



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

June 15, 2021
7:00 P.M.

- **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Dockery

- **Discuss 2022 Budget**

- 7:00 - 7:30 Development Authority
- 7:30 - 8:00 Library
- 8:00 - 8:30 Coroner
- 8:30 - 9:00 Clerk of Court
- 9:00 - 9:30 Staff

- **ADJOURNMENT**

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



June 15, 2021
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:28 PM by Chairman Chris Dockery

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

Consideration of Agenda

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Mayfield to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stringer. The motion was approved and carried.

Discuss 2022 Budget

7:00 - 7:30 Development Authority

Development Authority Director Rebecca Mincey is requesting an additional \$25,000 for two primary items. The first item is to fund a part time employee. The UNG interns have been used every year with great success, but it requires training a new person each year. The employee would start out working 20 hours a week. The other item is funding for special projects to help supplement expenses that are unknown at this time. Ms. Mincey explained this would be funding for items like reservoir trails or items that improve the quality of life of our citizens that come up in the future. Currently there are no monies set aside for this and if needed, it could be used to assist with obtaining grants that may require a small local match. The request has been included in the presented budget but she wanted to explain their request and what they will be using it for. Chairman Dockery recommended the development authority be included in the general fund and in the budget in the future so they are well maintained and kept operational. He said this year is not the year, but sometime in the future he thinks that a dedicated millage tax needs to go to the development authority for economic development.

7:30 - 8:00 Library

Chairman Dockery began by reviewing the past requested amounts and what they are asking for today. The County Manager has recommended an increase of \$10,000 in the proposed budget. Library Director Leslie Clark said they have not asked for an increase in a couple of years. This year they are requesting an additional \$40,665 to cover the increase in the water bills, electric bills, and increased facility cleaning supplies. She disseminated a document explaining the increases and some of the bills that were not anticipated. They are wanting to increase the hours they are open and give a COLA/merit increase for the staff.

Ms. Clark shared a few stats of the amount of people that have been coming in compared to 2019. They are not comparing with 2020 because of COVID and the fact that the library was closed to citizens. They served over 700 patrons outside by table pickup during the height of COVID. During that time the employees were still coming in, so there were no savings from payroll. They did other things like digital materials and take-home kits as well. Chairman Dockery said before they built the new library, they both agreed there would be no additional staff requested. However, they didn't know what the extra utility costs would be, so they would have to be adjusted accordingly. She also reported that all 7 air conditioners had to be replaced, but they were covered under warranty. He asked if she sends the utility costs to the county manager for a side-by-side comparison to see where each have increased. She responded negatively, but will be able to go back and do so.

Chairman Dockery said he doesn't know what library employees are doing in the other counties compared to here. The library staff are not county employees and the commissioners do not know what they are being supplemented from other counties. Ms. Clark stated the employees receive a 3% increase each year but she will get some additional information for the Commissioners. Chairman Dockery said they needed documentation on the increases in the water and electric bills. He doesn't know if the increase in hours is feasible and suggested maybe if they see through 2021, they should have enough information to have a baseline. If the increase in water, electric, and cleaning supplies is COVID-related then it is considered a one-time expense and can be reimbursed. The extended hours, merit, and COLA increases is something that he would look into more closely next year.

Ms. Clark said they have increased their hours by 4 without increasing anything from the budget. Chairman Dockery explained \$10,000 had been added in the proposed budget for an increase in bills and cleaning supplies. Ms. Clark is going to provide a list of what is COVID-related for reimbursement and they can look at expanded hours next year after establishing a baseline. Chairman Dockery suggested imposing a small fee to offset the burden for using the meeting rooms.

8:00 - 8:30 Coroner

Coroner Mark Cox displayed a PowerPoint presentation explaining his desire to move away from the case fees and go strictly to a salary. He reviewed the surrounding area's economic data, demographic data, salaries and deputy coroners. He evaluated the current compensation for himself and the deputy coroner. Mr. Cox stated there is a proposed bill for 2022 for a minimum coroner salary of \$33,000. Chairman Dockery asked if that was for only the coroner or included the deputy coroner, and Mr. Cox replied he was unsure and would have to check.

Chairman Dockery asked about the amount of time it takes for each call. Mr. Cox responded it varies from case to case. It frequently involves calling the crime lab and waiting for the return call, and they also have to wait on the funeral home to get there. After some calculations Mr. Cox estimated a minimum of 8 hours per call, but if they can't determine a cause of death then it will take longer. The problem with determining the amount of time per call is that it doesn't occur all at one time.

They are on pace for 130 cases for the year. Mr. Cox said that if someone comes into the hospital unresponsive or has been there 24 hours or more, then they are not considered a coroner's case. Even though it is not their case, they have a page of questions that they have to ask when a hospital calls if the decedent is a county resident. Mr. Cox said that taking the information over the phone is not taking a case, but they log the call and record the information to cover their bases so it's not considered as falling in the gray area. Chairman Dockery expressed his concern with the possibility of a coroner hiring as many deputies as he wants for \$3000 a piece while the citizens are paying a coroner \$30,000 a year and then only going to one call. He said he doesn't think that Mr. Cox would do that, but he will not be in that position forever. The Chairman liked the idea of a salary and said something that provides a checks and balances system is the way to go. Commissioner Stringer suggested having the coroner and deputy coroner's salary set, then having a separate set amount for a third person. Then once the third amount is spent that will be it and there will be no additional monies added. The coroner will work with staff to figure out a salary around \$30,000 - \$35,000 to be spent on compensation.

8:30 - 9:00 Clerk of Court

9:00 - 9:30 Staff

Chairman Dockery reviewed with staff what was discussed with each department. He listed what additional information the BOC had requested from each department for submittal prior to the next budget meeting. Ms. Branan reviewed the proposed 2022 budget and the list of proposed and committed projects. With the average home value being \$225,000, a one-mill tax increase would cost the average homeowner \$90 dollars. The last millage increase was 5 years ago, she explained. The Commissioners also discussed the salary study and whether the aquatic center will be open by the spring of 2023. Staff was asked to prepare a scenario with a one mill tax increase and a scenario covering all expenses to see how much the millage increase would be. The Commissioners can look at the options at the next budget meeting that will be scheduled for next month.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Mayfield to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stringer. The motion was approved and carried, and the meeting ended at 11:20 pm.

July 21, 2021

Date



Melissa Witcher

County Clerk, Lumpkin County



Chris Dockery, Chairman

Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners