

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 27, 2003
MINUTES

Chairman West convened the public hearing on the proposal FY 2003-2004 budget at 7 p.m. in Courtroom A as noticed. All Board Members, the County Manager, County Attorney, Finance Director, Deputy Clerk, members of the news media and interested citizens were present. Chairman West welcomed everyone and requested anyone who wished to speak to please register and to limit comments to three minutes.

Norman Roberts stated in his opinion the hearing was out of order because the budget information was presented to the public/commissioners on Thursday, May 22nd and that gave the public less than a week, with included a weekend and holiday, to study the budget. Mr. Roberts added that the law calls for a public hearing and the law says the public should have enough time to study the information. He urged the Board to adjourn the hearing and hold a continuation in two weeks.

Don Swanson stated he could not speak to what is going to be happening on June 30, 2003, with the current county budget fund balance because it hasn't come yet but would speak to the fund balance ratio of all county funds for the past three years. Mr. Swanson used charts to express that he feels the county's fund balance is in excess of the twenty-five percent approved by a previous board as the ratio they wished to maintain and questioned how a capital project can have undesignated fund balance.

Bob Laverly expressed concern about recent articles in the Franklin Press and Macon News saying both papers published incorrect figures for the total proposed budget and requested the Board have same papers print correct information with correction being lead stories same as the lead stories with the incorrect information.

Matthew Bullis stated he was a concerned parent who has lived in the area for nine years and has found the county to be really strong in youth programs. He requested as much consideration and funding of the schools' request as possible stating the kids, parents and teachers of this area are a great resource.

Jeff Pope, a teacher at Macon Middle School, asked the Board to increase sales tax by two cents for the schools. He stated he realized that was a lot of money but the kids are worth it noting to do so would be a bold move and take courage.

Jimmy Goodman commended the Board for the job they are doing stating he knows it is a tough job. Mr. Goodman expressed opposition to the one-half cent (½¢) sales tax adding we should not follow the state's example stating they may not send it back. He added ways to cut need to be looked at.

Jennifer Baldwin, a kindergarten teach at Cullasaja School, requested consideration of funding for schools and suggested raising taxes one or two cents for the schools noting that they need funding for supplies, etc.

Harold Corbin stated the Board was doing a good job and commended them. He added they have a certain obligation to the people who elected them but they also have an obligation to the unborn citizens, obligations such as good schools, employment opportunities, safe environment, etc. and if this board doesn't do it some board down the road will have to make up for it.

RECESS: Being no further comments the hearing was adjourned.

Sam K. Greenwood, County Manager
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

Mark B. West
Board Chairman