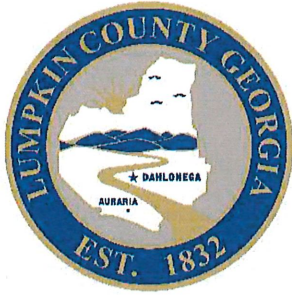




LUMPKIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
Special Called Work Session Agenda
Executive Conference Room
99 Courthouse Hill
Dahlonega, GA 30533

June 16, 2023
9:30 AM

- **Call to Order**
- **2024 Budget Discussions**
- **9:30 AM to 10:00 AM - Coroner**
- **10:00 AM to 11:00 AM - Library**
- **11:00 AM to 11:30 AM - Magistrate Court**
- **11:30 AM to 12:00 PM - Clerk of Court**
- **Adjournment**



LUMPKIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
Special Called Work Session Minutes
Executive Conference Room
99 Courthouse Hill
Dahlonega, GA 30533

June 16, 2023
9:30 AM

- **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:46 am. Present were Chairman Chris Dockery and District Commissioners Bobby Mayfield, Rhett Stringer, and Jeff Moran.

- **2024 Budget Discussions**

- **9:30 AM to 10:00 AM – Coroner**

Chairman Dockery read aloud the request that had been submitted to the budget committee by the Coroner. Coroner Mark Cox said he is trying to figure out a way to prevent the deputy coroners from answering the majority of the calls and the coroner not doing their part. He answered over 80% of the calls last year; one deputy coroner answered 26 calls and the other answered 12. Coroner Cox has been trying to think of a way to get himself some relief since one of his employees resigned. He thinks if they increase the case fees then maybe there would be some interest in becoming a deputy coroner. Chairman Dockery made some quick calculations to figure the average cost per call if they went back to a per call fee. After some discussion on the amount of calls they determined the per call fee needed to be \$225. Coroner Cox mentioned they are currently being paid by a 1099 through the Finance Department instead of payroll. He feels the deputy coroners should be paid as employees, not as contractors.

Training fees were also discussed. There are times when he will have a deputy in training go to a call with him until they complete their training. He asked for \$50 a call to cover that fee. Chairman Dockery suggested he move some funds around in his budget so he could cover those fees. Coroner Cox will create a ride along policy that will list out the stipulations, requirements, and how the funds will be spent from the budget. He will switch the base pay line item of \$15,000 to be his salary and the \$30,398 that is currently listed there will be put in the line item to cover the per call base.

- **10:00 AM to 11:00 AM – Library**

Library Director Leslie Clark disseminated a handout with additional information regarding their requests. She said their UFB is going up over the next few years. They can meet the increase from their unassigned fund balance this year to balance the budget, but next year they will not be able to cover the costs. She said with the increase in power, goods and services, and programs, they are not going to be able to keep up and keep the services the same. She is not asking for additional services or anything additional for materials, it is just to keep up. Chairman Dockery asked how they receive the appropriations and she responded it comes to them monthly. Ms. Clark said the only fee-based items are the fines and copies. They cannot change the amount they charge for fines because that is set at the state level. They do check and make sure that the fee for the copies covers their cost and it does. The Chairman asked if they rent space for free or if it was fee-based. She replied it is free, however, it is only rented to nonprofits or to their groups like the knitting group, children's group, etc. Chairman Dockery suggested looking at a fee-based system to cover the cost of the service. He explained it wasn't to make money, it is to cover the cost of the room.

Commissioner Mayfield said the only complaint he has ever heard is that they are not open long enough. They are not asking for more staff, replied Ms. Clark, so they cannot be open longer because they have to meet the hours for the part time employees. She confirmed the main purpose for this meeting is to let the BOC know they will be asking for more money next year to cover their 2025 budget. In order for them to provide the same number of

services, they will need more money. The Chairman appreciated them letting the Board know, but they cannot say they would be able to cover the costs next year. It will be contingent on everything else that will be happening and the amount of funding available.

- **11:00 AM to 11:30 AM - Magistrate Court**

Judge Maxwell began by stating there really wasn't any need to have two full-time judges and a part-time judge. Judge Beatty would like to go to part-time and take early part-time retirement. He thinks they would be fine with an additional on-call judge instead of hiring back a full-time judge. That would make four judges total: one full-time, two-part time, and one on-call. Judge Maxwell concluded that would be a reduction of \$18,134.94 to his budget and that includes adding the fourth judge. Chairman Dockery commended him on reducing his budget and helping out the County. He stated a reduction in a department's budget never happens.

Chairman Dockery asked Judge Maxwell how often he holds court. Judge Maxwell responded court is held every other Thursday of the month. They mainly hold court for arrest warrants, search warrants, code compliance violations, and animal control violations. They do not receive any funding from the arrest and search warrants. The Superior Court made them a designee to do alcohol and tobacco under age violations. There are criminal trespass and shoplifting cases from the unincorporated County that are heard as well. Commissioner Stringer asked if they have received a lot of amplified noise tickets. Judge Maxwell said there had been only one and they settled prior to seeing the judge.

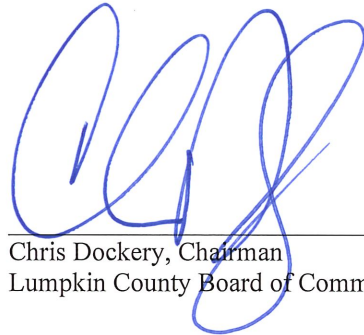
- **11:30 AM to 12:00 PM - Clerk of Court**

Clerk of Court Rita Harkins requested an increase to her travel and meetings budget, an assistant clerk position, and a uniforms allowance. Ms. Harkins said they have started having both summer and winter training again. Due to the court calendar, she would like for them to know that she is unable to go to the additional training 90% of the time. She attends the spring training and would also like to have the funding to attend the winter training. The training was included in the proposed budget, but the two positions and uniforms were not. Chairman Dockery asked how many employees she currently had and she responded 10 employees and herself. They agreed on 20 shirts and after purchasing the shirts and the one-time fee for the logo, \$750 would be enough to cover the uniform costs. Chairman Dockery explained the two positions were the only things that were unknown. Commissioner Stringer asked about a grant she was checking on. Ms. Harkins said she cannot get ARPA funding for the employee that it has been paying for. She said she doesn't want to train someone and then not have the support from the Board to pay for the position in the future.

- **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

July 18, 2023
Date


Chris Dockery, Chairman
Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Melissa Witcher
Melissa Witcher
Clerk, Lumpkin County