

HARTSVILLE/TROUSDALE COUNTY METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT

**BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**BUDGET HEARINGS FY2027**

MAY 13, 2026 | 6:00 PM | TC COURTHOUSE

**MINUTES**

Members Present: 7/9

Chris Gregory, Chair

Bubba Gregory, Vice Chair

Amy Thomas (*nvm*)

Beverly Atwood

Jerry Ford

Jeff Gregory

Landon Gulley

Members Absent:, Will Dennis, Lesley Overman

Commissioners in attendance: Tommy Belcher, Linda Bruce, Alan Carman, Judy Kerr, David Nollner, Mark Presley,

Others in attendance: Mayor Jack McCall, Sheriff Ray Russell, Fire Chief Ken Buckmaster, Betty Burch, Conner Brown, Jay Gregory, Samuel Dunn, Dale Thaxton, Darrell Smith

Meeting was called to order at 6pm by C Gregory.

**FUND 122 COUNTY DRUG FUND** – *continued*

Committee had tabled the Fund 122 discussion from its May 5 meeting to research allowable uses for the funding. CCFO Thomas reached out to CTAS and the Comptroller's office to verify uses. Funds are allowed for nonrecurring expenses related to law enforcement. However, the Sheriff has final say over the funding.

Gulley requested to move the patrol vehicle currently in Fund 101 to Fund 122. Sheriff dismissed the request. It was asked to fund the needed jail generator out of Fund 122; Sheriff also dismissed this request. Sheriff stated he did not want to use the 122 funds at this time as he has worked hard to build this fund up for contingencies. In the past the funds have been used for a trailer, SWAT gear, and drug dogs.

**Gulley motioned to remove the patrol car from 101; second by Atwood                      MOTION CARRIED**

Gulley stated that should the CoreCivic contract come through favorably, funding should go towards the purchase Sheriff patrol vehicles.

Sheriff asked for 122-54150-716 be reduced to \$30,000.

**Atwood motioned to approve Fund 122 as amended; second by Ford      FUND 122 RECOMMENDED**

**FIRST REPOSE / EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**FUND 101 GENERAL SERVICES**

54420 Volunteer Rescue Squad

**Motion to approve 54420 Vol Rescue Squad by Gulley; seconded by Overman**

**54420 RECOMMENDED**

54490 Emergency Management Agency

**Motion to approve 54490 EMA by Gulley; seconded by Ford**

**54490 RECOMMENDED**

### 54310 Volunteer Fire Department

- Line Item 316 Per Diem was increased to \$50 July 1, 2025. Line item is proposed at \$100,000. Buckmaster updated calculations and with a decrease of calls, the current estimate is \$88,000 for the year. Going into summer and fall months, this could easily change again. C Gregory asked about a graduated pay scale for the members; Buckmaster thought it could cause issues amongst the members.
- Line item 707 Building Construction for the proposed fire and rescue vehicle storage is estimated at \$150,000 with building, electrical, plumbing, sprinkler system and training space. Committee moved to Fund 171 Capital Projects.
- Line 338 Vehicle Maintenance and Repair was reduce to \$25,000.

**Motion to approve 101-54310 Fire Dept as amended by Atwood; seconded by Gulley**

**101-54310 RECOMMENDED**

### **FUND 111 URBAN SERVICES**

#### 54310 Volunteer Fire Department

**Motion to approve 111-54310 Fire Dept by Atwood; seconded by B Gregory**

**111-54310 RECOMMENDED**

### **FUND 118 AMBULANCE SERVICES**

Chief Batey was unable to attend due to family event. C Gregory had called him the before to ask questions on the budget and provided a transcript of the conversation. Per Batey, the proposed remount in line 718 could be delayed for another year. The current billing services offers an application to access reports, but Batey has not been able to log in to the software yet.

- Line 169 was reduced to \$15,000
- Line 187 had concerns on continuously being high and half the salary amount. Gulley asked for a history of total expenses over the past 7 years and stated it has increased 33%
- Line 718 was removed

**Motion by Gulley to move 54 from Fund 118 and move to Fund 101; second by Atwood**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion by Gulley to approve Fund 118 Ambulance Services as amended; second by Atwood**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Committee requested to review the Water & Sewer Department Budget on Monday, May 18.

### Public Comment

**Dale Thaxton** – Mr. Thaxton had several topics concerning the County that wanted to voice.

- Change in Staffing would save over \$100,000
- Emergency Tower is needed at 231. Knows issues stem back to 2022.
- According to what he has found online, the Mayor is responsible for 911 communications

*Note from Secretary after researching the issue:*

*State Level: The TECB consists of nine members appointed by the Governor and legislative speakers. This board sets statewide operating standards, oversees system finances, and ensures the implementation of 911 services.*

*Local Level: Responsibility is vested in local Emergency Communications Districts (ECDs). Each district is managed by a local board of directors appointed by the county mayor and confirmed by the county legislative body. The statute grants the County Mayor appointment authority for board members, subject*

*to legislative confirmation, but operational authority remains vested in the Emergency Communications District board itself.*

- Pool Renovations. Private funding had been offered in the past. This is estimated at being closed for at least two summers and causing the county to lose revenue.
- Funding for the jail could be done by using the funding from housing state inmates. C Gregory answered that the revenue is receipted to the General Fund 101 which houses the Sheriff Department expenses.
- Law Enforcement officer salary averages \$35.74 across the state and many are below this level. Hartsville/Trousdale County is very behind
- Sheriff budget could use rework. Committee should reconsider the Law Enforcement Supply and Equipment line items and research the history of usage. Monday could be reworked and reallocated.
- Health insurance is a big topic. Commission needs to research covering premium costs for first responders. Possibly pool with other counties.

**Adjourn 7:29pm**

***Motion by Gulley; second by Ford***