



LUMPKIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
Special Called Work Session Agenda
Executive Conference Room

July 16, 2022
9:00 AM

- **CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Dockery
- **DISCUSS 2023 BUDGET**
 - **A. Possible Budget Reductions**
 - **B. Millage Options**
- **Proposed Gymnasium/Outdoor Water Park/Pickelball Courts**
 - **C. Design Review**
 - **D. Estimated Cost Projection**
 - **E. Funding Options**
- **ADJOURNMENT**

LUMPKIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
Special Called Work Session Minutes
Executive Conference Room



July 16, 2022
9:00 AM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by Chairman Chris Dockery

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Chris Dockery	Chairman	Present	
Tucker Greene	District 1 Commissioner	Present	
Bobby Mayfield	District 2 Commissioner	Present	
Rhett Stringer	District 3 Commissioner	Present	
Jeffrey Moran	District 4 Commissioner	Present	

DISCUSS 2023 BUDGET

A. Possible Budget Reductions

Finance Director Abby Branan presented a spreadsheet showing the budget areas the staff had reduced at the request of the commissioners. She said they had deducted the excess vacancies from the health insurance that were figured at family coverage. This deduction was a large portion of the savings and staff has found ambulance fees and animal shelter fees that could be increased. There is a custodian, real property appraiser, and two road maintenance workers positions that can be frozen, if the BOC decided to freeze them. They could also remove the Yahoola Creek Park turfplane treatment and delay the airport project. If they chose to do those big decision points then they would save \$491,139. Commissioner Mayfield asked if the 4 positions were currently open and we are just asking to not fill them. County Manager Ours affirmed those positions have been open for a few months. Commissioner Mayfield asked how that would affect the services provided.

Ms. Branan said the commissioners still have to decide what they want to do about the Coroner's salary, the library, and the Deputy Magistrate Judge requests. Mr. Ours disclosed the appraiser position has been vacant for a while. The Board of Assessors has agreed to an outside company to come in and reevaluate the commercial properties. That will take a huge load off of the Appraiser's Office. Chairman Dockery asked if there was a better way and cost-efficient way to run that office, like if we could hire someone to do all of the commercial properties for the cost of one appraiser's salary.

Commissioner Mayfield questioned if it was necessary to have 2 to 3 vehicles to go to every emergency call? Mr. Ours has spoken to the Chief and Sheriff about cutting off the vehicles at each call to assist in the fuel costs. He clarified the turfplane treatment was requested by the Parks and Recreation Manager to smooth out the lip on the fields, so they have an even playing field. Chairman Dockery asked if this is something that people could get together in the community to do. Commissioner Greene responded the company does use different equipment to do the work, but he is not sure if it is something that they could do themselves. However, it is something they could look into. His only concern is, he wouldn't want to do something like this and it cause a problem later on down the road. Commissioner Stringer asked if it is just the transition in the infield and outfield and Commissioner Greene confirmed. Commissioner Greene would advise getting rid of all of the grass in the infield and go with all-dirt fields. He said that 99% of all of the fields they play on are dirt fields.

If there is a supplement to the Magistrate position, it would have to carry on until she retires. Chairman Dockery is not in favor of doing that because they can never take it away. He thinks they should let her know that they appreciate her working extra hours when there was a vacancy but unfortunately, they can't support an increase because they cannot make it a one-time supplement. He does think they need to make an adjustment for the Coroner's salary. Ms. Branan reminded them the Coroner will receive a \$5,000 increase at the beginning of the year. There was discussion on whether his figures that he provided had included the increase that begins in January. The Commissioners had figured an average of \$25,379.50 at the meeting with the coroner. That is the average amount of the Dawson, Fannin, Gilmer, and White County Coroners' salaries. Chairman Dockery asked if we increased the coroner salary to the average amount, what would that increase be? The consensus was not to touch the Deputy Coroner's salary; that will be up to the Coroner to figure out. The total increase would equate to \$9,000.

Chairman Dockery stated the library had requested a COLA (cost of living adjustment) and a merit increase. His only question is since the library gets an appropriation, is there any way to make sure the money will go for the increases? Ms. Branan responded they provide a detailed finance report of where the funds are allocated. The consensus was to put the COLA and merit increase in the budget totaling \$12,069. Chairman Dockery asked if the state is giving them any kind of increase towards their salaries. Mr. Ours said staff will check on that to make sure there isn't double pay. The Board was in agreement of the increased ambulance fees of \$100,000 and the \$6,360 animal shelter increased fees. They also supported freezing the positions, removing the turfplane treatment, and delaying the airport project. The increases for the Coroner of \$9,000 and library of \$12,069 were included after verification from the state of no increase to the library. They were not in support of an increase for the Magistrate Judge.

B. Millage Options

Ms. Branan went through the millage rate calculations and on the third page she provided three different scenarios. The last scenario shows to take the inflationary growth, keep the millage rate the same, and in order to yield to balance the budget, that would have us using \$1 million of fund balance. She explained that the middle of the page is at a 100% collection rate. However, they figure a 97% collection rate for the budget because they do not get 100% of collections. They have a tax prior years budget line item that they figure for collection of late taxes. Chairman Dockery asked if that includes any tax sales. Ms. Branan replied it does not include sold property, it is just prior years taxes. We do not budget for tax sales.

Commissioner Mayfield asked if we are still within the ACCG recommended fund balance parameters. Ms. Branan confirmed after the changes and \$1 million from fund balance, we are at 24%. ACCG recommends between 15-25%. Commissioner Stringer questioned why they wouldn't want to use the fund balance to balance the budget and not increase the incorporated rate even at 24%. Ms. Branan responded when you get over the 25% that is recommended, then you look at capital improvements that have been removed or neglected in order to balance the budget. Commissioner Stringer and Commissioner Moran were both in agreement that right now is not the right time to ask for more from the citizens. The inflation and gas increases will be hard on the residents, so they do not think now is the right time to increase taxes. Ms. Branan said staff tries to figure as conservative as possible each year. Commissioner Mayfield thinks the staff and County Manager have done a great job bringing options to them that he has never thought of before. There was discussion to see about checking with surrounding counties on ambulances and possibly changing out the chassis on the current ones. Ms. Branan asked for direction on the millage rates. The Commissioners decided to take the Planning Department's requested trucks from the Planning fund balance. The consensus was to keep incorporated and unincorporated at the 2021 millage rates.

Proposed Gymnasium/Outdoor Water Park/Pickleball Courts

C. Design Review

Mr. Ours said the revised plan for the aquatic center includes two basketball courts, six pickleball courts, and two meeting rooms. They designed it so they can add bleachers later. The contract would include conduit in the ground for lighting, but the pickleball teams think they could raise enough money for the lighting. They also think the tournaments will increase revenue to the county. Chairman Dockery suggested including a credit card machine that could be swiped to pay for lighting, for a set amount of time. Mr. Ours discussed the idea with the pickleball team who are on board and thought that would be a great idea. Mr. Ours said after talking about the

pool some, the architect switched some things up, to accommodate the possible bubble that could be placed around the pool. The pool has been increased to an 8-lane pool.

D. Estimated Cost Projection

Chairman Dockery stated originally the 3-lane pool was going to be heated by the school system. Now we are increasing the lanes and the depth which will increase the volume. He wanted to make sure everyone understands that if the school decides not to heat the pool, then it will not be heated. He said the same thing for the bubble. If the swim team and school want to figure out a way to swim year-round then that is up to them. The Commissioners said they were all on the same page that they are providing what they have promised to the community. The plan also includes a water slide and lazy river.

E. Funding Options

The total estimated cost is \$11,878,556. Mr. Ours pointed out some cost savings because of some rock that is there, but they are not going to have to go as deep as what they were going to do with the aquatic center. This number does not include FF&E. The latest estimated number is \$710,302 for that, but they still have more work to do before finalizing anything. He explained that option 2 included paying off the Justice Center early which eliminates that debt from future SPLOST programs. There will be proceeds from bonds that will pay the debt service on the aquatic center until the 2026 SPLOST. Trey Monroe recommends going to the bond market in September if the BOC is ok with moving in that direction. Chairman Dockery asked how it relates to the aquatic center and if they need to approve anything Tuesday night to move forward. Mr. Ours responded staff will work up something on Monday to get everything moving forward. Commissioner Greene asked if the parking lot lighting is not included. Mr. Ours explained that is typically leased from GA Power.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.

August 17, 2022

Date



Melissa Witcher
County Clerk, Lumpkin County



Chris Dockery, Chairman
Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners