

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

June 05, 2024

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: July 10, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Robert L. Pitts

10:00 a.m.

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

Robert L. Pitts, Chairman (At-Large)

PRESENT

Bridget Thorne, Commissioner (District 1)

PRESENT

Bob Ellis, Commissioner (District 2)

PRESENT

Dana Barrett, Commissioner (District 3)

PRESENT

Natalie Hall, Commissioner (District 4)

PRESENT

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

PRESENT

Khadijah Abdur-Rahman, Vice Chair (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**24-0365 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 AS AMENDED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Hall, to adopt the Consent Agenda as amended by removing items #23-0369, #23-0370, and #24-0387 for separate consideration. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

24-0366 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing "Velma Mae Turner Rainey Appreciation Day."
(Pitts/Arrington)
May 18, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Morris Brown College Class of 1974 Appreciation Day."
(Abdur-Rahman)
May 18, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Debra Lynn Rowe Remembrance Day."
(Abdur-Rahman)
May 18, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Ivy Goggins Appreciation Day." **(Ellis)**
May 18, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "North Atlanta High School Class of 2004." **(Pitts)**
May 24, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Zina Brown Appreciation Day." **(Arrington)**
May 27, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Jamila Jones Appreciation Day." **(Hall/Arrington)**
June 3, 2024

**Development Authority of Fulton County TEFRA
(Tax Equity Fiscal Responsibility Act)**

24-0367 Board of Commissioners

Execution by Chairman Robert L. Pitts of a TEFRA (Tax Equity Fiscal Responsibility Act) for documentation pertaining to the proposed issuance of its Development Authority of Fulton County Georgia Tech Facilities Revenue Bonds (Curran Street Residence Hall Project), Series 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$120,000,000.00 (the "Bonds"). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0368 Board of Commissioners

Execution by Chairman Robert L. Pitts of a TEFRA (Tax Equity Fiscal Responsibility Act) for documentation pertaining to the proposed issuance of its Development Authority of Fulton County Revenue Bonds (RBH Social Impact, Inc. Project) Series 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$154,865,000.00 (the "Bonds"). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Arts and Libraries

24-0369 Library

Request approval to award a contract without competition - Fulton County Library System 24SSREQ1293942B-RT, Comprise Systems & Self-check Machines in an amount not to exceed \$1,313,344.00 with Bibliotheca, Inc. (Norcross, GA) to replace all comprise pay system and self-check machines at library locations with material circulation. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

ITEM REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, and Arrington

Did Not Vote: Abdur-Rahman

24-0370 Library

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder - Fulton County Library System - 24ITBC1288213B-PS Non-Book Materials (Shelf-Ready DVD, CD Spoken Word, Poetry, Adult and Teens) in an amount not to exceed \$126,700.98 with Baker and Taylor LLC (North Carolina) to provide Non-Book to all 34 library locations. Effective upon BOC approval until December 31, 2024, with 2 one-year renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

ITEM REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Health and Human Services**24-0371 Public Works**

Request approval to accept a name change and authorizing the Department of Purchasing & Contract Compliance to reflect the name change of Analytical Environmental Services, Inc., to Eurofins Environment Testing Southeast, LLC Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0372 Department for HIV Elimination

Request approval to amend an existing contract pursuant to Item #23-0186 with The Networked Planet, LLC located in St. Petersburg, Florida to increase the spending authority for website maintenance pursuant to the Ryan White Part A Program and the Ending the HIV Epidemic Funding for services to be provided in Grant Year 2024 for an additional amount of \$11,327.00 for a total amount not to exceed \$19,327.00. There is no required County match and the project is 100% grant funded. Request authorization for the Chairman to execute contract with selected subrecipient. To protect the interest of the County, the County Attorney is authorized to approve the contracts as to form and substance and make any necessary modifications thereto prior to execution by the Chair. Effective March 1, 2024. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Infrastructure and Economic Development**24-0373 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 JEN Georgia 19, LLC, for the purpose of granting conditional approval for the installation of stormwater infrastructure within a portion of the County's existing water line easement at 11190 Rock Mill Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0374 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of an Indemnification, Maintenance, and Land Use Agreement for Private Improvement (Indemnification Agreement) between Fulton County, Georgia and JEN Georgia 19, LLC for the purpose granting conditional approval to allow stormwater infrastructure to remain within a portion the County's existing sanitary sewer easement at 11190 Rock Mill Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0375 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 116 North Main, LLC, for the purpose of granting conditional approval to allow concrete stairs to remain within the County's existing water vault easement at 116 and 126 North Main Street, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0376 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 JEN Georgia 19, LLC, for the purpose of granting Fulton County access to extend and maintain the sanitary sewer system at 11190 Rock Mill Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009 (the Development). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0377 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 Pulte Home Company, LLC, for the purpose of granting Fulton County access to extend and maintain the sanitary sewer system at 0 Lakefield Drive, Johns Creek, Georgia 30097 (the Development). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0378 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sanitary Sewer System Ownership, Operation, Maintenance, and Repair Agreement between Fulton County, Georgia, and Moslem and Leila Eskandari for the purpose of granting Fulton County legal access to extend and maintain the sanitary sewer system at 2385 Old Milton Parkway, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009 (the Development). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0379 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 6,326 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from EBC Hollyberry LLC for the purpose of constructing the Maison Project at 11310 Houze Street, Roswell, Georgia 30076. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0380 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 5,942 square feet to Fulton County, Georgia, from B.B. Morrison Park, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Gathering Project at 0 Haynes Bridge Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009.

(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)

24-0381 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 810 square feet to Fulton County, Georgia, from B.B. Morrison Park, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Gathering Project at 0 Haynes Bridge Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009.

(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)

24-0382 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 11,283 square feet to Fulton County, Georgia, from Morning Creek Partners, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Morning Creek Phase III Project at 0 Ripple Way, South Fulton, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0383 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Line Easement Dedication of 781 square feet to Fulton County, Georgia, from B.B. Morrison Park, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Gathering Project at 0 Haynes Bridge Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0384 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Line Easement Dedication of 8,083 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Moslem and Leila Eskandari, for the purpose of constructing the Avalon Village Project at 2385 Old Milton Parkway, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0385 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Vault Easement dedication of 5,942 square feet to Fulton County, Georgia, from B.B. Morrison Park, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Gathering Project at 0 Haynes Bridge Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0386 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Line Easement Dedication of 810 square feet to Fulton County, Georgia from B.B. Morrison Park, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Gathering Project at 0 Haynes Bridge Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Justice and Safety**24-0387 Marshal**

Request approval to increase the spending authority - Marshal Department, 22ITBC0412B-EF(B), Duty Gear & Uniforms in an amount not to exceed \$29,070.60 with T&T Uniforms, Inc., for the purchase of Marshal badges, ballistic vests and vest carriers Effective upon BOC approval through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

FIRST REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**24-0388 Board of Commissioners**

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

A motion was made by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to adopt the First Regular Meeting Agenda as amended by revising item #24-0400 as requested by Commissioner Barrett. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

24-0389 Clerk to the Commission

Ratification of Minutes. **(RATIFIED)**

First Regular Meeting Minutes, May 1, 2024

Second Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, May 15, 2024

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

Yea: Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Pitts

24-0390 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing "Major Vivian Dixon Bradford Appreciation Day."
(Abdur-Rahman/Pitts)

Proclamation recognizing "Summer Reading Program Appreciation Month."
(Barrett/Arrington)

~~*Proclamation recognizing "Art In The Paint Appreciation Day." **(Arrington/Hall)**~~

****recipient not in attendance***

PUBLIC HEARINGS**24-0391 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)

14 Speakers: Sherrika Bellamy (Housing Authority of Fulton County); L.A. Pink (Elected Officials); Camille Houston Jackson (Pipeline/Water Main); Paul Hershey (District 4 Activities); Mike Russell (Elected Officials); J. Wesley Day (Justice/Solicitor Office); Michael Collins (Fulton County Jail); Devin Franklin (Item #24-0400); Charles Rambo (Fulton County Jail); Devin Barrington-Ward (Fulton County Jail); Linda Lindo (Travion Reid/Injustice); Shani Robinson (Criminal Justice Reform); Fallon McClure (Item #24-0400) and Dominique Grant (Item #24-0400)

2 Zoom Speakers: Kevin Muldowney (Registration and Elections) and Ben Howard (Senior Services)

COUNTY MANAGER'S ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****24-0392 Finance**

Presentation, review, and approval of June 5, 2024, Budget Soundings and Resolution **(PRESENTED/APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Hall and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

24-0393 Human Resources Management

Request approval to modify the classification section of the Classification and Compensation plan by adding the new title of Utility Billing and Collections Supervisor (grade 20), Emergency Management Specialist (grade 16), and Fire Division Chief (grade 26). **(APPROVED)**

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

24-0394 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval to increase the spending authority - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 22ITB135741C-GS, Fire Sprinkler Protection System Maintenance Services in an amount not to exceed \$36,877.00 with VSC Fire & Security, Inc. (Norcross, GA), to provide additional modification and extensions to the existing fire sprinkler system due to re-configuration of spaces on the 1st (Notary and Passport Offices) and 5th (Criminal Division Offices) floors of the Fulton County Lewis Slaton Courthouse located at 136 Pryor Street, Atlanta, GA 30303. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Arts and Libraries**24-0395 Arts and Culture**

Request approval of a contract between Fulton County, Georgia and SHEMI Enterprise, Inc. in the amount of \$75,000.00 to provide the Taste of South Fulton ("Taste of SoFu") arts and cultural programs and events. Funds have been identified and are available in the Department of Arts & Culture's FY 2024 budget. **(APPROVED)**

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Health and Human Services**24-0396 Public Works**

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder - Department of Public Works, 24ITB230702A-BKJ, Valve Assessment in the amount of \$600,000.00 with Pure Technologies U.S., Inc. d/b/a Wachs Water Services (Buffalo Grove, IL) to provide valve condition assessment services. Effective upon execution of contract through December 31, 2024, with two renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Hall

24-0397 Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Request approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Fulton County, the Fulton County Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (BHDD) and Grady Memorial Hospital Corporation d/b/a Grady Health System for the purpose of continuing integrating strategies to provide medication assisted outpatient treatment of substance abuse for Fulton County residents. Fulton County shall pay Grady Memorial Hospital in an amount not to exceed \$464,000.00 annually or as otherwise provided by an amendment to this MOU. Effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Justice and Safety**24-0398 State Court**

Request approval to increase the spending authority - State Court, 22SS049A-KM, Substance Use Disorder ("SUD") monitoring in the amount of \$160,000.00 with Avertest, LLC, (Richmond, VA) to provide SUD monitoring services delivered via Aversys, a proprietary web-based application, drug testing services and products for the Fulton County DUI Treatment Court. Effective upon BOC approval to December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

COMMISSIONERS' ACTION ITEMS**24-0354 Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of a Resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioner urging Municipalities located within Fulton County, Georgia to enhance safety at convenience stores by adopting Ordinances and laws mandating the use of video surveillance systems at these establishments; and for other purposes.

(Abdur-Rahman) (MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED ON 5/15/24) (FAILED)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Chairman Pitts, to approve. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Barrett, and Abdur-Rahman

Abstain: Thorne

Did Not Vote: Ellis, Hall, and Arrington

24-0399 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of a Resolution of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners directing the County Manager and County Attorney to conduct an assessment of the feasibility of allowing pro bono legal clinics to serve as a resource for citizens from time to time or on a recurring basis at Fulton County libraries, and for other purposes. **(Pitts) (APPROVED)**

a. A motion was made by Chairman Pitts and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Arrington

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Arrington and seconded by Commissioner Hall, to hold. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Hall, and Arrington

Nay: Pitts, Thorne, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Ellis, and Barrett

24-0400 Board of Commissioners

The Safe and Humane Pre-Trial Jail Act: Request approval of a Resolution to direct County Management to pursue a sales tax for the purpose of funding a capital project to ensure safe and humane pre-trial detention in Fulton County, to direct County Management to re-issue the RFP for the next phase of project management amended to include a review of the size of the facility needed, the projected jail population for 25 years based on changes to state law and improvements in the Fulton County justice system, an evaluation of the option to renovate the existing facility, an evaluation of a phased approach to a new build, and for other purposes. **(Barrett) (MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED)**

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

Yea: Barrett, and Arrington

Nay: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Hall

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve as amended redirecting the County Manager to conduct a financial review and provide a report to the BOC with an available footprint of funds over a multi-year period of time that would not result in an incremental change to the mileage rate and redesign an RFP that would outline: a refurbishment assessment on the existing facility, construction of other facilities utilizing remaining funds, plan for transition while the refurbishment takes place, develop an operational plan, and develop a long-term master plan for potential expansion of other facilities. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, and Ellis

Nay: Barrett, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Hall, and Arrington

Commissioners' Full Board Appointments**24-0401 Board of Commissioners**
REGION III EMS COUNCIL (APPROVED)

The Bylaws of the Region III Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Council requires that its members be appointed by County Commissioners and must constitute a minimum of two-thirds of the voting membership. Council members serve terms of appointment of three (3) years. The Council year will be from July 1 to June 30. The term of each appointment shall be for three years with one-third of the Council to be appointed each year. In order to have one-third of the Council appointed each year some appointments may be made for 1 or 2 years until such balances achieved. Members may be reappointed to the EMS Council with no limit on terms. (See EMS Advisory Council Bylaws updated on 5/13/2021).

Term = 3 Years

Term below expires: June 30, 2024

Michael Charles (**BOC/Position 3**)

Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman nominated Michael Charles for a Full Board reappointment to a term ending June 30, 2027.

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

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

COUNTY MANAGER'S PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****24-0402 County Manager**
Discussion: Elections Update (**DISCUSSED**)**COMMISSIONERS' PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS****24-0403 Board of Commissioners**
Discussion: Outstanding water bill from City of Atlanta. (**Pitts**) (**DISCUSSED**)**24-0404 Board of Commissioners**
Discussion: Report from CFO and Purchasing Director on implementation of Cherry Bekaert procurement recommendations. (**Pitts**) (**HELD**)**24-0405 Board of Commissioners**
Discussion: Options to confirm or deny allegations of a culture of corruption in Fulton County Government. (**Pitts**) (**DISCUSSED**)

EXECUTIVE SESSION**24-0406 Board of Commissioners**

Executive (**CLOSED**) Sessions regarding litigation (**County Attorney**), real estate (**County Manager**), and personnel (**Pitts**). (**APPROVED**)

PRESENT IN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION REGARDING LITIGATION, REAL ESTATE, AND PERSONNEL: Chairman Pitts, Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, Commissioners: Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and; County Manager Dick Anderson; County Attorney Y. Soo Jo; and Clerk to the Commission Tonya R. Grier.

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Arrington, to enter into Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Thorne, and Ellis

b. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Chairman Pitts, to approve the request for representation and engagement of outside counsel in item #1 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Barrett, Hall, and Arrington

Abstain: Thorne

Did Not Vote: Ellis, and Abdur-Rahman

c. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve the requests for representation in items #2 through #7 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Barrett, Hall, and Arrington

Did Not Vote: Ellis, and Abdur-Rahman

d. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to reject settlement offer in item #8 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Barrett, Hall, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Ellis, and Arrington

e. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve settlement authority in item #9 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Ellis

f. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Hall, to approve authorization to make expenditures from the Inmate Services Unit for contracts for court ordered monitor Dr. Kenneth Ray, mental health provider Beginning Today, and yoga instruction provided by Dharma Project. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Thorne, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Ellis

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONER'S
FIRST REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 5, 2024
10:00 A.M.

Alexander Solutions, LLC
"A Court Reporting Firm"

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Good morning, everyone and welcome to the First Regular Meeting of June of the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County. Today is June 5th, 2024. It is 10 o'clock a.m. Please rise -- as matter of fact, no, I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's call the roll, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "Chairman Robb Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Bridget Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Bob Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Dana Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Vice Chair Khadijah Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Present."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. All right, please rise for the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 2, Consent Agenda, **24-0365**, 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. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, Purchasing Department has requested to move three items to the Regular Meeting Agenda from the Consent Agenda. First item is on page 3, 24-0369, Library: Request approval to award a contract without competition to replace all conference pay system and self-check machines. Also on page 3, 24-0370, Library: Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder to provide Non-Book to all library locations. And on page 6, 24-0387, Marshal: Request approval to increase spending authority for the purchase of the Marshal badges, ballistic vests and vest carriers."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So they want those heard on the Regular Agenda?"

CLERK GRIER: "Yes, sir."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, anything else?"

CLERK GRIER: "That's all have."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Commissioners -- Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah, just the on point of order on that, Mr. Chair. Can we - when those items take up, can we hear those after, like the 24-0398 before all those Commissioners' Action Items? We have a tendency to -- when we pull these things off the Consent Agenda; put these things which really need to be dealt with, the back as opposed after the discussion items and that sort of stuff, but we can hear them after 0398."

CLERK GRIER: "Yes, sir; so noted, Commissioner."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, anything else, Commissioners?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, the motion to approve, adopt as amended by Commissioner Thorne; it's seconded by Commissioner Hall. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, First Regular Meeting Agenda, **24-0388**: Adoption of the First Regular Meeting Agenda. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, I have one amendment. Commissioner Barrett's item on page 9, 24-0400, the Safe and Humane Pretrial Act. Commissioner Barrett is requesting to revise this item to include the word humane at the beginning of the Resolution to pursue a sales tax for the purpose of funding a capital project to ensure safe and humane pretrial detention in Fulton County."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, anything else? Commissioners, any items?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. I'll entertain a motion to adopt the Agenda as amended. Motion to do so by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman; it's seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote on the agenda as amended."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0039**: Ratification of Minutes, First Regular Meeting Minutes, May 1st; Second Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, May 15th, 2024."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Ellis; seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0390**: Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates. The first proclamation is recognizing 'Major Vivian Dixon Bradford Appreciation Day' sponsored by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman and Chairman Pitts."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Good morning. Can I get Major Vivian Dixon Bradford family and friends and supporters of her to come down, please? This proclamation -- really, I wish I could give this young lady more than a proclamation. I wish I could give her the keys to every city in the United States, because she is an unsung hero; and not only is she an unsung hero, she's an unsung hero with the heart of gold and the grace and mercy of so many -- so many people with the voice of an angel. She has prayed for so many people that didn't even know that she was praying for them. And I am old school, where you give your flowers to people while they're living. So it is with immense pride that I stand here with my colleagues for a proclamation: WHEREAS, Major Vivian Dixon Bradford was hired by the Fulton County Sheriff's Department on April 25th, 1988, she was only the 15 years old -- remember

that, okay? Just kidding. Under the administration of Sheriff Richard B. Lankford; and WHEREAS, Major Dixon Bradford holds several post certifications ranging from basic mandate as a certified peace officer, to certified jailer, senior deputy sheriff, intermediate certification, advanced certification, supervisory certification, management certification, instructor certification, and Georgia Crisis Intervention training certification, and many, many more; WHEREAS, Major Dixon Bradford has had the opportunity to be a part of a special operations multi-agency community policing program, Weed and Seed, the Georgia Governor's drug task force suppression unit, and six tactical years with the Fulton County Sheriff's office fugitive unit; and WHEREAS, Major Dixon Bradford is a member of many law enforcement organizations including the Georgia Association of Women in Public Safety, the Georgia Association of Chief of Police, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, Noble, the Georgia Sheriffs Association, and many others; and one thing that I do want to say before I end; WHEREAS, Major Dixon Bradford created the first motorcycle unit in the history of the Fulton County Sheriff's office called the Fulton County Sheriff's Office Motors Unit. She is known to lend her angelic voice to many who have passed on. And for me, I thank her for not only serving the citizens of Fulton County with so much humility; she also saw it as an opportunity to minister. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognize the professionalism and dedication of Major Vivian Dixon Bradford during her 36 years of dedicated service to the citizens of the state of Georgia, the city of Atlanta and Fulton County; and does hereby proclaim Tuesday, May 7th, 2024 as 'Major Vivian Dixon Bradford Appreciation Day' in Fulton County, Georgia. Would you please put your hands together for this servant?"

MAJOR VIVIAN DIXON BRADFORD: "First of all, I would like to say, good morning. I give honor to God who brought me 36 years to serve the city of Atlanta, the County of Fulton, the state of Georgia; and I just want to say to the Board of Commissioner, Commission Chair, Commissioner Pitts, and the rest of your colleagues, thank you. Thank you for thinking of me to give me such an honor; and I don't know if it's protocol, but I'm just full of songs, so."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "You do what you do, baby. You did serve Fulton 36 years."

RECIPIENT: (Recipient sings a song.)

CLERK GRIER: "The last proclamation is recognizing 'Summer Reading Program Appreciation Month' sponsored by Commissioners Barrett and Arrington."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Can I get the library staff and the library foundation folks to come down and join us, please? We are going to do a proclamation today for this Summer Reading Program at Fulton County libraries. And doing a little bit of research for this, I found out that the first time this program happened was actually in 1928, so it's been going on for almost a hundred years. It's an amazing program that I know families look forward to and the kids look forward to; and I'm officially a book nerd,

so I was reading also a lot growing up, and I'm very excited to be able to do this. All right, so I will read the proclamation with that and it says: WHEREAS, the mission of Fulton County Library System is to serve as a cultural and intellectual center that enriches the community and empowers all residents with essential tools for lifelong learning; and WHEREAS, the Fulton County Library System will once again sponsor a summer reading program in 2024 with activities taking place throughout the 34 libraries across the County from June 1st through August 1st; and WHEREAS, the theme for the 2024 Summer Reading Program is 'Adventure Begins At Your Library' which encourages participants to discover the many adventures available to Fulton residents at their local library including: books, movies, music, digital library, free passes to local attractions, countless activities and programs throughout the summer and so much more; and WHEREAS, reading is a fundamental skill that provides opportunities for exploration, imagination, and enjoyment, and studies show that reading over the summer months helps children and teens maintain literacy skills and prepares them to return to school ready to learn; and WHEREAS, the library system could not provide these exciting adventures in programming without the generosity of the Atlanta/Fulton Public Library Foundation and its enduring support for our largest youth literacy initiative of the year; and WHEREAS, the summer reading program promotes fun and exciting ways for children and adults to discover the power of literature through the self-directed independent reading experience. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County recognizes the importance of the summer reading program in developing lifelong readers, fostering literacy skills in children, teens, and adults; and celebrating the vast resources available to the community at the library; and does hereby proclaim June 2024 as 'Summer Reading Program Appreciation Month' in Fulton County, Georgia. We have Taryn and Marcia. Can you come and say something?"

MARCIA DIVACK, FC LIBRARY: "Good morning, everybody. My name is Marcia Divack, and I am the youth services coordinator for the library system. And I just want to say that I've been with the County now for 16 years, so this is my 16th summer reading program, and I'm really excited. And as Commissioner Barrett said, reading is the best thing that kids can do over the summer, it's the best thing that they can do year-round; and parents and caregivers model that behavior for your kids because that shows them that reading is a behavior that they should be doing."

TARYN GILLIAM, FC LIBRARY: "Hello. My name is Taryn Gilliam. I branch group administrator and adult services coordinator for the library system. And as Marcia just stated, we all know that summer reading is exciting for children, but we wanted to also be exciting for adults. So we encourage all of the adults to please stop by and sign up for summer reading. We have fantastic programs and grand prizes this year. So we would love to see you and look forward to having you. You can also go online as well to our website, fulcolibrary, to sign up for summer reading. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Madam Clerk, continue."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 7, Public Hearing, **24-0391**, 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 or submitting their comments in writing on the county's website, www.fultoncountygga.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. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have received 14 speaker cards. Will the first five speakers please come forward: Sherrika Bellamy, L.A. Pink, Camille Houston Jackson, Paul Hershey, and Mike Russell."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. And speakers, as always, when you have 15 seconds remaining of your two minutes, I'll say -- simply say 15 seconds and that's your key to begin to conclude your remarks. All right, first speaker."

SHERRIKA BELLAMY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Sherrika Bellamy. I am the interim executive director of the Housing Authority of Fulton County. I will be here every chance I get pleading for help for the residents and the staff. Last time I was here, I was placed on administrative leave by some of the board members with pay. I'm still on administrative leave with pay; but unfortunately, I have not received a paycheck in the last two pay periods. When they were asked why I have not received any pay, they said they have no reason, nor did they give me an explanation. No matter what retaliation I'm going through because of this board, I'm still going to be the voice of the residents, the landlords, and the staff. As of today, 1300 residents' rent has not been paid. Therefore, they will receive eviction letters and late fees. This will cause a hardship for these residents. It's a privilege for landlords to put their units on these programs; therefore, it is no excuse why the landlords cannot get paid timely. I was the only manager in the building keeping it running, and they removed me because I reached out to the Housing Authority Board for help and they rejected me. Then I contacted OIG, HUD, EEOC, Georgia Wage and Labor, and his Board. I am a woman of God, and my work is ministering for me. And if something is not right, I'm going to speak the truth even if it causes me to be retaliated against. I've asked this Board to contact your appointees. Some of them resigned, and you should know why. Some was ostracized, and they were muted on board meetings where they had to hold up a yellow Post-It note saying, please unmute me. My request is that this Board would meet with the whole entire Housing Authority and HUD to come to a resolution to help the Housing Authority of Fulton County, and I will see you the next Board meeting. Thank you."

L.A. PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Welcome, welcome, welcome today you guys. We want to make sure that we give our flowers to our Chair -- well, Vice Chair, Khadijah Abdur-Rahman, for this race that she ran clean. Thank God that he's here endorser and not the rest of these clowns, your Mayor Dick head; and, of course, Ike Arrington; your endorsement didn't work. But however, the case may be, let's get to the point of Commissioner Hall, chasing balls: we want you out. Let's make sure we make that clear. Dana, your little scheme is not going to work. Whatever you've got going on with this jail, we're continuously going to not accept it. So whatever route you're trying to take get in, it's not going to work. And why you want to know why I'm coming for you is because you're in with the corruption crew, okay? So there you've got it. You ain't got to ask nobody; I'm here to tell you. And then we've got a problem with, of course -- where did we get these people from, our DA's? These Sheriff Labutts? Where are these people coming from, but where they going? We got Fani Willis on Grey Goose getting loose. Anybody can get it Jezebel. I don't know how she got these pulpit pimps to get involved with her, and go up and make this big old ceremony of a lie about she ain't done nothing. Now hear it is, she take down a black man, Paul Howard, if everybody knows him. She takes down him on the same scandal that she came in on. Now all of a sudden we're supposed to vote and keep her in? I don't think so. Don't give her no more money. She don't deserve it. Then we got, of course, the other item - I know I got 13 minutes --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

L.A. PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and we got Labutt running, which we already going to get behind our new sheriff hopefully. Everybody need to write him in. So --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next speaker."

SUSAN THOMAS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, I am (inaudible.) Susan Thomas. I'm the most high, the most high fatitia. Camelina Dela Rose (inaudible.) no more strip club. I am the high (inaudible.) they treat me terribly. I wish she wasn't frozen. I am sure everyone in here knows who Rodriquez is because of the (inaudible.). I'm going to take the time with what is instead of city of Camille Williams down. I am the martyr. Good morning. I didn't mean to leave your city at a frown, but you need to watch what you guys are doing. Now, if you guys can prop up to the city of HUD which we are, the map of Atlanta. Woodstock is worth and Kennesaw need cleaner water, water mains and more pipelines -- new pipeline in tying into the Sandy Springs. That should clean up the problems of Snellville down to the Conyers. You know, this city's been built on ignorance. The R-way needs to be stopped. I'm addressing more bloody money for the dig out of problems; we need a lot of oopsy. There's Rose. No pay, the real Santa. Our Santa is always skinny. The new resolution I want to see in 2025 out of disgust, new lead, slimmer Santa's. All small business companies, Mother, Father, and son --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds, ma'am."

SUSAN THOMAS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- should be open at 6:30 a.m. every morning, not when it's your call. That is also for the Marta bus, the Marta train systems, open as early as well. I'll be back in a few weeks."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Next speaker."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Thank you. I'm Paul Hershey, and I'm changing my motive of operation this morning because I was given some information that I really didn't know. But let's talk about some facts. Number 1, there was an EEO suit filed by Brock against the County and Commissioner Hall. They tried to settle that suit three times. They found out that she had purchased the tracking devices, put them on the cars, and that was validated. Number 3, in a meeting with the judge before that suit took place, the County Auditor made a statement to her that somebody had filed a suit, and he could make it go away; and she made the statement, well make it happen. So let's play -- let's make a deal before it even gets anywhere. So the bottom line is, is this: you guys go sell something to the Air Force, because I'm not buying any of it anymore. And the moral of the story is, is we sit up here and you've got -- you've got all your constituents coming in here and talking about things. Chairman Pitts, when are you going to put together a program to answer the mail? You've got thousands of constituents through us that want to know what the hell is going on here. Everybody in this County seems to have some kind of issue with making money under the table. Why would a County attorney --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- auditor, tell her that he could make it go away before it even got settled or even talked about. You need to sell it somewhere else, and when are you going to put together a program to respond to your constituents? If you don't know how to do it, I can tell you how to do it."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I couldn't help but thinking when Major Bradford was saying that there's some folks who call on the name of God, but really don't believe in a living just God and we know that by their actions because they're devious and underhanded. But I want to say something positive. I want to congratulate Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman on her victory in the primary despite the lies that were told to you, and the lies that were told about you. You came out on top, and we congratulate you on that, and I also want to thank you again for last night for supporting our seniors on the west side. Which brings me to my next point about the cult of corruption here in Fulton County: we need four votes this morning to start an investigation and have an audit of the Sheriff's Department and the DA about what is happening and what should have happened in this County. The latest thing is we find out -- the whistleblowers are being retaliated against, and I urge you to do two things: start that investigation and come up with better protection for the whistleblowers because we know that indictments are coming and people are getting the message that

they either got to be witnesses or subjects. And as people come forward as witnesses, they need to be protected against the malfeasance and the evil that is pervasive in this county. We need to deal with it. The latest thing that came out is that the Sheriff and the DA prevented the grand jury from inspecting the jail, under Georgia law. They prevented them from inspecting the jail. We know why because we know what's happening in that jail. There needs to be an investigation --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- it needs to happen now, and we need an audit of both of those offices so that we can bring the light of day to what is happening in our county and with our funds like the million dollars that was spent to cover for Hall's malfeasance."

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers, please come forward: J. Wesley Day, Michael Collins, Devon Franklin, Charles Rambo, Devon Barrington-Ward."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I am here today to share with you once again a full overview of how Fulton County has fucked up my life at the hands of Keith Gammage. It starts with is: November 20th, 2018, I was beaten. I have all of my assailants on cell phone camera that I captured calling me fags, sissies, sissies (Technical issues. Audio feedback)."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Excuse me. Just a minute. What is that noise? What? Echo? All right. Sir, let me remind you about your language. No cursing. Continue."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Can it reset time, please?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Go ahead."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I'm here to talk about how Fulton County has messed up my life. I have been steadfast in manifested my entire life being in gifted programs, skipped second grade, two bachelor degrees, two master degrees, all but dissertation, to come here on November 20th to be met with hate in the city that claims it's too busy to hate. I caught my assailants on cell phone camera calling me homophobic slurs and epithets, and slapping me and beating me. Who get charged? I got charged. I got charged with affray. That's the injustice in itself. How does that happen? How does that make sense? Not one of you have been able to explain that to me. But Keith Gammage, your solicitor general, took that misdemeanor charge and upgraded it to a felony. How does this happen? I'm so stressed at this point. My mother's ill. I have power of attorney over my mom, and I'm still dealing with this. So as a result of that, Keith Gammage charged it -- upgraded it to a felony, I lost my job at Delta Air Line. But here in stark contrast, June 14, 2020, I was at the Cheesecake Factory, a hundred dollar order; I was waiting to pick up to go. The police came and tell me I have to leave without getting my food. They charged me with trespassing. That's

an injustice. As if that wasn't enough, Keith Gammage, 16 months later, went and added obstruction to justice, causing me to lose my job a second time at Delta Air Line when I had just gotten it back from the first time. How does any of this make sense?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Fifteen seconds."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "And now, the people that beat me, Keith Gammage dismissed one of their cases and then Fani Willis is threatening to dismiss the second assailant, and she's telling me she's going to charge me with extortion. How? How does this happen? I got charged with array, a felony and now I'm going to be charged with an extortion charge for nothing?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, sir."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Who's going to help me?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Next speaker."

MICHAEL COLLINS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Michael Collins and I'm with Color of Change. I stand here in opposition to the proposal to direct County management to pursue a sales tax for what would be the most expensive jail the country has ever seen. Building a new jail is not and never has been the solution. We need to continue efforts to reduce the jail population, which has been done successfully at Rice Street with no negative impacts on public safety; and instead has enabled repairs to be made to the existing facility. The plans for a new two billion-dollar jail are now firmly beyond reach. The state legislator is opposed to a sales tax. There is no path to funding a jail with that price tag. We cannot even staff the current facility. What hope is there to staff a facility double the size? While we continue down this cul-de-sac, we're distracted from real solutions. Advocates are ready to come to the table to discuss these solutions, but not to be part of a bulk shedding exercise as the current jail proponents (inaudible). What was perplexing about today's vote is that it includes an option to evaluate renovating the existing facility. Why was this option not explored years ago? The fact that the Commission is currently considering spending \$2 billion having never verified if they could upgrade the current facility is indicative of the wrong path we are on. To be clear, we support efforts to renovate the existing facility, but we will never support measures that move the new jail process forward. Thank you."

DEVON FRANKLIN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Devon Franklin. I am (inaudible.) policy counsel with the Southern Center for Human Rights. I'm also a member of the Community over Cages Coalition. And I too, am here today to speak in opposition of the sales tax, to fund the proposed two billion-dollar jail. This Body has previously, during its previous formation, declined smartly to increase millage rates to fund a new jail. The state of Georgia itself has similarly declined to engage in funding for a new County pretrial facility. And the response of this Body apparently is to pursue a sales tax which effectively -- it's a double whammy for the poor

people of Fulton County. Because, as we know, it is true that mass incarceration is a disease that disproportionately affects poor people all across the country, and similarly a sales tax would have a disproportionate effect on poor folks who are trying to survive day-to-day here in our County. They are the most vulnerable part of our community, and a sales tax would make living on a day-to-day basis a more expensive option for them. Quite simply, budgetary allocations toward building a building that the County cannot afford, is not well advised. Additionally, I would like to add that the whereas clauses that seeks to support the legislation by saying that the building is in such bad condition, that it's an old and outdated facility, I'd like to remind you all that Fulton County jail is one of the youngest jails in the United States of America being built in the late '80s where most jails in our country have been built since -- older than 1970. And finally, the DOJ investigation, that excited as a whereas clause, is mentally focused on the conditions of the facility --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DEVON FRANKLIN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- specifically, great detail was put into the concerns around the conditions of which people were living. Those conditions are related to the management of the facility. The repairs that are not being done to the facility and those are things that are not easily reconciled by a --"

CHARLES RAMBO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I am a citizen of South Fulton, also a 34 veteran of the -- excuse me, the Fulton County Sheriff's office. I hear a lot of commentary this morning towards the condition of the jail, and I understand that this is going to come up for a vote today in terms of how you move forward with the two billion-dollar project. Nelson Mandela said it best, the former president of South Africa, when he said 'the nation cannot be judged until he looks at the condition of its jails'. I am one who started in 1989 when your predecessors before you had come up with the plan on the 25-year basis in terms of how that jail should have been expanded and how it should have been constructed, and they failed very miserably. How can I say that, because Sister Khadijah, thank you for honoring Vivian Bradford who started with me in 1989 when we opened that facility. It was dilapidated. The locks were falling off. The day that we opened it, I can attest to the conditions of that jail. So many other inmates, as well as other retirees that I implore you all to bring in, as a panel study that can tell you where we went wrong. Now, at the end of the day, I applaud the fact that infrastructurally that you guys have that responsibility and you're facing the issue of, Commissioner Barrett, in terms of how you're going to move forward on the 25-year basis of how that's going to look. I pray that you all will learn the lessons that we don't have to see this 35 years later. Brother Arrington, when you said we pay for it now or suffer for it later; but at the end of the day this -- Commissioner Pitts, as you specifically have said as well, infrastructure alone is not just the issue."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

CHARLES RAMBO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- we've got to move forward in terms of what that internal order and discipline looks like. So I pray between now and November that too myself as well as the current incumbent will be able to define that, so that we don't have to revisit this issue again. Thank you."

DEVIN BARRINGTON-WARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Devon Barrington-Ward with the Black Futurist Group. I am here today to issue an invitation to the Fulton County Commissioners as you all are thinking about billions of dollars for a facility and infrastructure, we had a water crisis here in the city of Atlanta, and the city of Atlanta is a part of Fulton County. And I know many of you all will say that's the city of Atlanta's responsibility, but the residents of Atlanta don't care who gets it done. They just want it fixed. We are in a major US city where a pipe the size of 42 inches shut down Atlanta. We didn't have water at the airport, we didn't have water at major facilities, we didn't have water at hospitals. This is a full stop. And so, when we're talking about \$1.7 billion, I can think about \$1.7 billion helping us upgrade our water sewer system throughout the County, because it's not just the city of Atlanta that's got old pipes. In addition to that, we know that lots of people were impacted by this water crisis including small businesses, who lost revenue due to no fault of their own. And so, I was successful, along with some community organizers and small businesses at getting the city of Atlanta to establish a small business relief fund of about \$5 million. It would be great if the County could partner with the city to provide them some more relief to our small businesses because this is going to happen again. The last thing that I will say about the jail is that, let's be clear: you all -- your hands are tied, and we've been trying to warn you about this for five or six years. We've sat in Commissioner Hall's office. We've sat in Chairman Pitts' office. We've talked to the other Commissioners, the new and old alike, that the pathway towards this is a complete reimagining of our justice system --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DEVIN BARRINGTON-WARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- which means that we need to rely more on prearrest diversion. We need to rely more on services that keep people out of the jail in the first place. We haven't done a comparative analysis of what it would actually cost us if we had that plan. Chairman Pitts, I see you nodding your head. I would like you to take some leadership on that, and I will work with you to make that happen. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Last four speakers in Assembly Hall, please come forward: Linda Lindo, Shani Robinson, Fallon McClure, and Dominique Grant."

LINDA LINDO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello, everybody. My name is Linda Lindo, and I'm here to represent my son. I am a prisoner's mother. And my son has been unjustly convicted by Fani Willis and the former GBI examiner, Bernadette Davis. My son is Travon Reed, which was wrongly convicted on October 2006, based on the ballistic that Ms. Bernadette Davis provided to the court that she never examined those ballistics."

And as a mother, I have suffered greatly, and so have my family for 21 years. And I don't know if you guys -- you people can help, but not only me, it's a whole lot of people that Ms. Bernadette Davis falsified paperwork. I can go by this, but I'm just going to talk from my head for a few minutes. She falsified a whole lot of examining paperwork saying that she examined these papers or she did the testing on them, and she did not. The district attorney knew that, but they did nothing. I was on 11 Alive last year, in July, in front of the courthouse, and they came out and wanted us to move. I was supposed to go talk to the parole board, Ms. Crystal Moon, and they stopped that. Justice needs to be served. My son was not picked out, and the person that Fani Willis gave the deal to is the guy that got out of prison after the deal --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

LINDA LINDO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- with the gun and said he need a murder trial and they refused to give my son a new case. I would say they always say that nobody is above the law, than Fani Willis and Ms. Bernadette Davis is not above the law. Thank you."

SHANI ROBINSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Shani Robinson and I'm here to inform you that criminal justice reform is needed in the Fulton County Courthouse. There needs to be an ethical and financial audit of their use of Georgia's RICO statute. Eleven years ago, I became the youngest defendant in the Atlanta Public School's cheating trial, the longest most expensive criminal trial in Georgia history that charged educators with RICO for cheating on standardized tests. It was DA Fani Willis' first high-profile RICO case in which she was the lead prosecutor. So far, two educators have gone to prison, and currently in Fulton County, RICO is being used against a former US President, musicians, and protesters. I've maintained my innocence. As a first grade teacher, my test scores didn't even count, and I've never received any bonus money which was the reason prosecutors claimed I should be charged with RICO in the first place. Although I didn't get any bonus money, prosecutors basically told the jury that since my salary was US currency, I could still be classified as a racketeer. In other states where cheating took place, teachers were fired or had their teaching license suspended or revoked, the DAs did not over criminalize them. But in Fulton County, educators face 20 to 50 years in prison. On June 25th, my codefendants and I will be back in court to start the appeals process for a case that began over a decade ago. Millions of taxpayers' dollars have been spent to criminalize teachers for nonviolent offenses. I have two children, and I've had to live with the horror of being separated from them. Some of my codefendants have lost their homes and recently one of them was diagnosed with stage IV cancer."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Fifteen seconds."

SHANI ROBINSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Commissioners that have oversight in this area, I'm imploring you to authorize an ethical and financial audit of the Fulton County Courthouse and its misuse of Georgia's RICO statute. Thank you."

FALLON MCCLURE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Members of the Board. My name is Fallon McClure, and I'm the Deputy Director for policy and advocacy at the ACLU of Georgia. The ACLU of Georgia protects the civil rights and civil liberties of all Georgians. We are here today in opposition of the proposed Resolution to direct County management to pursue a sales tax. For several years, the ACLU of Georgia has worked with partners, elected officials, and community members alike to help provide solutions to the crises at the Fulton County Jail, and in the Fulton County system at large. We have collected data, researched, and written multiples reports, polled constituents, ran public education campaigns, met with stakeholders including several members of this Body; and filed lawsuits all to work toward the same goal that I believe all of you have, reduced human suffering and the loss of lives. In 2022, after releasing our first report, "There are Better Solutions," we shared it with his Commission, and after being invited by Chairman Pitts and added to the agenda, we stood here for over an hour and discuss the findings while being berated by several of you all. Our message was and still is simple: without systematic change, more beds or a newer facility will not solve the crisis at the Fulton County Jail. We did not just point out problems however, but we presented four solutions: Better utilization of the policing alternatives in the diversion program, indict cases within 90 days, true determination of ability to pay bond, and cite and release for misdemeanors. The solutions that were applied, helped reduce the population, and the trend toward better outcomes, which we acknowledged in our second report released in December of last year, breaking the cycle exploring alternatives to a new jail. These solutions will continue to be impactful --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

FALLON MCCLURE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- especially with the passing of Senate Bill 63. So our message today remains the same, we don't need a new jail."

DOMINIQUE GRANT, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Dominique Grant, and I'm the campaign and operations managers with Woman on the Rise Georgia. We provide services to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women in Georgia, but specifically provide direct services to women that are coming out of Atlanta City Detention Center by the way of Rice Street. We have gotten an opportunity, while being on the ground, to see the firsthand the effects of what it means to provide services to your community, to make sure that decarceration is happening. We have worked with multiple organizations like the one that came up here before, to prove to you all that a \$1.7 billion jail is not what's needed for the community, but resources are what's needed. We have been able to see a decrease in incarceration, and we have been able to see through our services that we provided last year that where people are provided with dignity and hope and the things that they need, they don't have to resort to incarceration. I feel that the County is doing their community wrong. There are so many other things that we need and there are so many other solution. We have come to you time and time and time again with every possible

solution, and it seems as if they're been ignored. I just hope that you guys do not continue to disparage the community by increasing the sales tax. Things are high. We can't afford to live as it is. We cannot afford to live as it is. So please consider that before you make your decision today and thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Anyone else?"

CLERK GRIER: "No further speakers in Assembly Hall. We have three speakers on Zoom."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Good morning, Commissioners. The first person to speak is Kevin Muldowney."

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. Kevin Muldowney, Fulton County resident. There's an agenda item 24-0402, County Manager's Discussion, Elections Department. Hello? You got me?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "The status of the Election's Department is such that a complete lack of transparency has forced a sitting member of the Board to sue the elections director for documentation necessary for certification of our recent primary election. Documentation that had previously not been available in depth or has been made -- or had been made available without the necessary lead time for effective analysis. A claim has been made that the Election's Board had ceded their oversight responsibility to the election supervisor. Two problems here: Any evidence of this claim has suspiciously disappeared and the very act of ceding oversight to the department that had supposed to be overseen sounds illegal and just plain ridiculous. The BRE member's oath call for a true and perfect return of the primary election. The board's certification causes the board to be liable for such a true and perfect return. Another argument has been made that the board's election certification is only ministerial. It sounds like the Election Department wants to have it all. To have an election certified by a qualified oversight board, to refuse to give that board the timely information actually needed to perform that oversight, and have the board assume liability for the accuracy of said election. The status of our Election's Department continues to be a mess --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and so, the wrong way to go in restoring the confidence of voters in Fulton County. I'm not compensated anyone -- in any way to provide this comment, and this comment comes free of charge. Thank you very much."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Ben Howard."

BEN HOWARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Greetings, Commissioner and staff and a special greeting fellow citizens. Ben Howard, Senior Advocate and public policy analyst. For matters relating to senior citizens, one may call the Fulton County Star Line at 404-613-6000. Now back to this Board of the Housing Authority of Fulton County: Why would a presiding officer take public pride in operating from a bully pulpit? The optics should raise an eyebrow. Women are waving bye-bye to employment at that Housing Authority. The optics should raise an eyebrow. Dismissing the Fulton County standard of transparency, the Housing Authority Board has unilaterally shut out public participation via Zoom. Those optics should raise an eyebrow. Board composition and titles of President, Vice President, Board Attorney, and ten representatives continue to be misty and muddled. Complaints about that authority and that Board continue to come before County Commissioners. It's time to bring in outside eyebrows and eyes to look into this sad saga. So stay tuned."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "Continuing on page 7, County Manager's Items: Under Open and Responsible Government, **24-0392**, Finance: Presentation, review and approval of the June 5th, 2024 Budget Soundings and Resolution."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Mr. Chairman, the item that is before the Board is a no-funding, no additional funding requested item. It's two changes to the annual hardware software maintenance and support list, an item for senior services, for web hosting, and an item for the IT department for our -- some technology support related to Microsoft agreements."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's it?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, sir."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, any questions, Commissioners?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Natalie Hall, seconded by Commissioner Bridget Thorne. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: " 24-0393: Human Resources Management: Request approval to modify the classifications section of the Classification and Compensation Plan."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Any questions or comments? None? Let's vote, please."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 8, **24-0394**, Real Estate and Asset Management: Request approval to increase spending authority in an amount not to exceed \$36,877 to provide additional modification and extensions to the existing fire sprinkler system."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne; seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. Motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "Under Arts and Library, **24-0395**: Request approval of a contract between Fulton County and SHEMI Enterprise in the amount of \$75,000 to provide the Taste of the South Fulton Arts and Cultural Programs and Events."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Where is -- is Mr. Manuel -- is that his name? Or, Dr. Roshell, do you want to --"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "I can answer, Mr. Chairman, while Mr. Manuel makes his way."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Explain what's going on. I have no idea what this is."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "So in January, the Board approved \$75,000 during the budget process for the Taste of South Fulton event. As the Department of Arts and Cultural worked with the County Attorney's office, they discovered that the Taste of South Fulton is an event name, but the company that we need to contract with is SHEMI. So that is why this agenda item is here, and the name SHEMI is there because that is actually the legal entity that can be contracted with. Again, Taste of South Fulton is just the name of an event."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay, I understand that, but what is the -- how do we benefit from a Taste of South Fulton? What is this?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "I'll let Mr. Manuel talk about the benefits of the program."

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "Good morning, Commissioners. The Taste of South Fulton, or the Taste of Sofu, is a cultural arts festival that they do in all of the cities in South Fulton in terms of bringing arts and cultural and entertainment to the community. They have vendors, they have live entertainment, and it's really a free event for the community to come out and support."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "How often have we done this?"

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "I think this will be our second year, but I think it's -- they've been doing it for probably about three or four years."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Who is they?"

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "The organization SHEMI. They put on these programs; and it's a combination of a concert, vendor, festival, art and cultural experience, and they do it in all cities in South Fulton. And now they're kind of spreading throughout now to cover all of Fulton."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So is this for all of Fulton or South Fulton?"

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "It's for all of Fulton."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And do the cities participate financially?"

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "I'm not sure the role of the cities, but for the last agenda item that we have, when we brought it up, it was approved. They had asked for a certain amount and then it went through the BOC and it was reduced down to the 75,000 to cover, I think about six different festivals."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. You're losing me now. Six different festivals? What is this? Is this six different festivals or one festival?"

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "It's one festival, but they do it once a month in all of the cities."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is this -- is this is like wind down -- what is that, in East Point? Is that a part of this?"

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "No. East Point is not a part of that. This is separate from East Point, Wind Down Wednesday. But again, this is a cultural art experience. It's a festival. It's a stage. It's live performances."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner, go ahead."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Yes --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Don't leave, Mr. Manuel. I have some more questions."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Chairman, this is an item that I actually added to the budget. And the reason -- generally speaking, Sofu has been working in the community, bringing events and doing a lot for not only South Fulton but Fulton, period. And so, I took it upon myself to bring it forward during budget time. It was approved under A Taste of Sofu, which they have done a lot of work in Fulton County for years, especially, when it comes to arts and culture and, in that South Fulton corridor, making sure that not only the events were family-friendly, but to bring not only the County, but municipalities together as well. One of their greatest things that they have done that Fulton County particularly has benefitted from, is the ball that they do each year that celebrates all of the South Fulton mayors and all of the South Fulton cities. And so, this was an item, unfortunately, because of the name change, you may not recognize, but this came under a Taste of South Fulton that the Board approved at budget time and because, like Dr. Roshell said, the legal name of it, that's the reason that you may not recognize it. But they have done quite a bit of work. I believe Michelle Taylor Willis is part of it. Sheila Mance is a part of it as well as others; but they have done quite a bit of work, especially in South Fulton. They have done it underfunded, and they have done it for everyone, not just South Fulton. And so, I apologize to my colleagues that you were not made aware before now that this is the same actual item; but I can speak to any questions anybody else would like to ask of me."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah. I just have some questions. For instance, on the second page under Statement of Work on the contract, it says the County shall provide financial assistance in the amount not to exceed \$75,000. But then at the end of the contract, it says that we're just going to give them a one-time paid out disbursement. So it seemed kind of contradictory in the contract, and I'm not real crystal-clear what we're going to be getting. Like, are they going to put -- I understand they're going to be putting our name -- Fulton County, advertising our name. But when I went and looked at their website, their Facebook and their registration forms, they don't have any sponsor's names anywhere. It looks like they have an event this weekend, I believe."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "They have one on Friday."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes. They have one on Friday, and then they have, I think, three more events for the remainder of the year. So are we only going to get our name put on the last three events or -- I'm just kind of not super clear exactly what the taxpayers are getting. We have a Taste of Alpharetta, and they don't come to us asking for money. It's purely, you know, funded by sponsors and event attendees who go, you

know, you may pay a dollar for samples, stuff like that. So I just don't want to open the, you know, open the gate like, okay, we're funding this in South Fulton and then North Fulton be like, okay, what are you funding up here type thing as well, so."

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "Right. So what I can say to that is, in terms of promoting the Fulton County brand, it's always at every event. They give us an opportunity to be on stage and to bring greetings; they give an opportunity for all of leadership to show up to talk about all of the wonderful things that are happening in our County, not just in arts and cultures, but in all departments. A lot of our departments do show up. They're vendor opportunities, but there is a huge stage present. And in terms of our local and our branding, when I have attended, I have seen Fulton County branded on the banners, on the step and repeat; and so, it is a pretty good turnout, but also it's a good opportunity to brand the County as a whole through this event."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will support this, because we, as a Board, approved the budget with this in it. So I have no problem supporting it. But I do -- I just wanted to weigh in and say I think -- the question certainly that you were asking, Mr. Chairman and Commissioner Thorne, your questions are valid and I, you know, wanting us to be able to ask those questions before the budget, and this is why I think our budget process needs to be refined so that these type of last-minute add-ons that we do can be -- can have second readers, can be more thoroughly discussed before we approve the budget, but I will support this."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. I just want to reiterate that, generally speaking, in some aspects, South Fulton, the corridor of South Fulton and those cities that are in those corridors have funded and have, a lot of times on a shoestring budget, brought things that benefit all of Fulton County, not just South Fulton. And so, here again, I apologize because of the misunderstanding of the name, and I am going to even take the responsibility of saying, I should have brought it to the attention of my colleagues that it was a name change, but a Taste of Sofu has been working diligently and done a lot, a lot of branding in conjunction with arts and culture, like David Manuel said, if you come out to one of the events, the main thing you will notice, it is a family-friendly event. It's an event that is designated for the entire family to come out. They have resources -- everything from learning about what Fulton County offers, also allowing local artists and local vendors to display their crafts. And so -- and also, you have a lot of the mayors, you have the mayors of Union City, of Fairburn; all of the cities on the Southside. Generally speaking, they will move from city to city within the County to have events to make sure that the arts and culture and the local artists. A lot of times, we have the local artists come down here and say that they're not getting the funding, that they're not getting the help. And so, this event, a lot of times, allows the

local artists to be in front of the public. And so, once again, I'm going to apologize that the information did not get in front of my colleagues in a timely fashion, but I would ask for support of this, not only for equity, but for the fact, that the city -- the cities in the South Fulton corridor, in some instances, not all; but I would be remiss if I didn't say it. In some instances they are left out. And so, they're made to make decisions on a mom and pop budget, which a lot of times they do a great job. And so, I would ask that the colleagues would reach out if there's any additional questions; but understand that this was something that was added as the Taste of South Fulton, Taste of Sofu that had already been in place. Fulton County had not been helping with the funding. The mayors on the Southside had been helping with the funding and a lot of times I have been out to these events. I have seen other Commissioners with a tent at these events giving information to the public. And so, this is something that we really want to make sure that is open not only to the entire Fulton County, but we want to make sure we're -- and be fair to make sure that we're allowing individuals on the Southside of Fulton County to experience the arts and cultures and what Fulton County has to bring as a whole."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Commissioner -- or Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, thank you for the clarification on that, and thank you, David. So they'll be getting a one lump sum of 75,000?"

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "That is correct."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. And I do remember approving this at the budget time, and I agree with you, Commissioner Barrett. I really wasn't sure who was getting it, what was getting it. It was just Taste of Sofu was all I knew. I believe, since we did approve it at the budget, you know, we should approve it this time; but moving forward, I think we need to look at that, not targeting just Atlanta and South Atlanta. And I'm not asking for a bunch of resources to be put in North Fulton, but I would like awareness that Fulton County arts is there. There's struggling artists everywhere, and I would like -- I have an event this Saturday, I'll put a plug-in for it, this Saturday. I welcome the people from the south to come up. I know Michelle Taylor Willis, I know her. She does a great job, does great events and she's just a great ambassador for the County as well, so I can attribute that. But I would really like to see the arts community come together across the entire County, not only to help each other, but to brainstorm and see what other areas in the County are doing so we can have true equity across the County. In Johns Creek, we have a -- they're desperately -- their arts programs are overflowing, they can't do adult programming, so I want to put in a plug for Johns Creek. They have standing -- they have waiting lists to get in summer programs. They're trying to get a van so they can make their art programs portable. So I would like to see us really, really try to reach out and bring north and south together and work together on things."

DAVID MANUEL, DIRECTOR, ARTS & CULTURE: "And I totally agree. And we will invite you to some of our community forums, because I believe it's collaboration over competition; and so, we work with the north and the south and we try to make sure that we support them all. As well as with our arts council that's one of our agenda items here lately is to make sure that everyone that we support including the funding is across-the-board in all 15 cities. So we will make sure that you get those invites. Some of them are Zoom, but you can sit in on them and hear the conversation and the partnership and the collaboration. I think you'll be impressed."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "This agenda item is not about North Fulton versus South Fulton. This agenda item is not even about the arts department and their programming which they program throughout the entire County. I'm a little confused as to why people are asking you and Dr. Roshell these questions because they're the ones that voted to put this in the budget. So they should be asking themselves those questions. They shouldn't be asking you anything; you didn't put this in the budget. They shouldn't ask Dr. Roshell anything; she didn't put this in the budget. So it's peculiar to me that the very same people that voted to put this in the budget are now asking you and Dr. Roshell all of these questions about an item that they put in the budget. Good Lord have mercy."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Anything else? So just to recap, this was approved in the budget. I assume I voted for the budget. This was in it that's my mistake for -- if I didn't ask these questions at that time. I can assure you though, that come next year, or later on this year, that these kinds of programs, that we've got a lot of issues that we have to deal with. We all love the arts -- at least we say we do -- but I still don't understand what we're getting here, but it was in the budget. I voted for the budget. Anything else? All right, let's vote. Vice Chair, thank you, but it was in the budget, and I supported the budget, and I'll support this this year, for that reason."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "Under Health and Human Services, **24-0396**, Public Works: Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder in the amount of \$600,000 to provide valve condition assessment services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett; seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "24-0397, Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities: Request approval of a Memorandum Of Understanding between Fulton County, Fulton County Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and Grady Memorial Hospital to provide medication assisted outpatient treatment of substance abuse for Fulton County residents, and Fulton County shall pay Grady Memorial Hospital an amount not to exceed \$464,000 annually or as otherwise provided by an amendment to this MOU."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, a motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett; it's seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 9, 24-0398, State Court: Request approval to increase the spending authority in an amount not to -- in the amount of \$160,000 to provide substance use disorder services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, a favorable motion by Commissioner Thorne; seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please cast your vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "Back to the Consent Agenda on page 3, 24-0369, Library: Request approval award a contract without competition in an amount not to exceed \$1,313.344 to replace all compromised paying system and self-check machines."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Were there questions on this? Why was this asked?"

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, FC PCC: "Good morning, Commissioners. Felicia Strong Whitaker. The three items that were removed from the Consent Agenda; there are only certain items that can be on Consent. This was a sole-source item. It is not grant funded and it had to be removed."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. I understand. I understand. Motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett; seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just had a quick question, and really just for the public to understand where the money is coming from. I know this is TAD money, I believe, correct?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "It is."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Can you kind of just, for the sake of it, explain sort of where that money comes from, because I just don't -- I just wanted to be clear that it's not coming from the general fund in the normal way."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "So the program is funded through a tax allocation district allocation for library improvements. And one of the improvements that we presented along with the structural improvements was this self-checkout machine item. For a little bit of background, the self-checkout machine systems have been upgraded. As we know, technology upgrades over time. And so, this is an opportunity for us to provide the best checkout solution for our constituents by upgrading these machines. The older machines are going out of service, and they will no longer be under any sort of maintenance, so we thought that this was a good use of TAD funds for a nonrecurring items."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Dr. Roshell."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Can you tell me -- it says it was a contract without competition? Does that mean they were the sole bidder on that contract?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "I'm sorry. Go ahead, Felicia."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, FC PCC: "I'm sorry, Commissioner. Yes, what that means was -- it wasn't a solicitation because the County already owns the machines. We bought them when we first opened the libraries and Biblioteca is our -- is the company that won the solicitation. We are upgrading. So that is an award without competition, so because of the compatibility and it is an upgrade. So it is considered a sub source."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay, thank you. And which TAD is this coming out of?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It's the Beltline TAD."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm trying to determine -- or let me ask a better question. How we -- how do we determine that this is the sole source? What criteria are used?"

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, FC PCC: "Yes, Commissioner. Purchasing Code, Section 102-384, has a section -- Section 4, 'when necessary to maintain compatibility with existing equipment or systems on a specified makes and models of technical equipment, software and parts, would satisfy the County's needs for additional units or replacement units, and only one source is available'. So we are upgrading the existing machines with the new technology. So we did go through our procurement to purchase the machine, we have standardized on Biblioteca and all of the libraries, and all of the machines needed to be upgraded."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. I mean, I'm happy to support this, but I just did a Google search, and I would challenge whether this is the sole -- Google shows that there are several different sources for digital library checkout systems, so --"

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, FC PCC: "Commissioner, the County did go through a solicitation process initially and elected Biblioteca for all of the libraries when we upgraded it and when we built the new libraries. So that is the self-checkout system that the County selected at that time. And you are correct; there are a lot out there. We did do a solicitation. Biblioteca was chosen and selected by the County. We are simply upgrading the existing equipment that we purchased."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. Hey, that's fine. It just doesn't -- it seems that if -- if we are replacing old extinct units with brand-new units, it would seem that that would also be an opportunity to put the contract for those new units out for bid. Now, if you're saying that -- I heard you when you read the ordinance, you referenced compatibility. And so, if there are compatibility reasons, then that might make sense. But just saying that we are replacing the old extinct units with new units and we are awarding a contract -- a million-dollar contract without bid doesn't -- it doesn't sit well."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, FC PCC: "So, Commissioner, in addition to that when we are doing our sole source, part of the process is, is that we do advertising. We advertise it on our bid board, and we ask if there is anyone else that can provide that with the justifications that we have, so it was advertised for ten business days. No one submitted anything any differently, so therefore we are still moving forward. Had someone submitted something, we would have reviewed it with the department and maybe have done something differently, but we did not receive any proposals."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I thought, Ms. Holloman, maybe you could explain. Replacing a system and upgrading a system perhaps the differences? My thoughts are, if you're just replacing the machines, the books are probably coded to work with those machines, and you're only replacing the machine, and not having to recode the books. Perhaps there is a reason that could --"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Good afternoon, Gayle Holloman, executive director of the library. I have here with me our financial systems manager, Jamar Parker, who can better explain what was going wrong with those 85 subject machines."

JAMAR PARKER, FC LIBRARY: "Good morning, Commissioners. So we have the pay component, which is called the comprised pay component, which is going out for maintenance or going out of warranty. And so, we could not replace just the pay component on those machines. We had to replace the pay component and the equipment itself. That's the reason why we took out the solicitation for replacement of all units throughout the County system."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. We have a motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett; it is seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Let's vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "Also on page 3, **24-0370**: Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder in an amount not to exceed \$126,700.98 to provide Non-Book to all library locations."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, a motion to approve by Commissioner Natalie Hall; seconded by Commissioner Dana Barrett. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 7, of the Consent Agenda, **24-0387**, Marshal: Request approval to increase spending authority in an amount not to exceed \$29,070.60 for the purchase of Marshal Badges, ballistic vests, and vest carriers."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Commissioner Arrington; seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "Back on page 9 of the Regular Meeting Agenda, under Commissioners' Action Item, **24-0354**: Request approval of a Resolution urging municipalities located within Fulton County to enhance safety at convenience stores by adopting ordinances and laws mandating the use of video surveillance systems at these establishments, and for other purposes, sponsored by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, we a motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Is there a second? I'll second. All right, Vice Chair."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I wanted to speak to this and that it is an urging. I think there was maybe a little misunderstanding of -- or there was a thought that this may -- this may be contradictory to what the Governor signed off. But what we're doing is we're just urging municipalities to enhance the safety at their convenience stores by adopting ordinances and laws. We're just asking them to aid in that. We're not telling them to supersede state law, nor are we telling them to do an action that would be contrary. Now, I would be remiss if I didn't say if we were to actually survey everybody in this room, I would say may be eight out of ten people would have some type of electronic surveillance at their home, you know, when someone has breached the front door. You know when someone has breached your driveway or whatever. We know that there has been an uptick in crime in certain areas where there is not surveillance. We know that in areas of where there has been surveillance, the surveillance was used as a crime-fighting tool. The law enforcement has been able to apprehend information, get tag numbers, get the description of the perpetrator within a short amount of time. I do understand, we do not want to put a burden on any establishment to upgrade their safety surveillance, and that is not the intent of this. However, we do want to find and encourage municipalities to find ways of possible grants, of possible funding, of possible collaborations if, in fact, they do need help to upgrade their surveillance. But I think in 2024 where we're in a society that most of us have some type of surveillance at our own homes; when we have something to alert us when there's an intruder; when we have something to alert us that our own parameters have been breached, I think it is not unreasonable to ask -- and this is clearly just an ask; this is not a mandate, this is not a you better do this or its financial penalties. This is for them to explore ways of possibly upgrading their monitoring systems to make sure that it can aid in any apprehension or any situation. We never want anyone's person or family to go to a convenience store, or to go to an ATM, or go to just a mall and God forbid, there is a criminal action that causes them to lose their life or to become injured, and we don't have everything in our arsenal to make sure that the police officers and those that are investigating does not have the tools that they need to make a very quick and expedient arrest. And so, that is the nature and essence of this. This is not telling anybody what they have to do; this is just an urging and a suggestion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I do really appreciate the overall intent of this Resolution, but, you know, I think it's really sad that we're having to do video surveillance; that crime is on an uptick. You know, I used to live in Midtown and my friends who still live there are like, well, I don't get gas at night, which I think is a very, very sad state of our existing system. But as a conservative, I would never want to mandate anything on a small business. I know all the large big-box convenience stores; they probably have the up-to-date surveillance systems. But it looks like you're requiring a certain standard, 300 DPI or more resolution. You have to be able to see the face. I just think once you mandate, you're putting the burden of public safety on the stores, on the small convenience stores. And I think we need to advocate for small businesses, and I appreciate urging, you know, cities to get grants to help these businesses put cameras in, even paying for the cameras. But once you make it a law and you put the burden on them and you put the burden on them to maintain them, then they're liable. You've just upped their liability. The minute those cameras don't work and something happens, a lawsuit instills, and those businessowners are going to be out of business. And from what I understand, there are food deserts in a lot of areas in South Fulton, and convenience stores are the only methods of some people getting food. And I just -- I just can't support it because, just on basic principle, I fully agree with grants trying to help businesses in these crime areas to get cameras, but not mandate them. That's where I would object."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Natalie Hall, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "This is simply urging the municipalities to do this, right? Okay. And I do recall that the police foundation gave the city of Atlanta a grant to amp up their cameras all around Atlanta; and I know -- I was recently driving around and noticed that there are a lot of cameras around. So I think that there should probably be some kind of review of where the cameras are already located because as I drove around, I've seen cameras that are right by gas stations that can clearly see those businesses, and I do agree that we need to be careful not to create a negative situation for these business owners in trying to -- and remember, with technology, technology is no longer useful after so many years. Computers themselves are obsolete in three years and start to break down. Your phone starts acting up within a certain amount of years. So depending on what the upgrade is on the cameras, this could be very obsolete. We should just say whatever the latest technology is because you don't ever know what that might be. As soon as you buy even like a phone, the new version comes out; and the same with cameras and the like. So I do think that this is a good start to trying to address a crime problem, but I don't know if it's completely what is necessary. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, any other comments? This is simply an urging Resolution. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "24-0399: Request approval of a Resolution directing the County Manager and County Attorney to conduct an assessment of the feasibility of allowing pro bono legal clinics to serve as a resource for citizens from time to time on a reoccurring basis at Fulton County libraries and for other purposes, sponsored by Chairman Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Dr. Roshell, did Ms. Holloman leave? You want to start, Commissioner -- strike -- not Commissioner, Dr. Roshell."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, sir. So in partnership with Gayle, we have already started to conduct some preliminary assessments of the feasibility of a expanded version of free legal clinics in Fulton County. As you all may know, the Fulton County family law center is already in operation through the superior court. We will plan to speak -- or Gayle has already spoken with Wake County, one of the counties mentioned in the Resolution. We will also reach out to other counties with similar programs for best practices. We've also spoken with Purchasing. We will need some sort of application process if this Resolution is approved, so that we have a way to enter in to an MOU with attorneys that will be part of this program. Finally, we will also, and have reached out to the Department of Community Development, the Department of Community Development, and have a \$43,000 contract with Atlanta Legal Aid. We will look at any opportunities to scope the work of that contract to support this type of program, if it is approved; and Gayle is looking at the appropriate access points that would be a good fit for this program so that there would be an access point throughout the County."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Ms. Holloman."

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, LIBRARY DIRECTOR: "Yes, good afternoon. Again, Gayle Holloman, Library Director. I did talk with Wake County, the person who's been in charge of that program for them. The County there operates a legal support center, and so they were able to structure it so that they assign their attorneys to go to the various locations. So there are four libraries, and they go there two times a month. People are allowed to have a 30-minute session for family law concerns, assistance with things like adoption, divorce papers, things of that nature. So we would want to try and model that as much as possible. But as Dr. Roshell mentioned, I am looking at other locations around to see just what other library systems are doing that, so that we can just figure how it would work for us. I did mention that the earliest we could possibly start would be the fall perhaps because, right now, we're under -- in the process of our summer reading program, which goes to August 1. So it is something that I believe could be feasible for us, but there would be a lot of discussions and a lot of things that would need to take place to make it happen."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay, Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Ms. Holloway [verbatim.], is there currently a rule or prohibition that prevents anyone from hosting legal clinics at libraries?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Oh, no, no. There has not been a lot of interest of late in that type of thing. We have done some programming with Judge Kirk and the magistrate court with some programs she has offered periodically for us within the last year. But there's no prohibition from doing so. If we've got the space, we can allocate it for someone to come in and do some. But this is a more formalized idea when it was brought to my attention. On an ongoing basis, that it's more regular than what we were doing in the past with the magistrate court."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And, in fact, there are groups that host legal clinics at libraries now talking about incorporation, how to incorporate and those things. That already occurs in our library, doesn't it?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "That does occur, sir, but it's periodically as people bring that to our attention or if certain times of the year when we're doing financial literacy for instance that type of thing that might include those legal matters. We have not done a formalized program that people can count on, knowing that on this Saturday's it's going to be here at this time for a period of time; like months and years."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. And you spoke about the magistrate court and Judge Kirk. It would seem to me that if we are going to do this, that we should do it in conjunction with our justice partners and helping the people get the services that they need that we offer. For example, probate court, right? Wills and trusts, right? Magistrate court. People have evictions and other small claims, right? And so, if we work on to formalize this; it would seem to make sense to only -- to do that in conjunction with the actual services that are being provided across the street and to work with the justice partners to provide those legal clinics."

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Yes. And it's my understanding that Soo Jo has indicated that she would be able to assist us in all that endeavor. That's essentially what Wake County has done, because they have a legal support center. That's basically how they approached it."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. Well, I'm sure the County Attorney can be helpful, but there are elected officials that have to be dealt with. The probate judge is a constitutional officer that has to be dealt with directly. The chief magistrate judge has to be dealt with directly. She's an elected official, right?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, LIBRARY DIRECTOR: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And so, I guess, I'm little confused because this is talking about conducting an assessment on the feasibility. That sounds like that's getting expensive. How much we paying for this assessment, to conduct whether we could do legal clinics at our buildings? We own the buildings, right, don't we, Ms. Holloman?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, LIBRARY DIRECTOR: "Yes, I don't think --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- so we can do anything we want to in them, right?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Yes, sir. I don't know that feasibility was used in that sense. I think it was used in the sense that this is something we want to do. You know, that's what I think it was -- in the sense of that, not that we've got to do a great study and pay money to do the study, not from that standpoint."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. All right. Well, we're in the legislative branch, and I guess, we can legislate to do this, but it sounds like it's something that we're going to be legislating to work with the judicial partners. So I think we got to get those judicial partners in on the front end of this, because we can't tell them what to do."

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Right. Please, know, sir, nothing has been done any further than what you see here. There are no plans. The idea was to get your approval to think about doing it and work on toward doing it, see if it's feasible to do it. And so that's where that word comes in."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. Well, I don't want any money spent on an assessment of whether we can host legal clinics at our libraries. I can tell you right now, we can, they're our libraries. We can host whatever we want to there, okay? So please don't spend any money on no assessment, or no feasibility study, to tell us something we already know."

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I just have a question related to line 21 through 23 which states that Fulton County enjoys several productive partnerships with local legal organizations and pro bono attorneys such as the programs offered at the Justice Resource Center located in the Fulton County Courthouse. And so, are we speaking of like Atlanta Legal Aid and those who are actually at the courthouse who are assisting the citizens with their cases?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Yes. That was one thought brought to us that we could work with Atlanta Legal Aid."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay, and then I know at one point we offered -- I think we awarded grant funding to Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers; is that correct? Does anybody remember that? It was a Volunteer Lawyers Group. It was Atlanta Volunteers -- okay. So are we trying to pull those partners in, and have them be located at the library to provide these services? Is that the kind of plan that we're looking at?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "So Commissioner Hall, we currently have contracts in the court system with Atlanta Legal Aid as well as the Community Services Program also has a contract with Atlanta Legal Aid. So we certainly will look at what is already in that scope of work and have the conversations there. We've also talked about the fact that many attorneys need pro bono work, so perhaps we should have an application for independent attorneys. As Ms. Holloman said, none of this has been worked through. These are just conversations. If the Board does approve this Resolution, we will certainly bring back a project plan for the Board to review and provide further input."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I'm generally confused as to what we're doing here. Are we trying to do an assessment of whether or not we want to allow our library space to be used potentially as for legal clinics? Are we trying to do an assessment of whether or not we want to sort of get into de facto business of offering pro bono legal services in some sort of coordinated managed fashion as an entity versus through just other partners that we've provided some funding to that they sort of do that independently? What are we doing here?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "So, Commissioner Ellis, our interpretation is that this is about the staff. I'm assisting Gayle and her team in, again, looking at best practices in other counties and things of that nature to stand up similar programs in the Fulton County libraries."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. That still didn't answer my question. I mean, are we trying to do the feasibility of whether or not we want to just, in addition to our libraries being a library, being a place that host legal aid services? Or in allowing a partner that we already contracted with to do physical work there? Are we talking about designing a specific program?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "It would be a replication of existing programs that host legal clinics at a library. So the focus in the Resolution talked more about family law, but based on all of the feedback, it could be any topic. So in the conversations that Gayle and I had, there could be four access points for specific libraries that hit north, central, and south. There would be designated days and hours

and either independent lawyers or organizations that wish to partner with the County would offer those services during those days."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. What you describe to me was what we're trying to do an assessment of whether we want our libraries to just be an access point for delivery of services. That's not that. What you described to me is whether or not we want our libraries to get into the business of becoming de facto legal clinics and figuring out how to manage those, determine the appropriate people are going to be in there, et cetera? And I -- I mean, how we utilize extra space in a facility, that's fine. I'm, okay, with that, but I mean, our libraries should be libraries. And that should be -- and I think anytime we start to stray away from what our core operations are in anything, we don't do it well. We're not going to do it effectively. Chances are we're probably going to be wasting taxpayer money in the process. So unless I got a little bit more clarity about what this is, I'm not in support of this."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I just want to go on the record, County Attorney. I sit on the Executive Board of Atlanta Legal Aid, so I'm going to abstain on this vote since that has been mentioned more than once on this. But I do want to go on record that, in theory, I support this. I think in 2024 when you have the issues that we have faced post-COVID, that this is a good idea; however, I'm going to abstain, and I think that's best, County Attorney, because I do sit on the Executive Board of Atlanta Legal Aid. And you can tell me if that is a conflict or not, but I always want to err on the side of caution."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Thank you, Vice Chair, and I respect your decision and I think it is a cautious and wise one. In this instance, however, I do not believe or I did not interpret this proposed kind of inquiry or, you know, thought kind of gathering, to involve any expenditures on the part of the County. The similar programs that I'm aware of in other counties, it really -- the libraries where the government facilities are just a location point for attorneys or organizations in the area that provide pro bono services to be able to meet folks who want pro bono services and need pro bono services to go to a familiar location from an entity that they trust. So it is just a location point and an organized kind of way to get the message out that hey, you come to our library, you could also come here and potentially receive pro bono legal services as well, as opposed to going to an individual attorney's office or something that may not be or feel as accessible to the person who needs these kind of services. I don't know if that's what's envisioned by the Chairman who was proposing it, but that was my interpretation of it, and I do know that other programs are cost neutral and, really, it's just a location point. I sit on the Access to Justice Committee for the State Bar of Georgia and our pro bono subcommittee organizes things similar to this in various locations that are just a place where everyone who is an attorney, and we have professional rules -- rules of professionalism that include an aspirational goal of 50 hours of pro bono service per year. So we try to provide easy coordinated ways that

someone could just show up for something that's already being arranged and offer their legal services for free."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm going to make a substitute motion to hold. Y'all can feel free to go gather as much information as you want to bring back to come with something that might make sense. But as the County Attorney just said, the State Bar of Georgia already hosts these. So all we've got to do is tell the State Bar of Georgia, hey, we've got some library space, if y'all want to host these over here. We don't have to go do programming; there are already groups that do this. So I'm going to make a substitute motion to hold. It doesn't make any sense. And the way that it's worded is really crazy, because I mean, again, it's talking about assessment of feasibility of hosting these clinics like -- (indiscernible.)"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It's that a substitute motion, Commissioner Arrington, to hold?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes, sir, for them to go get more research."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is there a second? Commissioner Hall, you seconding that motion to hold? All right, motion to hold by Commissioner Arrington, seconded by Commissioner Hall. I would respectfully ask that we not hold this. This is a -- you know, we spent probably minutes talk about expenditures of millions of dollars. Here's something that's no cost to the County, only requires meeting space in our libraries. Legal issues for people that we say we care about, who can't afford lawyers, but this is the service that we were providing free of cost. Just remember that. So let's vote it up or down but let's do -- I ask that we not support the motion to hold and get back to the main motion and vote it up or down. Go ahead, you have the floor, Commissioner Natalie Hall, on the motion is to hold."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "That was made very clear by Commissioner Arrington that this can be done without this actual agenda item. So let's make that clear to the public instead of creating insinuations and innuendos that something else is happening here. We can still do this without this item and that was what Commissioner Arrington just said."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Anything else? All right, on the motion to hold, please, let's vote."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Back to the main motion, which is to approve? Once again, this program will benefit people in our County who do not have access to these types of civil legal services. It's free to them; no cost to the County, only requiring the

use of meeting room. That's the motion on the floor, and I would appreciate your favorable vote. Let's vote, please. I'm sorry, you want --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I just want to clarify a couple of things. So this is essentially just a Resolution to investigate whether or not this fits in from a scheduling perspective and at which libraries it would work; is that correct?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. Obviously, I'll support this because, again, we're just in the investigation stage, and I do think our libraries -- I mean, you can certainly correct me, Gayle, but I certainly see our libraries as places for -- where we provide a lot of services for the community, and this seems like it's a fit, and given that other libraries are doing this, is that your assessment as well?"

GAYLE HOLLOMAN, DIRECTOR, FC LIBRARY: "That's what I have found so far."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. All right. Well, I will support it and thank you for bringing it to us, Mr. Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall, do you want to be heard again?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Dr. Roshell and County Attorney -- County Manager, did we not have an entire discussion about utilizing the central library for nonprofit partners that do work with us in various areas in looking at a whole entire floor that was vacant for utilizing the space in this manner, but with all the various partners that cover all different types of programs and services? Because I know I have a whole bunch of e-mail threads on it."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Commissioner Hall, I do recall during the construction and the subsequent opening of the library that there were conversations about utilization of space whether it was nonprofits or using that space for retail space; and so yes, we have had conversations about the use of the library."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes. And several times at this BOC meeting, I've mentioned the fact that at one of the NACO conferences, we visited a county where they had set aside an entire side of their building for those nonprofit partners and others who they dealt with. They even had a lot of free resources that people could come and pick up like clothes and other items right in the County building. So it made it a lot easier for people to literally have wraparound services at their fingertips because they could come to one building in their County building and do everything. So, this is just one of many things that we need to look at as far as how to use our space that we're underutilizing. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I just want to say, I'm in support of this. It's no cost to the County to do the study. It's going to be no cost to run the program. I feel like if our library space is being underutilized, then we can run these programs. I think it would be great, it would be beneficial, and I just want to mention that I'm just in fully support of it. Thank you."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Again. I'm going to ask my question, because the way you described this motion is not the way that Dr. Roshell answered my question. Is this just an assessment to figure out whether or not we have identified space in three sections of the County, at a library for legal aid services to be provided? Or is this some sort of an assessment for us to design a specific County-led legal clinic set of services run through our library system? Do you understand the distinction between my question?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, sir, I do. And we certainly can move the direction of the assessment in the direction that the Board feels that we should move this. We were just simply doing both, really. We were -- our interpretation of what this Resolution is, so we're open to moving the assessment to just space, what the times will be, which libraries and asking a partner to come in, or it could be more expansive. We are certainly open to this and to the direction of the Board."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "What is the intent? I mean, this is where we get ourselves in trouble where -- I mean, this should be simple. I agree with you. It should be simple, okay? But where it's not simple is, you're saying one thing, you're saying a different thing, and then something that's going to get manifested, and then all of us here come back and say wait, that's not what we approved. So what specifically are we being asked for? Which approach is it?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Space."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Define specifically."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Three or four rooms spread throughout the County that can be used from time to time to provide services."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Not for us to go recruit these, just to identify the space."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. That's all I've been asking."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. All right. Let's vote, please."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0400**: The Safe and Humane Pretrial Jail Act: Request approval of a Resolution to direct county management to pursue a sales tax for the purpose of funding a capital project to ensure safe and humane pretrial detention in Fulton County, to direct county management to reissue the RFP for the next phase of the project management amended to include a review of the size of the facility needed, the projected jail population for 25 years based on changes to the state law and improvements in the Fulton County justice system, and evaluation of the option to renovate the existing facility, and evaluation of a phased approach to a new build, and for other purposes sponsored by Commissioner Barrett."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, motion to approve. Is there a second?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS : "Well, I'll second it for discussion; discussion only."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Do you want to explain what's before us?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yes, please. Colleagues, the goal of this really is to address all of the concerns that were brought up at the last meeting that led to the vote to rescind the current RFP. And I have sort a long list of notes here about what's in it, so I want to go through that. But before I do, I want to also address some of the public comments about a sales tax, just to say, we've had this discussion I believe already here. And while certainly the sales tax is considered a regressive tax and can adversely affect poor people in a way that it does not affect wealthier folks; property tax has its issues as well, in particular for poor people on fixed incomes who, you know, could not really withstand an increase to the property tax. So we're sort of talking about damned if you do, damned if you don't. And the reason -- you know, first of all, this is not committing us to a sales taxes. It's just reiterating our ask to the state to see if it's even something that we can do, and educating the public sort of on the two options of property tax versus sales tax. And the other thing on the sales tax part I just want to say is that I think, while in some counties it may not make sense to use a sales tax for an option or for a project like this, Fulton County is, by all means, a destination county. So we are a county where people come to work, to shop. They travel here from other states and other countries. We're about to see some major sporting events in Fulton County; all of those people coming here to participate are going to be spending money and, also, adding to the burden on our justice system. So I think it does make sense to look into this further, but this Resolution does not commit us to a sales tax. It just commits us to pursuing that option again in the 2025 legislative session as we did in the 2024 legislative session. All right, so getting back to the gist of what the purpose of this is: We've been having conversations as a group for a year and a half. And from those conversations, I'm pretty clear on the fact that everyone here on this Board cares deeply about upholding our responsibility to provide safe and humane pretrial detention. To

that end, before I ever got here in 2021, this Board directed County Management to find a team of industry experts to conduct the jail feasibility study that would give some clarity on what was needed to get us through the next 25 years. In January of 2022, the team was selected through our RFP process and, in February of 2023, that feasibility study was presented to us. It concluded -- and I've included the summary document in the packet -- it concluded that the existing jail was obsolete, creates public safety concerns, has limited space for services, and is adversely affecting employee retention and recruitment. It also stated that the current buildings are deteriorated and in poor condition, and that the Fulton County Jail, which opened in 1989, exceeded the average useful life of comparable jails, which is 30 years. It recommended a new consolidated jail at Rice Street that would maximize operational efficiency by housing the entire pretrial detention population in close proximity to Fulton County courts and Grady Hospital, and eliminate the need for outsourcing inmates. And it recommended that the new building be designed to facilitate what they call best thinking and best jail practices, which include direct supervision, a non-punitive environment, expanded wraparound services, state-of-the-art medical and mental health housing, and a safe and positive work environment for staff. When we got that report, I don't think any of us had an issue with those particular conclusions or recommendations. And I'm sure that nothing in that study lessened our commitment to providing safe and humane pretrial detention. That's why, even though we struggled with the size of the facility and the price tag that came with it, we continued to move forward with the process, recognizing that the next steps that we would take would not lock us into the size or the price tag. To that end, we approved phase II of the study, we approved bond financing to start the planning phase, and we approved issuing an RFP for program management, all the while, working with our justice partners on efforts to reduce our jail population. We also began looking at ways to reduce the burden on Fulton County property taxpayers and, under the leadership of Commissioner Ellis, we directed the County Manager to pursue the option of getting approval from the state to allow a sales tax. So where are we now? Well, over the months since the jail feasibility study was released, we've heard from citizens and we've heard from our Chairman and others who believe that a renovation of the current facility at Rice Street is a viable option. We've also made significant reductions in our jail population, which is great. We've seen the passage of SB 63, which adds a list of offenses that are ineligible for pretrial bond release, and we were not able to get approval for a sales tax during the 2024 legislative session. And then, at our last meeting, during a discussion item on the jail, we voted to stop the current process in its tracks and rescind the RFP for program management. So again, this Resolution is an effort to reiterate our commitment to addressing the condition of the current jail, and to respond as best I could do to all of the concerns that were brought up at the last meeting and over the preceding months. So this Resolution directs county management to make an even more thorough effort to get state approval for a sales tax, including developing a plan to educate the public on the advantage of sales tax versus property tax for this project. It also directs county management to reissue the RFP, but with the following additions: a review of the size of the facility needed and, therefore, the price tag, options for a phased approach to a new build, which would also give us opportunities to adjust the size and price tag, and evaluation and cost estimate for a

renovation of the existing jail in conjunction with the use of the various outsourcing options and the other resources that would create a similar pretrial detention paradigm with those best thinking and best jail practices I've already mentioned, from the jail feasibility study; and, in an effort to keep us on track through next year, it also directs county management to include in the proposed 2025 budget, the funds needed to complete that next phase for whichever option we ultimately choose. So again, this is not locking us into moving us forward. At the last meeting, the County Manager described this sort of next step as, what he called a no-regrets option that just keeps us moving forward but still leaves us room to make decisions on the specifics of the project. I think it will give us that second opinion, if you will, on the jail feasibility study of the numbers, taking into consideration all of the changes that we've discussed, and I think it's important that we keep this moving forward. So that's what this Resolution is trying to accomplish, and I'm asking for your favorable vote."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Commissioner Barrett, for going back through the history of how we got here. I am generally supportive; however, I don't -- I guess, I have a few questions I want to ask our staff. I don't believe that renovating the existing jail is a feasible option. The walls are literally crumbling and people are taking metal out of the walls. Let me say that again: the walls are literally crumbling, and inmates are taking metal out of the wall and using that metal to assault other inmates. And in one case, an inmate climbed through a wall to attack another inmate. An inmate climbed through a wall, a brick concrete cement wall, to get to another inmate to attack them. Staff, how much did we spend on the last study? How much did that jail study cost us that we spent and talked about the size and the useful life -- how much did that study cost?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Are you talking about the one just completed, Commissioner?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "As far as I know, we only did one. So I don't know; the one that proposed the two billion-dollar jail. How much did that study cost?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Just over two million."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Just over \$2 million? So we already spent \$2 million on a jail study. And then now this is another jail study that appears it's going to have a bigger scope. So it might cost more than the \$2 million that we've already spent. Now I want to be clear, there are two different arguments. We need to be reducing the jail population, period. We need less mass incarceration, period. That is a separate conversation than those of us that are up here that are charged with making sure that people have a safe and humane place to live while they are incarcerated. It's a completely separate issue. One has nothing to do with the other. Absolutely, 10 million times over, we need to reduce and stop mass incarceration; full stop. But as a

Commissioner, we have a responsibility to make sure that the facility that we are housing people in is a safe facility. And when people are crawling through walls to attack other inmates, I am of the belief that that facility is not safe. When inmates are able to reach inside brick and concrete walls and take out metal objects and use them -- the steel that was used to create those walls, how much of that steel can they take out before the building just falls to the ground? So, in my mind, we absolutely need another -- we need a replacement -- we need to replace the jail. My understanding was that when this jail was built, the original plan called for three towers; two additional towers. So we know -- and the two million-dollar plan that we already paid for, the jail feasibility study that we already paid for, already talked about a phased approach of building one pod at a time. And so, I'm probably about 70 percent there with you, Commissioner Barrett. I'm probably about 70 percent there, but I don't want to spend any more money on whether it could be done in a phased approach. We got over 50 acres out there. Yes, it can be done in a phased approach. I don't want to spend any more money on remodeling or renovating -- my understanding from facilities -- and, Joe, you can correct me if I'm wrong -- they go out there to fix something, takes about 90 days to fix it, and after they fix it, takes about 90 days for it to be broken down and torn up again. Joe, can you tell us what type of schedule have you had when you repair items, do they wind up getting broken again? I thought we had that conversation before, perhaps I'm wrong."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "The repair schedule is typically based on lead times for the items that materials that are necessary to facilitate the repair. Currently, we're experiencing some protracted times in that respect; but ultimately, depending on the item, yes, can it become broken again? Absolutely, for any number of reasons."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Well, and that's what I'm really more concerned about is, how many times are you having to repair the same thing over and over again? How many times do they keep tearing it up?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "We can forward that information from our maintenance manager database that reflects singular items and the number of times they've been repaired."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So again, I'm about 70 percent there. I don't want to spend another \$2 million on a jail feasibility study. I don't want to spend any time, energy, or effort on renovating the existing facility. I do think we need some ways to finance this, right? I mean, the only ways that we really have -- we've got property taxes, we've got sales taxes, like there're not necessarily a lot of options. And so, I guess I'll leave it there, but this is not about mass incarceration or not. I want to make that clear. This is about how do we humanely house the people that we have in custody and make sure that they can't climb through the walls to attack someone else or pull the metal and steel out of the brick concrete walls to attack other inmates, and/or Sheriff's officers or staff. Those are two completely separate issues, and we need to keep those two issues separate. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm a little bit confused why we're discussing this again. I thought we had given clear direction about where we stood as a Board with the majority vote at the last meeting. But just to -- I'll try to keep this as succinct as possible, but I may fail in that, so forgiveness on the front end. You know, one of the things that's been talked about probably for about the past 20 years is getting heavy rail up Georgia 400. Plenty of money was spent on studies, environmental assessment, feasibility studies, et cetera. Ultimately, it didn't happen and it's not going to happen, and an alternative got, you know, kind of presented in the form of BRT, riding on express lanes, which will be adopted. But the reason it never happened, because there was no funding mechanism to do it, and there was not a will from the citizenry to do it, in terms of the funding -- in terms of the funding for it. So a lot of people sat around in a room and talked about it and all that sort of stuff. In a world where money was no object, it maybe made some sense. But it didn't happen because there wasn't the funding to be able to do it. We listen to a lot of stuff in terms of it came out of this feasibility stuff. There's some valid stuff; there's some stuff with question marks on it, et cetera. But what was presented at the end of the day has a price tag which we have no funding mechanism for, and we're not going to get a funding mechanism for. Sales tax: dead on arrival. State said no, citizens, if you listen to them, are really saying, no. They're -- you know, they've sort of been nicked and dined with a lot of stuff or, you know, fractional penny with a bunch of stuff, I should say. Sort of nicked and dined. And, you know, they're looking probably at terms of even if it came up for a vote, even if you've got the legislator to authorize it, the likelihood this is going to pass is questionable, given the way citizens feel about what they're getting for their existing sales tax. Folks in the city of Atlanta may be saying, we're not paying a sales tax for water infrastructure? What in the heck has been going on with that money over the past several years? City of Atlanta's being saying what about this more MARTA? Where is more MARTA, right? So if we're going to come by -- if we came behind and layered on that with a proposal related to additional sales tax -- I'm not even sure if the legislature even allowed it, which they said they aren't, I'm not even sure it would pass. Certainly from a property tax standpoint, citizens are tapped out. So, you know, we've got to be faced with the political realities of and the funding realities of where we are in a recognition of there are things that are within our span of control that we can do, and we need to focus on doing those within the footprint of the funds that we're going to have available to us. What are some things that we know? Number one, the management and supervision of these facilities, it needs to improve. I mean, we've heard about overtime mismanagement, we've heard about detention officers, you know, misbehaving, you know, et cetera. We don't have clarity. We've provided additional funding for more detention officers to be there, we have no clarity, no insight in terms of how kind of progress be made for that, even though we've asked for it. So that needs to improve. We've got a slow-moving court system. We talked about that ad nauseum, for the better part of four years now. We've implemented a program design to that. And yet, while the real and inhumane treatment exists, is how long it takes for the average

citizen to get accused of a crime waiting for their case to be prosecuted. And how many career criminals we probably create through that lengthy process of not adjudicating these cases in some sort of timely fashion. That's within our span of control. Those first two things are within the span of control of either collectively us or the other elected officials that are in charge with doing those things. Number three, what do we know? We've track this; we've seen it. We have a massive underutilization of the other jail facilities that we've gotten access to. If this thing was crumbling at the walls, you know, and all of that sort of stuff, and about to fall down, well why, on God's green earth, if you're in charge of these facilities, would you have not gotten everybody you conceivably could have out and into other facilities? Yet we waited the better part of six or seven months before we did anything to relieve any pressure at Rice Street with AC/DC, and AC/DC as it sits right now is half utilized based upon the beds we had. So there's another thing that's within our span of control. So, and then that brings me to my last portion of this stuff that, yes, clearly, there are some things that need to be done and I thought we clarified this last time with the motion that was made to pull back the RFP and to direct the manager to do some other specific things. But maybe that's not clear enough. So I'm going to offer up a substitute motion again on this, and the substitute motion is this: It's going to be to redirect -- it's to deny this -- then redirect the County Manager to do a financial review and come back to us with an available footprint of funds over a multiyear period of time that would not likely result in an incremental change to the millage rate. Do that and evaluate all sources of that, whether is expiring TADs, roll off of existing debt, you know, repurposing of the money that we're utilizing right now for jail outsourcing, et cetera. Number two, redesign an RFP that would be issued that would accomplish and look at five things: if you can accomplish one of these things without it being inclusive in the RFP, then you can do that. Number one is a refurbishment assessment. I mean, one of the things that we clearly learned in this when you went down this path of establishing whether or not you could do this jail blitz plan, it was going to cost us \$13 million, all right, to do this. And it sounds like in what you've shown to us in terms of the refortification of these individual pods, that that's a pretty good solution in terms of making these things a little bit -- these things significantly more hardened and less likely to be torn up if the folks that are in there are properly supervised. So the first part of the RFP would be the refurbishment assessment, what needs to be done, what is the cost of it, what are the components of it, how would it be staged, et cetera. Number two, in terms of the other funds that would be available after a refurbishment that emanates from, you know, you do the financial footprint, what's it going to cost to refurbish, what's left, what would be the best use of those funds for construction of other facilities. And have folks really kind of take a hard look at that and say, all right, is that mental health, is it medical, is a 500 bed, you know, max facility whatever it is, right? But what would be the best use of those other funds in terms of construction for other facilities; number three, a plan for transition while the refurb of the main facility was being done to the extent that it was needed; number four, an operational plan since we can't seem to be able to do this ourselves, an operational plan for maximizing utilization of our existing jail facility; number five, a long-term master plan for other potential expansion of facilities. That's my motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay, Commissioner -- all right, a motion -- that motion -- well, a couple things. The first part of your -- was to adverse or deny Commissioner Barrett's legislation; is that correct; and then to approve?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah, distinction without a difference, you know so. That's fine, but if you want that included, that's fine. But it's just to repurpose what I thought we said last time, so, the only things I just annotated."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I think we need to make sure we capture that first part. I'll recommend we dispose of it one way or the other Commissioner Barrett's --"

(Zoom technical interruptions.)

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "This is all comprised of one motion, Mr. Chair."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Point of order, Mr. Chairman. I mean, maybe this is a question for the parliamentarian. A substitute motion --"

(Zoom technical interruptions.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Hold on. Hold on. Will somebody tell me what's going on."

CLERK GRIER: "Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware. I don't know what's going on in the control room."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is it coming from up there? Or where is it coming from?"

CLERK GRIER: It is, yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Ms. Corbitt, is that --"

KEVIN KERRINGTON, CIO, IT: "Mr. Chairman, I'll go to the room after we break here. We're having problems where it's having to rejoin the Zoom call, so it -- (inaudible)."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Their on the phone or something?"

KEVIN KERRINGTON, CIO, IT: "I'm not sure what's causing the Zoom call to drop, but it keeps saying to rejoin. I'm not sure why we can't mute that process while it's rejoining so it doesn't interrupt the discussion, so I apologize for that. But I'll get with our technicians in the booth after to make sure we clarify that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. Sorry. Point of order is just that a substitute motion should be a replacement motion. It shouldn't automatically disqualify the

underlying motion. So if the substitute motion fails, my motion should still be on the table, so I don't understand this."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's why I recommended separating the two. You made two motions. So I'm in agreeing with you."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So we'll remove the component of it, and do you want me to restate my specific motion?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I think it would be cleaner to dispose of Commissioner Barrett's legislation and then vote -- we need to hear exactly what you said."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "The substitute motion takes precedent over the main motion, so that would be disposed first. But I do agree that the motion to deny, the main motion is separate from the substitute motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's what I'm saying."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I'm saying that component; I'll strike that from the motion. You want me to restate it, I'm happy to do so."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis, now you seconded the motion which were two components. He's going to strike the first component which is to adverse -- now, you'll have to agree to that as a second. When you agree to that -- okay. So, Mr. Ellis, now what's before us now then would just be all that that you just read, and I think we need to capture that, to make sure we all understand what's before us. This is a worthy discussion, by the way."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I agree with that, we need to capture it. And this is -- and we're directing a lot of this, in terms of the working -- what we're asking to do to our management team. So, I mean -- I saw them taking notes over there, so I am anxious to hear whether or not you feel like this provides explicit direction or are there any parts of that that you've got questions on?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "No, sir. I think this is very clear."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. That is the Ellis substitute motion, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Questions or comments? Commissioner Thorne, you want to be heard?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "This is on the substitute motion."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes. I support the substitute motion. The previous motion, I mean all of us up here are for safe and humane jails. There's no arguing about that. I think this motion is a safe and humane alternative but not only that, it's hopefully -- it's feasible. It's something we can do. Let's not forget that LaShawn Thompson, he died of neglect, and we paid \$4 million because he died of neglect. That's not a building issue; that's a management issue. I also want to make it clear, in the previous Resolution, it talks about the current jail is obsolete. Now, if you look at the whole study, not the power points, but the whole study, this is what we paid \$2 million for. It's referred to, the current jail is obsolete, and that's just wrong because that's just a quote from the Sheriff. The sheriff says the current jail is obsolete, because it has indirect supervision. Indirect supervision isn't obsolete. I do -- a lot of jails are moving towards direct supervision, but it is -- it's not considered the best practice for all types of inmates. And it's also the least cost effective, and it's the most invasive method of supervising inmates. In the previous Resolution, it said December 6th agenda, item 23-0880, it refers to that. That was not explicit instruction for the County Manager to start issuing RFPs and taking other steps towards directing the building of the 1.68 billion-dollar jail. I want to be clear on that. Much of this new jail is devoted to running new programs, but it's without a plan. With the Sheriff, how is he going to accomplish that? I mean, he can't even manage the staffing requirements to run the current jail, so how is he going to run the current jail with direct supervision, and he's going to manage all of these programs? He talked about the assessment of the feasibility study calls for the Rice Street as average, but aging, is how it refers to it. It's average, which hardly seems to be the dire picture that we're being painted here of this jail with crumbling walls. Renovation was never explored as an option. It was taken off the table because they said it was obsolete. The walls are crumbling. How long does it take for an inmate to get through the walls of cinderblock? How long? I think that would be a management issue. I personally believe that it takes multiple days of being unsupervised in your cell with no cell inspections. If you look at the full study, they consulted about 40 different entities, partners that work with our jail. Not one of them is responsible for the cost. We are responsible for the cost. Of course, they're going to want the biggest, the grandest, the best. Of course, our court system's going to say, like they do in here, yes, let's accommodate everybody. Let's build it and they'll fill it. Now let's go back to the sales tax. I think Madam CFO, Sharon Whitmore, you talked with ACCG about the feasibility of a sales tax, and with new legislation, that's -- you don't see that as a path forward at all, correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Not without the legislature taking another action that will be exclusive for the county, but within that legislation that was recently passed, it does not appear that there's an avenue for us to levy a portion of a penny or a whole penny countywide."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And wasn't there something with cities may have to give up their TSplost?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, ma'am, in order to stay within their current maximum number of pennies that would be allowed under this revision."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So I don't really see that we need to go down that path to pursue that anymore. In conclusion, I agree with the substitute motion. I do believe we need to spend money in other areas, perhaps building a better intake center and better care for mental health since 40 percent of the population is a mental health patient or substance abuse. I believe in trying to reduce recidivism, reduce incarceration with prearrest diversion programs, and I think we need to look at those avenues. But first of all, we need to do something and look at what is feasible, from a monetary standpoint. So that's why I support the substitute motion. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you Commissioner. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to respond to a couple of things. First of all, Commissioner Ellis, the comparison to heavy rail is not a fair comparison in that there is no constitutional mandate for heavy rail. We have a constitutional mandate to have a jail, and to have it be secure and safe and of adequate size to house the population, as Commissioner Arrington described, that is given into our care essentially. Secondly, I'm going to sort of jump around a little bit, but all this objection to a sales tax, I find really interesting, because we were all for pursuing it in the 2024 legislative session, and now all of a sudden, we're not interested in pursuing it. So this is confusing to me because nothing changed other than that we didn't have successful conversations in the 2024 legislative session, but in conversations with the county management, and I don't want to put words in your mouth, so free to correct, Mr. County Manager if I'm wrong, or Jessica. But, we did not necessarily do everything we could during the 2024 legislative session to accomplish a sales tax. We had some conversations. They were not met with interest, shall we say, and that's sort of where it ended. I don't think while there are opinions from the public about whether or not a sales tax is the right thing, I don't think the majority of the public has been presented with enough information on what the options are here. And we do have a responsibility. Again, and unlike heavy rail, there's also not lives at stake. There are lives at stake here. And while I hear everybody's comments on supervision and, in particular, the current supervision and issues with staffing and such, while a new building will not automatically fix problems with staffing, staffing and supervision, better staffing and supervision will not automatically fix a building that is crumbling. These are things that both have to happen. And so, you know, I think there seems to be some continued agreement that the building at Rice Street needs to have something done to it. That is why I included renovation in the underlying motion, so we could examine what that actually looked like, and what that would actually cost, and take into consideration that if we do invest in a renovation and potentially other buildings as Commissioner Ellis suggested, would we be able to provide the current best practices and best jail thinking as described by the experts we paid \$2 million to give us their opinion? And that would include things like state-of-the-art mental health housing and medical housing. Can we

accomplish that in the footprint of Rice Street and the other facilities in which we outsource or an additional building? What is a price tag for all of that? We have been having these conversations, not us exactly, but this Body has been having these conversations for decades, since 2004. We've had lawsuits and, you know, justice actions since 2004. In 2000, I think it was 12, there was an article written in the AJC that said that we had already spent over the course of that decade a billion dollars over the course of that time, to address these issues which then would come back within a year or two years. So, are we going to continue to put a Band-Aid on this broken leg, or are we going to finally say enough is enough. We're under DOJ investigation. We may be told we have no choice within the next 12 months. Why would we now all of a sudden reverse course on something that so clearly needs to be done? It's mind-boggling to me. And I really, in all honesty, tried to put everything in there, and I understood Commissioner Arrington's objection to the underlying motion on the renovation front; but I put that in there specifically because the community expressed, and the Chairman expressed, and I believe that the last meeting Commissioner Thorne expressed an interest in renovation. So let's, once and for all, put a price tag on what that would be. You know, it feels very much like these objections are now just objections to -- I don't know, details on how this was written? It's very puzzling to me that this isn't sort of -- it doesn't change anything. It just gives us the opportunity to get more information and move forward."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. I can't support either one, and I'm going to tell you why and I'm going to say it publicly. We do a disservice to our constituents who are watching. Are we going to take 285 to 20 or are we going to 85 to 75? What I find very disheartening is -- is that you put all this stuff into one thing and you want us to vote on it. I get it. You're trying to cover all your bases. We know that we don't have the money. We do not have the money. That's a reality. We also know that there are issues at the jail that the public was very clear about this morning when they spoke. We had seasoned law-enforcement that spoke this morning. Now my phone is blowing up with people asking me what are we voting on? Now, with all due respect, colleagues, we may know what we're voting on, but have we made it crystal clear to the taxpaying citizens what we're voting on? And so, I would caution us with an issue like this that we do not go haphazardly. Well, this group voted this the last time. This other group voted this way the other time. We heard this morning from individuals that spoke on this issue. And I think, yes, a lot of time has been spent on this kicking it down the road, way before some of us ever got here. But at the end of the day, whatever decision we're going to make, let's make the decision and move forward with it. To make the decision and come back two weeks later and say, well no, I thought I was going to go 20 West, but I'm going 75 North now. That is too cavalier, in my opinion. And we know what people say about opinions, so I'll be candid to tell you that can refer to me as well. But I think for me and for the listening public who is the taxpaying citizens, who sent us here, I cannot support either one. I think we need to come back to the table with a mission of what was voted on two weeks ago, hammer

that out, and move forward because -- and the reason I say that I understand clearly, Commissioner Ellis, what you're saying; Commissioner Barrett, I understand clearly what you're saying, but for the taxpaying citizens, they don't understand what we're -- they're lost. Because we do a lot of things in the confines of, okay, it's going go this way, but wait a minute, let's change it immediately, and we throw out these things, but we don't know for sure if the taxpaying citizens understand what we're doing. So it is in that spirit, not that I don't agree with either one, it's in that spirit that I think that I cannot support either one."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm not into doublespeak or continuing to sort of kick cans down the road, so, I mean, I put this forth as a motion again today because I thought I said all this stuff last time and that's we voted on. So there's nothing different in terms of what's here today and what was here two weeks ago, okay? So, if you supported it two weeks ago and you don't support it this time, then you know whatever. You're the ones going backwards, not me. You know the MARTA analogy was more about just sort of the notion of how you can talk about an issue forever and do nothing. All right, so I recognize what our constitutional responsibilities are and they aren't, so that is -- explicitly to create sort of an analogy. We don't have funding. The notion is that we all did the notion on sales tax, we investigated it, it's dead. It's not an option. I don't know why we continue to talk about it. So you got the things here that are before you in terms of the construct of the motion, again, to direct the County Manager to establish the amount of funds that we would have available to us, most likely, without -- that most likely would be available to us without resulting in incremental raising the millage rate, and then to craft an RFP, which would do the five things which I had noted. The dollars to figure out what we need to do to refurbish the existing facility, the best use of the other funds that would be available to construct the other types of facilities whatever that may be, a plan for how to transition of the main facility would take place while we were doing the renovations, the operational plan for maximizing utilization of our existing jail facilities, and a long-term master plan for adding other jail facilities. So that's it respelled in terms of what the motion is."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. County Manager, can you help me with something? I feel like when we spoke about sales tax sometime in the last week or two, you had mentioned that in the past when we worked on trying to get one of the local option sales tax, it took more than one year to do it that we ha -- it took several years of attempts before we were able to get it. Did I make that up or did you actually share that?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "No, ma'am. I think that's about a two-year period was what it took to get the T-Splost teed up and ultimately approved by the legislature and then by the voters."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So it's not completely unrealistic that we could make another attempt with both the legislatures and then potentially put it on the ballot and still have a positive outcome."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "No, I think the -- well, the only new information even since we spoke, is this ACCG assessment potentially a city in Fulton County would have to give up some part of their existing sale tax. I mean, I think that would be a hurdle for sure."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah. Okay. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, any other comments? So the Ellis -- what's before us now is the Ellis substitute motion that was seconded by Commissioner Thorne. And the essence of that motion is to restate publicly and give direction again -- the same directions that were given at the last meeting; so all things fall apart here today, the operative motion is what was approved at our last meeting. So, all right, what's before us now is the substitute motion. Let's vote."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, back to the main motion which was the Barrett motion."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Can I get in the queue, please?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, are there things that we could take out now that would simplify this in your eyes and make it more amenable to the public that would -- or would you prefer to may be hold this and work together to come up with something that's more amenable?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I think, as it stands, unfortunately, I would not be able to support it. I think, what we -- and this is just my personal opinion based on my constituency base. All of us up here are legislators. We have staff, we have the county management staff, we have the attorneys. I think sometimes we get to in the forest and we do not put it in plain view for the listening public. I think it would need a revamp; either we're going to go with what already passed, or we're going to bring something back that fully encompasses what is best for Fulton County. And I don't think I -- I'm just going to speak on my behalf -- I don't think the way that this has played out that I could sit here in one motion and tell you, yeah, I can work with you on this on what's best for Fulton County. Because I think when we look at what has transpired over the last 12 months -- let me clarify, so you'll understand. This is not Commissioner Khadijah; this is not Vice Chair Khadijah. This is the public that I listen to. We have people that told me they want a new jail, they want a new jail, they want a new jail; we got too many deaths."

Those same people are coming back to me and saying well, I would like a new jail, but I don't want any situation to be put forward for my tax dollars without a DOJ report in front of me. Now, whether you want to say that's fair or not, I'm not asking anyone to opine on that. I'm just telling you what individuals are telling me. Now, on the flipside, we have individuals that are saying every day there are issues at the jail, some of them may be created or not created by D.R.E.A.M. Some of them may be created or not created operationally. And so, we do have such a serious of a situation that I would not be comfortable in saying that I could support this the way it is or even work with you on the way it is, because I think we need to sit down and look at what we have in front of us. The reality is we can speak, we can put in legislation that sounds good, that feels good, but at the end of the day it's the taxpayer dollars. And so, with the taxpayer dollars, I would have to go back to the drawing board, so to speak, because my positions have changed; they have evolved. They may evolve and change after today, but I'm just not comfortable with the way this is going in that we, as legislators, understand what's going on, but the taxpaying citizen doesn't. So if that was the long way for me to answer to your question, I wouldn't be comfortable with doing that."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So just to make sure I understand. There's -- what is here, is too many things in there for the -- for your constituents, so you're not okay with it as is, but you're also not willing to work with me to change it?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Please don't put words in my mouth."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, I think that's what you just said."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Well, interpretation is in the eye of the beholder. What I'm saying is, this is too serious of a situation to make a decision right here that would satisfy you, because I have to satisfy the taxpaying citizens. And I apologize if you took it that I would not be willing to work with you, because that is not the case."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Great."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "At the end of the day, I'm here on behalf of the taxpaying citizens of Fulton County, and that's where my first loyalty is to."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, thank you for clarifying that. I also want to just add that you mentioned in your earlier remarks, Madam Vice Chair, that we shouldn't kind of, you know, barrel down one path, and then reverse course, and go another direction. We shouldn't go down, I don't remember which roads you said, I-20, and then switch and go on I-75, or whatever it was, and I agree with you. And to me, that's exactly what happened at our last meeting. We were moving forward on a path that had been discussed many times over the course of a year and a half. And then at the last meeting, we all of a sudden, were no longer going down that path. All I was trying to do was get us back on that path by addressing some of the additional concerns that people brought to the floor. I agreed with what Commissioner Arrington said earlier about not

thinking a renovation is going to work. I don't think a renovation is going to work, but I was willing to include some assessment of that in order to respond to the public and to the Chairman, who believe it is. I understand that there's probably not the votes to move forward with this, and I'm disappointed. But it is what it is."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Well, it's unfortunate. Sometimes things pass, and sometimes they don't. For me, I can only speak for me, and because the taxpaying citizens do not understand what we're doing right now. And because they do not understand what we're doing right now, that is my decision to not support either one. And so that's not to say whether it was good, bad, indifferent, or whatever. That's saying that as colleagues, as a Body, we probably need to do a better job of having a conversation with each other. We probably have -- need to have a better job of having conversations before the BOC meeting. You know, a lot of times we come to the BOC meeting and we try to stuff all of this in at one time. And I understand we have lives, I understand that, you know, we have responsibilities. But a lot of times, I think there is a perception, and I could be wrong, let me say that, that if I don't support today, that doesn't mean I won't support it tomorrow. What I'm saying to this Body, and what I'm saying to the taxpaying citizens and to the public, this today, has convoluted it. This is not crystal clear, I cannot support either one today. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, anything else? So let's put some of numbers to what the Manager was asked to do at the next meeting, which is also consistent with what Commissioner Ellis recommended today. If you take -- I think Mr. Davis has told us that units that are being remodeled now, cost about 13 million. Let's assume they cost 25, 30 million. A new roof, he said, 5 or 6 million. Let's assume it cost 5 million. Add all these things up, it will total about -- I mean, just I'm loading it up, get a Cadillac version of \$100 million in renovations. That will buy us 20 or 25 years. And that will save the taxpayers of Fulton County, you say you love the taxpayers. That will save the taxpayers of Fulton County \$1,900,000,000 versus the \$2 billion for this palace that we're talking about building. If this one fails, then we're back to where -- what was approved at the last meeting. And Mr. Manager, I'm making an assumption, you will continue to move forward. So on the Barrett motion, Commissioner Arrington, you want to be heard on the Barrett motion again, which is to approve?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah. I'm just -- I would love to see those numbers that you just came up with. I'd love to see the numbers behind that \$100 million reno-verse, and then saving us 1.9. I graduated from a law school in 1996. I've been visiting the jail for 28 years. Twenty-eight years, I've been visiting that exact same jail, visiting with clients, was just over there earlier this week. So I don't -- I don't need to look at the study. I don't need to look at all that stuff, I see it firsthand on a weekly basis. But I would love to see the numbers that support that, what you just said, Mr. Chair, \$100 million renovation will last for 25 years, and will save the residents \$1.9 billion. I would love to see that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'll make it available to you after the meeting."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So it exists?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: Wow. Who did it?

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a simple math. You know, there's a lot of --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "No, no. Who prepared it? Who prepared the numbers? Who ran the numbers?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Well, we listened to Mr. Davis that said that 13 million to prepare those -- repair the units, those units. And I'm saying, let's say it's 25 to 30 million versus the 13. The roof, we talked about a new roof, that's probably, I think he saying six or 700,000. I'm -- let's say if the new roof cost 5 million, and go on down the line."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Well, you just convinced me to vote for it. You just convinced me to vote for the renovation study. I didn't want to vote for it, because I don't -- it looks like just, you've written some numbers down on your pad. And you're doing some back-of-the-paper math. And I -- that just convinced me to vote for this. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Mr. Davis, your name is being taken in vain little bit over here. So I want to give you a moment to opine on whether or not the numbers that the Chairman is suggesting are actually enough to repair the jail and keep it going for 25 years, because that's what the Chairman just said."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "Based on previous discussion and direction, we are in the process of preparing orders of magnitude for all identified upgrades, renovations, equipment replacements, such as the roof that has always been mentioned. I believe the notion here is that based upon what we have already spent to renovate the housing units of the jail that you can extrapolate out to \$100 million, that we could potentially resolve many of the jail's issues. As we have gone through this process of blitzing the jail, we've identified retrofits that could help us down the road with things like vandalism and damage being caused by the inmates. But ultimately, any renovation that we do, if you are directing -- you know, connecting that to whether or not we need a new facility, I can't speak to that. I can only speak to what we can do to preserve the existing asset."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And in this \$100 million plan that is sort of a little bit still back of the napkin, it sounds like --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It sounds like what?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "A little bit back-of-the-napkin math. I mean, it sounds like it's still -- it's not been fully fleshed out. It's just been discussed at sort of the high-level numbers. Would it be able to be been done in the same way that a blitz is being done? In other words, people moving out of a particular section of the building, while the rest is happening? Or would everybody have to be moved out and be located somewhere else while this happening?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "Certainly, for some of the identified task, we would have to move inmates. But in terms of vacating the entire jail, experience tells me that that's not the case considering we completed a \$60 million MEP between 2006 and 2010, where we vacated floors at a time, one floor, both north and south tower. And in one particular phase, I think we did remove two floors of inmates at one time. But to completely empty the jail in order to facilitate what we have identified and are continuing to identify, I don't based on my experience, see that as necessary. It's all about coordinating the different -- you know, for example, HVAC, we would simply work on that particular aspect of any potential project in the fall and winter when HVAC isn't needed, so as to be complete before the next cooling season. So those types of -- that type of coordination would have to be done in order to facilitate the project."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So I'm sorry, you mentioned that there was a renovation done in what year?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "Began in 2006 and ended in 2010. We called it the jail MEP."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "The jail, what?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "MEP: Mechanical, Elevator, and Plumbing Project."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So, but that wasn't really with meant to shore up the building and make it last for another 25 years. That was just those specific things, the mechanical, electrical, whatever you just said, yes?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "It's --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Because I'm -- if -- I'm wondering then if why we're in this state again after just a few years. But we don't have to go down that path. If we renovate, if we do this 100 million back-of-the-napkin math renovation, will that allow us to separate out the mental health beds from general population?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes, ma'am."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "I'm sorry. I didn't know that was directed to me. No, ma'am. Again, any renovations that we do is exclusive of any population considerations moving forward and/or medical needs moving forward. It is simply to preserve or extend the life cycle of the existing asset."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Right. To preserve or extend the life of something that already doesn't function properly. I mean, Mr. Rambo was talking at public comment, and said he was there the day it opened, and it was already falling apart and not good enough. So I don't know what we're doing here, but."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Mr. Davis, how much have we spent on renovations and repairs at the jail this year?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "I would have to reflect or go over, review records. But I would venture to say that based upon what we're spending on the Blitz Plan right now, we've probably spent about \$2.6 million."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "How much did we spend on renovations and repairs last year at the jail? And I -- I want -- let me just really ask, because I'm going to need more information because I would imagine -- I need to see, how much did we spend on the Jail MEP Plan? How much did that cost?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "It was between 58 and \$60 million, once change orders were factored in."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "58 and 60 million, and you said that was done between 2006 to 2010?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "Yes, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So that's 58, you said 2 million this year? Do you know how much we spent last year on renovations and repairs at the jail?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "So when you first asked the question, I thought of it from a renovation perspective. But if you include repairs, then I would have to say we would have to add in the cost of our maintenance contract, which is right now \$5.4 million annually. So to that 2.6, add the 5.4 for our current maintenance contract. That 5.4 would also be the beginning point of determining any overall repair of any renovation costs in 2023."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So on an average, we're spending \$5 million a year, a minimum of \$5 million per year in repairs and renovation just on the ongoing maintenance contract. And from 2006 to 2010, we spent 50 to \$60 million on the Jail MEP Plan?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "That is correct."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Mr. Chair, I think that this disproves your \$100 million. We're spending \$5 million year. 2006 to 2010, we spent 50, and we're spending an average of five a year. So from 2010 to 2020, that's another 5 million a year, that's another 50 million right there. So since 2006, we've already spent \$100 million, and we are where we are now. And so that's -- that's not even a full 25 years. So I guess we do -- this, it's crazy, but I guess we do need to -- the renovation and repair study to disprove the feasibility of renovating the current --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Or approve. Or approve."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Well, this, Mr. Chair, this is my time. You can get in the queue, you can get in the line next. Right now, this is my time. Right now, we need the feasibility -- I need the feasibility study to disprove that maintaining or keeping the existing facility is, in fact, a feasible option."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. I stand by that number. But even if it were 200 million, 300 million, 400 million, that's still less than 2 billion, which would save the taxpayers 1.9, 1.8, 1.7, 1.6 billion. All right. Let's vote on the Barrett resolution, which was to approve."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 10, Commissioners' Full-Board Appointments, **24-0401**, Region III EMS Council, Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman has nominated Michael Charles for a Full-Board reappointment to a term ending June 30th, 2027."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. A motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne; is that correct? Seconded by Commissioner Arrington. Let's vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion passes, unanimously."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. It's 1:15, I'd entertain a motion for lunch and Executive Session, we'll take up issues of real estate, litigation, and personnel. Oh, I'm sorry, you want --"

CLERK GRIER: "I need a second, please. And the vote is open."

Recessed for Executive Session at 1:16 p.m.

Resumed Regular Session at 2:25 p.m.

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Without objection, we will resume the regular order of business. Madam Clerk, continue, please. Items from Executive Session, Madam County Attorney."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there a motion to approve the request for representation and engagement of outside counsel, contained in item 1 of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett, I'll second. Let's vote, please."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. And the vote is open."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Which one is this?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Just the first, first item, number 1."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is that the one you -- you did, or did not?"

CLERK GRIER: "And the motion passes; four yeas, one abstention."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion to approve the request for representation contained in items 2 through 7 of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote on all of those items."

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion to approve -- excuse me -- is there a motion to reject settlement offer presented in item 8 of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Favorable motion by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion -- oh, I'm sorry."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Wait, hold it."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "This is number 8, correct?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "It's on number 8, to reject the settlement offer."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay."

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion to approve the request for settlement authority in item 9 of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please vote."

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "And finally, is there a motion to approve authorization to make expenditures from the Inmates Services Unit for contracts for court-ordered monitor, Dr. Kenneth Ray, for mental health provider beginning today, and for yoga instruction provided by Dharma Project?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Natalie Hall. Please vote."

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "No further action items from Executive Session."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, Madam County Attorney. Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 10, County Manager's Discussion Items, **24-0402**, Elections Update."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Mr. Manager, Madam --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Ms. Williams is here."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Good afternoon, Chairman and Members of the Board. We were pleased to report that the May 21st Primary Election was conducted successfully. We would like to thank our Election management team, our Elections staff, and poll workers, who diligently worked to execute this election. We especially would like to thank the Fulton County GIS Department, which worked with our Registration Division to successfully complete redistricting, and the municipalities in adjacent counties who collaboratively worked with our department to complete this effort. For the May 21st Primary Election, we operated 36 advanced voting locations. We processed over 50,000 voters, 177 Election Day locations who processed over 60,000 voters. The election results were successfully uploaded timely. The Board of Registration and Elections certified the election on May 28th. And the risk limiting audit was successfully completed on May 30. Along with the May 21st Primary, we completed the Fulton County audit requested of our Absentee Division. Our Absentee Division was found to be in compliance with all required election codes, which govern our election operations. Our internal standard operation procedures were provided to the auditing team and were enhanced, as are committed, to provide clarity of our processes. Regarding SOPs, along with the Absentee Division, our standard operation procedures in various divisions will be revised this month to take into account new legislation effective July 1st. Regarding the new legislation, we are pleased to reconfirm that all of our permanent staff were confirmed as United States citizens, and therefore not impacted by this legislation. We are now preparing for the June 18th Runoff Election. An informative memo was forwarded to your offices on May 31st. All election information was posted on the Fulton County website to inform our voters. And advance voting is scheduled to begin on June -- Saturday, June 8th. On a budgetary note, the Runoff will be an example of an election with significant under runs. The budget was drafted in January, 2024, which -- the 24th -- the 2024 budget was drafted in January, and it included the June 18th Runoff. This election was drafted to possibly have Runoff Elections countywide with the Sheriff, District Attorney, or Clerk of Superior Court Runoffs, which were not required. So therefore, we budgeted for 36 locations, we'll only have to be used ten. We budgeted for 187 Election Day locations. We only have to use 76. And these will impact several object codes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Do you know the savings on that? I'm just curious. You may not know."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "No, I do not know off the top of my head at this point."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay, no problem. No problem."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "So we anticipate a successful Runoff, and we thank you for your support, and we'll take any questions at this time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "What were those numbers again? I'm sorry, the --"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "For the locations?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Yes, for the June Runoff, will have 30 -- we'll have ten advanced voting locations. Those will -- there will be six of them there in Senate District 38, and there will be another four in Commission District 4. So it'll be a total ten advance voting locations. And throughout the two elections, there will be 76 Election Day locations to service the voters that are registered in those precincts."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. And they were -- and you budgeted for 110?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "We had budgeted for 36 advanced voting, decreased to ten. And budgeted for 187, decreased to 76."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Awesome. Sound like we found some more budget money, Sharon."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So do you have an estimated figure about how much it cost to run a EV location? Because they're all staffed the same, correct?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "They're not all staffed the same. Some of them have more -- have a higher turnout than others. So for the heavy hitters, we actually put more people in those locations. But I do not have the total in front of me."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "But you don't know, like, roughly on average, how much it costs to staff for early voting or to run an early voting loca- -- you don't have a ballpark figure in your --"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "I don't have that total front of me."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And what about Election Day precinct? Because all of those are about the same size."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "No. They're not about the same size. They are based on the number of registered voters for the precincts. Some of them have 8,000 people assigned, while some of them might have 500. So it just it depends on --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So an average, how much does it cost to staff --"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "I don't have the figure in front of me."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "But I can provide that information to you."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, I'd like to know kind of roughly ballpark figures, what we're looking at to -- for staffing, for running a precinct, and how much the savings by doing a Runoff Election, what we're looking at. And I thought, you know, since we do runoffs for cities, Municipal Elections, that you might know a figure for staffing. And this was a very, very low-turnout election, correct?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "It actually was moderate. They had 60,000 people for Election Day and 50,000 people for advanced voting. So for a Primary, it's pretty moderate."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So 110,000 total, about?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Roughly."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Out of 750,000 people registered?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Yes. But we still have to have accommodations for them. We cannot control if they go to the precincts or not. But they have to be accommodate for."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, but will that change with the new ruling that -- the new legislation that came out?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "With the -- it will change the voting --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Election Day --"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "-- equipment. Yes. It would change Election Day, but it's still just -- it's not -- the election is just not based on equipment, there's other factors that come into play."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah. And it would also, though, if you have less equipment, chances are, you have lower turnout so you don't need to staff as much in every single precinct, correct?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Well, you're in a catch-22, because you don't want to create long lines either. So we don't want to have long lines, so we still have to try to predict voter turnout, make sure everybody's accounted for, because we don't want to be in a position where we have lines in advance voting again, or --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "But you have emergency workers that you can call in in the event that there are lines that are created."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Emergency worker would not show up with equipment. We'd have to already have the equipment there."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes, to do the logic and accuracy testing of equipment beforehand. But I'm talking about staffing, because I went into a precinct that had -- first day of early voting, which is typically a high day, and they had -- it was 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, and they had eight voters come in all day."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Okay. So if you would -- okay, so at a minimum, when you walk into a precinct, you're going to see at least three people. We're required to have a manager and two assistant managers. We also have to have somebody manning the poll pads. We don't want to just have one poll pad in case that poll pad goes down. So we at least try to have at least two to three at every location. That gives you five people. You want to have a person outside. Our line monitors are there to, not just there, line monitors by title, but they're the outside -- they're the greater. They don't -- they're the eyes and ears on the outside of the precinct, make sure there's no campaigning going on and things of that nature. So we try to make sure we brand ourselves on customer service, and make sure we have adequate staff. And as well, some of those people are part time as well for advanced voting."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah. Yeah, the precinct that had eight people that had come as of 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, they had a line monitor, but they didn't come. So I just -- I just think we're over staffing. I think it's a way we can kind of restrict cost. We should have historical data on all these precincts to know voter patterns. Like, the ballot is another issue. If you're going to -- you know, if it's a quick primary, you're not voting a long ballot, although there were a ton of questions on my ballot."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "The ballot was very long --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "-- for this election."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, so, but on some of them you have very short, short ballots, so people don't stay very long in the polls. So if we could get some of that. In terms of the audit, I wasn't really prepared to address the audit. Maybe that, we could do that a later time. But I'm glad to see that you've kind of tried to update all the standard operating procedures, because that seemed to be a common theme in that audit. You didn't have -- they weren't able to watch the full absentee ballot process, because there weren't that many absentee ballots. And this was in the Municipal Election --"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "They watched the full process. The number of ballots would not have changed the process itself. But they were able to watch the full process. We were, like I said earlier, we were completely in compliance with all of our election codes and guidelines. And any enhancements to our SOPs have been completed just to provide clarity on our process."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, because you only -- you had zero UOCAVA ballots, they stated in the audit that came through, so they couldn't see that process. Which the UOCAVA ballots, you're having to transfer. So that wasn't able to see. The GARViS system was down because of the cyber security, which is a huge thing in accepting ballots. And they didn't look at legal elements or transparency elements as well. So I appreciate you guys, you know, I understand you changed your tabulation procedures for this election?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "We did not -- well, we make announcements. So therefore, there's no misconceptions of things that are not happening regarding seal checking and things of that nature. Now, we have a play-by-play to basically announce what's happening, so our observers know they don't believe that we did not do a particular process."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Yeah, but you -- last time, you couldn't even tell me the day that you did the checking of the seals, correct?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "No, that's incorrect. I told you that we checked the seals. What I could not tell you was the exact time."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I didn't say exact time, I asked for day, time period, who checked them. You said you couldn't tell me. So we'll kind of disagree at that. I've got the email chains. I asked multiple times. But in the end result, I'm happy that you changed the procedures to let the poll watchers know, and let them physically see the whole entire process. I think that's a step in the right direction. Are -- is something funny?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "I'm just smiling. It's okay."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay, okay. It seems like you're looking at Commissioner Barrett here, and having a conversation or something here."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "That's not true."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay, okay. I guess I'm wrong again. Yeah, I would like to maybe get better clarity on the audit procedures, see the actual standard operating procedures, the actual -- not just saying that they've been updated if that's possible to --"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Yes, we provided all of the updated SOPs to the audit team."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. That'll be great. I'll get with them. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Whew. Let me commend you all. I know that you all have had -- you all have been under scrutiny. But I do want the Fulton County taxpaying citizen to know that there's -- we're not in the business of stealing elections here at Fulton County. And I know as much as sometimes Commissioner Thorne, you may think some of the stuff she's saying is redundant. But for me, I think it adds to the fact that you all are doing a much -- and very great job to me. The processes, I see where you all have changed some of the processes and streamlined them more. What I want to say to the public, as a sitting official, I never want to get to the point where I tell you what's best for your department. I would hope that you're the subject matter expert. I remember at one while that you did come down here, and you know, daggers was just being thrown at you, left and right, and you could see it on your face that it was. So the fact that you are smiling, I am very happy, because I remember the days that you weren't smiling. I believe that we have to understand when it comes to staffing, and here again, I'm not a subject matter expert. But I just would like for you to speak to it. We're required by law to have a certain amount of staffing, a certain amount of things done a certain way. And it has absolutely nothing to do with the amount of people that walk in the door that day; am I correct?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "That's correct. So we have to have the manager, assistant manager, we have to have somebody standing next to the scanner to verbally tell people, did you review your ballot? So all those things have to be staffed."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "See, I want to be very careful that we're not sending the wrong message to the citizens of Fulton County. Do I think we can streamline? Do I think that, you know, early voting may ultimately mean that we may be able to decrease some voting precincts? But that is something that has to be analyzed over a period of time. That -- that's not something that you would do, well, it was light for the

Runoff, so this particular election, we should have the same idea. I think, and here again, this is my personal opinion. But I think we got to be careful into what is someone's personal opinion versus as to what's law. Because we know that at Fulton County, we have had our challenges. We know that we've got a big facility out there. I remember the day that they toured it, we had people that come in from the state that toured it. They were very pleased with it, and I believe we're moving in the right direction. Am I saying that we're going to get everything correct? No. No county this size is going to get everything correct. But I do believe that we're running in the right direction. And I just want us to be careful as to what's opinion versus are we doing what we need to be doing by law. And so I commend you. I know sometimes, you know, you're under the gun, and sometimes it's warranted, sometimes it's not. But for me, for this sitting Commissioner, thank you for very well-ran election, in my opinion. I didn't get any of the calls that, generally speaking, I had gotten before. I remember one particular precinct that we had a problem with that I shared with you before. That constituent called me back and she had glowing reviews. She said she had known the problems that she had had before. And so I just want to -- sometimes you want to put the -- with the criticism and with the problems that we may perceive as a problem, we also want to celebrate the successes. We want to celebrate the good stuff that we do. And so I just want to tell you, please understand -- and I -- and this Board, we just want to make sure that we're getting it right. We also want to make sure that a county this size, we're not going to be flawless. But we don't need any gotcha moments either. We've had our enough, even myself as a sitting Commissioner, these gotcha moments, there's no place for that. We just need to make sure that we're moving in the right direction, we're not adversarial, and we're doing the best for the taxpaying citizen of Fulton County so thank you for all you do."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Williams, I just wanted to also add my thanks for a great job on the Primary. Of course, we look forward to an equally great job on the Runoff. And I do want to just add that I think you guys are doing an exceptional job of balancing, being responsible with the resources, and making sure that voters are not disenfranchised by waiting in long lines or not having access to polling places. So I also appreciate that you, you know, your response to the audit was thorough and quick, and you know, all the updates to the standard operating procedures, as you mentioned just for clarity sake, not that there was wrongdoing, but more just so that so that's it's a hundred percent clear that those were made. And I think that was great, and thank you."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah, thanks, Mr. Chair. And I think maybe we can have a further discussion potentially on kind of that audit information. But this was a -- this was for -- this is an absentee review of the city election portions, right?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "It was the city and the Presidential preference."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "City and Presidential --"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "March elections."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "-- preference, okay. So there were -- I mean, I do -- I would encourage us all to listen carefully to what you try to -- listen carefully to what each other say, and remove our, maybe some of our personality differences when things get said, so that we're -- we're hearing it. There were some processes in this audit that were not observed by the auditor. And those are noted in his report back to us. And those were the mail and the walk-in portions of those, as well as the GARViS piece of it. So this is noted in the auditor's report, okay. So there were pieces of this that were not looked at and reviewed. So let's try to listen to kind of what people -- everybody is saying, and put our personality conflicts aside as we're -- as those things are being made. You know, there's a difference -- there's two difference -- there's a difference between fraud or something like that actually occurring, and I think that's not what this type of audit is about. But it's really more about, like, we all know that the process of elections has become increasingly more complex, right, when it's sort of basically, these three methods of voting that have become more, equally more prevalent. Absentee, we don't know where absentee turns out, early voting, and Election Day. And one of the distinct things that we had a lot of conversations with the department about when this Board was constructed, even somewhat differently than it is right now in terms of members, is the importance of having standard operating procedures that were repeatable and consistent time, after time, after time. And a concern I have with this, and I'm glad that there's been a response back to the auditor, I have not had a chance review actually what these actual procedures are. But a concern I have was that this is the type of thing where these things should have already been in existence. And I -- quite frankly, I don't understand why they weren't in existence already given the level of emphasis that was placed on by -- by this Board, as well as sort of the opportunity for resources that were provided to the department multiple years ago to get these procedures set up and teed up. So while I'm glad that there's a response and there appear to be some standard operating procedures that are put in place now. What I don't know and what gives me sort of less confidence in is, what about in all of the other pieces of things. And how -- are there procedures for those? Are they quality? Because I don't dispute that anybody is trying to work hard do their job, right. But if you don't have these mechanisms set up, the opportunity for them to fail or something not to be done consistently, and either there clearly a mistake gets made, something that bubbles up and it gets in the system wrong, and we go back through, votes don't get counted or whatever the case may be. Or there's an opportunity for people to raise

questions about it, that's what we -- that's why -- that's what we wanted to avoid in the first place when we asked the department to get really aggressive in terms of having consistent procedures that were repeatable for all of the multiple processes that were involved with voting. And again, I'm glad that you responded to this. But the fact that the auditor went through and there were multiple of these steps in the process where no procedures existed or reviewable at that point in time, that's problematic, you know, in terms of -- terms of, you know, terms of the report back on this. Great that they exist, may exist now. So I just -- I'm just voicing my own opinion. I don't get down in the business of running the components of elections. That's not my role, right, and I understand that. But I did, as a Board Member, say one of the things that I was looking for was that we had good, clear procedures in place for all of the different components of running of elections, so that we did not find ourselves in a situation where things were inconsistently getting done, mistakes were getting made, or we were having ourselves getting called into questions, and we really -- into question, and we really couldn't understand it. So, you know, I'm not necessarily looking for a response to that, I'm just, I'm vocalizing my response to what the auditor's report showed back on just this tiny piece of the election's process."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "May I comment? So --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Sure."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "-- for our standard operation procedures, we have them for every division. They change repeatedly. So it's not that we did anything incorrectly, per -- per code. It's that we need to make -- get provided more -- we need to provide more clarity to the operation procedures for the people observing. So we recognize that we have to maintain operation procedures. Every election, they change. We, if we -- if we see there's a process that can be improved, it needs to be updated. Again, there's going to be legislative changes before July 1st that we have to also implement. So we -- it was not so much that we -- we want to make it clear that we did not do any process wrong. We just needed to provide more clarity on our SOPs. And we'll make sure that keep them updated more routinely. And if we have another -- anybody who needs to observe them."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Ms. Williams, I just -- it's nothing wrong with what you said. But my point, again, was that -- I mean, I'm -- I'll read you, right, you know, we recommend updating procedures to include processes for handling and reconciling absentee ballots through the various pathways to ensure proper handling and reconciling. We recommend updating the procedures to include all steps observed and potential issues that may arise during the mailing process, along with mitigating controls to address any issues. We recommend updating the procedures to include the specific steps that should be followed during the verification process and any necessary controls that should be followed to ensure the accuracy of the mailing envelopes. We recommend updating the procedures to include all steps observed to ensure processes performed by all staff are consistent, ensure all requested ballots are mailed to the

respective voter. We recommend ballots be presorted to determine initial. And they're nine of these, okay? So if we were to go do a similar audit of, you know, our Finance area or some sort of functional unit that is administering funds, and it came back that these apparent sort of set of controls and processes didn't exist, that's a red flag. Listen, I want you to listen to what I'm saying, okay? And I would ask you to sort of take this feedback, because this is a point that has been raised by the totality of this Board, not just this moment in time. This goes back multiple years. So when there's this -- if that same sort of report came back with any of the financial elements of this, similarly, we would have a lot of aggressive questions for those particular entities and requests for a lot of remediated actions and clear procedures and controls, you know, identified in terms of us not seeing that replicate itself again, if we went back and did that audit. Things change in this -- in the scope of all types of operations, not just elections, and they have to adapt. But you are in -- you're in particularly, are in an area where processes and procedures matter very much so. And the fact that we went through sort of, had an audit done of a particular component of it, and there was a lack of processes and procedures that the auditor could see, that's problematic, particularly given the emphasis and the asks that was placed on by this Board, going back multiple years. And, you know, so that's just what I want to go on record of, and you know, I -- if we do it, and we do another audit of another specific process, I would -- hopefully, we're not seeing this. And I would encourage, again, your board, who is in the process of ensuring that the elections are run properly and getting down in the weeds and stuff, not us, take an active role in that process as well. Because I think it's productive for all of our citizens, you know, for that to be the case."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I just want to piggyback on some of that. The absentee ballot process has to be transparent, and it has to be following rigid guidelines especially since we have temp workers in there working that aren't permanent employees that are probably going to be changing. They need to have those guidelines so that -- and that I -- you are going to have to update them depending on the size of the election and the scope and the amount of ballots you get. But it goes back to the Carter Jones report back in 2021, that you had to establish the standard operating procedures. That the handling of the absentee -- you were weren't responsible for it back then, Ralph Jones was responsible. But it was abysmal. I think he gave it a grade of a D+. And then last summer, you had -- or Cathy Woolard and Patrise Perkins-Hooker had to sign a decree that you had accidentally double scanned 3500 absentee ballots in the absentee ballot processing system. So I don't know in that decree if the State Board will tolerate any more lapses in judgment. And now that we're going to have to hire monitors, I think it's very, very important that we -- there is clear guidelines. There's clear guidelines in the process that are being followed by these temp workers and the staff. So I hope you understand the true importance of it. I realize you're having to tread new ground, trail blaze, it's something that hadn't been done in the past. So I appreciate the efforts you're making, and I hope you will look at the audit committee as a friend and not a foe in establishing the proper -- and your board, to establish those

guidelines. And I want to clarify, because it seems like I'm asking above the law, how many people you have to staff. You have to have a manager, you have two assistant managers by law, a poll clerk, somebody to check leaving. You don't need -- by law, they don't prescribe ten people. You have to have ten people in every precinct; is that correct?"

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "We didn't have ten people in every precinct. It -- I said, it varied depending on the size of the precinct."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Well, the ones I visited all had ten. I'd like to see the staffing then, of all the precincts, because as a Commissioner, we're responsible for the cost that we allocate to your budget. Staffing is a huge portion of your budget. And the fact that so many other counties are able to do it per voter, per voter, so much cheaper, is concerning to me. So I would like, you know, I would like -- you have enough data. We've held enough elections, you can look at voter patterns in the different precincts throughout to establish more clear guidelines, at least have an estimated cost of how much it is to set up a precinct, and per day, early voting and Election Day. And I hope you work with your board on that to try to trim those costs and trim the staffing. And now that you have more freedom and the equipment allocation to come on with the areas that you can maybe trim some equipment allocation that -- I mean, as a manager, I would even -- you know, you'd send me three tabulators, and I'd close two of them, because I knew I only needed one. But if I ever needed to open it, I could open it up. So I would just -- I don't know, I feel like you're kind of laughing at me the whole time I'm sitting here talking to you."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "I have not made a sound. So I don't know if you heard a laugh, it was not me."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "No. I just feel your facial expressions, that you're laughing at me, and this is ridiculous. So anyway, with that being said, I've had my say. I'm good, thank you, Chair."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Let me just say this, and a lot of times I try not to say stuff. This is not adversarial. I don't -- I don't think you're being adversary, and that's my personal opinion. We all know as colleagues that this is something that is near and dear to her heart. But I think, I mean, when you have someone that's running a department and they come down here in front of us, if they don't smile, then they talked about, if they do smile, they're talked about. Let's be fair. Let's be fair. And the only reason I'm saying this publicly is because I just feel like, you know, this is not personal, and let's not make it personal. There are things that you both are going to disagree on, period. That's life. I have colleagues up here that I have utmost respect for, but we're going to disagree on certain things. That's life. But I would hope that this Body and our interactions with each other is one that we can be respectful. And I'm just going to say

that, because this is not adversarial. I guess, Ms. Williams, I remember when you first got in this position, and daggers were being thrown at you, and people were saying, well, you didn't smile, or did smile. You know what I'm saying? Let's -- even if we feel that, let's find ways as adults to work for the best of Fulton County. Because the message that we send to the taxpaying citizen is not a good one. I'm not trying to take anything away from you, Commissioner Thorne. I think that is your right to feel the way that you feel. But I think we set the wrong tone and precedent when we look at someone and because they're smiling, we assume that they are, you know, they're doing something this way, or like Commissioner Ellis said, wait a minute, I just want you to hear what I'm saying. You know what I'm saying? I don't think he was being disrespectful. He just wanted you to hear it. But you may have perceived that as being disrespectful. I don't know. All I'm saying is, if we know better, we do better. And we're working for Fulton County. We're working for the taxpaying citizens of Fulton County. I'm quite sure we can have a conversation with each other down here and be respectful and not denigrate to whether somebody's smiling or doing other things. I think we get a little bit too in our feelings. Whether we take a vote, don't take a vote, whether we smile, don't smile, whether we are coughing, and somebody think that we are, you know, trying to be funny. We are grown, y'all. We are grown people, grown people of average or more than average intelligence. We can agree to disagree. That's all I wanted to say. Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. I just want to say to you, keep smiling, because you're doing an awesome job under a tremendous amount of stress, pressure, scrutiny. And you deserve to smile. Thank you for all the hard work you do, because you have to answer a whole lot of questions."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS: "Thank you."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Anyone have, any of my colleagues have any other questions? Oh, I'm sorry, Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "If you like me, you got to smile to -- so you won't be crying."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Does anyone else have any questions of Ms. Williams? All right. Thank you, Ms. Williams. We appreciate you, have a good day. Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "Continuing on page 10, **24-0403**, Discussion, outstanding water bill from city of Atlanta, sponsored by Chairman Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Madam CFO, and where is the Purchasing Director? This is your deadline today."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Mr. Chairman, before we move on to the purchasing report, with regard to the update on the city of Atlanta water bill, we did meet with the city of Atlanta on May 28th. I would describe it as a fruitful and amicable meeting. We did receive a list of active accounts from the city that we're currently validating against our records and facility locations. We agreed -- or the city agreed during that meeting, to provide billing and payment data dating back to 2008. That's the period of time that they have that information available. We did receive that data, and we're in the process of also reviewing and reconciling that back against our payment data as well. They provided us utilization data for six -- well, they provided us the billing and payment data on six of the accounts, the six of the, what they identified as key accounts, the ones with the highest balance on their -- on their system, so we're reviewing that. And they also provided utilization data, so we're reviewing that as well for unusual activity or any anomalies during that same time period from 2008 forward. We also agreed that once we had had the opportunity to confirm the account list and complete our initial review of the account data that they've provided, that we would get back together to mutually review the findings. And I expect that our team will complete that account validation and internal review within the next two weeks. So that's where we're at, sir."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So when do you think we'll have a final determination?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I think we'll be through reviewing the data that's been provided within two weeks. I still think that a significant portion of the balance that they've identified as being past due is going to predate 2008. And so we will -- we will get to that point, and then all parties will have to decide on how to move forward with any balance that is from 2008 or earlier."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, I was just going to -- I would hope that we could have narrowed that timeframe to either four years or seven years. I don't believe that they go back, or that they can go back to 2008. I think under their own policies, the most they can go back is seven. And frankly, again, I think under the Statute 9325, they can only go back four years, which would help narrow the scope and the work and the reconciliation that you and your team have to do and that they and their team have to do, right? So maybe we should reach out to the City Attorney and try to narrow that issue down, because that might be -- that might help the discussions be more fruitful, even more fruitful than they already were."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I will confer with the County Attorney on that. What -- as I said, we, you know, we're about halfway through, I think at this point, reviewing the data that they did provide on the accounts. So when we've

done that and we have a feel for what the situation looks like, then I think, Soo, I would like to have that discussion with you about, do we want to narrow it, and how we would proceed from that point forward."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So, absolutely. We are standing by for that. But my understanding so far with the information that has been reviewed so far is that the large amount of outstanding debt does currently appear to predate any records they have, and certainly the reach back that they would be able to use legally to collect. I believe part of what Finance is doing now is reviewing what we have paid to see where there may be overpayments. I think I also heard that there may be some indication that we have been billed for properties we either do not own or have never owned. So that's part of the reason to do the audit, even if it goes back beyond the statute of limitations, because we may actually be owed some credits as well."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, thank you. Look forward to the next report. Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0404, Report from CFO and Purchasing Director on implementation of the Cherry Bekaert procurement recommendation, sponsored by Chairman Pitts."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that you have been provided at your dais, a copy of the document that Felicia has put together that outlines our review. It should look -- it should be a legal-sized document that outlines our -- our review of the CBH procurement review findings. And so I'm just going to turn it over to Felicia and let her walk you through that document and hit the highlights with you this afternoon."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "Good afternoon, Commissioners. Yes, we reviewed all of the recommendations. As Ms. Whitmore has said before, we looked at the adds, actions that Purchasing could implement, the executive team or items that we may need BOC review. So for the most part, the majority of the items that were noted, we are already -- we already have implemented. And we were already -- we already had processes and procedures in place for those. So I guess I will highlight a couple of the recommendations that I did not agree with. It would be on the second page. I apologize, I did have numbers assigned to the lines, but it didn't print out. So if you go to the second page, the third item down where it says implement an automatic renewal process for contracts. I did not agree with the auditor's recommendation, and the -- I stated my reason why. But also in 2021, the Board did approve an action to revise the renewal process that renews under 150,000 can be presented on the consent agenda. I do have a recommendation to increase that amount up to 200,000, but otherwise, renewal agreements should continue to come to the Board of Commissioners for approval. So I did disagree with that one. Let's see -- and stop me

at any time, I know it's a lot of information, it is a lot of words. If they're any questions you have or any items that you would like me to highlight, that's fine, I can do that. A lot of this is routine purchasing procedures that we do on a day-to-day basis. Oh, I'm sorry."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Mr. Chair, if we can -- thank you, Ms. Strong-Whitaker for this information. I think this was just placed on our desk after we got back from lunch. And I'm sure that we could benefit from the time from having some time to review it. So I'm going to do a motion to hold this item."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. No objections? No objections. Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0405, Options to confirm or deny allegations of a culture of corruption in Fulton County Government, sponsored by Chairman Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I spent a letter to each member of the Board, the Manager, and the County Attorney a couple weeks ago, because at every meeting of the Board during public comments, there are people who allege a culture of corruption at Fulton County. And I'm very protective of our brand. And what I'm concerned about if that continues, and it goes unchecked that that perception can become reality, and will further damage our brand. And I think we're doing a great job as a county, moving in a very positive direction. But when those comments are made -- so what I've asked -- what I asked the Manager and the County Attorney to do was to respond and give us some options of what our -- what are our options when it comes to either confirming what members of the public are saying or denying what members of the public are saying. The Manager responded and so did the County Attorney. You each should have received a copy of their responses. And the Manager made a couple of, I thought, observations that kind of struck me. In the second paragraph in his letter to me, and a couple of you have commented on, is to me says: All of our ethical issues involve elected officials who are only accountable to the voters. And there are, if my math is correct, there's 44 elected officials within Fulton County, the seven of us, DA, Sheriff, Solicitor, the Judges, Tax Commissioner, total about 44. So if the Manager's observation is correct and there's a problem among the 44 of us, and not our employees at large. So what I -- the round number I use is the 5,000 folk that work for Fulton County. And the Manager goes on to say that since elected officials are responsible to the voters, there's not a lot that he can do or not a lot that we can do. Then I talked to the County Attorney about what, when these people make these allegations about a culture of corruption here within county government and that goes unchecked, what options do we have to stop them? Then you get into the -- what's that amendment of free speech, what's that called, First --"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "First Amendment."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "First Amendment. And so I'm at a loss to figure out what we can do, if anything, when people make unsubstantiated allegations, charges, and sometimes they're very specific, about me included, so what are our options, if any?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "As I mentioned in the letter, especially given the fact that most of the subject -- most of the officials who are the subject of the comments are public figures, the standard for defamation is quite high. So as a result, I did recommend a certain level of permissiveness that would be appropriate in terms of allowing people to express their political opinions and provide political commentary. So your options in terms of limiting speech -- are -- is the question, can you limit speech because you believe it is unsubstantiated?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No. What I'm asking, if they continue to make allegations about a culture of corruption within county government, not specifically naming -- not naming names, not providing any evidence whatsoever, is there a point where we can say, okay, you have 60 days, 90 days to provide us with some proof of what you're saying, or we will do whatever is in our power to do? That's what I'm looking for --"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So, I don't think --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- maybe there's nothing we --"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I don't think there is any mechanism available to - to force people to do -- to take any particular option for reporting the things that they are commenting about. I think you can encourage them to speak out and report it to the appropriate authorities. We could even provide information about what those particular authorities might be so that it's a little easier for them to seek out an investigation if they believe that they have information about wrongdoing."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And these are the seven options that you have listed in your letter?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So the seven that we were able to identify are the seven that I wrote in the letter, which is Fulton County Auditor for whistleblower complaints dealing with waste, fraud and abuse in state programs; the Fulton County Board of Ethics for violations of the code of ethics; Fulton County Human Resources or an employee's supervisors if there is a violation of our code of conduct or other personnel policies and procedures; the State Attorney General, regarding allegations about state officials or employees; the District Attorney if the alleged wrongdoing could be criminal, and the public corruption is alleged to have occurred at the county level; the Judicial Qualifications Commission if there are allegations of misconduct by Judges; and local or federal law enforcement agencies if you believe that a crime is being committed, just report it to the appropriate agency that has the authority to investigate."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So is it possible then for us to advise the public of these seven options that they have, and if they do not exercise one of these at some point, 30, 60, 90 days cease and desist, or something happens? And that something is what I'm -- what I don't know."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I do not know of any basis to ask people to essentially file a report or stop speaking out about their opinion or their belief."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Arrington. I just -- this just -- it doesn't seem right to me. But I know the law says one thing, but in my heart, it's just not right. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So we are a policymaking board. And I guess, you know, it really goes even more to the County Attorney, and maybe it's worth a memorandum of law. We are a policymaking board. And I think it is okay for people to criticize our policies. I don't know if it's okay for personal attacks."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's what I'm getting at."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And as we saw in Congress, Congress doesn't allow its members at least to make personal attacks on each other. And so I wonder, Madam County Attorney, is there a way to limit personal attacks, right? Obviously, it's a -- we're dealing with the First Amendment. And it's a limited -- a limited public forum, right? So I think what we need, Madam County Attorney, from you are, you know -- and maybe that's what you've already provided, I haven't seen it. But you know, I don't -- for me, I don't want to see a list of seven items, I want to see a memorandum of law that explains what can be limited, what cannot be limited. Can personal attacks be limited? Are they only able to attack on or criticize on policy issues, or are they able to continue to level these baseless, frivolous, personal attacks in the limited public forum that is provided? And then secondly, you know, in my mind, those attacks are fine if they are around what we're doing here or any elected official or any employee, right? Because we had -- I mean, I think, outside of the public officials, and I don't know if any of it was substantiated, but we had the people complaining about, you know, the Election people, Election workers, the temp workers, the staff, all of that type of stuff. And I think, you know, it's feeding into this overall general narrative, as the Chair says, of public corruption. But a lot of those things are baseless, and you know, obviously as elected officials, we have to -- I think it's fair for us to take criticism, comments, criticisms, recommendations, all of those things. But I don't know if we got to sit here and just be falsely accused. I don't think defamation has anything to do with it, Madam County Attorney. I don't think we're talking about filing lawsuits against people for defaming us. I think the question is what -- what topics are off limits in the limited public forum that we provide?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So we will do -- we'll prepare a memorandum based on what limitations you can impose on this particular forum. So again, you know,

in private speech that wouldn't apply, but here, in the forum that you provide through the format of public comment, what is your ability to rule make to limit personal attacks that are not based on policy or your actions as a Legislative Body."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With all due respect, I feel like the wording of this agenda item is casting some doubt on the county as a whole, on the 4,000 some-odd employees that work here and are above reproach as it relates to anything to do it corruption. So I'm appreciative that you brought up the response from the County Manager, who said in the third paragraph of his response, quote, from my experience, two to three things are critical. One, is tone at the top; we need to clearly communicate from the Chairman's office an expectation of ethical behavior. It can't come from the County Manager office, since all of the current issues are with elected officials. I think that's true. I think when you're talking about a culture of something, the tone does come from the top. So all we can really do as a Body, you as the Chairman, us as a Body, is to operate in the most ethical way that we can, stay above any kind of even shadow of corruption, and to ask the same of everybody that we deal with. That said, I also think the wording of this agenda item and your words as you introduced the item imply that there are just, you know, you know, in a large number of complaints that are talking about corruption. I think all of us here know what it looks like when the public, in a large way, is upset about something. We have had on various issues hundreds of emails pour into us, and the room filled with people who want to make comments. Because this was on the agenda, my team and I did some research on the language around corrupt and corruption and how much it's been said or not said. And this is what our analysis says: For the entire year of 2024 so far, there have been 16 comments that include the word corruption or corrupt. Those 16 comments have come from seven individuals. There has only been one use of the words culture of corruption. There have been three uses by one person of the expression cult of corruption. Two of those were within one public comment. Of the 16 uses of those words, only five related to some sort of vague general corruption. The rest were about specific individuals and their behavior, and they were elected officials. And those were -- the general corruption allegations were not backed up with any facts at all. There was no other facts given with those comments, other than, and Fulton County is corrupt. So I think, to validate those accusations by, you know, bringing this up in a conversation here, again, undermines the bulk of the 44 elected officials and the entire staff by sort of accepting that those comments, even though they are completely without any backup or description, that they are sort of worthy of us investigating further. I think, you know, turn the other cheek is -- is the expression. And you know, we all, I think, individually, have sat here and been criticized by somebody at public comment, if not lots of people, and it's unfortunately part of the job. We have to listen to the criticisms along with the -- and the personal attacks along with the constructive criticism. So my take is this is not

a widespread problem. And those people, whether I agree with them or not, have a right to say whatever they want to say, so."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah. I'm sort at a loss for what we're trying to do here as well. And I certainly don't want to be a part of cutting off people's voice. And look, I mean, let's be clear, over the course of the past, you know, 12 to 14 months, there have been behaviors by elected officials in this county, they're the minority of the 44. But there have been behaviors by certain elected officials that, you know, certainly many people can look at is highly unsavory and have a lot of frustration with and want to vocalize their frustration about. And they should have every right to be able to do so. And I'm not going to cut any of that off. And if anything, I think that if we should hear somewhat in that, maybe we're -- maybe we should hear, not exactly in the words that are being expressed by certain of those individuals, but collectively, maybe what we should hear is there is a frustration amongst our citizenry on a certain level, that when that does exist, granted it may be a minority portion of this government, that nothing is done about it, and if they have no redress related to it. And clearly, if it's a situation where it's potentially a criminal-type action, who is supposed to be addressing it and looking at it, and, you know, they've been looking at -- you know, and many of these folks are coming down and expressing some desire that we, as a board, do that. Whereas, in most -- most all of these cases, particularly from like a punishment standpoint, all that, we have no -- we have none of those powers. And in many cases, we have even no investigatory pattern -- you know, powers related to that stuff. So, you know, I mean, I think it's fine if we want to say, hey, you know, if -- hey, if you have problems with XYZ and this whatever, you know, these are the appropriate, you know, channels of government to pursue your redress with, and make that known. And if people are frustrated that they don't understand that, and they want to come down here and just -- we have Groundhog Day, and they yell at us about it, or just generally yell about it, then that becomes counterproductive. But people are well within their rights to, you know, to vocalize that. But, I mean, this notion of, hey, you got to present evidence to say what you want to say, I mean, that, I'm not -- I have no interest in trying to pursue something like that because that's just hugely problematic on a lot of different levels. So that's all I'll say."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Well, I have to say, I was a public commenter for many years. It's kind of my start in this whole process in trying to be heard and the frustration of not being heard. And I do have to say, Chairman Pitts, you called me into your office and had a meeting with me to sit down to go over, what can you do to get me to stop coming down here, basically, and making public comment and --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You didn't need to tell all that."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Well, we didn't agree with everything, but I appreciate -- I mean, I felt like I was so frustrated because I wasn't being listened to. And I felt like no one was hearing me. And the fact that you took time out of your schedule to listen to my grievance, even though we didn't come to an agreement on anything, you listened, and that was a tremendous help. So my take away is, as a sitting Commissioner, when I'm -- feel like I've being attacked by someone in the audience, for instance, the people who were pro-Hamas Palestinian people attacked me and their comments, that I needed to learn and be more educated. I reached out to them to say, yeah, I'm willing to meet. And I hope we can do more of that because I think we can diffuse situations. And by the way, none of them actually followed up on a meeting with me. But some other instances people have met with me. I think that helps diffuse the situation. I think they just need to feel like they're heard, even if it's a simple email. I don't know how we do it, because the range of problems are so diverse and complex that people come down here speaking on. But maybe we can feel -- figure out a way to have more civic engagement with them instead of just having listening to their public comments. It's just my 2 cents."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "You know, my late mother, Victoria T. Jackson, she told me, it's not what someone calls you, it's what you answer to. I think it is very interesting as I hear my colleagues speak that we want -- and here again, this is my opinion. Everybody has a right to their own opinion. But we're asking of the audience that comes down here for public comments, we're asking them to do something that some of us don't do. We scream at each other. We have presenters to come, they get screamed at. They get called out their name. And so with all due respect, Chairman, I see where you're trying to get. However, if you ever go to APS meeting, the last APS meeting, the public person that was commenting, pretty much told all the School Board Members or all the ladies to me him outside. Like, he wanted to -- they wanted to jump on him. You -- one only needed to look at the City Hall public comments and see some of the things that were said there. I think part of this, it comes with the territory. You got to be thick skinned, because some of the people that come down here, they have called my office, they have reported certain things to me that I told them, it's not what you think that is. And if you think that is that case, reach out to that person. But I think we get in very slippery slope -- now, I don't agree with people coming down here cursing any of my colleagues, any of the staff. I don't agree with that. But I think when people feel as though they're not being heard, when they feel as though we are making decisions without their input, or in other cases, I've had a colleague to tell me, oh, you sent the people down there. I have not sent one person down here. People speak on what they speak on, because that's how they feel. And as individuals who are elected to office, it comes with the territory. I was somewhere in a store, a gentleman pulled up a article that had me as ally of our DA, crooked ally of our DA, and all these list of things that I supposedly done. I came out of very nasty, very ugly, very unsubstantiated race, but it comes with the territory. And so I'm not sure, other than asking for a certain amount of decorum, not to curse, not to scream, people have a right to have their freedom of

speech. But I think we do a disservice if we're asking people to come down here and do something that we don't do. Are we respectful to each other, or do we scream at each other? Are we respectful to the audience, to the presenters? Or when we disagree with the presenter, we scream at them? And so let's sweep around our own door, around our own porch, before we start talking about anybody else's. Chairman, I get your frustration, because if you paint everybody with a very broad brush, then you run the risk of, how do we in store or restore the integrity in government? I get it. I understand the point that you're making, Chairman. But the flip side of it, you can call me whatever you want to call me. It's what I answer to that's most important. People can come down here all day long and say what they want to say, as long as they're not cursing me and screaming at me. But I think at this point, we have to do two things. We have to understand freedom of speech, and we also have to internally be an example. How many times have we been in Executive Session, and a news reporter has gotten the information before we got to our seats? Are we going to talk about that, or we going to leave that off the table? And so we have to be the example in some cases that we're asking for the public to be. But I believe when people are frustrated, for the most part, they come down here and they show that frustration, however loud, however disrespectful it may be, it is frustration. So I'm not sure, Chairman, that we can do anything about it. But I will ask that whatever that we ask of the taxpaying citizens that we be the example for it as well."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So I was just looking at Robert's Rules of Order. And what Robert's Rules of Order states is that public comment is to be germane to the duties of the Body, relate to current or new items for discussion and decision by the Body, be respectful and avoid the use of names of pejoratives. Now, that's from Robert's Rules of Order. And so I think, you know, I don't want to limit anyone's right to free speech, because I don't want anyone to limit my right to free speech. But if public comment is to be germane to the duties of the Body, I think we might -- and again, we have to hear from the County Attorney, be able to limit a personal attack. I don't know that speaking loud or yelling or getting excited is a personal attack. You can still -- like with those people from Cherry Bekaert came down in here, and I asked them a lot of tough questions. I didn't personally attack them. I asked them a lot of tough questions. And so I think we have to be careful. We don't want to discriminate against anyone's viewpoint, right? People are allowed to have a viewpoint. But of these same seven people, I know at least one of them lives in Douglasville. She doesn't even live in this county, right? And I think we should do whatever we can to limit people coming down here using names and pejoratives pursuant to Robert's Rules of Order. Pursuant to Robert's Rules of Order, I think the use of names and pejoratives should not be allowed. There's somebody's viewpoint is one thing, but a personal attack on an individual is another. We shouldn't allow personal attacks on any county staff, let alone elected officials. You know, if they want to personally attack them, they can personally attack them on their own, on their own time. But we shouldn't allow our television and resources and internet to promote those personal attacks. I don't -- I don't believe a

personal attack is germane. You can attack someone without -- you can attack their policy or provide your viewpoint on a situation without personally attacking an individual, right? I had to come back and apologize to Commissioner Morris one time because I called him racist. And what I said was, hey, he's not racist, I think the policy he was proposing was racist, but not him individually. And so, you know, I guess I'll just leave it there. I think we need guidance, because it is First Amendment, it's United States Constitution. And we have to be very careful not to tread on anyone's constitutional rights."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Commissioner, Commissioner Arrington, may ask what portion of the Rules you were looking at? I'm unable to find any portion of Robert's Rules about speakers from the public. I know that the Rules regarding debate by the speakers who are on the Body say what -- what you're saying, that has to be germane. But if you're looking at another portion that deals with public speakers, I wanted to go ahead and ask if you could direct us to that."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'll send it to you following this."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah, I mean, I was kind of going down that line of the County Attorney. I mean, what we say to one another, and hey, listen, I mean, a lot of people would suggest that there have been personal attacks made by individual Commissioners up here on this Body for which there's been, you know, no apologies whatsoever been levied in return. So that's, you know, always sort of a matter of interpretation. But the Robert's Rules of Order, I think if I'm coming down here and public comment, I don't think there's anything in the Constitution that speaks to Robert's Rules of Order. Those people can pretty much say, you know, whatever they want to say. And I don't -- I'm not interested in us trying to craft some policy that's going to be throwing people out based upon, you know, some word they said that somebody didn't necessarily like. I agree, there shouldn't be profane behavior, you can have some general guidelines. But, you know, I mean, we've had people come down here and talk about subjects that I sure as heck don't think germane to anything we got on our agenda. And that's been going on since for -- for 10 years, 20 years, and will be going on for the next 20, 30 years. So I do not want any sort of opinion or anything of discussion about limiting what people are saying in the context of public comment. I think that's just fool's gold and a waste of our time from our staff."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I know I've had several Chairs of other counties approach me and say, how do you all allow the type of behavior in your public comment and don't

address it? And so one particular Chair is going to send me what they do, because they said they do not stand for it. And I will share that with everyone once I get it."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Well, thank you for your input. Madam Clerk, anything else? No further items to come before us today, we are adjourned."

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:49 p.m.