

RICHLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

SOUTH CAROLINA

BUDGET AD HOC COMMITTEE

March 27, 2017
10:30 AM
Administration Conference Room

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda was sent to radio and TV stations, newspapers, persons requesting notification, and was posted on the bulletin board located in the lobby of the County Administration Building

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Myers called the meeting to order at approximately 10:44 a.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Pearce moved, seconded by Ms. Dickerson, to adopt the agenda as published. The vote in favor was unanimous.

ELECTION OF CHAIR

Mr. Pearce moved, seconded by Ms. Dickerson, to nominate Ms. Myers for the position of Chair.

Ms. Myers was elected Chair by acclamation.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Midlands Technical College Capital Project Request

Ms. Debbie Walker, Vice President of Business Affairs, gave a brief presentation on Midlands Technical College's Capital Project request.

- 16,000 Credit Students
- Over 100 Programs of Study
- 26,000 Corporate and Continuing Education Students
- Operating Budget of \$83 million
- Total Assets \$100+ million
- 6 Campuses and teaching location on Ft. Jackson

The 50 year old Lindau Engineering Technology Building on the Beltline campus is the building they are planning to replace.

- Current building has constructed in 1968
- It is 4 stories with a flat roof



Council Members Present

Dalhi Myers, Chair
Joyce Dickerson
Yvonne McBride
Greg Pearce

Others Present:

Gerald Seals
Daniel Driggers
Michelle Onley
Kevin Bronson
Sandra Yudice
Janelle Ellis
Donald Woodward
Brandon Madden
Karen Magsino
Meagan Douglas

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- Approximately 65,000 sq. ft.
- Serves about 5,000 students
- Outside steel accents are rusty and in bad shape
- Currently has classrooms and faculty/administrative offices
- Estimated replacement cost is \$30 million, which includes demolition of the existing structure, asbestos abatement, design services, construction, parking, furniture, fixtures and technology

The new facility will be the center for Quick Jobs Training and Workforce Development. Presently Quick Jobs are spread amongst several campuses.

The up-to-date technology will allow them to serve the needs of more students.

Many of the students are served by public transportation and are able to purchase bus passes on campus.

The college will save approximately \$600,000 per year with the increase in class sizes.

- Overall MTC placement rate is 89%
- IT and Business – over 80%
- Quick Jobs – 90%
- 90% of graduates stay within the State; 80% within the service area

The Center for Quick Jobs Training and Workforce Development will concentrate on essential skill crafts and other instructional areas designed to meet the real time workforce needs. The center will provide accessibility to training, higher education for lower income, first generation and minority students.

Midlands Technical College has received funding from the State for the last 2-3 years for Quick Jobs.

Ms. Myers inquired about the number of students that received jobs through the program.

Ms. Walker stated she did not have the numbers, but could provide them.

Ms. Myers inquired about the timeline for the project.

It will take approximately 6 years to construct. The plan is to construct the new facility on a plot of land that presently has a two story building on it. The two story building will be demolished and the new facility constructed in its place. Once the new facility is built, the six-story building will be torn down and additional parking constructed in its place.

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Dr. Yudice stated Midlands Technical College will be issuing a \$10 million bond and has requested the County's assistance. The debt service for the bond will be a .5 mill increase. The request before the committee is to approve the .5 mill increase request from Midlands Technical College to fund \$10 million with a bond to partially fund the replacement of the LET Building that will house the Center for Quick Jobs Training and Workforce Development. Midlands Technical College will issue the bonds and that the approved millage increase ends when the bond debt is paid off.

Mr. Pearce inquired about the current capital millage.

Ms. Walker stated capital is 1 mill and debt service is .5 mill.

Mr. Pearce stated he has a simple philosophy about budgets. How does it meet with the mission of the County? Is it mission critical? And, can we pay for it? He believes they built a very clear case, in terms of their mission, and their mission is the County's mission.

Mr. Pearce moved, seconded by Ms. Dickerson, to recommend the Midlands Technical College .5 mill increase be added to their budget FY17-18 request. The vote in favor was unanimous.

B. Sheriff's Facility

Dr. Ellis stated Deputy Chief Cowan is before the committee to talk about a property that has been proposed for sale from SCANA to the Sheriff's Department. The motion is to approve for acquisition of this properties located at Shakespeare Road in the amount not to exceed \$1.3 million for the purchase of the property.

Deputy Chief Cowan stated for the last 20 years the Sheriff's Department has been successfully processing evidence in-house. There is a need to increase the square footage to successfully continue this service.

- The laboratory currently sits on 7,800 square feet.
- There is 3,200 of additional square footage is contained in modified Conex trailers. The trailers have been modified with heating and air to preserve evidence.
- Presently there is 133,000 pieces of evidence that have been collected that must be maintained due to the State Mandated Evidence Recovery Act.
- The Conex trailers are located at Powell Road and behind the Sheriff's Department. Additional evidence is housed downstairs in the Sheriff's Department.
- There are internationally and nationally renowned scientists on staff that processes the evidence.

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- One of the only agencies in the country to have a Rapid Hit DNA System

Deputy Chief Cowan stated the request is to move from the various facilities and consolidate those services. In addition, it gives the Sheriff's Department the ability to project what they can do over the course of the next 50 years to be able to provide services to the estimated 1 million people in Richland County in 2030.

By moving to the proposed site on Shakespeare Road, the Sheriff's Department would be able to relocate their fleet services, the compound, evidence and processing services within the first year.

- There are 24 acres available
- Any repairs, maintenance, or environmental services will be covered by SCANA
- Other services could be moved to the property in the future

The first priority is to get the laboratory and evidence to the facility, as well as fleet services. Then specialty services will be added to facility to provide services to the citizens.

Ms. Myers stated the funding plan is to have the big costs come this year and then every subsequent year there are smaller costs.

Ms. McBride inquired if the proposal has been discussed with the community.

Deputy Chief Cowan stated the proposal has not been taken to the Newcastle Community, which the Sheriff's Department has a great working relationship with. This will be expanding the Sheriff's Department services in the community; therefore, he does not imagine there will be any kickback.

Ms. McBride stated she had mentioned the proposal to the President of the community and she did not appear to have any issues with it.

Ms. McBride stated for the record she wants to ensure there are funds for the magistrate office.

Mr. Seals stated the County is off schedule with the magistrate offices, but staff is presently looking at all the capital improvement needs of the County.

Ms. McBride stated the County has a state of the art system, which she's very proud of. She inquired if the City of Columbia utilize or have access to the system.

Deputy Chief Cowan stated they provide service to multiple agencies throughout the State and Southeast, but the other agencies are charged for the services. The

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Sheriff's Department does some processing for the City of Columbia if the cases are linked.

Ms. Myers stated there is a possibility it could be a revenue generator.

Deputy Chief Cowan stated they have looked at it, but it will not generate enough revenue to offset the debt. Just to give the committee an idea, \$190,000 is budgeted for laboratory and an additional \$68,000 for forensic services. The costs to operate the laboratory service is \$585,000, which is offset with forfeitures and federal grant specific for DNA.

Mr. Pearce stated this could potentially resolve a big problem without disrupting any other part of the budget. It is his understanding Mr. Seals plans to use the money remaining from the renovations at Decker and some funding from the Judicial Center renovations.

Ms. McBride moved, seconded by Mr. Pearce, to forward to Council with a recommendation to proceed with the purchase. The vote in favor was unanimous.

C. Council Motion: Imposing a uniform service charge on tax exempt property

Mr. Pearce inquired if the County can legally do this.

Mr. Madden stated this originated with a Council motion. He sees this as similar to how the stormwater management fee is handled. Although there is not a criterion for imposing fees on tax exempt property because it would not be a flat fee since the property values vary.

Mr. Seals stated it is questionable. There are ways staff sees it can be done. At this point, it is not clear how the Council member wants it configured and to his knowledge he's not sure it has been tested.

Ms. Myers stated at the first Council meeting, there was a suggestion to come up with a structure to collect a service fee on tax exempt property. The memo, in the agenda packet, suggests we might be on a razor edge. She believes this item needs more research before a motion is even made.

Mr. Seals stated this is an item the committee can begin to "dig" into long-term. He reiterated he is not sure it has been tested in South Carolina.

Ms. Myers stated it would appear this will be a fee in lieu of tax, but how would it be implemented. Additionally, she inquired if there were similar fees anywhere else.

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Mr. Madden stated he had not. He spoke with the Assessor, Liz McDonald, and she did not understand, in practice, how this would work.

Mr. Pearce moved, seconded by Ms. McBride, to table this item and direct staff to continue to explore. When the additional information is available, it can be brought back to committee for vetting. The vote in favor was unanimous.

It was decided to hold the remaining Budget Ad Hoc Committee meetings on the Wednesdays of the Horizon meetings at 2:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:45 a.m.

The Minutes were transcribed by Michelle M. Onley, Deputy Clerk of Council