

BUDGET COMMITTEE

June 03, 2019

6:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Willie Campbell, Patty Woodby, Ronnie Trivett, Isaiah Grindstaff, Ross Garland, Travis Hill
Aaron Frazier for Ray Lyons, and Kelly Collins

ABSENT: None

CALL TO ORDER: Ross Garland, Chairman

ROLL CALL: Quorum Present

Chairman Ross Garland called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- Approval of Agenda: Chairman Garland opened the floor for motions regarding the agenda. Motion was made by Aaron Frazier and seconded by Isaiah Grindstaff to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.
- Public Comments: No members of the public wished to address the committee
- Old Business: None
- New Business: Chairman Garland informed the committee the only new business before them was to review and vote on the revised budget presented by the Carter County Planning Commission. Chairman Garland explained this is simply a “yes or no” vote on the Planning Department budget.

Motion was made by Kelly Collins to approve the Planning Department’s budget as presented by the Planning Commission. After calling for a second and hearing none, Chairman Garland stepped down as chairman and turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Isaiah Grindstaff.

Ross Garland then provided the second for the motion made by Kelly Collins.

Ross Garland stated he had some questions regarding changes made to the Planning Department budget since it was last presented to the committee. Planning Director Chris Schuettler addressed those questions as well as others from the committee.

Following discussion, the motion was put to a vote. By roll call vote as follows the motion failed:

Willie Campbell – No	Patty Woodby – No
Ronnie Trivett – No	Isaiah Grindstaff – No
Ross Garland – Yes	Travis Hill – No
Aaron Frazier – No	Kelly Collins – Yes

Commissioner Robert Acuff, who is not a member of the committee but was in attendance, spoke to the committee regarding the letter which Planning Commission Chairman Jerry Pearman sent to the committee along with the budget advising the committee if the Planning Department’s budget was not approved the county would need to set aside funding to pay the salaries for someone to serve as a project manager and as Economic Development Director as those duties had been placed on the Planning Department without an increase in funding or salary. Robert Acuff asked the committee to go ahead and set those monies aside.

Willie Campbell suggested the committee approve the rest of the county's budget and let the state come in and set the Planning Department budget. Chairman Garland cautioned that could put the county in an even worse position.

Isaiah Grindstaff stated that no one on the committee denies the Planning Department is underfunded but he just could not see a \$15,000 pay increase "in one bump" but that he could see the salary being increased in increments.

Kelly Collins stated the Planning Department has been doing a wonderful job as project managers, adding the county would have had to allocate a lot more money to the Animal Shelter budget this year if it had not been for work done by Chris Schuettler.

Ross Garland asked Chris Schuettler if the Planning Commission had any discussions on what would happen next if the budget were not approved. Chris Schuettler said the committee previously gave no guidance when rejecting the original budget presented. Chris Schuettler stated he would take the budget back to the Planning Commission and they would have 10 business days to approve a new budget. Chris Schuettler said this would require a special called meeting of the Planning Commission and the earliest a special called meeting could be held would be 3 p.m. on June 17 to give adequate time for public notice. Ross Garland said there was no compromise by the Planning Commission in resubmitting their budget following the Budget Committee's vote to reject it.

Mayor Rust Barnett asked the committee to give him guidance on what to do with Economic Development. He stated the agreement had been for the Planning Department to take on those responsibilities and he did not believe economic development should be handled through the Mayor's office. Ross Garland stated he did not think the Mayor's Office has sufficient time or staff to take on economic development duties. Aaron Frazier stated he believes Carter County needs to have an economic and community development director in the county.

Motion was made by Willie Campbell and seconded by Aaron Frazier to send the Planning Department budget back to the Planning Commission and set a Budget Committee meeting to vote on their new budget at 5:30 p.m. on June 17 prior to the 6 p.m. County Commission meeting. After discussion regarding the time needed to prepare documents for the Budget Committee once the Planning Commission approved a new budget, Aaron Frazier made a friendly amendment to the original motion to set the Budget Committee meeting for 6 p.m. on June 18. The friendly amendment was accepted by Willie Campbell.

Following discussion, the motion was put to a vote. By roll call vote as follows the motion passed:

Willie Campbell – Yes	Patty Woodby – Yes
Ronnie Trivett – Yes	Isaiah Grindstaff – Yes
Ross Garland – Yes	Travis Hill – Yes
Aaron Frazier – Yes	Kelly Collins – Yes

Ross Garland then addressed Chris Schuettler regarding his request for guidance to give the Planning Commission regarding the budget and stated the guidance would be to lower the numbers.

Patty Woodby stated the raises included in the Planning Commission's budget were not fair to other county employees.

Ross Garland stated he did not understand why the commissioners put more responsibility on the department but did not want to give them the compensation for the new duties.

Isaiah Grindstaff and Patty Woodby stated it was not that the commissioners did not want to give them compensation they just did not agree with the requested amount all at once.

Ross Garland invited the committee members to conduct their own research regarding what other comparable counties pay for project managers and economic development directors.

With the rejection of the Planning Budget the scheduled Public Hearing on the county budget which was set for June 10 will be cancelled and rescheduled for another time once the budget has been approved.

Robert Acuff shared his concerns with surrounding counties and municipalities experiencing declines in revenue and stated he is concerned the increase in projected revenue included in the county's budget could leave the county in a bad spot later in the fiscal year. Finance Director Brad Burke stated the budget he and his staff have worked on with the elected officials and department heads is sound and based on actual revenues and expenditures in recent years. He also advised the committee and commissioners in attendance they need to "get away from" comparing requests to last year's budget because those numbers "are no good." He further stated that he believes all revenue should be accounted for in the budgeting process and that he did not "fluff up revenue numbers just to balance the budget." Robert Acuff stated he did not intend his comments as a criticism of Brad Burke or the Finance Department but merely as a caution for the committee and commissioners to consider. Patty Woodby praised the work done by the Finance Department on this year's budget and their work with officeholders and department heads in correcting line items to better reflect where money is being spent and their work to track revenue which has helped to find additional revenue already in the budget.

Following discussion, motion was made by Ronnie Trivett and seconded by Isaiah Grindstaff to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: Abby Frye

Approved for entry: Chairman Ross Garland