



Finance, Administration, and Economic Development Committee Workshop Beaufort County, SC

This meeting was held both in person at the County Council Chambers, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, and virtually through Zoom.

Monday, April 10, 2023
2:00 PM

MINUTES

Watch the video stream available on the County's website to hear the Council's discussion of a specific topic or the complete meeting. <https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/223612>

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chairman Lawson called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

PRESENT

Chairman Mark Lawson
Vice-Chairman Anna Maria Tabernik
Council Member David P. Bartholomew
Council Member Gerald Dawson
Council Member York Glover
Ex-Officio Joseph F. Passiment
Council Member Logan Cunningham
Council Member Paula Brown
Council Member Alice Howard
Council Member Thomas Reitz
Council Member Gerald Dawson

ABSENT

Council Member Lawrence McElynn

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee Chairman Lawson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. FOIA

Committee Chairman Lawson noted that public notification of this meeting had been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Passiment, seconded by Council Member Dawson, to approve the agenda.

The Vote - The motion was approved without objection.

5. CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD

No one came forward.

6. PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY BUDGET INITIATIVES - DENISE CHRISTMAS, FINANCE DIRECTOR

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the citizen comments.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/223612?ts=69>

Director Christmas (Finance Department) briefed the Committee on Beaufort County's FY 2024 Budget.

County Administrator Greenway commented that Council would need to provide feedback on how to proceed with a potential merit-based pay increase.

Council Members Bartholomew and Passiment highlighted concerns about the merit-based pay increase proposal because of the need for training.

Committee Chairman Lawson and County Administrator Greenway discussed the provision of COLAs.

County Administrator Greenway commented on requests to develop a system to reward high-performing employees and the recommendation for an up to 3% merit-based pay increase for employees based on performance evaluations.

Council Members Howard and Tabernik commented on their support for the merit option and additional training for supervisors.

Council Member Glover commented that parameters would need to be put in place to limit the potential for subjectivity.

Council Member Dawson raised concerns about the merit option and the potential for a morale problem. County Administrator Greenway commented on how COLA could also create morale problems.

Committee Chair Lawson asked staff to continue considerations of how to implement the merit-based pay increase and create a placeholder in the budget.

Council Member Glover and Deputy County Administrator Richland discussed how longevity could be rewarded.

7. PRESENTATIONS OF BUDGETS BY ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the citizen comments.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/223612?ts=1703>

Judge Heather Galvin (Probate Judge for Beaufort County) provided an overview of the Probate Court's budget request for \$20,000 to support professional services, including translators, internships, court reporters, etc. Judge Galvin also commented on the provision of COLAs and the potential for merit-based pay increases.

Treasurer Maria Walls presented the vision, mission, and values of the Treasurer's Office, the FY 2023 budget, and the request for \$99,700 in FY 2024 to support tax bills communication, public service announcements, and technology improvements. Treasurer Walls commented on the need for a combination of COLAs and merit-based pay increases, trustworthy supervisors, and engaged employees.

Committee Chair Lawson and Treasurer Wells discussed the request for the Treasurer's Office to have its own evaluation system and merit pay structure.

CFO Suzanne Cook (Beaufort County Sheriff's Office) discussed the FY 2024 budget request and the budget cuts that were requested by the County.

Council Member Passiment and CFO Cook discussed the revenue projections.

Committee Chairman Lawson and CFO Cook discussed the difference between the Town of Hilton Head Island's law enforcement fee revenue project of \$5,150,000 and the request for \$5,598,467.

County Administrator Greenway commented that the fee would be recalculated to ensure the necessary amount of money is raised.

Council Member Reitz asked about communication with the Town of Hilton Head Island on the potential fee increase.

Council Member Bartholomew and Sheriff Tanner discussed the 37 open positions that need to be filled.

CFO Cook commented that there would be no surplus in the budget because every dollar is being used on staff.

Council Member Tabernik and Sheriff Tanner discussed performance-based pay, COLAs, and longevity planning.

Committee Chairman Lawson recognized auditor-elect David Cadd, who will start in July. Mr. Cadd commented on his plans to promote positive collaborations with County Council and County Administration.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned: 1:05 PM

Ratified: May 16, 2023