

Council Members

District 1: Terry Graham
District 2: Charlene McGriff
District 3: Billy Mosteller, Secretary
District 4: Larry Honeycutt
District 5: Steve Harper, Chair
District 6: Allen Blackmon
District 7: Brian Carnes, Vice-Chair

**County Administrator**

Dennis Marstall

County Attorney

John K. DuBose III

Clerk to Council

Sherrie Simpson

April 28, 2022

1:00 PM

**101 North Main Street
Lancaster, SC 29720**

**LANCASTER COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
County Council Chambers, County Administration
Building, 101 North Main Street, Lancaster, SC 29720**

MINUTES

Council Members Present: Allen Blackmon, Brian Carnes, Larry Honeycutt [*who entered the meeting late at approximately 1:11 p.m.*], Charlene McGriff, and Billy Mosteller.

Absent: Terry Graham and Steve Harper.

Staff Members/Others present: Dennis Marstall, County Administrator; Sherrie Simpson, Clerk to Council; Veronica Thompson, Financial Services Director; Kim Belk, Budget Director; Lisa Robinson, Human Resources Director; Clay Catoe, EMS Director; Robert Purser, Public Safety Communications Director; Dr. April Williams, Library Director; Jeff Catoe, Public Services Director; Sheriff Barry Faile; Darren Player, Fire Rescue/Emergency Management Director; Hal Hiott, Parks and Recreation Director; Rox Burhans, Development Services Director; various Department Heads who entered and exited Chambers throughout the meeting, various Elected Officials who entered and exited Chambers throughout the meeting; various employees and citizens.

A quorum of Lancaster County Council was present for the meeting. The following press were notified of the meeting by e-mail in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act: *The Lancaster News*, *Kershaw News Era*, *The Rock Hill Herald*, Cable News 2, Channel 9 and the local government channel. The agenda was posted in the lobby of the County Administration Building and also on the County website the required length of time. The power point presentation utilized during the meeting is attached to the written minutes in the Clerk to Council's office.

Call to Order - Vice-Chair Brian Carnes

Vice-Chair Brian Carnes called the meeting to order at approximately 1:03 p.m. He noted, for the record, that a quorum of Council was present and he explained that Councilman Honeycutt would be joining the meeting shortly. He also noted, for the record, that all meeting public notices had been posted as required and that the press had been notified as required under the Freedom of Information Act.

Welcome and Recognition - Vice-Chair Brian Carnes

Vice-Chair Brian Carnes welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation - Council Member Brian Carnes

Vice-Chair Brian Carnes led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and delivered the Invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Charlene McGriff moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Allen Blackmon. Motion Passed 4-0.; Absent: Graham, Harper, Honeycutt

Citizens Comments

The following citizens signed up for Citizens Comments:

1. Mary Rathel, Probate Judge, said she thought she was just signing in to the meeting and did not have any citizens comments; and, likewise, the other County employee, Melissa Newman, and elected official, Treasurer Carrie Helms, did not have any citizens comments but rather thought that they were signing in to the meeting.

The following citizens submitted electronic, written comments for Citizens Comments: None.

Discussion and Action Items

Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Administrator's Recommended Budget Presentation

Dennis Marstall stated that he was pleased to present his first budget presentation and thanked all staff for their help with the budget recommendation. He explained that he hoped that there were not any surprises in the budget recommendation due to the workshops that Council has had and he thanked them for their participation in those workshops. He noted that his focus has been on the employee compensation and, that as the budget moved forward, he wanted to understand Council's budget priorities while also addressing the requests from departments and staff. He explained that he wanted to prepare the County to be a forward thinking and problem solving organization while also giving it a better structure to accommodate growth. He also explained that the budget needed to be adjusted for impacted costs to the supply chain and inflationary market factors and to be ready for a highly competitive job market. He explained that the County was in a strong fiscal financial position. He further explained that even though the County's revenues were up due to new houses and business, that the demand for services had also increased amid strong population growth. He noted that the budget recommendation recognizes that employees are the County's key asset. He explained that even though Council has had some issues with the study since it was first presented, that now the job market was hyper competitive and that the study could not continue to be delayed. He stated that he thought the budget was forward looking as it addressed increasing demand for services in a variety of ways. He also asked that Council hold their questions until the conclusion of the entire budget presentation.

Kim Belk reviewed the budget recommendation via the power point attached to the written minutes in the Clerk to Council's office. She reviewed pages 5 through pages 45 of that power point. She explained that the four budget goals were as follows: (1) efficient and effective services; (2) innovation and technology; (3) investment in the future/forward thinking; and (4) promote professionalism and customer service. She noted that the budget was balanced with a property tax increase of 2.6 mils in the general fund. She reviewed the County-wide personnel adjustments on page 9 of the power point and the workforce information, including historic turnover, current vacancies and hard to fill positions, on page 10 of the power point. She provided an overview of the County's General Fund revenue, which can be found on pages 12 through 14 of the power point. She highlighted the proposed new fees for the County's general fund, which can be found on pages 15 and 16 of the power point presentation, and she noted that these fees would have to be advertised as part of the public hearing process for the budget. She provided an expenditure overview that broke down the major expenditures by category and that

expenditure overview can be found on page 17 of the power point slide. She noted that personnel had a large increase and she explained that the increase was due to the implementation of the compensation plan and due to new, proposed positions in the budget. She provided an overview of the major changes in personnel in the upcoming budget and those personnel adjustments can be found on pages 18 through 23 of the power point presentation. She then reviewed the operating funding changes and those additional funding changes can be found on pages 24 through 29 of the power point slides. Also, she reviewed the non-recurring funding, which included some capital, via pages 30 and 31 of the power point presentation. She noted that these items were one time costs. Finally, she reviewed the other funds, including the Airport Fund, the Capital Improvement Fund which she noted is funded by its own millage, the Court Security Fund which she noted was balanced without a millage increase, the Victims Advocate Fund, the E-911 Fund which saw an overall decrease, the Hospitality Tax Fund, the Stormwater Fund, the County Transportation Commission Fund, the Local Accommodations Tax Fund, the Debt Fund, and the Van Wyck Fire District Fund which is a new fund, and those fund overviews can be found on pages 33 through 44 of the power point presentation. Lastly, she explained that there are five funds that still need to be finalized: (1) the Indian Land Fire District; (2) the Pleasant Valley Fire District; (3) Capital Project Sales Tax 2; (4) Capital Project Sales Tax 3; and (5) State Accommodations Tax.

Dennis Marstall explained that the County had several requests to create new fire fee districts, requests to increase current fees for existing fire fee districts, and requests to possibly consolidate some districts. He further explained that since fire services is continuing to have difficulty in recruiting volunteers, has a desire to move to more full time staffing, and due to the high cost of fire apparatus, the County needs to start analyzing the fire service model currently in use and evaluate how the County needs to provide fire services over the next 5, 10, and 20 years. He further explained that the conversation would probably need to be a year long conversation which could be held at the Committee of the Whole (COW) meetings.

Dennis Marstall wrapped up the budget presentation by explaining that the budget is balanced with a small millage increase for the general fund. He reviewed the variances from prior years' budgets and those variances can be found on slide 47 of the power point presentation. He further explained that the overall budget increased by \$9.3 million, of which \$5.67 million was in the general fund. He noted that this budget established one new fund, but that there would actually be two new funds once the Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) 3 was included in the budget at second reading. He also noted the budget funded twenty-nine additional positions and created the new Communications and Marketing Department. He also noted that the budget funded key initiatives that would meet the four budget goals. He noted that the tentative schedule for the budget readings were as follows: the first reading of the budget would be held at the May 9 Council meeting, the public hearing and second reading would be held at the May 23 Council meeting and the third reading would be held at the June 13 Council meeting. He reviewed the vision for the County and he noted that he thought that this budget continued that vision.

Council and staff discussed the following items: the duties of the Communications and Marketing Department which would be a centralized department for proactive brand management; money for the Sheriff's Department career ladder; a potential career ladder for the EMS Department; increases for Information Technology (IT); clarification of efforts to increase the County's bond rating, which could possibly be done by increasing the County's reserve funds; different costs for the same position but at different locations, which Kim Belk explained was related to inclusion of vehicle costs for one of the positions; starting dates for new positions; whether it would be more cost effective to have a mower for the Airport or to contract out the grass cutting; who should pay for Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) studies and Kim Belk explained that those studies were reimbursable expenses; the number of positions in the Stormwater Department, which Dennis Marstall explained was due to the Department's increasing work load; and whether the City had expressed any interest lately in joining the County's 911 system and even though Dennis Marstall indicated he had discussed this item with the City, that they were not yet ready to join the County. Council and staff continued discussing the following items: the addition of another Project Manager, which Dennis Marstall explained was due to the increased case load of upcoming projects; that the State comes up with mandates but yet does not provide any funding for the County; explanation of fees for Parks and Recreation; possible bonds for a County shop and new convenience site; and architect fees. Billy Mosteller explained that he was not in favor of a tax increase. Council and staff discussed whether the classification study could be implemented over two years in order to avoid a tax increase; possibly moving the County to a merit performance system; the possibility of using some type of step system for employee pay; and clarification of the demolition budget, which increased but not by as much as requested. Charlene McGriff stated

that she supported salary increases to the minimum for employees. Council and staff discussed the fund balance in Stormwater. Allen Blackmon explained that Council should review the annual audit before starting the budget process. He explained that he was not in favor of a millage increase. He noted that he was in favor of the Sheriff's career ladder. He further noted he supported a career ladder for the EMS Department. He explained that he supported a cost of living (COLA) raise for all employees. He further explained that he wanted to see the systems for merit performance and tuition reimbursement before he would agree to their implementation. He also explained that perhaps Council should put off bringing legal in house and not building the Airport terminal this year. He also noted that he was not for bonding any other projects. Dennis Marstall explained that the County would always have contracted legal expenses. Council and staff again discussed the Sheriff's career ladder and eliminating two positions at the Sheriff's Department in order to fully fund their career ladder. Council and staff discussed the classification and compensation plan and bringing legal in house.

Citizen Comments

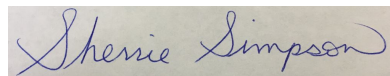
All citizens were heard during Citizens Comments held at the beginning of the Council meeting.

Adjournment

Larry Honeycutt moved to adjourn. Seconded by Allen Blackmon. Motion Passed 5-0.; Absent: Graham, Harper

There being no further business, the Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at approximately 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Sherrie Simpson
Clerk to Council

Approved by Council on May 23, 2022



Billy Mosteller, Secretary