

2010 BUDGET SUGGESTIONS FROM DEKALB CITIZENS

1. Sales Tax collection for Tax Year 2010 may not be as bad as the forthcoming 2011 or 2012. I believe that it would be short sided to look at the current budget deficit from a 12 month perspective. I would estimate that revenues are going to be in the low 80's or high 70's (millions) for 2010 with the 2011 revenues looking like low 70's, so this issue has to be addressed fundamentally proactively now instead of reactively later.
2. My understanding is that we thought that we were short \$30+MM and now we are \$40MM+ short, so dramatic changes are needed this year.
3. As difficult as it may seem, a budget needs to be set this year at \$500MM. This was the budget in 2004, and we need to return to those numbers.
4. As hard as it may also be, I heard you share that we are seeking "world class service" from the county. I do not think that it is realistic to expect world class service in the middle of the hardest recession in 80 years (where because of no fault of your own, proper planning was not completed) that excellent service is a priority. I believe that fiscal responsibility should trump quality of service during this current period.
5. The current plan laid forward is to raise real estate taxes this year to offset the shortfall. While this is the simplest solution, it may not be the wisest. In a period of personal fiscal difficulty, you must consider the people that are currently on the edge of giving up on paying their mortgage/taxes and insurance on their home. You may want to review the term "strategic default" which is catching steam even with my clients (All High Net Worth) who purchased second homes on places like Key West and Montana etc. They are now walking away from those investments. So, it might be wise to consider the lost revenue by increasing real estate taxes as well as the increased revenue from a millage increase.

6. I have put together a detailed proposal for bring the current budget to \$500MM. At this time, I am not willing to pass this information along via email based on the time that I have invested. I would more comfortable and appreciate an opportunity to share my ideas with you in person should you be willing to review them.
7. Trash p/u once a week, bulk every other week and recycling every 2 weeks instead of weekly. This would save gas cost and man hours.
8. Evaluate replacing current fleet of garbage trucks with one-man, mechanical lifting-arm trucks to possibly gain greater efficiency?
9. Discontinue Car allowances. All employees should complete mileage/expense reports. Some employees receive car allowances and never leave the building.
10. Facilities Maintenance should be doing the painting and wall papering and stop all unnecessary contracting out. This is too expensive and not considerate of the tax payers.
11. Cut the tremendous expenses for breakfast and lunch for the work sessions and BOC meetings every week.
12. Cut CEO and executive's salary.
13. Cut the extra security in the buildings at night when the buildings are closed. Why have police officers and security guards. Hire Off duty police officers, eliminate contracts with security firms.

14. The Human Resources department is a mess. Get seasoned executive to fill the director position and reorganize for better efficiencies
15. Double/triple traffic violations and parking tickets.
16. Increase the cost of tags for people relocating from out of state for the 1st time.
17. Double court cost, fines and fees. Same for clerk of courts fees.
18. Charge people that work, who are jailed, with their daily jail cost and processing fees.
19. Charge parolees and people on probation, when they start working, a monthly fee
20. This could offset some of the probation officer's expenses.
21. Garnish wages for all fines, jail cost, parole/probation or court cost that are not paid in 90 days.
22. Turn more vacant County lots in to parks or community gardens. County won't have to
23. Keep them up if they become community gardens. Make it part of the green space project.
24. Seize homes when they have been involved in drug bust more than once, sell the homes
25. To individuals who plan to live in them or police/fire/1st responders'.

26. Seize Businesses involved with drug sells and allowing drug dealers to remain on their
27. Properties and sell their inventory.
28. Increase liquor, pawn and title pawn shops/stores, more for business licenses and fees.
29. Their signage creates havoc on our street scapes and environment.
30. Charge impact fee to builders, investors and developers. Also look at charging non-profit organizations that are in an expansion mode, since these organizations do not pay property taxes.
31. Increase property taxes for rental home owners and make the owners of rental homes be registered. This will prevent absentee home owners. If they don't register than place a fine/fee as a lien on the property and when they pay their property taxes it will be included.
32. Seniors who have retired age group now begins at 55 and up some still want to work or just be active. A lot of them are professionals and would be great in the call centers as volunteers for reduced property taxes. The 311 call center would be a great place to start.
33. Abandoned and foreclosed homes- allow the county to clean and board them up then place liens on them, when taxes are paid they must pay the lien or it is treated like an unpaid tax and sold on the steps.
34. Charge for business license and permits at recycle sites where cooper is received.

35. Require them to keep a log with ID info for all copper they receive. If not they are heavily fined. This might impact the destruction of property by thieves for its cooper.
36. Give incentives for communities that assist code enforcement and actively work in the police VIP program.
37. Create a volunteer code enforcement program just like VIP
38. Place someone as manager/director in code enforcement that is community focused and who will get out into the communities and interact with the residents. This has not happened in years.
39. Law students can be utilized to conduct research to expedite law proceedings and court dates. This will not impact the budget.
40. Double fines each time there is a code violation that continues to happen at any one location. After two make it a criminal misdemeanor with a few days in jail. After which they would have to reimburse the county for their jail stay as mentioned above (page 1). Again, use the garnishing of wages.
41. Fine home owners who do not have their address properly displayed. In most cases where the addresses and mail boxes have been removed these are drug houses and they pose a huge problem for code enforcement and police.
42. Find ways to charge none resident's fees for services such as parks, garbage.
43. Create partnership with schools to share services. The Community Achievement Center on Flatshoals Parkway is a great example – services can continue to be provided at a nominal cost.

44. So many county services are duplicated. Citizens have to meet with three departments to get sidewalks, speed bumps and stop signs. Why these are related services housed in three different departments? Combine into one.
45. EMPLOYEES- Discontinue sick day's incentive pay.
46. Base salary increases performance only.
47. Make sure the City of Dunwoody reimburse the county for county services. They wanted to become a city and they should pay for it
48. Increase all fees for services
49. Review outstanding fees owed in all departments.
50. Review Cash handling policies in the Planning department and Parks & Recreation
51. Outsource customer service for water billings to the company preparing the bills. The current call center can not handle the large number of calls coming in
52. Outsource meter reading water usage
53. Reduce weekly garbage pick up. There is a truck in my neighborhood five days a week. Our fee for service can be reduced so that we can pay for the proposed mileage increase
54. Consider paperless forms to pay employees- Dekalb School System just implement a web pay system to reduce cost of printing check stubs.
55. Create more revenue generating sources

56. Consider utilizing retired police officers to replace private security companies and to free up uniformed officers at County buildings
57. Hire a grant writer (consultant)- Fees paid from grants
58. Review collections for false alarms- Charge alarm companies for dispatching police to false alarms at homes and businesses- Let the alarm companies be tasked with fee collections
59. Get rid of gas guzzling county owned SUVs
60. Charge households who do not recycle
61. Charge citizens for violating the sign ordinance
62. Instead of the added leave payment bonus pay to the proposed early retirement for an additional two years, consider giving credit for an additional four years. Higher paid employees would take this option.
63. Outsource the management of Lou Walker Senior Center and Porter Sanford Community Arts Center- They should be operating on a break even basis and should not be a burden to the taxpayers
64. Increase fees for use of swimming pools
65. Combine CEO and BOC staff- Too much duplication of effort
66. Cut CEO and BOC budget by 50%--that should generate about 1 million dollars
67. Review public education outreach staff in each department- This function can be included in your ONE office.
68. Centralize public relations and cut this position from departments
69. Increase sales tax from 7 to 8 percent

