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Contact: Hannah Moldenhauer
Public Information Officer
843-826-5895
Hannah.moldenhauer@berkeleycountysc.gov

Berkeley County Council Passes FY 2019-2020 Budget
Unprecedented year because of reassessment and rollback calculations

MONCKS CORNER, SC (Monday, June 24)- Berkeley County Council passed the budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 at the County Council meeting, on **Monday, June 24, 2019**. Additionally, County Council passed the Berkeley County Water and Sanitation (BCWS) budget.

Berkeley County is required to reassess property values every five years. Because of the unprecedented amount of growth in Berkeley County, the County is slated to receive an additional \$4 million (projected) in property taxes, while at the same time instituting a rollback millage rate, from 45 mills to 43 mills for County operations. The rollback calculation is anticipated to reduce the County operating millage rate by 2 mills.

Council approved Berkeley County Government's general fund at \$90 million and Berkeley County's Water and Sanitation budget at more than \$75 million.

The full presentation details the highlights of the budget. This presentation was given to County Council at the second reading on May 28, and may be viewed [HERE](#).

Eight vacant positions were eliminated and the following positions were added. The new positions will primarily support needs in infrastructure & public safety.

- Sheriff's Office- Four Deputy Sheriffs and four Corporals
 - Berkeley County Animal Control will now operate under the Sheriff's Office
- Solicitor Office- One Drug Court Coordinator/Mental Health
- Coroner's Office- Deputy Coroner
- Engineering Department- Engineering Tech and Principal Engineer, funded with 25% of General Fund and 75% of Sales Tax
- Tourism Coordinator- One new employee funded by accommodations tax
- Animal Center- One new kennel tech position

- Grants Department- One new employee funded by general fund for 25% of fiscal year 2020, and funded through CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) after that
- Economic Development- One manager of existing industry position added, funded 100% by Economic Development
- Cypress Gardens- Two positions unfrozen and reassigned for the park's reopening (Horticulturist and Administrative Support Specialist)

Also, the budget includes funding for up to a 3% merit increase for employees, beginning January 2020.

More than half of the \$4 million capital budget shows support for public safety, by providing 28 new vehicles for the Sheriff's Office and three new ambulances for EMS. The budget reflects dedicating resources to infrastructure and road maintenance. It also includes funding to replace its 1980's-era property tax software, along with addressing several other needed technology projects to improve efficiency throughout the County.

The Berkeley County Water & Sanitation budget includes a 5% water rate increase, which represents a \$1.83 per month increase for an 8,000 gallon per month user, and an increase in the sewer impact fee of \$350. Both increases are part of an ongoing effort to ensure an appropriate level of funding is available for capital projects and asset replacement. Six (6) new positions are included in the BCWS budget, as well.

The first reading of the 2019-2020 budget was held at the County Council meeting on April 22. The second reading, with the presentation, was held at the County Council meeting on May 28. The third and final reading for the 2019-2020 budget was held at the County Council meeting on June 24. The 2019-2020 fiscal year will begin July 1, 2019.

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- Prepared by the Berkeley County Public Information Office –