

The Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia met in a Special Called Budget Workshop on Thursday, June 28, 2001, at 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Greg Dunn, Chairman  
Linda Wells, Vice Chair  
Herb Frady  
A.G. VanLandingham

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris W. Cofty, County Administrator  
Carol Chandler, Executive Assistant  
Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk  
Mark Pullium, Finance Director  
Janet Camburn, Assistant Finance Director  
William McNally, County Attorney

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Chairman Dunn called the meeting to order. He said this was a special called meeting to finish the discussions on the budget.

#### **FUNDS APPROVED FOR SPECIAL RUN OFF ELECTION:**

Finance Director Mark Pullium remarked that there was the necessity of a run off election. He asked for the Board's consideration for a request for additional funding to cover the expense of a special run off election from the Board of Elections in the amount of \$31,000.

On motion made by Commissioner Frady, Seconded by Commissioner Wells to approve the request from the Board of Elections to fund the special run off election in the amount of \$31,000. The motion carried 4-0.

#### **FUNDING**

Finance Director Mark Pullium remarked that previously there was a legal question as to whether or not the members of the Board of Elections would be considered Registrars. He said there was a legal opinion that indicated that they were in fact Registrars for this purpose. He said the decision that the Board had was whether or not to fund a per diem of \$61 for the Chief Registrar or a monthly salary of \$272 and then for the other members a per diem of \$48 or a monthly salary of \$242. He said the recommendation was to add the \$2,736 to the budget which represented the increase from \$100 per month for each of the Registrars to \$272 for the Chief Registrar and \$242 for the other members.

Chairman Dunn asked Attorney McNally if it was his opinion that there be a Chief Registrar and two assistants.

Attorney McNally responded that the way this was worded was that the Board of Elections were the Registrars.

Chairman Dunn asked if all three Registrars were considered equals.

Attorney McNally replied that the Chairman would be considered Chief Registrar. He said the Chairman would be earning the \$272 and the other two members would receive \$242.

Chairman Dunn said this was a substantial increase. He said last year they received \$9.04 per hour.

On motion made by Commissioner VanLandingham, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve paying the Chief Registrar \$272 and the other two Registrars \$242 for a total of \$2,736 from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002. The motion carried 4-0.

**FURTHER DISCUSSION OF KEEP FAYETTE BEAUTIFUL:**

Commissioner VanLandingham said he had a lot of other information from other budget hearings regarding the Keep Fayette Beautiful. He said he fully understood the positions of the Board members.

Chairman Dunn interjected that Commissioner VanLandingham was out of order because of the vote that he had made in the prior motion on this issue. He said that motion was denied and Commissioner VanLandingham could not bring this back up.

Commissioner Frady asked if he could bring up this issue and Chairman Dunn replied yes.

Commissioner Frady remarked that when staff was charged with presenting the Board with the budget, the Board was charged with adopting or not adopting the budget. He said it would take three votes to approve anything. He asked for the ruling on this.

Attorney McNally replied that the county operated on a zero based budget. He said for any item to be included in the budget it must pass by a 3-0 vote. He said that was what the Board would be doing tonight on the budget. He said the budget had to be passed and when the Board approved the budget tonight it would be passing each and every item included in the budget.

Commissioner Frady asked Commissioner VanLandingham to discuss the Keep Fayette Beautiful budget.

Chairman Dunn felt there needed to be a motion to bring this issue up again for discussion.

Attorney McNally remarked that in actuality according to the rules this was a new meeting and therefore anybody could bring up a motion for reconsideration. He said if the Board voted at the same meeting and wanted to bring this item back up it would have to be somebody who either voted against a defeated motion or for a passed motion who would

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be able to bring the question of reconsideration. He said otherwise at a subsequent meeting the item could be brought up by anyone.

Chairman Dunn asked how discussion would ever be stopped on an issue.

Attorney McNally replied this could not be done.

Chairman Dunn remarked that in the other entities in the county you would have to have been on the winning side of a motion to bring it up.

Attorney McNally said he had no idea what other entities had in the way of rules. He said Fayette County had adopted a set of rules that required for a motion to be reconsidered that it must be brought up by a Commissioner who voted against the original motion if it was defeated or in favor of an original motion if it passed. He said that was for reconsideration and that was at the same meeting. He said otherwise, the original motion may not be presented to the Board again until its next meeting. He said if someone wanted to bring up the same issue three times a month and thirty six times a year they were entitled to.

Attorney McNally said the intent of the ordinance was that a motion not be brought up again by someone at the same meeting. He said this was not meant to stifle an item to be brought up in the future.

Chairman Dunn interjected that from a practical standpoint there would never be finality on any issue before the Board ever.

Commissioner Wells felt what the Board needed right now was a motion to reconsider the Keep Fayette Beautiful budget.

Chairman Dunn remarked then anyone could make a motion on anything.

Attorney McNally interjected that the Board needed to go by past experience. He said the county had twenty years with these rules in order and there had never been a problem. He felt these rules had worked very well for the county.

On motion made by Commissioner VanLandingham, seconded by Commissioner Frady that the Board reconsider the Keep Fayette Beautiful budget. The motion carried 4-0.

Commissioner VanLandingham remarked that he agreed with the feelings that some of the other Commissioners had on Keep Fayette Beautiful. He said he had some of the same feelings. He said he saw the potential of this program was not diminished by the fact that it had not reached its potential. He said he had read the minutes from the last two budget hearings. He felt while there were some explicit instructions given, he did not find anything

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that said the Board would not fund them this year. He said he found that the program would be scrutinized closer and there would have to be serious consideration. He said once this funding was stopped it would be over for this program. He said there was no one who was going to voluntarily go out there and do anything for this program. He said he had spoken with several people and there was some guidance offered to the program. He said there would be some encouragement for them to do the things that they needed to do to retain and expand this program the way that it ought to be. He felt Mr. Gosa's comments at the last budget hearing were very, very good but he felt no one had listened to them. He felt the Board had gotten Keep Fayette Beautiful's attention now and the question of continuing with the program. He said he would offer that if the same thing would come next year that had come this year then he would have trouble funding it next year. He felt there should be more to this program after its fifteen years in existence. He said if this program was killed then there would not be anything.

Chairman Dunn pointed out that next year there would be a new Commissioner and that new Commissioner might need a couple of years worth of this too. He said each new Board had come in and had concerns but wanted to see what would happen at the next budget. He said it was hard for the Board to find anything in this program to approve funding. He said the Board was not looking for information to disapprove it. He said what had occurred was that the Board did not get any good information. He said the last thing that was said last year was that the Keep Fayette Beautiful was to submit a quarterly report. He said Marie Short had agreed to do that and said the Board would be very pleased with it. He said this report had not been forthcoming and the Board had not heard a word from the program. He said when the Board asked for details, it had not been able to get any.

Chairman Dunn remarked that on Tuesday evening he had a visit from one of the board members of Keep Fayette Beautiful. He said that person had suggested to him that this was a good wake up call. He said they had held a meeting of the board and called Marie Short in and told her that they had enough funding to keep her going for another six months. He said the board told her that she would need to raise \$25,000 in the next six months and lay out a program that could be brought back to this board. He said the Commission had indicated if the Keep Fayette Beautiful board could show the Commission a broad based program with specifics in it, then the Board would reconsider the request. He said the program did have enough funding to go another six months. He said if the Board did not do something drastic then this program would never be where it was supposed to be. He felt it was a matter of accountability of taxpayers' dollars. He said the county had been putting money in there with no visibility whatsoever and no accountability. He said he was not trying to kill the program but wanted it to be more broad based in the community. He thought the Board might have them going in the right direction now.

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Commissioner VanLandingham asked if the Board could fund six months and it would be the last six months and if Ms. Short met the criteria of the Board then the funds could be released to her. He said if she did not then the Board would not release the money.

Commissioner Frady asked where the recommendations were that the Board had given her to follow.

Commissioner VanLandingham replied these were in the minutes.

Chairman Dunn said the Commissioners see these individuals once a year and the Board tells them their concerns. He said the Board had not seen much. He said the other day he had asked Marie Short how she spent the \$25,000 and she said it was for her salary and her office expense. He said for two years in a row people had come in here and said that they were going to raise \$50,000 without seed money as well as other programs off the ground and most of this has never come to pass. He felt they were doing a lot of things and if they put these altogether and lay out a program and people could see what they were doing, it would be easier for the Board to deal with. He said the individual who had come to see him was setting up a meeting with him and the chairman of the Keep Fayette Beautiful. He said he had told them that he would commit himself to try and help them get something together that could be brought back to the Board. He said for the last three years that he had been involved in the budget there was just not that level of comfort.

Commissioner Frady felt the Board was choking itself on \$25,000. He asked exactly what this board did and Chairman Dunn replied that was the problem and the Board was trying to find out what they did.

Commissioner Frady felt the Board needed to find out what this program was doing.

Commissioner Wells remarked that in the fifteen years that this program had been in existence and her being on the Board for seven years she had asked Keep Fayette Beautiful representatives exactly what they did. She said the last two years this Board had been incredibly clear in saying that this Board needed to see some progress or there would be no funding. She said this Board had not seen anything. She said the amount might only be \$25,000 but it was still taxpayers' money. She said she was not inclined to give a dysfunctional group as far as the performance of the group \$25,000 for a good idea that was not maturing. She said there was a whole world of good ideas out there but throwing money at them and not getting anything in return was in her opinion poor management.

Commissioner Frady said it might be poor management but at the same time he felt the Board needed to give them a goal to reach of some sort.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the Keep Fayette Beautiful was a separate non-profit organization and this Board could not tell them how to run the operation. He said this was

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not what he was getting at. He said he was getting at an accountability for taxpayers' money. He said two years ago the Board had paid \$25,000 and Keep Fayette Beautiful raised \$300 and they said they were going to raise \$50,000. He said they really do not come in with a good description of their programs and what they do. He said the other thing was that a lot of the programs were Atlanta region area in scope. He said Marie Short belonged to two other boards in the Atlanta area. He said this Board had committed every year to relook it if they came in with a decent program. He said if the members came in with a decent program he would fight for their funding if he could see that the taxpayers' money was being well spent. He said until he could see that he would not want to give them the money for this coming year. He said the program had enough money to get them through December, 2001.

Commissioner VanLandingham asked if the Board could do this.

Chairman Dunn said he personally would not want to do that and Commissioner Wells agreed.

Chairman Dunn said \$25,000 is a significant amount of money in many ways. He said this was money the Board would be giving to a non-profit. He said there were approximately 100 plus non-profit organizations in the county who wanted money from the county and the county just could not do that. He said when the Board did decide to give money to one, it would expect results for the entire community. He said in this case, the Board just had not seen this. He said the county supported the food for the senior services but that was food for tax paying Fayette County citizens who were elderly and could not prepare their own meals. He felt that was a wonderful way to spend the county's money on its own citizens to a service that they could not provide for themselves. He felt the Keep Fayette Beautiful was a wonderful program as well if some of the environmental things could be done. He said the government could not pay for everything. He said the citizens of Fayette County could not take the strain. He said if the Board could get accountability by pushing a little bit and more broad base support throughout the community it would be going in the right direction and in the long run would be doing a service rather than allowing them to go year to year and doing the same thing. He felt Keep Fayette Beautiful was where it should be right now and that was to relook their own organization and their own program and come back to the Board. He said he would sincerely try to work with them to get them to that position where they would have a viable program to be funded by the county. He said Marie Short had managed to get a \$10,000 donation from the Yamaha Corporation this year and that was not the result of a hard fundraising effort. He said one of the members of the Keep Fayette Beautiful board was the Chairman of Yamaha. He said there was not an organized effort to go out and hit all of the corporations as well as the entities of government. He said until this point Ms. Short still says that the cities had declined to participate at all. He remarked that the county had provided seed money for several years. He felt the Board had made the right decision on this issue and he would stick with his prior vote on this matter.

Commissioner Frady asked if there was a list of programs that they had accomplished.

Chairman Dunn replied that the Keep Fayette Beautiful had a pamphlet that was general in nature. He said he wanted to know how much money they raised, what was spent on programs in Fayette County and what was the level of volunteer support. He said the Board did not want to tell them what to do but wanted to know that the things they were doing were the things that the Board would expect after providing seed money.

Commissioner Frady said he would withdraw his second. He said if Keep Fayette Beautiful could come up with a list of things that they could do he would bring this issue back up.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner VanLandingham said he would again like to thank the staff, Mark Pullium and all of his support staff for all of their work on the budget. He said it was very easy for him to work through it and he appreciated it very much.

Finance Director Mark Pullium said he appreciated all of the nice things that the Commissioners had said and all of the responses that had been given to his department.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Dunn adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

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Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk

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Gregory M. Dunn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 26th day of July, 2001.

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Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk