

Russell County Commission
Russell County Commission Chambers
Budget Proposal Meeting for FY 2023/2024 Minutes
August 16, 2023 9:30 A.M. EST

A called meeting of the Russell County Commission for the fiscal year 2023/2024 budget was called to order by Chairman Costello.

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

A quorum was established by County Administrator Paulette Colbert.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert gave an overview of the proposed fiscal year 2023/2024 budget as follows: The appropriations are level funded with a column in the binders which lists the entity's requests. There are four new requests. Funding for these is not included. There is a 5% increase in health insurance premiums included. The Revenue Commissioner is requesting a salary increase in the department and has made reductions to cover the increase in the department's budget. The Maintenance Director is requesting salary increases for the Maintenance Department's employees and has made reductions to cover the increase within the department's budget. The Sheriff is requesting a salary increase to public safety workers only and has made reductions to cover the increase in the department's budget. The EMA Director' salary increase is due to the State supplement increase that was approved. The Director is requesting salary increases for the EMA Department's employees and reductions have been made to cover the increase in the department's budget. The License Enforcement department is requesting an increase in the Special Enforcement Officer position and reductions have been made to cover the increase in the department's budget.

The above-stated salary adjustment requests are included in this proposed budget.

The Coroner is requesting a salary increase, an additional part-time employee, and changing an existing part-time employee to full time. Funds to cover the increases were not found within the department's budget. These requests are not included in this proposed budget.

There is a 5% across the board cost-of-living allowance included in this proposed budget.

Due to value increases on property, we are seeing an increase in Ad Valorem taxes. Sales taxes have increased partly due to the reduction in collection fees. The General Fund fund balances have steadily improved over the last few years.

The total General Fund proposed budget for fiscal year 2023/2024 is \$20,387,955.66.

After discussing and hearing from appropriation representatives that were present, Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Reed seconded to approve the requested amount of \$181,393.00 to Lee-Russell Council of Governments. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

Commissioner Reed moved; Commissioner Corbett seconded to approve, but not pay United to Save Ourselves until further directed, due to a reorganization in that organization. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

Commissioner Lee moved; seconded by Commissioner Reed to approve, but not pay Macon Russell Community Action until documentation has been received from that organization. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

Commissioner Corbett moved; seconded by Commissioner Reed to approve funding the Helping Family Initiatives program which is a part of the District Attorney's Office coordinated by Mrs. Florence Bellamy in the amount of \$5,000.00. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

Commissioner Screws moved; Commissioner Epps seconded to approve the appropriations segment of the proposed budget with the beforementioned changes. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

Each department's budget was discussed.

Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Reed seconded to approve increasing the Coroner's salary to the requested amount of \$51,044.00 and to change a part-time employee to full time at \$21,100.00. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

Commissioner Corbett moved; seconded by Commissioner Reed to approve the proposed budget as presented with the beforementioned changes with the Sanitation Department budget being contingent upon the approval of a \$2.00 per month residential rate increase. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

Commissioner Corbett moved; seconded by Commissioner Reed to approve the FY 2023/2024 salary schedule as presented with the approved changes in the Coroner's department. Commissioners were polled by the County Administrator. All Commissioners voiced a yes vote.

There being no further budget business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Reed seconded to adjourn. All Commissioners agreed.