



**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES • April 07, 2015**

**Budget Work Session**  
**Riverdale City Hall**  
**Conference Room 201 at 6:00 PM**  
**7200 Church Street, Riverdale, Georgia 30274**

**CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM**

**Roll Call**

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>
Evelyn Wynn Dixon	Mayor, At Large	Present
Cynthia Stamps-Jones	Councilmember, Ward 1	Present
An'cel Davis	Councilmember, Ward 2	Present
Wanda Wallace	Councilmember, Ward 3 Mayor Pro - Team	Present
Kenneth Ruffin	Councilmember, Ward 4 Parliamentarian	Present

Mayor Dixon turned the meeting over to the City manager.

**Mr. Wood:** Presented the first slide most of which is a recap of the things you've already discussed, but a set the tone. FYE '15, we had an adopted budget around numbers of \$13 million. That's why in FYE 16 our special request for \$17 million but our projected revenues were about twelve two, so that left us with a spread of about five. That twelve two, we think, based on some re-visitation of court revenues we may be able to adjust upward of twelve two. You're still talking about an adjustment of \$4.8 to \$5 million. Since we have met, we have paired off about \$4,230,000 of that \$5 million disparity. I'm going to give you all hard copies of this too, by the way. By dropping a million and eighty capital requests, \$900 thousand in new positions and about million five thirty in various requested increases over the current year budget.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** When you say nine hundred in new positions, what exactly are you referring to?



**Mr. Wood:** Those are all new positions that were requested by various department heads.

**Mr. Wood:** Chief Willis one and Chief Spivey, but all need over and above current personnel.

Now, if you remember, part of what's causing some of the problems this year, and again, not to be labor anything, but we had the \$500,000 in over projection of property taxes in the FYE '15 budget. We're still looking at plus or minus \$300,000 less in court revenue declines. The addition of the athletics department, now that's new dollar over and above the '15 budget. New debt service this year of a hundred and fifty thousand, various new positions that were added during the year of a hundred and eighty thousand. Health insurance premium cost is projected about ten percent increase, that's around number, around seventy thousand in property causality insurance. Again, estimate. We don't have those quotes yet, either of those insurance categories. Those are estimates. That totals about \$1,380,000 difference between the '15 budget and '16 budget. Either in under revenues, or higher expenses, either way the net effect, combined is about \$1,380,000. '16 versus '15.

**Councilmember Stamps Jones:** Inquired on the property tax over projection? You have the five hundred thousand is that, how it was calculated?

**Mr. Wood:** What happened last year was, when Don pulled the number from the FYE '14 budget, property tax revenue, to use it in the FYE '15 budget, he was not aware, it was his first year here, so he was not aware, and I understand it's a mistake, that included sanitation fees, which had not been pulled out at that time. Lowered it by a half million dollars.

In other words, hypothetically, these are not accurate numbers. If he saw a \$2.5 million number in the budget, it really should have been a \$2 million number, because you should have pulled out a half million dollars of that for sanitation. Under that scenario there's going to be a \$2 million number.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** Mention if the sanitation fee was included.

**Mr. Donald Turner:** Stated the sanitation fees, has been pulled out.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** Are we still factoring in the fallout from 2008 economy? Are we still looking at the number of people that are actually moving out, or moving into the city?

**Mr. Wood:** All that's a product, Councilmember Stamps Jones, of in the digest. We don't set the digest, the county sets the digest.



**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** We can review, from the past years, how the digest has either declined or grown.

**Mr. Wood:** If you remember one of the first slides I showed you, the first night, our digest actually flat lined. It dropped significantly from 2007, 2008, or whatever. Flat lined, and we got a little bit of a bump up. Minor. We may be \$50 thousand over in property tax revenues in 2016 over 2015. It's not going to be a "save the day" number, but it's at least the right trend. It's headed the right direction. It's just not headed there fast enough.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** The form that you all are using, I think everything should be taken into consideration.

**Mr. Donald Turner:** Based on what we used this year, we didn't assume any growth at all. We can't plan on that because we don't have the digest. Basically what I projected was what we're collecting this year, and that's what we projected to collect next year. Hopefully we'll have a little increase, we'll have a little extra revenue, but we can't count on that until we the digest.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** We received those numbers in November, the numbers come in at the end of the year, the fiscal year, 2014.

**Mr. Donald Turner:** We collected ninety five percent. Because we started collecting in November.

**City Attorney L'Erin Barnes:** That's your 2014 minutes we've collected ninety-five percent. We haven't collected our 2015, because the digest hasn't come out. The counties is in assessment. They're doing assessments of the properties so they can create the digest.

**Mr. Donald Turner:** Last year we had about a one percent growth in our digest. We'll probably have one or two percent again this year because it is trending up. I didn't budget any of those increases. It would be great if we received. To be safe, I budgeted what we did this year.

**Mr. Wood:** You see why we got some budget severities from 2015 to 2016, it's because those are all less revenues or new expenses combining to create \$1,380,000 impact to the 2016 budget over and above the 2015 budget. That does not include the park repairs. We don't know what that number's going to be. The number that's been thrown out there was eighty to a hundred, but apparently a lot of that stuff is subterranean, and Ms. Barnes has started working on it.

**Mr. Wood:** The Worker's Comp Fund, escrow, that Mr. Turner talked about previously that we would like to work toward where we, it's not really self-insurance, but it's just better budgeting.



You've got that escrow fund already established, and the number we would like to use there would be \$100 thousand dollar. We don't have but it's something we should shoot for.

**Councilmember-Stamps-Jones:** Mention The ADA I think that it is a discussion that really needs to be taken seriously, simply because if we continue to have events or people coming on to the campus and the garage are located over at the Cultural affairs, it needs to be communicated to anyone that we need to either supply a trolley, some golf carts, or something. Even Saturday when I was here for the Easter Eggs Event I saw handicapped people with crutches and canes going up the gravel, making it to the blacktop, but couldn't make it any further to the garage because they were exhausted. I only think about the pending litigations that we have, and we're still not communicating that we're placing ourselves in that precarious situation to create more.

**Mr. Wood:** Ms. Jones everybody agrees. That's a goal we should shoot for. I'm just pointing out costs that are not in that \$1,380,000 number I just gave you. You need add another half million dollars.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** There needs to be a priority list.

**Mayor Wynn Dixon:** The top two on the prioritize list would be the Workman Comp, following escrow and ADA ramps. Until we could get as such, we do have those gold carts. For transport the people back and forth. They were doing it during a concert. We might be able to utilize that until we get them in place to offer something. We still could meet federal regulation.

**Mr. Wood:** Depending on what the numbers come back in of ADA to see if this could be done during this budget year. That's not to say it won't have a financial impact at city, and effect on your fund balance.

**Councilmember Wallace:** I have a problem when we're moving money. You never know what disaster the city might come into.

**Mr. Wood:** The fund balance of the city of Riverdale has gone in the wrong direction.

**Councilmember Wallace:** That has been a problem, for the last three or four years, we voted on the budget and then after we voted the budget returned with a problem.

**Mr. Wood:** The goal should be in the coming year not to touch the reserved fund and do not make any budget amendments unless we have legal issue.



**Mayor:** if anyone have any questions on the budget, we'll be glad to address them.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** Don has a great question in regards, if we had dollar figures attached to it, it would be easier to visualize.

**Mr. Wood:** Pull the number on park repairs and say a hundred thousand dollars. Pull a number out of pension, and say a hundred thousand dollars, if we go with the schedule that we talked about. Litigation, there's no way to put a number there. Worker's Comp Fund, escrow, very noble goal, but that probably ought to be a bottom right now, of necessity. That would be a hundred thousand dollars, to start. Economic development incentives that's as high as up. ADA ramps and steps, I'd still like to try and do this fiscal year.

**Councilmember Wallace:** Requested what is the amount of money in the general fund? If disaster come, where are we?

**Mr. Donald Turner:** It's a moving target; because it changes every day. When we spend money and we bring money in every day. Last year about 2.8 million in unassigned fund balance. That's going to leave us about \$2.2 million. We can transfer money from the sanitation fund to up make the sum. We're probably going to end up with a fund balances down \$500-600 thousand.

**Councilmember Wallace:** Indicated the city is in a deficit of \$1.3 million.

**Mr. Wood:** Mayor, we're going to let Cie Cie talk, and she brought us some revisions to her plan.

**Cie Cie:** Explained the classes and structure in some of the classes. We talked a little of some previous sponsors and sponsors that we plan to go after. Those are the two touch points that we were just going to revisit this evening.

**Cie Cie:** We worked on a couple of scenarios, the classes that currently m make money. And the Yoga classes the class sessions are normally eight weeks, and we proposed to make them four week sessions at \$20 a week. The average number of people our classes right now are four, but the maximum is eight, yoga, thirty two. We feel with new marketing efforts, that with a total of fifteen people per class, which we feel is doable, and that we will be able to make money and/or break even so that the classes can pay for themselves. Some of the marketing techniques that we will be using and some Living Social and Grouping, and offering incentives to corporate sponsorships as well.



**Mayor Wynn- Dixon:** That would be an encouragement for them to ask for people to come to their classes. The more in the classes, the higher your percentage. I think that would be great.

**City Attorney:** Asked, whether the Centre is to be a service or a social rec room. I think that decision needs to be made for us to determine which of these scenarios are going to work best for what we're trying to do.

**Mayor Wynn- Dixon:** Asked Cie Cie, what do you think of this? Cie Cie agreed with the City Attorney.

**Mr. Donald Turner:** I agree with that to certain point, however, I don't think we'll ever get to point where we'll totally pay for it. The fixed costs are so high, but what we can do, is we can get to the point where the viable costs are those programs. The cost to put on a program, at least cover the revenues, at least cover the cost of the program so we're not spending extra money to put on a program. I don't think we're going to ever make enough money on programs to cover the cost of all the overhead.

**City Attorney:** Program I think is just one component. There other areas of revenue, other than programs that the center can tap into. The Attorney asked if the fixed costs of the center is it known. Of course, salaries, that's obvious, right?

**Donald Turner:** Stated the fixed costs are salaries and utilities and it is almost \$600 thousand.

**City Attorney:** Have we looked at a way to reduce that? Utilities, maybe not so much, unless you change the hours and you're not open on certain days, or certain times, but of course then that cuts into how much is available to your citizens, Has that ever been looked at a source savings, of reducing your fixed costs

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** We're loosely talking about one entity, but we haven't looked at the big picture in regards to the center as a whole. I could not tell you, before you stated, what was the overall operating cost of the center, and what does it entail to operate it? Even from utilities stand point?

**Wood:** The fixed cost is \$500 thousand. The fixed cost is utilities, and full-time salaries, that's \$500 thousand.



**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** We went down a hundred thousand, because it was six hundred thousand, and it is not to try to play with the numbers, I'm saying, for us to be able to make sound decisions on how we want the center to work and operate.

**Cie Cie:** In the plan we provided last week, to covering the million eight or nine, with the center, the classes, the rentals, and the programs, the way our facility is built, the way that our amphitheater plan is, no way the Centre to receive a million. Cie Cie asked are we going to provide the service to the community.

**City Attorney:** Stated that you've have to lower those fixed costs. They are super high \$458 thousand on salary that is too much.

**Councilmember Wallace:** This conversation we've gone over the last two or three years about the fixed cost. I agree it is too high. And now we're here with a deficit. Councilmember Wallace stated she refuse to raise taxes something has to be done across the board.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** I'd like to hear something from Mr. Davis. I like to hear your opinion on this matter.

**Councilmember Davis:** No comment at this time.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** Mr. Ruffin?

**Councilmember Ruffin:** How do we compare to Virginia Gray, and the Frank Bailey Center, they close at four or five can we do something to attract some people from there, what are our rates compared to Virginia Gray in particular?

**Cie Cie:** It's a fluctuation depending on, give and take, \$7 to \$10, depending on what the class is. The Centre classes may be more flexible for the working individual, whereas Virginia Gray may target the more senior person. With our playing basketball, using the gym and working out, it fluctuates. Virginia Gray, they have more fitness equipment than we do, but we offer more class schedules than they do. They may have two or three classes versus our seven or eight classes.

**Councilmember Davis:** Commented should we not be looking at trying to target the people and do something different? We can't compete with them; they have a swimming pool.

That, number one that takes it all. Their machines have TVs on them, the one time I went in there, I think I've been in there twice, they have more space. We can't compete with them, so if they're



going after the ABC people, we should be going after the DEF people. We can't compete with them. The swimming pool alone takes it, and the basketball facility is way different from that. I think that we're defeating ourselves to try to compete. We should look for an audience that's totally different from all them other people, what they doing. Something different.

**Donald:** I think what we've got different that nobody else has right here is the facility as a meeting room, and to rent out for other things.

**Donald:** We're going to make money on those thing. We're not going to make money on people going over and riding a bicycle.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** What I wanted to say is, Cie Cie, I don't know if you were aware, but right next to Krispy Kreme, they've closed up that senior center. They're not there anymore. I wanted to have most of the senior at Frank Bailey, they have seniors just sitting there doing nothing. They've cut out a lot of theirs, that's with the county, and the county has decreased a lot of their activities. They're there daily, and they have a bus that brings them there. I didn't know if you wanted to catch that, two or three days a week, that population or whatever. They do pay dues. I'll have to ask Frank Bailey, but this Senior Center just closed.

**Councilmember Wallace:** Cie Cie how many years have you been here?

Cie Cie: I have been here since 2010.

**Councilmember Wallace:** The point of that center was to focus more on renting those rooms that was much closer to the main target. To make our numbers. It was supposed to if you are out of state, you can have everything all in at the center. Please elaborate.

**Cie Cie:** from my memory, 2012-, the end of '2011 or '2012, I know that we, Deller, myself, or the event team at the time, I know that we had meetings with the Southwest Airlines, and Porsche employee. All of the people that's planning on coming in one of the things that collapsed with those, the testing center and the virtual meeting, and I think we submitted a proposal somewhere around then. To do that during the day, with our lighting, there was no way that they could project where the people could actually see on the screen, somewhere in the regime, we submitted a proposal to try to get blinds to make it darker. Currently, right now, when you use the screen, you can't see until it gets dark.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** If you got the blinds, and you were able to do what is asked, how much money would it generate, and who's your target audience for that? What's the revenue?



**Cie Cie:** We would definitely have to calculate that, because of the room and who it is. I will get back to you with some figures, I just can't give you one right off the top of my head, how much that would be, based on the rooms that we have.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** In regards to Cie Cie, and the question that you render, was the fact that we did have physicians from Georgia Tech.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** We did have physicians from Georgia Technical College, and other entities, that were coming out and wanted to utilize that, but it was a fiasco because we did not have the blinds for the darkness to construct those classes. I know several schools, people who live down in this area who didn't want to commute to Emory, and all those places, they would have loved to use that. It still can be a great possibility if we can make it feasible where they can see the screen.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** That's a good point, but it also goes back again to when people wanted to use the facility for graduation and the acoustics of the center wasn't there. Then I think we fixed the acoustics

**Councilmember Wallace:** Have you had any graduations?

**Cie Cie:** Yes we had one. The elementary school.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** To implement something, it needs to have a purpose, it needs to be attached to something. We just don't need to say, let's add some more stairs and maybe we can do a prom.

**Wood:** Tell us what programs that she's offering that create that deficit, that debt cost that you want to discontinue.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** A question about graduations, we're having several graduations over there now. Church Street Elementary, and a couple of other ones, because it's becoming too costly to do it. What's that over there in Mount Zion? Performing arts? Performing arts. Their graduation classes are so small, and some of the technical schools. We need to maybe market that a little more.

**Cie Cie:** The Center is full every Friday and Saturday throughout the year, whether it is a wedding, or anniversary, birthday party, graduation. We do submit those calendars, and we try to, when all of the Fridays and Saturdays are booked, we do try to give specials and promote Monday



through Thursdays. We have been successful with some things, like securing the Georgia Cyber Academy and we're actually marketing towards some other home schools, so that they can do testing and other meetings. We've been servicing that client, and they are giving us great recommendations to go after other entities such as that.

**Cie Cie:** Mr. Wood asked what would be our approach to try to offset the costs of some of the non-revenue events, such as our Cool Downs, Mother's Day Brunch, and other programs that we do. These are some of the examples of the monies that we get to support the smaller programs that we have. When you're getting into tens of thousands of dollars you have to be able to have enough visitors at that event to get the return on the investment

**Cie Cie:** The original plan was to put it on the lawn where we could get more people, but it rained almost every day up to the event, and this year it will take place inside.

**Wood:** Cie Cie, do you have a report of what you're revenues have done over the last three years, not your total expenses or your budget, but your revenues.

**Cie Cie:** I have one in the previous handout.

**Wood:** The salaries have increased in the three years, from '2012 to '2014, I don't have '2015, but from '2012 to '2014, your salaries increased about thirty, forty percent. Seems to me like your revenues have increased at least in a commensurate dollar amount, not necessarily percentage amount, but commensurate dollar amount preferably exceeded.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** Is it safe to say that her revenues maybe have been about two hundred thousand, because I think the slide we were shown was that her budget was one point one million, and she had an eight hundred thousand dollar deficit. She might have been around two hundred thousand in revenue.

**Wood:** That was '2015. If her revenues were that in '2012.

**Donald:** I think that the approach we need to take is, we minimize the fixed cost as low as we possibly can, and then don't do any programs that lose money, unless you specifically vote that you want to. For example, if you vote you want to have the Thursday night Cool Downs, which I think are great, they don't cost us that much money to do a thing for the city. If you vote to do that, great, we'll budget it. I don't think we should lose money on any program that you don't say, "Yes, we want to do that as a service to the citizens."



**Wood:** if everybody is comfortable with what we're saying on the classes. That the classes aren't making, we don't offer them. We don't have enough interest in the community, it's not fair to ask citizens to at large to subsidize their class if you don't have enough interest in it. The class doesn't make, we don't offer it. With respect to those other items that she's talking about, the events, etc., you give us a list of those.

**Councilmember Davis:** May I make a quick suggestion? This is a lot of detailed information, and these numbers are very burdensome, and this is a pretty big deal. I'm just wondering, I'm not trying to go back just on these, but I'm just looking at some of these big ticket cost items and to me it would have helped to have a little more time. Not more than a week, or whatever, to digest this and be able to cut some things. I'd be a lot more comfortable if I could think about the effect of, my mind is going toward these big things.

**Mayor Wynn- Dixon:** To make a suggestion to the board, this is a lot of information to digest. I make a suggestion that we review this, and come back and have enough time to analyze it. During the course of the week, you can call city manager to address, because this is a lot of information, with the numbers, to bring in at one time. I suggest we take this information and go home and critique it and get the question, so that when we come back we're going to know what we're going to need to do. That's a lot of information

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** As you know, I've had sponsorship for some years, and what I did in that regards, sometimes it wasn't that I gave them a proclamation, I sent out a letter of appreciation to them, but on my programs, when the people are there, they're on our programs now in the back. I acknowledge them in my gold sponsor, silver sponsor, and that really helped. Every year I call them back, they give me a donation.

**Councilmember Davis:** We were operating with a dollar, but thirty percent, we were just going to give back, and seventy percent is where we've got to make it profitable. To me, that's makes more sense, because a certain amount you're going to give back to the community. I think if you give you that kind of marching orders, I think your suggestion won't be as bad and maybe we will like it. Maybe thirty is a high number, maybe twenty percent we're going to give back to the community, and now, Cie Cie, you've got to work out of eighty. You got to make it happen out of the eighty cents that's left out of that dollar. That makes more business sense.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** We're moving in the right direction, and in moving in the right direction, we're thinking more critical now. I like this suggestion we come back with recommendation, and what we need to cut. I'm not sure how you're going to do that, or how many people are going to



be unhappy, or whatever. We got to have the greater good of the day, at the end of the day, for the people.

**Wood:** Here's the thing. The first \$4.5 million we cut, pretty simple. Most of that was stuff that we didn't have anyway, and have never had. It's easier to do without something that you never had than it is to cut something that you do have.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** Inquired who maintains and services 971 Wilson Road Park?

**Wood:** Peter Rose's department does.

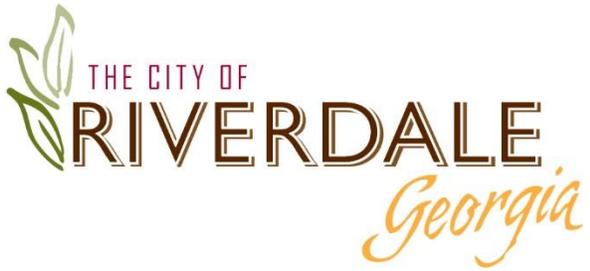
**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** Does he have a sign off sheet for that? The reason I asked is because, going back, when Ms. Jessie was here and that equipment was brought from the whole park up here. There are a lot of people walking, and there are kids playing up under the hickory. There are a lot of ant beds under there. I was telling them there are a lot of ant beds, and I don't know, at that time she said it was part of the cultural center.

**Councilmember Ruffin:** What I want to do is look at the cost of each one of these, I think there's thirty-two things on here. I want to look at the total cost and the cost per person and the number of people who attended these things, and I can give you that. That would help me as far as a suggestion that we should continue to do something, somewhere I see \$68 a person.

**Councilmember Stamps-Jones:** Requested to give Cie Cie her a budget, and , everyone should do as the Mayor suggested, but I'm not going to be contacting you regards to the her budget.

If she wants to increase or decrease her list, or want to keep it the same, then she should work within the confinements and restraints of what was financially given to her. She has enough people on her team to be creative professionals. They should be able to dip into their resources, and have not just what you have on the list happen, but I think you all can do additional things on this list. You have the people and the resources to do it. Your budget can be cut, and you should still be able to provide the services.

**Mayor Wynn-Dixon:** The one thing I want to say, may I have all of your attention? I hope that we do cut, if we do cultural affairs, but the one thing is, let's maintain some classes. I don't want us to nickel and dime, and whatever we do save, it looks strong in the cultural center. We still need to manage things on some level of class and dignity for our citizens. Will there be no more questions.



There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, Council Member Stamps-Jones motioned to adjourn Council An'cel Davis offered the Second. The time 7:41PM.