

CITIZEN'S BUDGE REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – 02-19-2020
Merchant Square

Members Present

Kathryn Dennis, Chair (Chancellor)
Karen Adams, Vice Chair (Lee Hill)
Dawn Napper, Secretary (Battlefield)
Tim Bryner (Livingston)
Jackie Williams (Livingston Alt)

County Representative

Bonnie Jewell

Call To Order: 6:31 p.m.

Pledge Of Allegiance: Karen Adams

Moment Of Silence: Kathryn Dennis

Determination of Quorum: Yes

Old Business:

Motion made by Karen Adams to approve the August 19, 2019 minutes. Second by Tim Bryner. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion made by Karen Adams to table the approval of the September, 2019 minutes until the March meeting. Dawn Napper seconded. Motion passed 4-0. Jackie Williams pointed out a correction on September's minutes that Richard Thompson's name was spelled incorrectly.

Motion made by Karen Adams to approve both the October, 2019 and February 13, 2019 minutes. A second by Tim Bryner. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion made by Karen Adams to postpone approval of the December meeting minutes until the March meeting. Dawn Napper seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Kathryn Dennis will send all approved minutes from this meeting to Ms. Green in the County Administration Office for posting on the website.

NEW BUSINESS:

The board of supervisors (BOS) meeting was held on 02-18-2020 and per Kathryn Dennis, a 10 cent tax rate is needed to fully fund both the county and school budgets.

Discussion on what the CBRC members think should be a recommended rate. Per Bonnie Jewell, to fully fund both budgets including the Schools' \$4.4 gap, the rate needs to be 90.72. 81.00 is the equalized rate.

Mrs. Dennis asked the committee for comments on a proposed 10 cent tax rate. Mr. Bryner – Understands why the BOS approved wage increases to stop public safety employees from leaving but said he is surprised by the gap of funding for the schools. He feels the gap would go down if compression issues are addressed. He said SCS compensation for starting teachers is competitive with nearby districts.

Mrs. Napper – Thinks the increase is necessary. SPED has had an increase of 300 Special Ed students and that accounts for most of the increase funds needed for the students and teaching positions(mandated). Each new IEP increases need for more funds for the schools.

Mrs. Adams – OK with a rate increase and thinks we need to make educating our children a priority

Mrs. Williams – Not ok with a rate increase. Too many retirees here to raise the taxes that much and recommended cuts in non salary areas.

Mrs. Dennis – we may need a minority and majority report to BOS since the CBRC committee doesn't agree. She further added our report will not be titled "Recommendations" but rather "Considerations".

Ms. Jewell stated that the county is not obligated to adopt the Equalized Rate(ER). By law, the ER must be calculated and advertised so residents are aware of what the ER is so they know how the new rate compares to the ER.

Mr. Bryner – if the ER is adopted, the government is operating on the same amount of revenue as the previous year with a 1% increase only.

Mrs. Napper asked Ms. Jewell to calculate the increased amount of taxes at 7% and 10%.

Mrs. Dennis asked why out of county employees are allowed to bring students into the schools tuition free, including Special Ed students when nearby counties are beginning to charge tuitions.

Mrs. Adams asked why people are moving here from all over for our Special Education services. Ms. Jewell remembered that Dr. Baker had made that same comment at the BOS meeting and made a note to research that and get those findings to the CBRC.

Ms. Jewell's answer to Mrs. Napper's above question:

\$230,949 – average residential property rate

81 cents \$1,871/yearly

87.97 cents \$2,032/yearly - an increase of \$161/year

90.72 cents \$2,095/yearly – an increase of \$224/year over Equalized Rate
an increase of \$64/over the 87.97 rate

Median Income for SC - \$86,695 (multiple wage earners)
\$97,313 (family)

Ms. Jewell said County Admin is recommending 87.97 for the tax rate, an increase of 6.79 cents. 5 cents to Public Safety Compensation Adjustment (PSCA), not 10 cents overall.

Mrs. Dennis would like the Personal Property Exemption reviewed for volunteer firefighters. She suggested a cap on \$300 per member as members no longer use their personal vehicles to responds to scenes as in the past.

The presentation on the items this committee wants the BOS to consider will be compiled from input from this meeting by Mrs. Dennis and Mrs. Williams. A draft will be sent to the CBRC for feedback and comments prior to the presentation to the BOS. Ms. Jewell read the guidelines for the presentation from the group.

Karen Adams – Motion to Adjourn 8:49 p.m

Tim Bryner – 2nd

Passed 4-0

Submitted by
Karen C. Adams