

# After Agenda

**Board of Commissioners of Spalding County  
Extraordinary Session  
Monday, March 15, 2021  
6:00 PM  
Room 108, Annex Building**

**The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held their Extraordinary Session in Room 108 of the Spalding County Annex on Monday, March 15, 2021, beginning at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Clay Davis presiding. Commissioners Gwen Flowers-Taylor, James Dutton, Rita Johnson and Ryan Bowlden were present for the meeting. Also present were County Manager, William P. Wilson, Jr., Assistant County Manager, Michelle Irizarry, Administrative Services Director, Jinna Garrison, County Attorney, Stephanie Windham and Kathy Gibson, Executive Secretary to record the minutes.**

**I. OPENING (CALL TO ORDER)** by Chairman Clay Davis.

**PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND ALL OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

**II. INVOCATION**

Invocation was delivered by Commissioner James R. Dutton, District #2.

**III. PLEDGE TO FLAG**

Commissioner Rita Johnson, District #3, lead the Pledge to the Flag.

**IV. PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS**

1. Dr. Randy Peters and Airport Project Manager Bob Stapleton to present an update on the new Griffin-Spalding Airport Project.

Dr. Peters and Bob Stapleton gave a comprehensive presentation covering what the Airport Authority has been able to accomplish to date on the new airport and covering the next steps for moving the new airport forward.

They are currently working on Phase Two which includes relocation of existing high voltage utility lines, the funding has been approved and they are currently in the planning process. Land Acquisition for phase two is pending. Phase Three will include demolition of existing buildings on property that has been acquired. Site preparation which will include rough grade and obstacle clearance. Coordination of these efforts will be conducted with local, state and federal agencies – the U.S. Army Core of Engineers, State Water buffers, FEMA, etc. Phase Four will include final grading, provision of utilities to site, paving of the runway, taxi way, ramps and aprons. In this phase they will begin construction of new buildings – hangars, FBO, and ancillary facilities such as a fuel farm, etc. Installation of lights, nav-aids, precision GPS, etc. will also be part of Phase Four. In Phase Five the plan is to have existing Airport businesses relocate to the new airport and the airport should open for business in 2024. Phase Six will be the final disposition of 6A2 (current airport) property.

## V. PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS –

1. Consider approval of financial statements for the eight-month period ended February 28, 2021.

Jinna Garrison, Administrative Services Director, advised that she is available should the Board have any questions regarding the financial statements.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated the financial statement was hard for her to read, she had a question regarding the expenditures and a Capital Outlay total of 1800% over.

Ms. Garrison advised that the \$4.5 million was the Noresco improvement project that was done this year at the Law Enforcement Complex. The roof and the energy improvements. She advised that the revenue for this project was budgeted last year when we received it and she hasn't done a budget amendment this year and this will be in the year end or the next month budget amendments when she brings the CARES budget amendments.

***Motion/Second by Johnson/Dutton to accept the financial statements for the eight-month period ended February 28, 2021. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

## VI. CITIZEN COMMENT

Speakers must sign up prior to the meeting and provide their names, addresses and the topic they wish to discuss. Speakers must direct your remarks to the Board and not to individual Commissioners or to the audience. Personal disagreements with individual Commissioners or County employees are not a matter of public concern and personal attacks will not be tolerated. The Chairman has the right to limit your comments in the interest of disposing of the County's business in an efficient and respectable manner.

Speakers will be allotted three minutes to speak on their chosen topics as they relate to matters pertinent to the jurisdiction of the Board of the Commissioners. No questions will be asked by any of the commissioners during citizen comments. Outbursts from the audience will not be tolerated. Common courtesy and civility are expected at all times during the meeting. No speaker will be permitted to speak more than three minutes or more than once, unless the Board votes to suspend this rule.

**Bob Beyer, 516 Orchid Lights, Griffin, Georgia** spoke regarding the COVID Relief package that has just passed and how he would like for consideration be given to those in need in the County and in the City. Possible discussion with the Collaborative or the Commissioners having townhall meeting. There is a real need for good housing in the County.

**Spoke regarding the Bethany Road a private drive and the need for the County to assist in getting this road to where people can access their property:**

Larry Sutton, 133 Bethany Road, Griffin

Brandy Byard, 135 Bethany Road, Griffin

Andrea Latourrette, 129 Bethany Road, Griffin

**Michael Turner, 1726 Pineview Road, Griffin** stated that he would ask that the Board give serious thought to reopening the Senior Center.

Chairman Davis then asked Mr. Wilson to bring the Board up-to-date on the Bethany Road private driveway issue.

William Wilson, County Manager, advised that that driveway off Bethany Road was developed as a private drive, it is not a county road. It has never been a county road. The Land Bank Authority did purchase the road under past leadership. In January 2020, several residents contacted Commissioner Miller, we have researched the minutes and have researched everything on this. When this subdivision was built, the county allowed for a development on a private drive. In 2020, we amended our ordinance to not do that anymore, specifically because of this private drive. The developer failed to properly deed the drive to the property owners on the private drive, it changed hands and went into foreclosure. The bottom line is this is a private non-county road, the county does not accept dirt roads now, for the county to accept maintenance of this road it would now have to be graded, based, and paved to the county's specifications. The Public Works Department has been out there, they have talked with a number of people out there and explained the situation.

Mr. Wilson then stated that has emails where T.J. Imberger, Public Works Director, spoke with a lady who had been maintaining the road. This lady came by the Public Works Department and Mr. Imberger explained to her that the road was a private road and what that meant. At that time, we believe some work was done on that road by a private contractor, but the county has never maintained that road and it is unfortunate that the developer did not do what he was supposed to do, but we have several other roads in the county that are private roads. In the 90's the county did offer a way for private roads to be accepted by the county and as part of that program the landowners on the road had to sign over 80' of right-of-way, have the utilities relocated, have the road based and paved and then submitted to the county.

Commissioner Johnson then asked if a TSPLOST would solve this problem.

Mr. Wilson stated "no, this is private property, it does not belong to the county."

Commissioner Bowlden then asked what it would take to make this county property?

Mr. Wilson advised that according to the current rules, it will have to be graded, based and paved to county specifications and then deeded to the county.

Chairman Davis stated that he wanted Mr. Wilson to cover this while it was fresh on everyone's mind. This is a big decision, and it would set a precedent that we are going to have to work our way through.

## **VII. MINUTES –**

1. Consider approval of minutes for the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Work Session and Executive Session of February 25, 2021, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Zoning Public Hearing and Executive Session on February 25, 2021, and the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting and Executive Session on March 1, 2021.

***Motion/Second by Johnson/Flowers-Taylor to approve the minutes for the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Work Session and Executive Session of February 25, 2021, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Zoning Public Hearing and Executive Session on February 25, 2021, and the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting and Executive Session on March 1, 2021. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

#### **VIII. OLD BUSINESS –**

1. Lift from the table and consider termination of lease agreement with the Griffin Spalding Historical Society for the Camp Stephens property.

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Flowers-Taylor to lift from the table and consider termination of a lease agreement with the Griffin-Spalding Historical Society for the Camp Stephens property. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

Commissioner Dutton stated that it is his understanding that staff has talked with the Historical Society and they want to take over the care of the property.

Mr. Wilson advised that is correct.

Commissioner Dutton then asked if there were any stipulations to the contract that allowed us to maintain it as a park, so people could come and go. Was that part of the maintenance contract? Will this go back to being private property owned by the Historical Society or are they going to continue to operate it?

Mr. Wilson advised that intend to keep it open. There are two Georgia historical monuments there and the plan is to keep it open.

***Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to terminate the lease agreement with the Griffin-Spalding Historical Society for the Camp Stephens property. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

2. Consider appointment to the McIntosh Trail Community Service Board to replace Judge Sid Esary.

Chairman Davis advised that this item should read: Lift from the table and consider appointment to the McIntosh Trail Community Service Board to replace Judge Sid Esary as it was tabled at a meeting earlier this year. He then asked for a motion to lift from the table.

***Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to lift from the table an appointment to the McIntosh Trail Community Service Board to replace Judge Sid Esary. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

Chairman Davis then advised that if there was no other name the Board wished to present for this appointed seat, that he would like to be considered for this appointment.

***Motion/Second by Davis/Flowers-Taylor to appoint Chairman Clay Davis to the McIntosh Trail Community Service Board to replace Judge Sid. Esary. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

3. Consider request from the Griffin-Spalding County Board of Education to appoint Bruce Ballard to represent the BOE on the Griffin-Spalding Land Bank Authority.

Chairman Davis stated that this item should also read: Lift from the table and consider appointment to the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority to fill the Griffin-Spalding County Board of Education seat as this item was also tabled at an earlier meeting.

***Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to lift from the table and consider appointment to the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority to fill the Griffin-Spalding County Board of Education representative. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

Chairman Davis then asked for a motion to accept the recommendation for the Griffin-Spalding Board of Education and appoint Bruce Ballard as their representative on this Authority.

***Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to appoint Bruce Ballard as the Griffin-Spalding County Board of Education representative to the Land Bank Authority. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS –**

1. Consider request for an Amplification Permit to host a wedding and reception at 2613 Newnan Road from 6:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 31, 2021.

Mr. Wilson advised that the application was forwarded to the Sheriffs' Office, Public Works and Community Development and the departments have no problem with this event. Staff recommends approval.

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Bowlden to approve an Amplification Permit to host a wedding and reception at 2613 Newnan Road from 6:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 31, 2021. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

2. Consider approval of an MOU with the University of Georgia, the City of Griffin, the Griffin- Spalding Board of Education and the Archway Partnership to continue the Griffin-Spalding Archway Partnership for FY 2022.

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Johnson to approve an MOU with the University of Georgia, the City of Griffin, the Griffin- Spalding Board of Education and the Archway Partnership to continue the Griffin-Spalding Archway Partnership for FY 2022. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

3. Consider approval on first reading an ordinance to establish Planning and Regulation of Development in Spalding County.

Mr. Wilson stated that Ms. Windham would be addressing this item, as these are changes in ordinances requested by the Board to give us higher standards, but

predominantly allow for nuisance abatement, which the current ordinances do not.

Stephane Windham, County Attorney, stated that this ordinance would bring the County more in line with State minimum standards. The ordinance is referencing DCA codes that State law references, that the County was not referencing in the past. The ordinance also incorporates international building codes that are now relied upon by DCA. The ordinance provides for a better administrative process for enforcement. So, at this time we are not actually changing the rules as far as what is considered a violation, but we are making it easier to enforce the ordinances that we have in place. She stated there is one thing that she would like to change when it is voted on, she referenced Code Enforcement Officials throughout the ordinance and Mr. Hanes suggested that it should read Building Officials and she agrees with that change. We are not creating a building department, that department will remain Community Development.

Commissioner Dutton then asked if this would change for commercial, industrial, or residential what can be built. We're not there yet, but we have been asking for that for two years now.

Ms. Windham advised that we are not there yet, but this ordinance does create more avenues for things to be declared a public nuisance as opposed to a private nuisance. So, that gives us more authority to act, where if it is a private nuisance a citizen would have to bring an action. If it is a public nuisance the county can take the action.

Commissioner Dutton then asked how far away are the requested changes to the housing codes and the building codes?

Ms. Windham stated that she has had meetings with Mr. Galloway, Mr. Hanes and Ms. Bell as the building codes are part of the Unified Development Ordinance or Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Wilson stated that the codes involved in making these changes are zoning codes and they have to go to the Planning Commission first for a public hearing before they come before the Board for consideration. He then pointed out that the ordinance will adopt the International Energy Conservation Code.

Ms. Windham stated that this ordinance is about enforcement and giving staff more tools in their toolbox to enforce. As Mr. Wilson has stated, when it comes to changing the UDO, it will have to go before the Planning Commission and is going to have to have a vote there, then there will be a Public Hearing prior to the changes coming to the Board. These things are all in the works. Mr. Hanes, Ms. Bell, Mr. Galloway and Ms. Windham have been in talks about this for a long time. We have spoken with Bob Dull at the Housing Authority and got his input as well. She has talked with Ms. O'Connor at the City of Griffin and discussed the way they handle their nuisance abatement, because they do a good job in this area. We've been getting input from all sources and we're changing what we can, as we can and this will allow us to better enforce the ordinances and make it easier for things to be declared a public nuisance which gives us more authority.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then asked for a simplified explanation of what the Energy Conservation Code would provide.

Brett Hanes, Charles Abbott Associates Representative, stated that the codes that are in this ordinance will make it easier for our officers to enforce the codes. In the past Chad Jacobs would come before the Board and asked that new codes

be adopted as DCA adopted them. The State has it in the O.C.G.A. where the State minimum codes are set by right, so those have always been in effect for new construction. In terms of existing construction, in the old mill houses and other dwellings built years ago, you are not going to find any insulation. He can personally assure you that every new house that has been built since his company started meets the International Codes. This isn't anything new that is being adopted, we are just stating it outright, as adopted and amended so this will not have to come before you again.

Mr. Hanes then advised that the current energy codes have been in effect since 2015 and that mandates the thickness of insulation put in the walls, the ceiling the floor, the insulation around your pipes in your crawlspace to make a house more energy efficient, including the actual U-factor in the windows and the glazing. These things have been enforced and will continue to be enforced. Again, this is only on new construction, additions, remodels, and things of this nature.

Mr. Hanes also advised that there is another section regarding the International Property Maintenance Code, which will take the place of Spalding County's current minimum housing and unfit building code. This is a permissive code that is allowed by the DCA. The City has adopted this code, and this gives us more regulation from both building department enforcement and code enforcement to regulate those existing structures.

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Bowlden to approve on first reading an ordinance to establish Planning and Regulation of Development in Spalding County with the change from Code Enforcement Official to Building Official throughout the document as recommended by the County Attorney. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

4. Consider approval of calendar of events for proposed November 2, 2021 SPLOST referendum.

Mr. Wilson stated that we have contacted both our investment banker and our bond counsel. Attached to the agenda items is a schedule for a November 2<sup>nd</sup> SPLOST referendum. It lists the absolute latest dates for the referenced action to occur in order to have a November 2<sup>nd</sup> election. A November 2<sup>nd</sup> election will allow the SPLOST to continue being collected by local vendors and there will not be an interruption. Right now, the 2016 SPLOST is scheduled to cease March 31, 2022. If this one is voted in on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 and passes, it goes into effect the first calendar quarter after 90 days. So, this would continue the SPLOST.

The current average is approximately \$800,000/month for the existing SPLOST and he is recommending \$750,000 because a new SPLOST would go for six years, if you have an intergovernmental agreement with the cities and we are assuming that you would again have an intergovernmental agreement, we have never had a SPLOST in Spalding County without an intergovernmental agreement. It can only go five years if you do not have one. \$750,000 per month would bring in \$54 million.

Chairman Davis would like to table this discussion and talk about a different way to approach this. We understand what has to be done and we have some time to be able to get this done, but I would like to table this action tonight.

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Johnson to table the proposed November 2, 2021 SPLOST. Motion carried unanimously by all.***

5. Consider approval of Quality Construction by McLeroy Inc. low bidder in the amount of \$1,495,884.55 for renovations to the Historic Rosenwald School at Fairmont Heritage Park.

Mr. Wilson stated that this project was bid out and Brian Upson with Paragon Consulting is here this evening. The low bid was \$1,495,884.55, we had estimated about \$1.8 million for this project. McElroy Construction, we have checked them out and we have no problem with their work and staff recommends approval of low bid.

Commissioner Dutton asked if this gets us everything that was discussed, or does it include only the minimums that were presented.

Mr. Wilson stated that this bid is the full picture with no “deducts” it includes the parking lot, everything to do with Rosenwald. He then reminded everyone that this is the Rosenwald School only, it is not the Equalization Building which will be done by the Housing Authority, nor is it the Gymnasium that will have to be considered at a later time. This bid is all inclusive, it is the parking, total renovation of the building, the bathrooms will be inside the building as discussed and a “historically restored” or as close to historical as possible classroom. The other five rooms will be vacant for use for historical and museum purposes.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then asked if the City had been consulted regarding the quality of work that McElroy did on the LCI project?

Mr. Upson advised that this is a different company. Mr. Upson stated that the company that did the LCI project was the grading/road work division this is the building side of the company. They are related, but it is a different company.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then asked what work this company has done for the City? She would like to go out and see the quality of the work performed by this company. Just because it is the low bid doesn't always mean it is the best way to go.

Commissioner Johnson stated that it shouldn't be hard to find out what projects they have done and go out and see their work.

Mr. Wilson stated that staff has been told that “heads will roll” if this project isn't completed by the end of the year. We have scheduled a pre-construction meeting for Friday to get things underway. If we delay the signing of this contract, that will further delay the start of the project.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that if we are going to get somebody to restore this school, she would like to see that they have done restorative work of this nature. She's not willing to jump in and start until we know that we have the right contractor for this project.

Brian Upson stated that when they receive a bid, there are references given for projects and those references were called. All of the responses received from the references were very positive. That is how Paragon went about making their recommendation. In the past they have had contractors whom they have gotten poor references on. Most recently, there was a bid for the Water Authority ,and we did not accept the low bid, we went to the second low bid and moved from the low bidder due to the reference check. We check their references we check their bonding capacity with other components to see if this contractor was qualified and they were found to be qualified.



***Motion/Second by Dutton/Bowlden to approve a contract with Quality Construction by McLeroy Inc. low bidder in the amount of \$1,495,884.55 for renovations to the Historic Rosenwald School at Fairmont Heritage Park. Motion carried 4-1 (Flowers-Taylor).***

6. Consider approval of Task Order Form from Paragon Consulting for cost estimates for a recreation pool and/or splash pad at Fairmont Park.

Mr. Wilson stated that this is a task order form from Paragon, working with Lyman Davis and Dooley for pricing of a recreation pool and/or a splash pad.

Commissioner Dutton stated that he would also like to include what the cost would be if there were two splash pads. There may be a discount if we did two at the same time.

Mr. Wilson stated that they need to know where to put the additional splash pad because the study will be location specific.

Commissioner Dutton stated that is a square on the proposed Aquatic Center layout that would be perfect for a splash pad.

Mr. Upson stated that when they price the splash pad for Fairmont, they can transpose those costs to the location at the Lakes.

Commissioner Dutton then added that if you are building two splash pads at the same time there may be some type of discount.

Mr. Upson stated they could price both and then get a dual cost to see if there is any economy in building two. We will do the four options under the current task order form because we will have already done most of the work under the original splash pad.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then asked where did we come up with a splash pad or a pool being at Fairmont?

Commissioner Johnson stated that she had gone to look at the location next to the gardens and thought it would be a great location.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that putting anything on that field, next to that garden, next to a housing complex is sticking too much stuff in one spot. People were upset about having pickleball at Wyomia Tyus Park. Why are we trying to cram this stuff over next to Fairmont? That whole space is going to be housing authority on one side and the garden on the other. She doesn't know where it came from, but there are certainly other places in the community that could use having those facilities. Fairmont has the garden. Fairmont has a state-of-the-art playground. Fairmont has two pavilions, and it will have Rosenwald at the top of the hill. What about the rest of the county?

Commissioner Johnson stated that we have talked about distance, we have talked about location, we're talking about the community being able to get there without transportation being an issue and at the time she went to look at it, Fairmont really did seem to be the ideal place for it. She is fine with looking at other areas, but we have said all along we need a location that people can get to without transportation being an issue.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that sometimes people think that they know what other people want and she thinks that sometimes we think we know what people in the black community want or in the poor community want and

nobody has really asked them if that is something they would like to have there. But it doesn't really matter if they want it there, we said we were going to build one somewhere in the County and there are certainly areas in the county that are a lot less developed. She is just saying that she doesn't know how we decided that Fairmont was the place where we wanted to stick one more thing.

Mr. Wilson stated that the Board of Commissioners asked for this location.

Chairman Davis stated that Paragon has to have a specific location to look at in order to come up with accurate costs because he will have to test the soil and do other tests for the evaluation. We either do nothing at this time and save the money on the splash pad and pool or we say we are going to look at Fairmont specifically. This is going to cost us money and if we're not going to put it at Fairmont there is no need and spending the money or waste his time and money to do this.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that if you are going to put the Aquatic Center at Green Valley and you're going to build a splash pad and an outside pool, you may as well put it at Green Valley.

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Johnson to approve the Task Order form with Paragon Consulting for a recreational pool and splash pad at Fairmont Park and with the addition of a splash pad at the Green Valley location. Motion carried 4-1 (Flowers-Taylor).***

7. Consider approval of TOF for construction of Aquatic Center at The Lakes at Green Valley.

Mr. Wilson stated that since the Board has voted to placed the Aquatic Center at the Lakes at Green Valley, this task order form gets that started. He then asked Mr. Upson to give the Board projection on when construction will start and when the center will be finished.

Mr. Upson stated that design of this project will take six months. So, we will be bidding it out in September/October of 2021 and then we should plan on 12-15 months for construction of the facility. Paragon will design the project with the Architect, then we will oversee the bidding and then we will manage construction throughout the process to make sure it is built per plans. Which takes us from today to the ribbon cutting.

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Bowlden to approve the Task Order Form for construction of the Aquatic Center at the Lakes at Green Valley. Motion carried 4-1 (Johnson).***

## **X. REPORT OF COUNTY MANAGER**

- ✓ Spalding County will host a blood drive on April 14th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Senior Center.
- ✓ The Griffin-Spalding County school system is holding a Meet and Greet with new Superintendent Keith Simmons. It will be at the College and Career Academy hanger on Monday, March 29th from 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- ✓ Zoning 101 is scheduled at the Senior Center on Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Then next Thursday we have you again all day for the Team Building exercise with the

gentleman from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. So we have a busy two weeks ahead.

- ✓ Spalding County sent a letter to the City of Griffin for their Planning Commission who is meeting tonight opposing the rezoning on Williamson Road and Debbie Bell was there making a presentation for the County's opposition to the rezoning on Williamson Road. It will come before the City Commissioners on Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

## **XI. REPORT OF ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER**

- On January 24, 2020, Ms. Irizarry sent out a policy regarding pit bulldogs' adoption. It had a policy, an application, and a certificate. This was a result of our working with the Foundation to try to adopt these dogs out. We have had this policy in place, and we have not had many people qualify because the policy is just too stringent. Because we are partnered with the Foundation and there is interest in adopting these pit bull dogs, she would like to recommend that the County move forward with adoption of the pit bull dogs, the same as we do with the other animal breeds at the shelter.

Commissioner Dutton stated that he is 100% supportive of not being breed specific.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then asked what the special requirements were in the policy for adoption of the pit bulls.

Ms. Irizarry stated the policy was very stringent in the liability insurance aspect. There had to be a \$100,000 property liability insurance policy. The dogs had to be registered and the owner would be issued a certificate. The dogs were limited to only one per home.

This would change it to where anyone who comes in the adoption would not be breed specific and if they wanted to adopt a pit bulldog, the only rules would be the same rules that apply to any of the other animals. Which is the spay and neutering and the vaccination and micro-chipping.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that the reason for having the stringent rule was because there was so much dog fighting. The animals are being spayed or neutered before leaving us. She feels it is a little reckless not to have something. She feels that some of the requirements could be lessened; however, she is afraid that somewhere we would not pay attention and someone, somewhere would end up getting a bunch of pit bulls. She simply feels that with the history in this county she feels it would be prudent for us to look at changing some of the restrictions, but she would like to have a check on them within a specified period of time so that we can make sure that the animal is not being used for fighting or is not being mistreated. She agrees that some of the restrictions may be too much, but we can't forget that we have had these problems with dog fighting.

Ms. Irizarry stated that in the two years she has been in Spalding County there have been no reports of dog fighting incidents and we have had a vicious and dangerous dog hearing, but neither of the breeds involved were pit bulls.

- Ms. Windham stated that she, Ms. Irizarry and Brent Foster worked on this policy, so she feels they can “tweak” it a little bit further.
- Vaccines administered through March 12<sup>th</sup> are 9,064 doses.
  - The COVID site test for tomorrow has been cancelled due to the anticipation of inclement weather.
  - The next Vaccine Administration Pod will be Friday, March 19 from 8 a.m.-5p.m. with expanded eligibility started on March 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - The next planning meeting for Pre-Disaster Mitigation will be Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Senior Center.
  - The Fire Department has hired four new personnel, their first day will be tomorrow. One just completed the Georgia Fire Academy Basic Firefighter Course and will come in certified. Two will start Monday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> and the last one will go in July. That means the last one will go in July. This leaves four open positions.
  - The Fire Department is also conducting a promotional process in April. The timeline will be: Written Test on April 15<sup>th</sup>, The Practical Assessment on April 26<sup>th</sup>, Final Interviews on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup>. They plan to post the promotional roster on May 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - There have been a total of 17 violations issued by Code Enforcement since the beginning of March.

## **XII. REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Gwen Flowers-Taylor** stated she spoke with Jeannie Brantley who is the Planning Director at Three Rivers Regional Commission about Southern Rivers EMC and their plan to expand broadband service starting out in Monroe County. Part of Spalding County on the Southern end, that abuts Barnesville and on the Butts County side are Southern Rivers EMC customers, so we may be eligible to get some broadband through the funds that have been allocated for this project. There will be a presentation at the next Three Rivers meeting by the people from Monroe County and Southern Rivers EMC talking about what their partnership is going to look like so anyone in the area who would be eligible, may in fact be eligible some of those funds to start expanding broadband in rural areas.

She will be very interested to find out what the new relief bill will in fact net to Spalding County. She knows that the money is supposed to go to cities and counties, but she doesn't know if what ACCG published is actually the money for the entire county or the money for Spalding County and then the City will have money. She feels this is a critical time for us to have an opportunity to take these funds and do some of the things that needed to be done but couldn't be done because of COVID. For her, the biggest thing was realizing how little internet service was available to most of Spalding

County. The fact that the school system had to go out and set up hotspots throughout the County so that children could do their homework. She will send an email out to everyone with the details. This will be a virtual meeting, and anyone interested in finding out what is going on with broadband should plan on participating.

**Ryan Bowlden** thanked the citizens who live on the private drive off Bethany Road for coming out this evening and updating the Board on their situation. He agrees that something wrong happened somewhere along the line and he is going to keep digging and looking.

He is still receiving a lot of complaints about Alpha Dynamics on the east side of the County. He is prop second amendment and he hates having to do this, but they are advertising these shoots on April 1<sup>st</sup> they are having one. He would like a briefing on this and see what needs to be done.

**Rita Johnson** she is disappointed in what has happened and seeing the pictures of the private drive off Bethany Road. Like Commissioner Flowers-Taylor said there are other roads in the county with this problem and we need to figure this out because when you can't get ambulances or emergency personnel to a home it is a problem.

The gentleman who spoke about the Senior Center reopening, she talked about that last month and she is hoping that the Park and Rec Advisory Commission will come back with a recommendation as to when that is going to be open again. She feels like there is a need to get the Seniors back at that facility

She was glad that the Board decided to table the SPLOST discussion for November, knowing that we are not in a position to ask for another SPLOST when the projects on the last SPLOST have not been completed. She feels that to request another SPLOST right now would be doing the community a dis-service.

**James Dutton** stated he is excited about some of the things going on. He wants to thank all the citizens who are coming out and doing things in the community. Not just elected officials, or people who are paid to do stuff in the community, but people who volunteer their time like the Rotarians who are actively working and have been for years to create mentorship programs and we need to do everything we can to support those folks in their efforts to try to make Spalding a better place.

We touched on the dumping at the new airport site, they didn't say it, but at one time before the county installed the barricade that we have now, the Authority had put up a cattle guard type gate and someone sole that gate. This isn't just folks throwing trash out the window this is a concerted effort. He feels there was a timeline for closing these roads, he feels that we need to look at accelerating that timeline.

The issue on Bethany is something that we should definitely take a look at, but as a Board, once again this is an opportunity to "learn the lesson" of these developers coming in and saying "it's going to be great, I promise that I am going to uphold all of the conditions" and then if they don't what is the repercussion? What is the repercussion for this builder? Nothing? What is the repercussion for the developer in Commissioner Johnson's neighborhood who broke the rules? Nothing. So, again how many times do the citizens of Spalding County have to be burned before we learn that lesson and say we have to put some teeth in our ordinances.

He agrees with the gentleman who came in, we should be opening up the Senior Center along with all other county amenities as soon as possible. It is up to the people if they want to come and use those amenities. The liability, per law, has shifted, it is not our liability. If you want to come and use the facility there is a sign posted on the door that says we have no liability, if you're worried about catching a virus, if you're worried about slipping and falling in water, whatever it is, if you're worried then feel free to choose not to come. When we, as a government say that you can't do these things we are taking that choice away from the individual. We're saying that we are making this choice for you because you can't properly make that choice. The citizens of Spalding County can make those decisions for themselves and he trusts them to make those decisions correctly for themselves and their families.

He wants to say once again, he has said this before, that he is not sure what folks are looking at in putting future SPLOST projects together and what that list of projects is going to be, but the current one was almost exclusively "wants" and although he is not against Pickleball, he's not against an Aquatic Center, but these are things that we didn't need. They are wonderful and he is glad that we have them, but Spalding County has a lot of needs. Go to the jail and tell him if we should have built an Aquatic Center or worked on the jail? We have needs that must be attended to. He then stated that on the next SPLOST, if it isn't a list of needs then you are going to lose him and he will actively work against it. This is something that we can do to make the County where it needs to be. We have an incredible amount of unfunded needs and that is what needs to be on the SPLOST projects. There are enough needs here in the County that we could complete two to three SPLOSTS with just needs.

He then stated that regarding broadband, it is incredibly expensive. Laying wires and acquiring rights to lay wires is incredibly expensive and once the families get it, it is incredibly slow until there is enough people for them to lay fiber. That said, there is technology coming down the pike, he is a huge fan of cutting edge technology that will disrupt existing monopolies. Tesla, through SpaceX is launching satellites to create broadband access directly to satellites called StarLink and they are launching 60+ satellites a week. They are micro satellites that are specifically for this purpose. Their speeds are up to 2 GB per second which is much faster than what broadband would be and it is incredibly cheap compared to broadband. That rolls out starting in September and he feels the County should look at doing that. He feels that the Board should reach out to this company and say "hey, we want to get involved, we want to be part of your pilot program. Please host us as a beta tester." He would love to reach out to these companies and see what they have to say.

Consensus of the Board was to allow Commissioner Dutton to reach out to these companies to see if they would consider his proposal for satellite broadband.

He then stated that when we had the financial report earlier this year, he said something that he knew was a reality, but didn't realize the depth of it. The unfunded portion of our retirement fund for our employees, we are only at 65% funded which means it is 35% unfunded and that retirement amount is going to grow exponentially and the only way to solve that problem is to do steep cuts or do austerity measures to pay for it. Or if money fell out of the sky. Well no one plans for money to "fall out of the sky" and yet, I think we are about to find ourselves in an instance where money has literally "fallen out of the sky." If we don't put some of the money coming to the

county into this fund, when that starts coming due it is going to be a problem for the County. It is going to be bad. That said if we put it away part of this money, it might solve the problem or it becomes manageable. However, if we don't put in a few million now, it is going to be significantly higher in the future. It could be a huge problem. We have to use the incoming money to fund our future.

As far as pit bulls go, he thought that when we struck the deal with Auburn University's Foundation for them to cover the costs of the spay and neutering, that we had to change the ordinance to not be breed specific. He knows that has been a policy that we still have some breed specific stuff, but it bothers him that we told them that we are not breed specific; however, we still in some ways are. So, again there are laws in place against dog fighting and animal cruelty and we should enforce them. If you look at the actual data, a small number of dog bites actually come from pit bulls. He feels we should not be breed specific at all. The majority of the bays at the Animal Shelter are currently filled with pit bulls that people want to give a home to, but are unable to due to the current requirements for adoption. He feels we should get rid of any kind of breed specific language.

**Clay Davis** stated we have just approved the contract with Archway for next year. In 2020 they had 18 projects they completed. They used 24 UGA students in the projects, 8 faculty members were supervising and provided the subject matter expertise needed and they have a \$252,120.00 return on investment for our community for what was spent. This is a big return on a small investment.

Spalding County Water Authority has signed a 25 year contract with the City of Griffin and it was a two party contract. It eliminated the County from being on the contract. Part of the agreement was that we would look at Joint Authority, instead of one producing water and one selling water to us. We are in the middle of the feasibility and there is a lot to do with assets and how much it is going to cost.

Mr. Wilson's job announcement for the replacement for his position as a County Manager is on the street. Once again, it is a huge loss to the County with his expertise and his historical knowledge for him to leave us.

He then asked Mr. Wilson to look at the DCA Broadband Ready Certification. They have a way of looking at counties and saying what has to be done in each county. Broadband as Commissioner Flowers-Taylor and Commissioner Dutton have talked about is very important and we need to find out what that looks like to us.

He wanted to make sure that we are working on a meeting date with the local legislators. Pick a date in late April and let's try to arrange something in the middle of the day to meet.

We have to have SDS done by the end of next year. We got out of this a little earlier this year. He would ask that Commissioner Dutton and Assistant County Manager, Michelle Irizarry get together and go over to the City and start working that and find out what the issues are and come back. He doesn't want to get into the situation we were in earlier this year where did the minimum and walked away to get it signed. He feels we can do better than that. It will take some time and there is going to be some hard decision that will have to be made. It is not going to be easy.

He will be attending the next meeting via ZOOM. He will be in Washington State and the Vice Chairman will be running the meeting. He will be voting as a regular member.

He then stated he would like to say as a concerned citizen, not as a commissioner or the chairman, when he talks about the priorities in this County and when Commissioner Dutton talked about the needs, the number one priority in this County is the roads. We have a bad situation with the roads and it's not going to get any better unless we do something about it. So, we are going to have to figure out how we are going to fix roads in our County. If that means we have to change the way we are doing SPLOST and TSPLOST we need to start thinking through that.

His number two priority is broadband. You have had a couple of people address this already tonight. We have people in this County who can't get on broadband and it is absolutely unbelievable in the day and age that we are living. Part of the money that President Biden has allocated to us allows for broadband and he is interested in trying to find out how to best do this. He wants to get broadband available to every citizen in our community. This is not a revenue generation thing for him, it is simply having broadband capability. When he found out how many school buses the school system had to put out in the County to get hot spots for students to be able to have access to do their work at home, it is concerning and we have to have this.

His number three priority is code enforcement. Talking about blight, talking about cleaning up the side of the roads, those type of things are what we have to do. He believes that if we give a little bit of time to the new code enforcement team, they will clean up these problems. If we can get a system set up and start working it, we will change the culture, which what has to change in our County to be able to do the right kinds of things.

Last, he wanted to talk about vaccines. Leadership by example. He feels the number one thing facing our country is the pandemic. We have people dying in our community. Right now there is a supply and demand issue, right now the demand that is higher than supply. We have people wanting vaccines and they are frustrated about that. In the next few months, that problem will go away and we will have the supply of vaccines for everyone to have a shot. His concern is that we are going to end up with only 50% of the County taking the shots. He then asked everyone present in the room to start talking about taking a shot. He doesn't need you to argue about being pro-vaccine or anything like that, just simply tell people that you are going to take the vaccine. That work between now and the time the vaccines are available will spread out and will get people to do it. We are also going to talk about transporting people to the vaccine locations, but we have people in our community dying. When we did the census we worked hard for months and months and barely got to 70%. Herd immunity starts at 75%, so we've got to do better in an environment why people are afraid of why we are giving shots. He would like for all of the leaders and everyone with families to talk about it and try to get this done.

**XIII. CLOSED SESSION – None.**

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

***Motion/Second by Dutton/Flowers-Taylor to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by all.***