

County Council held a budget work session on Thursday, April 1, 2004 at 4:00 PM in the Small Courtroom located in the Georgetown County Courthouse.

Present:        Ron Charlton                                Johnny Morant  
                  Thomas Earl Drayton                             Jerry Oakley  
                  Sel Hemingway                                    Helen Rudolph  
                  David Hood

Staff:            Thomas Edwards, Jr.                             Theresa Floyd

Other staff members, members of the public, and representatives of the media were also present.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda was sent to newspapers, television and radio stations, citizens of the County, Department Heads, and posted on the bulletin board located in the lobby of the Courthouse.

Chairman Sel Hemingway called the meeting to order.

Judicial Complex

Mr. Tom Rubillo addressed County Council, on behalf of a "judicial committee" consisting of members of the Georgetown County Bar Association, Judges, the Solicitor, and Clerk of Court regarding the need for an expanded facility in Georgetown County for judicial matters. The County has outgrown the current courthouse facility and it is inadequate and insufficient to serve the citizens of this community.

Mr. Rubillo requested that County Council give consideration to constructing a new facility for judicial purposes, and therefore expanding the remaining building for administrative purposes.

Councilman Oakley made a motion to direct Tych & Walker, the architects identified for this project, to proceed in a manner to identify space requirements, design, and cost estimates of a potential judicial center. Councilman Morant seconded the motion. Chairman Hemingway asked for discussion.

Councilman Morant verified that this directive would be in addition of the scope of work already assigned to Tych & Walker to identify space arrangements and cost estimates on a proposed administrative building. The Council Chairman concurred.

In Favor:        Ron Charlton                                Johnny Morant  
                  Thomas Earl Drayton                             Jerry Oakley  
                  Sel Hemingway                                    Helen Rudolph  
                  David Hood

Georgetown County Council on Aging

Ms. Kim Harmon, Acting Executive Director of the Georgetown County Council on Aging, was present at the meeting along with two of the County Council on Aging Board Members, Mr. J. T. Martin and Mr. David Britton. Ms. Harmon explained that the financial footing of the agency is not good and its continued existence is in jeopardy. She provided a proposed operating budget to County Council and requested that Georgetown County give consideration to providing oversight for the services provided to senior citizens in Georgetown County.

Councilman Morant expressed concern that the programs currently being offered to senior citizens are limited, as many of the services previously provided have been cut. Many citizens that are eligible for these services are not able to benefit from them for this reason. Councilman Drayton agreed with Mr. Morant stating that he would like to see the services continue and possibly expand at some point in the future.

Councilman Morant moved to authorize the County Administrator to devise a plan for meaningful participation in senior activities in order to serve the senior citizens of Georgetown County, and establish the Bureau of Aging Services under the jurisdiction of county governance. Councilman Drayton seconded the motion. Chairman Hemingway asked for discussion.

Councilman Hood questioned whether this program could be in place by the implementation of the FY 04-05 budget. The County Administrator concurred.

In Favor:	Ron Charlton	Johnny Morant
	Thomas Earl Drayton	Jerry Oakley
	Sel Hemingway	Helen Rudolph
	David Hood	

Electronic Voting Machines

Mr. Herb Bailey, Chairman of the Georgetown County Board of Election and Registration addressed County Council with concerns regarding the procurement of electronic voting machines by the South Carolina Election Commission in an effort to standardize electronic voting machines across the State. This action would mandate that Georgetown County cease using the voting machines purchased by the County in 2002 which the County has been very satisfied with. Discussion ensued.

It was the consensus of County Council that Mr. Edwards, should contact other jurisdictions and counties with similar concerns, and draft a letter regarding this to the State Election Commission.

Law Enforcement Budget – FY 05 Budget

Sheriff Lane Cribb addressed County Council regarding a deficit within the FY 04-05 Law Enforcement Budget. He stated that the only options available are to cut some of the services currently being provided or increase the existing millage. Sheriff Cribb noted that he welcomed the newly created Map Committee to review his Department’s budget and operations, and he was open to any assistance they could provide. Discussion ensued. Chairman Hemingway reminded County Council that decisions must be made to address this budgetary shortfall by June.

Management Accountability Performance (MAP) Committee

Councilman Hood stated that Map Committee Chairman, Carl Falk, has requested to add three additional members (that Mr. Falk would name) to the Map Committee. The Committee has a very brief timeframe in which to review a 7.5 million dollar budget and Mr. Hood encouraged County Council to afford him the “manpower” he needs to do a proper analysis. Councilman Hood applauded the Sheriff for allowing a committee of volunteers to review his budget.

Councilman Morant expressed concern that County Council may be deferring its responsibility, and questioned whether a member of a committee, any committee, should have the power to

appoint other members. Other Council members echoed similar concerns and reiterated previous concerns that this process remains objective.

Councilman Hood made a motion to direct the Chairman of the Map Committee to call a meeting of the appointed members to discuss the option of adding three additional members, vote on the matter, and bring a collective recommendation back to County Council. Councilman Oakley seconded the motion. Chairman Hemingway asked for discussion. There was none.

In Favor:	Ron Charlton	Johnny Morant
	Thomas Earl Drayton	Jerry Oakley
	Sel Hemingway	Helen Rudolph
	David Hood	

Solid Waste Budget – FY 05

County Administrator, Thomas Edwards, Jr., presented options for balancing the Solid Waste Budget including negotiation with Regional Wastewater partners, a revised fee structure (both commercial and residential), implementation of a capital outlay/equipment reserve account, and an approach to “borrow” from the existing fund balance (closure/ post closure reserve funds) to pay debt service with plans for repayment of the debt by FY 09. The plan met with conceptual approval by members of County Council.

Collections

The County Administrator proposed a plan to enhance the collection of delinquent business and personal taxes as well as enforcing penalties for local residents with out of state automobile tags and registration. The proposal also included creation of a separate fund for delinquent taxes, and addition of an employee position in the Delinquent Tax Office whose duties will be dedicated to recovering business taxes, and an additional employee position in the Auditor’s Office to work specifically on illegal vehicle registrations. The plan met with the conceptual approval from County Council.

Economic Development Plan – Financing

County Council considered a proposed plan to implement a registration program for contractors and subcontractors within the County, which is in accordance with State Law. The proposal will also generate additional revenue for purposes of County economic development. Council members had questions regarding the plan and detailed discussion ensued. No action was taken.

Being no further business to discuss, Councilman Charlton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

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Date Approved

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Clerk to Council