Officer. Clerk Hand stated this amount (approximately \$30,000 - \$40,000) is included in the proposed budget for 2013-2014.

Chairman Flowers said the Road Department has some recent vacant positions that will not be filled that will reduce the proposed budget by approximately \$83,000.

Chairman Flowers asked each Constitutional Officer to estimate their payback to the Board, if any, from their 2012-2013 budget allocation prior to the Budget Hearing on September 5, 2013.

Chairman Flowers mentioned that Clerk Hand discovered the County is still paying insurance premiums on some General Fixed Asset items no longer in the County's possession. These items are being removed from the insurance policy and there will be some savings there as well.

Commissioner McDougald asked if the reductions discussed today would balance the budget. Clerk Hand responded it would not. She stated approximately \$200,000 more in reductions are needed to balance the budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Shelton to make the following changes to the 2013-2014 proposed budget:

- Include \$7,500 for each Calhoun County Volunteer Fire Department
- Include \$3,500 for Calhoun County Search and Rescue
- Include \$2,500 for the Riparian Stakeholder Coalition
- Change the County's maximum contribution for employee health insurance benefit to \$500 per month for Board and Constitutional Officer employees
- Eliminate \$500,000 for the Courthouse HVAC repair
- Eliminate \$200,000 from the Road Department budget for capital outlay of equipment
- Reduce the Road Department budget for vacant positions


The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Brown to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner McDougald. The motion passed 4-0 to adjourn this meeting at 4:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

CARLA A. HAND, CLERK



THOMAS G. FLOWERS, CHAIRMAN

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