



**Blakely City Council
Budget Public Hearing**

November 22, 2015

City Hall

5:30 P.M.

I) Call to Order, Roll Call, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

The Mayor, Anthony Howard, called the Public Hearing to order. Let the record show that the Mayor, Anthony Howard, Councilman Al Hutchins, Councilman Frank Thornton and Councilman James Crozier were present. Councilman Charles Middleton was not present. Councilman Hutchins gave the invocation. The Mayor led the Council and public in the Pledge of Allegiance. Also let the record show that the City Clerk, Melinda Crook and the Department Heads were also present.

II) Public Hearing 2017 Proposed Budget

The meeting started with Jason Gauntt going through the E-911, Electric and Technology budgets. He went through the E-911 and Technology budgets a little more detailed due to those being new departments added to the City budget. He spoke of where the revenues from E-911 would be coming from, Early County (surcharges plus their portion of expenditures), Stewart County and Randolph County (intergovernmental agreements) and how he projected the revenues for Technology (projection numbers of around 250-300 customers in first year FFTH). He then went through the expenditures on these departments (E-911, SGRITA and FFTH), again explaining a little more in detail how he came to these figures. Councilman Hutchins questioned Jason on how many Cities could be added to E-911 and Jason stated that they could double with little additional cost. Jason also went through the revenues and expenditures for the Electric Department stating that some figures are looked at per the MEAG budget and then touching mainly on the larger expenditures and why some areas had increased such as salaries (three additional employees), infrastructure (some additional for AMI metering) and Electric Cities (work order system). The Mayor then stated that the budget figures, for technology, may need adjustments in 2017 due to delays in moving forward and that some of amounts amended to the 2016 budget may move to 2017. Jason then stated that the City has spent \$585,000 to date on FFTH. Each Department Head then addressed the Council, one at a time, to go over their individual budgets. Each Department mainly went over the items that increased on their budgets for 2017. There was questions and answer segments as each budget was gone through.

The City Clerk then went through the Special Funds Budget, which consists of SPLOST, CDBG, USDA and the Bond budget. The Clerk went through, in detail, the items incorporated in the SPLOST budget which were: General Fund (new billing/finance software, new lawnmower), Water/Sewer (new sewer jet, new truck to replace 11, new truck for water treatment and used van for water treatment), Gas (new utility truck) and FFTH capital project items. The Clerk gave the budgets for the CDBG project, the Fire Department/Government Center USDA project and the Bond and FFTH loan budget. The Clerk then informed the Council of a 9% increase

in health insurance cost and that GMA had added a \$2,000 ded. plan and that she was waiting on the quote for that plan to compare cost differences.

The Mayor then spoke to the Council regarding increase for the employees in 2017. He then asked the Department Heads how they felt about the structure of the increase for the last couple of years. Several employees stated that they liked the previous year 2% with the additional merit increase up to 1%. The Council agreed with the employee choice of 2% with the additional merit increase up to 1% and the clerk was asked to calculate this out and incorporate it into the budget.

The public hearing was closed at 7:20

III) Public Comments

Commissioner Sol addressed the Council about the speed bump on Howell St. He stated that his wife was having chest pains, that morning, and that he had to go out of his way to avoid the speed bumps which took extra time. He was upset about the fact of having to avoid the speed bump because of the emergency. He stated that law enforcement would not even come into the area to patrol due to the speed bumps and that he felt the City was going too far with the speed bumps and that if anything would have happened to his wife he would have held the City responsible. Councilman Thornton commented on another route Commissioner Sol could have taken. Councilman Hutchins stated that the City couldn't make a change just for one person.

IV) Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to adjourn the November 22th Special Called Public Hearing for the 2017 proposed budget. The motion carried unanimously by the Council members present.

Anthony Howard, Mayor