

Columbia County
Board of County Commissioners
Special Meeting/Budget Workshop

Minutes of
May 25, 2017

The Columbia County Board of County Commissioners met in a special meeting/workshop at the auditorium of the School Board Administrative Complex at 9:00 a.m. The meeting opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Commissioners in Attendance: Chairman Ronald Williams, Rusty DePratter, Tim Murphy, Bucky Nash and Everett Phillips

Others in Attendance: County Manager Ben Scott ("CM")
Assistant County Manager Scott Ward ("ACM")
Assistant County Manager Kevin Kirby ("ACM")
County Attorney Joel Foreman
BOCC Finance Director Danielle Beard
Sheriff Mark Hunter
Public Defender M. Blair Payne
Deputy Clerk Katrina Vercher

Agenda Additions/Deletions:

Additions:

1. Resolution 2017R-12
2. Meridian Behavioral Healthcare

Deletions:

None

MOTION by Commissioner Nash to approve the agenda as amended. SECOND by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment on Discussion and Action Items:

There were no public comments.

Resolution 2017R-12 – Burn Ban

There has been rain in Columbia County for several days and therefore, staff is asking that the temporary burn ban be lifted.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to lift Resolution 2017R-12. SECOND by Commissioner Nash. The motion carried unanimously.

Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse (“CJMHS”) Grant

Meridan Behavioral Healthcare is asking for approval to apply for a grant that will be used to assess needs, and develop a strategic plan for adult individuals with mental illness and/or substance use disorders at the Columbia County Detention Center. The goal is to increase public safety and reduce recidivism.

MOTION by Commissioner Murphy to give Meridan permission to apply for the grant. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Budget Presentation

CM Scott gave a PowerPoint presentation on the following topics:

- Fire Department
- Budget Process
- County Debt/Finances
- Road Improvement Needs/Options
- Stormwater Mitigation
- Administrative Space Needs
- Detention Center Repair/Replacement
- Economic Development
- Policy Development
- Communications System Improvements
- Recreation Enhancements
- Ellisville Development
- Strategic Planning

Several of the topics had motions. Those topics are addressed below.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Jeff Crawford addressed the Commission and presented the two (2) plan options for the Fire Department budget.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner DePratter to approve Plan Two (2). SECOND by Commissioner Nash.

Discussion ensued. Chief Crawford will report in 30/60 days on the progress of recruiting volunteers.

The Chairman called for the vote. The motion carried 4 to 1 with Commissioner Williams voting in opposition.

Chief Crawford would like to bring back Advanced Life Support (“ALS”) to the fire crews.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner Murphy for the County Manager to enter into negotiations with Century Ambulance to see what the possibilities are to fund this item.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

MOTION by Commissioner Nash to fund ALS in the North end and the South end of the County and give the County Manager the latitude to negotiate with Century to fund the monitors during the process if that negotiation is not successful then the County funds it. SECOND by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Commissioner Nash for the County Manager to proceed with the raising of the fire assessments. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

County Debt

CM Scott gave an overview of the County debt.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner Nash to give County Manager the latitude to keep down our long term debts. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Space Needs

CM Scott gave an overview of the County Administrative space needs.

MOTION by Commissioner Nash to get an architect to design the building and get a hard cost. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Detention Center

CM Scott presented three (3) designs and the costs for a new detention center.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner Nash to send out an RFQ for an architect. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Strategic Planning

CM Scott reported that interviews were conducted on the bid applicants for developing the County's Strategic Plan.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner DePratter to reject all bids and rely on County staff. SECOND by Commissioner Nash. The motion carried unanimously.

Millage Rate

MOTION by Commissioner Nash to set the Millage Rate at 8.87. SECOND by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried 4 to 1 with Commissioner DePratter voting in opposition.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

Ronald Williams, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

P. DeWitt Cason
Clerk of Circuit Court