Robertson County Budget Committee
Minutes of May 6, 2025 Meeting

The Budget Committee met at 4:30 P.M. with the following members present: Bobby Couts, Eric Roberts, Billy Ray Dorris, and Bob Stroud were present. Mayor Billy Vogle and Jody Stewart were also present. Faye Stubblefield was absent.

Budget Committee Chairman Bobby Couts called the meeting to order and the following main discussions and actions took place during the meeting:

The Budget Committee minutes of April 8, 2025 were approved as presented.
Bobby Couts asked if the Public had any comments about the agenda, there were no Public Comments at this time.

Bobby explained that the Department Heads and Jody have all worked on the FY2026 Budget. Bobby said that he requested all the Department Heads pass their budget same as last year and he wants to make clear that the Budget Committee will listen to all requests today and then take all requests into consideration and make decisions later during the budget process like previous budgets. He also stated that his intention is for everyone to be accountable to explain their extra needs in the FY2026 Budget to all County Commissioners.

1. It was moved by Eric Roberts and seconded by Bob Stroud to recommend a resolution to approve balanced budget amendments #36 in the amount $21,631 for emergency equipment on their new truck to the County Commission. Chance Holmes referenced the quote from Strobes-R-Us and the following are included: truck topper, bed slide, the brush guard, and the wench. Chance explained their budget had $9,000 to apply towards the $21,631 and the County will need to help with the difference. All voted yea.

Chance and Blake Pierce explained their need for a drone in the FY2026 budget. They explained how the drone will help in emergency rescues and all the requirements for maintenance of this State approved drone. The quote for the purchase of this drone is $22,977. There was a question answer session about the drone. They also mentioned the pay study request as presented last year is still a need for the Director, but the Assistant Director's pay is okay after County pay raises have been applied.

2. It was moved by Eric Roberts and seconded by Bob Stroud to recommend a resolution to approve balanced budget amendment #37 for the School System to the County Commission. Danny Weeks, School Director, stated balanced budget amendment #37 was for transferring funds to the School Capital Projects Fund 177 for various change orders for the Innovation Academy (IA) Project in the amount of $300,000. All voted yea.

Commissioner Michael (Bubba) Dorris, Fire Committee Chairman, distributed a twelve (12) page packet of information about the Volunteer Fire Departments. He stated that he is requesting approximately $630,000 for all the Volunteer Fire Departments and all the details about each Volunteer Department are listed in the packet he distributed. There was an approximate twelve-minute question answer session.

Chris Traughber, Assessor of Property, addressed the Committee about his need for a new employee in his FY2026 budget. Chris explained many details about extra duties his department has undertaken and the fact that he did investigate the use of technology for his department. Chris stated that he considered trying to hire a part-time employee, but the need for an employee is specialized and a part-time employee will not be an option at this time.

Judge Joel Perry and Althea Sickel discussed the Drug Court budget and the Mental Health Court budget and stated both budgets are State grants. The State has approved a 5% pay increase for their three (3) employees and decreased the consultants line item so there will not be any additional funds needed. Bobby stated that they are not certain of an amount for pay rate increases for all employees at this time, but he would like the increase for all County employees to be the same.

Judge Joel Perry stated that the General Sessions budget is flat, but he does have a need for an inequity for an employee he should have taken care of long before now. The Judge distributed the pay study prepared by Gallagher for his Court Administrative Supervisor and stated that her current pay was extremely low as compared to the mid-range of the pay study.

3. It was moved by Eric Roberts and seconded by Billy Ray Dorris to recommend a resolution to approve balanced budget amendment #38 in the amount $40,000 to the County Commission. Mayor Billy Vogle explained the need for the temporary small Juvenile Courtroom on the third floor to be remodeled again to accommodate the return of the three (3) Drug Court employees. These 3 employees have been working from home since September 2024 when the Historic Courthouse employees moved into the Robertson County Office building temporarily for the Roof repair. The Mayor is requesting his opioid funds in the amount of $40,000 be used to renovate the small courtroom into office space for the 3 Drug Court employees. These funds will be transferred into General Capital Projects Fund 171 for the remodeling project. All voted yea.

4. It was moved by Eric Roberts and seconded by Billy Ray Dorris to recommend a resolution to approve balanced budget amendment #39 in the amount of $3,156 to the County Commission. Mayor Billy Vogle requested the balance of the opioid funds be split between CASA and the Robertson County Health Council/Prevention Coalition. All voted yea.

Eric explained that an air conditioner broke at the Historic Courthouse. Joe Fort stated he received three (3) quotes to replace the unit and after some discussion about the situation all agreed this was an emergency and time was of the essence. A & K Construction was the lowest quote in the amount of $34,337 and everyone thought it would be best to request a change order with A & K.

5. It was moved by Bob Stroud and seconded by Billy Ray Dorris to accept this lowest price quote of $34,337 from A & K Construction, the current contractor working at the Courthouse. All voted yea.

Joe Fort, Building and Grounds Director, requested $10,000 to be placed in his FY2026 budget for overtime during the installation of the eight (8) HVAC units to be installed on the Robertson County Office Building. There was some discussion about taking $10,000 from his 799-line item in the FY2026 budget.

Jody informed the Committee that seven (7) Department Heads will be making requests for their FY2026 budgets next week. She stated that the FY2026 budget currently has $403,000 more expenses than revenues. The question of how much a one percent raise will cost is approximately $307,000. And someone also asked how much the value of the penny is and she stated there is an approximate 3.13% increase in growth making the penny value $330,000.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

Bobby Couts, Chairman

Jody Stewart, Finance Director