

# RICHLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### RICHLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

#### FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017 BUDGET WORK SESSION

MAY 12, 2016  
4:00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pearce called the meeting to order at approximately 4:05PM

#### REVIEW OF MILLAGE AGENCY REQUESTS

Mr. McDonald stated the individual millage requests packets were distributed to Council. Staff has not had a chance to thoroughly review the requests; therefore, discussion regarding this item will take place a future meeting.

Mr. Pearce inquired if all the millage agencies were informed of the limited amount of cap money available.

Mr. McDonald stated the agencies have been informed.

#### REVIEW OF ENTERPRISE FUNDS

There is an overview of the Enterprise Funds with a brief summary of the request and the recommendation included in the budget book.

**Solid Waste** – Request: \$35,454,000; Recommended \$34,767,684

The recommended amount balances to the revenue that has been projected. There is funding for the recycling centers and for new positions in the Special Services portion of the budget.

Mr. Pearce inquired if there were any items not funded that were deemed important by the departments.

Mr. McDonald stated the directors of the departments and Administration worked together to make the necessary budget cuts.

Mr. Pearce requested the fund balances for each of the Enterprise Funds.

**Broad River Utility System** – Request: \$9,700,000; Recommended: \$6,900,000

Mr. Rush inquired why the request was more than the projected revenue.



#### Council Members Present:

Torrey Rush, Chair  
Greg Pearce, Vice Chair  
Joyce Dickerson  
Julie-Ann Dixon  
Norman Jackson  
Paul Livingston  
Bill Malinowski  
Jim Manning

#### Others Present:

Tony McDonald  
Daniel Driggers  
Michelle Onley  
Warren Harley  
Roxanne Ancheta  
Kevin Bronson  
Kim Roberts  
Shahid Khan  
Rudy Curtis  
James Hayes  
Tracy Hegler  
Chris Eversmann  
Michael Byrd  
Ashley Powell  
Jeff Ruble  
Donald Woodward  
Ismail Ozbek  
Quinton Epps  
Larry Smith  
Geo Price  
Meagan Douglas  
Ryan Staub  
Valeria Jackson  
Beverly Harris

**Budget Work Session**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2016**  
**Page Two**

Mr. Harley stated the initial budget request was due to the new Director requesting additional staff and capital. Once Administration and the Director met, it was determined that many of those items could be implemented in the future.

Ms. Dickerson inquired as to how many positions were added.

Mr. Harley stated there were two (2) full time maintenance tech positions added to the Utilities Department.

Mr. Malinowski inquired as to what the responsibilities of a maintenance tech would be.

Mr. Khan stated a maintenance tech is licensed by LLR and DHEC to conduct the day-to-day maintenance on the wastewater treatment plant, pipelines, pumping stations, etc.

There are four (4) large pumping stations and several small pumping stations to maintain.

Ms. Dickerson inquired about the total amount, including wages and benefits, for the two (2) positions.

Mr. McDonald stated the two positions with benefits would total \$192,489.

Mr. Malinowski inquired about how much the customer base has grown.

Mr. Khan stated in 2008 it was 8,000 and is currently at 11,888.

Mr. Khan stated although the customer base has not increased dramatically, the need for preventative maintenance in the Utilities department going forward is his main focus. In previous years the department was not appropriately funded and this is an opportunity to gradually ramp up the resources.

Ms. Dixon inquired about the White Rock Water System.

Mr. Khan stated it is a small water system for a small subdivision in the Broad River area.

Mr. McDonald further stated White Rock was a system the County took over at DHEC's request.

Mr. Jackson stated he has received numerous complaints regarding low water pressure.

Mr. Khan stated in order to solve the problem a booster pumping station will need to be added, which is included in the long range plans for the department.

**Lower Richland Utility System** – Recommended: \$993,713

Mr. McDonald stated this system includes the water and sewer for the Lower Richland area. Unfortunately, the revenue is not supporting in full the system; therefore, a transfer from the General Fund and Stormwater Utility in the amount \$700,000. The amount taken from the General Fund is to be considered a loan with the intention of repaying the funds to the General Fund once the system is self-sustaining.

Mr. Malinowski requested for it to be put in writing that the amount borrowed from the General Fund would be repaid.

**Budget Work Session**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2016**  
**Page Three**

Mr. Malinowski stated he does not understand how there is a large amount of expenditures when the system has not been completed.

Mr. McDonald stated there is an existing sewer treatment plant that serves the Town of Eastover and an industry in the immediate area; therefore, there are customers utilizing the existing system. The ongoing Lower Richland Sewer project will eventually tie into the existing wastewater treatment plant.

Mr. Jackson inquired what the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant.

Mr. Khan stated the existing system serves approximately 50 customers. Of the 50 customers, 2 are bulk customers (Town of Eastover and an industry) with the remaining customers being residential customers. The more the customer base increases the less overhead.

The expansion of the tank was necessary to proceed with the Lower Richland Sewer Project.

Mr. Pearce inquired about the ownership of the sewer plant in Eastover.

Mr. McDonald stated the sewer plant is owned by the County. There are ongoing negotiations with the Town of Eastover requesting they pay the County for services rendered.

The Town of Eastover collects fees from the residents of Eastover, which a portion of should come to the County to pay for wastewater treatment services.

Mr. Pearce requested Administration provide Council with the amount the Town of Eastover owes.

Mr. McDonald stated the amount payable to the County each year is approximately \$40,000 with the overall total outstanding of \$400,000.

Mr. Khan stated the requested positions are the same as the ones for the Broad River system.

Mr. Jackson requested the discussion of the Town of Eastover debt be held in abeyance until a District 10 representative can be seated.

**Parking Garage** – Recommended: \$110,000

Mr. McDonald stated these funds are for the repair and upkeep of the parking garage at the Administration building and the Judicial Center.

**Airport Operations** – Recommended: \$610,000

Mr. McDonald stated the \$372,400 in capital includes grant projects, renovations to the facility, infrastructure and runways. The County funds these projects with the majority of the projects being reimbursed by the Federal Aviation Commission and/or State.

The funds from the sale of the Curtiss-Wright Hangar will remain in the fund balance of the airport.

### **REVIEW OF SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS**

**Victim's Assistance** – Request: \$1,161,021; Recommended: \$1,161,021

Mr. McDonald stated the budget increase is due to personnel changes during the fiscal year.

Mr. Livingston inquired how the revenue is assessed.

Mr. McDonald stated the State provides the assessment and fees to the County. Since the State's contribution does not increase, the only way to cover the increases is for the County to provide the funding.

Mr. Driggers stated the numbers are driven by the assessments by the courts.

Mr. Malinowski inquired what is mandated of the County in regards to this program.

Mr. McDonald stated the obligation is the amount generated by the assessment and fees.

Mr. Pearce stated when this program began it was supplemented by \$238,000 of County funds and has now grown to a supplement of \$655,448.

Ms. Dickerson inquired if all of the positions attributed to these different departments (Court Administration Solicitor, Sheriff and Detention Center) pertain to the Victim's Assistance Program.

**Tourism Development** – Recommended: \$1,200,000

Mr. McDonald stated this is the additional 3% Accommodations Tax charged on hotels. The development of the fee was for payment of the debt for the Convention Center. The County collects the fee and then turns it over to the City of Columbia to pay the debt. Any additional funds collected goes toward operations. There is approximately 7 years left owing on the debt.

**Emergency Telephone System** –

Mr. McDonald stated this is the joint venture between the County and the City for the 911 Operations Center, wherein the County pays half and the City pays half. The City of Columbia is responsible for running the center.

Mr. Bronson stated in February the budget request from the City of Columbia was received in regards to the Emergency Telephone System. In the request, there was a request for an additional \$112,453.00 to cover an increase in personnel costs. In addition, there was a request for 8 additional telecommunicators, an accreditation coordinator, a quality assurance manager, an administrative assistant and a training assistant.

The recommendation is for the increase of \$112,453.00 to cover personnel and the County's portion of the 8 telecommunicators.

**Budget Work Session**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2016**  
**Page Five**

Mr. Byrd stated there are several revenue streams into the fund, but the expenditures are balanced to the revenues collected. The County's portion of the funds go to support the 911 telephony system, computers, software, hardware and the CAD system at the 911 Center with the City of Columbia, as well as, several other public safety answering points in Forest Acres and USC.

Mr. Malinowski inquired how many telecommunicators are presently employed by the system.

Mr. Bronson stated there are approximately 31 telecommunicators.

Mr. Malinowski inquired about how much of an increase has occurred in the last year.

Mr. Byrd stated he does not have specific percentage, but the number of calls has increased significantly each year and they are currently understaffed.

Ms. Dickerson inquired if the increase can be attributed to the flood.

Mr. Byrd stated it had an effect on the costs this year, but should not affect the costs in the future.

Ms. Dixon stated approximately 92% of her constituents complain have expressed displeasure with their service through the 911 system.

Mr. Pearce inquired how the employees at the 911 Center relay information to emergency personnel.

Mr. Byrd stated the information is sent out over the call radio, as well as, through mobile data systems.

Mr. Pearce inquired about which system will need to be replaced.

Mr. Byrd stated both systems (radio and mobile data) will need to be replaced and the funding will come from the individual department budgets (i.e. Fire, Sheriff, EMS). Upgrades at the 911 Center will come from the Emergency Telephone Fund. The upgrades have begun to be implemented.

If Federal grants are available to assist with funding of replacement of equipment. The departments vigorously pursue those grants to less the strain on the respective budgets.

Ms. Dickerson inquired about the progress of the NextGen program.

Mr. Byrd stated they are very close to having the first part ready and then the cellular companies will be notified to implement their portion of the program.

**Fire Service** – Requested: \$26,016,000; Recommended: \$26,016,000

There was approximately a 6% increase due to the implementation of the Class & Comp Study.

The majority of the items on the supplemental request received from the City of Columbia have not been funded, but the base budget is recommended to be funded in whole.

**Budget Work Session**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2016**  
**Page Six**

Mr. Bronson stated there are four (4) positions recommended in the Emergency Services Department (2 – Emergency Planners; 2 – Fire Marshals).

The emergency planners will be responsible for scheduling shelter locations and providing food in emergency situations. The fire marshals are needed to ensure all businesses are being inspected annually to assure compliance with the fire code.

**Stormwater Management** – Recommended: \$3,150,000

This item is funded from the Stormwater millage.

Mr. Malinowski inquired about the requested position.

Mr. Harley stated Mr. Ozbek and Mr. Simon requested the position to address the increase in monitoring and inspection of roads.

**Conservation Commission** – Recommended: \$991,924

The item is funded through the use of a ½ mill. The fund will be supplemented by the use of fund balance.

**Neighborhood Redevelopment** – Recommended: \$730,000

The item is funded through the use of a ½ mill.

**Hospitality Tax** – This item will be discussed at the Grants Work Session.

**Accommodations Tax** – Recommended: \$630,000

The proposed revenue is from the accommodations tax charged on hotels and motels. The Accommodations Tax reviews applications from various agencies for the distribution of the funds.

**Title IV-D Civil Process** – Recommended: \$70,000

The revenue comes from the State and law enforcement drug fines. The funding is utilized by the Sheriff's Department to serve warrants.

**Road Maintenance** – Recommended: \$5,900,000

The revenue comes from the \$20 per vehicle road maintenance fee. The funds are utilized to repair, upkeep and maintenance of existing road structure in the County.

Mr. Jackson inquired about what percentage of the fund is used for administration and what percentage is used for repairs.

Mr. McDonald stated staff will provide the breakdown. A large portion of the budget goes towards the employee's salaries.

**Budget Work Session**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2016**  
**Page Seven**

**Public Defender** – Recommended: \$1,567,650

This fund will be discussed in more detail a subsequent meetings.

**Transportation Tax** – Recommended: \$59,650,000

The funds are distributed per the referendum.

Mr. Pearce inquired how long the buses would be able to operate if the Transportation Penny funds were frozen.

Dr. Schneider stated the buses would be able to operate until August.

**School Resource Officers** – Mr. McDonald stated the recommended funding amount is not included in the budget book at this time.

This is a newly established fund in conjunction with the Sheriff's Department. The purpose is to better capture the funds coming in for school resource officers. The officers are partly funded by the school districts and partly by the County.

**Economic Development** – Recommended: \$830,000

The Economic Development Department's revenue stream was restructured last fiscal year by dedicating ½ mill to the department. In addition, a portion of the multi-county industrial park revenue goes to the Economic Development Department.

Mr. Ruble stated there are three (3) positions he has requested. He would like to convert the part-time position to a full time position. In addition, there were two (2) positions recommended by the Strategic Plan. With the additional staff, the Economic Development Department would have five (5) employees.

Mr. Manning inquired when and who conducted the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Ruble stated an outside consultant conducted the Strategic Plan last year.

Mr. Livingston requested a copy of the Strategic Plan be provided to Council members for their review.

Mr. Manning requested an analysis of the increase in Economic Development projects since the creation of the department.

The County is a member of the Central Alliance and the I-77 Alliance.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:03 PM

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