

## DEKALB COUNTY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR 2025 BUDGET

August 27-28, 2024

### The following Council Members were present:

President David Yarde  
Vice President William VanWye  
Member Richard Ring  
Member Robert E. Krafft  
Member Amy Demske  
Member Amy Prosser, absent  
Member Rick Collins, absent

### Others present:

Auditor Susan Sleeper  
Deputy Auditor Jody Wiedenhoeft  
Attorney Donald J Stuckey

David Yarde opened the meeting with prayer at 9:02 a.m.

### **MATTER OF DATA ENCRYPTION**

Auditor Sleeper began by explaining that Central Dispatch needs to have data encryption to meet new state requirements of not being allowed to use social security numbers and soon even birth dates will not be allowed as well as the safety of our officers. Auburn PD, Sean Miller has applied for a grant to update equipment for all the departments in the County, not just Auburn, but the grant cannot pay for licensing/software. Therefore, Central Dispatch needs approval to pay for the licensing in the amount of \$79,905.60 and what fund the Council would like to pay from. Auburn PD will know by October if they receive the equipment grant, but even if they get denied the County still needs to update the licensing/software. The decision was made later in the meeting to pay for this from ARPA \$.

### **MATTER OF 2025 BUDGET WORK**

Auditor Sleeper went over the documents provided to the Council. David Yarde reminded that it may look like we have additional money, but we also need to be looking at the 'what ifs' that may happen and be prepared for that. Richard Ring feels there are many things that need to be addressed that keep getting kicked down the road such as Public Defenders/Prosecutors wages and benefits, the jail and a critical decision is on the future of Sunny Meadows.

The council began the work session with discussing the **Soil & Water Director and VA Director** job classification. The two department heads are not in the Executive classification as are the other department heads of the County. Discussion took place among the Council.

*William VanWye moved to approve Soil & Water Director and VA Director to EXE-A for 2025, not to be retro for 2024. Richard Ring seconded and all approved.*

The **health department bookkeeper** position was discussed, stemming from a year ago when a special request was made to increase the positions wage higher than the WIS study and council approved rate. The consensus of the Council was to keep that position at a 4% increase.

**Public Defender/Prosecutor Attorney benefit** offer was discussed. Auditor Sleeper provided Council with information on total benefit cost dependent on the current attorney's that would accept the benefit offer. The total cost prior to the public defender 40% reimbursement with misdemeanor attorneys included is \$376,159.03, and without misdemeanor attorneys is \$319,842. Prosecutor Neal Blythe was in attendance to speak again on the part time Prosecuting Attorney wage being requested for 2025. He wanted to remind everyone how critical the pay and benefits are for their department. Later in the meeting the following decision was made.

*Richard Ring motioned to create Job Classifications for Learned Professional with a Law Degree who work in the Prosecutor and Public Defender Offices and offer benefits, both health insurance and PERF, as well as set the 2025 Prosecutor Full Time Deputy wage at \$83,000. William VanWye seconded and all approved.*

Regular Meeting paused for the advertised Public Hearing

**MATTER OF 2025 AIRPORT BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING @ 10:00**

Public Hearing opened at 10:00.

David Yarde asked if there was anyone in attendance to speak on the Airport Budget. There were no comments from the Council.

David Yarde asked

Closed public hearing at 10:01.

*Richard Ring made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-OCC-6 | on FIRST Reading. William VanWye seconded and all approved.*

Break

**MATTER OF 2025 COUNTY BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING @ 10:15**

The Public Hearing opened at 10:15.

David Yarde asked if there was anyone in attendance that wanted to speak.

Karen Griggs | 0635 County Rd 35, Ashley: wanted to thank everyone for their public service and wanted to say she is interested in trails, solar, broadband, health department, and plan commission. She wanted to bring attention to the junk yard area on CR 35 and wanted to be sure we keep DeKalb County beautiful.

The public hearing closed at 10:18

Regular Meeting resumed

## **MATTER OF INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF BUTLER**

Auditor Sleeper provided the agreement that had been approved by the City of Butler and DeKalb County Commissioners for approval. The agreement is for the Development Services Director, Chris Gaumer, to assist the City of Butler with long-range planning, including the comprehensive plan, ordinance updates, etc. Discussion took place on Chris being able to prioritize his work and do both jobs. The City of Butler will pay the County \$20,000 per year for the services.

*William VanWye made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement as presented. Robert Krafft seconded and all approved.*

Auditor Sleeper went over the **Cumulative Capital Development** Funding Requests and the need to cut a decent amount for 2025 as the cash balance is very low. Auditor Sleeper provided the Council with a list of cuts that she was aware of from the requests.

(200,000) Courthouse Building Repair & Maintenance because I have it budgeted in County General also.

(35,000) Courthouse Equipment because I have it budgeted in County General also.

(117,600) Microvote Machines, which would leave 1 year payment budgeted.

(50,000) Maintenance Truck, because the Health Dept. truck is going to be utilized for Larry.

(250,000) Development Services Office Remodel, because Commissioners are funding from their LITED fund.

(32,000) Sunny Meadows A/C, as Commissioners are using ARPA \$.

Possible another (316,386) IF the newest ARPA proposal is approved for the sheriff's office current needs to be paid from ARPA.

This would be a total cut of \$1,000,986

The council reviewed the remaining request, and Richard Ring suggested that the Development Services request for the comprehensive plan rewrite would not be considered a capital need, therefore another (\$100,000) could be cut. Auditor Sleeper verified that this expense had also been budgeted in County General already, so it is covered for 2025. With a total cut of \$1,100,986 this would leave an estimated 12/31/2025 cash balance of 20%. Discussion took place on the number of Sheriff vehicles being requested and additional information was sought from Sheriff Thomas. However, all 7 vehicles were approved in the CCD plan.

*Robert Krafft made a motion to approve all the cuts as listed by Auditor Sleeper, including the additional \$100,000 from Development Services, with an estimated 20% cash balance. William VanWye seconded and all approved.*

Auditor Sleeper provided the following items that had been budgeted in multiple funds to be covered and the Council to choose where to pay them from for 2025. First is the **Sheriff Pension** in the amount of \$711,047 that was budgeted in County General and Public Safety LIT.

By consensus the Council agreed to fund the pension from Public Safety LIT for the 2025 Budget. Second, the CCMG Highway **Grant match** options were covered. Auditor Sleeper budgeted the grant matches as follows:

\$350,000 LITED

\$334,000 MVH Restricted

\$550,000 Rainy Day

\$449,556 LOIT Special Distribution for Highway

By consensus of the Council the \$449,556 amount will be removed and keep the other three amounts as budgeted. By doing this the auditor will have options when it is time to pay the grant match for 2025.

**ARPA Proposal:** At the prior Council meeting on August 7<sup>th</sup>, Auditor Sleeper presented the Commissioner Proposal to the ARPA plan. The plan would allow the ARPA \$\$ to be spent in 2024 and final reporting to be completed. This Auditor would make some claim adjustments to some expenditures that have already been made which would then allow money to go back into funds the expenditure was originally made from. Below is the proposed plan. Since the initial proposal the Commissioners have added to pay \$6,959.24 for the Central Dispatch gate repair. Then, at the August 26, 2024, commissioner meeting the request was made for Data Encryption for Central Dispatch in the amount of \$79,905.60. Further discussion took place among the Council members present.

\$	4,847,297.95	ARPA Balance as of 7/12/2024
	-232,151.10	Remaining Hwy Contingency
	-1,300,000.00	Bridge #17/Highway Operations
	-500,000.00	Jail Chiller & other needs
	-1,407,149.32	Health Insurance
	-21,000.00	Sand Strategies-Broadband Consultant
	-1,019,593.20	CR 56 grant match & CCMG match
\$	367,404.33	
\$	(26,550.00)	Sunny Meadows AC
		Sunny Meadows Gutters
		2023 Audit Fees for ARPA Audit
Balance to Liability Ins.		

Richard Ring made a motion to approve the Proposal as permitted, including the Central Dispatch Gate repair and Data Encryption, as well as requesting the Commissioners to pay up to \$100,000 for a solar consultant for Community Corrections. Robert Krafft seconded and all approved.

Lunch 12:00-1:15

**Elected Officials:**

Richard Ring would like to give the Assessor, Auditor, Clerk, Recorder, and Treasurer a 6% increase to their 'base' salary because there have been years when the Elected Officials did not get as high of increase as the rest of the Department Heads/Employees. Clerk Albright commented that the amount of work put on the Clerk and Auditor to see non-elected officials making more than elected officials is a stab in the back.

*Richard Ring made a motion to give a 6% salary increase to Assessor, Auditor, Clerk, Recorder and Treasurer. Robert Krafft seconded and all approved.*

*Richard Ring made a motion to give a 4% salary increase to all other employees not listed above. Amy Demske seconded and all approved.*

**County General Budget:** Auditor Sleeper explained the with the full amount of requested county general budgets, and double entered appropriations the estimated 12/31/2024 cash balance is coming in at 37%. Auditor Sleeper also provided the below items that could be cut since requested budgets were submitted.

(27,427) Diff. between Registered/Non-Registered Surveyor  
(1,435) req. wage for S&W director vs. EXE-A rate for 2025 (if decision is made for this position to NOT go to EXE-A, then the reduction may increase.

(275,286) Probation wages that were double budgeted while waiting for final grant awards.

Discussion took place among the Council members on the cash balance, other changes or ideas on the County General requested budget.

**MATTER OF ORDINANCE 2024-OCC-7**

*William VanWye made a motion to approve the changes agreed on during the August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, workday and approve Ordinance 2024-OCC-7 on FIRST Reading. Amy Demske seconded and all approved.*

**MATTER OF ORDINANCE 2024-OCC-5**

*William VanWye made a motion to approve the Ordinance granting the Recorder's request to use monies from the Recorder's Records Perpetuation Fund to supplement the Recorder's 2025 Budget. Amy Demske seconded and all approved.*

There is no other business that needs to be discussed regarding the 2025 Budget, therefore the Council work day scheduled for August 28, 2024 is not needed.

**MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT**

Amy Demske made a motion to adjourn at 2:16 p.m. Richard Ring seconded and all approved.

DEKALB COUNTY COUNCIL:

David Yarde  
David Yarde, President

William Van Wye  
William Van Wye, Vice President

Richard Ring  
Richard Ring

Robert E. Krafft  
Robert E. Krafft

Amy Demske  
Amy Demske

~absent~  
Amy Prosser

Rick Collins  
Rick Collins

ATTEST:

Susan Sleeper  
Susan Sleeper  
DeKalb County Auditor