



DeKalb County Government

Manuel J. Maloof Center
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Draft - Minutes

FAB-Finance, Audit & Budget Committee

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

3:30 PM

This meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Simultaneous public access to the meeting will be available

(1) via live stream on DCTV's webpage,

(2) on DCTVChannel23.TV

Meeting Started At:3:31PM

Attendees: Commissioners Rader, Johnson, Cochran-Johnson, Bradshaw, Terry

Present 3 - Commissioner Larry Johnson, Commissioner Jeff Rader, and
Commissioner Lorraine Cochran-Johnson

I. MINUTES

2021-2593 Commission District(s): ALL
Minutes for the May 11, 2021 Finance, Audit, and Budget
Committee

MOTION was made by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, seconded by Larry Johnson, that this agenda item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and
Commissioner Cochran-Johnson

II. STATUS UPDATE

Budget Planning Timeline

-Update from OMB Director TJ Sigler, COO

-Director Sigler: the tax digest has been received today; the initial signs are encouraging. The administration is reviewing information with departments and will continue to review based on the tax digest received today.

-Question JR: Can you provide an updated estimate on the CEO's proposal availability?

TJ Sigler: We are still aiming for the June 8th date; if there are any changes we will let you know

-COO Williams: this morning, we laid out a number of items from our constitutional offices. As we prepare the mid-year budget, we would like everyone to be mindful that items not shown in the budget are not necessarily being captured

-Question JR: are you suggesting that you will not incorporate the budget that you outlined this morning into the mid-year budget?

-COO Williams: the process will be similar to last time. There will be a separate vote on this grant hopefully in two weeks, which will come a month before we deal with the mid-year budget. We will provide a budget outline when the grant is accepted. Regarding requests from departments and constitutional offices, our goal is to ensure that everything that is logical and we can recommend, we will recommend the funding source being the mid-year budget, this grant, or other sources.

-JR: requests administration draw the distinction between when commissioners will be making decisions on individual budgets that will then devolve the funding into either constitutional offices or departments in the County, and how much will be reserved for future appropriations that is not yet a full commitment to that funding. Please provide that graphically in advance to prepare the commissioners.

-Question LJ: regarding the Stormwater piece discussed this morning, please include that in the budget as well while we have this infrastructure money. Is it possible to get funding besides CARES/ARP from the federal and state governments? Also if departments like Planning & Sustainability need additional staff, we have the opportunity to go for what we have to do.

COO Williams: absolutely; we can begin the presentation with a chart to show the federal/state funding

-Question LCJ: I echo Commissioner Johnson's statements. It should be clear on what pots the funds are going to, particularly as it relates to infrastructure.

-COO Williams: when infrastructure funding becomes available, we will ensure we are in line or first in line if possible. There is funding within the ARP that was discussed this morning; we are still anticipating major infrastructure funding coming from the federal government.

-LJ: the digest is looking better than before; let's use those extra dollars to pave more streets near homeowners, invest in trails and sidewalks. We also need to ensure the middle class group and homeowners in this process.

COO Williams: the e-host and other tax reduction methods have been successful examples in the last few years. We recognize the position that we're in, will spend wisely, and will be proud of what we've done with the funds in a few years.

-Question SB: what is the target date for passage of the mid-year?

TJ Sigler: July 13. CEO's budget amendment is projected to be sent on June 8th; that is the best-case scenario

-Question TT: Can you remind me of the venue that we the commissioners are interacting with administration for budget requests? How detailed should proposals be?

COO Williams: what works well is time to talk in conversation rather than only hearing this in committee; this applies for everything, and not just mid-year budget season. Whether the Board would like to have the same process as the most recent budget process is up to the Board's purview.

-Question RP: with all of the projects needing to be done, are you working on a plan to secure resources and have contractors get ahead of the work? We will be in competition with other jurisdictions as these funds are received.

COO Williams: We have been getting a handle of understanding of our needs; the next step would be to determine the resources needed to meet those needs. As of now we are analyzing what is needed, and what can be spent within the ARP funds.

-Question RP: are you working in a direction to address the low-hanging fruit that residents talk about?

COO Williams: Part of our master planning will include a triage of projects that we've been working with FEMA on, and will be part of our strategy

-JR: it would be useful to map back to the particular authority within the statute, or departmental guidance from the Treasury department as it relates to the ARP. So as we make commitments, we note that these are projects that take advantage of particular authorizations out there so that we are not funding in only narrowly-tailored categories.

III. DISCUSSION

Water/Sewer Debt Refinancing

-Presentation from CFO McNabb for discussion of refinancing opportunities for bond indebtedness as a result of the moratorium being lifting.

-D McNabb: Bond refunding is a process much like when one is refinancing a home, we are refinancing the bonds to capitalize on stronger interest rates

-D McNabb: here we are aiming to combine the 2011 bond funding with the new bond funding for the next 2 years, estimated to be around \$200M at this point. This will be more cost effective, will be done once rather than twice. There will be significant savings in debt service and present value savings; those will be reinvested in our new bonds.

-D McNabb: we will be bringing a resolution to the BOC to move forward with authorization of the bond issue; once we have the final pricing, then we'll bring you a final resolution that the Board will need to approve once we sell those bonds.

-Question JR: how do you ensure that the interest rates that we are getting are the lowest available?; how do we benchmark this?

D McNabb: I recommend to the administration that we sell these bonds on a competitive basis; it is the easiest way to ensure the lowest rates. We compare each bid to each other, and whoever has the lowest cost wins the bonds; in the marketplace we tend to sell well, and have issued competitively since 2015. A benefit of this is that we're not taking a shot in the dark; you can mathematically compare which bids on the bonds are the best.

-Question RP: You call these the 2011 Series bonds. Are there other series bonds outstanding?

D McNabb: 2006B bonds (callable in 3 years), 2015 refunding bonds, 2013 refunding bonds. These cannot be advance refunded on a tax-exempt basis. There were also recovery zone economic bonds issued in 2010 that will likely be a good candidate for refunding. We monitor all of these on an ongoing basis.

-commissioners request a debt summary from Director McNabb at a future FAB meeting

Public Defender

-Discussion of Public Defender's mid-year budget allocation

-C Saari: office currently has over 13,000 open cases; of that number - 9,500 are felony cases, representing a 45% increase in cases from the previous year.

-Requests 13 additional staff for the public defender's office

-Funding is for 2 years, totaling \$2,224,352.

-Requests increase in midyear budget of \$56,773 to cover the costs of annual leave payout for 4 attorneys that are retiring and/or resigning

-Question LJ: do you have an assessment tool to show the common factors that detail these particular crimes? We will need to start looking at the root causes of crime and want to assist you on the front-end to prevent these occurrences from happening.

C Saari: We do not currently have the assessment tool that you are referring to; we do understand the larger categories in which these crimes happen. Having social workers on our staff has helped to address the recidivism with mental health issues and provides stability. We are also working with the schools on a school justice partnership that is in the works. I will check for available assessment tools.

COO Williams: much of this we are tackling in the revitalization resolution as well as it relates to youth and recidivism

Question TT: Could you provide an update on the eviction lab report? Will this budget allocation help in any way of tenants and evictions? At one point the eviction moratorium will end.

C Saari: Atlanta Legal Aid is the organization that can assist with that; public defenders aren't available for the eviction proceedings.

COO Williams: we do have Atlanta Legal Aid as a partner to represent those on the other side facing eviction in those situations, that the County has put resources toward. We'll provide an update to the commissioners on how that is going.

-Question TT: could speak to those who have housing issues and the relation to mental illness?

There aren't those resources available; we work with View Point Health, and partnership with ALA, to provide longer-term, stable housing to keep individuals out of the legal system. Many of them also have criminal records, which could be a barrier for landlords.

-Question JR: is there an opportunity to accrue reserves for leave? That way we are addressing when individuals do not take time off and hoard it until they retire.

TJ Sigler: that is something that we can explore further

-LCJ: in some corporate settings, there is a use-it or lose-it policy to encourage employees to take their time; this needs to be discussed through HR.

IV. AGENDA ITEM

New Agenda Items:

[2021-2505](#) Commission District(s): ALL
SS - Utility Billing Software Maintenance and Support (Sole Source):
for use by the Department of Finance. Consists of maintenance and
support of the software system (CPAK) utilized to process utility billing
for various County departments. Awarded to AdaptToSolve, Inc.
Amount Not To Exceed: \$743,675.00.

MOTION was made by Larry Johnson, seconded by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 6/8/2021. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Cochran-Johnson

No additional information requested

[2021-2571](#) Commission District(s): All Commission Districts
Request for Additional Fleet - Solicitor General's Office (One Chevy
Traverse - \$27,220)

MOTION was made by Larry Johnson, seconded by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 6/8/2021. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Cochran-Johnson

-Question JR: what line of business requires that type of a vehicle, rather than a smaller more economically feasible vehicle? S Fields: currently the Solicitor's office has older fleet utilized by the investigations department; this vehicle was requested based on how many people use this vehicle and the transporting of the solicitor general. We have several smaller vehicles in our fleet; we are looking to add this to the fleet.

-Question JR: How many of these full size SUV's are in the fleet?

S Fields: Currently there are 2 full size SUV's; others in the fleet are Chevrolet Malibu, Chevrolet Impala, and Dodge Charger

-Question LCJ: this will be purchased from grant funds, with no cost to the county?

S Fields: that is correct

Meeting Ended At:4:58PM

MOTION was made by Larry Johnson, seconded by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, that this agenda item be adjourned meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Cochran-Johnson

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC