

**FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FIRST REGULAR MEETING**

February 05, 2025
10:00 AM



Fulton County Government Center
Assembly Hall
141 Pryor Street SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



MINUTES-RATIFIED

This document has been ratified or approved by the Board of Commissioners, and is not binding on the County or any officer.

Ratification Date: March 5, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Robert L. Pitts

10:02 a.m.

ROLL CALL: Tonya R. Grier, Clerk to the Commission

Robert L. Pitts, Chairman (At-Large)

ABSENT

Bridget Thorne, Commissioner (District 1)

ABSENT

Bob Ellis, Vice-Chairman (District 2)

PRESENT

Dana Barrett, Commissioner (District 3)

PRESENT

Mo Ivory, Commissioner (District 4)

PRESENT

Marvin S. Arrington, Jr., Commissioner (District 5)

PRESENT

Khadijah Abdur-Rahman, Commissioner (District 6)

PRESENT

INVOCATION: Reverend Clifton Dawkins, Jr., County Chaplain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recite in unison

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE SWITCH ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (CELL PHONES, PAGERS, PDAs, ETC.) TO THE SILENT POSITION DURING THIS MEETING TO AVOID INTERRUPTIONS.

IF YOU NEED REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS DUE TO A DISABILITY, INCLUDING COMMUNICATIONS IN AN ALTERNATE FORMAT PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK TO THE COMMISSION. FOR TDD/TTY OR GEORGIA RELAY SERVICE ACCESS DIAL 711.

CONSENT AGENDA**25-0087 Board of Commissioners**

Adoption of the Consent Agenda - All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the County Commission and will be enacted by one motion. No separate discussion will take place on these items. If discussion of any Consent Agenda item is desired, the item will be moved to the First Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration. **(ADOPTED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, to adopt the Consent Agenda. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts, Thorne, and Arrington

25-0088 Board of Commissioners

Proclamations for Spreading on the Minutes. **(SPREAD ON THE MINUTES UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Proclamation recognizing "Edna Moffett Remembrance Day." **(Ivory)**
January 3, 2025

Proclamation recognizing "Jacqueline Leonard Remembrance Day."
(Abdur-Rahman)
January 24, 2025 and sponsored

Proclamation recognizing "Ceasar Mitchell Appreciation Day." **(Ivory)**
February 3, 2025

Proclamation recognizing "Dr. Evelyn G. Lowery Appreciation Day." **(Ivory)**
February 3, 2025

Proclamation recognizing "Marvis Simpson Nelson Remembrance Day."
(Arrington)
February 7, 2025

Commissioners' District Board Appointments**25-0089****Board of Commissioners****FULTON COUNTY CITIZENS COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT****(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

The Fulton County Citizens Commission on the Environment shall consist of citizens from throughout Fulton County to be appointed by the Members of the Board of Commissioners. There shall be fourteen (14) members to serve on the Commission. In making such appointments, the Fulton County Board of Commissioners shall ensure that the terms of appointment are staggered. Each District Commissioner shall appoint one Commission member to a four (4) year term. Each District Commissioner shall also appoint one Commission member to a two (2) year term to ensure staggered terms. After the expiration of each appointee's initial term, the regular term of office for such an appointee shall be four (4) years. No term of any member shall extend beyond the term of the District Commissioner who appointed the member to serve on the Fulton County Citizens Commission on the Environment; however, each member may continue to serve beyond his/her term until replaced. After the expiration of any appointee's initial term, the Commission may recommend to the Fulton County Board of Commissioners a list of eligible persons for consideration as appointees to the Commission. The Appointing member of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners may remove his/her appointee(s) to this Commission at any time and within the sole discretion of that individual of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners.

Term = 4 Years, staggered

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Vacant (**Arrington**)

Commissioner Arrington nominated Merlin Knight for a District appointment to a term ending December 31, 2027.

25-0090**Board of Commissioners****FULTON COUNTY CITIZENS COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT****(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Chris Radnell (**Thorne**)

Commissioner Thorne nominated Lisa Ethridge for a District appointment to a term ending December 31, 2027.

Open & Responsible Government**25-0091 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval to accept a name change and authorizing the Department of Purchasing & Contract Compliance to reflect the name change of Allied Fence Company, Inc. to Osborne & Witt, Inc., d.b.a. Allied Fence Company. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0092 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Vault Easement Dedication of 206 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Chick-fil-A, Inc., owner, for the purpose of constructing the Chick-fil-A FSR #00686 Project at 4285 State Bridge Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0093 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Meter Easement Dedication of 59 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Chick-fil-A, Inc. for the purpose of constructing the Chick-fil-A FSR #00686 Project at 4285 State Bridge Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0094 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sanitary Sewer System Ownership, Operation, Maintenance, and Repair Agreement between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and JBGL Atlanta Development 2014, LLC, for the purpose of granting Fulton County legal access to extend and maintain the sanitary sewer system at 132 Brook Street and 51 Thompson Street, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009 (the Development). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0095 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sanitary Sewer System Ownership, Operation, Maintenance, and Repair Agreement between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and CRP/WP Union City Owner, LLC, for the purpose of granting Fulton County legal access to extend and maintain the sanitary sewer system at 7105 Hall Road, Union City, Georgia 30213 (the Development). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0096 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of an Indemnification, Maintenance, and Land Use Agreement for Private Improvement (Indemnification Agreement) between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and Joshua Cady and Stephanie Cady for the purpose of granting conditional approval to allow stormwater infrastructure to remain within a portion of the County's existing sanitary sewer easement at 40 Cumming Street, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0097 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of an Indemnification, Maintenance, and Land Use Agreement for Private Improvement (Indemnification Agreement) between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and JBGL Atlanta Development 2014, LLC for the purpose granting conditional approval to allow stormwater infrastructure to remain within a portion of the County's existing sanitary sewer easement at 5560 Abbotts Bridge Road, Johns Creek, Georgia 30097. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0098 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of an Indemnification, Maintenance, and Land Use Agreement for Private Improvement (Indemnification Agreement) between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and JBGL Atlanta Development 2014, LLC for the purpose of granting conditional approval to allow stormwater infrastructure to remain within a portion of the County's existing sanitary sewer easement at 5560 Abbotts Bridge Road, Johns Creek, Georgia 30097. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

25-0099 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of an Indemnification, Maintenance, and Land Use Agreement for Private Improvement (Indemnification Agreement) between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and CRP/WP Union City Owner, LLC for the purpose of granting conditional approval to allow stormwater infrastructure to remain within a portion the County's existing sanitary sewer easement at 7105 Hall Road, Union City, Georgia 30213. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

FIRST REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**25-0100 Board of Commissioners**

Adoption of the First Regular Meeting Agenda. **(ADOPTED AS AMENDED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Ivory, to adopt as amended by removing item #25-0110; and revising item #25-0106. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts, Thorne, and Arrington

25-0101 Clerk to the Commission

Ratification of Minutes. **(RATIFIED)**

First Regular Meeting Minutes, January 8, 2025

Second Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, January 29, 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, to ratify the meeting minutes. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts, Thorne, and Arrington

25-0102 Board of Commissioners

Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates. **(PRESENTED)**

Proclamation recognizing "Transdev Mobility Change Makers Appreciation Day."
(Arrington/Barrett)

Presentation of Certificates: Youth Commission Induction Ceremony. **(BOC)**

PUBLIC HEARINGS**25-0103 Board of Commissioners**

Public Comment - Citizens are allowed to voice County related opinions, concerns, requests, etc. during the Public Comment portion of the Commission meeting.

Priority for public comment will be given to Fulton County citizens and those individuals representing businesses or organizations located within Fulton County, including their employees, whether such persons are commenting in-person, via emails or via Zoom or other electronic media (i.e., phone call). Non-Fulton County citizens will only be heard after all in-person Fulton County citizens, representatives of business and organizations located within Fulton County, including their employees, have been heard and the time allotted for public comment has not expired, except as otherwise provided in this code section. County staff shall verify the residency of each public speaker prior to such person being heard by the board. Speakers will be granted up to two minutes each. Members of the public will not be allowed to yield or donate time to other speakers. The Public Comment portion of the meeting will not exceed sixty (60) minutes at the First Regular Meeting, nor will this portion exceed sixty (60) minutes at the Second Regular Meeting. In the event the 60-minute time limit is reached prior to public comments being completed, public comment will be suspended and the business portion of the BOC meeting will commence. Public comment will resume at the end of the meeting. For more information or to arrange a speaking date, contact the Clerk's Office.

(CONDUCTED)

27 Speakers: Jimmy Gouch (Arts Funding); Waduda Muhammad (Arts Funding); Conrhonda Baker (Arts Funding); Christopher Escobar (Arts Funding); Taylor Benion (Arts Funding); Celise Kalke (Arts Funding); J. Wesley Day (Justice/Solicitor Office); Chris Moses (Arts Funding); Charmaine Minnifield (Arts Funding); Marsha L. Thadison (Youth Malnutrition); Sarah Bishop (Arts Funding); Rivka Levine (Arts Funding); L.A. Pink (Justice System); Desman Mosley (Social Justice); Donna Watts-Nunn (Arts Funding); Lisa Adler (Arts Funding); Demetrius Brewer (Homelessness); Patrick Horton (Homelessness); Laura Hennighausen (Arts Funding); Collins Desselle (Arts Funding); Apollo Gun (Arts Funding); Felicia Seamōn (Arts Funding); Lydia Meredith (DFCS); Ravi Klindom (Arts Funding); Virginia Thompson (Arts Funding); Valerie Fluker (Senior Services Funding); Dee Hayes-Parker (Homelessness)

1 Zoom Speaker: Madeline Evans (Arts Funding)

PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD**Land Bank Authority****25-0110 Board of Commissioners**

Land Bank Authority Briefing **(REMOVED)**

COUNTY MANAGER'S ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****25-0104 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval to extend an existing contract - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 21RFP127274K-BKJ, Comprehensive Operation and Preventive and Predictive Maintenance Services for the Fulton County Jail and the South Fulton Municipal Regional Jail in an amount not to exceed \$2,815,000.00 with Johnson Controls, Inc., (Atlanta, GA), to provide continued comprehensive operation, preventive and corrective maintenance services for the Fulton County Jail, Jail South Annex in Union City, and the Fulton County North Annex Jail in Alpharetta to extend the contract for an additional five (5) month period. Effective February 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts, and Thorne

Health and Human Services**25-0105 Public Works**

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder - Public Works, 24ITB092324K-CRB, Tree Trimming in an amount not to exceed \$130,604.00 with Good Choice X-pert Tree Services, LLC (Stockbridge, GA), to provide tree trimming and vegetation clearing services at the specified water distributions facilities. Effective from issuance of the Notice To Proceed (NTP) for 120 calendar days for final completion of the work. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts, and Thorne

25-0106 Public Works

Request approval of a recommended proposal - Atlanta-Fulton County Water Resources Commission ("AFCWRC"), RFP# 24RFP0820K-DB, Operation & Maintenance Services for the Atlanta-Fulton County Water Treatment Facility, owned jointly between the City of Atlanta and Fulton County, to Veolia Water North America - South, LLC (Veolia Water) / Khafra Operations Services, LLC, a Joint Venture (Atlanta, GA) in the amount of not to exceed \$6,192,307.00 to provide operation and maintenance services for the Atlanta-Fulton County Water Treatment Facility ("AFCWTF") **The initial term of the contract is ten (10) years**, effective April 1, 2025 through March 31, ~~2030~~ **2035** with one, ~~five~~ **ten (10)-year** renewal option. **(APPROVED AS AMENDED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve as amended. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts, and Thorne

COMMISSIONERS' ACTION ITEMS**25-0107 Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of a Resolution to amend Fulton County's current approved FY2025 budget by approving an increase to the total budget provided to the Department of Arts and Culture by an additional amount of \$1,700,000.00 for the Contracts for Services ("CFS") Program to maintain the current level of services provided in FY2024 and recent years; and for other purposes. **(Barrett/Arrington) (MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Arrington, to approve. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Barrett, and Arrington

Nay: Ellis, Ivory, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts, and Thorne

COUNTY MANAGER'S PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****25-0108 External Affairs**

Presentation: 2025 State Legislative Session Update **(PRESENTED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Arrington to approve adding to the Fulton County Legislative Agenda a review of O.C.G.A 331-11-3 and the EMS Council to address reducing the high EMS response times. The motion failed for a lack of a second.

EXECUTIVE SESSION**25-0109 Board of Commissioners**

Executive (**CLOSED**) Sessions regarding litigation (**County Attorney**), real estate (**County Manager**), and personnel (**Pitts**). (**DID NOT ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION/NO ACTION TAKEN**)

ADDED TO THE MEETING**Items Added to the Agenda****25-0111 Board of Commissioners**

Discussion: Ambulance services in South Fulton. (**Arrington**)

SUPER MAJORITY WAS NOT PRESENT

ITEM WAS NOT ADDED TO THE FIRST REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONER'S
FIRST REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 5, 2025
10:00 A.M.

Alexander Solutions, LLC
"A Court Reporting Firm"

(Whereupon, the meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.)

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Good morning. It is 10:02 a.m. I am Vice -Chairman Bob Ellis, and will be presiding over the meeting in the absence of Chairman Pitts. I'm going to ask our Clerk to call the roll."

CLERK GRIER: "Chairman Robb Pitts. Commissioner Bridget Thorne. Vice-Chairman Bob Ellis."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Dana Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Mo Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr. Commissioner Khadijah Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Mr. Vice- Chairman, you have a quorum."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. If you could all, please, rise for the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Thank you."

(Whereupon, the invocation was given by Reverend Dawkins followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.)

CLERK GRIER: "On page 2, Consent Agenda, **25-0087**, Adoption of the Consent Agenda - All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the County Commission and will be enacted by one motion. No separate discussion will take place on these items. If discussion of any Consent Agenda item is desired, the item will be moved to the First Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "And Commissioners are there any items that any of you would like to remove from the Consent Agenda?"

Commissioners: (No response.)

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "We have a motion and a second."

CLERK GRIER: And the vote is open. And the motion passes; four yeas, zero nays."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 5, First Regular Meeting Agenda: Vice Chair and Members of the Board, we have one items requested to be added to today's Regular Meeting Agenda by Commissioner Arrington, 25-0111, Discussion: Ambulance services in South Fulton."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "So Madam Clerk, as we all know that add-on items require a super majority of the Board, which is five members, correct? We only have four members present?"

CLERK GRIER: "That's correct."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "So by nature of that, this particular request fails."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. So noted."

CLERK GRIER: "**25-0100**, Adoption of the First Regular Meeting Agenda: Vice Chairman and Members of the Board, we have two amendments to today's Regular Meeting Agenda. The first items to be removed on page 6, 25-0110, Land Bank authority briefing; and on page 7, items to be revised, 25-0106, Public Works: Request approval of a recommended proposal in an amount not to exceed \$6,192,307 to provide operation and maintenance services for the Atlanta/Fulton County water treatment facility. This item is revised to amend the contract date to ten years instead of five."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. I'm just wanting to understand why the Metro Atlanta Land Bank presentation is being removed."

CLERK GRIER: "Yes, Commissioner Barrett. After the agenda was posted, I was informed that Commission staff had responded to the polling incorrectly to add this item to the agenda, so that only gave us three."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So we didn't have a majority of the Board wanting to hear from it Metro Atlanta Land Bank?"

CLERK GRIER: "That is correct."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Any further questions on the agenda? Is there a motion to adopt as amended? Motion and a second."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes; four yeas, zero nay."

CLERK GRIER: "**25-0101**, Ratification of Minutes; First Regular Meeting Minutes, January 8th; Second Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, January 29th, 2025."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Is there a motion to ratify? We have a motion and a second."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes; four yeas, zero nays."

CLERK GRIER: "**25-0102**, presentation of proclamations and certificates: Proclamation recognizing 'Transdev Mobility Change Makers Appreciation Day' sponsored by Commissioner's Arrington and Barrett."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "(Microphone is not on.) we get with unwavering dignity, respect and kindness; fostering a sense of family and all who rely on their care; and WHEREAS, Mobility Change Makers go above and beyond in their commitment to the community, ensuring that the needs of their guests are met with compassion, professionalism, and a spirit of excellence; and WHEREAS their tireless efforts and selfish dedication to the principles of equity and accessibility have a profound and immeasurable impact on the lives of those that they serve; and WHEREAS, the leadership and unwavering dedication of Mobility Change Makers strengthen our community, inspire trust, and serve as a shining example of what it means to prioritize people first; and WHEREAS, their extraordinary contributions to Para transit mobility not only enhance the lives of their guests, but also promote the values of inclusivity, care, and service within our society. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes and celebrates the remarkable achievements and enduring commitment of the Transdev Mobility Change Makers, and express our heartfelt gratitude for their exceptional work; and do hereby proclaim Wednesday, February 5th, 2025 as 'Transdev Mobility Change Makers Appreciation Day' in Fulton County. Let's give them a big round of applause. Does someone from Transdev want to come and speak?"

MARK SAULSBERRY, TRANSDEV: "Thank you very much. My name is Mark Saulsberry, I'm the Chief HR Officer for Transdev, and it's an honor and a pleasure to be

here to recognize our two change makers. We're deeply honored to celebrate the outstanding work of Ms. Gaylene Brown and Mr. Willie Smith. Truly, these two truly embody the spirit and service and compassion that is our purpose at Transdev. That purpose is, if empower the freedom every day to move things to safe, reliable, innovative solutions that most importantly serve the common good. Willie and Gaylene work every day tirelessly creating enriching experiences for their passengers; many of whom were seniors or individuals with physical challenges who rely on their dedication to live full and abundant lives. We extend heartfelt gratitude to Commissioner Marvin Arrington and Commissioner Dana Barrett, and the entire Fulton County Board of Commissioners for this recognition. This honor is a testament to the collective efforts of those committed to transforming communities through mobility, access, and opportunity. Thank you very much. Thank you, Gaylene and Willie."

WILLIE SMITH, RECIPIENT: "Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Commissioner Barrett, Commissioner Arrington, and the rest of the Commissioners for having us here. My name is Willie Smith; I'm a 30-year retired DeKalb County firefighter that came to MARTA -- well, I came to Transdev -- Marta -- came to Transdev 2014. Said I was going to give it two years and I was going to go back home. I got bored and needed something to do. But I've been here for ten now. So one thing I will say about Mobility, a lot of the rural community and little smaller towns, they don't have this service -- I'm from a small town -- they don't have this service, and it's great to be able to help someone -- help the people that really need this. Everybody don't have a motorized wheelchair to go where they need to go. A lot of people don't have a way to get to the doctors. A lot of people don't even have a way to get to the grocery store, so this is a very important service and the people really appreciate it. And I try to tell my coworkers who are younger than I; I'm 65 that, you know, treat people with kindness and respect. Don't complain if they ask you to help them a little bit because you might be riding on this bus -- driving this bus today. You never know what God might do to you overnight. You might become a passenger on this bus next week. So with that being said, I just want to thank everybody, and y'all have a good day."

GAYLENE BROWN, RECIPIENT: "Good morning. My name is Gaylene Brown. I am Transdev employee mobility operator. I started April 12th of 2017. Ms. Jo gave me a job, and I've been there ever since then. I came from Florida. I didn't think I was going to last a year; it's hard to figure out the navigation around here. But -- but I'm still there and I appreciate my position; and I try to treat all my seniors with care and positivity to allow them to continue with their ADLs so they can be, you know, just advanced to a better level. You know, I try to be nice to them, I try to help them as much as I can because I lost my mom from multiple sclerosis at 40, and she was in a wheelchair, so I don't deny anyone that I got help in a wheelchair. That'll never come from me, because my mom might get up and slap me. But -- but I just want to thank Commissioner Barrett, Commissioner Arrington, and the entire Fulton County Board of Commissioners for this honor and this award today. And I thank you all for allowing me to be here. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Presentation of certificates: Youth Commission Induction Ceremony."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Well, today is a fun day, so I think this is one of the more exciting days every year that we have in terms of our Commission meetings as we get to sit and swear in our Youth Commission. I know for me personally it's, being a Georgia grad, it might be the only day of the year I get excited about seeing orange. I don't even like Halloween, so you guys look great, and we're definitely excited to have the opportunity to swear you in and, you know, commission you, in terms of your activities for the Fulton County Youth Commission. So I have the honor -- the honor today of reading the oath of office in the absence of Chairman Pitts, and we're going to do that, and then we're going to follow that with some certificates of service, and then Mr. Crossley is going to come up and say a few things, then we'll have closing remarks by all of our fellow Board Members, so a lot of pictures. Parents please feel free, I guess, to come, congregate in here, but we're also going to get plenty of pictures, which I think we will distribute, correctly as well. So congrats, parents, and feel free to you know, kind of snap as many pictures as you would like today. All right. With that, I would ask the Youth Commission Members to stand, and raise your right hand. All right. And after I say I, you're going to state your name, and then we're just going to be repeating the rest of this, okay? All right. I, do affirm that I will well truly discharge the duties of Youth Commissioner for Fulton County in all matters which require me, to the best of my knowledge and skill, to advise the Fulton County Board of Commissioners about how Fulton County can best address youth concerns and issues, design techniques to prevent at-risk situations of teenagers in Fulton County; influence policies that impact children and youth; I do further solemnly affirm that I will endeavor to discharge my duties in the following manner: participate in monthly meetings and community projects, remain in contact with Commissioners on youth issues, and this is only when you're not in school -- attend Board of Commissioners meetings, plan community service projects that will benefit youth, and reflect favorably on Fulton County government and citizens; and share pertinent information with my peers on youth-related issues. I pledge that I will fulfill these duties and I will act in my judgment, which will be the most conducive to the welfare and best interest of the youth of the entire County. These affirmations I hereby make on this 5th day of February of 2025. Congratulations. Let's give them a hand. All right, I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Crossley and we're going to get ready to do the certificate of service. We're going to recognize you by District and my fellow Commissioners are going to participate in this as well."

REGINALD CROSSLEY: "Thank you. At this time, we'll do inductee recognition, and I will call the students down per District. I ask the Board of Commissioner Members also present the plaques to the students as we call them by District. We'll start with District One: serving as Clerk to Commission, Prisha Shah, Ishaan Kejriwai, Sophia Campo, Vedha Tamilinain. Next, representing Vice Chair Ellis in District Two: Nathaniel D'Silva, Sarah Lopez, Shania Correia, and Joseph Giles. Representing Commissioner Barrett in District Three: Corinne Evans, Mya Hullum, Rohan Anand, Ismini Vasiloglou, Claire Collins. Next, representing Commissioner Ivory in District Four: Sierra Pate, London

White, serving as Vice Chair of the Youth Commission, Nasiir Simmons, and Vanessa Adams. Representing Commissioner Arrington in District Five: Laylah Jones, Sanaa Scipio, Taylor Walton, Natalie Desrosiers, and Dereck Reed. Next, representing Commissioner Abdur-Rahman in District Six: Fatimah Muhammad, Layla Patel, Mya Nelson, Sir Washington, and Alexander Chalk. And last but not least, serving as the Chair of the Youth Commission At-Large David Alexander. David, will share some words on behalf of the Youth Commission.

DAVID ALEXANDER, CHAIR, FC YOUTH COMMISSION: "Good morning, everyone. It is an honor to stand before all of you today as the Chair of this esteem program. Before I continue, I'd like to thank the Board of Commissioners for backing this program. It would not be what it is without their support. I want to also to thank Mr. Crossley, our program director, for being a role model and mentor to myself and all of our fellow Youth Commissioners and for taking a chance on me in developing me and my fellow Youth Commissioners to who we are today. It truly has been a privilege to be a part of this organization, and I'm grateful for God for paving this path for me and my fellow Youth Commissioners. I attribute much of my development as a leader, as a citizen, and as an advocate to my time in the Youth Commission. I read a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. the other day that said, 'Our lives begin to end with the day that we become silent on things that matter'. The Youth Commission has given myself and my fellow Youth Commissioners a platform to advocate across Fulton County on the issues that affect youth. These issues range from mental health in schools, to issues as a society and impactful as climate change. And this has provided us with chance to be the catalyst for the change that we want to see in our communities and the world. In this changing volatile political climate, it's vital that tomorrow's leaders are ready to take the action that we need. While climate issues continue to rise and geopolitical tensions increase, it's imperative that the next generation of leaders have the ethical and moral integrity and responsibility required of the leaders of tomorrow. The Youth Commission has provided a strong foundation for these values from our service projects like the Hope Box Initiative, which provides essential items to un-housed people in the Metro Atlanta area to toy drives for disadvantaged youth across the County. These experiences have expanded my worldview and the views of my Youth Commissioners, and has strengthened my moral convictions. To my fellow Youth Commissioners, congratulations. This is a commemoration of everything that we have done. This is a start of incredible journeys for all of us, and thank you for being alongside me as I continue to learn and grow. Thank you all for listening and for supporting this program and God bless."

VICE- CHAIR ELLIS: "Mr. Crossley, do you want to say anything additional, or no? You all good? All right. Let's let the Commissioners come up."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "I just want to say real quickly, since Reginald's not going to come up here and boast on himself; but it was at least ten to 12 years ago maybe, that my daughter came through this program, and she was in the Fulton County Youth Commission. So this will be a very special ceremony for me every year, and this

morning when I told Janie that I was coming here, she said, is Mr. Crossley still running the program? And I said, he is. She goes wow, he's old. So Janie says hello. Congratulations on the decades that you've been running this program."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Hi everyone, I'm Commissioner Barrett. I just want to let us give one more big round of applause to all of these incredible students standing back there. This is the kind of engagement we would love to have from all of our young people in our communities. It's amazing to see these kids getting interested and involved in all of the civics: local government, state government, at such a young age. I'm so impressed, because I can tell you that's not what I was doing at that age. But we won't talk about that. But I am really impressed by them. We have some kids here who have been with us for multiple years. They've done legislative work, service projects, and they just continue to be a shining beacon in our community. So thank you, guys."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So, I heard Hank Stewart, the poet, say our children are 50 percent of our population, but they are hundred percent of our future. And so, I want you guys to know that we are expecting for you to continue great things. We are expecting great things out of you. We are relying on you because you are our future. Thank so much for your service and I'm happy to be here to celebrate with you today."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "If the audience would turn around and look at the faces of those youth. You're looking at the next Senator, Congresswoman, Congressman. You're looking at the next Commissioner, DA, Sheriff, or possibly the next President of the United States of America. And so, I want to thank as Commissioner Khadija Abdur-Rahman, affectionately known as Commissioner Khadijah, I thank you all, because they will not be what they are without the support that you all did. I think about my late mother, Victoria Travis Jackson; she says that fruit don't fall far from the tree. And so, young men and young women please go out and set the world on fire, but I charge you today to keep your talents, please, in the state of Georgia when you finish. Thank you."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "And preferably in Fulton County, too. You all feel good about yourselves now? Guess what you get to do now? Go back to class. Congratulations to all of you again and thank you so much for your service and the great work that you're doing in the leadership that you're providing within your communities and to Fulton County. So, thank you."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, Public Hearings, **25-0103**, Public Comment. Citizens wishing to participate in public comment will be allowed to appear in person or may choose to participate virtually via Zoom videoconferencing by submitting their comments

in writing on line by registering on the County website www.fultoncountyga.gov. Priority for public comment will be given to Fulton County citizens and those individuals representing businesses or organizations located within Fulton County. Speakers will be granted up to two minutes each. The public will not be allowed to yield or donate time to other speakers. The public comment portion of the meeting will not exceed 60 minutes. In the event the 60-minute time limit is reached prior to public comments being completed, public comment will be suspended and the business portion of the BOC meeting will commence. Public comment will resume at the end of the meeting. Vice Chair and Members of the Board, we'll start with the speakers here in Assembly Hall. We have received 26 speaker cards. Will the first six speakers, please come forward: Jimmy Gough, Waduda Muhammed, Conrhonda Baker, Christopher Escobar, Taylor Benion, and Celise Kalke."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Madam Clerk, just for the record, it's 10:36, almost 10:37. So our public comment period will end at precisely one hour after that."

JIMMY GOUGH, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Are we-a-go? My name is Jimmy Gough, a lifelong resident of Atlanta. I'm the current board chair of the Academy Theater in Hapeville, Georgia. The Academy Theater of Georgia's oldest professional theater company founded in 1956 by Frank Woodauer; starting place for such people as Samuel L. Jackson, Kenny Leon, David Hasselhoff, all right? So definitely a serious, serious place and we're serious people about having fun and working with children. The thing we just saw was the most beautiful thing -- the things that I see when I come down here before I say, come on money, money, money, money, the people that drive people around. The people out there in the community doing the real everyday thing. The kids, where I clearly see that you cannot take a pen out and say there's no DEI. I just saw the great magic of the American melting pot in action. Kids from every walk of life working together to build a better future for all of us. I think arts helps all of those kids with reading skills, with writing skills, with looking eye-to-eye to people with really talking, with really communicating, with really understanding and teamwork. It's all about teamwork. No matter what you do, you're all about the Super Bowl coming up, what's that about people? Teamwork. Lastly, I'll say when I was coming out of a train station to come up here, I saw those last sculptures from when I was a child with those beautiful woman standing there with their bare breasts; and I was just waiting -- I know somebody's going to write up a thing saying we've got to put bras on those ladies. We can't just have them standing out there in plain sight. So come on, people, arts are a beautiful thing. They're not obscene. They're for everybody; know who to take where and when, right? Age appropriate, okay? Y'all are the best."

WADUD MUHAMMAD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Waduda Muhammad. I'm the Executive Director of Georgians for the Arts. We are the statewide arts advocacy organization for the entire state of Georgia serving 159 counties. I am here on behalf of Fulton County Arts and Culture. I'm just going to give you a couple of facts, because you're going to hear from all the other organizations about all the wonderful things that are happening, but I just want to -- I just want y'all to

key in on some numbers and some data and some stats. So Georgia is 50th in funding per capita for the arts out of all 50 states. Right now, at the state level, we are facing a funding cut. And now in Fulton County, we are facing yet another possible cut. What's happening with the executive orders at the federal level is also another funding freeze possibility for the National Endowment for the Arts. When we look across the state of Georgia, everyone looks at Fulton County as a model for how arts and culture funding and quality of life should be. You are the model, you know, of County. You have the majority of arts organizations and institutions, and the decisions that you make for Fulton County resonates across the state. So we want you to continue to do the work that you have been doing supporting the arts in Fulton County so that everyone else could have the morale across the state and continue to follow your lead. Thank you."

CONRHONDA BAKER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Conrhonda and I'm with the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. Thank you for the support that you have given to the arts and for placing this critical funding back on today's agenda. Arts and culture are not discretionary expenses. They're economic drivers that generate substantial tax revenue, jobs, and stimulate local business. In Atlanta alone, the art sector supports 6,500 jobs, generates more than 360 million in personal income, and contributes 7.5 million in city and county tax revenue. Attendees spend on average \$42 per person beyond ticket costs, directly benefiting restaurants, hotels, and transportation services. These are real dollars circulating in our economy, strengthening the tax base that funds essential services with a significant expenditure on the horizon that will likely require financing. It is physically responsible to maximize and generate revenue-generating investments. You're prudent financial management accounts for budget underruns. Would you be opposed to also factoring in Fulton County arts and culture's investment returns? Without contracts for services and support, the volume of events and programming in your jurisdictions will decrease. Supplemental event-related spending will be left on the table. Reducing investment in the arts guarantees a decline in tax revenue, which will only increase the financial pressure in the long term. I urge you to fully approve the \$1.7 million in funding being reinstated to the contracts for services budget. This is not about discretionary spending. It's about ensuring that a benefit to an industry that delivers measurable economic returns maintains. Thank you for your time and consideration."

CHRISTOPHER ESCOBAR, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Christopher Escobar. I am the owner of the Plaza and Tara Movie Theatres and serve as executive director of the nonprofit Atlanta Film Society. I'm joined this morning by some of my colleagues on the staff and board sitting here behind me and up here in the stands. First, I want to say thank you for your historic support of the arts. I also want to specially call out and thank Commissioners Arrington and Barrett for putting up the measure today; and to the rest of you who I know maybe art is likely to vote in favor of it. I also want to say I get it. You got this huge Consent Decree Bill that you have even no idea what that's going to cost, and you've got to be fiscally conservative. Listen, as someone who pays over \$75,000 a year in property taxes and generates over \$300,000 a year in sales taxes, I appreciate that fiscal conservatism. And I know Commissioner

Ellis you don't even want to say anything that rhymes with millage rate, s I appreciate all of that. But I also want to caution you in not unintentionally and accidentally being penny wise and dollar foolish; and as my colleague just said, ignoring the revenue implications. I have here an AP study conducted within the city of Atlanta. It's not estimates. It's not projections. This does not even represent a hundred percent of nonprofits arts organizations, and if I could submit this here for you all. It shows that over \$16 million in tax revenue is generated for the city and the county. Now, even combining Fulton County's three with Atlanta's two, 5,000,000, getting a 16 million return. That's an incredible return. So I want to caution you and think about not just the dollars out, but think about the dollars in. That \$3 million budget revenue that we've been -- that should be the norm, and I want you to consider the incredible implications it makes for the revenues. You may not believe the study. You may not think they're accurate, but consider what if I'm right. Consider a closer look. Thank you so much."

TAYLOR BENION, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi, good morning. My name is Taylor Benion, and I am here on behalf of Balethnic Dance Company and Balethnic Academy of Dance. I want to express first our heartfelt gratitude for your continued supports of the arts in our community. Balethnic's mission is to inform, educate, and entertain through dance, using it as a vehicle for social change. Your investment has made a significant impact in enriching lives and fostering cultural engagements. So thanks to your funding, we've been able to provide lecture and demonstration in schools for underserved and disadvantaged youth. We were able to host a residency with Wayne State University and represent Atlanta most recently at the International Blacks and Dance Association in Pittsburgh. We've also engaged in international collaborations with Canada's National Ballet School in the Holland's Dance Festival, as well as working in Tanzania creating monthly fundamental ballet classes. We are truly thankful for your consideration in reinstating the \$1.7 million in CFS funding. The support is critical to continue transformative work that we and the other arts organization in this county do. The arts shape the identity, culture, and economic vitality of our community. And its funding ensures that the arts remain vibrant in Fulton County. And I told you I heard you mention to those youth to keep their talents in Fulton County. This is how you keep their talents in Fulton County, by supporting the arts. By providing jobs that they can come to, not going to New York City or going to Chicago, but being right here in the city of Atlanta in the County of Fulton. Thank you so much."

CELISE KALKE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello, everyone. Thank you so much for this time. My name Celise Kalke. I am the managing director of Synchronicity Theater. We uplift the voices of women and girls and build a community -- we're just -- just north of the Arts Center on Peachtree, come check us out. Earlier this week, we issued 118 1099s for artists, many of whom live in Fulton County. I just wanted to uplift the contract for services program. It's a really unique in that when your press release really is released about this program, there's a list of organizations like the one I work for, but there's also a list of artists. And Fulton County is one of the few funders that I know even nationally that always groups individual artist grants and the grants for organizations together. This is incredibly important to the spirit of entrepreneurship and

community that defines Atlanta where we are truly working together. And Fulton County has been such a leader in helping artists imagine a future with funding on the individual level and on the organizational level. To even skip a year would be such a detriment to this incredible gift of leadership that has been mentioned before. So I wanted to request an urge and thank you for reconsidering the \$1.7 million, and thank you so much for your leadership in Fulton County, which is truly, truly at a national scale; and I hope we can bring that money back. Thank you all so much."

CLERK GRIER: "Next speakers, please come forward: J. Wesley Day, Chris Moses, Charmaine Minnifield, Marsha Thadison, Sarah Bishop, and Rivka Levine."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is J. Wesley Day. I hope each of you had the opportunity to read my e-mail that I sent yesterday evening. I want to encourage you today to consider consolidating the Solicitor General's office into the Fulton County District Attorney's Office. When you look at other major cities across the nation, they only have one office, and I think Fulton County could benefit from this by saving money; perhaps take 20 percent of the budget from the Solicitor General and apply it to the arts to help prevent people from getting caught up in the criminal justice system. So I believe that a committee should be formed to figure out what will be the pros and cons of putting the Solicitor General office as a department under the Fulton County District Attorney's Office. I think it will be a win-win for everyone. On another note, you all know that I was beaten into a coma -- life support in 2018. We are approaching seven years, and no one has been prosecuted. Two people have been indicted, but no one's been prosecuted. What message are we sending our youth that you just had here today that if they get beaten nothing would happen? Perhaps this is why crime is an issue in Fulton County because it's instances like mine that make people want to take matters into their own hands. Our citizens should be able to count on fair justice in Fulton County. I had another incident in 2020 while I was just waiting on food at the Cheesecake Factory. I get charged with trespassing, how, I still don't know to this day. But Keith Gammage, the Solicitor General, added obstruction of justice causing me to lose my job twice at Delta Air Lines --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "-- thank you, Mr. Day."

J. WESLEY DAY: "-- justice, please."

CHRIS MOSES, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi, thank you all so much for putting this back on the table today. My name is Chris Moses. I have the honor of being the artistic director at the Alliance Theater and the Woodruff Arts Center at the heart of Fulton County; and every day I am grateful that we sit in the heart of Fulton County because you guys have been a beacon of support for the arts, and I want to thank you for that. And I'm so glad we have David Manuel as such a champion of our work working here with you all. Chris Escobar made a great point about the returns on investment in an economic sense. I want to talk to you about the return on investment and impact on young people in our community. We no longer have to guess about what the outcomes

are. We've commissioned study after study. We did it ourselves at the Alliance Theater about what happens when a young person experiences theater. And there are two things I want you to know that's -- it's no longer -- it's unassailable that the impact is real and long-lasting. A young person who comes to the theater leaves with a greater sense of tolerance. They're able to tolerate multiple points of view on a subject, which I think is critical right now, it's always been critical. And the second one that I want you to remember is a young person who leaves the theater and sees a story play out leaves with a greater sense of hope in their own future. So we have a chance here with this investment to mitigate hope and create conscientious human beings, why wouldn't we support the arts in this way so we can continue to churn out these incredibly bright young commissioners like we saw today. Thank you for your continued investment and this work. It is essential."

CHARMAINE MINNIFIELD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "My name is Charmaine Minnifield. I'm the founder of the Praise House Project. It is a site-specific public art installation series that's been funded by the National Endowment for the Arts to present in multiple sites across the city. It first appeared at Oakland Cemetery where it honored 800 unmarked graves. It was presented by an arts organization that was funded by you all. I am here because I want to bring the tradition of the ring shout in the Praise House forward as an example, because the Praise House was actually created in resistance to laws that were intended to dismantle our identity. And in resistance to those laws, we built the Praise House because it is a drum. I want to beat that drum again. It physically is a drum. We stood in a circle and we sang a call and response. We beat the floors and the walls in a polyrhythmic language that brought us back together. It was our resistance. I believe that the arts are the drum today. We are the griots. We tell the story of society; we keep our story safe; we create safe spaces to dissect complex issues around history and memory, and we uplift our institutions as we do so. We were honoring -- we are honoring the 80,000 souls that rest in South View Cemetery next, as well as those who are victims of the 1906 Atlanta race massacre. That is where the Praise House will go this month. We have attracted funding from across the nation including the Center for Cultural Power who gave us a fellowship for 18 months; and all of these professionals related to construction and building and higher education. We've also been a point of gathering in consideration for the philanthropic community to find ways of repair and reconciliation. We want to continue this work with your support in the arts. Let the arts lead the way. We are the griots. Thank you."

MARSHA THADISON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Marsha Thadison. I'm the owner and founder of the company called Yesterday's Kitchen for Today. I tell the community I am the grandma of yesterday calling in the next generation to educate them on how malnutrition is affecting our children. Malnutrition is causing children to be delinquent -- delinquent in school. Malnutrition is causing us to be sick. Malnutrition is causing mental illness. We have to look at the enemy on our plate that we're feeding our children to become child delinquent. Sugar is the next cocaine. It is taking our kids down and our health down, so I want to know how many of you have these problems in your family; mood swings, severe fatigue, delinquent behavior, crying

spells, insomnia, suffering temper tantrums, anxiety, outbursts, fainting spells, withdrawal, allergies, seizure? All of this is linked to diet. The enemy is on our plate and we're feeding it to our children, and we want them to sit still and be still, and when we're feeding them this poison. We need to come together to get our children -- I'm seeing people get their children set free from ADHD, bipolar, schizophrenia, cancer with diet. We have to educate our children to know how to feed the next generation, if we want peace in our home, if we want peace in our school. It has been said through history, Eric Vincent, Secretary Department of Agriculture told the Lincoln Day audience in Washington, DC -- I'm sorry, I'm a little nervous, February 18, 1960, lack of nutrient eating and feeding our children weakens America and cause us to have a rise in delinquent children behavior. We need to get our kids back with the diet. My name is Marsha Thadison, Yesterday's Kitchen for Today, putting the power of good health back into the hands of the people."

SARAH BISHOP, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello. My name is Sarah Bishop, and I'm a proud employee of the Woodruff Arts Center, home to the Alliance Theater, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and High Museum of Art. I'm here to thank you for supporting the arts and for placing this critical funding back on the agenda today. The Woodruff Arts Center is honored to serve as one of Atlanta's most beloved cultural institutions. And we are much more than a destination for entertainment. Our art partners serve more than a million people across our campus and out in schools and our community each year. The work that happens across our stages, in our galleries, in our rehearsal halls is changing lives and it's saving lives. The US Surgeon General continues to warn us of the unprecedented mental health epidemic facing our youth. And suicide rates are skyrocketing throughout our state. Young people are experiencing sadness, hopelessness, loneliness, and despair at alarming rates. But we know exposure to and participation in the arts in any form can change the course for rising generations. We bring nearly 200,000 young people to our campus each year to experience theater, music, visual arts, and to tell their stories in profound ways. We've conducted year's long longitudinal studies on the benefit of the arts and have seen firsthand how repeated exposure to the arts can reduce cortisol levels, nurture hope, improve self-confidence, and foster resilience. But we can't do this work without support and resources. The issues young people are facing affect all of us, and we're humbly asking you to please fully approve the 1.7 million being put back into the CFS budget, because the strength and health of our city and our young people are depending on it."

RIVKA LEVINE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi again, Rivka, from the Atlanta Shakespeare Company. I looked at your budget and I can't imagine the pressure that you guys are under looking at justice and safety and senior services and HIV elimination, and you are looking for something that you can cut. But the arts are the means by which you are going to get healthy people and crime-free communities. A national evaluation approved that arts program for teens lowered stealing, destroying public property, fighting truancy, vandalism, excuse me, and other criminal behaviors. Among adults in the justice system, the average recidivism rate is 60 percent; it is three percent among adults who participated in theater programs while they were incarcerated. There's your

justice and safety. The National Institute for Health determined that the theater training impacts cognitive function in the elderly, and minimizes the effects of Alzheimer's and dementia. For cardiac patients, music therapy reduces heart rate and myocardial oxygen demand. Parkinson's patients can't stand up from a chair by themselves, but they can dance. Neurologists don't know how, but that is true. The creative writing affects lymphocyte counts, pain management, and decreases viral loads in HIV patients. There's your Grady, there's your HIV elimination. I'm not telling you that the arts are a cure all. You still need to fund emergency services and juvenile courts, but I'm going to argue that no single allocation is going to have such an across-the-board impact. Please give us the means to take some of the burden off of your shoulders to take care of your community. Thanks for hearing us."

CLERK GRIER: "Next speakers: L.A. Pink, Desman Mosley, Casanova, Donna Watts-Nunn, Lisa Adler, Demetrius Brewer, and Laura Henninghausen."

L.A. PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. The last Board of Commissioners meeting Bridget Thorne brought a subject about a nonpartisan position; and I bring this back up because if people go back, the Sheriff Rambo ran for a nonpartisan position, which that's where it should have been. But he was ignored, overlooked, not even given still to this day his count for his run. We still have not received the tally up race for this run. The Sheriff has been illegally sworn in; I'm going to say that. Because he was sworn in on the 10th, he didn't get his surety bond until the 26th. It was not clear, and you cannot swear in on an older surety bond. Please do your research. Georgia law code 15-16-7-5-6 tells you that you cannot swear in on an old surety bond. There's nothing that will lapse over once that is over, because that surety bond was not picking him up. There was supposed to be a new surety bond in place if he swore in anytime in December. That's the reason why a lot of times y'all swear in, in January because it gives you your new surety bond, and it's effective. So therefore, we need an investigation on that. I don't know if anybody is aware of all of the deaths that's happening in the jail. From my understanding Mr. Williams was supposed to have been hung and then they took him to the hospital where they say he was on a ventilator and later on passed away. I just got a message from one of the guards now. Nobody is saying anything about any of this. This stuff is being brushed up under the rug because they're saying once these bodies get to the jail, oh, they're considered dead -- I mean, when they get to the hospital from the jail, that they're considered the hospital's problem, and that's not true. If a situation happened at the jail it's supposed to be reported, and we need an investigation done on this immediately because this is a very serious matter to his family and to other inmates that's off in there watching these things happen. We got stuff after stuff after stuff happening, and what is going on with the DOJ? I mean, come on. This is ridiculous that this stuff is being brushed up under the rug because y'all want to keep the Sheriff in office, and he needs to go. So I'm going to stay on his hat, I'm going to stay on his watch; I'm going to continue to be that --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Ma'am. Thank you, thank you. Next speaker."

DESMOND MOSLEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hey, how you all doing? My name is Desmond. I'm an upcoming activist -- motivational speaker, whatever. In order to consider some of the disadvantages that's been happening over the years, like within a span of three to five years, a lot of things we have did, we have went to doing the wrong thing in order to do something right. Which kind of put us like in a messed up position; like a hole. And sometimes you don't want to be in a hole. You want to be able to have this start where you could go forward, instead of going minor setback to go forward. I'm really proud of this city. I'm not trying to disadvantage or downplay anything or belittle anybody because of their position of what they have done or -- everybody makes mistakes. Coaches make mistakes. Players make mistakes, but it's about helping. We have time to do this. We have a think-fast moments and everybody have think-fast moments. And with this governmental system, we have to be ten steps, five steps ahead. This is chess. So if you want to gamble with your freedom, your time, your support because helping someone sometimes could feel like gambling. It's three things that divides a community: A miser, someone who selfishly hoards his wealth, and there's a lot of people that does that that's in authority positions. I don't have a direct -- it's reality. You have a slanderer: someone who's accused you of something without no type of evidence. We have fell a victim to that in the system of Atlanta."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Next speaker."

DONNA WATTS-NUNN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. I'm Donna Watts-Nunn, managing director at the Hammonds House Museum. As many of you know, we have -- the Hammonds House Museum has seen significant growth and success in recent years directly resulting from our being included into the Legacy cohort of Fulton County. We have -- the funds have allowed us to expand programming increased community engagement, and enhanced educational offerings, all which directly benefited the residents of Fulton County. I can't express to you enough how important it is that you do take seriously considering reinstating the 1.7 million dollars to the CFS funds for our partners here at the city. We hire independent contracts, we partner with other organizations, and the impact would be devastating if we do not have that income coming in for their organizations as well as ours. We will lose key -- key programs. It would impede our future growth. It would just limit our outreach to the culture in the community, and I just want to say thank you, of course, for -- you know, you have a lot on your plate and you have been a stellar support of the arts. You are the largest supporter as we know in the state, because we are the fabulous, you know, Fulton County. But again, just wanted to come in this morning and say thank you from the Hammonds House Museum and ask you to please give us serious consideration to keep the arts income -- the arts funding where it is; at least where it was from last year. Thank you."

LISA ADLER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello. I'm Lisa Adler; I'm the artistic producer of Horizon Theatre Company, now in its 40th season presenting contemporary plays in our home in Little Five Points Inman Park. I'm here today as an artist and entrepreneurial whose chosen to make my career and home in Atlanta for 40 years, and have employed

thousands of people and serve hundreds in thousands of audiences. We and all the other arts organizations in the Fulton County generate tax income and jobs that far exceed the contracts for services funds that we receive. I want to thank Commissioner Barrett, Commissioner Arrington for bringing this up, and Commissioner Ivory for talking with me extensively yesterday explaining the Consent Decree, really understanding what that is and what the impact is on Fulton County; and I understand the challenges of budgets. We work on them every day. We're businesspeople in the business of arts. But I also want to point out that most County department budgets are not being cut this year, but the contract for arts services budget is being cut. Now they're cutting a program that gets both tax income and jobs. We're not requesting more, we're requesting not to make a cut. Now the rationale is that 1.7 million are enhancement funds because they were added to the budget last year and, therefore, it's not a line item. However, did you know that the contracts for arts services, budget line item in 2001 to 2011 ranged from 2.5 to 3.5 million, and then there was a drastic cut in 2011 down to 1.6 million? And that's where it stayed until last year when the departments successfully advocated for the restoration to three million. So I'm requesting that the 1.7 million be restored to the budget this year and have that amount moved back into a line item budget in the future so that any increases no longer considered enhancements funds. I'm also requesting that these funds are not restored now, that there be reconsideration of funding midyear so that the additional funds might be awarded, and that the department of arts and culture puts in place a mechanism in the spring --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Next speaker."

DEMETRIUS BREWER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Board. Brewer again, and I'm coming before you all again two seconds for (inaudible.). But my concern is, I understand that it's some funding for the homeless, so I want to bring to y'all attention that, you know, it is -- it's still buildings on Bankhead, Donald Lee Hallowell, that's empty. And they've been empty for like 13 years, like the YMCA. So, you know, I'm only asking and requesting, you know, that allow those buildings to be opened, reopened, restructured, and ran by a different administration. Someone that will help positive attitudes for as kids goes, and allow that place to be opened back up, such as houses over there. The homelessness -- I've been homeless since 2021, and I've been out on this side of -- right outside this building, and a few of y'all walk past me, y'all speak; I recognize you. But I'm not going to put you out there like that. But at the same time, you know, be considerate, you know. Don't toot your nose up at, you know. Y'all work us. Work for us. You know, take some of that money and let it be used correctly, you know. I can't say much about who taking what, but my mom name Gus Ann Brewer and she had a real bright son. I ain't trying to step on nobody toes, but God will man, that's y'all do, take real consideration and open up some of these other programs and let, you know, non-funded foundations run it, you know. At least it's just a better chance than we just getting, okays and all right, and we going to look out and ain't nothing happening but accidents. One thing I want to say before I walk away is our administration --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "-- thank you, sir. Thank you, sir. Thank you. Next speaker."

PATRICK HORTON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "My name is Patrick Horton, and I want y'all to think about this, about the homeless. A lot of people that are homeless, they get a welfare checks and SSI. You know what I'm saying? They work jobs, but a lot of the churches and all the places that house people in all the housing programs and the shelters, they are taking our money, you know what I'm saying? They're taking they checks and then -- and then they're making it possible for them to keep their houses that they do get and they kick them out, and they're back on the street. A lot of them know how to manage their money properly, but they be taking their funds and everything, and the churches and the places that house people, you know what I'm saying, and the shelters, they're making it where that it's impossible for them to stay there. Because -- and also the money that they do spend too is supposed to go out to help the homeless. They keep the money for themselves, and they taking care of everything else but the homeless with the money that they do get from y'all. And also, I mean, there are people that have different attitudes, but their attitudes are coming from them not having what they need. And also, some of them, they might be on some type of drug or something, but they need help. And some of them also got, you know what I'm saying, all type of skills that they can use, but because they ain't got the right help they can't excel. And a lot of them got master degrees, you know what I'm saying, doctorate degrees, and are skilled carpenters --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "-- thank you, sir. Thank you, sir."

LAURA HENNINGHAUSEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Laura Henninghausen. I am the director of Strategic Philanthropy Purpose Possible, which is a Fulton County-based consulting firm that works with nonprofit organizations. I'm also here as the board chair of Soul Food Cipher, and the board co-chair of MODA, the Museum of Design in Midtown. And on behalf of Arts Capital, which is a collaborative of about 23 different organizations representing over 200 arts nonprofits in the Atlanta Metro County Region. The arts bring value to our lives, yet our local arts organizations are on life support. As mentioned earlier, the state arts budget is slated to be cut from 4.9 million to 1.9 million this year for the entire state. Arts Capital's data shows that of the approximately 210 currently operating arts organization in the 11 county metro, 110 of them are based in Fulton County. Several of them are in this room; all of them benefit from Fulton County arts and culture funding. My colleagues have highlighted the economic health and numerous other benefits of the arts, but arts nonprofits bring the Fulton County. But our research also shows that of 50 percent of the arts organizations in Fulton County, they operate on \$150,000 or less per annual budget. The vast majority of these organizations have also shown that they have less than three months of operating reserves saved up. If you cut Fulton County's arts funding while other funding sources shrink, these will disappear. You will see many of those 110 arts organizations in your County close for good. \$3 million for arts and culture funding should be the base, not our aspiration. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Last seven speakers in the Assembly Hall, please come forward: Collins Desselle, Apollo Gun, Felicia Seamon, Reverend Lydia Meredith, Ravi Windom, Virginia Thompson, and Valerie Fluker."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Next speaker."

COLLINS DESSELLE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Had a traffic jam. Good morning. My name is Collins Desselle. I work at the Alliance Theater in the heart of District Three. And just echoing everything my colleagues have said. Thank you, Commissioners Barrett and Arrington, specifically, for putting this back on the table. I currently work in Commissioners Barrett's district and I've worked in Commissioner Arrington's district before as well. As colleagues have said, arts funding is a net positive. It is not a net drain on a County budget. Me and my colleagues have appealed to the -- you know, the morals sense, the education sense what it does for youth development, I can go on about that all day, I will spare you, but I will die on that hill. But it also makes incredible business sense to make this investment. I can speak for the Alliance alone. At the Alliance we have about 100 full-time employees every year, most of whom live here in Fulton County because they have a full-time job. In addition to those FTEs, we also hire over 400 artists every year. Those are actors on our stage, designers creating the, you know, sets and costumes for our shows. They are, you know, over higher and in our scene shop; our teaching artists who are working day in and day out directly with students across Fulton County either at the arts center or directly in Fulton County schools. And all of those folks are able to have -- or able to put together work to have a sustainable life here in Fulton County, and they choose to live here when their talent could so easily go to New York or LA, if they choose here, because of the investment Fulton County has made to make the arts thriving and create jobs. So I do urge you please put the 1.7 million back into the budget. Make it the whole \$3 million and you will get more than you could possibly imagine for that investment. Thank you so much."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Next speaker."

APOLLO GUN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, everybody. My name is Apollo Gun. I am the administrative assistant at the Hammonds House Museum located in the West End. Today, I want to remind the Commission about two major events coming up in the city. In 2026, you would have the FIFA World Cup, and in 2028, you guys will have the Super Bowl 62. These are considered two of the largest international events that take place around the globe outside of the Olympics. As we approach these events, I want to remind you guys the entire county is what I would like to call a preparation phase; preparing to welcome the world to all to what the County has to offer. As we prep for hundreds of cultures visiting us, we must give the citizens of Fulton County an opportunity to learn about these cultures. Of course, of course, of course, extensive research must be done to fully understand these cultures, but through the arts, you could become aware of these cultures in ways you guys probably won't be able to imagine. The Brandywine Workshop and Archives founder, Allie Edmonds, she

once said that through the arts, you can experience the world. And so, today I challenge all of the Commissioners to approve the Fulton County budget for the arts of 2025, so the citizens of Fulton can be able to experience the world in preparation for these events that will bring such positive light to the County of Fulton. And through the arts, the world will be able to experience Fulton County. Thank you."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Next speaker."

FELICIA SEAMON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Felicia Seamone. I'm a new resident of Fulton County. I'm also the director of development for Voices of Note, the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus that was founded in 1981, and the Atlanta Women's Chorus founded in 2012. Our mission is to inspire dialogue and drive social equity through artistic excellence. I'm here today first to thank you very much for the support that you've given to Voices of Note and to the arts. You've placed this critical funding back on the agenda for discussion, and we really appreciate that. Arts is imperative, and it has been very, very resourceful to -- I'm sure some of you and many of those who have spoken. It has a transformative force, and that's what it's done in many of our lives; not only providing knowledge and skills, but also a sense of belonging and purpose. For me, engaging in the arts has been a lifeline, offering a safe space for self-expression and connection during challenging times. So continued funding for artistic programs is crucial. Investing in education and arts is investing in the well-being and potential of our communities. Together we can create a brighter future through arts programming. So we thank you again for supporting the arts and appreciate very much that you are putting the \$1.7 million funding back into the CFS budget. Thank you."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Next speaker."

REV. LYDIA MEREDITH, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. It's my honor to be here today. Happy New Year and welcome to my new Commissioner, Mo Ivory. I urge you to envision a future where every child in Fulton County has the resources, support, and safety they deserve. The Division of Family and Children Services is dedicated to the mission of safe children, strengthen families, and stronger Georgia. However, meeting this growing demand in our services require a bold commitment that I believe we are ready to make. Today, I advocate for a 25 percent budget increase to fortify DFCS programs to address emerging challenges and ensure no child is left behind. When I started this advocacy work over ten years ago, the budget was 1.9 million, now it's down to 1.6 million. The budget increase is being asked to first combat increasing child exploitation and trafficking. And we've been charged by Brian, Governor Kemp to pay attention to these matters and work on these matters. The rise in commercial sexual exploitation of children is an urgent -- is an urgent action that's needed by this Board. Secondly, addressing the growing mental health crisis. The surge in children requiring care is staggering. Number three, supporting children with complex medical needs. Our work increasingly involves children with significant medical needs includes children with autism. Number four, empowering DFCS staff and strengthening partnerships. The staff at DFCS is the first line of support for children and

families in crisis. I appreciate your attention, and I pray that you will give consideration to increasing the budget."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Next speaker."

RAVI WINDOM, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Ravi Windom, I'm the education and programs manager for the Hammonds House Museum. Thank you to all the Commissioners for your continued support of the Hammonds House Museum and arts community as a whole; and again, a special welcome to our Commissioner Mo Ivory. With your past support and hopeful continued support, we will be able to present hundreds and thousands of students, families, and educators and more with art exhibitions and programming that speak to all people, but specifically people of color. As you know, this is Black History Month, and we look forward to welcoming hundreds of people into our museum this month. Specifically, with your financial support, we are able to have monthly free admission community days, which we actually have coming up this Sunday, so I please welcome you to come and join us for that. But most importantly, we are able to service hundreds of Atlanta Public School students by offering them at no cost a full experience of a tour of our museum, a walking tour of the West End historic neighborhood, as well as a curated activity for them to leave with a better sense of self, because most of those students that come have either never been to a museum or let alone an African-American Museum full of artists that look just like them. It is so important to continue expanding these opportunities to these students and families, and we can continue making strides with your continued support at the current level of funding that we have, as well as your participation in visiting our museums and programs. And I will leave you with one last thing: As we continue to navigate through tough, uncomfortable times in this world, what unites us most and helps us to exhale and create balance is the arts. Please keep that in mind when making these hard decisions and grant the arts and culture community with the same --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Next speaker."

VIRGINIA THOMPSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Ginny Thompson. I'm the Executive Director of Atlanta Young Singers, and a proud 30 plus year member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra chorus. Our organization gets funding from Fulton County, and we've been in Fulton County since 2013. We have been working in our art for 50 years, and we're very proud to be in Fulton County. The funding that you give us means that we can do free workshops in schools. We hold young man's power sing with Morehouse College Glee Club and Dr. David Morrow every year in District Four. We are in District Four, Commissioner Ivory. The 140 singers that are in our intensive program come in to Fulton County every week from 50 plus ZIP Codes, 11 counties, and 80 plus schools. All of their adults and all of their siblings come with them and spend money in Fulton County; they spend money at restaurants; they spend money at gas stations; they spend money at shops, you name it; they're spending money in Fulton County. The Contract for Services program has meant so much to our organization. It means that we can share with other singers and

other educators. And also take our singers all over the world and present Fulton County arts to everyone. Thank you for considering this today. We hope that you reinstate the 1.7 million for Fulton County arts. Thank you."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Next speaker."

VALERIE FLUKER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Valerie Fluker. I'm here on behalf of Quality Living Services, Inc., affectionately known as QLS, Inc. in which Ms. Irene Richardson is the executive director, and Ms. Sandra Lakesville is the housing supervisor. Quality Living Services provide seniors who reside in Fulton County on a daily basis an array of services, activities, and community resources, and a nutritional meal. Quality Living Services provided 27,333 units of service in Fiscal Year 2024. Of that number, 10,484 were congregate meals. Quality Living Services serve 494 unduplicated seniors. Funding is desperately needed for programming enhancement and development. Post COVID, QLS participant numbers are steadily increasing to pre-pandemic levels. The average unduplicated number of persons served per month in 2024 was 254. The programs and the services that are offered at QLS, Inc., are congregate meals, line dancing, computer class, exercise class, ballroom dance, men's healthy living, ceramic, bell choir, arts and craft class, that consists of sewing, jewelry making, gardening, and painting just to name a few. QLS' Annual Health Wellness Fair is our major community resource. Now, I just like you to imagine -- imagine being granted to live in your 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, and 100. We just saw the youth. We can live that long with these programs. Thank you for hearing QLS, Inc. out."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Are there any further speakers?"

CLERK GRIER: "We have six on Zoom."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Go ahead, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER DEE HAYES-PARKER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: My name is Commissioner Dee Hayes-Parker. I hope you look at my outfit. I made my hat; I'm dressed perfectly well, and I'm a former Jersey City Commissioner who worked under Biden and four mayors. I was a multimillionaire. I invented a product that was absconded from me, I became homeless. My husband passed away of Alzheimer's, I became homeless, nasty, and stinky. I had no place to go to the bathroom. I would go behind buildings and try my best to defecate. I would go to places where I could wash up and it was very, very difficult. I went to the senior citizens where you're supposed to have your advocates there, and they told me they had a room for me in a dormitory if I'd give my support dog, and I didn't. Now when a young man heard this, where he was living was crushed by bulldozers. You don't know what it's like to be a woman like me that could afford to buy the most expensive perfume and travel all over the country and smell like you know what. You got to do something. You got to take a bath. We can wash. Do I look like I'm filthy? Do I look like I don't have an education? I've taught

from preschool, I own my own school in Jersey City, New Jersey, and I paid my own way and didn't ask the government for a dime, and I got homeless. What are you going to do about people like me who've accomplished something in life and contributed back to the community? Why can I go to a bathroom? Why don't you even got a potty out there for somebody? Can we get washed up? What are you going to do about that? You're going to run people over with bulldozers who can't afford to even wipe their behind. You got to do better. I understand that Fulton County is the best, that's why I'm here. I didn't know I was coming until the Lord told me to, believe me. I had no idea I was ever coming into Fulton County in Georgia. My father, don't do that. My father told me, whatever you do, don't get stuck in Georgia."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you, ma'am. We have two minutes left for public comment. Do you have any speakers on Zoom?"

CLERK GRIER: "Yes. We have six speakers on Zoom."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Good morning, Commissioners."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "It's 11:36 -- 11:37, go ahead."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The first person to speak is Ann Carol Pence. Ann Carol Pence. Okay. The next person to speak is Antemil Jorkey. Antemil Jorkey. Next person to speak is Anuli Akaneglou. Anuli Akaneglou. Okay. Next person to speak is Elaine Wadsworth. Elaine Wadsworth. The next person to speak is Gianna -- I'm sorry, Gina Cipriano. Gina Cipriano. Okay. And the last will be Madeleine Evans. Madeleine Evans."

MADELINE EVANS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello?"

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Yes."

MADELINE EVANS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi. I was just listening in, but I just want to reiterate all of the testimonials from all of the art departments that have been speaking out. As someone who is a leader in the arts community specifically improv performance, a teacher, I've truly seen it change people lives. The mental health statement -- sorry, I was on a walk. I wasn't expecting to talk. But the mental health point, particularly as someone who has suffered from it as well as close people to me, I've truly seen it change lives. And what you're doing today, what you're running today, has impacted more than you know, especially in preventative measures. If you want to make a difference, these are the things that will prevent people from making terrible choices in the long run. Thank you."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "And this concludes the Zoom public comments."

CLERK GRIER: "No further speakers."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Thank you. Continue."

CLERK GRIER: "Continuing on page 6, County Manager's Item, Open and Responsible Government, **24-0104**, Real Estate and Asset Management: Request approval to extend an existing contract in an amount not to exceed \$2,815,000, to provide continued comprehensive operation, preventative corrective maintenance services for the Fulton County Jail, Jail South Annex in Union City, and the Fulton County North Annex Jail in Alpharetta."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. And we have motion to approve and a second. Is there any discussion of this item?"

Commissioners: (No response.)

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Hearing none, let's vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes; five yeas, zero nays."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. On page 7, under Health and Human Services, **25-0105**, Public Works: Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder in an amount not to exceed \$130,604 to provide tree trimming and vegetation clearing services."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "We have a motion to approve and a second. Is there any discussion of this item?"

Commissioners: (No response.)

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Hearing none, let's vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes; five yeas, zero nays."

CLERK GRIER: "**25-0106**, as amended: Request approval of a recommended proposal in an amount not to exceed \$6,192,307 to provide operation and maintenance services for the Fulton County water treatment facility."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. We have a motion and a second. I did have just a couple questions for Mr. Clark. Thank you, Mr. Clark. So this is for operations of the joint facility which we operate collectively with the city of Atlanta. So the cost on this -- these are reflective of the shared cost or is this our portion of the cost?"

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "The \$6 million is the total cost that would be split between Fulton County and the city of Atlanta based on our collective usage. Usually, in a given year, Fulton County usually buys, two-thirds of the total water that is produced at the plant so, therefore, our cost would be two-thirds of that \$6 million."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Got you. Okay. All right. No further questions. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes; five yeas, zero nays."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner's Action Items, **25-0107**: Request approval of a Resolution to amend Fulton County's current approved Fiscal Year 2025 budget by approving an increase to the total provided to the Department of Arts and Culture by an additional amount of \$1,700,000 for Contract for Services Program to maintain the current level of services provided in the Fiscal Year 2024 and recent years; and for other purposes sponsored by Commissioners Barrett and Arrington."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. Colleagues, first of all, I just want to acknowledge the arts community that has come down to our meetings I believe more than twice now. I think this may be the third time for this year's budget that they came before us. I know how important this is, so I'm not going to reiterate all the things that they shared with us about why arts are important. I know that we just voted on our budget last week and that we did not include this 1.7 million for arts organizations, but Commissioner Arrington and I both felt that it was important to bring it back for separate consideration today because of the timing of the grant application process and the timing for the arts organization. At the January 8th BOC meeting, there were four Commissioners, including myself, who expressed their support for funding the arts at the same level as the previous two years; but since that meeting, there has been a lot of talk both privately and publicly about reserving those funds and revisiting arts funding midyear. Unfortunately, the promise of a midyear maybe will be too late for many of the arts organizations who rely on this funding. These organizations can't plan based on maybe. Some will have to cut staff; some will have to cut programs; and some may not be able to survive. We heard from one public commenter today who shared that a lot of

these organizations have operating budgets of less than a hundred thousand dollars. We are a big percentage for some of these organizations of their budget. I fully understand and respect the Board's decision to hold the 13.9 million in underruns aside for as Mr. County Manager calls them, the known unknowns, related to the Consent Decree that we have on our plates; and I am as committed as all of you are to addressing the issues at our jail. But as I said last week, we cannot stop investing in our community and investing in our future. The \$1.7 million needed to maintain our arts funding at prior year levels amounts to less than .2 percent of our total general fund expenditure budget, and .6 percent of our non-agency budget. Last year, we over budgeted in non-agency by almost 25 percent. It's safe to say that there will enough underruns in non-agency this year to cover this critical funding. The Resolution before you asked that .6 percent of the non-agency budget be used to fund the arts as part of our contract for services program. That program has critical deadlines approaching. Applications were due January 17th, and they are currently being reviewed. The review committee needs to have that final dollar amount by the end of February because they will begin making allocation decisions in early March. I certainly understand that we have some flexibility on the schedule and that we can add more money later, but again, you can't plan on a maybe for later. As we've heard at the public comment today and over the last three meetings and based on over 150 e-mails from residents, the community wants this funding to continue. One of our citizens who e-mailed me the appeal this way: he said, quote, as someone who works and lives in Fulton County having a thriving arts community is important to me and improves my quality of life. In addition to the mental health and literacy benefits that have been proven for students and growing minds, the economic impact of arts organizations is essential for thriving neighborhoods, and is one of the most impactful investments you can make. Please keep arts funding whole so the Fulton County and Atlanta can continue to be a bastion of world-class arts organization and an incubator for the next generation of creative thinkers. Colleagues, I, and the community would very much appreciate your favorable vote."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you, Commissioner Barrett. Commissioner Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you so much for that. And thank you everybody for coming today. I want thank you for all the e-mails. I want to thank you for the phone calls, and I want to tell you that I am an arts lover, and I agreed with everything that was presented here today. I'm a professor at Georgia State University College of Law and the director of entertainment sports and IP law program. I am also the director of the popular culture collective at Georgia State, which is an extension of what I do at the law school into the greater GSU community, and there isn't a day that I'm not working in the arts. I am also the chair of the advisory board at the Rialto Center for the Arts. Arts is a part of my life; it's a part of my family's life, and I feel as much as you do about the necessity to have arts funding. With that, I ask myself, what kind of Commissioner do I want to be? I want to be the kind of Commissioner that does the research; that follows the law, and is consistent. So I am not saying no to the arts; I am saying pause, let us figure out what we need to do for a most crucial part of what we are mandated to

provide in our County Ordinance, which is the County's jail. So a Consent Decree, many of you have asked, and I wanted to spend this time educating a little bit, because I feel like it is really important from conversations that I've had with you over this week, and many of you have asked me to say this so that everybody can understand. A Consent Decree from the Department of Justice, which is what was given to Fulton County on January 6th, is a court-ordered agreement that requires a jurisdiction to change its practices. The DOJ uses Consent Decrees to address misconduct by government agencies. How does it work? They investigate a jurisdiction for misconduct, the jail. They sue the jurisdiction, the jurisdiction and the DOJ negotiated a Consent Decree, which our attorney did skillfully with the last administration, so it wouldn't be so much more crazier than it is right now. A federal court approves the Consent Decree, which they did, and then we begin to comply with those terms. What our Consent Decree said was that there were unconstitutional practices going on in our jail that we need to fix immediately. And that affects a large amount of our population. And in our Ordinance, what we must do is one of those services which is our County jail. So we are not saying that the arts is not -- I would never say that the arts isn't rehabilitative, that it helps people every day, I'm just saying hold on and let us assess what the Consent Decree demands of us, and it has deadlines in it. It has deadlines that say a monitor must be appointed by a certain date, an implementation plan must happen by a certain point in time, and we're following those dates. And then those things have to be approved by the Department of Justice. We have sat in meeting after meeting saying, okay, if we put this 13 million aside to assess those things, then midyear we will be able to assess where we are in the budget, and we will be able to come back and give money to the other departments that asked. So other departments asked. Last week, Commissioner Barrett set forth 15 departments that she felt we should approve the enhancements for. And I understand every single one of those requests. Many of them, nine in fact, were less than \$1.7 million. They came from Superior Court, Magistrate Court, Clerk of the Superior Court, State Court, the Land Bank, federally qualified health center pilot program, the Marshal's Office, Juvenile Court. So when we say that 1.7 is just .6 percent of non-agency or the general fund, these organizations, these departments are saying the same thing: Well, my department is only asking for 711,000, that's only .3 percent or point whatever percentage that is. We are being asked by multiple departments for less than \$1.7 million for needs that they considered to be immediate and actually are completely related to the Consent Decree because our court partners are those that feed into the jail system. So just imagine for a moment the amount of requests that we are getting from other partners that were on this list just one week ago. But now we've been able to narrow that down just to arts and culture. I say that we have many, many requests that are immediately important, and we have heard them all. And we have heard your request, and my heart breaks for the planning that has to take place, but I think there is hope in this, and that's what I'm looking forward too. The hope that if you will give us the pause to challenge us to do what we've been mandated to do by the Department of Justice and come up with that timeline and work towards every one of those timelines that we have to meet, put dollar amounts to it, then we will be able to say okay that costs us this amount, now we can come back and make the adjustments to all of the

departments that need it so badly. Here's another e-mail response that I got that I want to read to you, and I appreciate this e-mail response because it just says I understand the challenges that you are going through, and this is from an art supporter. I appreciate your response, Commissioner Ivory. I am well aware of the terrible inhumane conditions at the Fulton County Jail. I wasn't aware of the Consent Decree regarding the facility. In that context, it helps me to better understand the real priorities that the Commissioners face in managing the overall budget, and I appreciate the anticipatory foresight in proceeding with vigilance. I am asking you to just understand that we need to proceed in vigilance and pause for a minute and come back midyear and examine what we can do, and I promise that we will do that. And so, I ask David Manuel to please look and just look at adjusting the process and procedures for the awards in the event midyear we are able to fund. So that the process doesn't take as long when the trigger is pulled, and you are able to get funding, that that funding can come to you quickly. It is within his ability to work on that process so that it can be more swift. So those timelines that Commissioner Barrett was talking about can be met swiftly when we figure out how to get the money, because it is our intention to figure it out. That is why we're here. And so, I want to say to you thank you for being so loud because that is important, but there are others that haven't been as loud upfront in public comment that needed just as much. And we are working to give everybody a slice of this pie that you have put us in charge of. But right now, the number one priority is the unconstitutional actions that have been happening at the jail, that have been recognized by the Department of Justice, and we would be remiss not to sit in our elected seats and take care of that crisis that we find ourselves in. So I ask you to please have the patience with us. A no is not a no today, to handle our crisis first is not a no to the arts later. Thank you."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you, Commissioner Ivory. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Number one, thank you for coming out today. Thank you for expressing your opinion. With all due respect to Commissioner Ivory, who is new to this, her first budget process and CFS process, the Consent Decree is irrelevant to this conversation. We have 50 to a \$100 million dollars left over in underruns every year, so it really doesn't matter. We additionally have another \$165 million in reserves. So the Consent Decree, at least for me, it may be relevant to her -- for me, it's irrelevant because I know at the end of the year we're going to have 50 to \$100 million left over. So I'm not, you know, only a Commissioner like Commissioner Ivory, I'm an entertainment attorney, we may be the only County Commission in the country with two entertainment attorneys. But I'm also a filmmaker, right? And an artist. And so, I look at it from completely different eyes. I look at it from, I guess my artist eyes. And so, that is why every year that I have been here I've always advocated for additional funding for the arts, and I will continue to do that. You know, the -- Commissioner Barrett actually proposed the \$24 million that Commissioner Ivory was talking about was to address the Consent Decree. It was to address the departments that can help make sure that the numbers at the jail stay down, and that we comply with the Consent Decree. So additionally, I would just say that again, the timing, I certainly

do not want to hold up the award of the 1.2 million until midyear. I certainly don't think that that would be beneficial to anyone, right? You know, I want to get the additional money now so that everyone can plan so that people don't have to lose jobs. And so, I pray that David Manuel does not hold up the 1.2 million to midyear to see if they may give something out. You know, we need to give whatever amount we're going to give out needs to be given out now, and I guess if someone wants to allocate additional money at a later time, then maybe there could be a second process for giving out that money, but that seems duplicative. It seems like working staff twice, working people to do submissions again, what happened to the people that already got submissions, can they submit again or not? And so, I think it's just -- there are a lot of unintended consequences. This deadline was set, and it is true, it's not an enhancement; the money has gone up ever since we've been here. It did go down prior to my arrival in 2015, but we have done everything that we can to increase it on an annual basis since I have been here. And, you know, I guess I'm the optimists, right? You know, I want us giving out 10 million a year, 100 million a year to the arts, right? And I want corporate matching of that money, right? So whatever we put in is doubled, that's what I want. But in a year where in a time in this country where federal funding is being cut short, National Endowment for the Arts may not know what they're doing; in a time when the state of Georgia may be cutting its already dismal arts budget that is the wrong time, in my opinion, for Fulton County who has been the leader, who has led the way for the last 40 years; that is the absolute wrong time for us to be sending the signal that we are moving in the same direction; that we're moving in the same direction as the national. And as the state, we need to continue to lead the way. And I do not think that we can continue to lead by cutting the resources when we know that we will have ample resources to cover this despite what may happen with the Consent Decree; despite what may happen at the jail; despite the Clerk, the DA, and all those people not getting the funds that they requested in order to try to help us maintain or to reduce the jail population and provide a constitutional environment for those who are being housed there. And so, I just hope that we will support this and I don't necessarily want to take a lot of time, but it's personal for me. It's personal for me."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "It's personal for us all."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. I just want to add a couple of things. In 2015, there was an article published in the AJC that detailed the cost to Fulton County of the prior Consent Decree on our jail that I believe occurred around 2004. And that article stated that the total cost over that period of time to address the Consent Decree was over \$1 billion. Now, I mention this only because the idea that 13.9 million is going to fix the problems in our justice system and in our jail is far from accurate. And while I appreciate that when you have an issue and you have money, you want to hold that money aside to deal with the issue that's coming. You know, if your hot water heater breaks, you're not going to go buy a new car, you got to get the hot water heater first, right? I get it. But -- and I'm also not suggesting that we're going

to need to pay \$1 billion in year one of this fix. However, we have a much bigger problem on our hands with this Consent Decree that even our Chairman who also doesn't like anything that rhymes with millage rate, has said we are probably going to have to raise the millage rate to address the Consent Decree. And so, you know, in that vein, we are going to have a lot of work to do on addressing justice. If what we're saying is the choice is between adjusting the justice issues or funding arts, there is no maybe later because that need isn't going to go away by midyear. So, you know, in the way that we are continuing to keep our budgets steady as Commissioners to fund libraries, to fund seniors, to fund community service programs, to fund -- and the list goes on, we have to continue to do the rest of our job. And the rest of our job includes supporting the arts. So I will just reiterate that these organizations cannot survive a pause. A pause is not a pause on buying a new car; it's a pause on people's livelihoods. It's a pause on children's programs that they attend. It's a pause on organizations ability to exist. Some of them will not make it if we pause. And, you know I had a conversation with the County Manager briefly; we can find a way to make this work. If we're going to find a way to make it work in two, three, four months, we can find a way to make it work today."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "You done? Okay. Just a couple of remarks. I just wanted to express to Commissioner Ivory, I thought her remarks where very well formed. She might be a new Commissioner going through her first budget, but I think she understands what she's talking about and gave this a very thoughtful approach to it and has expressed the views of many of the Commissioners up here in the process that we're just going through -- and the process we'll continue to go through throughout the course of the next few months. So I want to acknowledge that, and I think, you know, to try to portray that there's some sort of a hundred million dollar leftover that can be played with is intellectually dishonest and we covered all of that during our last meeting as we were going through the budget discussion. So thank you, Commissioner Ivory, for your remarks and thank you all for the -- coming forth with the, you know, all the public comments and the e-mails. I think everybody on the Board understands, you know, kind of the importance of what you do and the impact that you have on the community but also, hopefully, you understand and appreciate, you know, kind of where some of us -- the majority of us on this Board are coming from and the things that we're wrestling with as well. And we have confidence too that, you know, there's going to be a point in time where we're going to reach, you know, a medium that's, you know, effective for everybody. Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Vice Chair. You know, I did not want to weigh in on this, but I think there's something that you all need to know. What you need to know is that this is a subject that should not be politicized. It is unfortunate that it has. It's unfortunate that your passion for support of the arts is being used as a pawn. Why do I say that? We had a man that was crushed by a bulldozer; he was homeless. That made the news. You know what didn't make the news, the 85-year-old lady in South Fulton who had no heat in her house when we had single-digit weather. You know what didn't make the news? That single mom who's working at Waffle House

that has five kids, that's in a hotel off Fulton Industrial that is being threatened for her kids to be taken away, and the best thing that I can do as a sitting Commissioner is to leave here every day and find somebody to pay for the hotel room one more night. That didn't make the news. I could sit here and I could give you all of the examples of money that's needed from one end of this County to the other. But what I will leave you with is this: Look at what your Commissioners do; not just on the first Wednesday and the third Wednesday. Look at what they do in between. I will be remiss if I didn't say this time last year, I led a bipartisan fight for the money to be restored, so I have a well-documented history of fighting for arts because the arts saved not only my life, it saved the life of my kids. As a domestic abuse survivor, as someone who has artistic relatives, I know what the arts community has and will continue to do. But what I ask to you, the grace and the patience that you want us to bestow upon you, please bestow it upon us. What was different from last year to now, we have President Trump in office. He could wake up any moment any day and decide he's going to cut off something; and we have an executive team that's on pins and needles making sure that we have enough for the HIV homeless community, for other communities that may not come down here and speak, but they're talking to me and other Commissioners. And so, all I'm asking that the no today does not mean it won't be a, yes, tomorrow. I'm asking you all as I look in your eyes give us the grace and patience to get through what we have to do as elected officials for the entire Fulton County community. Yes, I represent District Six, but I'm accountable for everyone in Fulton County. The no that I will say today, and I promise you it hurts me to say no today, but I have to. It does not mean tomorrow it won't be, yes, but I've had to say no to some others as well. It's a disservice to you for this to be put back on this agenda. I know it looks like it was a heroic moment, but it wasn't. Did I have to tell you that? No. But I want you to hear an uncomfortable truth from me, because a lie will continue to hurt you over and over and over again. The truth can only hurt you once. The no that I have to say today, does not mean tomorrow that it won't be a, yes. Please have patience, please give us the grace to do what we need to do for the best of everyone, and that includes the art community. Thank you."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I just want to say that I did not say anything that was intellectually dishonest. It is a fact that over the last ten years we have had 50 to \$100 million in underruns from our budget. So I tell the truth and let the chips fall where they may."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay, we have a motion on the floor with a second."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion fails; two yeas, three nays."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "County Manager's Presentation and Discussion Items, **25-0108**, External Affairs: Presentation 2025 State Legislative Session Update."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Good morning, Commissioners. We're here to provide you our next update on the state legislative session. I'm just going to ask the team to pull up the slides. We had a -- while they're doing that, I'll just go over and update from the delegation. Our delegation has had two meetings. They had their convening meeting of both the House and Senate; they've had their convening meetings and reelected the chairs. The chairs are the same as last year. In both cases, Representative Park Canon is the chair of the House delegation, Senator Sonya Halpern on our Senate delegation. They held a joint meeting last Thursday, and we shared with them an overview of our legislative priorities for the year. Tomorrow, our colleagues in Superior Court will be discussing their legislative requests and presenting before the delegation. Next slide, please. And then I think I've just got over this. Next slide, please. This is just again, a snapshot of priorities for the year. Next slide. So with the Superior Court judicial officers, we have seen draft legislation, so that is proceeding. This will be a piece of general legislation, and as soon as we have those final commitments from sponsors, we will share that with the group, but that is proceeding. Next slide, please. On the State Court judges, a similar situation. Legislative council is working on this. This will be local legislation, and we are -- we provided them with information. State Court will also be coming to present to the delegation with some of their -- to provide more information about their request. Next slide. Our behavior health teams, so we are monitoring the Georgia DBHDD budget. They have a number of requests related to crisis services, and specifically for -- I'm sorry, correction. For forensic beds, as we talked last week about their work to increase hospital beds in the state hospitals that will meet the needs of individuals who are moving from a jail or prison into a state hospital. So we are continuing to monitor that, and we'll provide updates. Next slide. I wanted to follow up on our discussion last week and share for you just the layout -- the lay of the land, and we'd like to -- we have a couple of scenarios and want to -- we'll share some information with you. But I just wanted to show you on the screen what the appointment status looks like today for the MARTA Board. So as we've talked about last week, the Board of Commissioners has one appointment, which is a resident of South Fulton -- of Fulton County, south of Atlanta. North Fulton Mayors, as a caucus, make two appointments. The city of Atlanta has three appointments without restrictions. DeKalb County has three appointments; one north, one south, and one unrestricted. The Caucus of the DeKalb Mayors also have an appointment. Clayton County has two appointments without residency restrictions. The Governor has one appointment who must be a resident of a MARTA jurisdiction, and then there are two Ex Officio members. So as we talked about last week, there are some significant differences from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and we have -- we'll circulate for your input some further discussion about that. Any questions on that before we proceed?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes. Thank you for providing this information. I just want to be clear for the record. Do the North Fulton Mayors actually get the

appointment, or they just make the recommendations to us and we actually make the appointments?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Commissioner, it was my understanding that they were making that, but let me please clarify that. Thank you. Very good point."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "But because it may be that we have -- my recollection, which could be wrong, my recollection was that we get three appointments, but then two of those recommendations come from the North Fulton Mayors. And that we decide the third one on behalf of South Fulton residents. It looks like that really DeKalb has four for the MARTA Board, because DeKalb County itself gets three appointments, and then the Caucus of DeKalb Mayors gets one appointment. And so, you know, we certainly need to look at that. You know, we certainly -- and we may need, I don't know, to get with finance and our CFO to look at how much money we've put into MARTA over the years, right? And compare that to what DeKalb has put in, and Atlanta -- I'm sure Atlanta has probably put in more than a lot, but you know certainly Clayton just got in, in the last few years."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "That's correct. And Commissioner Arrington, I do want to be candid and say this is, you know, obviously a very highly charged political issue, but we wanted to make sure we provided you with information and we'll get -- we'll get clarification on the North and South Fulton appointments and then this -- like I said circulate some additional information to you for input."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. I still have other points, but I will let you all -- I don't want to interrupt your flow."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "No, no, no. If you'd like me to stop here, I'm glad to do that and then we can continue whenever you're ready."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. I understand it might be on the Fulton County agenda, but I can tell you I am going to do everything in my power to fight against judicial officers. They do not report to the public -- they do not report to the public, and I am going -- I am going to oppose that. I certainly have not -- happy for them to get more Superior Court judges that are accountable to the people. I certainly could support that. Like the State Court judges, I have no problem supporting that and the behavioral health. The other thing that I would like to see us add to our agenda, legislative agenda, is working on OCGA 31-11-3, which revolves around the Region 3 EMS Council and the appointment. We just had a lady who died at a church, and we've been having very slow response times for EMS. And part of the problem is the way that this statute is drafted. It has this EMS Council, but there is no contract for the service. There is no term for the service and there is no --"

VICE-CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "-- Commissioner Arrington. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes, sir."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "We're going to take this up as sort of a separate item for us to collectively vote. This is a Fulton County Legislative Agenda, not an individual Commissioner agenda. If we want to take this up as a specific item as a vote, whether we want this to be a part of our legislative package, then we could do that. Otherwise, I'd say let's keep our remarks to the legislative agenda we just approved."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Well, this is the legislative agenda."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "That's been approved."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Right. And I am asking for something else to be added based on current events that just happened, and I believe that I have the right to do that."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "So can you put it in the form of a motion that you would like for this to be added to, you know, to our legislative agenda, and then we'll vote it up or down."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'll be happy to. I move that we add -- looking at the OCGA 31-11-3 and EMS Council, so that we can help work better with our cities and reduce the EMS response times -- the high EMS response time because there have been a lot of deaths in the last 30 to 60 days, at least three or four, all with related EMS response time issues."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "That's your motion. Is there a second?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Is there no second? Continue discussion with the remainder of the agenda. You have any further questions for Ms. Corbitt on other topics?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Commissioners, I have just a couple of other updates. Next slide, please. We wanted to make you aware that, of course, Governor Kemp, this has been in the news, has introduced his tort reform package that does include language about premises liability, so we will continue to track that as it moves through the process. Next slide, please. We also -- there is a bipartisan bill that is related to Medicaid -- some additional Medicaid expansion with some limitations, but this is another one that we are tracking carefully. Next slide, please. And by the way, if you want to take a position of support on any of these specific bills, please let us know. This is House Bill 179, which does align with one of

our priorities related to allowance of digital reporters and in place of court reporters, that is still reviewed by a human, but it would supplement the services of court reporters and increase efficiency in the justice system, so this is House Bill 179. And again, I just go through these and if you'd like to take a position on any of them, let us know. Next slide, please. The next one, this is one that we have tracked previously. It was Representative Schofield and our delegation asked us to bring this to your attention because this is something the County is engaged with previously, which is related; it's called the HOA Accountability and Community Empowerment Act. And again, she has asked us about position on this bill. Next slide, please. In the last -- last week, we discussed two bills related to nonpartisan elections for certain County officials. And so, wanted to provide -- I think we circulated last week the bill language. These essentially would create a pathway statewide for nonpartisan elections for the offices that are listed here and then it's a two-part process. The second part would be local legislation through those delegations that would essentially enact that. So we are tracking that carefully; that was discussed in great detail last week and so we wanted to just share that with you publicly. Next slide, please. This is a bill that is moving through -- this is related to compensation of judicial -- oh, excuse me, of Superior Court judges. In some jurisdictions, Fulton County is one there is a supplement to judicial salaries on top of their state -- state salary, and this really seeks to, I guess create some balance across the state. In some jurisdictions, the local government has really struggled to keep up with the demand for those supplements. So this is really one again that would have Fulton County is on the higher end of that scale, but it's one that we're continuing to monitor and, of course, judges around the state are watching this. Next slide, please. And then House Bill 168 would require local legislation to reimpose SPLOST so this something typically -- once it is enacted the first time, those jurisdictions simply go through a process to call the referendum and bring it back. So this would add an additional step in that process. Next slide, so just again, where we are in the calendar, so we'll continue to keep -- continue to provide updates and we'll be back on your agenda in two weeks."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. We have Commissioner Barrett, Commissioner Arrington in the queue. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. Just a quick question. On the nonpartisan elections item, we're not taking a position; is that correct?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "That's -- it's really up to the Board what things you'd like to take a position on, so if you would prefer to take a position, we're certainly glad to communicate back, but we haven't asked you for that at this point, because it was not -- I know there were a lot of opinions about that one, so we would leave that to you."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So right now, we're just watching?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Right now, we're monitoring as it kind of continues through the process. There are two members of our Senate Delegation who are cosponsors on that Bill. So we're, you know, we're watching it carefully, but this time, I think we're just -- that's where we are."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay, thank you. And then just one other note, I'm, Commissioner Arrington, certainly willing to look more into the EMS issue and reconsider that at the next meeting. I just don't have enough information to ask for that right now."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes, thank you. So I just wanted to point out that this was not only the adopted legislative agenda, but there were several items that Ms. Corbitt presented that were items that she wanted us to consider, just like the item that I presented that I wanted us to consider. So I just wanted to make sure to state that for the record. You know, obviously, you know, Commissioner Barrett and everyone, take as much time as you need. But people are dying. It's an issue that needs to be addressed. A young lady in College Park, took 45 minutes, and she died, a similar incident in East Point."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And the lady in -- on Sunday, this past Sunday, lady had --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- nephew died and --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Arrington, this is not germane to what we're covering --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "This is --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "We covered this --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Sir, sir."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "-- and if we want to bring it back in a discussion to where we're -- this not the discussion. This is not the moment in time to have this particular discussion."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "People are dying. We need to a look at --"

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Arrington, thank you. Any further, any further questions for Ms. Corbitt?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

VICE -CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Hearing none, next item."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Mr. Vice Chair, there are no further items."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "No further items on our agenda. Madam County Attorney, are there any items for Executive Session?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "No items for Executive Session."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Hallelujah."

VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Hearing none, do I have a motion to adjourn? Vote's open to adjourn, well, we're adjourned. Nothing else, all right."

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.