

**MINUTES  
CITY COMMISSION BUDGET WORK SESSION  
June 14, 2023**

The City of Cordele Commission held a Budget Work Session on June 14, 2023 at 9:30 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

Joshua Deriso, Commission Chair	Royce Reeves, Sr., Commission Vice Chair
Wesley Rainey, Commissioner	Vesta Beal Shephard, Commissioner
Isaac Owens – Commissioner	Angela Redding – City Manager
Alisha Williams – Asst. City Clerk	

**Absent:** Tommy Coleman – City Attorney, Janice Mumphery – Recording Secretary

**Staff present:** Rusty Bridgers – Finance Director, Fire Chief Alligood, Jack Wood, Sr. – Chief Codes Official, Police Chief Jalon Heard, Steve Fulford – Asst. City Manager/Public Works Director, Debbie Wright – UC&T Director, Jackie Walker-Municipal Court Clerk, Irene Cantrell – HUA Director.

**Staff absent:** David Wade – Human Resource Director.

**Call to Order:** Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the Meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

**INVOCATION:** There was a moment of silent prayer.

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES FLAG:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Owens.

**ROLL CALL:** A quorum was established.

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Joshua Deriso	Commission Chairman		✓
Royce Reeves, Sr.	Commission Vice Chairman		✓
Vesta Beal-Shephard	Commissioner Ward 1		✓
Isaac Owens	Commissioner Ward 3		✓
Wesley Rainey	Commissioner Ward 4		✓

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – June 14, 2023: Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Agenda for June 14, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

**DISCUSSION – FY 2023-2024 BUDGET:**

- 1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** City Manager Angela Redding and Irene Cantrell – HUA Director  
 City Manager Angela Redding stated Community Development's  
 Current Budget \$542,882  
 Year to date expenditures – June 12<sup>th</sup> \$449,480  
 Remaining Budget – June 14<sup>th</sup> \$93,401.91  
 Budget Request FY 2024 \$479,887.56  
 There is a decrease in the budget, but also included in the budget, the Comprehensive Plan.

**Commissioner Rainey:** The new position that is being created, this position will also possibly have a role with the Land Bank, wouldn't that be under Community Development?

**City Manager Angela Redding:** It will be in Community Development, right now the salary is in the Executive Department, but it will be transferred to Community Development. City Manager Angela Redding stated, she and the Finance Director, Rusty Bridgers, will move the position of Community Advancement Manager from Executive to Community Development. It was in Executive because, the position will be housed in Community Development, but they will report to the City Manager. Community Advancement Manager's salary is already budgeted in Executive.

**City Manager Angela Redding** stated, salary increases are not included in this budget, but this is a discussion that can be discussed as we go through or at the end, because the employees received a 5% COLA earlier. But also, we have the wage and comp study proposal that the City Manager and David Wade, Personnel Director are going through, recommendations will be brought to the Commission. City Manager Angela stated that she was saving salary increases to the end to see if the Commission wanted to look at a COLA or wait until the City has the Wage and Comp Study. But when the Commission get to the revenue part of the budget it can be discussed at that time.

#### **Requests from Irene Cantrell – HUA Director**

1. Irene Cantrell is requesting a 5% raise for employee, Rita Bass.
2. Irene Cantrell stated she would like to have some Work Shops for the senior citizens explaining the different programs that are offered, i.e., CHIP Program.

#### **2. JUDICIAL: Jackie Walker**

Current Budget	\$165,684.00
Proposed Budget	\$179,764.56

Requesting a pay increase for Jackie Walker – Municipal Court Clerk and Nancy Crook – Deputy Clerk.

City Manager Angela Redding stated the travel budgets were increased because workshops are held more in person than at home.

City Manager Angela Redding stated in the salary line item, the increase there is because the Judge salary was an initially coded in Legislative and it was moved to Judicial.

#### **3. HUMAN RESOURCES: City Manager Angela Redding**

Current Budget	\$236,151
Budget Request	\$203,151.05

**Note:** City Manager Angela Redding stated, as we go through most departments, the expenditures through Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, are still running under budget, which will help

the City out in the end, once the overall picture is shown, in terms of, the budget and expenditures. There were some slight decreases in the budget, just based on current expenditures.

**Note:** City Manager Angela Redding stated, the City is allocating for an 8% insurance increase, this is just history. But the insurance rates always come in after the end of the year. This number will be adjusted, based on the true increase or maybe no increase at all. If this is the case, adjustments can be made.

**4. U C & T:** Debbie Wright

Debbie Wright stated, we did not use nearly what was budgeted for salaries because they were five employee short most of the year. Since, several employees have been hired, salaries will get back up to the normal. Overtime was extremely high.

**Landfill fees** are another item that is large, U C & T did not have to pay Landfill fees because there is a credit, eventually that credit will run out and we will have to pay again, probably around the end of the year. The charge for U C & T is \$45.75 a ton for sludge, at the Landfill.

**Septic Tank fee:** We will have to increase the fee; the fee now is \$15.00. Residents that have septic tanks are charged a fee of \$15.00 to dump. The process for dumping a septic tank load; the waste is dumped into a pit. Debbie Wright stated, three screens have been placed over the pit, to keep the things (rags, cigarettes butts, gloves, etc.) which do not go into the pit, out of the pit, so the pit will not get stopped up. The fee is 1,000 gallons for \$15.00. Out of town residents are charged a higher fee for dumping septic tank waste.

**Commissioner Rainey suggested** to exchange Landfill fees (County) for Septic Tank fees (City). Because the City's U C & T Department is accepting County residents Septic Tank waste at a minimal charge.

Debbie Wright stated, the only big difference in U C & T's budget is chemicals, chlorine is very expensive.

**Operating Equipment Maintenance:** all money budgeted was not spent.

**Line item – Small Equipment** increased because all small items were moved from Capital Items to Small Equipment.

**5. POLICE:** Chief Jalon Heard

**Code Enforcement:** Expanding Code Enforcement and making it a full unit. Having one Code Enforcement Officer per Ward.

**Developing a Code Enforcement/State Certification Division:**

Code Enforcement/State Certification Division will be supervised by a Lieutenant and that would fall under the Administrative Division. The Lieutenant was granted in last year's budget. So, that position is budgeted, this position has not been staffed yet, anticipation of this position coming up very soon. Lieutenant's primary duties: to manage the division and work toward the State Certification. State Certification will bring lower insurance cost up to 20% and will also put certain standards on the Police Department that are approved by State and Federal Governments. Actions were also taken to create this division, one of the Code Enforcement Officers, Louis New, was placed under the department; we have already started transitioning into developing that unit. The average salary for a Code Enforcement Officer in a City, the size of Cordele is \$35,000, so two to three positions will be added.

**Positions eliminated:** Five positions were eliminated last year from the Police Department.

Four patrol positions and one detective position. Even with the salary increases, which was 10%, total savings for the City is \$216,893.04, \$122,000 of that total savings were reallocated. However, \$94,732.00 was cut from the budget. The vision in eliminating those positions were to have that money rolled back into other line items, such as training or overtime. So, far with the number crunching with the salary increases and eliminating the positions, we are still on the budget. Chief Heard is requesting that the \$94,732.00, that was left over, that was cut from the Budget, to be put back into the Police Department Budget, as originally planned. It can be used for several reasons or for several different projects:

(1) In car computers (computers are outdated). Howard Technology Solutions gave the Police Department an estimate of \$66,000 for twenty (20) computers, broken down to \$939.00 each for a term of 36 months, this will replace all the computers. At the end of the 36 months contract, it can be renegotiated and we can receive new computers, each 36 months. This will leave a total of \$28,632.00.

**One of the Line Items** that we went into the red, is jail expenses (they have increased). Requesting 10% increase on jail expenses, that will increase from \$25,000 line item to \$27,500 line item, an increase of \$2500.

**Cut last year from Animal Control** - \$12,500. Chief Heard stated he proposed that money be reallocated to a K-9 Division. However, it was just cut, trying to reallocate this money towards A K-9 Division. Reminder, benefits of a K-9, they will not be bite dogs. One thing that will be beneficial, have the K9's for tracking purposes, for missing persons, search and rescue missions, useful for escape convicts. Basically, K9s can assist with community events.

**Vehicles:** In dire need of vehicles, ordered two vehicles, need more, put vehicles in for SPLOST. Our current vehicle fleet is outdated and the maintenance cost will go up.

**Future Plans:** Development/Training for Officers (sending officers outside to training). Turning land into a training complex – partnership with the Fire Department. Maybe \$2,000 a year on the Training Budget, if funds are left over, not looking for additional money.

**6. FIRE:** Chief Todd Alligood

**Salaries:** Requesting two things; (1) Add a Deputy Chief position – the Fire Department does not have a second in command; (2) If Corporals are moved up, I request to make them Sergeants. Instead of a Sergeant and Corporal on each shift, you will have a Sergeant on each shift.

**Purchased/Contracted Services:** Pretty well set, not too much of a difference in 2023 and 2024.

**Supplies (Small Equipment):** Two things will happen; the budget difference is \$31,000; part is \$10,000 that was inherited from gear that was purchased before the present Fire Chief and has not yet been delivered, needs to be included in next year's budget for when the gear arrives. (2) Fire Department has a set of extrication equipment from 2006, that is old and has been repaired twice since the new Fire Chief has been employed with the City of Cordele. Chief Alligood has spent \$2,000 to repair a part, and getting ready to spend another \$3,500 to rebuild the pump in it, it is not worth spending the money. Quotes to replace the extrication equipment is \$19,000 and \$24,000, hoping to have the money in the Small Equipment to replace extrication gear, this way the gear will be on both trucks.

**Capital Outlays (Buildings):** Both Fire Stations, on the exterior, are in bad shape, has deteriorated over the years. One quote to resurface, one station, \$80,000; another quote to

patch and paint one of the stations is \$40,000, the last quote to remove the old patches, and patch the holes is \$5,000, will take off old patches, put new patches, resurface it, the Officers at the Fire Department will paint the building themselves. Chief Alligood stated, he will go and buy the paint, the cost is approximately \$2,000, will bring on equipment to wash it off and spray it down. The cost will still be about \$10,000 per building.

**Machinery and Equipment:** The \$60,000, the compressor for the RSCBA's, which is what we breathe when go in a structure fire, RSCBA, breathing air. That is a 1993 compressor, it can no longer be serviced, that company has not been in business for years, we cannot get parts, that last repair, the repairman said, I luckily found a part, it will not happen again. It is running fine, \$60,000 is a quote to replace it, so that it is compatible with everything else that is needed to be filled. It needs to be in the budget, in case, we have to replace it.

\$8,000 budget variance is for new hire equipment. The difference is this year's budget and last year's budget is \$400,000, \$250,000 is in salaries, \$150,000 is the only difference.

City Manager Angela Redding stated the Ladder Truck that Chief Alligood went to inspect, it is coming in under what was budgeted for SPLOST, but with the GMA Lease Program, they were put on notice, because this was something that was discussed in the last budget. They are ready to move forward and will send information for the Commission to consider, regarding a lease.

7. **E-911:** City Manager Angela Redding  
E-911 is basically remaining the same, because the Commission has not approved an increase, it is static at the \$261,980.
8. **ELECTIONS:** City Manager Angela Redding  
The budget was increased for Elections, being that this is an election year. It is budgeted for \$10,000 because this year, there are two seats verses the three that were in 2021. Also, there was a run-off in 2021, the actual cost for the 2021 Election was \$18,768, but again \$10,000 is budgeted this Election year because there are only two seats.
9. **CLINIC:** City Manager Angela Redding  
The clinic cost was reduced about \$16,000. This is the clinic for the employees. There is not a detailed analysis, in terms of, savings, this is still being worked on.
10. **COMMUNITY CLUBHOUSE:** City Manager Angela Redding  
The City has a trust fund and we are looking for the initial paperwork, as to how the funds can be used for the Community Clubhouse, as far as, maintenance. The building repairs and the lawn care was increased, \$15,000 for each was added back into the budget.
11. **LIBRARY:** City Manager Angela Redding.  
The budget was increased in certain areas, building repairs and maintenance, because the maintenance personnel is having to do a few more repairs than anticipated at the Library. That line item was increased, communication, just based on the current expenditures, we increased that line item. The budget requested is \$187,469.
12. **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** City Manager Angela Redding  
The payments are the same. The yearly budget is \$15,660.

**13. MAIN STREET:** City Manager Angela Redding

The budget was decreased for Main Street. Based on some of the expenditures to date, electricity was decreased. Rent for land and building decreased to \$500.

**14. PUBLIC WORKS:** Steve Fulford

Most of everything is about the same. We will have to purchase some equipment. Public Works total budget is \$3,290,850.00, that excludes water and gas.

1. Water Distribution – Budget is \$1,068,775.00
2. Engineering
3. Gas – Budget is 2,454,416.00
4. Parks & Maintenance – FY 2023 Budget was \$42,500, no technical service for Parks and Maintenance, this is the reason this is zeroed out. Lawn care expenditures are \$4,000 and the budget was \$7,500, so it was reduced by \$1,000, so the proposed budget is \$6,500.
5. Sanitation

Equipment that is needed will be coming from SPLOST. Most immediate needed equipment are backhoes, side arm mower (top priority), new vehicles (pickup trucks, work trucks). The City should not be losing money in the gas line, it is an enterprise fund, it should be making money. Gas each month is billed at a different rate, but it has been billed at the same rate, this is the reason for the deficiency. Gas prices has been mismanaged. The City is not having problems with the Public Service Commission now, Tina Bearden – Gas Superintendent has gotten this problem resolved.

**15. FINANCE:** Russell Bridgers

Finance Department largest change is salaries because the Finance Department is short staffed. Payroll Clerk/Assistant Utility Billing and Staff Accountant is an increase in salaries and a position has been added for Customer Service. Beverly Vance has been with the City for more than forty years and she will be eligible for retirement in Spring 2024. Mr. Bridgers stated that Customer Service Clerk needs to be added to the staff and trained before Mrs. Vance retire and then when Mrs. Vance retire, we can look at filling her position.

Elaine Kent position is under Professional Service, this is over budget \$34,000, for this year's Budget, Ms. Kent is not in the budget, but the Finance Department did keep the budget amount of \$25,000.

We did put in SPLOST for computer software.

Nancy Butler has also mention retiring next year, but a Payroll Clerk/ Assistant Utility Billing Clerk has already been hired.

**16. EXECUTIVE:** City Manager Angela Redding

**Salaries:** There is a decrease in salaries because a City Clerk that had been at the City for years, resigned; even though, an Assistant City Clerk was added. The Executive Assistant assumed

some of those duties, we have a decrease in salary, but the City still has the Social Media/Marketing person and Community Advancement Manager coded in salaries.

**Professional Services:** there is an increase in Professional Services, Technical Services, Building Repairs and Maintenance; these increases are due to, VC-3 providing technical services and IT salary and expenses are coded in Executive. But we also have Hygienic Janitorial Services; total for the previous person was about \$24,000 a year for two days a week, there is an increase in janitorial services. VC-3 provided between \$30,000 and \$40,000 expenses for FY 2024 that the City will need to add in. We have the website, wage and comp study, we have the proposals for the wage and comp study. Increase in building, repairs, and maintenance, there are a lot of small maintenance bills that are coded to every department in this building. All of the offices in this building, when AP receive an Invoice, it is coded to six departments, they are being rolled to Executive, into on line item. We are over in Education and Training because for the last Fiscal Year we did not have the amount for the City Clerk's Training, in terms of, becoming a Certified City Clerk and then with hiring the Assistant City Clerk, some of the conferences and seminars that the Assistant City Clerk will need to attend for Business License and also for Elections.

**Information Technology – Bobby Stennett**

City of Cordele Technology is outdated, server, network backbone, everything. Asked VC-3 to send the City estimated cost for upgrades, VC-3 sent an estimate of about \$30,000 to \$40,000, this amount is not included in the Executive Budget.

**17. LEGISLATIVE:** City Manager Angela Redding

**Professional Service** – Expenditures can be decreased.

**Insurance and Bonding** – Increase because of litigations.

**Education and Travel** – Increased to \$7,500, if needed can be increased more.

**Increase Per-Diem** to \$125 and Travel to \$10,000.

**Judgement and Damages** – Increase because of litigations.

**Contingencies** - \$80,000 for emergencies that come up, if needed can reduce back down to \$60,000.

**Public Employee Relations** – Increased because employees are being recognized more with the service awards.

**The Fees for the City to increase:**

Sludge - \$50

Water Disconnect and Connect Fees – City fees are \$15, most Cities are \$20 or \$25, increase.

Sanitation RFP – advertised last week, will be advertised the remainder of this month, but we need to look at increasing our sanitation fees, those have not been increased since 2019. We are losing on sanitation and gas.

Permit fees - Community Development and Codes to look into the permit fees because those fees have not been increased in years.

By a Consensus of the Commission, to increase all above fees, except the water disconnect fees, they will remain the same.

City Manager Angela Redding stated based on where the City is with the Budget, the General Fund will have to be utilized for the \$743,000 to balance the budget; the revenues are under the expenditures. But through June 12<sup>th</sup>, the City has \$887,768.00 still left in the current budget.

City Manager Angela Redding stated the next step is for her and the Finance Director to go in and update based on the information that they have today, look at the funds again to make sure they are where they are supposed to be and then an updated sheet will be given to the Commission, in terms of what will be needed from the General Fund and if the Commission is in agreement with that, then we will move forward with having a Public Hearing.

**ADJOURN:** Commissioner Shephard moved to adjourn the Meeting at 12:35 PM; seconded by Commissioner Owens; the motion was approved by the Commission.

APPROVED