



**After Agenda
Board of Commissioners - Regular Meeting
June 5, 2023 6:00 PM
Room 108, Annex Building
119 E. Solomon Street
Griffin, GA 30223**

The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held their Regular Meeting on Monday, June 5, 2023, in Room 108 of the Spalding County Annex Building, beginning at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Clay Davis presiding. Commissioners James Dutton, Gwen Flowers-Taylor, Ryan Bowlden and Rita Johnson 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)

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND ALL OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

II. INVOCATION

1. Rev. Reginald Watts, Associate Minister at Rising Star Baptist Church, delivered the Invocation.

III. PLEDGE TO FLAG

1. Commissioner James Dutton, District #2, led the Pledge to the Flag.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

1. Consider request from the Parks and Public Grounds Department to recognize Greg Stansill for 30 Years of Service to Spalding County.

T.J. Imberger introduced Mr. Stansill to the Board of Commissioners and gave a brief summary of Mr. Stansill's service to Spalding County.

2. Rev. Reginald Watts would like to update the Board of Commissioners on the Juneteenth Parade and Celebration scheduled for Saturday, June 17, 2023.

Rev. Watts gave an overview of the parade route and the program outline for the Juneteenth events scheduled for Saturday, June 17, 2023. Rev. Watts stated that the celebration would be multi-cultural so that everyone attending would be exposed to the different cultures within Spalding County. They plan to focus on peace, love, unity, and respect.

3. Dr. Ledbetter would like to present the information that has been developed and is being delivered at the Town Hall Meetings he is having to educate the citizens on the 2024 Budget.

Dr. Ledbetter then gave the presentation he has delivered at the Town Hall Meetings to the Board of Commissioners and those present for the meeting.

V. 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 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 for more than three minutes or more than once unless the Board votes to suspend this rule.

Susan Prichard, 111 Ann Street, Sunny Side, Georgia spoke about the Land Bank and property on her street that was previously owned by the Land Bank Authority.

Dr. Yoshunda Jones, spoke about the Juneteenth parade, hypocrisy, and systemic racism within the Spalding County community.

Donald Driver, resident of the City of Griffin, spoke in support of Dr. Jones and racism within Spalding County.

VI. PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Consider approval of FY 2023 Year-End Budget Amendments.

Jinna Garrison, Administrative Services Director, stated that at this time every year she brings year-end budget amendments for the Boards consideration. The legal level of budgetary control is at the department level, and we can't let a department go over budget. She analyzes every department and considers everything she is aware of that is going to happen and projects what she thinks the department will end the year at. If it looks like they need more money, she will come to the Board and ask for more money to be appropriated. That is what is reflected in the budget amendments this evening.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Bowlden to accept the FY2023 Year-End Budget Amendments as presented. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

VII. MINUTES

1. Consider approval of the Minutes from the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Special Called Meeting, Extraordinary Session and Executive Session on May 15, 2023, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Work Session on May 22, 2023, and the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Zoning Public Hearing on May 25, 2023.

Motion/Second by Johnson/Flowers-Taylor to approve the Minutes from the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Special Called Meeting, Extraordinary Session and Executive Session on May 15, 2023, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Work Session on May 22, 2023, and the Spalding County Board of Commissioners Zoning Public Hearing on May 25, 2023. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consider request from Three Rivers Regional Commission to surplus a 2016 Ford E350 Shuttle Van to be purchased by the Griffin Area Resource Center.

Dr. Ledbetter advised that Three Rivers Regional Commission has requested the Board allow for one of the shuttle vans to be purchased by the Griffin Area Resource Center for a total amount of \$4,800. This will give them the opportunity to move people back and forth within the community. Staff's recommendation is for approval. This is an allowable direct sale to this agency and the vehicle has reached it's end of life for service to the County. Three Rivers Regional Commission is replacing this van with two new ones through the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Bowlden to approve the request from Three Rivers Regional Commission to surplus a 2016 Ford E350 Shuttle Van to be purchased by the Griffin Area Resource Center. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

2. Consider a request from Spalding County Public Works to declare items that have reached their end of service surplus so they can be auctioned.

Motion/second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to approve the request from the Spalding County Public Works Department to declare surplus and approve auction items that have reached their end of service. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

3. Consider a recommendation from the Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Commission for an ordinance and signage in parks related to No Overnight Parking and towing at owner's expense.

Kelly Carmichael, Director of Leisure Services, stated that on the Park Facility Rules there is a rule that states: “Unauthorized vehicles left in parks at closing will be towed at the owner’s expense.” We’ve never had to enforce the rule; however, we are having an increase in the number of abandoned vehicles in some of our parks. In order to enforce this policy there needs to be an ordinance. Right now, the only thing we can do is try to find out who the owner is, contact the owner, but we can’t have it towed off the property.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that the staff recommendation is that we instruct the County Attorney to write the ordinance for no parking and put a penalty in the ordinance.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Johnson to instruct the County Attorney to write an ordinance that will allow Parks and Leisure Services to enforce the policy as stated in their Parks Facility Rules regarding unauthorized vehicles being left in parks at closing. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

4. Consider ending the current contract with Mom's Meals and signing a new contract with the Middle Flint Council on Aging.

Doris Carter, Senior Services Assistant Manager, has secured an alternative to Mom’s Meals which is a cost savings to the County. Ms. Carter stated that the cost savings under the proposed contract would be approximately \$13,000. We currently have about 22% of our home meals being provided by Mom’s Meals.

We need to change this, because after doing surveys with our clients, we realized that the meals weren’t as tasty as we would like them to be. We are a program of excellence. So, staff researched and found that Middle Flint Council is a better option for this service. This service is being offered at a reduced cost of \$2.00 cheaper than Mom’s Meals.

Commissioner Dutton then wanted to make sure that even though it is a cost savings the actual product is better meals.

Ms. Carter advised that they are better meals. They sent five sample boxes, and they were distributed to some of our Meals on Wheels seniors, and they were asked for feedback on the taste. Everyone who received the meals agreed that the meals were tastier than Mom’s Meals.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that these are better meals, but we aren’t eating any of them. Before the pandemic, she was under the impression that Meals on Wheels were being prepared by our CI. When did that stop happening?

Ms. Carter stated that they still prepare meals from the CI, but they have found if a client is living 9 miles or more outside of the City Limits it would cost a lot of money

to transport those meals to the client's home. So, we came up with an alternative that would address this and give us substantial savings on gas, car maintenance and employment of County Workers who were delivering the meals.

Chairman Davis stated that he would like for an evaluation follow-up on this program in six months. We need to make sure that the few meals they provided for evaluation weren't "show piece" meals.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that she would like to know what it was costing the County in meals, gas, car maintenance and employees that were delivering the meals. This program gets money from Three Rivers and the Hospital Authority and knowing those numbers will help us know if we need to ask for more money from these entities.

Ms. Windham advised that there is a provision included in the contract to allow us to terminate the contract with thirty (30) days' notice.

Chairman Davis asked if we could get some of the sample meals for the Board of Commissioners to try out and see what we think of these meals.

Commissioner Dutton asked if some type of feedback could be arranged from those receiving the meals. Just in case the quality of the meals is maintained.

Ms. Carter stated that this is a small number of meals, only 22%, most of the meals are still provided by the CI. This group has been receiving Mom's Meals, not the CI meals.

Commissioner Bowlden stated that Ms. Carter and her team are more than just Meals on Wheels, they have provided walkers and wheelchairs and have kept him updated on matters he has been concerned about and he is appreciative of her efforts, and he wanted to say Thank you.

Chairman Davis stated that at some point when we are having a workshop, he would like to have these meals delivered so that the Board can see the quality of the meals firsthand and we want an evaluation form sent to the clients so that we can get the feedback on how we are doing.

Motion/Second by Johnson/Dutton to end the contract with Mom's Meals and sign a new contract with Middle Flint Council on Aging with a follow-up on the quality of the meals and report back to the Board of Commissioners in six months. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

5. Consider a recommendation from the Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Commission to approve Cheers Without Fears as an association.

Ms. Carmichael stated she is here this evening representing the Parks & Leisure Services Advisory Commission. Since 2018, Recreational Cheerleading has been provided through Spalding County. There haven't been people with a passion to take over this program. Last year, there was a group of women who approached Spalding County Leisure Services and asked if they could "test pilot" and work along side our youth football program to test the interest in cheerleading. They had a fantastic year. They have met a number of times to learn the "ins and outs" of an association and before coming to the Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Commission, they have demonstrated the knowledge of the budget, they understand the finances of what it takes to operate the program.

They appeared before the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission in May and received their recommendation after their presentation. She then introduced the people involved in "Cheers Without Fears." Attached to the Agenda Item is their financials, their Articles of Incorporation, the minutes from their meetings, their structure, and their budget plan. This group is dynamic in fund raising and trying to make this affordable so no child will be turned away.

Niesha Duffey, CEO and President of CWF. This organization approached her last year. She taught at Griffin High School for three years in Special Education. When she attended games two years ago with her son, there were no cheerleaders. The coach came to her and stated that if she would bring the girls to cheer, he would buy the uniforms. Two years ago, we had 10 girls who cheered for that season. Last year she came back with the same 10 girls, and she was approached by other coaches of the football teams asking for cheerleaders for their groups. Last year, we had 80 girls come out to City Park. We broke them down into teams.

Ms. Duffey stated that had done three fund raisers and they raised \$2,702. They are looking at a budget of \$375 for each child. We have had over 21 girls come to each fund raiser which lowered the costs for these girls to \$195.00. We have over 60 girls looking to come out and cheer with us. We also have parents calling us every day about this program. They just completed a summer camp and had over 60 girls to participate at \$40.00 each.

Commissioner Johnson then asked if there were opportunities for local businesses to contribute to the organization.

Ms. Duffey stated that they are a non-profit organization and we have had doctors donate and be a part of the organization. She has talked to people from Spalding High School and they are going to have some of their fund raising people to reach out to their group. They are looking to have sponsors.

Motion/Second by Johnson/Dutton to approve Cheers Without Fears as an association within Spalding County. Motion carried 4-1 (Flowers-Taylor).

6. Consider Request from the Spalding County Accountability Court to renew their grant beginning July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Dr. Ledbetter advised that this is a continuation of the grant that is provided for the Accountability Court every year. The total budget for the grant is \$174,037.00 with a county match of \$23,241.00. Staff's recommendation and State Court Judge Thacker's recommendation is to approve this grant request.

Motion/Second by Dutton/Flowers-Taylor to approve the request from the Spalding County Accountability Court to renew their grant beginning July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor then stated that she was under the impression there was no match for this grant.

Dr. Ledbetter stated there is a small match, it is \$23,241 the total budget for the grant is \$174,037.00. The majority of this, even the match, is accounted for through the Court System, so it doesn't come out of the General Fund, it comes out of the Court System.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

1. Revisit and discuss the future of the Griffin-Spalding Land Bank Authority.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that Newton Galloway, the Chairman of the Land Bank Authority is here this evening.

Mr. Galloway then asked that the property addressed by Ms. Prichard earlier be pulled up on the screen for consideration. This property was closed by the Land Bank and hasn't been a Land Bank property since 2021. The last sales date was 11/10/2021 and would have been sold with the standard restriction that there has to be an owner occupant. This is an example of approximately 30% of the Land Bank Properties that have been transferred with that being a restriction, probably have been reconverted back into rental property.

Mr. Galloway stated that this is only one of the reasons there needs to be an Executive Director, because we can't keep up with this. The other thing is, I have spoken with Ms. Prichard, what he found odd is that the sales for the property have a zeros sales price with multiple parcels.

Sharon King stated that the property in question sold to Venette Wallace who lives in Virginia. There were multiple properties sold at that time to the same person, one on the North 9th Street Extension, several on Hamilton Boulevard and she was supposed to consolidate the lots on Hamilton Boulevard, but she never did. The one on Hamilton is a rental and there was one purchased inside the city that is also being used as a rental. This was brought to the attention of the Board.

Mr. Galloway stated that they had investigated, and we know that people are violating the covenants. How do we find out and who is responsible for it? The board members do not have time to pursue them. The lady who owns this property has approximately 7-8 other properties which are probably rental properties. There is another property located close to this property that has burned, but the County doesn't have a policy on demolishing those properties, whereas the City does, and we can ask the City to demolish and there is a process in place whereby the property is demolished.

Mr. Galloway stated the bottom line is you have before you a proposal to essentially try to get a Land Bank Executive Director. 70% of the properties currently owned by the Land Bank are probably in the City. Right now, he cannot access the contracts because they are in the City's offices. They were transferred there when the Executive Director resigned, and it was placed under a consultant. As you know, he supports the consultant's findings, but we have not implemented them. Right now, if an inquiry is made, the City has nobody they will direct to help us find contracts.

Mr. Galloway then advised that on the Land Bank Agenda for this week there is an item proposed by Mr. Penland who works with Beck, Owen, and Murray, to have all of the City's files now transferred to his office so counsel for the Land Bank can access the contracts. The Land Bank has taken property and transferred it to persons who have put it back on the tax rolls. If you do not have a process in place, we do not know what happens to the tax foreclosed properties. One of the problems we have that other places don't have is the value of the property in most cases is exceeded by the amount of back taxes, penalties, and interest.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that she hears what Mr. Galloway is saying and these are issues that clearly need to be addressed and can't be addressed until the Board has an Executive Director. She has said for the last five or six years that we need some checks and balances. This is something that as a Board they should have a policy for that. The biggest thing that makes me support the Land Bank is the thing that we initially asked the Land Bank to do was to put properties back on the tax rolls.

Mr. Galloway stated that as far as covenants are concerned, we have to have a way to monitor, and he can't do it.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that if we want the Land Bank to be successful at what it is doing, then we must fund them to a level that will allow them to do business the way it needs to be done. The other thing is that as a Board of Commissioners we haven't done what we need to do. We've set back and watched the city be involved with the Land Bank but haven't been involved ourselves. She is hoping that with the new Executive Director, there will be more structure.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that she feels there needs to be representation at these meetings by the County and she will volunteer to be that representation initially. Clearly, we need to be there to mind our own business and we can't do that if we don't show up.

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Dutton to accept the last presented Personnel Lease with the City of Griffin for a full time Executive Director and an amendment to the Interlocal Agreement with a review in six months of how things are going and come back with what next year's budget for the Land Bank looks like.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor and Charles Reese are to attend the meetings.

Dr. Ledbetter stated the current budget for contribution to the Land Bank Authority is \$35,000 which is one half, the City has the same amount in their budget.

Mr. Galloway stated that the amount will probably be between \$50,000 and \$60,000 for the Executive Director.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

X. REPORT OF COUNTY MANAGER

- ✓ Budget Town Hall meetings continue. The next meeting will be this Thursday night at 6:00 p.m. at the Cabin Creek Fire Station.
- ✓ Kudos to Greg Stansell for 30 years with Spalding County and to T.J. Imberger for completing 31 years with the County last Thursday.
- ✓ Re-codification: Municode completed their review and staff, the County Attorney, and the County Zoning Attorney are awaiting the first draft of the document which should arrive in the next few weeks.
- ✓ Our new Human Resources Director will start next week.
- ✓ Tomorrow, we are scheduled to open bids for the FY24 resurfacing work. He then presented the list of roads for FY24 to be resurfaced this year. They were listed by district. There is a total of 23.69 miles of roads scheduled for resurfacing.

XI. REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS

Rita Johnson – Thanked Rev. Watts for delivering the Invocation and updating the Board on the plans for the Juneteenth celebration. She then thanked Dr. Ledbetter for the Town Halls he is conducting to let the citizens know what is happening with the budget and why.

Ryan Bowlden – Expressed his concerns regarding the Impact Fees and the charges for a pool that were installed.

Dr. Ledbetter stated that the software was not updated properly, and it has now been fixed. The individual in question will be receiving a refund of part of the charges.

Wanted to know when the next Bulky Day will be scheduled.

Dr. Ledbetter advised that Randy King is working on the next Bulky Day and notices should go out shortly.

Thanked Dr. Ledbetter for his Town Hall Meetings. We are putting him on the front lines, but he is handling it and educating people on how things work is valuable. You have to come to the meetings to know what is going on in the County.

There is some verbiage on some of the park signage that needs to have the wording updated. He will provide that in an email.

Gwen Flowers-Taylor – She is happy to hear about the Impact Fees. She wanted to ask if she could get a golf cart before the parade on June 17th so that she can decorate it. She will contact Public Works to see about that. She thanked Rev. Watts for coming in and updated the Board on the arrangements for Juneteenth. As a partner in this we are making our resources available to your organization, and we are very glad you are stepping up to do this.

She thinks that we need to be looking at getting a “tiny home” policy. We need to decide how we want it, and where we want it. If someone wants to put a tiny home on their property, we need to have some guidelines. We can’t just allow people to place these houses on property.

She is glad we have this settled with the Land Bank Authority and she hopes we can be more involved moving forward.

James Dutton – He is excited about the Juneteenth parade and festivities. The ACCG head legislative advisor called him today and asked what needs to be worked on, there were a number of things discussed. ACCG suggests that since Spalding County is the one wanting to institute a JSPLOST it should be one of our local legislators to introduce the bill. This should be a win for legislators on both sides of the aisle.

Clay Davis – Stated that the budget is tough right now, the tornados have caused a real issue for our budget. We have asked the County Manager to look at every possible option. No decisions have been made; we are currently looking at all the options. He then asked that if anyone has an idea on how to do LOST better, he would like to hear about it. He has an opportunity statewide to influence LOST. We don’t do this again for another 10 years, but he is open to any ideas. We cannot go through what we went through this last time. What happened between the city and the county is not how we want to do things. Last, he would like to thank the County Manager for stepping forward and conducting the Town Hall meetings. It is not easy to step forward and have get blasted by the citizens.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Johnson to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.