

After Agenda

**Board of Commissioners of Spalding County
Work Session
Monday, November 2, 2020
4:00 PM
Room 108, Annex Building**

The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session in Room 108 of the Spalding County Annex on Monday, November 2, 2020, beginning at 4:00 p.m. with Chairperson Gwen Flowers-Taylor presiding. Commissioners James Dutton, Rita Johnson and Bart Miller were present for the meeting. Commissioner Donald Hawbaker was absent from the meeting. Also present were County Manager, William P. Wilson, Jr., Assistant County Manager, Michelle Irizarry, Deborah Bell, Community Development Director and Kathy Gibson, Executive Secretary to record the minutes.

I. OPENING (CALL TO ORDER) by Chairperson Gwen Flowers-Taylor.

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND ALL OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

II. INVOCATION

Commissioner James R. Dutton, District #2 delivered the invocation.

III. PLEDGE TO FLAG

Commissioner Bart Miller, District #4 led the Pledge to the Flag.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discuss the 2020 Capital Improvement Element (CIE) and Community Work Program (CWP) for Spalding County, City of Orchard Hill and City of Sunny Side.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then asked if the Board had an understanding of what the CIE and CWP were about.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she had a good idea, but Commissioner Dutton stated that he would like to have a better understanding of the Capital Improvement Element and the Community Work Program for Spalding County.

Mr. Wilson then advised that in order to receive Impact Fees, the County has to have an Impact Fee Ordinance and you have to set a level of service. Every year the County has to prepare a Capital Improvements Element update to advise what projects have been completed and account for how the Impact Fee money has been spent. Mr. Wilson then stated that Spalding County developed the Impact Fee Program and adopted the ordinance in 2006 or 2007.

Commissioner Dutton then asked what specifically are the impact fees?

Mr. Wilson stated that Impact Fees are charged when someone purchases

a building permit.

Commissioner Dutton then asked if it was only on building permits, or if it was levied on other permits as well?

Mr. Wilson advised that impact fees are charged on only new construction.

Commissioner Johnson then asked if the Dog Park was an Impact Fee project?

Mr. Wilson stated that portions of the Dog Park was an Impact Fee Project. Park and Recreation is the biggest recipient of Impact Fees. He then asked Debbie Bell, Community Development Director the current charge for Impact Fees?

Ms. Bell advised it was about \$1,650 per house.

Mr. Wilson then advised the County also has an equivalent residential unit cost for commercial construction. Any commercial, industrial, project pays an Impact Fee and once you levy an Impact Fee ordinance you can't make any adjustments to the stated fee. If there is an adjustment, the difference has to be made up and it has to come out of the General Fund. Impact Fees are only for Capital Expenditure Projects. They cannot be for routine maintenance, they cannot be utilized for employees, benefits or anything like that.

Spalding County built the L.B. Norton Fire Station with impact fees. Over the past two years, we have purchased two quick response vehicles for the Fire Department. We provide money for books at the library every year on a quarterly basis. We collect small amount for Homeland Security, for E-911 and for the Jail for future expansion.

Impact Fees are charged on new development. The county has to set a level of service determined by the Board and the level of service with new housing and industry coming in will create additional demand for services and the purpose of the impact fee is to provide funding for additional services.

Mr. Wilson then stated that we can only expand the services that we are already providing. Chairperson Flowers-Taylor has been asking for four years to put the new Instructional and Competition Pool on Impact Fees. You can't do that because the County currently does not offer that level of service. Now, should the County decide to take over City Pool we would then have a basic level of service and we could then start collecting an Impact Fee to assist us with the construction of a new Instructional and Competition pool.

Commissioner Miller then asked if the taxes would go up?

Mr. Wilson explained that this is a one-time fee that is implemented at the time the building permit is issued and when you apply for commercial/industrial, we have what is called an equivalent residential unit. He stated for example the adult beverage store that is going in on SR15 will have to pay an Impact Fee when they purchase a building

permit. We also have agreements with Sunny Side, Orchard Hill and the City of Griffin that when they issue building permits, our impact fee is collected at the same time. All of that money goes into a special account that can only be used for impact fees and it is accounted for separately and within that account there are approximately 30 different categories. Every month when building permits are issued the money is sent to Jinna Garrison and it is put in the Impact Fee Account and she allocates to each of the categories in each project.

The Dog Park was an Impact Fee project, the Ninth Street Bathrooms and Pavilion is an Impact Fee project and the Quarry's Edge Trailhead with the Bathroom and Pavilion is an Impact Fee Project. The L.B. Norton Fire Station was an Impact Fee project and 97% of that qualified for Impact Fees and we have three more stations to go on-line and 100% of those stations will qualify for Impact Fees.

Mr. Wilson then added that the expense with the Fire Department is not the Fire Station and putting trucks in it. It cost approximately \$3 million for a Fire Station and \$2 million to put trucks in it which is a \$5 million one-time expenditure, the expense is the staffing and operation of that Fire Station. We do have three slated for the future, but right now we don't have the population to pay for the staffing and operation.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor stated that as we have more population, we can justify the need to go forward with the fire stations and the expense will also be justified.

Mr. Wilson advised that money will be put in the Impact Fee fund with every permit that is issued. Mr. Wilson then stated that if there is an established building and you are going to increase the size of a building, an impact fee will only be implemented on the additional square footage, not on the original structure.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then stated that when this was started there was a list of projects that were impacted by increasing population. Projects included the Sheriff's Department, Parks and Rec, Library, E-911 and Homeland Security. Every time these funds are received they are distributed among the projects and the person who worked the formula up for us determined the percentage that would be distributed to each project. What has happened in the past is Planning and Development goes to Parks and asks if they have any updates for the work plan and by the time it gets to the Board all of the work has been done and we don't have an opportunity to have input on projects that are added. She stated that for the last two years we have talked about doing something different and Mr. Jacobs asked that we wait until this year and now he's not here. She then stated that she doesn't want to just blanket approve this and we really haven't looked at it. If there are things that are no longer relevant or things that should be changed and it needs to be done.

Mr. Wilson then presented the annual update prepared by Debbie Bell, it was attached to the Agenda for review prior to the meeting. The actual project portion of it includes Master Plans, Project Plans and Infrastructure Projects. This is the most current update on what is being

done with Impact Fees.

Ms. Bell stated that when we update the CIE Programs we have to account for all of the dollars that haven't been spent yet in the projects. If we don't then money that doesn't get spent for Impact Fee projects ends up having to be refunded to those who paid it in. That was one of the cautions that Mr. Ross wanted us to be cognizant of when changing the CIE. We need to account for that amount of money being utilized.

Ms. Bell stated that historically the Short-Term Work program combined and became the CWP and was then combined with the CIE. So, this is the same format. Mr. Ross advised that for the purpose of submitting the CIE, we only need to show Impact Fee Projects. That is the only thing that we have to show DCA. Ms. Bell stated that in the future she can separate the two reports one for the CIE and one for the CWP and it will be a smaller report that will go to DCA. This is the Work Program and Impact Fee bundled into one report.

Mr. Wilson stated that on the agenda this evening the Board will be asked to vote on an update to the Park and Rec portion of the Impact Fee program. Because there have been so many changes from when this program was drafted and our priorities have changed since that time. Plus, many of the projects on the original list have been completed. Once they are completed, they are left on the list for a year and then they drop off. This is on the Agenda for this evening, the cost is approximately \$15,000 and Impact Fee does provide for an Administrative Fee which can be used for a CIE Update which is for doing things like this. Our Comprehensive Plan will be updated in 2022 and we need to get the Park and Rec portion completed.

Chairperson Flowers-Taylor then asked if we wanted to purchase park land if that could be done with Impact Fees?

Mr. Wilson advised that it could, but there is a very complicated formula based on the level of service that we have now, how much population growth we expect through our Comp Plan for the next 10 years. The key to this is getting the update done.

Bill Ross is the expert in the State of Georgia for Impact Fees, he did ours in 2005. He has been to court on Impact Fees and has never lost. He is the best in the business and he is very good to us when we call in. He never charges when we call him. You will see tonight if you look at his proposal, it includes unlimited calls to him about Impact Fees.

Mr. Wilson stated that you will not be issued a building permit in Spalding County, the City of Griffin, the City of Orchard Hill or the City of Sunny Side without paying the Impact Fee first. It is collected at the time of permit. Some entities collect the Impact Fee at the time the Certificate of Occupancy is issued; however, we chose to collect it at the time of permit.

Commissioner Dutton then asked what exactly the Board would be approving this evening?

Mr. Wilson advised that the Board would be asked to approve the

transmittal of this list to Three Rivers, they will review it and if they approve it, they will send it to DCA. The Board will be doing a Resolution of Transmittal this evening. If the agencies approve the submittal then we will do a resolution adopting it at a later date. This is a yearly requirement because we collect Impact Fees and this tells them that we are using the money for.

Commissioner Johnson stated that it is her understanding that a group is planning on attending the meeting this evening to hear about the Infrastructure improvements (water and sewer) that is listed under Community Improvements/Infrastructure Projects.

Mr. Wilson stated that this is only the Dundee Mills Sewer project, it has absolutely nothing to do with expansion of sewer in the County. The Water Authority came to the Board of Commissioners in 2019 and the BOC agreed to apply for a CDBG grant, because the SCWA can't apply for CDBG grants. The Water Authority has paid for everything and the work actually started last week on Phase 1. There are 3-4 phases depending on how we configure it and the total cost will be \$3.8 million to provide sewer within that entire mill village. We are currently doing approximately 100 houses. This has nothing to do with expansion of sewer, that can't be paid for by Impact Fees.

Mr. Wilson then asked if there were any changes the Board wanted to make to the report.

Commissioner Dutton stated she has a problem with the Softball Complex project as listed.

Mr. Wilson advised that staff is aware of that and it will be amended with the study that the Board approves tonight. Mr. Wilson stated that the project was submitted in the original program and if we remove the project without replacing it, we will lose \$2.2 million for other projects. So, we have to keep it in there until we have another project of that value and staff is hoping that should we acquire City Park Pool, the level of service here, the new Instructional/Therapy Competition Pool can be added to the list for Impact Fees.

Mr. Wilson then advised the Board that the Property Tax Bills were printed last week and mailed out on Saturday. The Bills will be due on December 30, 2020.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/Second by Johnson/Dutton to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by all.