

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing to Adopt the FY20-21 Budget and Special Called Meeting on Wednesday, June 24, 2020 at 9:00 a.m., in the Auditorium at the Brooks County Ag/Extension Building located at 400 East Courtland Avenue, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. James Maxwell, Chairman; Patrick Folsom, Vice Chairman; Mr. Willie Cody; Ms. Myra Exum; and Mr. Rhett Rowe. Others present were: Ms. Jessica McKinney, Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney via teleconference; and various residents.

Public Hearing – FY20-21 Proposed Budget

Chairman called Public Hearing to order. A Sign-in Sheet was provided for those attending who wish to speak. Chairman called for anyone who would like to speak. No one was in attendance. Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 9:10 a.m. to go into the Special Called Meeting.

Special Called Meeting – Chairman called the Special Called Meeting to order. Mr. Rowe led all in attendance in prayer.

FY20-21 Budget Adoption

o Approval of Requested Expenditures

Chairman called for a motion to adopt the FY20-21 Proposed Budget. Mr. Folsom made the motion to adopt the FY20-21 Proposed Budget as is; and will be amended if needed, Mr. Cody seconded. Ms. Exum asked Administrator to point out the difference from last meeting. Administrator advised the revenues are up and current; at the last meeting they were current thru March; and now the revenues are current thru June 17th. Departments did a good job, they were frugal and fiduciary with spending. Most of the departments remain flat, some pulled under, and expenses are under. Vote was unanimous.

Some of the requests include:

- Six vehicles for Sheriff's Office (\$121,000); which four of those can be purchased with SPLOST funds
- 911 – Radio Tower, \$30,000; Pavo has agreed to pay a portion of \$7,000
- Turn Out Gear for Fire Department – funds will come from SPLOST
- Contingency Fund - \$200,000
- 3% COLA for employees

Discussion of Pending Grady Subsidy

The Board previously discussed the renewal for the Emergency Medical Services Agreement with Grady EMS; which expires July 31, 2020. Brooks County is currently compensating the ambulance and emergency medical services \$375,000 annually. Grady EMS is requesting an increase in the renewal Agreement of \$75,000, which would total \$450,000 annually. They are basing the increase on the fact they have not received an increase since providing service for the past five years. After such a huge increase, Ms. McKinney, Administrator, wanted to put the service out for bid; but

discovered we cannot. When the prior EMS Service sold the company to Grady, the license for this zone was also sold; and because Grady holds the license, we cannot bid out service. There are no changes to the renewal agreement only the cost to do service. Administrator advised the Board there is room for discussion as to what they would like to do. Does Brooks County want to get license back? Or do you want to pay the increase? Administration has spoken with an individual and was told it is possible to get the license back.

Mr. Compton, Grady EMS, provided an overview of services to Brooks County for the past five years. He stated the number of full time members in Brooks County increased during the first year. The level of training has been enhanced and upgraded all equipment and ambulances to the current state of the art condition of the Brooks County ambulance services. Grady EMS has provided service to the local hospital for emergent and non-emergent transfers using a third ambulance dedicated to non-emergency transports. Grady EMS continues to provide support and a community presence to high school football games, community events, public school career days other community oriented functions at no charge. Mr. Compton stated Grady EMS coordinated donation funding to purchase six AED's for Brooks County fire trucks, a \$6,000 value.

Mr. Compton proposed negotiating co-existing in Brooks County fire station and working out negotiations for next five years; depending on the space, the renewal cost could go from \$375,000 to \$380,000. Mr. Compton was asked if he had looked at any potential facility for housing. He was advised to get with the Fire Chief. The current rate will be extended 60 days at same cost (\$375,000); and will give more time to look at. Ms. Exum motioned to extend the current rate of \$375,000 for 60 days to negotiate the renewal contract, Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous. Ms. Exum will assist with looking at a location for Grady EMS to co-exist in a Brooks County fire station.

Discussion of Development Authority IGA

The Board discussed the Intergovernmental Agreement and how to fund going forth. Ms. Exum and Administrator met with Development Authority Director, Tiffany Holmes. They looked at the five-year digest to consider their needs and wants. Board discussed the option of providing one-half a mill funding the first year, allow access to fund account and equity saved; and eliminate the current \$75,000 currently funded by the County. First year, Development Authority provide a report annually by November 1 on operating expenses to allow the Board to consider adjusting the millage rate for funding the following year for the remaining term of the five year agreement. Discussion also included putting a one-half mill amount around a number and look at the millage rate every year to adjust their need. The IGA has not been prepared; Administrator will get with County Attorney to send IGA to Development Authority and get back with the Board. Ms. Exum made the motion to proceed with entering into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Development Authority, Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Folsom made the motion to go out of special called meeting into executive session at 10:05 a.m., Ms. Exum seconded.

Executive Session

- o **Real Estate** – Ms. Exum made the motion to close executive session at 10:21 a.m.; Mr. Cody seconded.

2021 SPLOST Workshop with Excellence Exceeded Consulting Team

Scott Johnson, Consultant, Excellence Exceeded, is assisting the County with 2021 SPLOST negotiations with the municipalities, City of Quitman, City of Morven, and City of Pavo. City of Barwick is not incorporated; therefore will not receive a percentage. Assistance will also include preparing the referendum to put on ballot for November and Intergovernmental Agreement between Brooks County and the Cities. Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the process and the dates of meetings for negotiations; and a timeline in which we have to get the Referendum to Elections Supervisor to be placed on the November ballot. Voter education will be provided to take input from the voters/public. He advised each Commissioner to prepare a wish list of projects to be discussed and estimated amount because the projects have to be listed on the ballot; the list should be completed by June 29, 2020. Notification letters went out on June 19th to the municipalities. The meeting dates will be July 8th, July 16th and July 17th, if needed. The Referendum has to go to Elections by August 3rd in order to be on November ballot.

Adjournment

On the motion by Mr. Cody; seconded by Mr. Folsom; the Board closed the Workshop at 11:35 pm

Mr. James Maxwell, Chairman
Ms. Jessica McKinney, Administrator
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk