



After Agenda
Board of Commissioners - Extraordinary Session
September 19, 2022 6:00 PM
Room 108, Spalding County Annex Building
119 E. Solomon Street
Griffin, GA 30223

The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held an Extraordinary Session on Monday, September 19, 2022, in Room 108 of the Spalding County Annex Building, beginning at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Clay Davis presiding. Commissioners Rita Johnson, Ryan Bowlden, James Dutton and Gwen Flowers-Taylor were present for the meeting. Also present were County Manager, Dr. Steve Ledbetter, County Attorney, Stephanie Windham and County Clerk, Kathy Gibson to record the minutes.

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

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND ALL OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

II. INVOCATION

1. Union Baptist Church

Pastor Tim Conort with Union Baptist Church delivered the Invocation.

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. Pledge to the Flag

The Pledge to the Flag will be led by Commissioner Ryan Bowlden, District #4.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation - National Voters Registration Day

Dr. Ledbetter read the proclamation and Roy McClain with the Elections Board was present to accept the Proclamation.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Dutton to approve the Proclamation and declare September 20, 2022, as National Voters Registration Day in Spalding County. Motion carried unanimously by all.

V. CITIZEN COMMENTS

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.

Ron Hoffman, 130 Milner Avenue, spoke regarding the upcoming elections and the vulnerabilities identified by CISA in the Dominion Voting System. He asked that the Board consider replacing this system prior to the election in the Fall.

VI. MINUTES

1. Minutes

Consider approval of the minutes from the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Extraordinary Session on August 15, 2022, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Special Called Meeting and Executive Session on August 24, 2022, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Special Called Meeting and Zoning Public Hearing on August 25, 2022.

Motion/Second by Johnson/Bowlden to approve the minutes of the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Extraordinary Session on August 15, 2022, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Special Called Meeting and Executive Session on August 24, 2022, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Special Called Meeting and Zoning Public Hearing on August 25, 2022. Motion carried unanimously by all.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Equalization School

Consider approval of an Option to Purchase the Equalization School, this will enable the Griffin-Spalding Housing Authority to obtain grants needed to complete this project.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that on May 18, 2021, the Board of Commissioners authorized the option to purchase real property with the Griffin Housing Authority the appropriate documentation was never filed and Mr. Bob Dull is asking us to complete the transaction as they are working to complete a grant application to perform renovations on the Equalization School. Dr. Ledbetter stated that he has discussed this with the County Attorney and this direction is going to have to be reaffirmed by the Board of Commissioners. Properly signed, filed and returned to Mr. Dull so that he can file the grant application. Staff is recommending the Board reapprove this so that the Housing Authority can move forward with the grant.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that her concern with this request is that she hasn't seen a plat of the property to be acquired by the Housing Authority.

Ms. Windham stated that this will give the Housing Authority the option to purchase, and this can be used for the grant.

Dr. Ledbetter then stated that this is an Option to Purchase so once the grant application is approved staff would come back to the Board with the appropriate paperwork and the request to purchase the property.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then asked if the entire piece of property is included in the plat which includes the Rosenwald School as well as the Gym? She stated that she understands the agreement for the Equalization School and the area behind it for housing. Her concern is how the property is being split for the Rosenwald School and the Gym. She wants to make sure before we exercise this option that it is not for the Rosenwald School or the Gym.

Dr. Ledbetter stated we need to make sure what we are going to convey. We are looking to subdivide the open parcel to the west of the Equalization Building and as well as the Equalization Building.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Bowlden to table the request until a survey can be done to separate the property to be sold from the property to be retained by the County. Motion carried unanimously by all.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting

Recognize Jinna Garrison, Administrative Services Director and her staff on Spalding County receiving the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its 20th consecutive year.

Dr. Ledbetter then recognized Jinna Garrison for being recognized by GFOA for our Annual Audit. Ms. Garrison has done a fabulous job for this County in showing our transparency, showing all that we bring to the table for our community to see and he is privileged and honored to recognize Ms. Garrison this evening.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that she wanted thank Ms. Garrison for her tireless dedication to Spalding County and for sharing her expertise and knowledge with the Board.

2. IGA - City of Orchard Hill - Internet Services

Consider request from the City of Orchard Hill to participate in the broadband services that have been extended by Spalding County into their area.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that last year the Board of Commissioners approved for staff to install a wireless antenna system around the County and we currently have 35 miles of antenna set up. The first thing that we did was to bring Blalock Fire Station up on the system as they did not have internet available. Mike Windham and a company we hired installed the antenna system onto our towers and they were able to have high speed internet like they have never had before, and it is currently working great. We have been able to extend service to the Animal Shelter and Station 2 is about to come onto the system and we have a lot of things happening with our high-speed internet.

The City of Orchard Hill approached us about six months ago and Mr. Windham has worked with them to get the system up and running on the silos in Orchard Hill. Which has resulted in the City Hall having internet and cameras have been installed in the park giving a layer of security they have not had in the past. We are currently in a position where we need an agreement between Spalding County and Orchard Hill to carry their backhaul. Orchard Hill is wanting to provide high speed internet for their community. The current provider to that area has not agreed to provide them with fiber to the homes so none of the homes or businesses in the City have high speed internet access. Orchard Hill has paid, out of their ARPA funds to put high speed internet into their community.

Over the summer, the County had the Georgia Tech interns do a lot of the work that needed to be done to provide high speed internet around the county and as a part of that work, they did a cost model of how much high-speed internet should cost for residents. Orchard Hill is looking to implement exactly what the interns have suggested which is provide high-speed internet to their community for \$35.00 per resident. The \$35.00 would be cost shared, 25% per customer would come to the County to pay for the internet that travels between here and Orchard Hill and the remainder of the fee would be designated for maintenance and upkeep of the system.

The agreement between Spalding County and Orchard Hill is just to provide them with backhaul should they decide to extend their internet service to their residents and staff's recommendation is that the Board consider this for approval. It's not going to cost us anything and will provide the residents of Orchard Hill with high-speed internet where their kids can attend school if needed and they can do telemed and they can work from home where previously they have not been able to do so.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Flowers-Taylor to approve the IGA with Orchard Hill to provide broadband services into their area. Motion carried unanimously by all.

3. Amplification Permit - Union Baptist Church

Consider request from Pastor Timotheé Conort of Union Baptist Church for an amplification permit to host the Grand Opening and Dedication of the Horse Arena at 1405 N. McDonough Road, Griffin, Georgia on October 1, 2022, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Union Baptist Church has worked closely with the Spalding County 4-H on this project and the horse ring is complete and they are hoping to celebrate the opening of the horse arena on October 1st. All of the Spalding County Departments have provided feedback and their recommendation is for approval.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Bowlden to approve an amplification permit for Union Baptist Church to host the Grand Opening and Dedication of the Horse Arena at 1405 N. McDonough Road, Griffin, Georgia on October 1, 2022, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by all.

4. **Amplification Permit - Tadros-Elson Wedding**

Consider a request for an amplification permit for the Tadros and Elson wedding to be held at the Meadowlark 1939 event center located at 2613 Newnan Road in Griffin, Georgia.

The request is for Saturday, October 1st from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Dr. Ledbetter advised that staff has approved the application, it is a long day; however, it is a wedding and this is wedding venue.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Johnson to approve an amplification permit for the Tadros and Elson wedding to be held at the Meadowlark 1939 event center located at 2613 Newnan Road in Griffin, Georgia. Motion carried unanimously by all.

5. **Amplification Permit - The Lake Pavilion**

Consider request from Aaron Burks for an amplification permit to host a music festival at The Lakes Pavilion, located at 460 Aerodrome Way, Griffin, GA.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that there are some significant safety concerns with this property, the one way in and one way out has some challenges for public safety the parking location is another area of concern with the number of people who will be attending this event. Staff has given Mr. Burks a list of items to be completed. At this time staff's recommendation is conditional approval with compliance with all of the conditions listed.

Commissioners Dutton and Flowers-Taylor questioned the Board's ability to add event requirements to an amplification permit approval. The amplification permit should be separate, and the County needs to have an event application or criteria in addition to an amplification criteria.

Stephanie Windham, County Attorney, stated that the noise abatement ordinance does not provide for safety type issues, it is more a business licensing type permit.

Aaron Burks, 1704 Queen Victoria Court, Locust Grove, Georgia the owner of the property and event coordinator stated that he has owned the property for seven years and the property has existed as an event venue for 32 years. The road into the property is adequate and they currently have parking for over 700 vehicles. This event will only consist of about 300 people. They have reduced the event to one day, for five hours on Saturday, September 24th, for five hours from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Our business is run as an event venue he has a \$1 million insurance policy for personal injury and \$2 million in general liability for all of these events. We don't do an event unless we can do them safely. He has turned down a lot of business at this location because he didn't feel the event could be done safely.

Mr. Burks stated he had a company come out and measure the amount of parking spaces that could be accommodated, and they haven't even come close to filling the property up with parking.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor asked Mr. Burks if he had turned that information in as part of his site plan?

Mr. Burks stated that he had done the best he could, he provided a map with the amplification permit, and he sent pictures in an email to the Fire Marshall last year, but he doesn't have the technology to generate those types of maps, but he did have it mapped out as to where the stage would be, where the chairs would be and where the vendors would be located. He has these drawings for every event. The pavilion is part of the vendor set up, there are tables under the pavilion where people can relax. The footprint of the property hasn't changed.

Mr. Burk then stated that there is a second entrance onto the property that he told the Fire Marshall about when he talked with him. It is through a commercial property adjacent to the property who allows them to access their property through that property when there are events.

Mr. Burk stated that they have changed the event to a one-day event on Saturday, September 24th from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that she has no problem granting a one-day amplification permit, but clearly if there is going to be large events hosted on multiple days, we are going to need a site plan and get a diagram of parking for the event. We're not just going to ask this of you, but we are going to ask this of other event venues in the County. She thinks it will be great to have these types of events, but we want people to be safe and we want them to have access to medical care should there be a need.

Commissioner Dutton then stated that this is not directed at him, it has simply brought to light that we don't have a procedure in place to create an event and ensure that it is safe for those attending.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to approve an amplification permit to host a music festival at The Lakes Pavilion, located at 460 Aerodrome Way, Griffin, Georgia on Saturday, September 24, 2022, from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by all.

6. Spalding County Correctional Institution Contract for Medical Services

Consider request from the Spalding County Correctional Institute to approve a contract with Dr. Hall for Medical Services at Correctional Institution.

Warden Humphrey stated that this contract was bid out in January of this year, and they had three companies to express interest, but only one put in a bid. IPS services submitted two bids one was for on-call for 24-hours, 7 days a week and that number was extremely high, and a proposal for using two LPN's 24 hours a day and that was \$575,000/year which was also extremely high for the facility. So, staff went back and renegotiated a contract with Dr. Hall for basically the same services and same coverage as we have had in the past, it is at a slightly higher rate, but it is the same service that we had before.

Ms. Windham advised that the last contract was for one nurse, eight hours and this one is for two nurses for twelve-hour shifts.

Warden Humphrey advised the coverage would be Monday thru Friday, twelve hours a day.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Flowers-Taylor to approve a contract with Dr. Hall for Medical Services at Correctional Institution. Motion carried unanimously by all.

7. Fayette County Inmate Work Detail

Consider request from Fayette County for use of Inmate Work Details.

Warden Humphrey advised that we currently have two contract work details in Fayette County, and they are requesting a third detail the only difference in this contract is a provision that we can hire that contract detail officer. At this time, we do not have anyone, but basically, we will add the detail when we have the staff to do so.

Ms. Windham advised that this contract is subject to the availability of inmates and staffing.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to increase the work detail for Fayette County based on the condition that there are inmates and an officer available for the detail. Motion carried unanimously by all.

8. Setting Park Hours

Consider a request from the Spalding County Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Commission to create a county ordinance setting the hours in the county park system to 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. unless there are approved special events being hosted at a particular location. Airport Road Park would be the only exception and would be excluded from the set hours.

Robby Milner, Spalding County Parks, and Leisure Services stated that it is his understanding that they are requesting set park hours in order to regulate the number of people in the park late at night. If they set park hours, then it will give the officers an ability to enforce the laws if there are people in the park after 10 p.m.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that the skate park is regulated by the City Park Hours because it is located inside the City of Griffin.

Commissioner Dutton expressed his concern over the skate park because the presentation didn't include that the skate park could be open late with approval, he asked that the skate park also be included for special exception if there is an event.

Ms. Windham advised that the Board could direct her to draft an ordinance with an exemption with approval for every park.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor Johnson to approve a request from the Spalding County Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Commission to direct staff and the County Attorney to create a county

ordinance setting the hours in the county park system to 6:00 a.m. to

10:00 p.m. with an exemption allowed with approval for every park. Airport Road Park would be the only exception and would be excluded from set hours to be considered by the Board at a later date. Motion carried unanimously by all.

9. Pavilion Renters Request

Consider a recommendation from the Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Commission to allow charcoal and gas grills at pavilions for an additional \$50 fee.

Mr. Milner advised that many of the individuals who rent the pavilions at the parks do not feel that the grills that are provided are not large enough to cook for a large group of people. The fee being recommended is for staff to clean up any mess that may be left behind by people bringing their own grills into the park.

Greg Stansell, Parks and Leisure Services stated that this started 20 or more years ago when they outlawed the big grills being brought in because charcoal would burn the grass, or we would have grease drippings kill the grass or on the concrete where staff would have to come in and pressure wash the concrete. The \$50 would offset the County's cost should this happen in the future.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that one of the requirements when the pavilions are rented is the general liability goes back on whomever is renting the pavilion, so whether it is coming from their homeowner's insurance or from a special general liability insurance they purchase coming in. The \$50 would be sufficient to cover the cleaning of the facility, but the insurance is a different discussion.

Ms. Windham advised that the Ordinance could state that upon vacating the premises we find they used their own personal grill we would send them a bill for it.

Commissioner Dutton then asked if we could hold some type of deposit? Instead of charging folks, we could ask for a card so if there are any damages their card could be charged for any damages.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated she feels there should be a designate place if the grills are allowed, they shouldn't just be able to put it anywhere on the property and that would be part of the application.

Ms. Windham advised that she would need more direction from the Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Committee in order to draft an ordinance.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to send this request back to the Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Committee and ask them to work out the specifics and resubmit this request.

Dr. Ledbetter asked them to think about the insurance part as well because the County's current deductible is \$25,000, so if they burn the pavilion down and there is only a \$100 deposit sitting there, that doesn't cover anything for the County.

Motion carried unanimously by all.

10. Land Bank Authority

Consider request from staff to review the study completed by KB Advisory Group and review their recommendations for the Land Bank Authority.

Dr. Ledbetter stated the Board of Commissioners have had enough time to review the study completed by KB Advisory Group. Staff's recommendation was included in the agenda packet for you this evening, but we would like to hear your thoughts on how we maintain and keep the Land Bank Authority active and working for our community.

Commissioner Dutton stated that he feels the Director should be a County Employee because this will be a county wide function and a City Employee would be restricted to the city limits. If that person is going to have to work for one or the other, it makes more sense that this individual work for the County. Even though most of the property and opportunities are going to be inside of the City Limits.

Ms. Windham then stated that this position would be more in line with the position that Robert Mohl, the Airport Director, who is officially a City Employee, but he is employed by the Griffin-Spalding Airport Authority. So, he is a shared employee and for us it would be like the General Manager of the Water Authority.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that in a perfect world the Director should work for the Authority, but history has shown that there is no accountability. She doesn't feel we need to remake the process, but she feels the first thing that needs to be established is a strategic plan. Additionally, she feels that a commissioner from both the City and the County should serve on the board. She also feels that anyone on the Board should be reappointed because we have no way to stagger the terms of the current members and without them being staggered everyone could leave at the same time.

After much discussion the following items were agreed upon:

- 5 Member Volunteer Board with terms to be staggered
- 2 Elected Officials - 1 Spalding County Commissioner and 1 City of Griffin Council Member
- Community Development (non-voting members) Spalding County (Kellie Littlefield) And City of Griffin (Chad Jacobs).
- Director Position to be a Full-Time Position – 3-year contract to run through the City of Griffin HR Department as the County does not have the level of properties that the City has that would be involved in the Land Bank.
- Updates to be made to the County Manager and City Manager every 6 months with an annual update to the County and City Boards.
- Office to be moved to the Housing Authority with overview by the City of Griffin.

Mr. Galloway stated that currently the Land Bank is operating under the original legislation. The 2012 Land Bank Act offered a significant expansion of Land Bank power and right now we have one critical issue that has to be addressed and that is we need to get property closed on those parcels we have pending contracts. Even though there are provisions in the contracts that they expire, we have people who

expect that those contracts will result in them buying property and they have the ability to buy property. That is the most crucial issue at this time. We have roughly 120 properties under contract for which we either have to have Ms. Windham tell us that this can't be closed because the title is too complex, or we can move them to where they can be closed.

Mr. Galloway then stated that he does not favor expansion of the Land Bank Authority until they have cleared out the back log of contracts. Once the backlog has been cleared out within a reasonable period of time and if both governments desire to expand the Land Bank Authority which will allow us to go into a tax sale and bid against a private purchaser, it will allow the Land Bank to engage in a tax levy if they vote to do it. But clean up the back log of the contracts before we make a policy decision to expand it.

We will need to expand the current IGA to increase the Board membership, but we will not expand the powers of that Board until the backlog of properties have been addressed.

11. **Repairs at the Spalding County Jail**

Consider approval of a contract with Foster Plumbing Contractors for emergency repairs required at the Spalding County Jail.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that earlier this year the Board agreed to expend up to \$3 million for repairs at the Jail. Thanks to Brian Upson at Paragon and the great work of Sheriff Dix and Tony Thomason, who have done a fabulous job of pulling all of the requirements together. Foster Plumbing Contractors has been the only commercial contractor to bid on the work. They have submitted a price for materials, equipment and labor of \$874,837.00 for the emergency repairs of plumbing for both the water and sewer at the jail. It is the recommendation of staff and the Sheriff's Office that we move forward and immediately award Foster Plumbing Contractors to begin the work on repairing the jail.

Ms. Windham stated that she has reviewed the Master Service Agreement and it is approved as to form.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Flowers-Taylor to approve a contract with Foster Plumbing Contractors for emergency repairs required at the Spalding County Jail. Motion carried unanimously by all.

IX. **REPORT OF COUNTY MANAGER**

- This week, I had the opportunity to attend the Georgia Planning Association Fall Conference! While there, I was grateful to be part of a panel for the "Georgia Smart: Planning for Smarter Communities Statewide" session of the conference. This panel featured perspectives from representatives from several Georgia Smart Communities Challenge projects across the state of Georgia. Remember, Spalding County is a finalist in the IEEE Smart Cities Award that will be presented next week in Cyprus.
- Our T-SPLOST work continues with 52% of our work behind us. CW Matthews, our contractor, is currently working on Rover-Zetella Road...and I believe they're doing a great job.

- Our work to hire more Code Enforcement officers continues to be a top priority.
- Thank you to Jinna Garrison and her staff for 20 years of outstanding service. The administrative team continues to ensure that our finances are accounted for and presented to our community in full transparency.
- Please join us this Thursday afternoon at our final public hearing for our millage rate.
- Thank you to the City of Griffin, their staff and elected officials for the work currently going on to finalize our LOST renegotiation and Service Delivery Strategy.
- Our Comprehensive Plan and our Capital Improvement Element deadline is quickly approaching – October 31, 2022. Our consultants are working to finalize our documents for presentation to our Board of Commissioners in the next month.
- Thank you to the Board of Commissioners for the Proclamation this evening regarding Voter Registration. Please, if you haven't already done so, go by and register to vote. This is an awesome opportunity we have as citizens to be a part of government.
- Kudos to the team at our Animal Shelter. They are consistently highlighting adoptions on Facebook and other social media sites. Just this past week, the state performed their quarterly audit of the facility and recognized the shelter for its' cleanliness and the attention to detail our employees show the animals and those who visit our shelter.
- Lots going on in Spalding County over the next few months. Please come join us!

X. REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS

Rita Johnson –

- ✓ Congratulated Jinna Garrison on her recognition this evening and thanked her for all that she does for the Board of Commissioners, the County Manager and the citizens of Spalding County.
- ✓ Stated that she noticed on all three of the options regarding the tax levy in the presentation this morning that the bonds would be affected negatively regardless of what we do.

Dr. Ledbetter advised that he and Ms. Garrison have had a number of conversations on how the depletion of our Fund Balance, which is our savings account, will negatively impact our bond rating as we move forward.

He has also been talking with Raymond James on some other areas of opportunity within our County and that has been on top of the list of conversations they have had.

- ✓ She then asked Ms. Windham if there is a possibility, we could get in trouble with the ARPA funding if we did roll back?

Ms. Windham stated that Dr. Ledbetter posed the question to her earlier: “Could the federal government take back ARPA funds?” Of course, the Federal Government could take back money, but the rule as far as the rollback applied was to the State and the general consensus from GMA and ACCG it s it did not apply to Municipalities and Counties.

Ryan Bowlden –

- ✓ He had several business owners question him today regarding the new Enterprise Leasing Program. Is this going to affect the local businesses, will they have the opportunity to continue the work on our vehicles like they have done in the past?

Dr. Ledbetter advised that after his conversation earlier today with Commissioner Bowlden, he reached back out to Enterprise and they have assured him that if we have local maintenance shops that want to participate in the program, there is an application process for them to go through and become an Enterprise approved vendor. Which would not only allow them to work on County leased vehicles, but all Enterprise vehicles moving forward.

- ✓ Thanked DeAndre Smith and his group for getting information out on social media. Keep doing what you are doing and share it.
- ✓ Updates on Yarborough Mill and Amelia Roads, have they fixed these roads yet.

Dr. Ledbetter advised that they have fixed the roads. They are in the process of doing the third coat on Yarbrough Mill and they’re going to extend it. Amelia Road has been completely fixed. Staff will be bringing back to the Board at one of the meetings in October the completion of Pineview for the chip and seal on Pineview.

- ✓ He then asked about the West Ellis Road repair on the resurfacing?

Dr. Ledbetter advised that C.W. Matthews has done a good job in getting that fixed. One of the things they shared with us was that particular issue was caused by a new piece of equipment and it was a learning experience, and they were glad that we brought it to them. They have fixed the issue.

- ✓ He liked seeing the people show up today for the Public Hearing. Show up for the meetings, it is important. If you don’t show up for these meetings, we can’t hear you.

Gwen Flowers-Taylor –

- ✓ Stated she would like to extend her sympathy to the City of Griffin staff and the Keller family in the passing of Brant Keller. He is going to be missed. His many contributions and his quirky personality will not be forgotten.
- ✓ She wanted to urge people to drive slower in the school zones. Please be aware when you are going through school zones you never know when a child is going to dart out into the road.

- ✓ This morning when we had our public hearing, she left upset because when people talk to her like she is not in the same situation they are in, it is upsetting. She has property taxes, she has an increase in all of her expenses as well and when they act like she can't identify with their situation she resents that. When she goes to the grocery store to purchase a loaf of bread it costs a dollar and a half more than it did a year ago. So, she gets it, it costs her more to live as well. We're here as commissioners and it costs to keep the County going. She sort of resented the people who were here stating they don't use the County amenities. They are here for you to use, if you want to use them. We get the fact that you are upset, but you are not the entirety of Spalding County, we have residents that do need and utilize the amenities that we provide.

The fact that all of Spalding County wasn't here this morning tells us that other people understand that we are in rough times right now. We can't stop people from going to the collection centers, we can't stop people from going to the Senior Center. Clearly, we need our employees who didn't have a cost of living or raise for almost eight years, and we just did some things for the first responders, and you are asking us to back all of that out. She just asks that you please be considerate of the fact that the Board weights all of that and we don't make these decisions lightly.

We aren't spending this money on ourselves; we're taking care of business. So give us some credit for trying to be good stewards, not just of your money, but she is a taxpayer as well and she is trying to be a good steward of her own money and she is trying to teach her children to be good stewards of it as well.

Commissioner Johnson then thanked Dr. Ledbetter for his presentation this morning because that was a lot of detailed work that he put into the presentation, and he laid out everything like it needed to be. She hopes that you will do it again at the Thursday Public Hearing.

James Dutton –

- ✓ What the meeting came down to this morning is "We don't want our taxes raised." But "We want the same number of services." The County's budget has to be balanced and if we're not getting enough money to pay for the services, what services do you want cut? Do you want less deputies on the road? Do you want no firemen? Do you want us not to spend money on the roads?

The value of living in Spalding County has gone up. The price of your property has increased because there is a huge list of amenities that weren't there when he was little, but now they are. We have awarding winning parks and we have done it on a shoestring budget, but now the price of the land here has gone up because it is a better place to live, and you're upset. Everyone wants to live in a community that is improving, but they are shocked when the value of their house goes up.

Most of the increase in home values has been caused by the disastrous policies coming out of Washington D.C. and he would love to say that we could stop that. He voted in November and votes every time, but that is as close as he can get to stopping DC from ruining everything.

The policies have ruined it for the Sheriff's Deputies, it has ruined it for our Fire Department, and it has ruined it for our county employees. The cost of a fire truck has doubled. The cost of living for our employees have gone up as well, do you want us to furlough a bunch of Sheriff Deputies?

Someone this morning advised that we need to seek other sources of revenue. Do you want us to rob a bank? Governments get money from taxpayers. A tiny sliver comes from fines and other places, but those are earmarked for specific things. The County funds the Sheriff's Department, funds the roads, funds the parks and funds the Fire Department on tax revenue. Although he feels property taxes are inherently unfair, he doesn't like them, and he wishes we could do away with them, but in order to balance the budget with an increase in sales tax, it would mean a ten-cent additional sales tax at a minimum in Spalding County and how many people will drive to the next county if we have a 17 cents sales tax on the each dollar spent in Spalding County? Everybody is.

He understands that it hurts because his property taxes have increased dramatically, and he doesn't get any exemptions. If you think this Board is doing this job for money, you would be wrong. That is not why we do this job; we do this job because we love our community, and we want to spend our time helping the community. The reason he ran for this office is because he wants to see his kids grow up in this community and it be somewhere they will want to raise his grandkids.

The decisions we are making right now are not for us. They are so widespread and so far-reaching. This is not the kind of stuff that we take lightly. It is the kind of stuff that we lose sleep over. We have amazing people who work for this County like Jinna Garrison and her staff and what they can do on skeleton crew that they have. What Planning and Zoning is able to accomplish on the small staff they have. We need to cut more. Where? If you find some fat, we will trim it, I promise you. I promise you we will continue to look for it and if we find something we will cut it. There isn't anywhere we can just cut expenses.

- ✓ He wanted to add that the Animal Shelter is awesome, it doesn't smell, the dog and cats are happy there and the best part is that you can come and interact with them any time that you want.

Clay Davis –

- ✓ On October 3rd, Judge Thacker will be here to talk with us about his project on the Courthouse and the Jail and he will be bringing a number of people with him to that meeting and we need to figure out where we are going on that.
- ✓ Continue our progress on sidewalks, we need to start planning the second phase and continue when we have that ready to go.
- ✓ We took the opportunity this morning to appeal our taxes to the State. There is a process you have to go through to appeal taxes and we took the first step in that process this morning with the Department of Audit with the State.
- ✓ We are also working on LOST mediation and where we are going in that area. Finalizing SDS to be able to get this done.

- ✓ We are still looking for solutions for Code Enforcement to be able to move forward.
- ✓ For those of you who had the opportunity to attend the pickleball tournament, it was a great event for the community. He estimates approximately \$1 million of economic impact in the county from hotel revenues, food and gas over that period of time. It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase Spalding County.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Performance Evaluation - County Clerk

Chairman Davis requests an Executive Session to discuss or deliberate on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a county officer or employee as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(6).

Motion/Second by Johnson/Dutton to enter into an Executive Session at 8:36 p.m. to discuss or deliberate on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a county officer or employee as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(6). Motion carried unanimously by all.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to close the Executive Session at 9:03 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by all

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/Second by Johnson/Flowers-Taylor to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 pm. Motion carried unanimously by all.