

Russell County Commission
 Russell County Commission Chambers
 Budget Proposal Meeting for FY 2022/2023 Minutes
 August 17, 2022 9:00 A.M. EST

A called meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order by Chairman Corbett.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert called roll of the Commission. Member's present were Commissioner Ronnie Reed, Commissioner Larry Screws, Commissioner Cattie Epps, Commissioner Rod Costello, Commissioner Gentry Lee, Commissioner Scott Chambers, and Chairman Chance Corbett. Also, present was County Administrator Paulette Colbert, who kept the minutes

A quorum was established by County Administrator Paulette Colbert.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented a proposed budget for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. She stated health insurance premiums were not anticipated to increase last year, but they did by 3½%, and this year the anticipated increase is 5%. Therefore an 8½% increase is included in this budget. The appropriations are listed at the same amount as was budgeted last year. There were two new requests. Funding for these were not included. Requests for changes to salaries or positions are not included, and no cost-of-living increases are included but requested to issue a second health emergency payment to employees in October from the ARPA funds for the same amounts issued last November. It would be an overall average of a 3% increase. She stated that this is a balanced budget using approximately the same amount of fund balance that was used in last year's budget. The proposed total general fund budget is \$19,831,034.10.

The appropriations were all level funded with the only proposed appropriation change was for Lee-Russell Council of Governments payment to be (\$530.00) less than proposed, and to be level funded in the amount of \$175,580.00. Mrs. Colbert was told to hold payments for those that have not sent in their requests or financial information, and to pay them when information is received. Commission requested to hold Phenix City Animal Shelter appropriation until a copy of their budget is received and brought back before the Commission. Commission requested to hold funding for Juvenile Department "Other Professional Services" until further information is provided and brought back before the Commission. Commissioner Screws moved to accept the appropriations. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called vote of the Commission as follows: District 4: Commissioner Reed, yes; District 7: Commissioner Screws, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, yes; District 3: Commissioner Costello, yes; District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 2: Commissioner Chambers, no; and District 6: Commissioner Corbett, yes. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the proposed 2022/2023 fiscal year general fund budget with the following departmental change requests presented:

- Probate Judge Harden requested 2 position changes within the Probate Office budget. Line items were adjusted within his budget to accommodate the changes.
- Director Heath Crowe requested 3 salary changes within the Mapping and Appraisal budget. This did not require a change within his budget.
- Registrar Brindle Griffin requested software fees in the amount of (\$19,850.00) be removed from the Board of Registrars budget. Commissioner Costello moved to allow the chair to sign the KCS system state contract for the Board of Registrar's office. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.
- Maintenance Director Leon Watson requested to combine 2 part time positions into one full time position adding \$4,995.85 in the Courthouse Maintenance budget.
- The Enforcement Department change included the removal of the motor vehicles cost of (\$67,126.00).

Commissioner Lee left the meeting after the Tourism Department budget was presented.

- Chairman Corbett requested the Parks & Recreation Department be moved under the Engineering Department. The interim Parks and Recreation Department Director salary will continue to be paid to the County Engineer from Gasoline Tax Fund instead of General Fund. All other employees in the Parks and Recreation Department will remain in General Fund, per Engineer Blakeney's request. This will reduce General Fund and increase Gasoline Tax Fund in the amount of (\$23,780.64). The Interim Sanitation Director salary will continue being paid to the Engineer from Gasoline Tax Fund instead of The Garbage fund. No adjustment needed in Gasoline Tax Fund to cover this change.

Commissioner Screws moved to accept the salary schedule with the changes in Probate Judge, Maintenance, Mapper/Appraiser, Engineering, and Parks and Recreation Departments included. Seconded by Commissioner Costello. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called vote of the Commission as follows: District 4: Commissioner Reed, yes; District 7: Commissioner Screws, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, yes; District 3: Commissioner Costello, yes; District 1: Commissioner Lee was not present. District 2: Commissioner Chambers, yes; and District 6: Commissioner Corbett, yes. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the final General Fund budget total of \$19,724,743.31 to include the noted changes.

Commissioner Screws moved to approve the final budget as presented with the noted changes as stated from the administrator. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called vote of the Commission as follows: District 4: Commissioner Reed, yes; District 7: Commissioner Screws, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, yes; District 3: Commissioner Costello, yes; District 1: Commissioner Lee was not present. District 2: Commissioner Chambers, yes; and District 6: Commissioner Corbett, yes. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert requested to pay employees a COVID-19 health emergency payment from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund in the same amounts as was paid last November for employees who are currently employed at the time of issuance. The cost is approximately \$450,000. Payments will be made the 3rd week in November 2022. This would equal a full-time employee that makes \$50,000 a 3% increase, and employees who make less than that would receive more than 3%. Part time, temporary, and contract employees who would normally not receive anything would receive this payment. Commissioner Reed moved to accept the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called vote of the Commission as follows: District 4: Commissioner Reed, yes; District 7: Commissioner Screws, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, yes; District 3: Commissioner Costello, abstained; District 1: Commissioner Lee was not present. District 2: Commissioner Chambers, yes; and District 6: Commissioner Corbett, yes. Motion passed.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Screws and seconded by Commissioner Reed. The 2022/2023 fiscal year Commission budget meeting was adjourned.