

**After  
Agenda**

**Board of Commissioners of Spalding County  
Special Called Meeting - Retreat  
Saturday, January 25, 2020  
9:00 AM  
Spalding County Senior Center**

**The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held their Annual Planning Retreat at the Spalding County Senior Center on Saturday, January 25, 2020, beginning at 9:00 a.m. with Chairperson Gwen Flowers-Taylor presiding. Commissioners Donald Hawbaker, James Dutton, Rita Johnson and Bart Miler were present. Also present were County Manager, William P. Wilson Jr., Assistant County Manager, Michelle Irizarry, Administrative Services Director, Jinna Garrison, County Attorney, Stephanie Windham, and Executive Secretary, Kathy Gibson to record the minutes.**

The following Department Heads and employees were also present: Sheriff Darrel Dix (Sheriff's Office), Chief Deputy Tony Thomason (Sheriff's Office), Captain Dwayne Jones (Sheriff's Office), Deputy Chief Mike Byrd (Fire Department), Deputy Chief Glenn Polk (Fire Department) and Miles Neville (Human Resources Director).

Also, in attendance were Gordon Maner of UGA to facilitate the meeting and Suzette Arnold from UGA who is currently learning to be a facilitator.

**A. Opening (Call to Order)** by Chairperson Gwen Flowers-Taylor.

**Welcome, Introductions and Overview**

William Wilson, County Manager, thanked everyone for attending. He thanked the guests for coming to the meeting and taking time out of their Saturday to be here. We do have some new faces, Miles Neville from Human Resources and Mike Byrd with the Fire Department.

**B. Invocation** led by County Manager, William P. Wilson, Jr.

**C. Pledge to Flag** led by Commissioner James Dutton, District #2.

Mr. Wilson advised that one of the Archway Goals for this year was to restart the Ministerial Association and we have had two meetings now, there was good attendance at both meetings. We will be meeting once every quarter and he did ask at the last ministerial meeting if they come to the Board of Commissioners meeting and pray.

It is a group that we haven't had in a long time and it is an avenue to get information out to a section of the community that may or may not know what is going on. We found out at one of the meetings many did not know what the City, County or School Board did, or how it affected them, and they were very interested in everything that we do. They also delivered five prayers at the meeting: one for the City, one for the County, one for the School Board, one for the Community and one for our Country and they will do that at every meeting that they have. He will let Board know when and where these meetings will

be held.

Mr. Wilson then asked Mr. Maner to go over the ground rules before we get started.

Mr. Maner stated he always looks forward to doing this retreat every year and helping out with everything. He then advised:

- Visitors are welcome to the meeting, thank you for your interest; however, the conversation today will be only amongst the Commissioners, County Staff and those presenters as part of the Agenda. There will be no public input and visitor side conversations are not allowed as they are disruptive.

Mr. Maner then advised that his role for the meeting today is to:

- ✓ Keep the conversation focused
- ✓ Keep on track
- ✓ Keep it moving
- ✓ We have some time frames for each of the Agenda Items and he will try to make sure that you get the conversation in that you need to have.
- ✓ Make sure everybody is heard
- ✓ Make sure if you want to weigh in on something you have the opportunity to weigh in on an issue.

The written record he will keep will be the action items or any agreement you may have, and he will share them with the group in the end. His role is to help the group reach a consensus.

Mr. Maner then outlined the ground rules for the day:

1. Check your title at the door, we are equal adults.
2. The past is the past, we are here to talk about where we are and where we are going in the future.
3. Think community wide and focus on broader strategy
4. Trust each other enough to disagree and respect each other enough to listen.
5. Respect each others' differences and perspectives, we all have different background, different constituencies there are a lot of things that are different about ourselves.
6. Talk to each other, not the media, if you want to talk to the media please do it during the breaks.
7. Don't beat a dead horse, if we get hung up on something and we don't seem to be making headway, he will suggest that we continue to the next topic.

#### **D. Agenda Items**

##### **1. Review of 2018 Goals and Accomplishments.**

Mr. Wilson advised that the list is available for your review, he stated that he would be touching on some of the bigger accomplishments during 2019.

#### **Administration**

- Spalding County Receives ACCG Health Promotion and Wellbeing Grant – April

2019

- Spalding County Tag Office Is Getting an Upgrade, new DRIVES Software – April 2019
- Spalding County Receives Refund of Premium from ACCG Worker’s Compensation Program – April 2020
- Spalding County receives Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 18<sup>th</sup> Consecutive Year from the Government Financial Officers Association – May 2019
- Redesign and upgrade of Macon Road Intersection in the City of Orchard – June 2019
- Miles Neville Named Spalding County Human Resources Director – July 2019
- Freight Cluster Study Kick-Off with ARC – July 2019
- 2019 LMIG Resurfacing of 13 Roads - August 2019
- Board of Commissioners approve Citizen Engagement Specialist – September 2019
- Ministerial Breakfast Meetings – September 2019
- Design and Right-of-Way Acquisition approved for Intersection #3
- CDBG Grant Award – October 2019
- Human Resources Offers Cultural Diversity Classes to Employees
- United Way Pledged by Employees topped \$20,000 – October 2019
- New and Improved Website for Spalding County Rolled Out – November 2019
- Spalding County Receives Employee Safety Grant from ACCG Insurance Programs – December 2019
- The Spalding County Bar Association Unveiled a Commemorative Plaque – December 2019
- Training Officer Hired for E-911 (Ashley Hunnicutt) – December 2019
- Census Partnership Resolution signed by Board of Commissioners/Census Count Committee established – December 2019
- Mitsui Kinzoku Die-Casting Technology America announced they would build a new facility and create more than 30 jobs at the Lakes at Green Valley in Spalding County – December 2019

### **Animal Control**

- New Pet Point Software
- Partnership with Foundation – Working toward “No/Low Kill Initiative”

### **Correctional Institute**

- Recognized for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year in a row for number of Program Completions from the Georgia Department of Corrections – June 2019
- Spalding County Correctional Institute holds 2019 Graduation Ceremony, 30 inmates completed program requirements in a number of areas – June 2019

## **Fire Department**

- Spalding County Receives Improved Insurance Services Office (ISO) Rating – February 2019
- Spalding County Fire Department Participates in Walmart Safety Day – June 2019
- Spalding County Fire Department and Spalding County Sheriff's Office – Call to Action – July 2019
- Receives Grant Funding from Walmart Community Grants – July 2019
- Car Seat Safety Checks – September 2019
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training – February and September 2019
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Refresher Training - February and September 2019
- Mobile Dispensing of Annual Flu Shots – September 2019
- Spalding County Firefighters raised \$7,742 During the 2019 Fill the Boot Campaign – September 2019
- Halloween Safety Tips – October 2019
- Deputy Fire Chief of Operations Selected – Michael Byrd – November 2019
- Spalding County Fire Department and Safe Kids Spalding partnered for a “Keep the Wreath Green” initiative – December 2019
- Delivery of Fire Engine funded by 2016 SPLOST – December 2019
- Delivery of 2 Quick Response Vehicles (QRVs) funded by Impact Fees – December 2019
- Multi-Agency Mobile Command Training and Search and Rescue – December 2019

## **Parks & Leisure Services**

- After School Activities Opens at City Park Community Center – February 2019
- Kids Fishing Events held in March, August and October 2019
- 2019 Bain Proctor Awarded to Dr. Quimby Melton, III
- Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Fairmont Park SPLOST Project – May 2019
- Flag Football Drills and Skills Camp for Boys and Girls at Volunteer Park – May 2019
- “Inspired by Greatness” event with Olympic Gold Medalist, Wyomia Tyus – September 2019
- Spalding County Parks and Leisure Services Earn Top Honors at District GRPA Banquet – October 2019
- Spalding County Parks Staff Earn Top Honors at GRPA Annual Business Meeting – October 2019

- Festival of Lights November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019

### **Senior Center**

- AARP Tax Preparation February - March 2019
- Hosted Senior Fishing Events in March, May, September 2019
- New Senior Nutrition Program Coordinator Selected, Doris Carter – July 2019
- Fall Senior Legislative Action Day – October 2019
- Fall Senior Issues Conference – October 2019
- Fine Arts Fair – May and October 2019
- Hosted a Computer 101 Course for Seniors September 10<sup>th</sup> thru October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019
- Senior Center Closed for Deep Maintenance and Deep Cleaning – December 2019
- Senior Center Cleaned and Treated – December 2019

### **Public Works**

- Road and Utility Construction Press Releases issued for
  - Jackson Road – January 2019
  - HA5 Preservation Product Applied to N. McDonough Road and Vaughn Road – May 2019
  - Jordan Hill Road Closure for Bridge Repairs at Bridge North of Teamon Road – July 2019
  - Bridge Repair on Vaughn Road – August 2019
  - Vaughn Road at Shoal Creek – September 2019
  - Shoulder Maintenance on Hollonville Road – October 2019
  - Intersection #3 construction started – November 2019
- Fire at City of Griffin Transfer Station to Affect County Collection Centers – September 2019
- Bring One for the Chipper Program – December 2019

### **Sheriff's Office**

- Coordinated with the Spalding County Fire Department and conducted a series of Town Hall Meeting – April 2019
- Awarded the first Spalding County Sheriff's Office Criminal Justice Scholarships to Elizabeth Scoggins and Elizabeth Arreola – May 2019
- Hosted the Second Annual CHAMPS Summer Camp – June 2019
- Hosted a Ladies Self Defense Class – August 2019
- Hosted a Golf Tournament to benefit the Georgia Sheriff's Youth Homes, Spalding County Jr. Deputy Program, Griffin Police Department and Spalding County Sheriff's Office Explorer Programs – October 2019
- Introduction to Fire Arms Class – November 2019

- Awarded State Certification by the Georgia Police Accreditation Coalition and Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police

### **UGA/Spalding County Extension Office**

- Radon Awareness Program - January 2019.
- Master Gardener Extension Volunteers Recognized for Completion of their 1<sup>st</sup> Year Service Hours – February 2019
- Free Tax Preparation Offered through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program – February-March 2019.
- Fairgrounds Farmers Market Open Every Friday Beginning April 5 thru November 15, 2019
- Flint River Iris Society and Spalding County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers Hosted an Iris Workshop – August 2019
- ServeSafe Training – August and November 2019

### **Spalding County 4-H**

- Spalding County 4-H Shines at District Junior/Senior Project Achievement – March 2019
- Spalding County 4-H Participants Receive Awards from Northwest 4-H District Project Achievement Competition – April 2019
- Spalding County 4-H'ers Recognized at Annual Awards Banquet – April 2019
- Spalding County 4-H'ers Receive S.A.F.E. (Shooting Awareness, Fun & Education) Grant from the NRA Foundation – April 2019
- Spalding County 4-H Receives Grant from Central Georgia EMC – April 2019
- Spalding County 4-H'ers Receive Honors at State 4-H Congress – July 2019
- Spalding County 4-H'er Claira Knapp Changes the Law – August 2019
- Spalding County 4-H'er Hope Stewart Elected to State 4-H Board – August 2019
- Spalding County 4H'ers Compete at the National Poultry and Egg Conference Winning at the State Chicken and Turkey Barbecue Contests – November 2019
- UGA-Spalding County 4-H'ers Earn Masters Status at the 2019 Cotton Boll – December 2019

Mr. Wilson then reviewed the Action Items that staff was tasked to accomplish in 2019.

- ✓ Magistrate requesting additional staff due to backlog in that Office. Completed with no additional staff needed; however, we will have a request from Magistrate's Court again this year for additional staff.
- ✓ Incentive Proficiency Pay Policy – this was approved by the Board of Commissioners and implemented with the adoption of the FY 2020 Budget.
- ✓ FY 2020 Budget Goals

- 2% Cola for employees approved by the Board of Commissioners and implemented with the adoption of the FY 2020 Budget.
- Contract for sale of Airport Park fully executed by Board of Commissioners in November 2019 and once the FAA releases that property, we will own Airport Road Park and the Walking Trail.
- ✓ Outsourcing of Building Inspections Approved by the Board of Commissioners in February 2019. It has worked out very well for us, we are very proud of the work that Charles Abbott and Associates are doing on our behalf.
- ✓ Electronic Permitting of Building Permits implemented in January 2020.
- ✓ Archways Retreat is coming up February 5 and 6.
- ✓ TSPLOST was delayed to 2020.
- ✓ Acquisition of right-of-way completed for Intersection #3, clearing of right-of-way is complete and construction has begun.
- ✓ The Board of Commissioners allocated \$75,000 for Unsafe Building Abatement in the FY2020 Budget. We have 3 houses that will probably be done in the next 30 days. We have also worked with State Court on our process for Unsafe Building Abatement and we will be running these cases through State Court instead of Magistrate Court. We are working through that process now.
- ✓ Renew SPLOST in 2021, it will expire in March 2022. He expects a number of requests for SPLOST 2021 from the Fire Department, Sheriff's Office and the Development Authority.
- ✓ Countywide Diversity Training was implemented for all employees and attendance was mandatory.
- ✓ Increased funding for the Development Authority to 50% of the requested amount (\$300,000).
- ✓ In the process of bidding out the Public Defender Contract in February 2020.
- ✓ Requests sent to Legislative Delegation in March and October 2019 requesting a judicial circuit split.

We got a majority of the items completed over the last year and he feels that staff has done a great job.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor advised that she appreciated Mr. Wilson highlighting the accomplishments, but for her, she would like to have been able to look at the Action Items document during the year and be aware at the time the items are completed. The presentation doesn't really tell her what we haven't done and if we set these Action Items, how do we check off that we know other than a narrative of last year at this year's meeting. If we set the goals, it would be nice to look at it in December and check off the items that are complete. She would like for it to be made into some type of action check list.

Mr. Wilson asked if Chairperson Flowers-Taylor would like to have the checklist quarterly?

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor would like to see some type of Goals Report Card

on the Website so that not only the Commissioners would be aware of the Goals and the progress, but the public would be aware as well. At any point during the year the goals, status of the goals and accomplishments could be viewed.

Action Items Captured by Mr. Maner:

1. County Manager to provide semi-monthly updates to Commissioners and the Public on Goal Status Accomplishments.
2. Publicize county data on website utilizing photographs: i.e. what 200 tires looks like

Mr. Wilson stated that we're still not there on substandard housing, but we are making improvements.

2. Discuss possible 2020 T-SPLOST referendum dates and projects.

Mr. Wilson advised that there are 3 dates that we can set this on the calendar for a vote: March 24, May 19 and November 3. We have contacted Todd Barnes with Raymond James who handles all our transactions for bonds and SPLOSTS. King and Spalding has also reviewed this information. The split between the City of Griffin and Spalding County last time was 66.50% to the County and the remainder to the City of Griffin. A TSPLOST can only be implemented for 5 years or 20 calendar quarters. It can't go for six years like a regular SPLOST.

Mr. Wilson then stated that using an estimate of \$750,000 per month, it would equate to \$45.5 million over the five-year term. Mr. Wilson advised that Spalding County currently has approximately 80 miles of dirt roads the cost per mile to pave a dirt road is approximately \$2 million and when you multiply that times 80 miles it would cost \$160 million to pave just the dirt roads in Spalding County. So, it would take 5 TSPLOSTS just to pave the dirt roads in Spalding County. He then advised that to resurface a road is approximately \$150,000 per mile, Spalding County currently has 520 miles of paved roadway, so it would take 1.5 TSPLOSTS to resurface the existing roads in Spalding County. That doesn't include the approximately 200 miles of roads inside the City of Griffin. To resurface the entire 720 miles, it would be in excess of \$1 billion which would take approximately 2.5 TSPLOSTS.

Mr. Wilson then reviewed the projects that were on the last TSPLOST. There was \$14 million assigned to paving dirt roads and we planned to resurface 80 miles of roadway at \$110,000 a mile, it is now \$150,000. There was a lot of discussion before and after the vote about dirt roads. A lot of people expressed that if they didn't live on a dirt road, they were not going to vote for the TSPLOST. Also, at the time the Board of Commissioners voted that 100% of the right of way donated on dirt roads to be considered for paving.

Commissioner Dutton then advised that many of the comments he had heard was that people who move on dirt roads want to live on dirt roads. He then



stated that many of the people who live on dirt road told him they didn't want their dirt road paved. Everyone was fine with sidewalks, but dirt roads were a point of contention.

Commissioner Johnson stated that when people move on a dirt road, they are aware that the road is dirt when they move there, they chose to move there so that is what they want.

Commissioner Hawbaker then stated that a number of people have been told by their realtor when they purchased the home on a dirt road that the County has the road scheduled to be paved. No authorized County representative would have ever said anything like that, so some realtor or mortgage broker involved in the transaction was trying to close the deal.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that if we decide to go forward with the TSPLOST we should look at this with different eyes and make the paving of dirt roads maybe a 15% priority so the focus would go back to resurfacing, or bike trail, sidewalks or bridges. We don't have to be project specific in a transportation SPLOST we have to categorize.

Mr. Wilson stated that you do not have to be specific on the TSPLOST, but locally we have been accused of being so vague when you say transportation. When you say transportation, the first thing people want to know is what roads are going to be resurfaced. Then express that if their road is not going to be resurfaced, then they aren't going to vote for it.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that we need to have a strategic long-range plan for transportation. If our long range plan for the next ten years is to incorporate resurfacing, she feels if you need to pave a 1 mile stretch of roadway this year and then come back next year to pave another portion, that would be preferable to no doing anything at all. Currently, we don't have a plan for how to do this, so we are not really spreading the wealth on these projects.

Mr. Wilson then advised that we technically have a plan with the evaluation of every paved road in the County that was conducted by Paragon two years ago, because each section of the road is rated. If we do the TSPLOST and we have \$1.5 million a year to put toward resurfacing that would equate to 100 miles of resurfacing. He stated that he also had commissioners who wanted to bond the full \$8 million and do it all in one year. There is now way this can be done because there are not enough paving contractors to do that in the State of Georgia.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that if the people know there will be so many miles a year that will be resurfaced then they will have an idea as to when the resurfacing will occur. That has been one of the problems is people not knowing if their road is on there, but if there is a plan that in 2022 my road is on the list you will know that you will be in the line.

Commissioner Johnson asked if we are going to decide if we are going to do this today.

Mr. Wilson advised that they did need to decide if they wanted to do this today.

Mr. Maner then added that we need to decide if we are going to do it and establish a timeline.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that with a good education process with the public, she feels that a TSPLOST would pass. People want transportation capabilities whether it is sidewalks, a better paved road, or the ability to fix potholes. She thinks it would pass, but we must be very strategic, exert the time in planning and letting people know what this TSPLOST is about. We need to give as much information as we can about the benefits of passing a TSPLOST. She is for a TSPLOST; however, she thinks we need to pick the right time and develop a program that will introduce it in a way that they know exactly what we are planning to accomplish.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she agrees with Chairperson Flowers-Taylor, but only with the City of Griffin also involved.

Commissioner Miller stated that in paving of dirt roads he is not in favor of condemning property. If the people who live on a dirt road wants the road paved, then they will need to convince their neighbors to get it paved. It needs to be 100% right of way donation for the road to be paved.

County Attorney, Stephanie Windham, stated this would be an opportune time for the Board of Commissioners to establish a standard message for paving dirt roads. That way when someone who lives on a dirt road request that it be paved, then you can say "if we have the money, we would pave this road, but these conditions must be met first."

Mr. Wilson advised that we have a 20-point check list that must be completed, and we change it to reflect 100% of donated right-of-way.

Mr. Maner the summarized the points:

- Everyone agrees to do a TSPLOST if the City is involved.
- We need to have standard messaging for dirt roads to include 100% right-of way donation
- Projects need to be prioritized.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that according to Mr. Wilson we have 80 miles of dirt roads and Public Works Director, T.J. Imberger has a list for the TSPLOST and some of the items in that list would allow the County to do

its own paving. So that is where she is going with this question: How important going forward for us to spend \$1-2 million in paving or have our on-paving crew and do our own work?

Commissioner Dutton stated that if we had our own equipment it would make the funding available go further. He is very in favor of expending the money up front for the equipment so that every year we the LMIG money would go farther and resurface more roads.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor would like to have a Dirt Road Maintenance Program which would establish that the roads would be scraped at certain intervals of time whether it is every month, every six weeks or every other month. The Standard that we have for Dirt Roads needs to move up.

Mr. Wilson then advised that in the past Spalding County was in the road paving business. We had our own paving machine, we had our own equipment, but the running of the equipment shuts down Public Works entirely because it takes so many people to do that. At this point in time, we have a problem retaining people as it is. A person that operates a paving machine make about \$80,000 annually. However, there is equipment that T.J. Imberger would like to have that would assist in maintaining roads. This can be purchased with TSPLOST money. A motor grader and a striping machine are on the list of items that could be purchased with TSPLOST dollars.

Mr. Maner then advised that the Board has established they wish to go forward with the TSPLOST, we need to work on a timeline and the mechanism for identifying projects.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that it has been her experience over the last few SPLOST referendums that they do not do very well in General Elections, we do better when it is a special called, low turnout election. The reason she says that is the more people you must vote, the more people there is to vote "no" simply because they are going to vote "no."

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that the Presidential Primary will be in March 2020, everybody else from US Senator down to the County Commissioner will be in May 2020 and the General Election would be in November 2020.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated in the last SPLOST vote in November 2014, there were nearly 17,000 votes cast and that SPLOST lost by 75 votes. The next year was a November 2015 and won 2 to 1 but only 5,000 voted, but it did win 3,000 to 2,000 votes. He feels the reason it passed by such a large margin is because we had so many projects and the project people were out pushing for the projects.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated he feels the most difficult part of the TSPLOST will be going from 7 to 8 cents, but if you get enough information out regarding the 46 Counties that passed it in 2012 and since that time a number of other counties have passed it. Henry County is going to have a TSPLOST and there have been a number of single county TSPLOSTS that have passed since 2017. In 2017, our TSPLOST only lost by 160 votes and that was a November SPLOST. He feels there is enough people who will see, if they are properly educated on what the money is going to be spent on, which is where it gets down to specific projects. The template for this was set by Athens-Clark County, they did a magnificent job. They started a year in advance with a website and information, it passed by 80%.

Mr. Maner then asked what date would the Board support for a TSPLOST vote.

Commissioner Hawbaker then advised that in order to continue the SPLOST with a seamless continuation, a referendum would have to be held in November 2021. If approved in November 2021, it can't start for a calendar quarter, 90 days, then you go to the first day of the next quarter which would be April 2022. Do we want to have a March 2020 TSPLOST and then a November 2021 regular SPLOST?

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that she would rather lose 4-6 months of collections on a regular SPLOST then to lose the SPLOST altogether. Whenever she has seen a SPLOST fail in this community it is a domino effect waiting for the next one, it simply empowers those people who say that we are not spending money well. While she feels that it is important for us to look further down the road for continuing the 2016 SPLOST, it is not a relevant conversation until we can tell the people how we are going to complete the 2016 Projects. She feels if we focus on making the Transportation SPLOST happen, we know we will have it for five years.

Commissioner Dutton stated that the TSPLOST is an infrastructure SPLOST and that the traditional "no" voters are going to hear a lot from the national politicians on "vote for me we are going to address the infrastructure problems." So, they are going to come out in favor of infrastructure, so if we brand and sell this the as an infrastructure SPLOST it should have a good chance of passing. We could do it in November of this year there will be a lot of infrastructure items talked about and this could reinforce the need for the TSPLOST.

Mr. Wilson stated that November 2020 is recommended by staff for the TSPLOST, but we will need to "hit the ground" Monday.

Commissioner Johnson stated we are going to have to concentrate on finishing the project from 2016 before we are going to have any change of getting another SPLOST project approved. We are not going to get the votes

until the public can see that we are doing what we promised.

***Consensus of the Board is to plan for a TSPLOST referendum in March 2021.***

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that if the TSPLOST passes in March 2021 collections would start July 1 and we could start putting all that money into visible/tangible projects and that may support the idea that we can be trusted to extend the other SPLOST.

Mr. Wilson then advised that he doesn't believe the State of Georgia has set the official schedule yet for 2021, but he will find out and more than likely it will be a March, July and November schedule.

Mr. Wilson stated we would have some good projects with pictures that have been completed: Intersection #1, Intersection #2 and Intersection #3 and we have pictures of these projects before and after of what we have done with the SPLOST money.

Mr. Wilson stated that any projects for the TSPLOST will have to be transportation related. He then added that he would like to get an idea of the projects. He stated that his would be Public Works Equipment, Dirt Road Paving minimal, Resurfacing "big time", intersections and bridges.

Commissioner Dutton would like to see some trail connections as well for inner connecting communities.

Mr. Wilson then stated that we have learned a very hard lesson that we don't want to use internal estimates on any projects. So, we will have to spend some money and if the Board wants trails on the TSPLOST, we do have a trail study, but it is not in the locations that Commissioner Dutton mentioned. We are going to have to do a lot of upfront work to add things that is going to cost money and it will have to come out of the 2016 SPLOST.

Ms. Windham then advised there is a potential for some of these to be Archway Projects if we were to request that.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that she would suggest that we review what we have already because we have a Greenway Master Plan that goes from Orchard Hill to Sun City that includes bike trails and green space connections. Before we spend money to create something new maybe we should review what we have and see if that is still relevant for where we want to go in the future.

Mr. Wilson advised that we have a number of plans. We have a Griffin-Spading County Transportation Plan that has projects in it. He will forward this information to the Board.

Mr. Wilson will provide the Board with all Master Plans, Trail Plans, Transportation Plans, etc. and let you review them to see what we already have on paper.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that she would like to have a workshop and review the plans. The other thing is at the Three Rivers Regional Commission Meetings is that Three Rivers and the State have a trail connecting plan that is coming out of Coweta County and there is funding in Three Rivers for that.

We will schedule a Work Session to discuss resurfacing, dirt roads, trails and sidewalks which is all transportation. It may be a multi-part work session, we may look at transportation one day, then look at sidewalks another day instead of doing an 8-hour work session.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor advised that her constituents have stated that they would like to see some type of designated route transportation system. Some type of transportation that will move people from Sun City to Ingles or transportation that will move people from the north the industrial parks. This is a large community of walking people, so when we talk about transportation, we should not only be concerned about people who ride on the roads. We currently have the 5311, but that is not what these people need.

Mr. Wilson stated that Chairperson Flowers-Taylor is looking for is a fixed route transport and 5311, the program that we do in conjunction with the City, Three Rivers, Pike and Upson Counties is an on-call system, it is not a fixed route and 5311 funds cannot be used for fixed routes.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then advised that the 5307 funds will not purchase vehicles they will provide for the maintenance of the vehicles and sidewalks to locations to catch the vehicles. The actual purchase of the equipment would be the responsibility of the County.

Mr. Maner then summarized what was agreed on:

1. Joint City/County TSPLOST Referendum.
2. Establish a standard message to include 100% right of way with a listing of prioritized projects.
3. Photos of before and after as part of the promotion.
4. Staff to develop an inventory of existing trails and greenways and other transportation plans.
5. Hold a workshop to go over all current projects, review existing plans and other transportation needs/fixed route transit.
6. Identify transportation specific projects for the TSPLOST referendum.

Mr. Wilson then stated that we are in the middle of a Transit Feasibility Study and he needs Chairperson Flowers-Taylor to attend those meetings.

3. Aquatic Center location and funding.

Discussion regarding various locations and funding options for an Aquatic Center was then addressed by staff and the Board of Commissioners.

***Consensus of the Board is that Mr. Wilson get a quote from Lyman, Davis and Dooly to be our pool consultant.***

Mr. Wilson then stated that before we leave the Aquatic Center and move to Heritage Park he wanted to know if we are still looking at two locations? The Lakes at Green Valley and Cowan Road. Do we want the consultant to evaluate both locations and make recommendations to the Board. Also, the Board wanted to wait until we got the letter from the School Board to look to see how the facility could be placed on Cowan Road. Paragon would do the Civil Engineering part of the evaluation and would work with Lyman, Davis and Dooly.

Commissioner Miller stated that we have no stipulations at the Lakes at Green Valley, but we have stipulations put on the Cowan Road Property by the School System.

Commissioner Dutton stated that at the Lakes at Green Valley we won't have to put in roads, we won't have to put in utilities, everything is already done. Everything short of an actual engineering survey, they have even presented a plan for the Aquatic Center. That said, if we go to Cowan Road we are going to have to put in new road frontage, new access, run all the utilities and then deal with all the stipulations that the Board of Education is going to put on it. Additionally, there will be no income from the swim teams to go toward the maintenance and upkeep of the Center.

Stephanie Windham advised that there are legal ways to make the proposal from the Board of Education more palatable as well. It would be negotiable, but there are a lot of things that you could put into the deed that would make it a better deal.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor added that without there being some type of water recreation available in the City she still has a real problem putting the Aquatic Center at an industrial park because it is right off of SR 16, we live in a walking community and we know that our youth and our young people walk to the pool that we have now. She cannot in all good consciousness agree to build a facility where she knows that the largest user population is going to have to walk across SR 16 to get to it.

However, if we are working at looking at partnering with the School System or the Development Authority, what about partnering with UGA. They have hundreds of acres off the N. Expressway over on Ellis Road where the Garden is located. The same opportunity we are talking about offering the school system is the same opportunity we could offer the Board of Regents and UGA, plus the amount of people who would have access to use it for free would be a smaller number.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then added that dollar wise the location at the Lakes at Green Valley makes more sense, but in the terms of what is best for the people who are going to be using it or the group of people whose quality of life we are trying to improve, she feels this location creates an obstacle for that segment of the population.

Commissioner Dutton stated that he is not opposed to looking at a UGA site if that is a possibility, but you are going to have the same problem because you can't really walk to that UGA land. There is a two-lane road with an extremely small shoulder and it has a very narrow bridge that has to be crossed. You would have to build a new bridge on Ellis Road as the current one is unsafe to walk across it due to the traffic.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she has always felt the location on Cowan Road would be the best location for many reasons. She has visited other locations and she grew up in a Park and Recreation area and the facilities were always centrally located. She feels that this is the wisest choice as this would provide children with access to a pool in an area where other recreational activities are located.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that simply from a cost standpoint with the project already being underfunded, we have to save money so he is leaning toward the Lakes location. He agrees with Commissioner Johnson, it does make sense and he would like for it to be in a location with other recreational activities are going on, but we simply can't afford it the overlay of additional costs. He will be leaning towards the Lakes.

Commissioner Miller added that with the addition of the Aquatic Center in the Cowan Road area, it is going to get really congested with people accessing the part from Cowan Road.

Commissioner Miller stated that if you are going to charge \$8.00 to go swimming there are going to be a lot of people who aren't going to be able to go swimming. So, you are going to limit the number of people, no matter where the pool is located and that is the amount that was suggested when they evaluated the cost to operate the pool. So don't say that you are going to have free days or have days where you are going to charge a dollar to go swimming because that is not going to work. You have got to look at that part, the Lakes at Green Valley is a good choice because they already have the utilities. Cowan



Road or SR 92 would be a good location other than the million dollars it would cost to get a turn lane for access from SR 92 put in. He doesn't see putting it over at the UGA unless you want to be on the UGA campus side of Ellis Road.

Mr. Maner asked if it would be helpful for the professionals to look at the two sites and give costs estimates for each location?

Commissioner Johnson stated we have to make some decisions, that is why we are here today. We have been putting the people off long enough and this has been on the agenda for today and we need to talk about it today.

Commissioner Dutton stated that the cost estimate we just heard about for a structure that was built in another County was \$5.25 million for the building and the pool alone. Not the parking lot, not running utilities, creating an access road, sidewalks or anything else. With just those two things we are already \$1 million over our current budget. We are expecting some overages, but we need to route a much of those overages as we can to Heritage Park. So, if we are going to building the Aquatic Center as we promised and if we are going to build on Cowan Road that is more money that we are going to have to route away from Heritage Park and into the Aquatic Center leaving less money for the Heritage Park project. But if we build that same building at the Lakes at Green Valley we will have a lower total cost for that project and thus more money to put toward the Heritage Park Project and they can both be "A+" projects as opposed to having two "C" projects. He stated he gets where Commissioner Johnson is coming from, but he respectfully disagrees.

Mr. Maner asked again if there was a decision on this project?

Commissioner Johnson advised that there are two commissioners for Cowan Road and two commissioners for the Lakes at Green Valley. All they need is one more vote.

Commissioner Dutton stated he is fine at looking at them all; however, in the end we are going to have to do our due diligence and look at both sites and the possibilities and this costs money. The consultant may come back with the Lakes at Green Valley isn't feasible for whatever reason.

Mr. Wilson stated that he plans to have the pool consultant take the specifications given by the Board of Education and give us an estimate on the cost to build according to those requests. Then he will have Paragon go out to both locations and give an estimate (1) if the building it would take to accommodate what is being requested by the Board of Education would fit on the property and (2) how much it would cost to prepare the land to build the Aquatic Center.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that her concern with that is what the school system wants should not drive what we put in a recreation center. We

want to be accommodating to the community, but this is not about what the school system wants.

Mr. Wilson then stated that at this time we don't have a starting point, that is the problem. Parks and Recreation recommended a 6-lane pool, the school system is requesting an 8-lane pool. There have been requests for a flexible cover, a metal building and now a brick building. We need some direction, we have to have somewhere to start and then we can move from there. He believes at this time everybody is agreeable to 8-lanes.

Commissioner Dutton stated that is correct, we would like to have a brick building, but we need for the pool to be indoors somehow, it might just be a cover, but we need an 8-lane pool.

Mr. Wilson then asked if everyone was agreeable with 8-lanes. We need an 8-lane pool for it to be a competition pool.

Commissioner Johnson stated that we have been doing this for a number of years and we have been saying that we were going to settle on a location for the last year or two. We need to give these design folks some direction. All we are doing is pushing it off again.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated she would go with the majority. Wherever we decide this base work that Mr. Wilson is talking about doing is going to have to be done no matter the location.

Mr. Wilson stated that now that we have the request from the school system, we need to let Paragon work with Lyman, Davis and Dooly so they can give Paragon an idea of how much land is going to be required to accommodate an 8-lane pool structure.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then asked if anyone was interested in the Dundee site that was proposed by staff.

No one on the Board expressed interest in that site.

Mr. Wilson then advised that the Lakes at Green Valley already has sewer, water and electricity on the site. The Cowan Road property is open property. Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that in terms of site work, that is what we need to have done.

Mr. Wilson advised that is what Paragon will do for both sites, Cowan Road and the Lakes at Green Valley.

***Consensus of the Board is to look at both Cowan Road and the Lakes at Green Valley for the location of the Aquatic Center.***

Mr. Wilson explained to Commissioner Miller that Lyman, Davis and Dooly would be the Architects for the pool, but they do not do drainage, parking or road a civil engineer would do those items. The Architect in turn will hire an electrical engineer, a plumbing engineer, an HVAC engineer. You are hiring people with specialties to do all this stuff. We try to use Paragon locally because (a) we have a contract with rates guaranteed and (b) he is the person on the ground here that we call when something goes wrong.

Mr. Maner then asked what the time frame for getting the consultant pricing?

Mr. Wilson stated that for Paragon we have pricing for Cowan Road already, we will have to get a quote on the Lakes at Green Valley, he can have that quote for the Board at the February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. He doesn't think he can have a price from Lyman, Davis and Dooly by then, but he will try. It will probably be the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting before he will get a quote from Lyman, Davis and Dooly.

Mr. Maner then advised that he had captured the following:

- Aquatic Center Location – County Manager to get quote from Lyman Davis and Dooly for pricing of the Aquatic Center at the Lakes and Green Valley and Cowan Road with estimates for both sites to include site prep, parking, lighting, ingress/egress, 8-line indoor pool, engineering and construction by late February.

Mr. Wilson then stated that a final vote on the site of the Aquatic Center could be on the first meeting in March.

4. Discuss Heritage Park Design #2 and funding.

Mr. Wilson advised that in March we should have the feasibility study from ArtSpace. What we need to decide is:

Phase I is the Gym at \$3.2 million, the most expensive part of Heritage Park.

Phase II is the Equalization School \$2.1 million

Phase III is the Rosenwald School \$1.7 million

Total amount if we do all three projects at one time \$6.7 million.

Mr. Wilson then advised that we have approximately \$1 million and the garden is currently in the process of being relocated and it is probably going to cost \$100,000. He then asked what the Board would like to see first, he mentioned at a meeting that we wouldn't be talking about this project if the Rosenwald school was not sitting there.

Commissioner Dutton stated that he feels the Rosenwald School is the most important and is the most in danger, the gym is important, but it doesn't have the historical importance that the Rosenwald School has.

Mr. Wilson stated that the gym has a sentimental value to the community, the Rosenwald has a historic value. So, do we go ahead and bid out Phase III the Rosenwald School at \$1.7 million.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that when she sees these estimates, she doesn't see anything regarding the parks that is supposed to happen. There are two parks on this property that is supposed to have a continuous walking trail and whatever else. None of these figures bring in these items to the community. Where in these figures does it account for what it is going to cost to do that.

Mr. Wilson stated that those figures are not in these estimates.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that if that is the case, when she campaigned to people about the school she campaigned on the restoration of the gym and the restoration of the Rosenwald School. While she feels the Equalization School is important, it is really nowhere in our budget unless we are able to identify money. She feels that if we were able to complete the whole thing we could ask in the next SPLOST for the money to pay off the debt to finish, but in real life in order for us to complete this project and save us a million dollars we would have to go into some kind of debt to complete Phase II, so the question is are we willing to go into \$2 million debt and hope that the project gets finished in the next SPLOST we can pay ourselves off for that. If we have to not do one of the phases, she feels it is imperative to complete the gym and the Rosenwald School as those are the projects that the voters, voted for in the SPLOST. We are going to have to address the issue as if the Equalization School isn't there and proceed with Phase I and II or go into debt to complete Phase II of the project and pay it off with the next SPLOST.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that the County has set a precedent for going into debt without it being for essential services. She respects Commissioner Dutton's opinion; however, that is how we ended up owing \$3 million in this SPLOST was for paying off old debt. We incurred the debt by purchasing the Old Food Depot Building and buying the land at Dundee Lake Park, they weren't for essential services. So, governments do go into debt and you arrange to pay that off.

Commissioner Johnson asked what was decided to do with the \$2.3 million from the 2008 SPLOST.

Mr. Wilson stated that it was decided to put those funds toward the 2016 SPLOST Projects. The funds have not been dedicated. Even if the full amount is dedicated to the Heritage Park project you have the \$2.3 plus the \$1 million and that is it for Heritage Park.

Commissioner Johnson stated that Daa'ood Amin has offered to champion this project. He was the Chairman for this SPLOST and help to get this

SPLOST passed and now that the race is over, he has asked if we want him to continue to champion this project. He wants to get in front of this as far as the citizens are concerned, he has some ideas of how he can help raise some money for this project as well. She wanted to asked the Board how they feel about having him be the lead on this project to help us also find some additional funds.

***Consensus of the Board is to have Daa'ood Amin assist as liaison between the county and the community on this project to get our message and explore additional avenues of funding.***

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then asked to recap the funding discussed earlier that could be available for the remaining projects: \$2.3 million from the 2008 SPLOST to be reallocated, \$1 million which was budgeted for the Heritage Park project, \$3.85 million from the excess in revenue from the 2016 SPLOST which is if we continue to have the same revenue of \$825,000 for the next 29 months. This puts us at \$7.1 million which would do the Heritage Park project, but would not leave any additional funding for the pool.

Mr. Maner then advised what he has so far on the Heritage Park:

- Consider allocating the \$2.3 million from the 2008 SPLOST to Heritage Park.
- Approach Daa'ood Amin to assist in promoting Heritage Park.

Commissioner Dutton then asked how much was in the budget for the Aquatic Center?

Mr. Wilson advised that it was \$4.69 million, but we are not talking about the Aquatic Center right now.

Commissioner Johnson then asked, "where are we on ArtSpace?"

Mr. Wilson advised that they will come back in March with findings.

Commissioner Johnson stated that if they come back and say we like this location we want to take this on, then what?

Commissioner Hawbaker then stated that the next steps in this process is further commitments.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that what ArtSpace will be something added, we are not going to do our part based on what ArtSpace is trying to do.

Mr. Maner then asked the Board to wrap up so that we can break for lunch.

Commissioner Dutton then stated that Plan A right now is the Gym and the

Rosenwald School and if ArtSpace or someone else kicks in, then we can also do the Equalization school. If ArtSpace, grants or whatever can also fund Equalization, then we will also include Equalization. d

Commissioner Johnson then asked for clarification on the \$2.3 million from the 2008 SPLOST and asked if that was going to be split between the Heritage Park and Aquatic Center projects?

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated we would have to look at it once we have a plan. It may be a 60/40 split, it is something we will have to look at later in this process.

Mr. Maner asked if this would come to a vote in March.

Mr. Wilson advised that it could if all the data is received.

Mr. Maner then stated that after lunch there would be discussion on the Collection Centers.

5. Discuss possible operational changes at the collection centers to deal with abuse.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that after reviewing the PowerPoint prepared for the Collection Centers, she feels it is a very comprehensive plan and she was pleasantly surprised by the thoroughness of the presentation. She further stated that the people she has talked with do not seem to have a problem with our stopping yard debris and bulky items, but they are struggling with the number of bags of household garbage that will be allowed in a day.

Commissioner Hawbaker then added that the number of bags can be any number that is decided on; however, no matter the number there are people who are going to have a problem with limiting the number of bags allowed to be dumped in a day.

Mr. Wilson then brought in a 33-gallon trash bag and climbed into it to show everyone how big one of these bags are. He then went on to state that at his home their garbage is placed in 13-gallon bags and you could place 3-4 of those 13-gallon bags in the 33-gallon trash bag and 5-33 gallon bags in one trip is a pick up truck load of garbage.

Mr. Wilson stated that Mr. Imberger worked with his staff and with administrative staff to pull this PowerPoint together. This presentation talks about everything that we talked about during the meetings. He then reviewed the presentation for the Board.

Mr. Wilson then advised that the Collection Centers are currently open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays. This seems to be working out.

Mr. Wilson the advised that the City would be adopting a new ordinance on Tuesday night and they will be severely restricting the materials they will be accepting in co-mingle and recycling. They are having a problem with what is being determined as contaminated recycling and if the vendor they are working with finds anything in the load that is considered “contaminated” they will either be fined or the entire load will be rejected and the City has to load it back up and take it to the landfill.

Mr. Wilson then cover the statistics around items accepted at the Collection Centers:

- Bulky Items – 2,000 Tons – 13,000 loads

Mr. Wilson the advised that garbage is a huge business, the County currently has a \$1.2 million dollar budget for this line item. Of that, approximately \$225,000 is maintenance of the Yamacraw Road Landfill. That landfill closed and we had hoped that we would be excluded to having to monitor it, but we took some hits on some of the groundwater monitoring wells out there and we have to spend about \$225,000 a year testing the water, testing the methane, providing blowers out there that inject air into the landfill and methane escapes through methane vents. Unfortunately, we do not have enough methane to generate any power, like the Pine Ridge Landfill. We don't generate that volume of methane.

Just for Bulky Items it cost the County approximately \$76,000 in disposal costs, but if you add the equipment costs and transport cost it would probably be about \$153,000 to dispose of just Bulky Items.

- Limit household garbage to 5-33 gallon trash bags per day.

Most people use 13-gallon bags in their kitchen and small bags in the other rooms of the home. You can get 3-5 13-gallon bags packed in a 33-gallon bag. So, if everybody visited the Collection Centers 4 times a week that would be 20-33 gallon bags a week. He thinks this is going to be enough once people see how big a 33-gallon bag is.

Mr. Wilson stated that the reason we are making the changes is to eliminate abuse, provide more access to citizens to dispose of their household garbage. He feels this presentation is getting the message across that we are trying to help the citizens, but eliminate those folks who are abusing the system.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then state that as a note every place in the presentation that says trash should be changed to household garbage.

Mr. Imberger sent Mr. Wilson an email last night, he had met with Henry County and they have one collection station in Henry County and mandatory curb side pick-up. The collection station is on Hwy 20 where the Henry

County Landfill use to be. The landfill is for residents only, they do not accept household garbage, they will accept bulky, but you have to pay. They will accept yard waste, but you have to pay because once a month they bring in a portable tub grinder at a cost of \$1,500 an hour to grind all that stuff up. It takes about a day to grind everything up for the month.

Commissioner Hawbaker then asked if they have any problems with people throwing stuff out in the ditch.

Mr. Wilson stated that they do not have a problem with this as Henry County has mandatory curb side.

Commissioner Hawbaker then asked when that started.

Mr. Wilson advised it had been in effect for 8-10 years.

Ms. Windham stated that Upson County has mandatory curb side as well. Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then wanted to ask a question regarding the bullet that stated:

- Citizens only need to prove residency with a drivers license or current tag at the Collection Center. Regardless of out-of-county tag, vehicle type or trailer type.

She wanted clarification of the out-of-county tag portion of this bullet point.

Mr. Wilson then stated that recently a gentleman pulled up in a large panel truck, the truck was full of garbage, but the kid driving it had a Spalding County Drivers License. The truck was out of Houston County and the other man in the truck was out of Alabama. So, we had to let him dump because he had a Spalding County Driver's License.

Mr. Wilson stated that Mr. Imberger told him that there were 7 fulltime employees at the Henry County Landfill daily and about 20 inmates. Henry County takes money at the Landfill. You have to prove you're a resident and you have to pay and they only accept cash.

Mr. Wilson stated that we have a lot of abuse at the Collection Centers, the Commissioners have been out there and he has been out there and witnessed the abuse. He then stated that he has been out there without his County ID on and he has asked someone wanting to dump: your tag has this County on it. The individual then asked who he was and Mr. Wilson responded that he was the County Manager and he was then asked what business is it of his. Mr. Wilson then pointed out he didn't have a Spalding County tag on his car and he was informed that he had borrowed the vehicle from his brother, "don't bother me."



Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that she feels it will be very beneficial for the Collection Center Attendants to know that you can only bring in 5-bags.

Mr. Wilson then added that we are the largest collector of aluminum for the Children's Burn containers that are located at the Collection Centers. We collect more cans in this County than any other County in the State of Georgia for this cause. We are going to leave those, but everything else is just household garbage.

Mr. Wilson then advised that the recycling market in China has crumbled, they don't want anymore recycling and they want us to pay them to take it. The City is enacting new regulations on Tuesday night with certain grades of plastic bottles. They will take the plastic bottles, but not the caps because it is a different kind of plastic and it can't be recycled.

Mr. Wilson then stated that we are going to get a lot of complaints. We have a Public Hearing set up for this on our February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. If the Board likes this we are going to push this out with the Press Releases and encourage people to come and talk. He will have a 33-gallon trash bag at the meeting and for a visual presentation we will show everyone how large this size trash bag is and we may have 13-gallon bags filled up and show how many of those will fit in a 33-gallon bag. We will do something to have a visual for those attending.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that one part of this that has not been touched on is there is a plan for anyone who is driving a vehicle whether it is Code Enforcement, Animal Control, Parks and Rec. for those people to know how to identify waste and abuse, how to document it, what to do with the evidence, how to put in a Facility Dude Work Order. To her that is a big deal. She wants to let the employees know that this is now a part of their job.

6. Discuss customer service and how to monitor satisfaction with inquiries and complaints.

Mr. Wilson stated that Commissioner Flowers-Taylor called in a drainage problem and Public Works was there within two hours, had the problem fixed and Scott Sullivan had called the citizens back to make sure they are happy.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that the Board never hears about the good things the County Employee do, they only hear about the problems.

Mr. Wilson stated that he had sent out on the County Managers ListServe again asking what other Counties do for Customer Service. We used to have a Secret Shopper type program and the Secret Shopper would call problems in and see how long it would take folks to respond. That really didn't work out.

Mr. Wilson stated that he talked with Kenny Smith at the 3-G Meeting and he advised that they have Customer Service Card at the Customer Service Desk at the City, but he doesn't think they utilize them anywhere except in Customer Service.

Other Counties have used Survey Monkey. He contacted Bridget Bailey who is the Director of Customer Experience and Solutions for Fulton County. She talked with him about 20 minutes and she is sending him what they do with their Customer Service. They actually had Kennesaw State come down and do a Customer Service Survey for them.

Mr. Wilson stated that what he would like to implement in the new Facility Dude work order system that if one of the commissioners call in, Mr. Wilson will put it in, it then goes to T.J. Imberger or Scott Sullivan and they route it to the guy on the motor grader. The guy on the motor grader goes out, scrapes the road, enters it into Facility Dude, right now that is the end of it. He wants this to come back to either T.J. or Scott or the one who originally submitted the original work order and he wants to pick up the phone or send a card and ask for a report card.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated she thinks that is a good start because right now we are not getting any feedback.

Mr. Wilson then stated that we assume the problem has been taken care of because they haven't called back. When they do call back, they advise that the initial problem was address, but now they have a new problem.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor wanted to know if there was a way to query the actual complainant to see if their problem had been fixed.

The Board would like to know if there is some way that a survey can be sent to the individual who files a complaint in Facility Dude once the complaint is marked complete by the Department. Mr. Wilson advised he would check with Felicia Camp, our Facility Dude subject matter expert, to see if this can be done. The Board further stated that receipt of these responses should be sent to the Citizen Engagement Specials who can combine the responses and present the Board with periodic updates.

7. Discuss pros and const of changing the fiscal year to a calendar year.

Mr. Wilson stated that every year we set a budget, and we're about to start the budget process in February. We set a budget and have to have everything finished by June, but the Tax Levy and the Tax Digest is not done until August or September. So, we have to estimate what we think the Tax Digest will be. A number of people have asked "why don't you move the fiscal year?" We can do that, we have talked to the Auditor and we have talked with our Investment Banker, etc.

Most Counties operate July 1 to June 30 because that is what the State does, the School System is required to do it by State Law. Cities and Counties can set their own fiscal years. We used to be October 1 to September 30 until 1983. In 1983 we changed from October 1 to July 1. If we did that now we would have to have two budgets for fiscal year 2021, a six-month budget from July 1 to December 30<sup>th</sup>. Then a new one from January 2021 to December 31, 2021.

In theory, if we had enough money to make it 18 months off of one tax levy we could do that, but we don't. The bad part of this proposition is that one year, we would have to levy a tax that would cover our expenses for 15-18 months depending on how much fund balance we have. The good part would be after that, it would go back to the regular millage rate and we would be setting the budget starting in July and finishing in December. We would probably do the budget in July, August and September and actually finish in October and November.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated the reason he brought this up, is because the current process just seemed to be backward. You can't run a household this way, you can't decide what you are going to spend for the next year and then determine the amount of money you will need to accommodate that budget. You can't run a house or a business that way. You have to know what the revenues are going to be and set your expenses accordingly. It just seems that we get ourselves into having to raise the millage rate when despite our best efforts, we have to then go tell the taxpayers how much they are going to have to pay. It just seems to him that it would reduce a lot of stress and anxiety and criticism if we operated our county more like a business or a regular household then the way we currently do it.

Commissioner Dutton then asked, "What if we did it over a period of years instead of levying 18-months we did it over a period of 6 years with one month extra every year slowly moving that fiscal year to be more in line." We would only have to levy 13-months instead of the 18-months at one time. Commissioner Dutton further stated that if there is any excess funds for the year those could be used to stretch the budget an extra month every year until we absorb the additional six months.

Commissioner Hawbaker then asked Mr. Wilson why the budget was adjusted from the October 1 calendar back to July 1.

Mr. Wilson advised that it was to be in line with the State and Federal Government budget year. He added that 90% of the Counties in Georgia currently have a July 1 to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that she didn't understand the benefit of moving the fiscal year from July 1 to January 1.

Mr. Wilson stated that we currently begin our budget process in February and finalize it in June of every year and then the millage rate is set several months after the budget is adopted. With the change the millage rate and the budget would be set at about the same time.

Commissioner Dutton then stated that by doing both at the same time the Board can say, "If we want to do X,Y,Z, then we've got to raise our millage rate." Right now we set the budget and once the Tax Digest comes in we find out that we are going to have to raise the millage rate to accommodate the budget. By doing both at the same time we can say, "Here is our budget and here is our millage rate."

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor express her confusion over what is wrong with we way we currently do things.

Commissioner Hawbaker explained that in August we find out about the Tax Digest, then based on the current millage rate before any adjustments, we can have a good estimate of what the millage rate applied to the Tax Digest is going to generate. To him that makes more sense then to decide "This is what we are going to spend" and hope that we don't have to increase the Tax Levy.

Commissioner Dutton stated this would enable us to say, "This is how much we have coming in" and generate a budget accordingly instead of generating a budget based on anticipated revenues. If we change it, we would know how much would be coming in and at the budget meeting we could allocate those funds. He then stated there is a possibility of putting back 5% of the budget funds then when we have enough to fund the six-month period, change the fiscal year from July 1 to January 1. We could designate any excess, whether it is 5% and put it back to fund this initiative.

Mr. Wilson stated that instead of using Fund Balance and drawing down on it, you build up your Fund Balance until you have enough to where you can levy a year instead of 18 months. Mr. Wilson stated that at the current time we are down to 10% in the Fund Balance, at one time we had 28%, but the recession hit and we drew it down. Unlike other governmental entities we never laid anybody off, we never cut anyone salary, we never stopped doing anything. It is philosophy and you could do it by increasing the Fund Balance Contribution every year, but if you do it right now, it's a tax increase. Right now, we are level using Fund Balance and you have to not use Fund Balance and add to it.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor feels that it could be a good thing if the rest of the Board feels it would be a good thing, but she would like to caution the Board. It's easy to say that we are going to build our Fund Balance up to achieve this goal, but in reality if we're not doing that, if we don't set a standard that over the next three years we should be able to obtain enough funds to do it, then it's not going to work.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated he is not looking for any action on this, it is simply one of his top concerns and he wanted it placed on the agenda as a discussion item.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated she would like for us to explore it if staff feels it would be a better option to what we are doing now and if it would make things easier, it is worth looking at how to plan to bring this about.

Mr. Wilson stated the staff can present a plan during budget for consideration by the Board and provide increments 3 years, 5 years, 10 year to implement the change.

Commission Dutton stated that he likes the idea of looking into those number to budget conscious enough to have a goal to move things into fund balance until we have enough to make that switch. That being said, we don't want it to be a 20-year goal. We would like for it to be a 5, 8 or maximum 10-year goal.

8. Discuss possible amendments to local legislation concerning the Spalding County Board of Elections and Voter Registration.

Mr. Wilson advised that we have discussed this a number of times. Local Legislation creating the Board of Elections and how the Board of Elections operates. Pike County, two years ago, introduced local legislation to create their Board of Elections and their legislation calls for each Commissioner appoint one member to their Board of Elections, and it is treated as a County department and comes under the Administration of the County Manager.

Our legislation was created 12-15 years ago and it is set to where the Republican Party appoints two members, the Democratic Party appoints to members and the Board of Elections appoints the fifth member. If the group should not agree and have a majority on the fifth member, then the two members there will flip a coin to determine who the fifth member will be. That is what happened this past year with the untimely death of Ballard Brooks.

Mr. Wilson stated that it has been on the agenda before to introduce local legislation to change that. We are in the beginning of the legislative year and this would be the time to do it should the Board wish to make any changes.

Commissioner Dutton stated that having spoken with members of that Board, they are fine with talking about the change, they are not totally against a change. It is more, let's get in line with the other Counties. He feels it is not appropriate for the two political parties to appoint the Board of Elections. This would not change the day to day operations of the Elections Office.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that she has never heard that was a problem.

Commissioner Hawbaker then advised that Spalding County is basically a 60/40 Republican County and the Board of Elections is a 3/2 Democratic Board. The other thing he doesn't like the County funds and pays for that department and Mr. Wilson has no direct control over. This department is the only department not ultimately accountable to the voters of Spalding County through a sequence of Department Head reporting to the County Manager and the County Commissioners and then ultimately to our voters. We are all temporary place holder in the office. Structurally, for the County's good it needs to be set up that way. Maybe this is something that can be deferred for later consideration, but he feels that given the hyper-partisan nature of what is going on in our Country today, that people who are in positions that deal directly with voting outcomes, they should also be required to make personal financial disclosures. Some people in these appointed positions may be vulnerable to some outside income.

Commissioner Dutton then stated that even if that type of thing isn't happening right now there is no oversight that if it was happening, no one could do anything about it. There is no evidence at this time to suggest that is happening, but if that were happening there is nothing that anyone in this room could do about and that is irresponsible to the citizens of this county.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that her concern and her disappointment when this was brought up last year was that as a Board we made a decision not to pursue it and as a private citizen Commissioner Hawbaker did pursue it by going to the Legislators. We have a really hard time getting our Legislators to contact us on stuff they need to contact us. She was a little bit put off by that because if it is something that affects the entire county and our Legislators go to bat for us, that should be something that the governing board at least have knowledge of. However, she gets what he is talking about where there is a potential, but she remembers for 20 years that the 3<sup>rd</sup> person on the Elections Board was a Republican. There was never a complaint about partisanism, about anything happening before. Now that the third member is a democrat there is a potential problem. We talk about Pike County, her question is they never had a Board of Elections so how are we going to mirror somebody who doesn't know what they're doing in the first place. In 2017-2018 you are just now figuring out that you have a Board of Elections? So the first thing she would like to see how many counties in the State actually have a system like we have it, where the political parties are choosing, how many systems in the state have the other authority where they all fall under County Manager. Those individuals that the political parties appoint are no different than those people that we appoint to the Development Authority, or different than the people that we appoint to the Hospital Authority. She feels to pick an organization and to look at what could potentially go wrong, that could be the same thing with someone sitting on the Development Authority, they know a prospect is coming, they take that information and go use it.

We can create potential for problems and we can talk about that but this is not a real problem that she can see right now and she would love for us to go at this for a reason that is going to benefit the County, rather than to separate us and she agrees with Commissioner Hawbaker, we are very politically split. But unless the Democratic or Republican Party say they are not happy with this process, she doesn't see there is anything broken in the way that we pick our representatives to that Board.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she met with the Board of Elections at their retreat. They sat her down and basically stated that they didn't need the Board of Commissioners to tell them what to do. Unless they are doing something they are not supposed to do there is no reason for the Board of Commissioners to get involved. If and when we see something that is wrong or not right then it is our job to address that.

Commissioner Dutton stated this is definitely an issue.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that as far as he is concerned they can fund the positions in that office. We, the taxpayers of Spalding County should not be paying for something that we have no control over.

Mr. Maner then reminded the Board that they fund the Sheriff and the Court and those do not answer to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated those are Constitutional Officers and we are statutorily requirement to fund those offices.

Commissioner Dutton had the opportunity to sit down with the Secretary of State and Commissioner Johnson and discuss this is the way we do things in Spalding County, how do other Counties run their Board of Elections. He advised there is a myriad of ways, but the one that he is most familiar with is the one that Pike County utilizes. He didn't say a particular one is the best, he simply said he was most familiar with the one currently being utilized by Pike County. He further stated that it is a Local Issue.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then added that the Secretary of State advised that our Elections Supervisor is well known and respected throughout the State. She is simply stating that we should not pick and choose where we think there is a problem, if there is a problem let's fix it. But if there is not a problem, lets not create a problem where there is none.

Commissioner Dutton stated that he sees a problem, but if the Board doesn't want to act that's okay. Last year the Board decided it was not going to act, the year before you actually voted to table it. There are two political parties who choose their election officials and we need to change it.

Mr. Maner stated that he doesn't feel there is going to be a consensus on this matter today. He then suggested that Mr. Wilson goes and researches other counties to see how their Board of Elections is set up.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated he would like to make this one comment, he is going to try to say this as neutrally and as historically correct as possible. What brought this issue about was in 2017 there was a personnel issue and we wound up with the question who has any control and decision making authority in this personnel issue and we got a legislative attorney's written opinion that the authority lies with the Board of Elections because of the wording of the legislations. She provided 5-6 examples from other counties that if you want that person to be supervised and ultimately responsible to the County Manager she gave some suggestive language from the Counties that do it that way. Then Mr. Fortune drafted some proposed legislation and that got tabled and his understanding was that the Legislative Delegation was simply asking for guidance. They have the authority with or without our recommendation or with our recommendation.

When the current statute was passed it was in contrary to the written request, at that time, of the Board of Commissioners including Michael Kendall and they still went ahead with the legislation. In the historical correspondence he has read, the Board specifically indicated that they would like for the Board of Elections Supervisor to report to the County Manager and the draft legislation does not do that, please change it. They did not. That doesn't necessarily mean that it can't be modified. The current legislation in 2018 asked for and would prefer to proceed with some specific direction from the Board of Commissioners and all that ever really happened is that it got tabled by majority of the Board at the time. The Legislature went through 2019 expecting to receive that guidance and now we are in 2020 and it may happen. He feels it would be best to give them the majority view of this Board as to how the legislation should be amended if at all.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that she would like a review of the minutes as she does not remember the item being tabled, she remembers a definitive decision. Obviously, this is contentious for many of us and we will do what the majority of the Board decides. We have never been able to come to a consensus as we have very strong opinions about it.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she remembers talking with State Representative Lee Howell about this and at that time because of the politics he advised to leave it as it is. There was a reason that the Board of Elections was created as it was and he felt it would be best to leave it as it is.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor state that at that time there were some complaints about voter suppression and it was felt that the legislation should remain as presented at that time. She's not saying that it is good, she simply feels that the Board is so split on this decision, with the exception of



Commissioner Miller who could make the matter go away or go forward. This not something we need to come back to we simply need to find out from Commissioner Miller where he is at. Do you want us to do it or do you not is is a pretty simple decision.

Commissioner Miller stated that he feels the Elections Supervisor needs to answer to somebody and it has to be the County because we pay her. Everyone else has a Department Head that has to go through Mr. Wilson. To him this department needs someone at the County to answer to. How the board is set up Democratic or Republican it doesn't make any difference, but they still need somebody to answer to.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then asked his comments on how the Board of Assessors works? It is exactly the same thing, they don't answer to the County Manager, do you propose that we go back in and change that as well.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that seems to be an apt comparison, but statutorily it is not. Because under 48-2-99 once we report a member of the Board of Assessors, they cannot be removed involuntarily unless either 100 property owners file a petition and attach it to a Superior Court lawsuit or the Board of Commissioners brings a lawsuit to remove a member of the Board of Assessors. That happened in Fannin County in 2014, the entire Board of Assessors got removed involuntarily and even went to the Court of Appeals. Now part of the reason they were removed is because the Chief Appraiser, who reports to the Board of Assess, but what he is saying is the Board of Assessors get appointed by the County Commissioners who are elected by the voters. So it is not a 100% direct staff position-County Manager – County Commissioner – Voters.

Rightfully so, the Board of Assessors who is responsible for Property Assessments, there should be an artificial wall between the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Assessors so that politics doesn't bleed over into how property evaluation are done and taxes are generated. But we do have the right to appoint the Board of Assessors who has the authority to supervise the Chief Appraiser. If the Chief Appraiser is misbehaving and the Board of Assessors is not going to do anything about it, they can be removed more directly by the voters than the Board of Commissioners can remove them because all they have to have is 100 property owners prepare a petition and bring a lawsuit.

In fact, had we not made a change on January 1, 2015 if we had not made a change in the composition of the Board of Assessors that very thing was going to happen. There was a petition signed by over 400 property owners to remove a particular member of the Board of Assessors because of the way the 2012 mass revaluation had been done. That got changed and the lawsuit was never filed.

In Fannin County the Board of Commissioners actually filed suite, under the provisions of 48-5-99 to remove the entire Board of Assessors because the property valuation and the examples were unbelievable in terms of how they "screwed it up." Part of the problem was they were not properly supervising their chief appraiser, but they resisted and they appealed and the trail court order was upheld.

All he is saying is that the Chief Appraiser reporting to the Board of Assessors may seem like it is the same thing as the Elections Supervisor reporting to the Board of Voter Registration and Elections, it is not because the voters of this County, under current legislation, have no direct control over the Board Elections or ultimately over our Elections Supervisor. The political parties do.

The voters of this County can not exercise any control over the Elections Supervisor position. That position, in his opinion, if it is going to be funded and paid for by this County, everything from the desks, the papers and other supplies and the salaries if funded by this County should be accountable to the County Manager.

Commissioner Miller then asked who hired the current Supervisor.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that the political parties interviewed the current supervisor and made recommendations to Mr. Wilson as to who they felt should be hired. Mr. Wilson considered their recommendation and hired the Elections Supervisor based on those recommendations and she started in April of 2017 then we had the mini blow up November 2017 when everybody in the office quit and Mr. Wilson was able to get them to stay on to handle the November 17 election, they then did actually leave and for a while there was no one in that office but the Elections Supervisor. At that time, it became an issue of who had the right to exercise any sort of supervision over that Elections Supervisor. That became the issue and the answer that came back from legislative council was that the way the statute reads, that position reports to the Board of Elections and Voter Registration and the County Manager does not have authority to implement any adverse employment decision affecting that position. That incident revealed the structural problem that exists and just because it happened to arise during the time of this particular person versus her predecessor, is inconsequential, it is a structural problem.

Mr. Maner then stated that the legislative delegation is not likely to push it forward until the Board of Commissioners has a 3-2 vote.

Commissioner Dutton stated that it was actually proposed last year but when the bar didn't act at all, they withdrew it. So, he feels they are ready to propose it again this year and if we have a vote of 3-2 it would be considered.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that he feels that we need to enter an expressed request. Being local legislation, they can do it but he feels they

would prefer to have some input for the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Dutton state that there are three who feel this should be done can we ask that a statement be drawn up for us to vote on? Then they can choose to act as they want.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated there was a proposed resolution by Mr. Fortune back in 2018 and that is the one that got tabled.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then asked who directed the County Attorney to draw that up? Which is part of her concern. Chairman Ray asked Mr. Fortune to do that, whatever work, whatever cost it was to the County, it happened, he did the work, but the majority of the Board was not aware of it and we did not vote on it because we didn't ask for it. She then stated that she would go with whatever the Board suggests, but with all due respect the arguments did not convince her that what happens at the Board of Elections is any different than what happens at the Board of Assessors. She totally gets it if you feel that the Political Parties are tainted, but she hasn't seen any evidence of it here, but she knows there was a reason that everything went down like it did. She would hate for this to become a dividing factor for the Board, she hopes that we can come up with something that would be palatable to the entire Board.

Commissioner Hawbaker then stated that the did not feel there is anything tainted about the current composition or membership of the Board of Elections. He is not casting aspersions on anybody. There have been some instances where Open Meetings Open Records were not complied with. That kind of supervision was not in the scope of Mr. Wilson's authority because of this whole situation. All he is saying is that it is outside the scope that Mr. Wilson has to exercise over that office. He is not casing aspersions on anybody at the Board of Elections it is just structurally the voters can affect the performance of the Chief Appraiser's duties by removing him as boss. The voters have the right of direct action, even more so than through the County. Nobody has that kind of influence as far as the membership of the Board of Elections is concerned or the Elections Supervisor.

Mr. Maner stated that the County Manager and Attorney draft formal language for proposed changes and bring to the Board of Commissioners for a vote to support changes in the County's enabling legislation. In the meantime, Mr. Wilson will do some background research on other Counties and how their Board of Elections are set up.

Ms. Windham stated that she sees two issues, one in how the Board of Elections is made up and the other being who the Elections Supervisor reports to. She then asked if we are talking about both or just the reporting of the Elections Supervisor.

Commissioners Hawbaker and Dutton stated that they would like to see both.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that we can expect a fire storm from those citizens who are with the two parties because as far as they are concerned the Elections Board is doing a great job by selecting the people that serve on that Board. She is not willing to wade into that with them, but she does foresee that being an issue.

Mr. Maner then stated that the draft is to address supervision as well as Board make-up.

Commissioner Dutton stated he would like to see both changed, the Board to be appointed by the Board of Commissioners like other posts appointments and the supervision of the Elections Supervisor to fall under the County Manager.

Mr. Maner then stated that he would like to bring this topic to closure as we are not making any headway. He further stated that it sounds to him that there needs to be a public discussion regarding the legislation and always consider what the unintended consequences might be to the community of these changes. Always consider how this may affect the community.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated she would like to have a public meeting to talk about our desire to look at this and get some public input about changing the way the Board of Elections is appointed. To her that is the biggest issue for her it isn't whether the County Manager has full control over the administrative part of the Board of Elections. We can't not finance them. If we see there is going to be a flood, we might want to back up off of it, but if the general public and political parties are okay with it going down like that then she is not going to fight it.

Commissioner Hawbaker would like to have that public meeting during the Extraordinary Session on February 17<sup>th</sup> so that the request can be considered during this legislative session. If this Board decided that membership on the Board Elections are to be post appointments, one spot per commissioner then we could make those post appointments at the January 2021 meeting.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor asked that an Agenda Item be placed on the February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting to have a public hearing two weeks later on February 17<sup>th</sup>. That will give us almost three weeks to let the people know about it on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Maner then thanked the board for being respectful of each other in working through this matter.

9. 2020 Goals and Objectives – Facilitator Gordon Maner

Mr. Maner stated that he has been capturing goals all along and wanted to know if the Board would like to add some more.

Mr. Wilson stated that he would like to talk about the goals that Mr. Maner has captured and see if the Board would like to add some more.

Commissioner Dutton stated that he feels we haven't completed some of last years goals for example we are still working toward splitting the circuit, getting the Public Defender actually bid out we are making progress in that direction as it takes a while, but he would like to add the goals that were not completed from last year on to this year so that we can ensure that those things get done.

Mr. Wilson then went back to the goals list for 2020 and covered the items individually. The last two on page three of the goals.

- Public Defender contract, we are working on that.
- We have been working with the Development Authority to increase their funding
- We have asked the legislature to split the circuit.

These items do need to be carried over for completion the remaining items we did discuss and talk about.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that we have decided on a date for the TSPLOST, but what is our goal for this coming year.

Mr. Wilson advised that the goal for this year would to do everything required to prepare, educate and bring together a committee to prepare for a TSPLOST vote in March 2021.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then said that the goal for 2021 will be to establish projects and get completely prepared for a 2021 TSPLOST. She then asked when the current SPLOST is scheduled to end.

Commissioner Hawbaker advised that the current SPLOST ends on March 31, 2022 and in order to have a seamless continuation of the SPLOST we would need a November 2021 regular SPLOST referendum because 90 days have to pass after the election and then you go to the first day of the next quarter so there would be a seamless continuation of that one cent.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then asked if we want to look at also establishing a SPLOST Committee as a short term project? Once we hit the TSPLOST vote it is going to be time to roll into the SPLOST.

Mr. Wilson stated that before December 31, 2020 and we need to have the projects approved for a SPLOST so that we can move forward.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that the goals for 2020 would be to be prepared for a SPLOST vote.

Commissioner Dutton stated that if we are going to add a new Justice Center to the SPLOST we need to go ahead and have a committee in place to discuss this matter and come up with proposals and cost estimates for the project.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then reminded the Board that any projects proposed for the 2021 SPLOST will require some upfront costs for planning and professional estimates of any project proposed.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated the projects will have to be on the referendum for November 2021.

Mr. Wilson stated that we need the next 11 months for the Board to decide what projects that you want on the 2021 SPLOST and if you want a project like the Justice Center then we need to hire an Architect to design it and advise what it is going to cost so next year we will have good cost figures.

Commissioner Hawbaker stated that we sent out and received responses from people who wanted to be on the TSPLOST committee. We need to contact those folks and see if they are still interested. So, we do have some pool to draw from and see if they will work on both a TSPLOST and a regular SPLOST. It is his hope that we will have people who will work in support of both referendums. We need to get a schedule set up to pick the projects then properly educate the people of the pros and cons and let them education the citizens.

Mr. Wilson then advised that the way it has historically been done is the Board of Commissioners choose the projects then you get a committee to promote those projects. He thinks that some of the members of the committee in the past has thought that they were going to pick projects, so we need to make it clear that the Board of Commissioners picks the projects, your job is to support those projects and push them forward.

Commissioner Hawbaker then asked Mr. Wilson to invite those who want to be on the TSPLOST committee in and let them know exactly what the TSPLOST committee is and what they will be expected to do. Let them know this committee is not to pick the projects, but to go out and inform the public of the projects and how the projects will benefit the County.

Mr. Maner then advised that he has three goals for 2020:

- To continue working on 2019 partially completed goals.
- Get completely prepared for a TSPLOST referendum in March 2021
- Board of Commissioners and staff to identify projects in preparation of promoting a November 2021 SPLOST. Develop a timeline for that

preparation.

Commissioner Miller then stated that he would like to look at a possible millage rate reduction this year. We have taken care of the County Employees and other items over the last few years, we need to look at taking care of the property owners.

Mr. Wilson then reminded the Board that the budget he proposed this year was at one level and the Board added over \$1.5 million to that budget proposal. The Board added the equivalent of almost a mil of tax that you decided to put on lease-purchase. We purchased the items this year, but the first payment will come due in 2021. He then asked the Board to please remember when you want these tax reductions you can't have your cake and eat it too.

Chairman Flowers-Taylor then asked Mr. William to repeat what he just said so she could better understand.

Mr. Wilson advised that his budget had a very small tax increase, but the Board came on top of that and added \$1.5 million in equipment for Public Works.

Chairman Flowers-Taylor then stated "That being said, we haven't started paying for that yet?"

Mr. Wilson responded correct. We did this on lease purchase, basically we put it on a credit card, but the first payment won't come out of fiscal year 2020, it will come due in fiscal year 2021, but yall are locked into it because you approved it above and beyond his budget and this is the second year in a row. So, when you say you want a tax reduction, he is already \$300,000 in the hole from where we are now. Mr. Wilson stated that a millage rate reduction could be a goal, but it more than likely will not be a goal that is met.

Commissioner Miller stated it would be a lot easier to pass the SPLOSTs if we were able to reduce the millage rate.

Commissioner Johnson then asked if we were making payments on the airport as well.

Mr. Wilson advised that we would be making payments on the Airport for the next 18 years.

Chairman Flowers-Taylor then stated that the goal for eradicating substandard housing and Newton Galloway, Zoning Attorney, is supposed to be working on an ordinance for substandard Commercial Buildings as well. So, this would be building abatement for everything. She advised that this should still be a goal for us that we are trying to eradicate blighted buildings. She then asked about the funding for this goal.

Mr. Wilson stated that we are beginning to spend some of the allocation for this year, but we won't spend all of it, but we want to continue to increase funding yearly for substandard abatement of housing, industrial and commercial. This year we went from \$50,000 to \$75,000 and the plan is to go from \$75,000 to \$100,000 in FY 2021 if we can.

Commissioner Miller then asked how much it costs per structure to tear it down.

Mr. Wilson stated that it normally costs somewhere between \$5-6,000 per house if you have to abate asbestos. The old mill that needs to be cleaned up on High Falls Road in tipping fees alone will run in excess of \$50,000 to \$75,000 and this with the City working with us to reduce the tipping fees to a minimum.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then advised that we do not have a mechanism to get reimbursed for the money we have to spend to abate these properties.

Mr. Wilson and Ms. Windham then advised that we do have a mechanism in place to get reimbursed should the property sell and it will apply to both residential and commercial properties. Mr. Wilson advised that what they are waiting on is the Ordinance that says what we have to do. We have the process to put the lean on the property if it ever sales. It is going to take a while to adopt the Commercial/Industrial ordinance because it has to go to the Planning Commission and get their comments then it will come to the Board of Commissioners for your comments.

Ms. Windham stated she thinks that we can include Blight in the Ordinance because we are now issuing citations for the tent city, we had an arraignment day and Judge Rita Cavanaugh was very strict. Judge Cavanaugh issued a ruling for \$4,200 fine and gave the owner 30 days to clean up the property and the property has been cleaned up. The woman's daughter didn't show for court this week and there is a bench warrant out for her. Judge Cavanaugh was appalled by tent city and said we are not going to have this in Spalding County.

Mr. Wilson then told the Board that Judge Cavanaugh is taking these types of offenses very seriously.

Commissioner Dutton then stated that he would like to see a change to the Building Code. The City just changed their coding to exclude vinyl siding and he would like the County to look at revising our Architectural standards.

Commissioner Dutton and Chairperson Flowers-Taylor requested that a Resolution asking that the legislation currently under consideration that will take the building standards out of hands of local government be defeated. ACCG has a sample resolution for this and we will place it on the February 3<sup>rd</sup>



Agenda for your consideration.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then advised that a short term goal is to increase our Architectural Standards and draft a resolution to the legislators that we oppose any legislation that takes away our ability to control what is built in our community.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then asked if we are going set a policy based on the cost of living index? I know that we currently have our staff at where we need them to be, but the cost of living rises every year. Do we want to measure how we compensate our employees based on what the Annual Cost of Living is nationally, or will we say that you will get a 1% cost of living and budget for it, because if we don't we will be right back in the same circumstance in five years where we actually 5% behind everybody in the industry like we have been in the past. She doesn't know what the number should be, but it would do us a dis-service not to plan some sort of annual increase.

Mr. Wilson then advised that he was planning on proposing a 2% cost of living increase. He stated that 1.9 to 2.1% percent is what we are hearing. So he was planning on proposing a 2% cost of living in the budget. The Board can tell me either way.

Chairman Flowers-Taylor stated she would like for the employees to be able to depend on at a minimum a 1% cost of living every year because we all know that it's not going to cost any less to live. Whether or not we can do that will depend on the budget, but she would like to see Mr. Wilson build that in. She then stated to that end she has some questions out proficiency pay and she had talked with Mr. Wilson, Michelle Irizarry and Miles Neville about it.

She then stated that she doesn't understand how in some jobs we let people go to school and we pay for them to go to school and upon completion they receive proficiency pay, but others have to pay for the schooling for the job and we turn around and give them incentive pay. She feels that may be a glitch we didn't see when we came up with this program.

Mr. Wilson then advised that Public Safety is probably the best example to use for this as Public Safety benefits more from proficiency pay than other departments because they do training, every day of every month of every year. He then asked Glenn Polk about how they award proficiency pay.

Deputy Chief Glenn Polk advised that there are 10 different paths that a firefighter can utilize to earn proficiency pay. Medical is not a required skill so they do not pay for any medical training. If the individual wants to obtain medical training certification, you get that on your own, then you get rewarded. The thing about the Fire Services is you have to get 14-hours of mandated training to keep your certification. So, our rule for a very long time is that we let you go to one class and we allocate your leave to allow you to

attend that class. That one class may qualify for one of the 10 paths, it may not it depends. We try to base the training on 100-150 hours of training per path to qualify which could be 4-6 classes that you will have to pass in order to qualify for that 2.5% raise.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that we just came up with this policy last year which was a major goal, but when she looks at some of the other areas that don't necessarily present the employees with the ability for people to move forward and engage upwardly. Then we have a large number of law enforcement and fire personnel who are receiving the proficiency pay and others that have no opportunity to receive the proficiency pay.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that if a person comes to us and we require them to have a Masters Degree for their job, she feels that your pay when you come to us should be indicative of the fact that you came with a Masters Degree.

Mr. Wilson then asked if this individual went ahead and got a Doctorate Degree would they be compensated.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor state "yes" because that is above what is required for the job.

Miles Neville, Human Resource Director, then stated that is how the program is currently set up. If the position requires a Bachelors Degree when you take that job, you don't get a Bachelors Degree Proficiency Pay, but if you go later and get a Master's Degree or you enter into the job with a Masters Degree you have the potential to get that incentive pay. We don't reward you extra for a required degree.

Mr. Neville stated in preparation for this portion of the Agenda, he talked with other Cities and Counties and in Public Safety they all do it the same way that we do it and if we don't do it that way they are simply going to go across the street, not necessarily to the City, but to another County that will compensate them for that training.

Sheriff Dix then outlined the training steps and requirements for the different levels within the Sheriffs Office, he advised that out of 153 employees, there are currently 59 employees that are benefiting from this program and only 14 of those are getting 5% because they have at least two of the certifications that meet this criteria. He stated that he agrees with Mr. Neville, if we make these individuals take 40 hours of their annual leave to take these classes, they will to Coweta County where they won't have to use their annual leave to take the classes. When you look at the proficiency pay for our department is taking less than 1% of our budget to recognize these individuals. You are getting a better quality employee, you are able to recruit a better quality employee when they see these things come in and you are able to retain those employees.

Sheriff Dix stated that since the County implemented the pay scale and the incentive pay the number of employees leaving their employment with Spalding County has dropped off dramatically. Folks are happy, they are satisfied in their jobs and they are satisfied with their pay. This is a multi-faceted win.

Mr. Maner then ask if this would suffice:

Staff to explore incentives for training and classes beyond what is required for all employees with provisions for staying after training. Provide options for cost to the Board of Commissioners for consideration in the 2021 budget.

Chairperson Flower-Taylor stated that her concession is that if a person gets proficiency pay for completing training that they not just walk away from the position to go to a higher paying job.

#### 10. Discuss FY 2021 Goals and Objectives – Facilitator Gordon Maner

- Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then state that the short term goal would be to complete the contract for Public Defender.
- Commissioner Dutton would really like it if Veterans Day be granted as a holiday for County Employees.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that she would like for Good Friday to be designated as a rolling holiday and those individuals wanting to take off Veterans Day could take that rolling holiday. Usually during the course of the year we wind up giving one or two additional days off.

Mr. Wilson stated that right now we have 10 paid holidays of which Good Friday is one of them.

Mr. Neville advised in 2018, the City of Griffin added Veterans Day so they have 11 holidays on the books. He did the research to find out how many others did Veterans Day and he was surprised to see how few counties and cities observed Veterans Day. At the time he reached out only about 25% of the counties and cities were doing Veterans Day, but since that time there have been a good many more that are observing Veterans Day.

Commissioner Dutton then asked if we could see how much it is going to cost and vote on it at a later date.

Mr. Wilson advised that the only thing it would cost would be productivity for the day.

Commissioner Johnson stated that people probably assume the County is

closed on that date anyway.

Mr. Wilson stated that it could be included the new budget as part of our package for employees benefits effective July 1.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor and Commissioner Johnson both feel this would be a good possibility.

- Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then added that the jail had not been discussed. We are going to start talking about the upcoming SPLOST projects and we are going to have to decide how to determine the most important things to be placed on the SPLOST we have a need for a new jail, but at the same time the Development Authority is looking for more land. If you look at some of the Judicial Complexes that have been built recently, we are talking \$80, \$90, \$100 million in cost. This is well beyond anything that we can do. So, it would be helpful to know if there is some plan that can be phased in. If the project can be broken apart to accommodate Administrative, Jail, Courtrooms, etc. We need to have some idea of where we are going with law enforcement.

Commissioner Dutton then stated that last year there was a consensus of the Board to have Judge Thacker start a Discussion Committee to review with the Sheriff and others how to do that very thing. How do we move from where we are to “What do we need?” “What do we want it to look like?” and “How can we get there?” They are already having those meetings.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that she would like to see if we can only allocate \$20-25 million to the Justice Complex initiative, how can that money be utilized in order to phase in the overall picture of what it needs to become. Would it be Administrative, Court Rooms, or maybe we would just build barracks? I think this is something that we are going to have to accommodate a piece at a time because there won't be enough money in 2 SPLOSTS to build a complete facility, but we do need to start that conversation immediately.

Commissioner Dutton stated there is a meeting next week that involves the people who would develop those plans already scheduled.

Sheriff Dix stated the meeting is a starting point to find out in which direction we need to go in order to answer the questions that you have. It is a preliminary meeting to get to where Chairperson Flowers-Taylor is talking about.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated we should know by March of 2021 what is going to be on our SPLOST for November 2021. She then asked: “At what point in 2020 are we going to be the projects that Law Enforcement is going to give us?” At this point it is very nebulous and she would like to know that by July we are going to have recommendation.

Sheriff Dix stated that he is hopeful that the meeting next week they will be able to solidify some of that, because they will all be at the table.

Commissioner Dutton then asked the Sheriff that the group bring something to the Board of Commissioners by June 2020.

Commissioner Johnson then added that it should not just be this project it should be all of the projects.

Mr. Maner then stated what he has as a Goal:

- Develop a Public Safety Planning Schedule for 10-year needs, related costs and potential funding sources to be presented by the Sheriff to the Board by June 2020.

Mr. Wilson asked Sheriff Dix to include him in the meeting as well.

- Commissioner Dutton then stated that in 2020 he would like to have at least broken ground on all of the outstanding SPLOST projects, if they haven't been completed.

Mr. Wilson stated that a location for the pool has to be chosen, we might break ground, if the location is finalized.

Animal Shelter will be built this year. We will do something on Heritage Park. We will decide a location for the pool by this time next year. We need a decision on Aquatic Center location by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Maner advised that all current SPLOST projects need to be put on the fast track as much as possible. Aquatic Center location by March 31.

- Commission Hawbaker stated that Spalding County needs to be making better use of technology to inform those who are willing to be informed about such things as what a 33 gallon bag of garbage would look like, what it cost to resurface a mile of roadway and one of the local stations has a program called "News By The Number." This will probably be something for the new Citizen Engagement Specialist.

All of this would be something that would be worthwhile, maybe Michelle Irizarry can put this together for every meeting a 3-5 minute presentation to inform our citizens who are watching the meetings live. It will need to be on discrete topics, not raw and get the word out on the restraints and restrictions the Board is trying to contend with every day. What it costs to feed a prisoner at the jail, how many meals a year get served at the jail. What it costs to run the Animal Shelter and all that type of stuff that people are interested in. This would not only inform on what it costs, but it would help

them to know where their tax dollars are going.

Stephanie Windham suggested that the Department Heads do You-Tube videos, super concise to allow for peoples' attention span.

Sheriff Dix added that he feels the Board of Commissioner need to do the videos because the public needs to see your faces and hear your voices. Making you more than just snap shots in a local newspaper. They need to know what you sound like, what you look like and how passionate you are about the things your are undertaking in our community. He feels this would be a good opportunity to personalize a little as well.

Mr. Maner captured:

- Make better use of technology to tell the County's story.
- Inform the public by participating in programs like "News By The Numbers." Look at Commissioners and Department Heads creating You-Tube videos.

Mr. Maner then asked what the Board found most beneficial about today.

- Chairperson Flowers-Taylor – She feels that the Board worked very well together today and they worked through some very difficult conversations.
- Commissioner Dutton – We reaffirmed to ourselves and each other that we can have those difficult discussions, we can disagree and be totally on the opposite sides of a situation and still be friends and work together.
- Commissioner Miller – Regarding the Aquatic Center when we have more of an idea of what it is going to cost and he feels it will be important to get the reports from the engineers and architects so that we can make a decision.
- Jinna Garrison – The whole day has been beneficial, she is able to get a better grasp of what is being requested.
- Miles Neville – It was great to get some face time with the Commissioners and just know that I appreciate all that you do.
- Glenn Polk – It is always good for him to understand the big picture, his department has a little part to play, but it is an important piece of the whole.
- Mike Byrd – It was very beneficial to him, being new to the County, it helps him to understand the processes and it will help the Fire Department to have better communications with the Commissioners.
- Commissioner Johnson – She appreciates the Board's passion in representing our constituents and she feels they would appreciate what we are doing for the County. She things we will have a good 2020 year and there will be a lot of hard decisions to make, but she feels we will get there.
- Commissioner Hawbaker – Stated that he echoed his colleagues in having some difficult conversations. He thanked the Department Heads for their participation. He is looking forward to 2020 as well.
- Michelle Irizarry – Stated it was good for her to be here to better understand why some of the Board feels the way they do about certain projects.

- Sometime you may be looking at a project from one viewpoint, but you never thought of it from the other.
- Kathy Gibson – Stated it is always good to attend this meeting every year to get a grasp of the back side of the decision making. Most of the time I only see what happens during a meeting, and rarely see what led up to the decision.
  - Sheriff Dix – Stated that he feels that everyone who attended should be proud of themselves because even though there were heated discussions, no one said “We’re not doing this” or “We can’t do this” it was all working to a point. Knowing that even if you disagree, you are still moving forward to find a solution, not being so stubborn that it ends. He feels the meeting was very productive and thanked the Board for allowing him to be here today.
  - William Wilson – Defined Obtainable Goals. We got some definition and that is the hardest part of his job because he has five different folks going five different ways and at this meeting we generally sat on the same page and try to get there and he appreciates everyone trying to do that.

Mr. Maner then stated that it was really good to watch everyone present respectfully disagree with each other and share your viewpoints on why you think the way you do on certain projects are matters that you are asked to consider. He then stated that he has done a number of retreats with this group and this is one of the best he has attended in coming up with some final goals and leaving here with some clear direction.

## **11. Adjournment**

***Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Hawbaker to adjourn the meeting at 3:34 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by all.***