



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

June 14, 2022
1:30 P.M.

- **CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Dockery
- **FY 2023 Budget Discussion**
 - **DFACS - 1:30 pm to 2:00 pm**
 - **Sheriff's Office - 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm**
 - **Library - 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm**
 - **Magistrate Court - 3:30 pm to 4:00 pm**
 - **Clerk of Court - 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm**
- **ADJOURNMENT**

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



June 14, 2022
1:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:34 PM by District 3 Commissioner Rhett Stringer

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Chris Dockery	Chairman	Absent	
Tucker Greene	District 1 Commissioner	Present	
Bobby Mayfield	District 2 Commissioner	Present	
Rhett Stringer	District 3 Commissioner	Present	
Jeffrey Moran	District 4 Commissioner	Present	2:03 PM

FY 2023 Budget Discussion

DFACS - 1:30 pm to 2:00 pm

DFACS Director Mariela Perez was present with Brigitte Barker. They are requesting a \$4,500 increase for the 2023 budget. Ms. Perez went over the foodstamps program and how it brings in about \$8 million per year into the local economy. Lumpkin County DFACS has 46 children in custody, but only 8 of them reside in Lumpkin County foster homes. The rest have to be housed in neighboring counties. Ms. Perez said they hope to recruit new foster homes as well as support the current ones so the Lumpkin County children in DFACS custody can live in their own community. She discussed how helpful many of the local community agencies are in supporting DFACS, including Enotah CASA and Lumpkin County Family Connection. Much of the extra funding they were receiving during COVID is now drying up, and their needs are higher than ever.

Commissioner Mayfield commended them for the high quality of Lumpkin County foster homes. There was discussion on how to ensure foster children would be involved in activities like sports. Ms. Perez said the State will pay up to \$400 per year for sports, but anything beyond that would require different funding. Commissioner Greene said he would find out how to get the kids involved with baseball and football in the school system. Ms. Perez said she would speak with the foster children and see if any were interested in playing football or baseball, and she would get back with Commissioner Greene.

Sheriff's Office - 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Sheriff Jarrard's main concern was with the need to update the cameras and door security at the Justice Center, as the system is over ten years old. He discussed the bid processes they have done to find a company that can install new cameras and door security. The Sheriff was in favor of using Mobile Communications, as they currently handle the systems at the 911 Center. He showed the Commissioners some recent quotes from the company, ranging from the basic service to more high-end.

There was discussion on the best course of action for purchasing a new security system. Commissioner Stringer said there is funding for it, but the only issue is identifying the best way to move forward. Sheriff Jarrard said

this proposal from Mobile Communications is good for fifteen days, and he said it is possible prices could rise again in the near future. The camera system is estimated at around \$185,000 and the door system at \$135,000.

Library - 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Director Leslie Clark was present with Paula Smith and Business Director Jonathan Smith. Ms. Clark thanked the Commissioners for their recent approval of the utilities budget increase, which allowed that item to be removed from the budget increase request. She provided the Commissioners with a handout summarizing the budget request and went over each section. Ms. Clark said they are aiming to increase the open hours of the library (which is currently at 45 hours per week). They would like to increase part-time staff to allow the library to be open two evenings per week, as the current schedule is not always best for families and working individuals. Ms. Clark said they also hope to implement a COLA for staff, as they have some employees with Bachelor's degrees who are working for \$29,000 per year. They are hopeful that an increase will help with employee retention.

Ms. Clark said the library is working to create some savings so they can afford certain things on their own, such as materials and the computer replacement program. They also try to obtain grants and donations as much as possible. She explained they are only asking the County to assist with the things they cannot do alone. The overall request has been lowered from about \$51,000 to \$26,000 since the library is able to handle most of the materials themselves, and the Commissioners already approved the utilities budget increase. The library also has a robust volunteer group that does a lot of fundraising and program assistance. Ms. Clark said the only other request they have is for a guardrail along the back side of the library. Just this past Sunday, a driver turning onto the street from the main highway went down the embankment and struck a pillar on the library. The Commissioners said it would involve both GDOT and the City of Dahlonega, but they would look into possibly obtaining one.

Commissioner Greene departed the meeting at 3:07 PM.

Magistrate Court - 3:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Magistrate Judge Will Maxwell explained the current staffing situation at the Magistrate Court and how the judges rotate being on-call. After Judge Pruitt passed away and then the assistant judge resigned, Judge Beatty has worked overtime to cover the Magistrate office. Judge Maxwell would like to compensate her for the extra hours she worked since she is salaried and not an hourly employee. He came up with \$1,500 as a possible lump sum payment for her, but he was cautioned by the County Attorney that you cannot give a supplemental payment and then take it away. They will have to investigate how to compensate her while keeping the County Attorney's advice in mind.

Judge Maxwell said Judge Beatty will be retiring in a couple of years when she turns 70. He also discussed his travel expenses with the Commissioners as well as projected revenues.

Clerk of Court - 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm

Superior Court Clerk Rita Harkins said the Enotah Circuit has brought on another senior judge to assist the current judges, but she has not gotten any extra help. The judges' assistant is now managing four judges instead of three. Ms. Harkins said there has been word of a grant, but the Circuit has not given her any information on how much money it is or how it will be distributed. They are still establishing the criteria for how it can be used.

She is requesting two full-time positions since their workload has increased so much. The criminal court cases have an even larger backlog than the civil side, and criminal cases take precedence. Commissioner Stringer asked if these two positions would be permanent, and Ms. Harkins responded most likely. Her most senior clerk is also leaving in July, which will leave her short-staffed. That clerk has worked for Lumpkin County for 23 years and Ms. Harkins considers her to be her right arm. Her replacement obviously will not be hired at the same wages, so Ms. Harkins suggested the extra budgeted wages could be used to help fund one of the requested positions. She is working on training internally so that they can start to perform some of the retiring clerk's duties.

Commissioner Mayfield commented it certainly seems like she does need some help, and she has requested additional help each budget year without receiving any. Ms. Harkins said the last time she got extra help was

when the law changed and the Board of Equalization became her responsibility to manage, which was many years ago. She described the current clerk positions in her office and their responsibilities. Ms. Harkins also expressed her concerns about security in the Justice Center and hopes they will be able to improve the current camera situation.

ADJOURNMENT

The Commissioners gave the County Manager a brief summary of the day's meeting, and then adjourned the meeting at 4:39 PM.

July 20, 2022

Date



Melissa Witcher

County Clerk, Lumpkin County



Chris Dockery, Chairman

Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners