

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

January 21, 2026
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: February 18, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Robert L. Pitts **10:04 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
Mo Ivory, 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

26-0015 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 Second Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration. **(ADOPTED)**

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

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

Absent: Arrington

26-0016 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing “Pop Up Shop 2 Appreciation Day.” **(Arrington)**
January 9, 2026

Proclamation recognizing “Yvonne Elaine Arrington Daniel Remembrance Day.” **(Arrington)**
January 16, 2026

Proclamation recognizing “Eagle Scout Emmett Cha-Choe Appreciation Day.” **(Thorne)**
January 17, 2026

Proclamation recognizing “Eagle Scout Wyatte Cha-Choe Appreciation Day.” **(Thorne)**
January 17, 2026

Proclamation recognizing “Eagle Scout Aarya Gopinath Appreciation Day.” **(Thorne)**
January 17, 2026

Commissioners' District Board Appointments**26-0017 Board of Commissioners
FULTON COUNTY HOMELESS CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC) (APPROVED
UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

One (1) representative nominated by each of the Commission Districts for a total of seven (7) members, this includes one (1) representative from District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, At-Large. Each representative would serve a two (2) year term and could be reappointed to serve additional terms. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no term of any member nominated by a District Commissioner shall extend beyond the term of the District Commissioner who nominates that member.

Term = 2 Years

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Vacant (**Barrett**)

Commissioner Barrett nominated Kelvin Thompson for a District appointment to an unexpired term ending December 31, 2026.

Open & Responsible Government**26-0018 Finance
Ratification of the December 2025 Grants Activity Report. (APPROVED UPON
ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)****26-0019 Registration & Elections
Request approval of qualifying fees - Registration & Elections - to approve
qualifying fees for Fulton County offices to be filled in the 2026 primary or
non-partisan election. Effective upon BOC approval. (APPROVED UPON
ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)****26-0020 Real Estate and Asset Management
Request approval of a change order less than 10% - Department of Real Estate
and Asset Management, 24RFP020124K-JA Design-Build Services for North Fulton
HHS Center in the total amount of \$706,765.91 with Beck PMI, Joint Venture,
comprised of The Beck Group and Peachtree Mechanical Inc. (Atlanta, GA), to
modify the existing contract Owner Controlled Contingency to allow the execution of
an additional scope of work required for the completion of construction and
renovation of North Fulton HHS Center located at 4700 North Point Parkway,
Alpharetta, GA 30022. Effective upon BOC approval. (APPROVED UPON
ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

26-0021 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Resolution approving the First Amendment to Ground Lease Agreement between Fulton County, Georgia (Landlord) and Celco Partnership D/B/A Verizon Wireless (Tenant) for the lease of real property located at 266 Rawson Street, Atlanta, Georgia; authorizing the Chairman to execute the First Amendment and related documents; authorizing the County Attorney to approve the First Amendment and related documents as to form and to make modifications thereto prior to execution; and for other purposes. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

26-0022 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Relocation Easement Dedication of 20,578 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Renewed Medical, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Buffington Center Phase II Project at 3600 Buffington Center, South Fulton, Georgia 30349. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

26-0023 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Relocation Easement Dedication of 3,740 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from PPF / Royal Airport West Venture, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Lincoln - AWDC 600 Project at 0 Naturally Fresh Boulevard, College Park, Georgia 30349. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

26-0024 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Relocation Dedication of 300 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Braj, LLC, for the purpose of constructing a Proposed Convenience Store at 4175 Fulton Industrial Blvd., Unincorporated Fulton County, Georgia 30336. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

26-0025 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 2,654 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Valor Communities, LLC, owner, for the purpose of constructing the Bishop Meadows Subdivision Project at 7125 Bishop Road, South Fulton, Georgia 30213. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

26-0026 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 59,313 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from SWVP Alpharetta, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Continuum Alpharetta - Infrastructure Project at 5555 Windward Parkway, Alpharetta, Georgia 30004. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

26-0027 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Easement Dedication of 59,313 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from SWVP Alpharetta, LLC, for the purpose of constructing the Continuum Alpharetta - Infrastructure Project at 5555 Windward Parkway, Alpharetta, Georgia 30004. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

SECOND REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

26-0028 Board of Commissioners

Adoption of the Second Regular Meeting Agenda. **(ADOPTED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to adopt the Second Regular Meeting Agenda. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Arrington

26-0029 Clerk to the Commission

Ratification of Minutes. **(RATIFIED)**

Second Regular Meeting Minutes, December 17, 2025

First Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, January 7, 2026

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

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

Absent: Arrington

26-0030 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing “Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Founder’s Day.” **(Ivory/Arrington)**

Proclamation recognizing “S.L. King & Associates Appreciation Day.” **(Arrington/Ellis)**

Proclamation recognizing “Creekside High School Football State Champions Appreciation Day.” **(Arrington/Barrett)**

PUBLIC HEARINGS**26-0031 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 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)

30 Speakers: Judge Kenya M. Johnson (Budget Funding); Keith Gammage (Budget Funding); Bobby Wolf (Budget Funding); Maurice Kenner (Budget Funding); S. Kennedy (Just Schooling); Patty Durand (Fulton County Jail); Casey Gwinn (Domestic Violence Funding); Leah Carlisle (Housing/Homelessness); Ian Zeringue (Housing/Homelessness); LA Pink (Fulton County Jail); Lance Robertson (Natson Hotel Group); Alison (Housing/Homelessness); Sherise Brown (Housing/Homelessness); Margie McCloud (Housing/Homelessness); Tim Franzen (Housing/Homelessness); Matthew Nursey (Housing/Homelessness); Bianca Garcia (Housing/Homelessness); Allen Hall (Housing/Homelessness); Sojourner Marable Grimmett (Housing/Homelessness); Brendan Gill (Housing/Homelessness); Devin Barrington-Ward (Housing/Homelessness); Steven Imle (Housing/Wrap-Around Services); Reed Stillson (Housing/Homelessness); Emma Jean Davis (Housing/Senior Services); Charles Bourgeois (Housing/Accountability); Carter Clayton (Public Defender's Relocation); Omedaur Adams (Prayer Advocacy); Cherlyn Henry (Housing/Homelessness); Cat Leatherwood (Housing/Homelessness); David Serrano (Housing/Homelessness);

5 Zoom Speakers: Robby Caban (Animal Services); Catherine Martinez (Community Investment/Housing); Maggie Goldman (Housing/Homelessness); Kirt Beasley (Housing/Homelessness); Birdell Jackson (Reparations Taskforce Study)

COUNTY MANAGER'S ITEMS

Open & Responsible Government

26-0032 Finance

Review and approve the FY2026 Final Adopted Budget and FY2026 Resolutions.
(APPROVED)

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Arrington, to approve the FY2026 proposed budget, including her requests along with Commissioner Arrington's addition of the \$500,000.00 for the Summer Youth Program. The motion failed by the following vote:

- Yea:** Barrett, Ivory, and Arrington
- Nay:** Thorne, Ellis, and Abdur-Rahman
- Did Not Vote:** Pitts

b. A motion was made by Commissioner Ivory and seconded by Commissioner Arrington, to approve the FY2026 proposed budget including her additional requests. The motion failed by the following vote:

- Yea:** Ivory, and Arrington
- Nay:** Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, and Abdur-Rahman
- Did Not Vote:** Pitts

c. A motion was made by Commissioner Arrington and seconded by Commissioner Ivory, to approve the FY2026 proposed budget including his additional requests.

- Yea:** Barrett, Ivory, and Arrington
- Nay:** Thorne, Ellis, and Abdur-Rahman
- Did Not Vote:** Pitts

d. A motion was made by Chairman Pitts and seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, to approve the FY2026 proposed budget including his recommendations assuming an 8.87 millage rate. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

e. A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, to call the question. The motion passed by the following vote:

- Yea:** Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, and Abdur-Rahman
- Did Not Vote:** Arrington

26-0033 Registration & Elections

Request approval of a statewide contract - Registration and Elections, 26TEMP1548386C-MH, SWC # 99999-001-SPD0000136, Temporary Staffing Services - Clerical Light in the total amount not to exceed \$7,849,501.99 with (A) Abacus Corporation (Morrow, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$4,225,923.47, and (B) Dover Staffing, Inc. (Smyrna, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$3,623,578.52 to provide temporary staffing services for General Primary Election/Nonpartisan Election & Runoff Elections. Effective: upon approval through June 30, 2026. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Did Not Vote: Thorne

26-0034 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidders - Real Estate & Asset Management, 25ITB140704C-GS, Moving Services, in the total amount not to exceed \$350,000.00 with (A) Beltmann Relocation Group (Stone Mountain, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$130,000.00; (B) ALS Van Line Services, Inc. (Atlanta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$130,000.00; and (C) APMC Moving & Delivery, Inc. (Tucker, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$90,000.00, to provide moving services on an “as-needed” basis Countywide. Effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, with two renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Arrington

26-0035 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval to renew an existing contract - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 21RFP127274K-BKJ, Comprehensive Operation and Preventive and Predictive Maintenance Services for the Fulton County Jail, in an amount not to exceed \$5,493,834.00 with Johnson Controls, Inc. (Atlanta, GA), to provide comprehensive operation, preventive and corrective maintenance services for the Fulton County Jail. This action exercises the fourth of four renewal options. No renewal options remain. Effective Dates: January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. **(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: Thorne, Ellis, Barrett, Ivory, and Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Arrington

Abstain: Pitts

26-0036 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a statewide contract - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, SWC#99999-001-SPD0000164-0002, Natural Gas Firm Delivery Service in the amount not to exceed \$750,000.00 with Scana Energy Marketing, LLC (Atlanta, GA), to provide natural gas services to all Fulton County facilities to include the Fulton County Jail Complex. Effective dates: January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Arrington

Did Not Vote: Thorne

26-0037 Purchasing and Contract Compliance

Request approval for the procurement of supplies and equipment required for residents housed in the County’s Jail facilities in a total amount not to exceed \$3,252,299.20 with various vendors identified in Exhibit 1 attached to this package and incorporated hereto. Effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Arrington

Did Not Vote: Pitts

Health and Human Services

26-0038 Public Works

Request approval of a recommended proposal - Department of Public Works, 25RFP450816K-JAJ, Flow Monitoring Services & Infiltration/Inflow (I/I) Program Management in an amount not to exceed \$12,079,844.00 with RJN Group, Inc. over five years to provide comprehensive operations, preventative maintenance, and repair services for flow monitors and rain gauges as well as infiltration/inflow (I/I) program management and engineering services for the Fulton County sewer system in North and South Fulton service areas. Effective upon execution of contract through December 31, 2030 for five years with two one-year renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Arrington

26-0039 Senior Services

Request approval of a recommended proposal - Senior Services, 25RFP1486848A-KM, Senior Transportation Services Assessment in an amount not to exceed \$133,000.00 with Calyptus Consulting Group, INC. (Cambridge, MA) to assess the current state of the Department of Senior Services transportation program. Effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026 with two renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Arrington

COMMISSIONERS' ACTION ITEMS

25-0994 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of a Resolution to establish a Fulton County Tax Allocation District Advisory Committee to advise the Board of Commissioners on policies, strategies, and community partnerships that advance Fulton County's redevelopment plans pursuant to the Redevelopment Powers Law; and for other purposes. **(Ivory) (HELD FOR A LACK OF A QUORUM ON 12/17/25) (MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED ON 1/7/26) (DENIED)**

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Ivory and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, to deny. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nay: Ivory

Absent: Arrington

Did Not Vote: Barrett

26-0040 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of a Resolution of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to repeal Resolution 18-0577 pertaining to the elimination of the Budget Commission as the body tasked with submitting an annual proposed budget to the Board of Commissioners for consideration so as to reinstate the Budget Commission; to amend section 2-261 of the Fulton County Code of Ordinances to redefine the membership of the Budget Commission; and for other purposes. **(Ivory) (FILED)**

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Ivory and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, to file. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nay: Barrett, and Ivory

Absent: Arrington

26-0041 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of a Resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to amend the Resolution creating the Fulton County Employees' Retirement System adopted September 11, 1991, as restated by a Resolution adopted December 18, 1991, and as further amended thereafter, so as to amend section 4.9 of the defined benefits plan related to reemployment to allow certain former Fulton County Sheriff's Office Detention Officers and Sworn Officers of any rank receiving a Fulton County pension benefit to work as Detention Officers beyond the 1,040 hours per year limitation through December 31, 2026, without penalty and without impact to their existing pension benefit; to remove the penalty for reemployed retirees who work no more than 1,040 hours per year; and for other purposes.

(Barrett/Abdur-Rahman/Ivory) (APPROVED)

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

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

Absent: Arrington

Did Not Vote: Pitts

COUNTY MANAGER'S PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****26-0042 External Affairs**

Presentation: 2026 State Legislative Session Update. **(PRESENTED)**

26-0043 Human Resources Management

Presentation: Childcare Reimbursement Pilot Program post-implementation briefing. **(PRESENTED)**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

26-0044 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, Ivory, and Arrington; County Manager Dick Anderson; County Attorney Y. Soo Jo; Deputy County Attorney Shalanda Miller; Chief Financial Officer Sharon Whitmore; Assistant Chief Strategy Officer Steve Nawrocki; and Clerk to the Commission Tonya R. Grier.

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Ellis, to enter into Executive Session. The motion failed by the following vote: (**NO VOTE TAKEN**)

Motion withdrawn

b. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, to enter into Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Did Not Vote: Arrington

c. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve the requests for representation in items #2, #3, and #4 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Did Not Vote: Ellis, and Arrington

d. A motion was made by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Ivory, to approve the request for settlement authority in item #5 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Did Not Vote: Ellis, and Arrington

A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Ivory, calling for a decorum violation against Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

Chairman Pitts ruled there was no violation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'

SECOND REGULAR MEETING

JANUARY 21, 2026

10:00 A.M.

Alexander Solution, LLC

“A Court Reporting Firm”

(Whereupon the meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Second Regular Meeting of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. It's 10:04 a.m. Today is Wednesday, January 21st, 2026. Madam Clerk, please, call the roll."

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 Mo Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Present."

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

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Present."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, Madam Clerk. Please rise for the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. "

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 2, Consent Agenda, **26-0015**, 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 Second Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Nothing on the Consent Agenda? Commissioners, no items?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. I'll entertain a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as it's printed. Motion to do so by Commissioner Thorne; seconded by Commissioner Barrett.

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 5, Second Regular Meeting Agenda: 26-0028, adoption of the Second Regular Meeting Agenda."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Any items? Nothing, Commissioners?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. I'll entertain a motion to adopt as it's printed. Motion to do so by Commissioner Thorne; seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "26-0029: Ratification of Minutes. Second Regular Meeting Minutes December 17th, 2025; First Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, January 7th, 2026."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "26-0030: Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "How many?"

CLERK GRIER: "We have three. The first proclamation is recognizing 'Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated Founder's Day' sponsored by Commissioners Ivory and Arrington."



COMMISSIONER IVORY: "If I have any of my sorors who are here to please come down and share in this celebration, please. Calling all sorors to the floor. I'm not going to sing, but we normally would. Good morning, everybody. It is my real honor to be here this morning to be able to do this proclamation. I never thought 35 years ago when I pledged Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated at Spelman College, Eta Kappa Chapter, I never thought that 35 years later I'd be an elected official being able to give a proclamation to my beloved sorority; pledging Delta Sigma Theta was one of the best decisions I ever made in my life. To have hundreds of thousands of women in all -- over all the continents, all over the world that you can call and rely on just because you were member of this organization, I can't even express how important it has been in my life, so this is really an honor for me. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated was founded on January 13th, 1913 on the campus of Howard University by 22 visionary collegiate women who sought to use their collective strength to promote academic excellence, uplift communities, and advocate for social justice; and WHEREAS, from its earliest days including participation in the historic women's suffrage march of 1913, Delta Sigma Theta has stood at the forefront of civic engagement, public service, and the fight for equity establishing a legacy rooted in scholarships, sisterhood and service; and WHEREAS, for more than a century, the woman of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated have been demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the five-point programmatic thrust, economic development, educational development, international awareness and involvement, physical and mental health, and political awareness and involvement, positively impacting communities locally, nationally, and even globally; and WHEREAS, the members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, affectionately known as Delta Women and sorors to me, continue to lead as educators, attorneys, elected officials, entrepreneurs, healthcare professionals, and advocates using their talents and resources to mentor youth, strengthen families, and address critical social issues affecting underserved populations; and WHEREAS, as the enduring legacy of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated reflects a profound dedication to public service and social responsibility; inspiring generations of women to lead with purpose, integrity, and courage in the ongoing pursuit of justice and equality for all. So, NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that many try, few are chosen, that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners commends the members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated for their outstanding service to the community; extending best wishes on the occasion of our 113th Founders Day and Anniversary; and do hereby proclaim Tuesday, this past January 13th, 2026, as 'Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated Appreciation Day' in Fulton County, Georgia. There are many sorors up here who are serving in Fulton County. So I want to -- I'm so glad that they decided to come here, and many of the chapters in Atlanta, I'm a member of East Point/College Park Alumni Chapter where we have many, many chapters in Atlanta and in the Metro area, and so I'm so proud to be represented here today. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "The next proclamation is recognizing 'Stanley L. King and Associates Appreciation Day' sponsored by Commissioners Arrington and Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Have Mr. King and his team come down? All right. It's my honor to share this proclamation about -- about this fine man to my left here and the

organization he's built and the commitment he's had to our community and service to Fulton County and also our community, and I'm also proud that they have their business in my district. WHEREAS, Stanley L. King has built SL King and Associates Inc. into a respected solution-driven firm, serving public agencies, commercial clients, and industrial partners across Fulton County, the state of Georgia, and the nation; and WHEREAS, Stanley King's commitment to excellence is demonstrated through his leadership, on major multimillion dollar initiatives for clients such as the General Services Administration, the University System of Georgia, Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport, MARTA, US Department of Energy, Southern Company, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and a long-standing and impactful relationship with Fulton County; and WHEREAS, for the past 30 years, SLKA has upheld a legacy of service, technical excellence, and dedication to strengthening public infrastructure, reinforcing its enduring imprint on the economic, environmental, and engineering development of Fulton County, Georgia; and WHEREAS, SLKA has delivered major Fulton County public infrastructure improvements including East Point City Hall, the Fulton County Government Complex, the Fulton County Juvenile Justice Center, and multiple facilities modernization projects; and WHEREAS, SLKA has enhanced regional water and wastewater systems throughout engineering leadership on Camp Creek, Johns Creek Environmental Campus, and Big Creek Water Reclamation Facilities earning state and national awards including the 2025 ASCE Project of Excellence and the 2025 AC/DC state award among other awards. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes SL King and Associates for 30 years of exemplary leadership, innovation, and stewardship in support of Fulton County's infrastructure needs; and does hereby proclaim Saturday, January 17th, 2026 -- that was the date -- as 'SL King and Associates Appreciation Day' in Fulton County, Georgia. Let's give them a big hand. Would you like to say a few words?"

SL KING, RECIPIENT: "Yes, I would. I didn't write that. First of all, I just want to give honor and glory to God because we couldn't have done it without him. And I also want to give thanks to my staff because there's no way I could have done all that by myself. In fact, it's more than 30 years; it's actually 40. But thank you, Chairman Pitts, thank you so much. And Commissioners, I'm honored; I'm humbled to be standing here in your presence to receive this recognition. We're committed to you all and have been and will continue. It's a legacy that we're going to continue. And one day -- they're trying to retire me, but it's not in my DNA. You know, God has blessed us and I want to also thank my wife of 45 years she's been by my side; for the last five or six year she's been battling Stage III esophageal cancer, so I'm a caregiver. So you don't see me that much because half my time is with my wife and she would be here. She apologized, but I'm just very careful about bringing her out with her immune compromised. But thank you so much. It's an honor, and I look forward to continue working with you, and this is my team, and I'm proud of them. They're the smartest folks -- it's not me, it's them. Thank you so much."

CLERK GRIER: "The last proclamation is recognizing 'Creekside High School Football State Champions Appreciation Day' sponsored by Commissioners Arrington and Barrett."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. I know y'all can do better than that for the state champions. They got the ship -- the championship. All right. Let's get half on this side. Thank you all, congratulations. It is truly my pleasure to be able to present this proclamation to Creekside High for winning the state championship this year. And the proclamation reads as follows: WHEREAS, the Creekside High School football team achieved a historic milestone by securing the 2025 Georgia High School Association AAAA state championship, defeating Benedictine by a score of 42 to 39. The win cemented the team's legacy as the highest scoring offense in Georgia history, with a season total of 845 points and top 25 national ranking by USA Today, ESPN, and Max Preps. WHEREAS, Creekside High School completed an extraordinary undefeated season with a 15-0 record, claiming the school's second football state championship and fourth consecutive region championship; and WHEREAS, the team was led by the exceptional performance of the championship's MVP quarterback, Cayden Benson, who was named the Region 4 Quad A player of the year and earned All-Star honors from AJC Touchdown Club of Atlanta and Recruit Georgia; and WHEREAS, team leaders, Tavarre Terrell, Cassius Burch, Cedric Kelly, and Gary Walker were among several others to receive All Region and All State honors; and WHEREAS, head coach Maurice Dixon was honored as Region 4 Quad A Coach of the Year, AJC Quad A Coach of the Year, and AJC Atlanta South Fulton Coach of the Year exemplifying outstanding leadership and mentorship. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioner's recognizes Creekside High School football team 'Tribe Pride' for their outstanding teamwork and sportsmanship that led to their title as the 2025 State Quad A champions and; and does hereby proclaim today, Wednesday, January 21st, 2026 as 'Creekside High School Football State Champions Appreciation Day' in Fulton County. Let's give it up for them. Coach, do you want to say something?"

MAURICE DIXON, RECIPIENT: "As a lifelong Fulton County citizen, I am honored to, you know, just be able to represent the county as we did. This is not only attributed to me but to my staff and these awesome young men who have committed to a culture of being consistent human beings and competing in the classroom and on the football field. So this is a celebration for them in their efforts, and like we always "Tribe Pride"

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

CLERK GRIER: "Continuing on page 5, Public Hearings - **26-0031**, Public Comment: Citizens wishing to participate in public comment will be allowed to appear in person or may choose to participate virtually via Zoom videoconferencing by registering on the County website www.fultoncountyga.gov. Priority for public comment will be given to Fulton County citizens and those individuals representing businesses or organizations located within Fulton County. Speakers will be granted up to two minutes each. The public will not be allowed to yield or donate time to other speakers. The public comment portion of the meeting will not exceed 60 minutes. In the event the 60-minute time limit is reached prior to public comments being completed, public comment will be suspended and the business portion of the BOC meeting will commence. Public

comment will resume at the end of the meeting. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we will start with the speakers here in Assembly Hall. We have received 30 speaker cards. Will the first five speakers, please come forward: Judge Kenya Johnson --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- hold on one second. Now, speakers, I think you know that when you have 15 seconds remaining on your two minutes, I'll say 15 seconds, that will be your clue to begin to terminate your remarks. Also, I've been advised that a lot of people may be here today to speak about -- what's it called? What is it? Permanent Supportive Housing that's in the budget, so don't feel compelled to speak. If you feel compelled to speak, we'll obviously hear from you, but it's in the budget. All right."

CLERK GRIER: "First five speakers: Judge Kenya Johnson, Maurice Kenner, Keith Gammage, Bobby Wolf, and Patty Durand."

JUDGE KENYA JOHNSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, everyone. My name is Judge Kenya Johnson and I represent Probate Court. We're asking for your support for a \$250,000 enhancement to staff our booming wedding ceremonies. By charging a small fee, this enhancement is a revenue neutral transaction. You've seen the statistics, cost and projected revenue, the data supports this request. The public need demands it. Every one of you here today is either married, was married, or at some point considered marriage. Maybe you had the means for an extravagant wedding, maybe you were looking for a low-cost option, like thousands of our citizens. According to CNN's news study, they found that couples that spend less on their wedding tend to have longer lasting marriages than those that splurge. With Valentine's Day approaching, I come to you, I get down to one knee, and I propose to you that you support wedding ceremonies in Fulton County and our modest budget enhancement of \$250,000. Thank you for your time."

KEITH GAMMAGE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. Keith Gammage, Fulton County Solicitor General. I want to just say thank you for the last Commission meeting where you clearly heard from members of the Justice Department. I worked here as a young public defender on the day that Brian Nichols went on that rampage that has affected us ever since. That was due to understaffing and some challenges around law enforcement and public safety. I was here working as an assistant public defender in this building just adjacent to us, so thank you for hearing from those who are boots on the ground. Thank you for considering in conjunction with the county management team and finance, those needs that are, you know, really foundational. Before we have good business locate or relocate to our communities, the public has to be safe. I would thank you for reconsidering -- I saw the new proposed budget, though there's nothing perfect, at least you all ensured that we had the opportunity to go back and engage again with our thoughtful county management team and finance team and get closer to what justice should look like; and it's appropriate for me just to say thank you, and particularly to those who ask questions, particularly about victim services, about caseloads, about ABA standards and about what an actual operational courtroom should look like. So I thank you for that and your commitment to public safety and justice. Thank you."

JUDGE BOBBY WOLF, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Bobby Wolf. I'm a new Fulton County State Court Judge. I just wanted to introduce myself. I look forward to working with everybody. Just a little bit about me. I was born and raised in Fulton County in Sandy Springs; graduated from North Springs High School. I worked for the county in three different roles over 25 years. I'm really excited to partner with you in every way. I'm not asking for anything, except maybe just to stop by your office and introduce myself in more detail and get to know y'all. So thank you."

MAURICE KENNER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I'm Maurice Kenner, the Circuit Public Defender. First, I want to thank you all for allowing me to appear in front of you, and I want to thank the County Manager for all the hard work -- and you all have put into supporting my office and our budget. However, the recommendation I think the County Manager makes today does not go enough -- go far enough. I think our ask was for an additional 1.3 million to support the two new state court judges. More importantly, to give us the administrative staff that we need. Right now, we have three administrators that support ten state court judges and 20 public defenders. That's a lot of work to add two new state court divisions and five new attorneys, two APDs in each courtroom and a supervisor. That will put the three administrators that are currently doing that work in a bone, backbreaking position. I don't want any of them to throw up their hands and leave. What I want is this Commission to see the value in those, that support staff, and to support us and to give us the \$1.3 million of additional funding that we need. And also, we did work hard with the County Manager's team. I know that one of the memos it says that --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MAURICE KENNER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- that we may not have, but the judicial stakeholders collectively did not see how no other names versus the positions of our staff would help us along with this process."

S. KENNEDY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi. Good morning, everyone. Good day to all the great Commissioners and good to see you today, Chair Robb Pitts, and my Commissioner, Mo Ivory. Peace and blessings, and good to see you Commissioner Khadijah as well. To those that I don't know, peace and blessings. I have currently, right, now going alone; I am Kennedy. My company is Just Schooling. We are partnered with the American Cancer Society, and we come before you today to discuss improvements with GDOT, the Board of Health Alliance, and to gain more public health resources within District Four to combat some of the public health issues that are plaguing our community. Presently, we have numerous encampments, and that is along I-20. I just see that Counsel Dozier just had those removed, but as a result, they will return if there is no solution for field activity and improvements. So we are requesting funding from GDOT to get that immediately resolved by placing stones and gates to prevent that. We understand that 311 PAD does provide those services, but oftentimes as we go out, we noticed that they -- some refuse those services. As a result, we are proposing that we get a designated plot of land from the city in order to address those nomads who don't want to live in population, who don't want to govern themselves with

societal rules, and they could possibly bring those tents there if they don't want to, you know, live in society and receive the help, but what we're not going to accept is the filth -
-"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

S. KENNEDY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- okay. I'm sorry. We're not going to accept the filth. And so this proposal is specifically outlining different resources for our parks as well. We are because we have a lot of encampments in those as well and we need immediate (inaudible). So I'll look forward to following up with your office regarding these needs."

PATTY DURAND, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Patty Durand. Fulton County is one of the wealthiest counties in Georgia. There is no excuse for Fulton County to operate a jail so unsafe and inhumane that the US Department of Justice was forced to intervene in a second consent decree. First one was 2006, now we have one from 2025, asking the County to stop the violence, disease, and misery for incarcerated persons; a place that is so bad that correction officers don't even want to work there. A county budget is a moral document. It reveals our priorities, and I don't like what I see. Commissioners who do not care about how incarcerated people are treated as reflected in the budget. The Fulton County jail is a disgrace and it makes no sense to say that the jail doesn't need a new building when it clearly does. Repairs should not be made on top of a rotten core. Previous Commissioner John Eaves wrote in a recent AJC opinion piece, I consider the allocation by County Commissioners of \$1.2 billion for a new jail as financially irresponsible. He wrote that the Board should focus on proactive investments to address the root causes of crime, particularly among youth, who are the most affected by systemic inequalities. I agree with that part, but this is from a man who did not solve the jail problems during his tenure, from the Justice Department consent decree that was issued during his tenure. Yes, proactive investments that address root causes are important. There is severe inequality in the county. You need to do both; do the programs and the building. It's difficult to believe you cannot find the money to do both. Raise the millage rate if necessary, we can afford it. There are ways to do that so that poverty --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

PATTY DURAND, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- isn't exacerbated. Even better, stop Mr. Conley's false property evaluations that drains the tax base by undervaluing commercial and data centers. This is a huge problem that you can and must address. And I urge you to. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers, please come forward: Casey Gwinn, Leah Carlisle, Ian Zeringue and Ricky P."

CASEY GWINN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello, Members of the Commission. My name is Casey Gwinn. I'm the founder of Alliance for Hope International, and I'm here on behalf of Madam DA Fani Willis and Simone Hylton, her executive deputy, who is

present here today. And I'm here to represent 150 people who are meeting at the hub today and tomorrow to imagine the creation of the Fulton County Family Justice Center to provide wraparound services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence in Fulton County. I've been honored to help open a hundred and 50 of these centers across the United States, and we're here now dreaming about one in Fulton County. Georgia has one of the highest murder rates of women in America; a hundred and 70 women were murdered last year in Georgia and Fulton County leads those numbers. I come from San Diego, California where we've created the first Family Justice Center, and we now have one domestic violence homicide per year in San Diego. Fulton County has 15 times that many. We believe the family Justice Center is that early intervention model; brings all the services under one roof for victims and their kids. It produces football players like Creekside High. It doesn't produce people that go to jail and prison. We can end that jail to prison pipeline with family justice centers. So the funding for that is in the tranches right now in your budget, but I urge you to make public safety and public health, which is what the Family Justice Center is, central to your budget discussion. We're going to have a vision for you in two days from a hundred and 50 people, Fulton County residents, and we can end domestic violence homicides in Fulton County. Yesterday, you had an Atlanta police officer shot in a domestic violence incident. The number one killer of police officers in America are men who assault women --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

CASEY GWINN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- we can end this generational cycle and break that cycle for kids, too. So thank you for prioritizing the Family Justice Center vision that's coming here. We have them all over the country. Fulton County needs to lead the state of Georgia in this. Thank you."

LEAH CARLISLE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Leah Carlisle. I'm a Fulton County resident in the South Atlanta neighborhood. It's excellent to hear that the supportive housing services is in this year's budget, but I did want to take this time to reiterate the importance to me and my community that the two million-dollar funds set aside in 2019 for supportive housing has been honored in this budget. Weather conditions in Atlanta range from the high 90s to the low 20s as we expect to see on this Saturday. People cannot survive unhoused in those conditions. Outside of the weather, people experiencing homelessness are disproportionately victims of violent crimes. Shelter and safety are fundamental and foundational in our hierarchy of needs. Without these securities, survival-related crimes increase. The solution is fair and equitable housing for all. Committing to funding housing services protects people and taxpayers. I implore you to continue to support our houseless neighbors in this year's budget, as well as to follow through with your long-term commitments to fully fund housing services for the next 30 years. Thank you very much."

IAN ZERINGUE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Ian Zeringue. I'm a Fulton County resident. I would just like to ask that you follow through on that commitment. The city of Atlanta reneged on obligations to put transit in the Beltline. They were unable to follow through with the city investigation, but I hope that this is a

surprise and the city continues fully funding the homeless -- the county continues to fully fund the homeless. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Next speakers, please come forward: LA Pink, Lance Robertson, Alison Johnson, Sherise Brown, Margie McCloud, and Tim Franzen."

LA PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "So good morning. As we continue to just pull 2025 garbage into 2026, I want to continue to just let the community know what exactly is going on inside of the community. I am LA Pink. I'm an advocate for the jails as well as the community. We have several different issues that we need to address. For one, I got a call this morning from an inmate that is from Fulton County. I know you guys are aware of the fire that took place inside of the jail. This inmate was one that was a whistleblower on the phone. The news watered down his story, but he had given me very detailed information that Lieutenant Butler had given him information two weeks prior that the smoke detector -- the extinguishers did not work. That he was left in his cell after helping save the jail -- left there collapsed, and the inmates had to notify the sheriff, or the deputies, that he had collapsed inside of his cell. They rushed him to the hospital, no word from any of this. We continue to unfold voter fraud in Fulton County as well as all the other frauds that we have going on. We continue to pour out all of these things to you guys and absolutely still nothing is being done, nothing. We're preparing for elections, we're preparing for coverups that is going on. Do you know that 2,000 voters across the street at the church over here from homeless have been -- from the Democratic Party have been --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

LA PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- put up and put into the system. Houses that are abandoned, houses have been a hundred people put there as far as them voting. You guys, this is too much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you."

LANCE ROBERTSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good day. Good day, Board of Commissioners, Chair, staff, and pillars of this phenomenal County of Fulton. My name is Lance Robertson. I serve as director of government affairs and community relations for a Natson Hotel Group. I'd like to take this opportunity just to reintroduce myself because we appreciate the opportunity on behalf Sam Patel, our CEO of Natson Hotel Group. We're here today to let you know that our hotel operates not only a significant portfolio in Georgia, but also significant portfolio here in Fulton County. We are north of a hundred and 50 hotels. We employ thousands of jobs throughout Georgia. Our hotel seats over 12,000 beds. We contribute to the hotel/motel tax revenue. Let me repeat that. We contribute to the hotel/motel tax revenue, and we are critical in the infrastructure, tourism, business travel, conventions, and major events. We view ourselves not only as hotel operators, but as long-term community partners. Natson Hotel Group actively supports human and sex trafficking awareness, training, prevention, and policy and legislation. We are committed to working collaboratively with local governments and law enforcement to continue -- and nonprofit groups to let you

know that we are part of the solution and not the problem. We also recognize Fulton County's housing crisis. We recognize your homeless challenges. We are here to offer collaborative partnerships; be it short-term emergency housing vouchers or long-term public-private partnership conversations that we can have --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

LANCE ROBERTSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- that we can convert our existing hotels to one-bedroom studios and affordable one-bedroom apartments. We're here to be with you. Natson is here to serve. My name is Lance. Thank you."

ALISON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I'm Allison, and I am with the Housing Justice League. I'm going to reiterate what people are speaking about as it relates to permanent supportive housing. It is undeniable that we have a housing crisis in the state of Georgia. It's undeniable that it's right here in Fulton County as the other metropolitan areas as well. But what we want to do is first thank you all for committing the financial support that's needed, but we also understand that this can't be something that's one off, because we're going to continue to have these issues because we haven't had any solutions. One of the solutions that we want to bring forth is that we really think about how you're taxing commercial properties. What that means in communities and how can those revenues help support long-term supportive housing. So although that, you know, you've done your due diligence for this year, we want to think in the long-term. How can we support those folks who are unhoused and even the folks that we don't see who are unhoused? How do we continue to provide those types of supportive needs to our communities? So I'm here today again to really say thank you, but also let's continue to think about how do we move forward with the right tools to tax the commercial properties in fairness, so that we all can have a safe decent affordable place to live in Fulton County. Thank you."

SHERISE BROWN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Sherise Brown and I'm a member of the Housing Justice League, and I came today to say thank you for reinvesting in supportive housing. Housing is a basic human right, and I also want to reiterate that we should probably assess these billionaires that we just given breaks and use that money toward continue supporting affordable housing and unsheltered people. Atlanta is a city that thrives, but yet we have our people outside on the streets in the freezing cold. So I think you all should assess the taxes properly and to invest more into affordable housing. Let's be proactive not reactive. These services help people get on their feet, you know. It's not a handout, it's a hand up, you know. They need somewhere safe and affordable to live as well. And we're already losing our affordable housing stock, you know, rapidly. So I think as our representatives who we vote in office, you come to our communities, we give you our concerns and our priorities; and this is, I know, number one priority in People's Town. So it is all over Atlanta and the United States. So I ask that you reconsider your tax assessment and truly tax it to where -- you know, some people are giving like the data centers \$2 billion worth of whatever, and they're not, you know, paying the right amount of taxes. So I think you all need to go back to the table, look at that, and again, I would like to thank you so much --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

SHERISE BROWN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- for reconsidering investing into the unsheltered and supportive housing."

MARGIE MCCLOUD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I came for family children service. I was trying to get down here before then, but a lot of things started showing up. I was a foster parent for ten years, and what I want -- I do not want to see family children services to be privatized because of funding. My kids are some forgotten children, and they was not taking care, because we're looking at money. And what do happen when you don't take care of the child you take away from the mother and then you put them in the foster system, and they don't do their part. Now these kids are 32 years old. They're called the unforgotten children. Arrington, you know who I am. You know I came to you -- a lot of people use my proposal, but I don't care. But here 20 years later, we're doing the same thing. I will go to the state and I will say that these kids matter. These children matter. They are people also. So we have to look about the funding, because we keep doing the same thing over and over and over, and who get hurt, the children get hurt because they're not getting proper care when they do go into the system. So what I'm saying to you, like housing. You're taking the children -- the children don't have housing. They can't -- when more foster children is coming out of the system and 80 percent, you're talking about sex traffic. If you're not taking -- when they do leave out, they are sex traffic. And Arrington, you know that because I talked to you about it. I was a foster parent. I loved what I was doing --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MARGIE MCCLOUD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- I used to love what I was doing. And Robb Pitts, you know, too. So I came to y'all many times. These kids need help. Now they're 30 years old, 25 years old, and you didn't do your part. That's what I'm saying, that you did not take care of those children, and they need help. And I need your help because I got one child that needs to go --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Thank you. Thank you."

TIM FRANZEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Tim Franzen with the American Friends Service Committee. I thank you for the opportunity to speak. I want to start by also thanking you for reaffirming the \$2.1 million commitment to housing. The decision matters to providers, to the community, and most importantly, to those that are struggling with finding stable housing. At the same time I think it's important to say that this never should have been in question when housing commitments are put at risk. It sends a message that providing for the unhoused is optional. And that's not who we should be as a county. This budget issue didn't come from nowhere. Fulton County doesn't have a housing problem; it has a revenue fairness problem. For too long, commercial property owners have not paid their fair share. And the cost of that imbalance shows up when housing and human services are suddenly on the chopping block. We should not be forced to choose between fiscal

responsibility and housing our neighbors. We can do both. If we're willing to take powerful interest -- if we're able to make powerful interests pay what they owe. Thank you again for honoring the commitment. I urge you to protect housing funding moving forward to ensure that we don't break promises. I also want to just say that I really appreciate getting a quick response from Marvin Arrington, Jr.'s office, from Bob Ellis' office, from Robb Pitts, and of course, Mo Ivory, and -- yeah, thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Next speakers, please come forward: Matthew Nursey, Bianca Garcia, Allen Hall, Sojourner Marable Grimmett, and Brendan Gill."

MATTHEW NURSEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Thank you, County Commissioners, Chairman Pitts. My name is Matthew Nursey. I am an organizer with the Housing Justice League. I wanted to start by as well thanking the county for the \$2.1 million that was committed for the supportive housing. But Tim is right, that should never have been put up on the chopping block to begin with. Fulton County has a health and human services that, unlike the city, and the city needs funding from the county desperately. We know that this is funding for 2026, but Chairman Pitts, you're quoted as saying 2027 and beyond, we'll have to find the money, because we may or may not have it. We could fund so much more if we've made the rich and wealthy corporate developers pay their fair share. We're giving them relief that they don't need. If the county would simply require their assessors to properly value the newest data centers, for example, they'd have a combined value of around \$2 billion. Yet, in 2025, they were taxed at a mere 132 million. The results are large losses for the county. If we're going to fund something as harmful as data centers, which I have a problem with to begin with, why don't we try getting the best -- as much good out of it as possible? But the data centers are just one example. Many developments are being under appraised. The county has a responsibility to the city as well. Fulton County alone is carrying out almost a 1,000 evictions a week, so exacerbating the houses crisis. So the county is playing a role in getting -- putting people on the street. Sixty percent of us live paycheck to paycheck, we're one emergency away, and Chairman Pitts, you know --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MATTHEW NURSEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- I know Tom, I know Benny, I know Malik. So I know the kind of people they are, so I know the kind of person I think that you are, and we need to get this under control: stop giving corporate developers tax breaks and selling out the communities, please."

BIANCE GARCIA, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Bianca Garcia, and I'm a resident of Fulton County. I want to start by saying thank you as well for recommitting the \$2.1 million for housing, obviously, quite important to support all Atlantans and uphold housing as a human right. That said, how we fund housing is important, and luxury properties and commercial properties must be pay their fair share in taxes. Commercial properties throughout Atlanta have been shown to be severely undervalued and that lower tax rate means money is going back into the pockets of developers and for-profit corporations, instead of towards working-class people and ensuring everyone has a roof over their head. As previously reported by the AJC in a

2023 study from Georgia Tech, \$290 million are found to be missing each year because of this undervalued commercial property issue, and some of those prime examples, as a reminder, that 725 Ponce Beltline Kroger building sold for 300 million in 2021, and was appraised thereafter for only 130 million, a difference of -- that's a difference of \$170 million. The 1180 Peachtree Tower sold for 465 million in 2022, and was later appraised at 187. That's a difference of \$278 million. Again, I reiterate that's money that went back in the pockets of developers and for-profit corporations instead of toward working-class people. That was a few years ago, but under valuation is still a continuing problem with our Fulton County Board of Assessors today, as witness most recently with undervaluing data centers. We must commit to people over profits. We must commit to supporting our unhoused neighbors with safe housing and wraparound services. And we must commit to fairly assessing and taxing all luxury and commercial properties --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

BIANCE GARCIA, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- to do their fair share so we can fund our city and take care of our people. Thank you."

ALLEN HALL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. First of all, I'd like to thank God for me being here to be able to speak to the council meeting. My name is Allen Hall. I am from the Old Wheat Street homeless encampment. In fact, I am a survivor of the Old Wheat Street home encampment. For 31 years, I lived as a homeless man in the streets of Atlanta. And I am here today to speak on behalf of all of the unhoused and homeless people that are presently and currently experiencing homelessness. And I'm here on their behalf to thank you, the Commissioners, for recommitting to the 2.1 million for housing for homeless people. I can't begin to even explain and express how much of a monumental, you understand, thing that it is for you to be able to pass this bill, because this bill actually is helping unfortunate people who are unhoused to change their lives. I mean, being housed is the catalyst to bring about not just transitional change from the streets, but a transformational change in people's lives like mine. So I want to thank you again on behalf of all the homeless people who are sleeping unhoused out there in the streets; for recommitting to this Bill. Thank you."

SOJOURNER MARABLE GRIMMETT, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners, and members of the public. It's great to see all of you this morning. My name is Sojourner Marable Grimmatt and I'm a lifelong community advocate for our most vulnerable and underserved citizens; and a resident of Fulton County District Five. For five years, I've worked in affordable senior housing during the COVID pandemic. And I saw firsthand how critical it is to keep roofs over the heads of our most vulnerable residents. Housing is not just yet shelter; it is stability, dignity, and health. In District Five, I hear from residents and service providers who see how the lack of stable housing combined with unmet behavioral health needs shows up in our neighborhoods and in our emergency rooms. Temporary fixes create lasting solutions -- temporary fixes don't create lasting solutions. Permanent supportive housing works. When housing is paired with wraparound services, especially behavioral health care, people stabilize, and public costs go down. As this budget is finalized, I'm glad to hear Chairman, the county is investing in permanent supportive housing. Choosing PSH

reflects our values, our commitment to dignity, and smart governance. Thank you."

BREDAN GILL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, everyone, my name is Brendan. I am a resident of Fulton County and I'm just a regular citizen. I don't work for any organized efforts toward housing, but I'm here to speak on my concerns regarding housing. As everyone has also stated, I'm pleased to hear that you guys have recommitted to the funding; but I just want to emphasize what everybody has emphasized about the importance of wraparound services, the importance of putting people over profit and care. As somebody that lives in the area, I watch the encampment around 120 both grow from a few people to a full encampment to seeing it being dismantled. And during that time, I have constantly thought to myself what's happening to them? Are they being thrown away? Are they being placed somewhere safe? And so it's just for me, I care about people. I want our city to be a city that reflects that care, so once again, I am appreciative of the recommitment, but I want to emphasize the importance of keeping that commitment; and emphasizing how the money is spent in wraparound services because as the woman spoke before me, temporary solutions are not what's needed. We need a permanent solution. We need services that really care for the whole person and not just trying to put someone in a place to get them out of sight. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers, please come forward: Devin Barrington-Ward, Steven Imle, Reed Stillson, Emma Jean Davis, and Charles Bourgeois."

DEVIN BARRINGTON-WARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, everyone. I want to introduce you to Fulton County's newest resident, Selah-Faye Barrington-Ward. I'm his father, Devin Barrington-Ward. He's not just our newest resident; he's our newest advocate, because he's going to follow in his daddy and his mama's footsteps. So but today, we are here to say thank you. Thank you for recommitting to the \$2.1 million that is needed for supportive housing. And the reason why I say thank you is because, as a formally homeless person myself, I know how important it was to have those resources when I was a young man that didn't have a lot of family support, but I was able to survive that experience, and I've been able to serve my community because of that. With that being said, we know that that money is so necessary for a variety of things. It's necessary because one, we can't do our diversion services the way that we need to, if there is not the supportive housing money there, those wraparound services. When we talk about the continuum of care -- you got something to say -- when we talk about that continuum of care, we have to make sure that people have those housing services so that way they can get out of the cycle of dysfunction that oftentimes takes place in this county because we could do a better job of putting people over profits. With that being said, I don't want the future for my child to begin with the weight at the expense of billionaires who are not paying their fair share in property taxes. I don't want my son to have to worry about how he's going to take care of the house that I leave to him in Fulton County because he's being --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DEVIN BARRINGTON-WARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- saddled with property taxes while millionaires and billionaires are not paying their fair share. There is money to pay for all of the things that we need to in Fulton County. And so, my hope is that we find resources, not just for this budget, but for the next one. Thank you."

STEVEN IMLE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Steven Imle. I'm a resident of Fulton County. And I'm here to say, first of all, thank you for those of you who have fought to put the \$2.1 million for permanent supportive housing back on our budget. I very much appreciate that. Real people are affected by this removal, and I'm happy to see the mistake corrected. Something else important though is missing from this budget. The homelessness wraparound services that the county is charged with delivering to the citizens of Atlanta and other municipalities that fall within this county. They're nowhere to be found. Many of you say that the cost is simply too much, and to that I would suggest that we consider properly taxing the billion-dollar corporations whose trophy properties are under assessed by this county on an average of 50 percent, which amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars of missing tax revenue. There's a concept known as social murder, which I think is an apt description for the outcomes that this Board has been producing. Every person suffering from addiction, unable to afford food, and struggling to find house -- a house is a failure of this Board. Fund the wraparound services now, otherwise every resident who languishes under the lack of policy in this county and dies in our hospitals and streets, just because they lack the means to survive is a murder that the Members of this Board commit. Thank you."

REED STILLSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Morning, y'all. My name is Reed Stillson. I'm a Fulton County resident; I'm a renter, and I live and work in the Buckhead area where I'm the leader of a local coffee shop and community hub. I first planned to come before you today to address the \$2 million cut in funding for wraparound housing services; but I am -- I believe you. I know many of you, and I trust that you'll do the right thing, and I thank you for including that in this budget. What concerns me more though, is the fact that this funding and it being cut was even a discussion to begin with. The truth about our aspirations is not found in what we say, but in what we fund. Today, you'll all be voting on a more than \$1.4 billion budget; over 850 million of which is funded by our hard-earned tax dollars. Here are a few examples of this county's priorities in this budget: arts and culture, \$7.7 million; behavioral health, 23.2 million; libraries, 32.5; elections, 32.5 million; police and the sheriff's department, \$171 million. That last one does not include the money earmarked for the Fulton jail consent decree, which is another \$31.8 million. What is truly keeping us safe here in Fulton? Is it spending one out of every five of our tax dollars on more guards, guns, and jail cells? Or might we all be better off if we focused more on funding that tackles housing, healthcare, and food insecurity? We have lot the plot. We, the hard-working citizens of Fulton, should not be asked to pay more in taxes when we get so little in return. Massive corporate owned properties and billion-dollar data centers paying at sometimes 10 percent the property taxes they should, and yet our own federal government, already slashing healthcare dollars in order to fund their own secret police in the form of ICE. It's past time we put our money where our hearts are."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Fifteen seconds."

REED STILLSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Let's stop this cycle of lifelong incarceration and allowing billionaires and corporate interests to outweigh our own. Please, support a budget that centers people, not profits or prisons. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Last five speakers in Assembly Hall please come forward: Carter Clayton, Omedaur Adams, Cherlyn Henry, Cat Leatherwood, and David Serrano."

EMMA JEAN DAVIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Emma Jean Davis. It feels real good to be back down here speaking in front of you. I have three things that I would like to share with you that I'd like for you to look at real good. Those three things are the wraparound service that we need for the homeless -- excuse me. They're real ugly -- that's not a word I want to use -- where we put people who are incarcerated in these dangerous facilities. Don't care whether they get killed or whatever. I need you to look at that again. I saw someone too looking at how you deliver the energy to seniors and to people who qualify. I've been calling FACA for three months trying to get an appointment. I'm 86 years old. I've called you, some of you to ask you how do we do this? Did you send the money back to the government? Or did you not apply for it? I'm asking you to take into consideration what you said you wanted to do when you ran. You say you wanted S-E-R-V-E the people. That's not what I see you doing. I want to know that when you say you want to do that for me, that my vote really counts. That's what people tell me. I don't vote because it don't count, because they don't see you. They don't see you. They don't hear you. They don't feel you. I'm with an organization called the Potter's Wheel Ministry. We come right over here on Prior Street on Saturdays. We feed the people food --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

EMMA JEAN DAVIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- but we also feed them something else. I got 11 minutes left. That's something I want you to deal with. You say you want my vote, then you're going to give me two minutes to talk to you, you need to extend that. I need to hear that. I'm looking for you."

CHARLES BOURGEOIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. Good morning, everyone. Hello, my name is Charles Bourgeois. I am a resident of Fulton County and I came here today out of my bed to give you guys a story. Nearly 20 years ago, South African President Zuma promised to uphold the public good and root out corruption until he didn't. And later that year, Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama, promised to relocate a controversial military base near and away from Okinawa. But he reversed, he flip-flopped. And that singular flip-flop ended up ending his political career. His party revolted and people took to the streets and he was removed from office. The moral of this story really is integrity. And when I say that, what I mean is that worldwide in Atlanta that means a whole lot. It means a lot more because we actually live here. So when we make promises to a Body and the people, those things matter. The public is watching, constituents are watching; my neighbors are watching. And so, I want to be clear about what I'm talking about here is that you've heard the line of people in talking

about wraparound services for the homeless, but when we make a commitment and a promise, those things matter. And that was voted on by you guys unanimously as a promise to the city of Atlanta regardless. So I also want to make sure that we are very clear about what we're saying. The public is watching, and you can see they are taking account, they're keeping record. Now promises matter to me, and I think they matter to the rest of the folks here, but if promises do not matter to you all, then that may be the reason why these seats look very different next year, right? So we are talking about 2019, 2025, but until 2039, we need to make sure we hold those promises to account --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "15 seconds."

CHARLES BOURGEOIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- because you guys do a fantastic job, and I want to see you guys continue to do that fantastic job for the people that you're called to serve. Thank you."

CARTER CLAYTON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Carter Clayton. I'm a Fulton County resident in the city of Atlanta, Ulmer Park neighborhood. I am also -- for the past five years, I've been employed as a public defender in the Fulton County Public Defender's office, although I am here on my -- in my personal capacity and not on behalf of the Public Defender's Office. I do want to address the proposed move -- the relocation of the Public Defender's Office from our office currently at 100 Peachtree Street to an office outside the perimeter at 515 Fairburn Road. Two minutes is not enough time for me to go over what a bad idea this is both for our office, for our clients, and for the citizens of Fulton County. But I would like to just address the timing. We are all with -- for most part, our office are trial attorneys. We are in court multiple times a week. Currently, it takes ten minutes to walk from our office to the courthouse. Under this proposal, it would take 20 to 30 minutes to drive, then find parking; and then the return trip, we're talking about an hour of wasted time. Every court appearance across our office, you'd be talking about hundreds of hours of wasted attorney time per week under this proposal, under this new location. And can you imagine if Denton or King and Spalding had a policy whereby they're just burning hundreds of hours of attorney time every week, they wouldn't, and the reason why is because they value their attorneys' time. By moving the office, this --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

CARTER CLAYTON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- this Commission would send the opposite message that they don't care about our time. They don't think what we do is valuable and they don't care about indigent defense. And I know that's not the message. I know this commission doesn't believe that, so please do not move our offices outside of downtown. Thank you."

OMEDAUR ADAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I just want to declare, this is the day the Lord has made. He has made this day, and you are here because he has brought you here. You are here in these positions because he has put you in position. We are voters. We voted, yeah. But he was the one that put you in position. But I want to tell you, and I repent before each and every one of you, that I hadn't been praying for

you as I ought to pray. But I'm going to tell you this day that God is saying to each and every one of you, he has called you to do just, to walk humbly before him, and to do right to his people, and I'm not seeing that. So I'm telling you today, repent. Turn back to God and ask him what he wants you to do, because you're going to have to stand before him one day, whether you believe it or not; you're going to stand before him and give an account to what you are doing in this city and this nation in his name, in Jesus' name, amen."

CHERLYN HENRY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Well, good morning, Commissioners. My name is Cherlyn Henry. I'm a resident, a homeowner, and a part of the prayer evangelism Potter's Wheel Ministry. We do minister food and other things to the homeless. And so, yes, I want to lend my voice of support for those \$2.1 million in wraparound services for the homeless. I'm not going to talk long, I'm just going to say you've already heard it all, but I'm going to say it again, for those of you especially who profess Jesus, remember that you said what you do or don't do for the least of these, our brethren, you've done to him or you haven't done. So I just want to remind you of that and just thank you for the good that you have done. We can all condemn, but then we are also condemnable. So as my predecessor said, we all have to bear some responsibility. But we urge and implore you to remember the least of these, the helpless, remember. And remember that we also are watching and praying. We are praying for you. Thank you."

CAT LEATHERWOOD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. Hi, my name is Cat Leatherwood. I'm a resident of Fulton County and a proud member of the Justice for Cornelius Taylor Coalition. I've also been a member of the film industry here, specifically, 10 years I've been a resident. Two years ago, the bottom of the film industry fell out, and I found myself relying on savings and working minimum wage jobs and doing what I had to do to take care of myself and my pets. I had to make hard choices and look at what mattered most. Step one was trimming down my budget, less takeout, started using the library a lot more, and was able to make sure I paid my rent to house myself. I was able to pay for the medications that I needed to stay healthy. I'm not a financial wizard, but I knew what my priorities were, and after I cut my spending, I got advice from my mom, who raised two daughters on a hairdresser salary. She said it's not enough to cut your spending but to look at where you can recoup money. I changed my phone bill, car insurance, and it made the difference in being able to keep my home or living on the streets. When things are good, we tend to look away as money slips through our fingers. As we tighten the belt, we do need to trim the budget, but we also need to view expenditures and income. The biggest step though is to decide what is nonnegotiable. And for me, it was my housing and my healthcare to treat my severe depression. However, while I appreciate you funded permanent supportive housing this year, there's been quotes that say that you have your concerns about 2027 and beyond. Well, hear some unsolicited advice from a taxpayer: instead of changing your car insurance, maybe we should change out the Board of Tax Assessors. Data centers and massive buildings in the areas are being undervalued and these developers are not paying their fair share. 2.1 million is cool, but a wise man told me I should always fight for more. The unhoused residents of Fulton deserve more. How we take care of our most vulnerable is a real reflection of who we are; who are you?"

DAVID SERRANO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "All right. Good morning. My name is David Serrano, I am a homeless person surviving here in Fulton County. I moved here from New York in September after being laid off and spending all of my savings trying to stay near my kids in New York while looking for work. I was evicted in September, and decided to move to Atlanta for more affordable living and a thriving industry in my field of work. I tried to use the local public housing services when I arrived. I filled out an online form for a caseworker assignment as directed by housing services over at 2 Peach Street. I received an e-mail two months later that my online form was erroneously capped and I needed to start the process again. I lived in my car for the past four months until it was repossessed in December. During this time, I found a part-time job as a local event security, and I volunteer at the local in town cares food pantry where I actually also receive my weekly food stipend there. As an uninsured homeless person, I was connected with Our House where I receive medical care for my type 2 diabetes and medication and mental health support as well. Last week I moved into a seven-person shared house over on the west side. However, my current salary only covers rent and not the services needed to help keep me there. I have to pay for my wireless services bill to keep my business going. I have child support to pay, which I'm not able to. Then there's food to buy, transportation, and healthcare to pay for. The list goes on. Your 2.1 million commitment was needed definitely, thank you for that. But it's the overall revenue inequality problem making our economy and society unaffordable by design. Supporting housing isn't enough. You have to support people with wraparound services in order to keep them housed. The average rent in Fulton County is \$2,000 a month. The average cost of a home is \$400,000. When these housing costs are unaffordable for many, and the corporate landlords (inaudible) --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DAVID SERRANO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- you're asking your citizens to make inhumane and stressful choices every week. A full multi-decade housing and services plan for Fulton County and Atlanta are needed. You guys have to work together. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have 17."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Seventeen. All right, we've got eight minutes left, so let's get started."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Good morning, Commissioners. The first person to speak is Gideon Jonah. Gideon Jonah. All right. The next person to speak is Robby Caban."

ROBBY CABAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Wow, lot of -- wow, can you hear me?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

ROBBY CABAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. A lot NGOs protecting their checks. NGOs like the animal control contract protecting its check. I want to say on the offset that I'm limited to two minutes like so many of the other constituents who mentioned. So my comments does not encompass all of the relevant facts. Those involved know who they are. The statement is made for public record. I am here because I am deeply concerned. I am concerned that an advocacy received a TPO, a temporary protective order, from a Fulton County Sheriff for exercising their right to speak allegedly. I'm concerned that advocates raising issues such as deed fraud, title theft, predatory HOAs, and the lack of real estate oversight are engaged during this assembly in a hostile manner by Members of this Board. As a licensed real estate broker in Georgia, I can state plainly that these practices threaten residents' homes, their primary asset, and the stability of their families as you have heard over and over. I am concerned that after Commissioners' staff acting with delegated authority, requested information from me regarding a defunct animal control contract endangering the public with Lifeline Animal Project, a private taxpayer-funded county contractor. My follow-up made on behalf of whistleblower employees, former volunteers, and taxpayers, and residents who are unable to obtain help through county systems was met with not dialogue, but intimidation and hostility. To date, there has been no response, Commissioner Ivory. I am concerned that after meeting for hours with the Lifeline -- former Lifeline supervisor and whistleblower at Fulton County Animal Services with Commissioner Thorne asking a simple question about an audit she was looking into. I was told would be reviewed was instead I was accused --"

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

ROBBY CABAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- not (inaudible) communication of attacking said Commissioner. All of this behavior, which again, this is very limited and there's certainly more, would dissuade any reasonable member of the public from exercising their freedom of speech. You say you want dialogue, but what do your actions say?"

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Katherine Martinez. Katherine Martinez. All right."

KATHERINE MARTINEZ, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I'm here. I'm here. Thank you. Good afternoon. Good morning, or should I say, Commissioners. My name is Katherine Martinez. I am a Savannah College of Art and Design graduate. I've lived and worked in Centennial Olympic Village neighborhood for 16 years. I've proudly supported your work, and I hope to continue supporting initiatives that strengthen our community. Commissioner Pitts, you recently spoke to a cohort at Fulton County Citizens University about integrity. I have to ask, how many of those citizens or even the Board itself, have actually visited the area, the crisis, the jails, the hospital, the homeless shelters before making budget decisions? In our neighborhood, youth crime is rising. The Boys and Girls Club has closed. Truist Bank has closed, and we have two homeless shelters plus over 100 unhoused students at Centennial Academy Charter School. These are visible signs of needed investment in a community with significant need. While emergency services are essential, exits from homelessness required pathway, access to skills, employment, food stability, community connection. The Centennial Project delivers

those pathways through gardens, workforce training, and group development; strengthening neighborhood stability, reducing long-term strain on hospitals, jails and shelter. Activating neighborhood parks during FIFA helps distribute traffic, public safety, and economic activity beyond downtown ensuring global investment benefits, local residence, and not just central business district."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Fifteen seconds."

KATHERINE MARTINEZ, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "There are solutions evidence backed programs that other cities have successfully adopted. The question is what will be the legacy of this Board? Will it be one of change and innovation or one of missed opportunities? I ask that you develop (indiscernible.) infrastructure and park activation remains reflected in the budget. Thank you."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Maggie Goldman."

MAGGIE GOLDMAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. I am unmuted. You guys can hear me, right?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

MAGGIE GOLDMAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. I'm hearing a consistent trend today. Your constituents are asking you to support resources for homeless families and individuals, especially wraparound services or case management. I'm also hearing how many of us see that you can raise millions of dollars by properly appraising commercial properties. I'm asking you today for \$230,000 to fund count homeless families and individuals in North and South Fulton so we can begin the process of providing them the case management they need to successfully move out of these hotels. This count is important because the point in time count we perform as a HUD requirement does not allow us to count homeless in hotels. The only way we count these families is to intentionally canvas each hotel. Based on the results of 714 families counted in 42 hotels in DeKalb, the potential hotels identified in North and South Fulton being 200 hotels, we could be looking at 1,500 to 6,000 families and individuals. Thank you for voting to appoint Calvin Thompson to the Fulton Continuum Care Board today. He and I are both deeply invested in this hotel count as we know these families exist and many cannot receive any help because there are limited beds in the programs that we do have available. At least 80 residents of Fulton e-mailed you in the last two days to fund this hotel account. Please consider this an issue that both North and South Fulton are eager to address. The data from this count can spearhead the process which will likely involve private funding to support the solution. Thank you."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Kirt Beasley. Kirt Beasley."

KIRT BEASLEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good morning. My name is Kirt Beasley. Good morning to Chairman Pitts and fellow Commissioners. I'm calling today to strongly encourage the approval of funds to partner with the city of Atlanta to support our unhoused population. As a retired Lieutenant Colonel with the Fulton County Sheriff's Office, I have seen firsthand how often unhoused individuals end up in jail, not because they are criminals always, but sometimes because they're simply trying to survive. During the winter months, especially, many commit minor offenses just to escape the cold. With dangerously cold and wet weather approaching this weekend, the likelihood of the jail population will increase extremely. The jail is already overcrowded, so this partnership will help reduce the burden preventing the detainees from having to sleep inside of boats on the floors. I would love to see how some of the unhoused residents could move forward to being placed in a more stable housing situation. If there are concerns about how the funds will be used, I strongly support assigning an oversight to follow the money and ensure accountability. I believe in a strong system of checks and balances. This is both a public safety issue, and a humanitarian responsibility. Supporting this partnership will save resources, improve safety, and show compassion for some of our most vulnerable residents. Thank you all for your time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Councilwoman Bond, I didn't see you. Forgive me. Thank you for being with the Councilwoman Kelsie Bond, city of Atlanta. Next speaker."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Amy Fox. Amy Fox."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Councilwoman -- hold, one second. Councilwoman Willis? Where's Councilwoman Willis. Thank you for being with us. Next speaker."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Alyce Hackett. Alyce Hackett. Next person to speak is Barbara Jone. Barbara Jone. Next person to speak is Birdel Jackson. Birdel Jackson."

BIRDEL JACKSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Yes, this is Birdel Jackson. I'm speaking on behalf of the Reparations Committee, and I'm glad that you extended the time period to 24 months. So please continue with the study because, as a Fulton County resident of over 46 years, I want to see the end results and the recommendations. Thank you again."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is David Garcia. David Garcia. Next person to speak is Denise Wells. Denise Wells. Next person to speak is Gladys Adeniyi-Jones. Gladys Adeniyi-Jones. Next person to speak is Kari Guenther. Kari Guenther. Next person to speak is Phyllis Hendricks. Phyllis Hendricks. Next person to speak is Randy Hessell. I'm sorry, Randy Hubbell. Randy Hubbell. Next person to speak is Robbie Huff. Robbie Huff. Next person to speak is Trudye Nesbit. Trudye Nesbit. With that said, this concludes your Zoom public comments."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Madam Clerk, where are we?"

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, County Manager's items under Open and Responsible Government, **26-0032**, Finance: Review and approval of the Fiscal Year 2026 Final Adopted Budget and Fiscal Year 2026 Resolutions."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Mr. Manager, Madam CFO."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY ANDERSON: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Commissioners and Chairman, we sent the operations report under separate cover to allow more time for discussion of the budget. Certainly, if you have any questions of that either during this period or after, we'll be prepared to answer those. We're here with the latest updates on the 2026 budget recommendation. I look forward to questions, adjustments, and then hopefully approval. As I learned long ago, the system will produce what it's designed to produce; and as you know, for the last several years, it has produced a budget recommendation that assumes a consistent millage rate, based growth that allows for and accommodates natural expense growth, but with constraints on expansion and new program growth. In 2026, we included 53 million in reserves for both known and unknown requirements in the DOJ consent order that we've discussed before. With the Fulton County Jail, that represents over three times what we spent in 2025, but it does test the limits of this approach that we've been using. As we've received Board of Commissioner feedback, we have included items such as BOE compensation enhancements, solicitor general support for animal services cases, state court operations expansion to accommodate the two additional courts, and then the expansion of supportive housing. These last two items are offset with a revised projection from actuaries that Sharon -- or Ms. Whitmore can discuss, that we've just received in terms of defined benefits contribution plan. So that is good news. The state court operations ask was 5.1 million. In the last meeting, you had instructed us to go back and find ways to accommodate that which we have, vis-à-vis, again these actuarial changes. Also, the permanent supportive housing ask was for 2.1, 2.2 million to cover the additional units that are coming on now projected in 2026. While we seek additional funding from state DPHDD and with the recently announced 50 million-dollar grant for homeless support initiatives, I think that's even more realistic. We recognize that there are also some different scenarios to consider, so certainly we look forward to robust discussion and, as always, our work represents a recommendation, the decision rests with you and we recognize that fully. So Mr. Chairman, we have a brief presentation to update on the changes that have been made and where that leads us as well as other scenarios. So with that, I will ask Ms. Whitmore, our CFO, to lead that discussion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Ms. Whitmore, you have the floor."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Next slide, please. As the County Manager indicated in his comments, this presentation is really more to share the scenarios that we were asked to produce, based on the discussion and direction received at the last meeting, specifically to address the request that had come from Commissioners as well as the scenario that would include all of the

unfunded operating requests; and then to provide the millage rate equivalency with that. So based on that request, we have developed five scenarios to share with you today, and they are being presented in the descending millage rate equivalency orders, so from highest millage rate to lowest millage rate. Next slide, please. So the first scenario that we have to share is the requested scenario to capture all unfunded departmental enhancement requests. The way that these scenarios are crafted, we start with the revised proposed budget, and then we are showing anything that would need to be incremental to that revised proposed budget in order to address the requested action. So in this particular scenario, we have added a total of a \$151.8 million in spending, bringing the total general fund budget from 1 billion 73 million to 1,225.6 billion, and that would increase the estimated millage rate from 9.26 to 11.47. Next slide, please. The second scenario is the one that is based upon requests received from Commissioner Ivory. And again, it takes -- the basis is the revised proposed budget of 1 billion 73.7 million. It is adding in a total of 59.3 million in additional spending, bringing the total revised proposed general fund budget to 1 billion 133.1 million at an estimated millage rate of 10.13 mills. Next slide, please. This third scenario is based upon the request received from Commissioner Barrett. Starting again at the 1 billion 73.7 million. This scenario adds 28.3 million in additional spending, bringing the total revised proposed general fund budget to 1 billion 102 million, and would increase the estimated millage rate from 9.26 to 9.67. Next slide, please. This slide -- this next scenario was based upon the information in the comments that Commissioner Arrington had made during the last discussion, and we do have one change to the slide that we weren't able to get done in time for today's presentation, so I'm just going to mention it while I'm talking about it; but in this particular scenario, the request increased -- the revised proposed budget from 1 billion 73.7 million by 750,000. The second item that Commissioner Arrington's office added was the homeless head count request -- a homeless headcount of 250,000, so that brings the total to 750 in that additions. And then that would bring the total revised proposed budget to 1 billion 74.2 million and would increase the millage rate from 9.26 to 9.28. And then the last scenario is -- next slide, please. The last scenario is -- shows the effect of the revisions that we made from the last Board meeting on the budget primarily showing the request to go back and revisit the funding for HB 625 for the addition of the two new state court judges as well as providing the funding for the permanent supportive housing. As the Manager indicated in his comments, the source from that is coming from within the general fund budget already; we did receive during last week's defined benefit contribution retirement committee meeting, we did receive the evaluation update from our actuaries, which is what is allowing us to reduce the plan contribution for 2026. So the budget amount doesn't change in total; we were able to just reallocate from within and the estimated millage rate would remain at 9.26. Those are the scenarios that we were asked to provide so that we could show the impact of each on the estimated millage rate, Mr. Chairman. So with that, I don't have anything else relative to this particular subject. I would just say that we are prepared today to make changes to the budget as the Board takes action so that we can update you on the impact of any decisions that you make today."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Thank you. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you. I see the 2.5 that's being added for the state court, so that -- this is the additional 2.5 for the additional requests made by state court, correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. Does that amount include the sheriff staffing the courtroom?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "We added -- we already had some resources in for security, but we increased the amount to ensure that we can provide two -- I believe it's two deputy sheriff positions per courtroom."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. Thank you. That is good to know. Because none of those other people can really use the courtroom if there's no sheriff to maintain security and peace, so glad to hear that. Glad that we were able to find the funding for the permanent supportive housing and for the additional 250 units that the city of Atlanta wanted to roll out. My understanding is we were already funding 300 of those units, and that the city requested to roll out an additional 250 units this year. So this 2.1 covers the additional 250 units, and the funding for 300 units was already included in the budget previously, correct?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, FC COO: "Yes, sir, and it brings the total county investment to 4.8 million, for 550 units' total."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay, and I think that, you know -- maybe -- I don't know if anyone saw it, but on my slide I had two requests: one was \$500,000 for the summer youth jobs program, which we have run for every year except for last year, and I have no idea in the world why it was not included in last year's budget nor included in this year's budget. But I think that -- you know, a wise said that it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men. And I think that if we make that investment in our youth, you know, I think that's a small amount of investment to make in our youth to make sure that they stay busy during the summer and have things to keep them out of trouble, right? An idle mind can lead to trouble sometimes, and so, colleagues, I hope that you all will consider investing in our youth, the \$500,000 that we've had since I originally got it put into the budget back in 2015 when we were experiencing the slider crimes -- maybe that was 2016, when we were experiencing the slider crimes. And additionally, if we're talking about the permanent supportive housing, I think one of the bigger issues, or an additional issue is, because we got the point-in-time count coming up, but the problem is that it doesn't include the people staying in hotels. And so, DeKalb just did a study and they found out they've got, I don't know the number, 1300 or however many people staying in homeless or unsheltered people staying in these weekly hotels. And so, I'm also requesting 250,000 so that we can do a similar headcount of homeless and unsheltered people here in Fulton County. And so, that will give us a better idea of actually how many homeless people we have, because the current point-in-time count doesn't include those people. And so, I'm hopeful that we can include that \$250,000 as well; and look like maybe we can go back one slide --

maybe one or two slides -- look like it doesn't really affect the millage rate much from that 9.26 to 9.27 and 9.28; yeah, 9.27. I think with the additional 250 for the headcount of the hotel, homeless people staying in weekly hotels, I think, Madam CFO said it that it will be 9.28, although I guess it's showing 9.27, but that 250 is not on there. So Colleagues, I would ask for your support for the summer youth jobs program, the \$500,000 as we funded for numerous years, as well as an additional \$250,000 to make sure that -- to make sure that we can properly account for all of the homeless people, particularly in North Fulton and South Fulton that are not being included, or not counted as part of the point-in-time count. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Anybody else? Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, County Manager and team for working on this. I know you guys have put a lot of hours into all of these changes. Sabrina in particular, has done an amazing job as she always does. So thank you for that. I do want to say that I feel a little bit like the way this is being presented on these slides is a little disingenuous, because the implication here is that the only way to pay for any of the things that Commissioners Arrington, Ivory, or myself are requesting is through an increase in the millage rate, and that is just not true. I pulled out the other day and read some of the things, and I just glanced through the very sort of disorganized data that was sent to me about what is sitting in nonagency other, which for the public just as a reminder, we have almost \$80 million sitting in other; and there is \$5 million sitting there -- I'm sorry, there's \$10 million sitting there for a jail debt service. We know that we are not using 5 million of that this year. So there's 5 million additional dollars that can go towards paying for some of these additional things should the Board agree to that. You know, there's also a gender equality initiative contingency that we don't use. That's been sitting there year after year after year for \$88,000. There's a million set aside for compensated absences. There's two million set aside for professional services, unknown for what kind of professional services? There is a contingency set aside for senior transportation that we have not used. There are all kind of things that I think could be looked at in the budget to find some additional funds to pay for some of these critical things that we have asked for. And so, to say that there is only one choice, black or white, millage rate or nothing, I don't think is accurate. And you know, I think, you will all say, as I've heard many times, oh, we need this contingency for that or this contingency for that, or we've always done this and we've always done that. I think the public would much rather see us spend a million dollars on women's health as an example than other, so there is other money here. There is work to be done. We're constantly being told to tighten our belts. The departments have all been asked to cut one percent from their budgets, but what kind of work has been done under finance to cut one percent, five percent. The number, I think a 5 percent reduction in nonagency is \$20 million. Over 20 -- I think it's over 25 percent of our budget is sitting in nonagency. And somehow magically we have no pennies to spend, but when we decide we want to spend something, we find five million that we don't have to put into the pension this year. I just think it's presented unfairly in this document. I don't think any of us -- and I don't want to speak for my colleagues. But I don't think any of us want to raise the millage rate, what we want to do is provide a level of service to the community that I see is mandatory. If we are not funding our justice system, this

is the thing I talk about all the time -- if we are not funding our whole entire justice ecosystem, we will never solve the problem at the jail, period. And for us to just say well, we are married to a particular millage rate or we can't cut money from a contingency that we know we're not going to use, it's just -- it's just not acceptable. So I am going -- I know that I do not have four votes on this Board, but I am going to continue to advocate for funding for the entire justice ecosystem. And the list that I provided is based on what was asked for by the justice partners. It's not all of what they asked for. It's an attempt to be reasonable and try to find some happy medium with what they've asked for and what we can afford; and I would say as I would say about all the things I'm requesting here, that I am not -- my requests are not 28 million or zero. My requests are what can we do for these departments and for these types of services that I'm asking for here at whatever level? I would love to see a million go to the federally qualified health center pilot program to try to help people pay their co-pays so that they can get healthcare, especially in the current environment where the ACA subsidies have been cut. But if this Board doesn't want to do a million, it doesn't have to be a million. Let's do 500,000. Let's do something. If you don't want to, you know, stand up for our family justice center, a solution for victims of domestic violence that will dramatically change the way the community addresses these problems, putting all the services for domestic violence victims under one roof, so that the kids who are survivors, or the children of survivors have a chance at a real life. If we don't want to put two million towards that, let's put a million towards it. Let's put 500,000 towards it. Let's do something. To say no to all these things, just no to the public defender, no to the solicitor general, no to the magistrate court, no to the juvenile court, no to veterans funding, it doesn't have to be, yes, or no. If we can't do it all, let's do something. Again, I know I don't have the votes here, but I'm at least going to continue to advocate for these things. I do want to say that I put two additional things on this list that did not -- I did not ask for last meeting and just quickly, I want to tell you what they are. One is money for DFCS. I'm sure many of you saw the story that DFCS is losing funding at the state level; but even before I was aware of that, it was on my list and I just neglected to include it. So I'm asking for the additional funding that DFCS has asked for, Department of Family and Children Services, this is something that again is critical work in our community. We need to make sure our caseworkers are paid and that the families have the support that they need. And then for just a tiny little hundred thousand dollars, I'm asking for us to help the Blue Heron Nature Preserve. We give \$200,000 a year to the Chattahoochee Nature Center, which is a very well-funded organization. We give \$200,000 a year to the Bear Creek Nature Center, which is coming along great. They've got a ways to go, and I know that Commissioner Arrington, you've advocated for the fairness in the north and the south, Blue Heron Nature Preserve is a similar type of place right smack dab in the middle of the county, and they are a nonprofit that runs it. It's wetlands that are being protected, and they have lost some federal funding and some grant money, and they are going to lose some rent income, because their current building is not working, and they will have to let the tenants leave as they try to figure out another building. So I'm asking that we sort of invest in sustainability and programs for children at these kind of places equally throughout the county. That's all I have."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So -- okay. I'll come back to it. Commissioner Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to start our budget discussion today by noting that I have been pushing for permanent supportive housing funding for our unhoused population. It's been a priority for me, and I made sure it remained front and center throughout our discussions at the last meeting. I'm glad to see that the funding has now been identified, and I want to thank the County Manager and staff for helping move it forward as well as the Chairman for adding his support to the commitment of these funds. I hope we will honor our commitment in the years to come in the agreement that we have already signed with the city of Atlanta. We were also able to find the necessary funding for the new state court operations. Again, I'm glad to see this included in today's proposed budget. These are examples of why it matters to take ownership of priorities and advocate persistently. It also highlights the need to look through our current funding sources. I am glad we were able to find the funds for those items. I would hope, we can do that with more items moving forward, especially the items that I have on my proposed budget. The budget I am recommending reflects my commitment for ensuring the funds, the things we know are necessary for our residents. So I put this budget -- put forward this budget because I believe we have an obligation to be honest and truthful about what Fulton County needs to fund. This is our funding existing responsibilities addressing active crises, and maintaining service-level residents already rely on. Today's vote is clearly -- my proposal today is about clearly identifying those goals. So let's go to my first one which is a reduction in restoring the one percent reduction to departments. I do not support an across-the-board reduction to every department. A one percent cut may sound small to you, but in practice, it reduces service capacity, strains staff, and delays work that eventually costs more to fix. Departments are already operating with limited flexibility; restoring this funding is about maintaining services continuity and operational stability. If we reduce capacity now, we absorb those costs later through overtime contracts or emergency budget amendments. Let's go to ORCA Light, which is \$25 million I advocated for courts and case backlogs. And I will agree 100 percent with Commissioner Barrett when she said, if we do not deal with the core problem, which is the underfunding of our courts and our jail, we will never fix the problem that we find ourselves in a crises right now. Courts, jails, hospitals that's our responsibility and those are our crises today: courts, jails, hospitals. We have a crisis in each of those three categories. This funding \$25 million supports court operations that were previously covered under and funded under federal ORCA dollars, particularly work that addresses case backlogs and delays. Those delays directly affect conditions in the Fulton County Jail. People sleeping on floors which today I believe the count is 61 people sleeping on the floors, is the predictable results of under resourced court operations. If we do not adequately fund the courts, we pay for it elsewhere; jail costs, legal exposure, and increased scrutiny. This is a necessary investment to stabilize the system that is already under strain and proven to work. That money that was given during COVID brought the case backlog down and the population of the jail. This is not will it work, we know it does work. Let's restore the funds and bring the backlog down. We know that we have legal fees coming from President Donald Trump. Right now we know \$16.2 million. Why would we not plan for it? It is a known cost that is coming. The legal fees included in my budget are not speculative. We know these costs are coming, and we know that they will have to be paid. Leaving them out of the budget does not reduce our exposure. It creates midyear shortfalls and forces reactive decisions. Budgeting for

known legal obligations is a basic responsibility that we should do. Consent decree costs: What is in the budget right now is not the amount of money that we need for the consent decree. It is not adequate. We have known costs of over \$60 million, so I have adjusted for that. The County Manager's budget allocates approximately 53 million for consent decree compliance. Based on what we know, that cost is closer to 60 million. Consent decree obligations are mandatory. Underfunding them increases the risk of penalties, enforcement actions, and higher costs later. If we know the obligation to be 60 million, then we should budget 60 million. Veteran services: I included a full \$1 million for veteran services. At our last meeting, the money for veterans funding occurred by reallocating dollars from arts and culture and community service grants. I do not believe we should be -- I do not believe we should support veterans by weakening other essential services. This approach funds veterans directly and transparently without shifting strain from elsewhere. The probate court weddings: The one thing we do so well, the one thing people love to come to Fulton for and that Judge Kenya Johnson has grown into an immensely popular service that the county provides and at zero cost, because she gets that money right back. So why would it in revenue? So why wouldn't do that? Probate Court weddings are a public service with real operational needs. This funding support staffing, and admission capacity to ensure consistent service delivery. It's a modest predictable investment that ties to services the county already provides. And \$250 that we're going to get back is just a small drop in the bucket. Let me talk about funding flexibility and fiscal reality. Something I'd like to educate constituents on the realities, not the stories that are told by politicians, but the realities. Throughout this process, we have seen funding drawn for nonagency sources including the nonagency pension fund to cover operating needs. That tells me there is flexibility within our financial structure that deserves closer examination. We also know there are large nonagency buckets including significant sums broadly categorized as other to the tune of \$80 million. At the same time, the net new investments in my proposed budget total approximately \$59 million, less, less than the 69 million midyear underrun we experienced last year. It's amazing when there is a conversation about raising the millage rate that we all of a sudden find money. But we never can find it when we are adopting the budget. So I do not accept the premise that these needs are unaffordable. It is entirely possible that through reallocation and closer review of existing funds, these obligations can be met without increasing the tax burden at all. Quit the lie that I just want to raise the millage rate. It is not true. I want to find the resources in a budget that somehow, when the majority of this Commission needs to find a way to pay for something, they find it. And then when we come back in the middle of the year like in 2025, we found 69 million more dollars so that we wouldn't have to increase the millage rate. Well, I'm asking for 59 million, so that should not be a problem at all for the majority of this Board. That is why it's important to clearly identify the expenditures first. Today's vote is about acknowledging what Fulton County needs to fund. After that, we should continue working with the finance department and the county management to review nonagency funds, examine pension balances, understand large unitemized categories, and identify responsible reallocation options. But we should not underfund our known needs while waiting for that work to happen. First, we establish the necessities, then we determine the most responsible way to fund them; that is how a budget should operate. I want to be very clear. Today's vote does not set a final tax rate. That decision happens midyear. What we are doing today is

setting the budget, identifying the costs we already know that this county has to cover. Those are not hypothetical expenses; they are known obligations, active crises, jails, courts, hospitals, and services that must continue. Refusing to acknowledge those costs today does not reduce them; it only pushes the burden into emergency decision-making later in the year. Approving this budget is about honest and responsible at the front end of the process. We can and should continue to examine revenues, reallocations, and inefficiencies before the tax rate is finalized midyear -- excuse me, but we cannot do that responsibly if we start by pretending these costs do not exist. Today is about setting the budget, the tax rate comes later. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you. I want to echo what Commissioner Barrett said. I think, Mr. Manager, that you know these budget request items in the presentation of these items and tying them to increase millage rates is not accurate at all; and does, you know, portray that we want to increase the millage rate, right? I mean that's basically what these slides and presentation do. If we can, let's go back one more, because I want to go back to the request from the departments. So Mr. Manager, what I would like for us to do -- and maybe it's not part of the discussion today for budget, but how do we look at diversifying our revenue so that we can fund that amount for next year, right? How would we work with the tax assessor to properly assess the commercial properties so we can raise the amount of money that the departments say that they need in order to operate at optimal -- you know, in an optimal fashion, right? And so -- you know, I think it's really unfair to Commissioners Barrett, Ivory, and I to put up this slide and to say that it's a millage rate increase and tied to that when we know that we just had \$89 million in underruns. You know, I'm not the finance, right? But what I don't understand, why don't we have an underrun line item as part of the budget? We know every year on average that there is \$75 million in underruns, so that's obviously somewhere, and that's in addition to the 80 million that Commissioner Barrett's talking about in nonagency, right? So that's \$150 million. And that could -- wow, a hundred and fifty-one, is what they ask for, 80 plus 75 is 150. That's what they ask for. They asked for a hundred and fifty-one million. And miraculously, I just found a hundred and fifty million, 80 million plus 70 million is a hundred and fifty million. I understand that we may not necessarily be there today, right? But how do we diversify our revenue streams? How do we properly assess the commercial properties so we can get here and make sure that the departments have what they need or what they believe that they need in order to operate in an optimal fashion? Commissioner Ivory, I agree with you on a lot of what you said, but I do not agree that we're going to owe Donald Trump any money. The law says that there has to be misconduct and a disqualification. The judge in this case, Judge McAfee, found that there was no misconduct, but he did disqualify. And so, I don't believe we're going to owe any money and even if we do, I don't think it's going to come out of this year, because I imagine that there will be appeals. And I don't know how much we have in the risk fund, if we have enough to cover it, but again, a lot of that is timing, right? And so, you know, I think we just -- I think we got to do a better job, Mr. Manager, of getting these department heads what they need, what they believe they need to run their departments, just like we give you what you need to run your department, right, to run the whole county. And, you

know, I think we got to find ways to get additional revenue; and certainly, you know, nonagency where Madam CFO hides all the bodies and the money, is a great place and additionally underruns. We absolutely know that there is going to be at least 75 million in underruns. And so, you know, I don't understand why we don't have a line item and I don't know -- you know, I'm not a mathematician, but I don't know why we couldn't just say oh, you know, we're going to -- every year for the last 12 years, we've had \$75 million in underruns, so that's an additional \$75 million that can be used to fund these requests, right? And the challenge that we have is that we've become accustomed to using that money to put with next year's budget to help balance next year's budget. And I think we perhaps need to dig a little deeper and find the revenue and obviously -- I don't know how much revenue we would get from properly assessing these commercial properties, but that would be in addition to the 80 million in nonagency and the 75 million in underruns. So then we'd have likely a lot more than a hundred and fifty million available to fund all of these other requests. So hopefully, we can work with Mr. Conley and our tax assessors to find out where the gap is on these commercial properties, right? Because it's not fair to individual property owners that they are bearing, you know, the burden, right? And that their properties are being properly assessed, but that these commercial properties are not. So hopefully, we can -- you can help us work in that regard, Mr. Manager, so that we can bring in the revenue that we need in order to properly fund all of these requests. You know, frankly, I think we have it now, but you know at least half, right, through underruns. But I don't know what the will of the Board will be, but certainly I just don't think it's fair presenting a document that says that we want -- we made additional budget requests and that these budget requests would yield a millage rate. Now maybe that was part of our instructions to you to find out, hey, how much would these things cost and would there be a millage rate increase, but I think that would be really conditional, right? That would be conditional based on us not using the underruns; based on us not using nonagency, right? We have \$5 million in the budget for 2025 for the center at the city of Atlanta, right? It's similar to the recovery --"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY ANDERSON: "-- the diversion center?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "The diversion center in the city of Atlanta, and I don't think we even used a million of that five million, right? And so, there's money all in our budgets, and you know -- and I don't know what the numbers are on that and maybe someone will have an update for us on that later. But, you know -- you know, we didn't use that five million last year. I doubt we'll use it this year because no one even was really using it. The cities didn't even know it was there. No one was sending people there. And so, I'll stop there, but we need to find more money -- I want to use this one point too as the baseline for what's needed going forward, right? That should be the baseline for what's needed, and then we need to find the revenue in order to get it done, and that doesn't mean that there would have to be a millage rate increase. So I'll stop there."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to add a couple of things. First of all, again, not that anybody is going to -- it's very clear that the four

people who are controlling this Body are not even weighing in, and don't have anything to say. Thank you. Okay. Thank you, Commissioner Thorne, for getting in the queue and have something to say, I appreciate that. But you know, I do want to say whether it will be considered by the group or not, that I am supportive of Commissioner Arrington's request for the youth summer program and I also wanted to talk briefly about the hotel count conversation. I know there was about 200 and something thousand dollar request and I just wanted to sort of bring that over to you, County Manager, and to you, Dr. Roshell, perhaps to just talk a little bit about -- because I do acknowledge that there is a real problem with people who are sort of one step away from unhoused, living in these extended stay properties that are often very bad conditions, and then because I think of their status, they are not eligible for some of the programs that unhoused people are eligible for. So my question I think to you is what are we already doing in terms of -- and to be clear, the program Commissioner Arrington is talking about, we all got a lot of emails about, is really about just step one, which is doing the count. So I guess my question is what have we done in the past, what are we doing currently, what can we do? I know this is like kind of, you know, it's one day's notice because we talked about this briefly yesterday, but if you could just shed some light sort of on where we are on that subject matter right now."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, FC COO: "Thank you for the question, Commissioner Barrett. So Commissioner Arrington is absolutely right; we are conducting our point-in-time count over the next couple of days, a specific count in the north and the south. The budget that we have for the point-in-time count is not including any coverage for the individuals that live in hotels. HUD, several years ago, made a decision that if a constituent is living in an extended stay that we were to no longer include them as a part of our unhoused community, so we do not have a mechanism to count those individuals. Some of the things that the Commissioners may want to consider if they move forward with funding, the first step, which is the assessment, would be the associated expenses for a new program. Specifically, a new program of this nature is anywhere from 200 -- 2,000 -- I'm sorry, 2,000 to 9,000 per family. The estimate is that we may have 1500 to 6,000 families. The costs associated with that are for things like deposits. Things like trying to remove some of the barriers associated with why individuals have had to rely on the extended-stay community, things like criminal records, prior evictions, unstable employment are very difficult to correct in a short period of time. And so, the associated cost in what would be required is very intensive, not that it is isn't a good thing to do, but it is a very intensive program, and we currently do not have any funding in our homeless support services which are primarily dedicated to our coordinated entry program which is \$3 million. That is for individuals who are considered by HUD criteria as homeless. So with a new program of this nature, it would take a significant investment to provide perhaps a pilot program or something of that nature so that we could then stand up the infrastructure which we do not currently have for a program of this nature."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, I think, when we talked about it yesterday, I was in agreement. You know, we're not really prepared to -- first of all, we don't know how big the problem is in Fulton County which is obviously what the count is all about. But we also -- you know, right now, certainly in this moment, you know, with a few days' notice are not really in a position to look at what all the steps should be to start to

address the problem. But I do think -- and I would ask that county management certainly look at this issue, not so much in terms of what program we can stand up as a county, but how can we -- perhaps we can partner with other counties. Perhaps there's something that can be done statewide to sort of quantify the problem. Perhaps there's things we can do to lobby at the federal level, to have some changes made. Maybe there's some things we can do to lobby at the state level. So I really don't know what the solution is having not had significant amount of time to study it, but I do think it is a real issue. We saw that in the situation in the hotel in North Fulton that -- where people were being evicted from there, and that, you know that these people sort of fall in this gap between unhoused and living in an apartment and having the services that when something goes wrong in an apartment that you can use. And so, there's sort of been this gray area; and I do think it's worth us elevating the issue and trying to see who we can partner with and how we can not only count, but begin to come up with some sort of a strategy again, perhaps with partners, whether they be private -- you know, a private/public partnerships or oh, whatever it might be. But I think we're just at the beginning of the conversation and I would love to see us take it further."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, FC COO: "And thank you, Commissioner Barrett, we certainly will also look at the criteria for the \$50 million that Governor Kemp has just announced to see if that is of an option or an avenue to explore this --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- if there's room in that language, maybe there's a way to start helping sooner than later. Oh, one other thing. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I did just wanted to say -- I thank you for getting in the queue, Commissioner Thorne. I do think this is the time to have the dialogue. This is what the County Manager is asking for. You know, I would love to hear what everybody's thoughts are about how we move forward. You know, I was hoping to participate in a discussion. So with that --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I just want to first say to Commissioner Arrington that, you know, I don't think we should have to give Donald Trump any money, like at all, right? And I don't agree with the county having to pay for the legal fees, but if anybody has been watching, when you think that there couldn't be a way that a judge could rule in favor of something that President Trump is doing there, we are with the ruling from the judge on the thing we thought could not happen at all. So I'm not confident that just because there was no misconduct found, that -- that means we won't have to pay the legal fees because we've seen some really wild things happening since President Trump was elected. So it seems to me to be right as a part of our risk assessment to just think about allocating those funds that we might have to pay. We can't just plan to pay zero. That would be irresponsible and because we do, do that, we do plan, we put money away for a possible bond issuance for the jail, for pension obligations, for infrastructure, this is why I put this in the budget because I do think it is coming down the line and it is important to put it in there. So that is really the reason why I included it and I just wanted to make sure there was no misunderstanding on whether I think that President Trump should be given any legal fees back for that. But I do also want to say that I know, I've been in deep conversation with the County

Manager and his team since the first proposed budget came out, and it is disappointing to me that even after all of the conversations that have happened, your proposed budget doesn't still include any of the things that Commissioners, Barrett, Arrington and I want to have in it. And when I asked you, because I think it's important for people to understand how the process happens. The County Manager is responsible for submitting the proposed budget, and when I sat and talked to the team and I said well, why are we not including all of these things, the answer was because I've been directed by leadership to do it this way. And I know that's a tough position to be in for all of the County Manager's staff that sees these needs that we have, but are being told by our leadership to make sure it lands a certain way. And to make sure it lands a certain way hasn't changed at all with any of Commissioner Barrett, my, or Commissioner Arrington's requests. So this was a fabulous exercise we went through to see what it would look like if we properly funded the county for the services that we're going to provide, but none of it is going to be voted on by the four Commissioners here who have already said this is what we want to see and that's what we're going to vote for. So let's be clear that this is about politics and not people. This is not about what the services are that are needed because when I sat with the County Manager and talked about the ORCA money that was there during COVID that reduced the backlog and reduced the population in jail, it was his suggestion to do it again. He even put his branding hat on and called it ORCA Light, which was a name we could give it to give those funds back so all the departments would get it and know exactly what it was for. It's to continue the work you had done before, to bring the backlog down and reduce the jail population, but it's not in your proposed budget. And that's not because the County Manager doesn't believe that the backlog needs to be reduced or even that it connects to the population in the jail, it's because he's been told not to include it in there. So let's just be honest. As a Commissioner -- listen, if I'm here, if I'm not. It's okay. I want the people to understand what this budget is. And what Fulton County Commissioners have a responsibility to you to explain to you what this budget is. The biggest thing I want, budget transparency. So when Commissioner Arrington and Commissioner Barrett and I were talking about this \$80 million other line, it is because like what's the other? The 61 people sleeping on the floor, are they a part of the other? Are the things that we know are going to come up reducing departmental services by one percent; is that part of the other? We talk about the improper appraisal of commercial properties. I know that's coming up now a lot, it's an election year. Those big ideas come up in election years, but this Board hasn't dealt with that for decades. That's not new. That's not some bright new idea, oh, it's an election year, now everybody's going to start fixing the way commercial properties are being appraised. That's been going on, on this Board for decades. It hasn't gotten fixed yet. So let's be real about what are the things that have to be fixed in budget transparency. We have to go into that budget and fix it. It's not right. Every mid-year when people are -- when the conversation about the millage rate is about to come, and, you know, the minority three of us start talking about why, it's because those other lines aren't open up to be used. Nobody wants to increase the millage rate. Guess what, if anybody increased the millage rate it would affect all three of us also personally. We live in Fulton. So does my aging mother at 85 and so does my father who's dealing with dementia at 84. All live in Fulton and have to pay taxes. I'm concerned about all of that for all members of my family. So we have the money although where is it? Let's overhaul the budget and find it, not just when there's a press

conference in the freezing cold and people are pressured to find money for homeless people, then we found it. Not when all the judges have to come here and say you asked us to get two judges, we put it on our legislative agenda, we needed two state court judges, we got them, now we're not funding them. They have to come on down here and beg us all, and then we found the money. We can find the money for a hotel count. We can. We should. And then they're going to be associated costs with it later; we can find it. We need to put looking into our budget and making it transparent as a priority: a huge priority. The commercial assessments, if we could ever figure that out, that might just be more money. More money. But the underruns of 70 million, the other category of 80 million, plus if we could fix the commercial assessment issue, we wouldn't -- we will be able to fund everything we need to fund. We could even stick with the agreements that we already signed going forward. Imagine being able to say to the city of Atlanta, we're going to actually fund permanent supportive housing according to the agreement we signed with you for all of the years that we said we would. Not just we don't know if we're going to have it in 2027. This just seems like a logical way to approach it. So I want to say that I'm disappointed that not even a one of the budget items that Commissioner Barrett, Commissioner Ivory, or Commissioner Arrington ended up in the proposed budget that the County Manager has proposed to Commissioner Ellis, to Chairman Pitts, to Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, and Commissioner Thorne, who I'm going to predict and I'm going to put on my magic hat right now and predict that in about 20 minutes from now they will approve that budget. So we have work to do."

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you, Chairman. I just wanted to comment, add on to your discussion that you had, Commissioner Barrett, about the hotel count in time and, Commissioner Arrington, you had wanted to fund that. Over the holiday weekend, I had several meetings to discuss this with stakeholders in my community. Those included SPARK who did the actual count. SPARK is in Gwinnett County. DeKalb did not ask them to count. They just did the count on their accord. I spoke with Drake House, they're a huge nonprofit in my area that deals in this space. I spoke with St. Vincent de Paul, they do a lot of case management with people who are living in hotels and trying to get them up on their feet. I spoke with the North Fulton Improvement Network about the issue. I spoke with Family Promise, a board member from Family Promise as well. And I got the opportunity to meet Commissioner Barrett's newest appointee on the CFC, Calvin Thompson, and just had some great discussions there, but I will be doing the point-in-time with him count on Friday night. So for me, the \$200,000 -- I understand the hotel -- people living in hotels. A year ago, I was helping a young woman; her name is Leah, who was living in a hotel. I met her at the Amazon returns one day. She looked like she was having a bad day. So I just built a relationship with her and started trying to help her out, and she was living in a hotel probably two miles from my house on Mansel Road. At the same time, Bryan Goldstone came out with his No Place for Us, which really went through the plight of five families in Atlanta and just living paycheck to paycheck, living on grandma's couch, fold out couch, having to fold it up, get the kids to school every day, living in their cars. There's so many people that aren't what they call street-level homeless. With all that

being said, I was given his book because he's a friend of my family's, and I was given the book before the book was even published and made available in March of last year. So all of that, come to say, the \$200,000 funding, I'm just hesitant to give it now because DeKalb County, when I spoke with them, they don't know what they're going to do now that they have the information. It remains to be unseen. Can the count be done more effectively? Can it bring in more partners? St. Vincent de Paul who does interview people who are staying in hotels says they make sure that everybody in that hotel has a connection to the community. They aren't just traveling through, that they have a job there, a recent eviction; they have children in the school. It's a criteria before they help them. They felt the survey might need to be a little bit tailored, more specific. I would love to incorporate these members if we actually do a count as well as our cities. This does not cover Atlanta. It only covers North Fulton and South Fulton, and I don't know who those numbers are in South Fulton, but hopefully I can get educated more on that. So I think, in talking with Chairman Pitts, it is a very small amount of money, but I think we can get by-ins from our cities to help us out. In the event we do, I think it's a wait and see that we need to wait and see what DeKalb can do, and bring all these partners together that are in our community. I did hear the Governor say he's going to give \$50 million for homeless, but he used the word street-level homeless. So for me, that was mainly cleaning the streets, not addressing these people who are living paycheck to paycheck; who one sickness, one illness, a broken down car, puts them in a horrible situation where they're not able to keep a roof over their heads. So definitely, I think that is something that we can continue to explore, but that we don't need to fund right now. And we need to just research it more. Other things, you know, Commissioner Barrett, you wanted to fund two million for the DA's office -- oh wait, four million for the DA's office and two and million for the Family Justice Center. I thought the Family Justice Center was going to cost 10 million. I don't know if two million can get that off the ground or would -- yeah."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "They have a lot of grant money and they have some partnerships, and their request was two million. They're getting a free building from APS, and so the request was two million to help with the buildout inside the building they were given, and then the plan I believe is to open next year in March, and I think they will longer-term be looking for some help with operational funding as well."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. For me too, with the District Attorney's Office, the 16.2 million that you mentioned, I really think we should look to the state as well to help out with that. Because she, her department is partly funded by us and the state. So I think there's a lot to look at there, if we are, if Fulton County taxpayers are held responsible for the 17 defendants' legal fees. It's not just Trump's legal fees, it's 17 defendants whose lives were turned upside down for two years by basically complaints that the prosecutor took over the case said were not valid to begin with. It is okay to question an election. You -- you wanted to give \$100,000, Commissioner Barrett, to the Blue Heron Nature Preserve. Like to know more about that. Have they applied for our grants in the past?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I am not sure if they have. But I certainly have recommended that to them as well. The reason I asked for it in this way is because we do do this as a sort of permanent funding to the other two parts of the county and that have sort of nature centers. And so this is a -- they have a similar type of programs for schools and all of those things, but I will recommend that to them as well."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So honestly, we have to look at costs, and the cost of the -- going back to the 16.2 million costs that with legal fees for a case that was thrown out, a case that was dismissed, a case that wasn't relevant to begin with, we need -- I'd asked for what is the cost? How much did it cost the county? How much did it cause a backlog in our courts, because so much time, attention and opportunity cost was taken in trying two high-profile RICO cases at the same time when we had a backlog. I have no -- I have failed to get an answer to this day. I have asked for some idea the last two years. Last year, when I asked, I was told that Lady Justice has no price. For me, I cannot give someone more funding if I don't know some basic answers to those questions. We also have to look at our Sheriff in the consent decree. How many millions we're spending, 50-60 million to do the ORCA -- to do the consent to create to comply. We were in a consent decree before. We came out of that consent decree, and we went right back into it, and we can talk about people sleeping on the floor. We recently had a fire in our jail. And I ran into the Insurance Commissioner at that Eggs and Issues, and he was furious over the fire. That is not a building issue. That is an issue that a fire happened in our jail, and it's something out of our control. There was talk about the cuts to supportive housing. We did not make a conscious -- our financial team did not make a conscious decision to cut supportive housing. In our original budget, we were doing what we normally do. We were supporting, I believe, 306 units; is that correct?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO: "Yes, ma'am, 302 units that are currently in operation."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "We had that in the budget. The issue was, is that they came with a 66 percent roughly increase that we needed to fund. And that took a little bit of maneuvering to figure out where we can get that additional 2.1 million. So I just wanted to be truthful, we weren't cutting anything. We were trying to find. I think everybody up here did not want to not fund that. It just took us a while to try to find where we're going to find that money to support that. There's been a lot of talk about the commercial property assessments. I had a nice meeting with Julian Benet, who's been leading the charge on this basically since 2017. It was kind of a learning experience for me. It's learning talking with our Tax Assessor's Office, too. They have rules, they have guidelines that they have to follow when they do assessments. We have people who work our Tax Assessor's Office with decades of experience in the field. So I think it would be a good idea if in the coming months that we can get our Tax

Assessor's Office down here to give us a presentation of what they're doing. I realize times are changing, data centers are new, technology is new. Technology is a very, very expensive upfront cost, but it rapidly depreciates every single year, even becomes obsolete. As a Georgia Tech student, I learned computer programs, and then I'd be relearning them the next year, because they were obsolete. And I think with 3D modeling that just rapidly changed every year. So instantly, you can make a huge investment in technology that is basically wiped out and obsolete and needs to be replaced the next year. So I would love to continue discussions and have the Tax Assessor come down here and maybe answer some questions on what they're doing. I held two town halls with the Tax Assessors back in the fall. They're very, very responsive people. They're very, very willing to answer questions. And I think it'll just be fair to give them a voice down here to address all of us moving forward in the future. And I do possibly see a need for the data centers to maybe even have a special assessor with the data centers since the top technology is so complex that perhaps, we can look into getting some further advisement. But my understanding is, they are taking steps in that area. They are looking at other counties to see what other counties do in that field, so one more reason to have them down here and tell us what they're working on and what they're trying to achieve. With that being said, I want to be honest and truthful, my vote today is not politics. I'm for the people. And when we sat that millage rate back in the fall, hundreds of people came down here. Now I know for some Commissioners, they hadn't sat through the budget hearings, but I sat through them for the past three years. And usually we came down here. We would call the hearing, and there would be nobody here, zero people would come down. But this year was different. People from all over the county came down here in person to give comment that they do not want their millage rate raised, hundreds of people, hours of public comment. People drove from North Fulton, South Fulton, paid \$20 for parking to park in one of our parking garages down here, took the time, battled. It takes me a little over an hour in the morning with traffic to get down here from where I live in the morning. They took that hour. They paid that parking. They gave, they signed up, they waited an hour to give their public comment. I take that very, very seriously. And for me, it would be irresponsible of me to just throw in spending that perhaps could wait a year, perhaps could wait when we're out of a consent decree. Yes, there's a lot of things that would be nice to do, but out of respect for those people, I'm taking out of politics. I'm not trying to buy votes or anything by pandering to certain people in the county. We have got to listen to those, everyone who came down here, everyone, their voice was heard. And I want to make sure that they know that, that I am going to vote for a budget that I feel is fair and that the county can efficiently run. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, I'm going to weigh in because I wanted to listen. What I've heard is some good discussion on a few points. But I've

also heard a lot of -- a lot of rhetoric and a lot of things that aren't really borne out in reality. I just want to ask and point out when I ask a couple of questions, to single out and just sort of highlight a few things so folks can understand this. How much fund balance money are we using to -- all right, let's just first off, start off this, our proposed budget from the Manager right now is a little over a billion in revenue, correct? Total Revenue?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "And total expenditures of little over 1.073 billion, right?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. That's a \$73 million right? Okay."

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Where's the \$73 million to cover to balance that out?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It's coming out of fund balance."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Excess fund balance, right? So it wasn't some just huge pot of money that you just had over here that you could just go and apply to new funding going forward. If we didn't have that excess fund balance, what would we be looking at doing? If you just flip this route? What probably would have happened in the budgetary process?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "One of two things, right, you would have maintained that existing level of spending. You would have to have an assumed -- in that right, as others have noticed, we're not adopting the millage rate, but you have to, for purposes of helping people understand this, here's what the assumption is, right? So our assumed millage rate would be more significant, or there would be cuts to all of these things, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. All right, all right. The other thing is, we have access to all kinds of information as Commissioners. Yes, we have a lot of funds in non-agency. We might do it a little bit different than -- than some other folks, but a lot of these things are costs that we would otherwise, if you didn't do it this way, would be allocated into the departments via some sort of force mechanism, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Correct, okay. So for example, but then, I want to highlight this too, one large portion of this money is for a pension. That's a pension -- that's a pension that was closed, but the reality of the way that defined benefit pension plans work, they live with you forever. You can't change the obligations, you're stuck with them, right? So this, this plan was terminated back in when? Or frozen back when?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It was closed to new insurance July 1st, of 1999."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "1999, okay. So we still have the ramifications of the decisions that were made in terms of how that was implemented and structured that we are paying for today. So the decisions we make at a particular point in time, they do matter, right? Some matter more significantly than others, and that's particular one we did not -- and then for -- for people can understand too, we are not reduce -- we are not cutting our required -- we work in -- the way a pension funding works, you go and you get an actuarial assumptions, actuarial assumptions each year. We engage in actuary, they tell us what should be the requirement, minimum contribution to ensure that we are properly funding the pension overtime, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right, okay. So you know, many of us sit through a couple -- couple of folks on there, sit through these meetings. Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and I were on this particular meeting this, this past week. We've had good returns in the market this year. So in terms of all the assumptions that play out, our required minimum contribution, we learned dropped, right?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right. So that created an additional -- that created how much in money that we otherwise had budgeted for?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "A little over four and a half million dollars."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Four and a half."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "4.7."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So you know, so we reprioritize that money into the areas that you saw. So I just want to make sure everybody understands we're not cutting an obligation that was there. We're sticking with funding at the particular obligation that we know based upon what our actuaries tell -- tell us about the requirement, required minimum contributions. We get access to -- there's -- there's those comments about this amount of other in our non-agency stuff. We all get this. Nobody's hiding the ball."

You haven't hidden the ball about what is in this. So everybody, everybody knows what this is. It's not funny money. These are things right -- uncompensated absences we're required -- tell us how our system works in terms of payment for uncompensated what that means exactly."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Compensated absences are payments for accrued vacation, accrued holiday, earned, accrued, compensatory time."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yep."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "When a person leaves the county, we have to pay all of those balances out to them that remain on their books at the time that they leave."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right. So for translated, for a lot of folks who work in the real world, if you got vacation time, I'm saying the real world in a lot of the for-profit world, and so the government world, right? Many of the way, and this is generally more of a construct of government, as opposed to, you know, for-profit, private sector, in the - in the private sector, for most of us who work in that -- that field, if you do not take -- you may have six weeks of leave, or six weeks of vacation time, or three weeks, or two weeks, or whatever it is. If you don't take that time, you generally, you use it, you lose it, or maybe it rolls over to the next year, you can take it. The way our system is set up and other governments are just, not -- just us, and many other government structures are set up, if you don't take that time, it's banked, if you will, and then it winds up being compensated when you leave the organization as pay, correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That's correct."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "All right, okay."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "There are --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "It's an obligation --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, sir. And there are caps in place on those --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right, right."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- amounts that you can make --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "But it's an obligation. It's not something that you -- we can change our policy, and we could remove that as an obligation. But it's not funny money, it's an obligation. There's capital money in non-agency, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right? That pay-as-go expenditures that we know that are going to come up that we can't predict, that's in there, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. So these are not two just sort of like fictional things that exist. These are real. So let's stop with the rhetoric on these two things. This is real. And if you were going to propose additional spending, that's fine. But let's just sort of deal with the reality of it is, it's likely going to have -- going to mean that you're going to have to go somewhere to get it and how likely it where you're going to have to go to get it is payment of more property taxes from our citizens. So let's just deal with the reality of that when we're having these discussions. You know, it's been a lot of talk about a lot of things we're not going to solve -- we're not going to solve every issue at stake in this county today, that's for sure. You know, but we're going to have to at some point in time today, we are going to have to adopt a budget. So I appreciate the works of -- work that's been done, and I appreciate the dialogue that's occurred to date, and looking forward to see kind of what -- what proposals that are -- we're going to be presented to us. I've been doing this for a while. And one thing I learned is like, you know, when you want to do stuff, you study it, you go talk to people, you build consensus, and you put something forth. And if folks feel like it's responsible, then it receives votes to pass, if not, then it doesn't."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "I appreciate dealing with reality of things with that's what we should be dealing with. And we have a crisis on many levels in Fulton County because we haven't. And many people have been here for years and still haven't solved the problems. That's the reality. And so yes, let's deal with the reality of things. We have a jail that has been taken over by the Department of Justice because we've underfunded the jail. The fire was in our control, Commissioner Thorne. Because if the jail was properly staffed, the fire wouldn't have happened. Right, maybe it wasn't -- we have yet to get the report, but maybe it wasn't a facilities issue, but it was an understaffing issue, for sure. So that is in our control, and that hasn't been funded properly. I love dealing with the reality of things. And the reality of things is that this budget is going to pass by the majority of this Board without including any of the things that we really need. So that's the reality. For a long time, that's been the reality, has to change."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. County Manager, I meant to ask you this yesterday when we met. It was the first thing on my list actually, but I skipped it somehow. The ACDC contract is up in the November; is that correct?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "December, this year --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So at the end of the year?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And we at the moment, do not really have a plan for 2027 of where we are going to house what right now is about four to 500 people at any given time; is that also correct?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "We're looking at alternatives, but I do not have a plan, as we sit here today."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah. Well, the reason I'm bringing it up in the context of the budget is because certainly, if we are able to negotiate another, an extension, for example, with city of Atlanta, at whatever price, that won't affect this budget. But I know one of the things being considered was some modular build out, and I would assume, and I don't know, so really, this is a question, but if the contract is up at the end of the year that January 1, we're going to have to move people if they're not -- if they're no longer allowed to be there. So if that's the case, it seems like we might have to spend some money in this calendar year to prepare for that. And I'm just wondering if we have one of the many contingencies somewhere set up for that."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, ma'am, that's the -- that's how we've debated and came up down on leaving the 10 million in debt service in non-agency, was the possibility of issuing debt for that, call it rapid housing to account for loss of ACDC capacity. Whether we can get there within a year's period of time, there are providers out there that can do it within 12 months. But we got to get through our procurement, our sorting, our procurement and then contracting. So I think either way, we would need to find a way to extend that ACDC lease for some period of time."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "But that's why we have kept the 10 million in non-agency."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, I appreciate that, and I think it would be -- it would have been helpful to have that labeled in some way so that that was known. I appreciate that. I also just wanted to, you know, since we're going to dig into this question about compensated absences and be clear about it and deal with the reality of it. Let me just make sure I have the understanding correct, because it is my

understanding, especially given the fact that I've had to do this as staff has left my office, that when someone leaves and they have absences that need to be compensated, it comes from the department's budget; is that correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And so the amount that's sitting in non-agency, to my understanding, from the questions I've asked and the conversations I've had with you all, is that that dollar amount that's sitting in non-agency called compensated not there because it's needed from a mandatory perspective. The departments pay for that. And the contingency, if I'm correct, is only when they don't have enough to pay for it in their budget for some reason; am I right?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, Commissioner, that's typically how we use those funds."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And of the whatever, I think, what is it? A million that we have in that fund --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- in that's line item?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And did we use a million last year?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "No, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah. And I mean, you know, without getting a report of how many, how often and how much of that we've used year over year, I would argue that that is still an area that may not be needed. I understand why it's there. I understand that if that should come up, you want to be prepared, but at the same time, there are a lot of things that are coming up that we need to address. And so that is the reality of the compensated absences contingency fund. It is not the payment of the legal requirement of paying for compensated abscesses. It is a contingency fund in case we underestimate the department's budget to be clear. Commissioner Ellis mentioned that we, when in talking about the pension that, you know, these are decisions that got made many, many years ago, and that this county continues to -- hat we long-term consequences from our decisions that -- and that we pay for decisions we make. So I would just ask, what is the cost to human life in the jail that we were paying year over year, over year for not resolving those issues? And financially, what is the cost that we have paid for additional legal fees for lawsuits around the jail? What is the additional amount money that we have paid in settlements? Thank you. Because the jail is understaffed and in the condition that it is in. How much money are we paying for

the consent decree monitor and the technical assistance staff? How much time in hours are being put, which cost money, into resolving a problem or trying at least to resolve a problem? These are the long-term consequences of decisions that are made here. So until we face that and actually start addressing and quantifying what those things are, how can we truly understand the budget and how we should spend money going forward? This is why I am continually harping on some of the things that are in non-agency. Some of the things, I'm fine with being there. It's not like I think the whole thing is bad. But if we can't say by looking at our budget, this is in its entirety, what we spent on justice, because we've tucked 60 million away for the consent decree under non-agency, and you know, we can't say what we spend on Real Estate and Asset Management because we've tucked money away in non-agency, and we can't say what we are spending overall on health because it's in all these different pockets. That's why I continue to harp on that. But to say that there is no financial consequence for the underfunding of justice and the underfunding of jail and the underfunding of staffing at the jail through all these years is just disingenuous. So that is -- if we're going to look at long-term consequences of the decisions this Board made ten, 15, 20 years ago, we're looking at it with that jail."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Have we not allocated money this year for the jail staffing? Does -- can anyone tell me how much we put in additional funds for jail staffing? Do you -- I don't know if you know that figure off hand, Madam CFO."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Are you referring to resources that would be made available to comply with the consent order?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Correct."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "The plan that was reviewed, I believe, required \$22.9 million which potentially would be covered by the resources that have been set aside for the consent decree in non-agency out of that 50-plus million dollars."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So we've provided money for staffing. And you're saying that the fire was caused because lack of staffing. But we're providing money for the Sheriff to staff, but he's still understaffed at this point, correct? I would think."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I would -- I would defer to the Sheriff to really answer --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: -- that question, but --

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes, it'd be great if he --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- I would say he has -- my understanding is, he has a significant number of vacancies."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "There is a significant number of vacancies. It's because of not properly staffing. We as Commissioners, he is a constitutional officer, we cannot tell him how to run the jail. Staffing is his responsibility. It is a management issue. It is not a financial issue. Since I came here in 2023, four months into my term, we were presented the shocking photos of the death of the Lashawn Thompson. He was covered in bedbugs. But my understanding is, we were spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on pest management in the jail. It was ruled neglect. It wasn't because the conditions in the jail. It was neglect. That is a management issue. We do not manage the jail, us Commissioners, we do not manage the jail. When we found out by Lashawn Thompson, his death, we approved emergency spending, because we're like, well, we'll do whatever we can to correct the situation. I was a new Commissioner. We approved it in Executive Session, so nobody was privy to what we were approving. That's reality. That was a lived reality. I want to make it clear. We are not responsible for staffing the jail. We are responsible for funding. And we're doing everything we can to get that jail properly funded. Prior to 2020 with the previous Sheriff, we were out of a consent decree. Operations were running fairly smoothly. We did not have all these lawsuits. We did not have these stabbings in our jail. Yes, I agree, we need more staffing, but the -- that's not our responsibility. Our responsibility is strictly to fund. And I just want to clear up that fallacy that has been told that staffing is our responsibility. We are working as fast as we can to correct the situation with doing a mental health facility that's going to have beds and is going to have direct supervision. And we're going to take the current jail and put it back from double occupancy to single occupancy so that it can be better staffed and better managed. We're -- that's what we passed. That's what we're all in agreement. That's what we're working toward. But we also have to do it financially responsible and take some cuts now to fund things later. Because we can't instantly have the taxpayers fund everything all at once. We need to take that burden off, whether it's commercial properties or single-family home properties. And renters, you're in it too because if our millage rate goes up, your rent goes up, because the cost is going to be offset to you. So I just wanted to clear up a little bit of reality, the report from the Department of Justice report that when we entered the consent decree, it's about 100 pages. I encourage everybody to read that report. It is available online. And just look, how much of that report was caused by the actual jail conditions and how much was by actual management of that jail. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry, I would love to have just let that whole conversation go, but I cannot. To say that we are not responsible for staffing in the jail is sort of confusing to me, perplexing, because there's a -- there's a couple things that you need in order to staff a jail. First of all, we are responsible, constitutionally, to give the Sheriff a reasonable budget. And you -- there's lots of people on this Body who think we've already done that. But the reality is, you cannot staff -- you cannot fill positions on a staff if you do not have adequate funding to do that. Not only do the positions have to exist, but the pay has to be high enough that people want to take the job. And then the working conditions have to be good enough that they want to stay in the job. So to say we have no part in the staffing equation is just not true. We do. The facility is a place nobody wants to work at. The understaffing leads to more understaffing because it's more dangerous the less people are there, and the positions don't pay enough for people to want to take on that kind of burden and that kind of danger to stay in the positions. So to say that this is a completely separate, walled-off thing from the Commissioners is just not true. We do have a part to play. We have been told over and over and over again by the monitor, by the courts, by the state, to work together with the Sheriff, and we are still not doing it. And one of the things we do -- yes, yes, Commissioner Thorne, we do have money in this year's budget for staffing. But we didn't have enough last year, and we didn't have enough year -- the year before or the year before or the year before. And to bring it back to Commissioner Ellis' point, we are paying for those consequences right now."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Oh dear, God. To the mothers whose children are dying in the jail, who kids are stabbed in the jail, and staffing is his problem. See, the reason that we're in this problem is because we don't work together in the very first place. Because saying it's his fault, no, it's our fault. That's such a position party for you to say. The real truth is we just should care about what's happening in the jail and figure out how to fix it, which this Commission has failed to do for decades. So let me ask a question, County Manager, did we ever meet the staffing recommendations from the monitor from the Department of Justice in the first consent decree that this county got for the jail in 2006?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "No, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you. Did everybody hear that? Can you just repeat that one more time? Yeah, no, I said, did we meet the staffing recommendations in the report from the monitor in the first consent decree in 2006?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point of order, Mr. Chair --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "No?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point of order."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. What's your point of order, Commissioner?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "The County Manager wasn't here then. He didn't get here until 2015. And this is a budget discussion that is not --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Point of order is well taken."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "That's fine. I -- you know what, I have -- that's a point of order that's well taken as well. But the County Manager has a record of what has happened in the county to which he can answer this question, to which he said no. And so my point is not about berating the County Manager at all. That's not my -- this is a point of facts. And the fact is that this county, in the very first consent decree we had, Commissioner Thorne, didn't adequately staff the jail back then. So now, we're in our second consent decree, and we're talking about the money that we need to staff the jail adequately now. Let's hope that this majority does give that money so we don't end up in a third consent decree in ten years from now. Absolutely, it is our responsibility to adequately staff that jail and provide those funds, which is why in my budget proposal, I put the dollar amount up to the known cost that we've already received in Executive Session for how much that would be, because that's not what's currently in the budget. And I know later on, we'll get the bills, and then midyear we'll go, oh, the bills went up, but we already know they're going to. So we should adequately fund right now so that the Sheriff can then adequately have the funds he needs in order to adequately staff the jail, which right now is some 700 positions that need to be funded. So let's just please stop pointing fingers and doing -- this jail hasn't been taken care of for decades, even before, Commissioner Arrington, the current Sheriff was the Sheriff. There was a consent decree, Commissioner Thorne, before he was the Sheriff. So we're not talking about this Sheriff or that Sheriff, we're talking about an overall problem of this Commission not properly funding the jail so that we can have adequate staffing so yes, people don't die because they were neglected. That's what we're really -- that's the reality."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne, you want to be heard?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, just quickly to rebut some of the fiction. Everyone on this Board has -- it is unanimous among all of us, we want the jail adequately staffed. We are funding to adequately staff. In 2000 -- you came in 2015 or '17?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, ma'am, 2015."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Was the jail -- 2015. Were we under a consent decree?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And then when did we get out of that consent decree?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "I believe 2016 or '17, one of the two."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "2016. So for seven years, we were operating, okay?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "The previous consent order had a requirement that we fund a certain number of positions. Those positions were funded. Whether they were filled or not is another issue. But the Board of Commissioners funded the requisite number of positions. And once we left the consent order, were relieved of the consent order, the Board continued to fund those number of positions."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Because we're in the consent decree together with the Sheriff. It is a partnership. That is why we're keeping it in some of the money to pay the consent decree in our budget. I see here line item, the Sheriff asked for 82 million. He needs 82 million to properly run the jail. It appears that some would like to do -- fully fund the Sheriff. We were given a book, a printed book that was stacked this high with all his funding requests. I -- and I know my fellow colleagues up here, we want the jail, we do not want people dying in jail. So the insinuation that we're not doing our part and that only certain Commissioners care about the people in jail, all of us were heartbroken when anybody dies in our jail, when anybody's hurt in our jail. And I feel awful for the parents whose kids, children or fathers or husbands or mothers, anybody that has to be in our jail system. We are all working towards an efficient jail. Throwing money at a problem is not necessarily fixing a problem. I could go into detail how systems are done on paper, like big systems are processed on paper when there's technology available that does better, is more efficient, lowers our cost, lowers staffing, and prevents errors. We're implementing those systems or making sure they're implementing, the monitor is helping us with that. We are doing everything we can because we are with the Sheriff. We're under this consent decree with the Sheriff. And everybody up here, I assure you, is working towards making our jail better. We are not intentionally withholding money. We are trying to use your money smartly and wisely and things that are going to have an effect. We're not simply throwing money in a budget, random money. It is directed. It is targeted. It is going to make a difference, and that's what our responsibility, that's what physically -- being fiscally conservative with your tax dollars. That is what I'm about, making sure every dollar you give us is well spent, and not just throwing it in somewhere for someone to come up with an idea on how to spend it. I'm sure if we have shortages in the consent decree, that we will find a way to fix those. Maybe those things will have to be funded by pulling out from somewhere else, from a non-agency fund or something. But that's the reason we have

to have some flexibility in our budget. We can't have every single dollar dedicated towards a particular item in the non-agency. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Do we know how many funded vacancies there are in the Sheriff's Department going into this year? Is it roughly about 100, or is it more than that?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "At the end of December, the report shows it was 151."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I'm not sure if they've reduced their salary budget for the 1 percent reduction, but according to --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- the records that we --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "-- substantive, substantive number, right? This in their -- they, you know, I think using this as a forum to kind of try to debate about how we got there and all that sort of stuff is probably not the most productive use of time. But there are a significant amount of vacancies that are -- that are there, that are funded, right? We know staffing is an issue. We've known it's an issue. We've sought to make it a priority. We've made funds available. We've given raises, et cetera. So we have a persistent problem. We can all debate some of the, you know, the why of that. But there are -- we have made funding available, and there are funded vacancies that sit there. We also do not make the hiring decisions at within the Sheriff's Department, correct? Those are -- those made by him as a constitutional officer?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That's correct."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "As well as -- right. As well as choosing the how he allocates that staff, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right. So you know, look, we're all seeking to work together on this. I know, you know, kind of, when you're working through things with the government, typically, particularly sort of a group of -- group of seven versus -- we got our management team, and they've been in close collaboration throughout the course of this year and in prior years with the Sheriff's Department in bringing things back to us and seeking to put -- make sound funding recommendations around stuff, but also build

sound accountability mechanisms in place to make sure that the funds are getting expended appropriately and going to -- go into their intended effect. So you know, I think those are in -- those are in place the way we've got things built. Those will continue to be in place. But you know, the reality of it is that there are -- there are -- it's a two-way street, and there is accountability that's required and actions that are required to the entities that you fund."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ivory. Nothing? All right, anything else? Anything else?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Now, I have sat quietly for probably several months and listened to probably too much, but I have. And what I've heard today is that the requests that have been made by some Commissioners is not included in the recommended budget by the Manager and his team. So what I'd like to do to try to move us along, in one case that would mean an additional 28 million to the 1 billion that the Manager and his team are recommending. In another case, it would mean an additional of 59 million to the 1 billion-plus that the Manager is recommending. Now, either one of those two would include all of the things that we say we want in the Manager's budget. So I'll entertain a motion to do that, any additions, so take which one first. You want to take yours Commissioner Barrett? Yours is \$28,318,816, add that to the budget that the Manager is proposing. Would you like to make a motion? That would include the things that you have requested."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, if we're going to do that, I would add this Summer Youth Program to it as well."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'm going to deal with that. We can -- Commissioner Arrington, we can handle that. I know how to get that 500, I support that for that 500,000. We can do that."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, could I -- could I understand it better? Because I'd like to have a budget that includes it. So if there's another way to get it, I'd like to understand it."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Well, make a motion."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So, fine. I will make a motion to approve the budget with the -- my request included and the -- Commissioner Arrington's additional funding for the -- those 500,000 for the Summer Youth Program, I believe was the number."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That would be 28,318,816 plus 500."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, Mr. Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "By my math that would bring the total to 1,102,568,262."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. And Commissioner Ivory. Just a minute. Commissioner Ivory's request would add \$59,393,132 to the budget that is approved that is recommended by the Manager. You want to add anything else to it? Okay. You want to take yours? Which one wanted to go first? Okay."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I made a motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. So is there -- there's a motion by Commissioner Barrett to add the \$500,000 to her request of 5,393,132, plus the 500,000 to the Manager's recommended budget. That is a motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett. It is seconded by Commissioner Arrington. Everybody clear on what that does? All right, let's vote."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm clear that it's no millage rate increase to it. It's just a straight budget."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No, this is on the budget, not the millage rate."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Right."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just the budget."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Ivory, in your case, it is an addition of \$59,393,132 to the Manager's recommended budget. All right, the motion to approve that by Commissioner Ivory. Is there a second? Is there a second? One more time, is there a second. Seconded by --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'll second it for purposes of discussion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Seconded by Commissioner Arrington. Let's vote, please, let's vote."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Now that takes us to the recommended budget by the Manager, which is -- has a --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point of order, Mr. Chair."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "It actually takes us to my recommendation."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'm sorry. It takes us to Commissioner Arrington's, which would add at 500,000 for the Youth Program, plus the 250 for the --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "For the Homeless Count at the Hotels."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "For Homeless Count."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "With the Hotels."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Adding that to the Manager's proposed budget that's before us."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "The total is \$750,000."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "An additional 750,000 to the Manager's recommended budget to us. All right, is there a motion? Motion to do so by Commissioner Arrington, seconded by Commissioner Ivory. Let's vote."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Now, I'm going to make an assumption that there is no appetite to approve everything that was requested by the departments, which would have been, where is that? \$1,000,225,624 -- is that what -- yeah, 1 billion -- 1.2 billion. Okay, all right. If y'all will give me five minutes. I haven't said anything since, what, two three months on this. I've listened to what everybody's had to say. And this is -- this is the time when we really -- and I appreciate all the discussion I've heard today, and appreciate discussion that I've heard from -- from the Manager and his team in getting here, but I've listened patiently to this. And I want to start with that we are at Fulton County, we're a large county with a lot of complex issues. And one thing I know for sure is that a responsible government comes from listening to our citizens, establishing programs that make a difference and are fiscally responsible and sound and do not, do not overburden our citizens with tax increases. You've heard me say this many times. We're the largest county in the state of Georgia. We're a leader in this state and in this country. We're one of the more, more progressive counties, not the largest, not the most populous. But in the United States of America, there's some 3000 -- 3000-plus counties. Some have us ranked as number four out of all of those. So I'm hoping that we can adopt a budget today that recognizes the two principles that I just spoke about. And Mr. Manager, I think that you and the CFO, y'all have done great work for us, and I appreciate that. But what you have before us at 9.26 is just a recommendation to this Body. We are the policy makers, and we make the final decision. So given that, I have a few changes that I'd like to suggest. And my changes will result in a budget that will be flat, and we will approve the mil -- a millage rate at some point later on this year. But

mine will be balanced when I recommend to you at 8.87 mils, and I'll tell you how I think that can happen. And our budget has been at 8.87 for the last six, five or six years, and going back probably some 20 -- ten or 12 years, we have reduced our millage rate each year to the benefit of the citizens of Fulton County. Now this budget is over a billion dollars, just the general fund budget. We haven't gotten to the other funds yet, but just this budget. And I think that we've done a good job in providing services, the mandated services in particular to our citizens without a millage rate increase. And we'll just highlight two or three areas, Public Safety and Justice, over 234 million of general fund money will be committed to Public Safety and Justice in this budget. And that represents a 90 percent increase since 2021, a 90 percent increase since 2021. There's another 5 million that will be going to our State Court to improve their operations based upon what they asked for, we can expect 20 percent improvements. Health and Human Services, probably over 68 million, Health and Human Services, which includes the opening of a 4700 North Point Parkway and a comparable facility in South Fulton County. And we are a leader when it comes to Health and Human Service. And Behavioral Health, about \$20 million, 25 million, really from our general fund to support Behavioral Health, and that included that 4.8 for the group that came today about the supportive housing. And put this in perspective, I don't think we're aware of this, or maybe not give ourselves a credit for the pat on the back that we deserve. But our, Fulton County's direct funding for Behavioral Health is more than six times, not one time, not two times, not three times, not four times, not five times, but six times that of DeKalb County, Cobb County and Gwinnett County combined. So we don't have to take a backseat to anybody on what we're doing in health, physical health and behavioral health. Senior Services, our Senior Services programs are second to none. We're the envy of the country. Our Community Services programs where we find fun nonprofits that help us deliver to our citizens, seniors in particular, again, the envy of the country. The Arts, we remain the largest public funder of the arts in the state. And our employees, and everything that we do is based upon our employees and the great work that they do. And that will include in this budget, a 12 and a half million dollar COLA for our employees. And we've heard requests from our Board of Equalization people, there's even an increase in there for them as well. And one of the new ones in here, in addition to what Commissioner Arrington is talking about, we voted unanimously to fund a trial Pilot Daycare Program for our employees, that's 500,000 that we can fund. That was a unanimous vote up here, and we can fund that in this budget as well. So I think that we don't -- I don't think we have anything to be ashamed of. I think that we've done a good job. Mr. Manager, I think you've done a good job. So now the question is, how do we do all of what I'm talking about, and maintain a millage rate at 8.87 mils on down the road, a balanced budget? Well, if you look at -- this is pretty straightforward. If the 9.26 -- is that the number? 9.26 that is being recommended by the management and CFO, and the 8.87, which I'm recommending, the difference in revenue, the difference there is \$32 million. And that's not very much in a billion-dollar budget. And I think we

can find that and still keep this millage rate down the road at 8.87. How do we do it? Very simple, and it's not complicated. In order to solve the problem for the 32 million, number one, you can increase revenue. Number two, you can decrease spending. And number three, or combination of those two. And what I'm proposing to you today is a combination of those three. Let's start with the revenue changes. I'm recommending in broad terms here, that we increase the assumed growth in the tax digest by 1.14 percent. That means going from 3.11 to 4.25. That would generate \$8.8 million. And we're trying to solve the 32 million, keep that number in mind. Second change I'm recommending would be to increase the sales tax growth from 3.3 to 4.4 percent, and this would generate another million. And thirdly, we always forget about this, I'm going to recommend that we increase the collection rate from 95.3 to 96. And that would generate another 5.6 million. Those three combined, they're simple, would generate an additional 15 and a half million dollars. And we're still short from the 32 million that we're trying to solve for. Let's talk about expenses. Where can we reduce expenses? Well, sort in descending order. Several of you have mentioned a reduction in the debt service, and I agree with that. If we reduce the debt service from 10 million to four and a half million, in that range, that's a five and a half million dollar reduction. Risk fund, several of you talked about the risk fund, which I agree with. We can reduce that. That will generate another 4.7 million. And then on those consent decree items, which all won't be necessary, we can decrease that by 3 million. And the other big one, Elections budget, by a million. That won't hurt us based upon what's happened in the past. Couple of smaller ones, shifting at a Cultural Center down south, from the general fund to the FID fund. And there are some minor ones here, but those are the main ones. And if we do that, those would total some 16,648,000. You add the cuts of 16 million to the additional revenue of 15 million, and voila, we've solved for that 32 million, and we can have a budget that remains flat for the taxpaying citizens. And I think this is really important because economists in Georgia have talked about a downturn in the economy. And a millage rate increase down the road, I think would be devastating to not only our seniors, but to young people who are trying to raise homes, build families, build -- buy homes rather. That would be, could be a problem for us. So, now I spent the weekend here, on Saturday, I was here on Sunday, after church. And even on Monday, I attended the Martin Luther King service. I came here, went to my office, it was quiet, and went through this, as I do, to understand the budget. And when I was here, I happened to run into Ellis who was in his office working. And I ran this by him, and so -- and I hope that I convinced him that we could do this today. He wasn't convinced at first, but I hope that -- am I leaving out anything, Ellis?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I think, Mr. Chairman, I think you had also spoke about adding some -- I this had the -- for the Child Care Program."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah, that's that 500,000 --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So these --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- for annualized --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So the expenses you notated along with the revenue cuts exceed 32 million, and there's some offset that would be applied to fund that portion?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Right."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Is that correct?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's correct."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And then I forgot, the Probate Judge, she mentioned the -- that, and I really support what she's saying, but I think there's a way to do that, either here, she can't do it -- legally, she can't do it across the street. We're looking for a space in here for her to do it, or in close proximity. I've even talked to some property owners here, who have property in close proximity, who may consider allowing her to use that space, because that can be a revenue generator for us and a tourist attraction coming to Fulton County, like a lot of folks go to Las Vegas and get married, they can come here and get married. Because we'd do a beautiful job, she does a beautiful job, and people look forward to it, and it would be a revenue generator for us. So that's what I like to -- not like to recommend -- I want to move for approval on us maintaining and approving a budget that would have an assumed interest rate down the road of 8.87."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "You making that motion?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's my motion."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: All right. Commissioner Arrington.

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Can you note that in the -- can that be noted on the screen?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Can the folk's motions be noted on the screen?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Arrington, Commissioner Barrett, Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess the first thing that I want to say is that the -- I want us to be clear that the budget is not flat, right?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "The budget has increased."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And so I don't know if -- that it's accurate to say that the budget is flat. What you're talking about trying to make --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- flat is the millage rate which has yet to be adopted. But I think what you just did was make Commissioner Barrett's point even further, in that the presentation of adding budget items and assuming a larger millage rate is not necessary because there are so many assumptions that are being made when you make a budget, you assume a collection rate. Well, we already know that the Tax Commissioner usually collects higher than the assumed -- than the assumed collection, right? And so certainly, manipulating those assumptions as you proposed, is another way to increase revenue and decrease expenses, right? And so again, I think it just makes the point that Commissioner Barrett made that, you know, assuming that there has to be a millage rate increase to add items to budget items to the budget is not accurate, right? And so I did not hear the 500,000 for the Summer Youth Job Program in your -- in your motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I know how to get it. I can -- I got some thoughts on how to do that, and we can find that. That's not a lot to find."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, that's -- that's not a lot to find, but certainly, I know that the Child Care Program has been well received and well applauded by the Fulton County employees. So I'm glad to see that that's in there. You know, I'm not happy with -- necessarily happy with the budget, but I can live with it. And I think, you know, as we manipulate the collection rate or increase the collection rate, and you know, the other rates that you talked about, it does allow for the increase in revenue and decrease in expenses. And it seems to be a happy medium, although there are certainly things that are left out, but I think we need to have the discussion, hear back from our Assessor on these commercial units as we go forward and look at the budget for next year. But I think that what you have proposed appears to be -- appears to be reasonable, and appears to get us to a point where we're going to adopt a budget, and it, you know, sounds like you guys have the votes anyway, so you know, I don't want to spend another two hours talking about this. So let's vote and move on to the rest of the agenda."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was trying to get all those numbers written down, but I missed a few of them. You said you were wanting to increase the growth rate to what?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "The what, which one?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Growth rate."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "3.3 to 4.4."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And the sales tax growth rate?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That wasn't."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "No, there's the tax digest growth rate, and then you said you also wanted to increase sales tax."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The tax -- the tax, 3.11 to 4.25."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So that's the sales tax?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "That's the digest."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "That's the digest."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Digest. Digest."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So digest is 4.25?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Right and the --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And sales tax -- I know, I thought you said --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 4.4."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "4.4, and you said that was \$1 million, is that what you said?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Um-hmm."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And the --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Collection rate from 95.3 to 96."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And the difference in the increased growth rate to 4.25 is how many million?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "In which one?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "The tax digest growth rate."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "5.6."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "5.6 million?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Um-hmm."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And the collection rate, you were increasing from what to what?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: 95.3 to 96.

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "96 percent growth rate? Oh, I'm sorry, collection --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's the collection."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- rate. I apologize. And that was an increase in how much in this year's revenue?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "5.6."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Another, another 5.6?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So the 5.6 was growth rate. Sorry. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Oh, 8.8 was the tax digest, I got you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You can have a copy of that."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah. I'd like it to be shared with the entire Board."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: Okay. So -- so the total 15 -- that was 15 million just by changing assumptions. Okay. Excuse me for just one second, five-point, I see, 296, okay. And then I missed a couple of numbers on the expense side, too. Thank you. Let me just -- since you've handed it to me now, let me just see if I can capture what I missed. So you're cutting over 3 million from the consent decree?

CHAIRMAN PITTS: Reducing.

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: Sure. And reducing inmate outsourcing and reducing Elections, okay.

CHAIRMAN PITTS: If there are minor adjustments that need to be made, I would leave that up to the CFO and the Manager. But the --

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: So this is what I'll say, I -- I'm -- I want to ask county management, Madam CFO, budget team, you mentioned, Mr. Chairman that economists have talked about a downturn in the economy that will impact, is impacting everybody already I think. And certainly the higher cost of living and all those things that people are dealing with, certainly is true. But I believe, and Madam CFO, we've had conversations about this, I think, both in here publicly and also in the Strategy Office. The reason for the decrease this year in the assumption for the growth rate is because of that same economic downturn; is that correct?

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "We set the -- the growth rate to equal the '25 digest because what we've been seeing is year over year for the last, I think, three cycles now, the digest growth has been on a decline. So that was why we set it at the -- the 3.1 percent."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And so when -- what was the actual growth last year? Is that -- is that what it was, flat at 3.5 or whatever you just said?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That was the number at the time that we received the digest estimates."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And the year before?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I want to say it was like 3.5."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. I just want to say, look, you know, on the -- on the -- I'm all for the fact that this is a budget, and you know, we are not setting a millage rate now, and the things that you talked about, Mr. Chairman, are assumptions. And we, I think my first year here, we passed a budget based on a higher assumed millage rate so that we could manage the things we wanted to get in the budget, in the budget, and when it came time to actually set the millage rate, you just said this, I think at last meeting, Commissioner Arrington, we did not end up having to raise the millage rate, and we're able to keep it flat. But for the purposes of the budget, we assumed higher. So I don't have a problem with us adjusting some of the assumptions. However, assuming the millage rate is the one assumption we have direct control over, these other assumptions are based on -- and look, everybody here talks constantly about trusting county management, staying in our lanes and -- and all of this, and -- and, you know, the experts over there who've done all the research on how much we are expected to do in collections, how much, you know, we expect the digest to grow,

they've done this work. And we're now saying we don't -- we're going to ignore that completely. And the problem is, we're setting ourselves up for failure here because if their numbers are closer to the truth than your numbers, we're going to not have enough in the budget. So that's my first concern. Whereas the millage rate, if -- if, for some reason, we move forward in one of these scenarios and we have to adjust the millage rate up or down, we have control over that, but we can't control the tax digest growth. So that's -- that's my concern here with adjusting those versus adjusting the assumed millage rate. On the expense side, you know, I was all for taking 5 million away from the debt service until the County Manager explained when I asked the question about preparing for the end of the ACDC contract that we might need that money to prepare. So I'm less inclined to do that at this moment than I was when I started meeting today. I think that we may need that or some portion of that to get ourselves ready for not having access to Atlanta city Detention Center should that happen. And the biggest thing I'm concerned about -- well, first of all, I'm not going to support reducing the funding for Elections, full stop, period. And I am certainly not going to vote yes on any budget that reduces the amount we spend to address the consent decree which we are under by the Department of Justice for the conditions in our jail, not one penny. We need to be putting everything we can into fixing that problem, and to say that we can cut back because we're not going to spend it, because we won't be ready. I mean, I think it was Commissioner Thorne that talked about when Lashawn Thompson died so tragically, and that was a long time ago already. We cannot afford to wait. How many more people are going to be injured or hurt or die, and you want to cut back on that investment? That is upsetting. That's upsetting. So while I appreciate very, very much, because I am also a taxpayer in Fulton County, I appreciate how hard it is right now to have an increase in anything else when groceries are high, when, you know, rent is high, when everything is higher, I also cannot responsibly approve a budget that does not fully address the consent decree."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I appreciate your leadership on this issue and remarks that you just made. And I wanted spend a little bit of time talking about the revenue piece. And I don't -- I'm not critical of the revenue presentation that was given to us by the management team based upon, you know, kind of some of the assumptions that, conservative assumptions they were going off of. But two things or a few things I want to point out with those assumptions. Okay, and let's just start back end up on the collection rate. So we've got a stated goal of getting our bills out earlier than we have in previous years, correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes. We're working with the Tax Assessor --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "And that timeframe is --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- we're timely scheduled this year."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right. And that timeframe for is moved up two months or a month and a half? What is it?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Currently, it's -- it's set for bills to go out mid-August, due mid-October."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Which would be a difference versus last year."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, a full month."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Full month, all right. So when you move your -- move your date up, your collection rates naturally should go up, right? Okay."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That would --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "The bills on that time, right, so we're at -- it's been around 90 -- it was at 95.3 this year?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right. So I think this is -- this movement is, you know, very responsible. And also, it's an accountability mechanism. We're not -- these, you know, from talking to the -- the Chairman and debating kind of these particular points about the revenue, which we had on Monday, the whole tax apparatus is not something that we fully control, we provide funding to. We've got to have greater accountability from that operation. And we've heard a lot of, you know, stuff today about potentially under assessment of commercial property. We all had other things about, you know, kind of our Tax Assessors Office on -- they have a tough job. They're -- they fall under sort of a separate way. There's a separation of things, sort of both in terms of, you know, constitutional side for the Tax Commissioner and also statutory stuff for the Tax Assessors. But I like the fact that we are putting in some revenue adjustments here which signal for a greater accountability from that Tax Assessors Office, and you know, driving towards, you know, if there are more appropriate assessment of our commercial properties. And we see that in, you know, the nod towards that with the assumed growth rate changing a little bit, not crazy, not a crazy number, but a responsible number, same on the collection rate. And on the sales tax stuff, it was five and a half percent last year in Fulton County. We've got, you know, one of the biggest events ever that's going to be in Fulton County with the World Cup. So we're going to have all kind of people running around here. We should see, that's certainly, I think, a very fair assumption to move that up a little bit in the assumption that we're going to account for

some more revenue there. And yeah, I'm not going to belabor any of the individual expense changes that are noted. But the backdrop of all of this too, we have a very healthy fund balance which provides us with an ability to not be crazy conservative in all of, you know, categories of things that are reserved, like in nature, but are responsible. And I think the ones that are noted here, this is a responsible movement. And if we find ourselves in, you know, some sort of clearly unexpected position, we do have a very healthy fund balance that we can draw upon if we were to need this. So that's why it's here. But -- but I think this is, you know, look, making -- making recommendations for expense changes and reductions and so forth, you know, requires leadership. And I appreciate Chairman for stepping up and -- and you know, bringing this forward to us today for consideration. And I think it'll be beneficial to our citizens and benefit -- you know, on a number. So than you, I'm supportive of it."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes, Mr. Chair. So having this document is helpful, because I heard you mention the Employee Childcare Pilot, and I thought you were talking about continuing to include that, but it looks like you're proposing to eliminate that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No. I don't think, unless it's --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "It says -- fund -- it's taking -- look, it appears it's taking 500,000 out of the --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- Employee Childcare --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No, it should be in there. I'm sorry."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "It looks like you've got the reductions are positive, and the additions are negative in terms of the expense changes, is that what you've done?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So, what, it cost \$1 million, and you're talking 500 out, and just --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- leaving 500 in there?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It would cost -- I was told it would be 500,000 from each of -- wait."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It's in."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Then we can get the 500,000 for the youth as well."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right, thank you. Yeah, I just, you know, I think it makes sense to, you know, manipulate the rates, the growth rate, the tax digest, sales rate, and you know, frankly, I think we could even assume a higher millage rate as well, and maybe include some of those items back in. But again, assuming that higher millage rate does not mean that they would actually have to take place, right? Because we always have the 75 million and so, you know, it may not be enough time today, right? But you know, assuming an 8.89 millage rate might allow some of this other stuff to be added back in, right? And so, you know, which is a -- which is a minor increase in that millage rate that wouldn't necessarily affect people much. And again, with the fact that we have 75 million left over every year on average, you know, we probably would not even have to do that. So the only thing that I would say to you and the gang of four is that, you know, some of this stuff could be added back in if we were to also assume like you did for collection rate, growth rate, and collection rate, growth rate and sales rate that we could also do that as well to add some of the other items back in. So I'm -- I'll leave it there, you know, I think it makes sense. But you know, I'd love to see some of these other items back in, and you know, cutting Elections, cutting decree money, you know, like that. Some of that stuff could probably be added back in. And I don't know, we'd have to talk to Finance. And I don't know, maybe it makes sense for us to go to lunch before we vote on this. But you know, I guess we'll see how it plays out."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for this analysis and for the time that you spent to explain it. I will just say that I fundamentally cannot agree to many items on -- I don't think they're realistic, and I don't think that they take into account our crises that we have in our county, and crises, crises that have been taking place for a very long time. We have a jail crisis, so I don't -- we're not properly funding the consent decree costs in the proposed budget from the County Manager, and you want to pull another 3 million out of that when we have known expenses, not -- not things that might come, things that we already know are here and we haven't allocated for them. So that is a crisis that we can't keep pushing the can down the way and not finally taking care of it. So I'm -- I'm almost quite shocked that there's even an item on here to reduce consent decree related items, as it word for word, says on here. I would not reduce our HR budget. I've heard from departments that are already struggling. I've heard even from the HR department about things that they need. So I would not be able to agree to reduce that either. And I certainly --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is that a 100? I can't remember, 100,000?"

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Not -- you have on here, 300,000."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Yeah. And then there's not ever a time that I would reduce Election's budget knowing what we know about what our President is trying to do to undermine fair and free elections. And particularly in this year when we know that that attack is coming strong, it's strategized and already planned for and it's meant to wreak havoc in this very county that is so important to Elections. So I could not ever agree to reducing an Elections budget. So I just cannot agree to this. I think is irresponsible."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. I wasn't going to weigh in on this, but I'm going to go ahead and weigh in on it. First of all, I want to apologize to the County Manager and all of the county staff, the CFO and others, they all sit to my right and even the ones that sit to the left, because when -- when you say something that one of my constituents may not like, then you're being political, then you're not doing your job. When you say something that they agree with, you're great. You all are tasked to do a job. Do I agree with you all the time? No, I don't. But I don't take cheap shots at you all, and I don't appreciate others taking cheap shots at you as though you all you have a dog in this fight because you don't. You're tasked with doing a job at the direction of what this Board gives you that sometimes we don't clean -- clearly give you the correct direction. You're left with having to decipher as to what the directive is from the Board. I personally don't think it's healthy to have the county management staff working on four or five different budgets. Because where does it stop? When we come in here one day and have seven different budgets that you all need to look at, that takes time, that takes energy, and that takes resources from other things that you all should be working on. So I want to go on record saying, I appreciate the work that you all do. It's respected, and it's not one that at any given time you're thrown under the bus for a camera. I don't appreciate it, it's disrespectful. I appreciate the job the County Manager and all of the senior staff does. Now having said that, I was voted in by the Fulton County taxpaying citizens. A lie will hurt you over and over and over again. The truth will only hurt you once. We much pass a budget, looking at not only what we have dealt with, but what may be coming down the road, but no pontification, no trying to say, oh, the sky is getting ready fall in, and it's going to fall in now that a particular Commissioner is here. There sky haven't fell in the six years that I was here. But all of a sudden now, the three horsemen of doom are riding down and everything is going to hell. That is theatrics. There were things that I wanted to see that didn't happen. There were things that needed to be done that did. But I can stand on principle that I did what I thought

was best for the Fulton County taxpaying citizen that, by the way, pays my salary and everybody up here. Thank you, Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Call the question."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Question has been called. Madam Clerk."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah."

CLERK GRIER: "We need a second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, a second. All right, a second by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

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

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Mr. Chair."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Go to the vote on the -- back to the main motion, which was to approve."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Would you accept a friendly amendment?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "too late we have to vote on the --"

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'll entertain a motion recess for lunch, Executive Session, litigation and personnel."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "With all due respect, our Elections -- Nadine, with our Elections Department has been waiting quite a while. Is that something that we can take up before we go to lunch?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "It's the next one."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Because it's the very next item. And she has been waiting very patiently. And I know that we have been long-winded as a Body, but we can just entertain this for a few minutes, and I will ask my colleagues to please be

mindful that we do need to go into Executive Session, however, we do have a department head that's here and been here since this morning, Chairman, with all due respect, if we could take that up."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Any objection? We've voted to go into Executive for lunch and recess, any objections? All right, where is she? Sound it. What? We voted on the motion on the floor. We haven't voted on Executive -- okay, all right. Come on up, come on up. Yeah, just remove it."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Can you sound this item?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah, sound the -- Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, **26-0033**, Registration Election request approval of a statewide contract in the total amount not to exceed \$7,849,501.99 to provide temporary staffing services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Ivory. Any discussion, questions? All right, let's vote."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "No, no, I have --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'm sorry, Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Sorry. I just have a few quick questions. So this is a \$7.85 million just till the month of June approval. And I know we talked last time that we're going to try to help you with recruiting poll workers as best we can in the north. I would like to see when we staff these management and assistant manager positions, especially for early voting, that we use local residents versus people -- if you could prioritize that, that would be wonderful. And I -- I'm going to try to connect you with civic groups across the north to recruit."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, REG & ELECTIONS: "Yes. So in the memo that I forwarded -- forwarded to the Board on the 16th, I believe, it stated that we are working diligently to try to have persons in their area work. Unfortunately, there is a shortage in the north that we have to ask people in South Fulton to come up and work. But we're working with our Board, we're working with sororities, churches, et cetera, our BO team plans to go out and do recruitment fairs to see if we can fill those gaps. But if any of the Board Members from the north have any recommendations, that would be great."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And if we could potentially get some more training seminars up in the north part of the county. I know a lot of people have had to drive all the way down to Union City, which through traffic, could be an hour and a half."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, REG & ELECTIONS: "Yes. So for Advance Voting and Election Day, we're going to ensure -- we have a new training team. We're going to ensure that there's training in the North for Advanced Voting and Election Day, so the people don't have to make that journey."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And one other thing, we pay the temp agency roughly, is it 25 percent above the rate that we pay the actual employee? Or -- hey, I didn't do the math this time around, but maybe Felicia, you can answer."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "It does vary. I'll have to go back and look. It's different for both agencies."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Yeah, with a 30 percent, if we're paying 30 percent, it's like 2.355 million that that temp agencies are splitting. And at 20 percent it's about 1.57 million that they would be splitting. So if we could reduce the costs maybe in overtime billing, these are temp agency, we should be able to hire, so that maybe we don't have that overtime. And but I know when you work elections, you working long days, so it's almost unavoidable. But I would ask that you would look at Gwinnett County, how they staff their early voting by having a team that works odd days, having a team that works even days. So you have two teams, and then if you can't work your odd day, you can pull from the even team to come and fill that gap to maybe limit the overtime that's getting billed to the county."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, REG & ELECTIONS: "We'll look into that."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "That would be great. And then lastly, as far as full-time staff, I know your staff gets paid overtime or straight time, straight time pay for hours that exceed the 40 hours a week. I know there was a staff member that was paid actually 100 hours in overtime over a two-week period. I don't know how you can work 179 hours. So if we need to hire more full-time people, and not rely as much in temp that would be great too, and potentially reduce exhaustion and costs."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, REG & ELECTIONS: "I'm not aware of those hours, but we'll look into that."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. I can -- I can send you some information that we've gotten offline."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, REG & ELECTIONS: "Please do."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay."

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And then -- and then I just want to make sure that the staffing agencies are following our Fulton County rules and hiring and no nepotism is occurring, that would be wonderful."

NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, REG & ELECTIONS: "Will do."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The motion on the floor is to approve. Let's vote."

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

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah. Executive Session, recess, lunch, Executive Session. All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

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

Recessed for Executive Session at 2:18 p.m.

Resumed Regular Session at 3:40 p.m.

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there a motion to approve the request for representation in items 2, 3, 4 of Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "We have a motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Barrett."

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 the request for settlement authority in item 5 of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Ivory."

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

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



CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Madam Clerk, continue."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'm sorry."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "With all due respect, before she gets -- before our Clerk sounds the next thing, I want to take a point of personal privilege. You may disagree with me, Chairman, and I know that this is probably abnormal. But because of the setting we're in and what has happened, it bears weight that I, as a sitting Commissioner, bring it not only to the attention of all my colleagues, but to the listening public, especially the Fulton County employees, and especially the Fulton County Division Heads. There was -- and I'm not going to show what it is. There was clearly, this is clearly campaigning at Fulton County. We have rules against campaigning at Fulton County. This was distributed this morning at this BOC. I received calls and texts about it. It was also distributed floor by floor here at Fulton County to the departments. Now, I have received calls that it was distributed at a couple another events that only that all of us, the colleagues were invited to. That is an abuse of authority. We have a colleague that's running for Secretary of State, and we have two colleagues running for -- excuse me, three colleagues that's running for Chair. To distribute your paraphernalia at a BOC meeting, to go floor to floor, some might say it's decorum violation, split hairs on it. But it is a ethical violation. I take issue with it, since it was done in this forum Chairman, I know you don't want me to bring it up, but I'm going to bring it up, because if any Fulton County employee came to work today, whether it was one of our officers, whether it was something that worked -- somebody worked in the Tax Assessor Office, whether it was somebody that just answers the customer service phone, if they brought -- and I will not show it to anybody -- excuse me, I have the floor. I have the floor."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I have the floor. You'll get your opportunity."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "That employee would be walked out by close of business for campaigning at work. Now, we often talk about our President, Donald Trump, doing what he wants to do and abusing the authority of his office. This is a violation and a abuse of an elected official sitting down here office. For you to campaign on BOC day, for you to go floor to floor, distributing something that is clearly - - I don't care it doesn't -- it doesn't say, elect me. It is clearly a campaign flyer, and for you to use your authority here as a sitting Commissioner to do that in front of the Fulton County employees. Now, whether any other Commissioner wants to say anything

about this, it doesn't matter. Whether you like -- I'm apologizing that I've got to disrupt this. But there's protocol and there's procedure, and you have crossed the line. You are campaigning at your job. You are campaigning in front of the employees that we work for and the division department heads when you sent your people in to deliver, which is clearly a campaign flyer, you disrespected them. Now on my behalf, I'm not going to throw a rock and hide my hand. If it happens again, I'm not going to ask a constituent to file an ethics complaint, I will file the ethics complaint, because you are out of line. That is clearly campaigning. That is clearly a violation of our ethics. We have several other people up here. Commissioner Barrett is running for office. Commissioner Arrington is running for office, and Commissioner Thorne is running for office and the Chairman is running for office. To walk in here and see campaign material being disseminated in this place where we are working and we're paid by the taxpaying citizens of Fulton County, for division heads to text me, because it was sent floor by floor, and those of you that are listening to my voice, Fulton County has a hotline you can dial at any time for ethics violation without fear of losing your job. I suggest that you exercise it, because there is not a different set of rules for someone that's sitting up here as a Commissioner, versus someone who is out there in the general public and walking -- and running for office. It was a violation, it was wrong, and I am calling you out publicly, because you publicly did it in front of our Fulton County employees, you publicly did it in front of our Fulton County department heads, and it's wrong. And I said what I said."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Barrett, you want to heard?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I do. First of all, Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, that should not have been allowed in this meeting. It's your meeting. You do what you want, but that, that should not have been allowed. If Commissioner Abdur-Rahman -- sorry, Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman has a complaint, she should have handled it the way complaints are meant to be handled. And the implication, although I don't think you intended this, the implication of what you just said implied you didn't say anybody's name. So it could have been me, could have been Commissioner Thorne, could have been Commissioner Arrington, could have been you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No, it couldn't have been me. But go ahead."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, it wasn't me. And the implication that, the fact that I'm running for another office has nothing to do with anything, I have nothing to do with whatever this is, you say you're going to be direct, so be direct. You're talking about Commissioner Ivory, talk directly to her. Follow Bridget Thorne's recommendation for ethics complaints, have a conversation with her before you bring it up publicly. I mean, everything about what was just said was inappropriate. And I'm going to say it's a decorum violation. So I'm calling a decorum violation."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ivory, you want to be heard?"

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "People become uncomfortable with professionalism when it challenges the standards they've learned to survive without. So because I have risen the standard in annual reports, I understand why you're jealous of that. I understand that you're incapable of doing that same thing. When my staff got together and decided we would do a beautiful annual report, which is exactly what this is, not afraid to show it, will continue giving it to the constituents who have asked me for it, as well as the Fulton County employees that say, thank you for educating us about the county, not a single thing is on here about campaigning. I am not campaigning because that would, in fact, be a violation. What I am doing is following all of the other department, departments and department heads that have put together annual reports. So here is the one that came from the Magistrate Court. Here is the one that came from the District Attorney. Here is the one that came is another report from -- let me get the department right, the Solicitor General. Here is another end-of-year report from another bunch of departments. You should read them. And here are all of the reports that you need for the end of the year from various departments. What I did was I did a little bit more creatively in a beautiful booklet that details out from when I first got elected on January - - inaugurated on January 3rd, all the way through my Christmas party for seniors that was held at the library. In the middle of it, I get to explain about what the Board of Commissioners done. You should read it. You might actually --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Point of order."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "-- learn something --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Point of order."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "So no, now, you want to do a point of order."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Point of order."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Now, you want to do a point of order. No."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Point of order."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "You let her talk for 20 minutes."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Mr. Chair."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute, we have a point of order. What's your point of order, Commissioner?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Point of order. There was a call for a decorum violation. It was supposed to be voted upon."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "No, I'm allowed to respond in the queue."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. Just a minute."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "It was not a decorum violation against you. It was a call against someone else. It needs to be -- that was what was brought. That's dealt with -- let's deal with that, please."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "And you're going to let me finish what I was saying?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. Just a minute. We're going to deal with the decorum. I'm not going to say that it's a decorum violation at this point. We may take it to a vote later. I'm not going to say it now, but wrap up."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "So I will just say -- and that I'm so proud of the work that my staff put in to putting together this beautiful 2025 year book from Commissioner Mo Ivory in Fulton County District 4, which speaks to the work that I did in the year 2025. I did not choose to put it have booklet like this. I went a little bit more creative and put it in a booklet like this. And I've gotten nothing but wonderful feedback from all of the constituents. And you know what, Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, I did something that you said to do --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Chair -- Vice Chair --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner -- just a minute."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "-- to do -- excuse me --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Vice Chair."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "-- to do in a former meeting, which was to make sure when you told Jessica Corbitt to make sure that items are printed so that seniors could have them. And people that don't get digital copies might want hand copies. So that's what I did. And so I will, Chairman, with all due respect, I will continue to give out my annual report. And I will continue to inform constituents in my district, which also includes this building, which is in District 4 --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "That was a violation --"

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "-- and are my constituents --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner. Commissioner --"

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "-- and I thank you for reading it --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "That was a violation."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "-- and loving it so much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner. Commissioner. All right, Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I was unaware that employees were fired for campaigning. I had no knowledge of that at all. I was a familiar that people have given me the brochure at Eggs and Issues and -- and at the Buckhead Coalition Luncheon, so I was aware of it. But then I saw people when they came up to the podium that were holding it as well. For me, it's kind of -- it's a grayish area. I mean, former Commissioner Hall used to have printouts, but she also put -- it was kind of a helpful piece too. It had all the different numbers to call for things, things we can help with, that kind of stuff. It was much more informative of our office versus kind of a self-promotional piece. So there is kind of a gray line immediately, you know, we start seeing this after you announce that you're running for Chair, so that kind of complicates things a little bit. So for me, it's kind of a gray, grayish area that could be an appearance of impropriety, which is -- which I learned is wrong as well. So with that being said, that's all I have to say. I do hope you will file my ethics rules, and you two have a conversation about this. And if you can't decide it, then get -- bring in a third person, whoever that might be, and try to not cost the county money by filing an ethics complaint."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, and then followed by Commissioner Ellis and --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. Just -- just to -- for the listening audience, Madam DA, when she is arguing a case, she's not handing this out to the jurors. She's not handing it out in the galley. Che Alexander, when she's stamping the information for the people that walk into her office, she's not handing it to the people. Solicitor Gammage, when he in his duty of what he's doing, he is not down there at the courthouse, at work handing out or campaigning. So I know apples and oranges and the difference, and I also know this, Commissioner Barrett, with all due respect, if you want me to call out, if that makes you feel better, because you think that I was talking about you, it was Commissioner Mo Ivory, if that makes you feel better. But at the end of the day, decorum violation or not, there is protocol, there is respect, and there's procedure for this Body. And if I am the only Commissioner that speaks up for the Fulton County employees, for the Fulton County division heads, for the constituents that walk in here and are clearly made uncomfortable because someone has decided to get up on the line and stand on it, don't matter that they crossed it, because in my

position and in my mindset, it was crossed, you are paid by the Fulton County taxpaying citizens to come here and do a job, not to campaign at the BOC. I stand by what I said."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Madam Clerk, let's continue. No, I declare that there wasn't a violation. Continue."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, 25 -- **26-0034**, Real Estate and Asset Management request approval of the lowest responsible bidder in the total amount not to exceed \$350,000 to provide moving services on an as-needed basis."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne."

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

CLERK GRIER: "**26-0035**, Request approval to renew an existing contract for Comprehensive Operation and Preventative Maintenance Services for the Fulton County Jail in an amount not to exceed \$5,493,834."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. I have a quick question. Is Mr. -- who, Ms. Strong-Whitaker, this contract expires at the end of this year? And we will be rebidding it?"

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: Yes, Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN PITTS: Prior to the end of the year?

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: Yes, Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN PITTS: Madam Clerk.

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

CLERK GRIER: "**26-0036**, Request approval of a statewide contract in an amount not to exceed \$750,000 to provide natural gas services."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 7, **26-0037**, Purchasing and Contract Compliance request approval for the procurement of supplies and equipment required for residents housed in the county's jail facilities in a total amount not to exceed \$3,252,299.20."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I like that you already turned your mic on. You know I'm coming to you. Yeah, Ms. Strong-Whitaker, if you could just explain what this is, because the supporting material is pretty thin."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "Yes. Good afternoon, Commissioners. This is the list of procurement items for the Sheriff's Office. We work with the Sheriff's Office to get the list of all of the needs that the inmates need, uniforms, shoes, mattresses, mattress covers. This includes all of those needs. We do a huge master agreement for them. We go through a huge procurement process where we're utilizing statewide contracts, cooperative purchasing contracts, the Georgia Correctional Industries contracts, because a lot of these contracts are specific for correctional environments. So that's what we're doing. We're presenting it as one whole thing so we can get it done at the beginning of the year, so they can start ordering the supplies and things that they need."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So I guess what's confusing me is, I feel like when we normally do some kind of a purchase with cooperative purchasing, or join into somebody else's agreement, we usually see who we're joining in with and/or if it's a particular vendor, we see a vendor and we see a contract, and here it's just a list of items. It's pretty vague, so that's what I'm sort of confused about here."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "These are all commodities. We will be cutting purchase orders or master agreements. It is multiple vendors and multiple cooperatives and statewides that we're using. We do have a very big spreadsheet that we can provide to you, but it would not print on this. But there is a list, summary list of all of the supplies that we're getting from each of the vendors."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And are each of these items individually, like under a certain threshold? Is that why it can be done this way?"

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "It's not that it -- it's over the threshold, of course, that's the reason we're doing it competitively. When we use statewide and cooperatives, they are competitively procured by those agencies, and we are making sure that the pricing is where we need to be."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. At some point, I'll sit with you, and you can give me a full lesson on this. But I appreciate it. That's good enough for today. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Well, let me just follow up on that. Looking at these, this is a -- actually the old inmate welfare fund money."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "Yes, sir."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "Yes, sir. I wasn't going to say that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Well, I'm going to say it. I'm going to say it, because that fund is supposed to be used for the benefit of the inmates. And the only three of these items, as I look at them, really benefit, directly benefit the inmates. Everything else, I've argued this before, should be, we should be paying for as a part of our responsibility at the jail. I mean, uniforms, towels, mops, toilet tissue, trash bags, that's stuff that we should -- that should be a part of our budget for the jail or coming out of the Sheriff's budget, not the inmate welfare fund. Only three items on this whole list here that can even, on the stretch, it says, program supplies, I'm going to assume that's educational supplies or something like that, I don't know, it doesn't say. Then it has law library books, which would benefit the inmates, and they, I guess this -- is this the Koran, is that what that is?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Mr. Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "These are coming out of the Sheriff's budget. We added this money to his budget. The Board added it last year through the sounding process. It was built into his base budget for 2026 for this purpose. So these funds are coming from the Sheriff's budget."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. That wasn't clear. I'm not clear, the way it's written here, it's just not clear to me."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Okay. But so to clarify, it is -- it is funded out of the Sheriff's budget. The Board did include these resources in his -- you moved it into his budget in '25, and it was part of his base budget for '26."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Motion on the floor is to approve."

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



CLERK GRIER: "Health and Human Services, **26-0038**, Public Works request approval of recommended proposal for Flow Monitoring Services and Infiltration/Inflow Program Management in an amount not to exceed \$12,079,844."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. A motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner -- this is a \$12 million -- somebody explain -- I mean, I understand it, but just for --"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Ask David Clark to come. That's a five-year number, but go ahead, David."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "Yeah, it's a five-year number."

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "David Clark, Public Works Director. Yes, sir. The \$12 million represents a five-year contract. So it's about 2.4-million each year over a five-year period."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And what are we getting?"

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "We have -- the county owns 50 flow monitors in our wastewater system. Those flow monitors primarily provide three main functions. The first one is it built -- it allows us to bill flow when other counties send us flow, like DeKalb County send us flow in the Big Creek basin. We send flow to Cobb County by Morgan Falls. So it allows us to measure how much flow we're either receiving or we're sending, so we can bill properly. The second thing it does, it allows us monitor in real time what the level of flow inside the pipe is. That's especially important during heavy rain events when we may have a spill, we can be proactively monitoring it and get out there before the spill actually happens. And the third thing it does for us, it allows us to model the system so as new developments come on board, especially in South Fulton, we know there's sufficient space within the pipe to handle their flows."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. All right, the motion on the floor is to approve."

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

CLERK GRIER: "**26-0039**, Senior Services request approval of a recommended proposal for Senior Transportation Assessment in an amount not to exceed \$133,000."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I just wondered if we could have this explained in more detail, what we're doing with this consulting group, beyond the summary, of course."

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "Good afternoon. Ladisa Onyiliogwu, Director of Senior Services. An information of memorandum was forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for the general public's knowledge and to -- in response to your question, this is a consultant who will assess all things senior transportation in Fulton County. We're seeking their advice so we can present that information back to the Board, which will also help us develop the new solicitation that will be issued this year. The current two transportation providers contracts end this December. We want to make sure that we have expert insight into any changes that have occurred with seniors that have entered into our demographic that we serve, changes since COVID. Just looking at traditional transportation and alternative through Uber/Lyft and making any recommendations to you. So that's the purpose of this consultant work. They're going to address all of the items listed in the scope, and then we'll present that back to the Board as we prepare in collaboration with Purchasing, our Chief Purchasing Agent and our Chief Operating Officer, a new solicitation."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Will they be serving the existing users and the existing, existing folks that sign up, or this will be more of a data study?"

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "It's a combination. It's a data study, really. So we're going to be providing information to them, and we're asking for them to investigate -- research the landscape of Fulton County and transportation needs for seniors."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So it's really about need, not about current process or what people feel, or any of those things right now?"

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "Not, not qualitative surveying, more quantitative on -- and on the process side, they may consider fleet, the current makeup of our transportation program and provide any recommended changes if needed."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. Nothing on the registration sign-up process?"

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "That's totally up to the -- no, I don't -- no, not unless there's some new technology out there that will help."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, that was my subtle --"

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "Oh, that's right."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- not-so-subtle wink at --"

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "Yeah, that's --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Got it, okay, thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Will they be evaluating senior transportation across Fulton County, not just what we provide, but other providers like North Fulton Senior Services, MARTA, all, all the players in Fulton County, or would they just be assessing the needs based on what we provide?"

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "Let's see, let me pull up that. We want them to be as expansive and broad as possible. So it would not benefit us if they only looked at what we're doing as a county, but adding some more insight into transportation services and needs across the county, so not just what the Department of Senior Services does, but to bring in other insight from other partners."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And that would be, I think, really valuable information so then we can possibly come up with direct when their number of rides goes up, makes our seniors aware of other services -- service providers that can provide them additional rides."

LADISA ONYILIOGWU, DIRECTOR, SENIOR SERVICES: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And that we may be just filling a gap versus trying to fill the whole need. That'd be great. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The motion is to approve."

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

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioners' Action Items, **25-0994**, Request approval of a resolution to establish a Fulton County Tax Allocation District Advisory Committee to advise the Board of Commissioners policies, strategies, and committee partnership that invents Fulton County's redevelopment plans pursuant to Redevelopment Powers Law; and for other purposes sponsored by Commissioner Ivory."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Ivory, is there a second? Seconded by Commissioner Barrett for discussion purposes. Commissioner Ivory, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you. So this came up before, and I wanted to answer a couple of questions that had come up. You know, we must be proactive in TAD discussions. These impact redevelopment, infrastructure, and long term



investments. It's a key tool, TADs are a key tool for funding strategic projects, waiting to react to risk, leaving the county out, waiting to react -- risks leaving the county of a critical decision -- decisions. This committee ensures the Board has a formal, structured mechanism to guide TAD policy and investments. Some Commissioners raised concerns that the previous resolution appeared too focused on the city of Atlanta. I want to clarify that this committee is entirely Fulton County focused. Membership is not limited to neighborhood planning units. Other neighborhood and community organizations across the county are included. The committee's work will be advised by the County Manager and structured according to county governance standards. The goal is to ensure that Fulton County sets its own priorities, goals, and strategy for redevelopment investments. The committee is about Fulton being proactive and organized. And that is the reason why I want to get this going. I've already spoken to representatives from APS as well as representatives from the city of Atlanta as it pertains to the TADs that are related to the city of Atlanta, and they have working groups already established. Spoke to other cities inside of Fulton County that are contemplating TADs of their own -- own, and they have working groups already established. This Fulton County TAD Advisory Committee is a proactive step for us as a Commission to get that going to have those conversations that would include everybody and would allow the Commissioner to each appoint their representatives. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett. You done? All right, the motion is to approve. Let's vote. Oh, sorry, Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Mr. Chair. I have a substitute motion to deny. Substitute motion to deny. I think on this subject, this power rest with us, in terms of when we're setting our priorities that we want to appoint a group of people to work together, it should be this group of Commissioners first working together, establishing our own priorities and things that we want to see different and standards we want to see held to. So that's my substitute motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Substitute motion to deny. Is there a second?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Seconded by -- just a minute. Just a minute. Just a minute. Seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. The motion on the -- substitute motion is to deny. Commissioner Ivory, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "I would like to first vote on my motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What?"

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "I would like to first vote on my motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "There's a substitute motion. Substitute motion is before us now to deny. Let's vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open on the motion to deny. And the motion passes; four yeas, one nay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "**26-0040**, Request approval of a resolution of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to repeal Resolution 18-0577, pertaining to the elimination of the Budget Commission as a body tasked with submitting an annual proposed budget to the Board of Commissioners for consideration so as to reinstate the Budget Commission, to amend Section 2-261 of the Fulton County Code of Ordinances to redefine the membership of the Budget Commission; and for other purposes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve by Commissioner Ivory, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Commissioner Ivory, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you. I would like to just talk to the purpose and why now of this reinstatement of the Fulton County Budget Commission that I'm putting forward. In 2018, the Budget Commission was eliminated and the County Manager became the primary author of the proposed budget. This process limited Commissioners' early access to department budget requests and reduced transparency during the initial stages of budget preparation. Reinstating the Budget Commission, restores early visibility, input and oversight, ensuring all Commissioners can participate fully in budget planning before submission to the Board. This resolution strikes through language that previously gave sole authority to the County Manager and required the County Manager alone to compile department agency and elected official requests. The Budget Commission, now reinstated, will collectively review and submit the proposed budget, ensuring Commissioners have early input and that budget reflects broader county priorities, not just managerial decisions. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The motion -- I'm sorry, Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Sorry, Commissioner Ivory, I fully agree that we need to have more consideration by a broader group before we pass the budget. I think a Budget Committee is needed. I would -- I do want to say, Mr. County Manager, that I appreciate that this year you brought back the departmental hearings. That was, I think, part of the problems we weren't getting read in early enough. And I think we all had the discussion here many times that the departments that, sort of, you know, spoke up the loudest to us as individual Commissioners, ended up, sort of, you know, the squeaky wheel gets the grease, so to speak. And so I do appreciate that, and I think that was a



step in the right direction. I think, you know, my sense is, I'm not quite sure the make up that you're suggesting is entirely right in this version. I'm going to support it, because I think it can be addressed. But I think -- I think it should -- it probably should have two Commissioners, and not Commissioners' staff. I don't think Commissioners' staff should be making the decision on a committee. That's the job of Commissioners. But -- but I also think it should be open meetings. And so, you know -- you know, I, to me, this should be -- it should be meetings where the public can attend also be read in earlier to the entire process and can weigh in on the various requests. So I -- I like the idea, I guess, you know, I think we're going to have the votes to get it done anyway. But you know, in a perfect world, we would have some time to go back and forth and perfect it little bit more, but I think it's a great idea."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Perhaps, County Manager, you'd speak into because we had a Budget Commission, and then it was dissolved. Could you speak into back in whenever it was dissolved? Because I remember, as a citizen listening to meetings, and Sheriff Labat came up and was talking about this Budget Commission. And I had no awareness of it, only to find out, oh, that was dissolved, it used to be. So I was just going to see if it's efficiency, because you need to work so closely with Finance that it needs to be an overall look at the entire county and not individual budget. So I don't know if you could speak to that."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "I don't know if I remember the exact day, it may in the resolution when I read it that we pass -- that we changed. Do you recall when we changed from the Budget Commission to this current budget ordinance?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Mr. Manager, what, you want me to address that? I don't remember the --"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Sure."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- day, but I can tell you what happened. The Budget Commission was comprised of three people, the Chair of the Board, the County Manager and the CFO. It was my position at the time, and it's my position today, that when you have a Commissioner sitting in a -- on the Budget Commission, when department heads come in, that's not a good thing, because they're intimidated first of all. So I removed myself from it. I wanted the Manager and the CFO, they run the county on a day-to-day basis. They know more about what the various departments are doing than any of us sitting up here. And therefore, I thought that it would be more appropriate, better suited for the Manager and the CFO and their team to listen to the -- to the presentations that were made by -- by department. Because once again, department heads are intimidated when they see a Commissioner. So therefore, I

removed myself from it, made a -- made the motion to eliminate Budget Commission. So that's why it is like it is today. And I think it's worked well."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you. That, the intimidation, I just didn't capture that. But that makes total sense. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ivory."

COMMISSIONER IVORY: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, yes, it used to be the Chair, the County Manager, and the CFO, and that was intimidating. That is what I've heard from the department heads. And the reason why I was asking for this Commission to come back in a Budget Commission to come back in a different grouping is because of that very issue. So we do agree there. And the department heads have repeatedly, over and over, said to me, and I know to many other Commissioners, that they would like to see the Commissioners that vote on their budget there during the process, or at least representatives from the Commissioner's office that could then relay that information because some Commissioners just don't show up. That Commissioners could then be relayed that information by their staff and hear directly from department heads instead of having to hear their concerns through the County Manager's staff. So you are correct that there was an intimidation factor and it still exists right now. They would like it to be a more open process. They would like the people that are actually going to vote on the budget to hear what their concerns are, not to be given a proposed budget that then have to assume reasons why a department head asked for certain things or why they were putting, you know, a certain line item in. So that is exactly what I'm trying to address in bringing back this Budget Commission is that there would be a more open process and the Commissioners would have representatives from every Commission office or the Commissioner themselves if they care to show up to listen to these conversations, and it would be a wider audience that would not at all feel intimidating to the department heads."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, you know, I think the idea of intimidation doesn't really sit right with me, because we, you know, the hearings are essentially the same thing. And we were, we were sitting in there, Commissioners were in there, staff was in there, and nobody was intimidated. So I don't know that that really that that really -- that may have been a legitimate thought at the time. I'm not saying it wasn't, but I just don't think that that is really what's happening in real time. Because aside from the fact that we weren't a voting committee, we were sitting there listening to their requests. So I think, you know, that doesn't really stand as a reason not to do it. But I also think that like, as I said, I think the makeup of it, if it's, you know, depending on how it -- how it's -- who's voting as members of the committee. And you know, in the various committees I've served on, you don't vote to pass something or not

pass something, you just vote to recommend. So you get to the point where the budget is complete, and then the committee votes to recommend it to the full board. I mean, that's sort of how I would see that, and I wouldn't think the staff members would members. So that wouldn't make sense to me. But I do think it's interesting that when the vote -- when you put up the legislation to get rid of the committee, I think it was -- yeah, I voted at the top. I think it was of the people -- it was the yeas, the people that voted for it to pass were you and Commissioner Arrington, Commissioner Hall and Commissioner Darnell. And the nays were Liz Hausmann, Bob Ellis, and Lee Morris, interestingly. So there was definitely, I mean, it was a four to three vote. It was definitely a split vote on how this should go, whether or not we should have it. So I think the discussion is still valid. And I think moving towards something like that is probably -- look at the end of the day, we are -- the budget is the most important thing we do all year. And we are hired by the people in our districts to -- to make sure that we are putting forth the most responsible budget that we can and for -- to be as read in as we can on that as well as informing them. And so I think the idea of doing something like this is just a positive step towards us, you know, doubling down on how important this is to our citizens and making sure that they have visibility and that questions are answered before we get to the last couple of meetings in January and late December. So that's my 2 cents."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Thanks, Mr. Chair. I mean, I think there's no perfect process for, you know, for budgeting in any organization. I've been involved in multiple budgets here, as well as pretty significant budgets in the corporate world, both staffing, revenue, expense side, et cetera. You know, the -- I was skeptical when we moved to this process. I think by and large, you know, it's worked, and has not really been that dramatically different, you know, as we played it out. And I think in some ways, probably also has made things more effective and efficient. You know, it -- because we really have sort of two entities of government, you know, we have one is sort of directly managed by our county management staff. And I really don't necessarily see the need for each and every one of us to be sitting through kind of any individual department that falls up underneath their management, his management, and hearing all their puts and takes and all of that. I think he -- he can represent that and make recommendations around that, make trade-offs and stuff. You know, so I think -- I think we're at a happy place with this in terms of where it's at right now. I think we all were given opportunity to, either through our staff or through us individually to sit through and listen to all the budget presentations. So that was, nobody was cut off from that. That was a change that was made this year I believe. We've also been given all these booklets and so forth. I read through all this stuff. My staff sat through several things. So candidly, I don't know that there's that much different, and I've been involved in both sides of it. I don't know that there's that much difference in terms of what we did with the Budget

Commission versus where we are now, except that we probably killed a few more, killed a few less trees in this process than what we had with the other. I think the Finance staff, maybe y'all can kind of talk to that. We used to have these reams of paper that were being produced, right? It was -- it was a little bit, it was a little bit too much, probably, when you went back, you looked at all this stuff. So you know, we've just got through a process. I mean, I'm going to make a motion that we file this for the moment. I think this is something we all can reflect upon, continue to have other conversations to potentially refine it, but I'm going to make a substitute motion to file."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Substitute motion file --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Motion on the floor is -- substitute motion is to file."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open on the motion to file. And the motion passes; four yeas, two nays."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 8 **26-0041**, Request approval of a resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to amend the resolution creating the Fulton County Employees Retirement System so as to amend Section 4.9 of the Defined Benefits Plan related to reemployment to allow certain former Fulton County Sheriff's Office Detention Officers and Sworn Officers of any rank receiving a Fulton County pension benefit to work as a Detention Officer beyond the 1040 hours per year limitation through December 31st, 2026 without penalty and without impact to their existing pension benefit sponsored by Commissioner Barrett."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Vice Chair."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. I have had the luxury, for the lack of a better word, to be on the Pension Board with my colleagues, Commissioner Barrett and Commissioner Ellis, since I've been here for the last six years. And I can't think of one, believe it or not, I can't think of one time that we have disagreed in reference to the Pension Board. So I want to add my name and support to this. But I do have a question as to why this -- I would think, because this would be a Board -- this would be a Board action, and I can't see any Commissioner voting against this. Why wouldn't this have, you know, been a consent agenda item, County -- County Attorney, can you weigh in on why this, or do you know why this wasn't on the consent agenda?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I'm not aware why it was not on the consent agenda. But it's my understanding that there is a consensus on the Board in support of this concept, so it would have been eligible for the definition of items on the consent agenda."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. Well, like I said, I'm in full support of it, Commissioner Barrett. I'd like my name added, since I am a Trustee, and I've been there since day one, six years, and I've been there since you've been on there, just a little concern, housekeeping, you know? Mr. Hermon, you and I have had several conversations about this, as well as the other Trustees that are on the Board. So I just was a little concerned, not undermining what you were doing, but I was concerned that it was not a consent agenda, because I cannot see any of my colleagues up here not supporting it, so that was my concern."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett. Sorry."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yeah, Commissioner -- sorry, Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, just to -- to just give you the background. First of all, yes, I'm happy to have you also be signed on and Commissioner Ellis, if you want to also, because we all three sit on the Pension Board. I'm fine with that. Everybody's name can be on, and I don't think it really matters. I think, you know, just to speak for you for a second, Mr. Hermon, I think they were just looking for somebody to put it on the agenda, I think it was as simple as that. They did all the work, you know, Mr. Hermon and Legal did all the work to put it together. I was just the vehicle --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay, no problem. No problem."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- so you are welcome to join me in this car. Yes. Were you waving?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "No problem, I just --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Let's move, let's drive the car."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "No problem."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "County Manager Presentation and Discussion Items, **26-0042**, External Affairs, 2026, State Legislative Session Update --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You don't have anything, do you? Next item, she doesn't have anything. She said she doesn't. Well, okay, I'm the messenger. She told me she didn't have any --"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Allow me -- allow me to clarify, Mr. Chairman. What I was saying is that the Session just began. We don't have anything substantive to report today. We did prepare a presentation, but given the hour and --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Don't worry about the hour, if you have something --"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "-- I was just going to suggest --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- to report, report it."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "-- we'll be back in two weeks. We don't have anything major to report today, just wanted to let everyone know, and we're glad to take any questions if there are any."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Preguntas? Questions? Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Ms. Corbitt, thank you for the work, you and your staff, thank you. I get all of the emails that come to me. And you all are great in keeping up us informed, and I just wanted to say thank you."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Thank you. We appreciate that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I just wondered if you could go over slide 4, the budget highlights --"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Sure."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- and just talk about what we know from that, and how -- if and how any of that might factor into some of the items that are our priorities."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Thank you, Commissioner Barrett. Yes, Governor Kemp has presented his preliminary budget. The Budget Joint Commissions from -- or the Committees, excuse me, from the Senate and House are holding those briefings this week, so it's possible that there will be changes. But as you see here on the slide, there is a quick rundown. The Governor has talked about transit and info -- excuse me, transportation, infrastructure as a major highlight. As you see here, there's more than 2 billion on that. In terms of Fulton County's direct priorities at

the bottom here, he talks about the mental health crisis system. Last week, the very first item the Governor announced that he's seeking 50 million for Homelessness Response Grant. We are tracking that very carefully. I've talked with our grant writers. We have mentioned this as we seek resources to help sustain our long-term support and wraparound services for permanent supportive housing, looking at every other possible external funding resource, including this. So that is certainly one that we are very keenly tuned into. The -- one of the -- our priorities is an additional Superior Court Judgeship. Unfortunately, Fulton County was not in the top three, and that is what is currently contemplated for this budget year. So those are a couple of the quick highlights that I could mention."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Can you speak to the 5 million to conduct a full ballot recount by hand during the 2026 election cycle, and the 1.8 million to utilize text-based ballot scanning technology? I'm just reading it the way you have it written. And the reason I'm asking is because I don't know what the total, like, if you were talking about doing that statewide, what is the total cost? And then -- and I -- and I -- and my reason for asking really is, does this come along with unfunded mandates for the county?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "I'm going to ask Jasmine to talk about that a little bit. Again, this is -- I do want to just say that this is the Governor's proposed budget, and it is not set yet. This is still in negotiations. Jasmine, do you mind addressing that question?"

JASMINE CAMPBELL, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Yes, good morning -- or afternoon. So the budget hearings are going on this week. Today, the Secretary of State presented this. These are the Governor's recommendations. When he talked about this item, it's for, it's statewide, but it's to do hand count ballots of two statewide races. So those will be chosen at the Secretary of State's discretion. But that's what that money is for. So it's statewide hand count ballots of only two statewide races."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So that was more of just like a proof point that those two were good, the others were good?"

JASMINE CAMPBELL, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Yeah, so for, he gave an example that on the ballot it might be 16 races. So to do a hand count ballot of all 16 races would not be sustainable, and also was cost a lot more than \$5 million for the whole state. So -- and also like I said, this is the Governor's recommendation, so the House and the Senate can change it. And he was presenting on what the Governor suggested."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Got it, thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Any other questions for Ms. Corbitt?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No responses.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, ma'am."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "**26-0043**, Childcare Reimbursement, Pilot Program Post Implementation Briefing."

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HRO, HRM: "Good afternoon, Commissioners."

VICE CHAIRWOMAN ABDUR-RAHMAN: "It's evening."

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HRO, HRM: "Good evening, Vice Chair. Before I begin, because I know every now and again, my father watches. I just want to tell them, wish them happy 65th wedding anniversary today. And it's kind of fitting, since we're talking about childcare, I think they did a great job raising me. So I will say Commissioners, Kenneth L. Hermon, Jr., Chief HR Officer. I just wanted to provide you a quick update on where we and the successes of the childcare pilot and some future recommendations. With me today, I have two young ladies, Justina Gordon and Karina Bell, who were very instrumental in making this program come to life. As you recall, this was the brainchild of the Chairman, and we collaborated on getting something together. But really and truly, they did all the work to make it a reality and make it as easy a process for both the applicants or the employees to apply for and for us to make the determination as to who was eligible. And if you have the slide, we could just go straight to the second slide. I'm not going to go back through how we got here, but just quickly go through the results. So on page 2, if you have the handout with you, Commissioners, you can see we wanted to give you first a preview of where we made the most impact, with the childcare program. In that little chart, you see, we identified the seven highest users of the childcare benefit that was in the pilot with the Sheriff having 19 employees, District Attorney with ten, Juvenile Court and Tax Commissioner tied for seven. And the Public Defender and the Superior Court, both having six employees, each that were selected to participate in the program through our random selection process. But overall, we were able to take applications from 121 employees, and was able to successfully provide 103 individuals with reimbursements for their childcare benefits that occurred during the months of July to December. What we realized and what we information we learned is, you know, having a diverse workforce, you also have diverse childcare expenses. So we saw childcare expenses that average as \$831 and we saw one employee with childcare expenses that averaged \$3,900 per month. The monthly reimbursement range from \$41 to \$500 which was the max. And some of you might ask, well, why did someone only get \$41? Well, through our exercise and working through the process with the Finance folks, we understood that

this individual was also receiving a FSA benefit, and because they couldn't double dip, because of the IRS rules, the FSA benefit was \$450 so all they could have gotten was the difference from the 450 up to the 500, so that's what accounts for those low amounts in our reimbursement. From a financially responsible perspective, we only spent about \$221,000 of the total \$3,000 allotment -- \$300,000 allotment, which is a 26 percent of the budget under run. And participations, and I'm hopefully -- hopefully you got an opportunity to read the feedback that we were able to receive from those participants. We got some great feedback about how easy the system was to apply, how seamless our process was. We got some good recommendations about whether or not if we wanted to continue it into the future. And if we are -- and I do believe I heard some good news during the budget conversation, and I apologize that there is some funding in this year's budget for that. So we will recommend that in the next iteration that we would end the program in November. We learned that when we try to provide reimbursements in the month of December, it's problematic not only on the employee side to get those invoices and receipts from their respective childcare providers, but for us to also get it and process it in time before the fiscal year actually closes for the -- for at the end of the fiscal year, and it can't -- it just conflicts with too much things at the end of the fiscal year. So we'll end -- we will recommend ending the program in November. I'll also recommend in the iteration, since there's money in this year's budget for it, you'll see that we will have a -- I'm going to use the terminology loosely, a sliding scale of number of participants that could apply only because we don't know if those individuals have FSA benefits. So if somebody's getting \$400, that's -- that frees up \$450 that can go to another applicant. So we may start with 100, but end up with 125 or 140 but ultimately staying underneath the budget that you -- was allotted to us on this program. In this iteration of the program, we will recommend that we only reimburse for checks, credit cards, and debit cards, things that we could easily track. We did have some individuals with cash payments and Zelle and those other financial nuances of making payments, and that became problematic for us to track. So we said, well, let's simplify it. Again, that was a learning exercise, and I think the employees, if they have time enough to adjust, can make those adjustments in time for us to move the program forward. And last but not least, we suspect that this second iteration will be successful. And if the Board's desire is for a third iteration in 2026, I did have a great conversation with a vendor at a conference that this is what they do, they specialize in these types of programs. And since -- while these young ladies did a great job getting the program off the ground, this is not their primary day-to-day responsibility. And I would want them to get back to that day-to-day responsibility and don't want to have them juggle too much, because I still want them to like me at the end of the day. And again, Commissioners, I'll stop there and take any questions that you have. But I believe once you read the feedback that we received from the employees who were able to participate, it was a well-received program. Even if they did not get into the

program, they still provided a great feedback that it was warranted. I highly encourage the Board of Commissioners to continue. Thank you very much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman, and congratulations on your brainchild. Mr. Hermon, I want to congratulate your parents, because they are the reason that you're so wonderful. You had absolutely nothing to do with that, okay."

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HRO, HRM: "I would agree. I agree."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "But seriously, though, I want to give people their flowers while they're living. You ladies did a wonderful job. I did have some calls to come through my office, and you all handled them, and you resolve the issues. And even the ones that you couldn't help you, you answered them with grace, and they understood why. Sometimes when we have to tell our Fulton County employees, no, it's the way we say it, versus what we're saying. And so as much as I would like to say kudos, kudos to you, I'm going to ring the alarm or the bell for you too, because you all are super women. I just don't see the S on your chest, but I appreciate what you all did. And I'm hoping that this will become permanent, and we will free you all up eventually, okay. Thank you so much."

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HRO, HRM: "Thank you, Commissioner."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, other questions or comments?"

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "No further items."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No further matters to come before us today, we are adjourned. Thank you."

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.