



MINUTES
GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL
Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2015
4:46 p.m.
County Square – Conference Room D

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Bob Taylor, Chairman
Mr. Butch Kirven, Vice Chairman
Mr. Joe Dill
Mr. Joe Baldwin arrived at 5:02 p.m.
Mr. Willis Meadows
Mr. Sid Cates

Mr. Jim Burns
Mrs. Xanthene Norris
Mrs. Liz Seman
Mrs. Lottie Gibson
Mr. Lynn Ballard
Mr. Fred Payne

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted on the bulletin board at the County Square and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned Citizens.

COUNCIL MEMBER(S) ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Joe Kernell, County Administrator
John Hansley, Deputy County Administrator
Mark Tollison, County Attorney
Theresa Kizer, Clerk to Council
Regina McCaskill, Deputy Clerk to Council
Paula Gucker, Assistant County Administrator, Public Works
Shannon Herman, Assistant to the County Administrator
Bob Mihalic, Governmental Relations Officer
Sandra Yudice, Assistant to the County Administrator
Ruth Parris, Management and Budget

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bob Taylor

INVOCATION

Councilor Sid Cates

Item (3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Seman moved to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Without objection from Council, Chairman Taylor elected to discuss Item (5) Disabilities and Special Needs Board / Seat Additions and Term Lengths prior to Item (4) Budget Discussions.

Item (5) DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS BOARD / SEAT ADDITIONS AND TERM LENGTHS

Alex McNair, Disabilities and Special Needs Board Chairman, spoke regarding the need for seat additions and longer term lengths for the board. Mr. McNair indicated the current board lacked a Marketing and Development Committee. This necessitated the need for an additional two (2) seats for the board. Longer term lengths were required by state statute and would insure seamless transitions for board members as well as continuity.

ACTION: Councilor Gibson moved to approve an Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 2378 regarding the number and term limits of the members of the Board of Directors of the Greenville County Disabilities and Special Needs Board.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (4) BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

Joe Kernell, County Administrator, stated the Budget Committee was available to answer questions regarding the Proposed FY 2016 and FY 2017 Budget.

Councilor Gibson inquired about the proposed purchase of a \$2 million piece of machinery: its purpose and how often it would be used.

Joe Kernell replied the amount, \$1.8 million, was for a new 60 ton crane used for bridge replacements. Since the proposed budget was submitted for review, it had been determined the new crane was not available and the County is looking instead at the lease/purchase of a used crane for approximately \$1 million.

Councilor Gibson asked if the budget reflected the change.

Joe Kernell stated those funds were a lease deal, therefore, the difference in the amount was negligible. He added the crane would be available to the County at all times.

Councilor Ballard stated it was his understanding that \$4 million was taken from the Infrastructure Bank, transferred to the Road Fund and then transferred to the General Fund.

Joe Kernell stated the Infrastructure Bank provided funding for road improvements

and the funds were transferred to the Road Program Fund. The Road Maintenance Fees, \$15 per vehicle, provided for road improvements and for the operation of the Road and Bridge Department, which was located in the General Fund.

Councilman Ballard stated his concern was the budget showed \$4 million from the Infrastructure Bank for roads, \$4 million in the Road Program, and another \$4 million in the General Fund for a total of \$12 million.

Joe Kernell stated that was how governmental accounting and budgeting worked. The budget had to show transfers to and from each separate fund. In this situation, there were three separate transfers. Each fund operated on its own, separate from the other funds and each transaction was recorded. Mr. Kernell added the Financial Statements showed each transfer in and each transfer out.

Chairman Taylor stated \$4 million was taken from the Infrastructure Bank and transferred to the Road Program, a special revenue fund. Money was transferred from the Road Program to the General Fund to cover the Road and Bridge Department.

Joe Kernell added it was not the same \$4 million each time, it just happened to be the same amount in each transfer.

Councilman Meadows stated the budget did not show transfers in or transfers out.

Joe Kernell stated the Infrastructure Bank received a fee in lieu and that was where the funds were collected. From the Infrastructure Bank, money was transferred out to the Road Program, a special revenue fund. The money was shown as "other financing source" in the Road Program, not as revenue. Funds were then transferred out to the General Fund and shown as "other financing source". Mr. Kernell added the County was very transparent in showing each transfer in and each transfer out. Authorization was required for each transaction and allowed for the movement of funds.

Councilman Ballard stated funds from the Infrastructure Bank were used for Economic Development Programs and to fund Capital Needs as a result of economic development. He inquired if the money used to fund the Road and Bridge Department fell under that category.

Joe Kernell replied funds from the Infrastructure Bank were used for the Road Program and money from the Road Program, specifically the Road Maintenance Fees, was used to fund the Road and Bridge Department.

Mr. Burns stated the County had not built any roads in quite some time and asked if the Road Program was just for repaving.

Joe Kernell stated the Road Program money was used for repaving, intersection improvements, bridge improvements, etc.

Councilor Burns stated money for roads was deficient. An amount of \$60 million was previously quoted as needed for the Road Program and the amount budgeted in the proposed budget, \$8 million, was far less.

Joe Kernell stated there was no way to increase the amount as there was no proposed millage rate increase but the County could look for alternative sources of money.

Councilor Burns stated the County had not kept up in budgeting money needed for road improvements and our roads would not last forever. He added Council needed to determine the best place to spend the taxpayers' money.

Councilor Kirven stated he agreed the County's infrastructure was not as good as it should be but the County had done much better than the State in its responsibility to the Road Program. He added the appropriate time to have looked at the situation and generate new ideas was about a year ago, not now.

Councilor Payne stated the County had a need for additional funds for the Road Program. The citizens of Greenville County voted against a referendum to increase taxes and the State did not appropriate money. If the referendum had passed, the proposed budget would have been \$60 million higher. Councilor Payne stated the County was paying for Crossing Guards and Resource Officers for Greenville County Schools and inquired as to why the County paid those individuals when it should be the responsibility of the School System.

Joe Kernell stated prior to 1975, County Council authorized those resources by an ordinance. He added County Council designated Crossing Guards as deputies in order for them to have the ability to enforce traffic laws.

Councilor Gibson stated the School District did not want to pay the costs of Crossing Guards and School Resource Officers at that time and County Council reluctantly agreed the County would absorb this expense.

Councilor Payne asked if County Council could rescind that action. He added that 60% of all tax money collected from Greenville County residents was designated for the School District.

Councilor Ballard stated he spoke with Sheriff Loftis on 06-1-2015 and was advised Crossing Guards have always been a County cost. He added Resource Officers have only been in place since 2001. Initially, the County received Federal Funds to cover the cost. Councilor Ballard stated Sheriff Loftis advised Resource Officers in the High Schools are paid by the County and Resource Officers in the Middle Schools are paid the School District. He added this arrangement was an agreement between the County and the School District.

Joe Kernell stated the agreement was signed in 2011. The School District paid for 14 Resource Officers and one Civilian in the Middle Schools and the County provided for 7 Resource Officers in the High Schools. He confirmed the officers were placed in schools located in unincorporated areas of Greenville County.

Councilor Burns requested an accounting of the Infrastructure Bank Funds for past couple of years.

Joe Kernell stated he would provide a copy for all Council Members. Mr. Kernell added some Public Safety and EMS costs would come from the Hospitality Tax Fund. He stated the County costs did not remain stagnant. The County had to increase funding in certain areas and funding would fluctuate. Mr. Kernell stated the Arena expected to generate \$1.6 - \$1.7 million profit that year and \$2.3 million next year. The Arena appeared to be in good shape to move forward.

Item (6)

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION:

Councilor Payne moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:39 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Theresa Kizer, Clerk to Council