

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

January 29, 2025  
10:00 AM



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



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**MINUTES-RATIFIED**

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**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 19, 2025**

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Robert L. Pitts **10:00 a.m.**

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

Robert L. Pitts, Chairman (At-Large)	<b>PRESENT</b>
Bridget Thorne, Commissioner (District 1)	<b>PRESENT</b>
Bob Ellis, Vice-Chairman (District 2)	<b>PRESENT</b>
Dana Barrett, Commissioner (District 3)	<b>PRESENT</b>
Mo Ivory, Commissioner (District 4)	<b>PRESENT</b>
Marvin S. Arrington, Jr., Commissioner (District 5)	<b>PRESENT</b>
Khadijah Abdur-Rahman, Commissioner (District 6)	<b>PRESENT</b>

**INVOCATION:** Reverend Clifton Dawkins, Jr., County Chaplain

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recite in unison

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**25-0047 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, and Ivory

**Absent:** Arrington

**Did Not Vote:** Abdur-Rahman

**25-0048 Board of Commissioners**

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

Proclamation recognizing “Braylen Ava Hollis Remembrance Day.” **(Arrington)**  
January 11, 2025

Proclamation recognizing “Campbell Stone Senior Living Facility Appreciation Day.” **(Pitts)**  
January 16, 2025

Proclamation recognizing “Lucy Sharpe Appreciation Day.” **(Abdur-Rahman)**  
January 21, 2025

**Commissioners' District Board Appointments**

**25-0049 Board of Commissioners**

**COMMISSION ON ELDER AFFAIRS (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Seven (7) appointees by the Board of Commissioners (one for each District); three (3) appointees from each of the non-profit umbrella agencies, which the County contracts with for aging services; and three (3) senior citizens elected by seniors in the three geographical areas of the County. The terms of such members appointed by the Board of Commissioners shall end at the end of the term of the appointing District Commissioner. Such members may continue to serve beyond his/her term until a successor is appointed.

Term = Shall end at the end of the term of the appointing District Commissioner

Term below expires: 12/31/2026

Vacant (**Arrington**)

**Commissioner Arrington nominated Vanessa Burton for a District appointment to an unexpired term ending December 31, 2026.**

**25-0050 Board of Commissioners**

**COMMISSION ON ELDER AFFAIRS (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Term = Members' terms shall end at the end of the term of the appointing District Commissioner. Such members may continue to serve beyond his/her term until a successor is appointed.

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Beth Cayce (**Ellis**)

**Vice-Chairman Ellis nominated Beth Cayce for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2028.**

**25-0051 Board of Commissioners  
BELTLINE TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICT (TAD) ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Fulton County Board of Commissioners is responsible for appointing 10 members.

Term = 2 years, with such term commencing upon approval of the Atlanta City Council. No member shall serve more that 3 consecutive 2 year terms

Term below expired: 12/31/2023  
Gabriel Sterling (**Ellis**)

**Vice-Chairman Ellis nominated Chris Copenhaver for a District appointment to a two-year term, commencing upon approval of the Atlanta City Council.**

**25-0052 Board of Commissioners  
ANIMAL WELFARE HEARING BOARD (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE  
CONSENT AGENDA)**

The Animal Welfare Hearing Board shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Each Commissioner shall appoint one member to serve for two years. Thereafter, all members may be appointed for an additional term of three years and until their successors are appointed.

Term = 2 Years/3 Years

Term below expired: 12/31/2024  
Vivien Dumford (**Ellis**)

**Vice-Chairman Ellis nominated Vivien Dumford for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2027.**

**25-0053 Board of Commissioners  
FULTON COUNTY CITIZENS COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT  
(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

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

Term = 4 Years, staggered

Terms below expired: 12/31/2024

Allison Keefer (Ellis)

Stacy Seidel (Ellis)

**Vice-Chairman Ellis nominated Allison Keefer for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2027.**

**25-0054 Board of Commissioners  
FULTON COUNTY CITIZENS COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT  
(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Term = 4 Years, staggered

Terms below expired: 12/31/2024

Allison Keefer (Ellis)

Stacy Seidel (Ellis)

**Vice-Chairman Ellis nominated Stacy Seidel for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2025.**

**25-0055 Board of Commissioners**  
FULTON COUNTY CITIZENS COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT  
**(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Term = 4 Years, staggered

Term below expired: 12/31/2024  
Danyell Little (**Pitts**)

**Chairman Pitts nominated Danyell Little for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2025.**

**25-0056 Board of Commissioners**  
FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS **(APPROVED UPON**  
**ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

The Board of Zoning Appeals shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County. The term of each member shall coincide with that of the District Commissioner who appointed the member to serve on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Any vacancy in the membership shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as the initial appointment. Members shall be removable for cause by the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County upon written charges and after a public hearing. The members of the Board shall be compensated as fixed by the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County. None of the members shall hold any other public office or position in Fulton County, except that one member may also be a member of the Fulton County Community Zoning Board.

Term = The term of each member shall coincide with that of the District Commissioner who appointed the member to serve on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Term below expired: 12/31/2024  
Kent Walker (**Ellis**)

**Vice-Chairman Ellis nominated Kent Walker for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2028.**

**25-0057 Board of Commissioners****COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) ALLOCATION PROCESS  
CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT  
AGENDA)**

The CDBG Allocation Process Citizen Review Panel shall consist of fourteen (14) citizens. Each Commissioner shall appoint two (2) members from his/her district for a two (2) year term, subject to ratification by the Board of Commissioners. Such term shall not extend beyond the term set for the Commissioner who made the appointment. Panel members may be reappointed to serve additional terms.

Term = 2 years

Term below expired: 12/31/2018

Vacant (**Arrington**)

**Commissioner Arrington nominated Paulette DeVaughn for a District appointment to a term ending December 31, 2026.**

**25-0058 Board of Commissioners****FULTON COUNTY HOMELESS CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC) (APPROVED  
UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

One (1) representative will be nominated by each of the Commission Districts for a total of seven (7) members; this includes one representative from District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Each representative will serve a two-year term and could be re-appointed 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

Chris Portis (**Arrington**)

**Commissioner Arrington nominated Chris Portis for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2026.**

**25-0059 Board of Commissioners**  
**COMMISSION ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

The Commission on Disability Affairs shall consist of a total of sixteen (16) members to serve staggered two (2) year terms and appointed as follows:

Each member of the Board of Commissioners shall appoint two (2) members; one of them said appointees shall have an initial term, of one (1) year; No term of any member shall extend beyond the term of the District Commissioner who appointed the member to serve on the Commission for Disability Affairs; The Commission on Disability Affairs shall appoint two (2) members, who receive the consent of the majority of the members of the Commission on Disability Affairs and one (1) of the appointees shall have an initial term of one (1) year. The Commission on Disability Affairs appointees shall be made for the purpose of maintaining diversity.

Term = Staggered two (2) year terms

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Gloria Weaver (**Pitts**)

**Chairman Pitts nominated Gloria Weaver for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2026.**

**25-0060 Board of Commissioners**  
**FULTON COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

The Arts Council shall be composed of fifteen (15) residents of the county. Initially, each member of the Board of Commissioners shall appoint two persons to serve on the council, one person to serve for a one-year term and one person to serve a two-year term. No term of any member shall extend beyond the term of the District Commissioner who appointed the member to serve on the Arts Council Board; thereafter, each year, each member of the Board of Commissioners shall appoint one member for a two-year term. Each member may continue to serve beyond his/her term until replaced. The Chairman of the Arts Council shall be appointed to a two-year term by a majority vote of the Board of Commissioners. The Council shall elect a vice-Chairman and a secretary from its membership.

Term = 2 years

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Nikki D. Crump (**Pitts**)

**Chairman Pitts nominated Nikki D. Crump for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2026.**

**25-0061 Board of Commissioners**  
FULTON COUNTY VETERANS' EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION, INC.  
**(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

The Veterans Commission shall have the following members: Each Commissioner shall appoint two (2) members. Such appointees shall be residents of, or work in Fulton County and shall have military experience or expertise in the areas affecting military veterans. Veterans Commission shall serve three (3) year terms, with such term subject to the discretion of the appointing Commissioner, who can remove a member for cause, otherwise such member may continue to serve beyond his/her term until a successor is appointed.

Term = 3 Years

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Vacant **(Pitts)**

**Chairman Pitts nominated Roger Wise, Jr. for a District appointment to a term ending December 31, 2027.**

**Open & Responsible Government**

**25-0062 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval of a Water Vault Easement Dedication of 120 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from H&M Alpharetta, LLC, owner, for the purpose of constructing the Fifth Third Bank Project at 4305 State Bridge Road Rear, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

**25-0063 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval of a Sanitary Sewer System Ownership, Operation, Maintenance, and Repair Agreement between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and AG EHC II (EMP) MULTI STATE 2, LLC, for the purpose of granting Fulton County legal access to extend and maintain the sanitary sewer system at 3000 Hembree Road, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009 (the Development). **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

**25-0064 Finance**

Ratification of December 2024 Grants Activity Report. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

**Justice and Safety**

**25-0065 Solicitor General**

Request approval of an agreement and partnership between the Fulton County Solicitor General's Office and the City of Atlanta for the sharing of criminal case records from the City's Court Case Management system to the Fulton County Courts Management system through a middleware solution. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

**SECOND REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

**25-0066 Board of Commissioners**

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Vice-Chairman Ellis, to adopt the Second Regular Meeting Agenda as amended by revising item #25-0076. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

**Absent:** Arrington

**25-0067 Clerk to the Commission**

Ratification of Minutes. **(RATIFIED)**

Second Regular Meeting Minutes, December 18, 2024

First Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, January 8, 2025

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Ellis 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

**25-0068 Board of Commissioners**

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

Proclamation recognizing “Medicolegal Death Investigations Professionals Week.” **(Ellis/BOC)**

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS****25-0069 Board of Commissioners**

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

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

**(CONDUCTED)**

**28 Speakers: Chief Judge Cassandra Kirk (Budget); Judge Kenya Johnson (Budget); Stanley Turner (Budget); Christopher Escobar (Arts Funding); Alex Acosia (Arts Funding); Shelby Hofer (Arts Funding); Jimmy Gouch (Arts Funding); L.A. Pink (Justice System); Beverly Williams (Section 8 Housing); Conrhonda Baker (Arts Funding); Sheleph Harper (Arts Funding); Angela Harris (Arts Funding); Laura Hennighausen (Arts Funding); Violet Crawford (Arts Funding); David Reingold (Arts Funding); Lauren Bryant (Budget); Rachel May (Arts Funding); Lisa Bonner (Arts Funding); Rivka Levine (Arts Funding); Laura Fuische (Arts Funding); Collins Desselle (Arts Funding); Paul Hershey (County Finances); Charmaine Minnifield (Arts Funding); J. Wesley Day (Justice/Solicitor Office); Michelle Taylor Willis (Arts Funding); Caitlin Barringer (Arts Funding); Melanie N. Willams (Arts Funding); Imara Canady (Arts Funding)**

**11 Zoom Comments: Kevin Muldowney (Budget); Ravi Windom (Arts Funding); Waduda Muhammad (Arts Funding); Lucia Frazier (Arts Funding); Matt Rowenczak (Budget); Jennifer Aker (Arts Funding); Christopher Swain (Arts Funding); Emily Russell (Arts Funding); Heidi Howard (Arts Funding); Unidentified Zoom Caller (Arts Funding); Patricia Geeter (Arts Funding)**

**COUNTY MANAGER'S ITEMS**

**Open & Responsible Government**

**25-0070 Finance**

Review and approve the FY2025 Final Adopted Budget and FY2025 Budget Resolution. **(APPROVED)**

a. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, to approve the budget as proposed, inclusive of a \$ 13.9 million reserve, \$4.9 million into the risk management fund for the DOJ consent order, litigation, and additional compliance costs, \$4.9 million for the operating reserve for the DOJ consent order, as well as \$4.9 million for a facility reserve with no additional enhancements to the budget. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

**Nay:** Barrett, and Arrington

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Arrington, to approve the proposed budget with enhancements totaling \$24,787,564.00. The motion failed by the following vote:

**Yea:** Barrett, and Arrington

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

**25-0071 County Manager**

Presentation of the Fulton County Operational Report. **(PRESENTED)**

**24-0891 External Affairs**

Request approval to renew an existing contract - Department of External Affairs, 23RFP139170A-CJC, Communications and Engagement Services, in an amount not to exceed \$407,875.00 with Ava TopRight, LLC, for strategic communications planning and support for Fulton County Government. This action exercises the first of three renewal options. Two renewal options remain. Effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Nay:** Barrett

**24-0899 Registration & Elections**

Request approval of a statewide contract - Registration & Elections, SWC# 99999-SPD-ES40199376IS-02, In-State Car Rental in the amount not to exceed \$494,000.00 with Enterprise Leasing of Georgia, LLC (Atlanta, GA) for the rental of box trucks, passenger vehicles and cargo vans for the Public Service Commission Primary/Municipal Primary and Runoff Elections; and the Public Service Commission General/Municipal General Election. Effective January 1, 2025, through September 8, 2025. **(MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED ON 12/18/24)**  
**(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Ellis

**25-0072 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval of a statewide contract - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, SWC #99999-001-SPD0000154-0001, Facility Maintenance Solution an amount not to exceed \$1,213,795.02 with CGL Facility Management, LLC (Fayetteville, GA) to retain the contractor to perform State of Georgia requested capital improvement projects (CIP) funded through the State of Georgia's capital reserve established through their leases at 5710 Stonewall Tell Rd, 515 Fairburn Rd, and 1249 Donald Lee Hollowell Pkwy. Effective upon BOC approval.  
**(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Ellis

**25-0073 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval to amend an existing contract - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 22ITB121622K-DJ, Industrial Racking for the Fulton County Central Warehouse, in an amount not to exceed \$260,000.00 with McGee Storage & Handling (Norcross, GA), to continue providing services that support the most functional and cost-effective solution of equipment and related components that facilitate a multi-business functional workplace environment for the selected County Agencies at the Fulton County Central Warehouse and to extend the contract through December 31, 2025 to complete the work. Effective upon BOC approval.  
**(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Ellis, and Arrington

**25-0074** Finance

Request approval of a recommended proposal - Finance Department, 24RFP1336388C-MH, Professional Property & Casualty Broker Services in an amount not to exceed \$94,500.00 with Edgewood Partners Insurance Center (EPIC), (Duluth, GA) to provide professional Property & Casualty brokerage services effective upon BOC approval through December 31, 2025, with two renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Ellis, and Arrington

**25-0075** Finance

Request approval of a recommended proposal - Finance Department, 24RFP1337774C-MH, Financial Advisory Services in an amount not to exceed \$217,000.00 with Raymond James LLC (Atlanta, GA) to provide financial advisory services upon execution of contract through December 31, 2025, with two renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Ellis, Ivory, and Arrington

**25-0076** Finance

Request **ratification of an Application and Agreement for Insurance Coverage**; approval of a Resolution authorizing membership in the Association County Commissioners of Georgia -Interlocal Risk Management (ACCG-IRMA) Agency and participation in the ACCG-IRMA First Responder PTSD Fund; **and execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement with ACCG-IRMA to effectuate such participation. (APPROVED AS AMENDED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Ellis

**Health and Human Services**

**25-0077 Public Works**

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder - Department of Public Works, 24ITB1335637A-JWT Sanitary Sewer Easement Maintenance in an amount not to exceed \$382,764.50 with Mariani Enterprises, LLC dba Ed Castro Landscape, Inc., (Roswell, GA) to provide easement maintenance in both the North and South Fulton service areas. Effective upon BOC approval through December 31, 2025, with two renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Ellis

**Infrastructure and Economic Development**

**25-0078 Public Works**

Request approval of a contract - Public Works Department, FAA Contract #693KA7-25-C-00003, Air Traffic Control Services - Night Coverage for the Fulton County Executive Airport at Brown Field with CI2 Aviation, Inc. (Dunwoody, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$323,584.00 to provide annual air traffic control night coverage services (M-F 10:00 pm to 6:00 am and Sa-Su 10:00 pm to 7:00 am) at the Fulton County Executive Airport. The County Attorney is authorized to approve the contract as to form and shall make such modifications as are necessary prior to execution. Effective February 1, 2025 for fourteen months with six, one (1) year renewal options. Funded from Airport funds. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Pitts, and Ellis

**COMMISSIONERS' ACTION ITEMS**

**25-0079 Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of a Resolution to provide the financial resources necessary to comply with the Consent Decree. **(Arrington) (WITHDRAWN)**

**ITEM WITHDRAWN AS REQUESTED BY COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON**

**Commissioners' Full Board Appointments**

**25-0080 Board of Commissioners**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE FULTON COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (APPROVED)**

Trustee position #1 is the Chairman or designee. Trustee positions #2 and #3, members of the Fulton County Commission, shall be designated or elected at a regular January meeting for one (1) year or until their successors have been appointed and qualified. Trustee Positions #4 and #5 are members of the Board of Trustees by virtue of their County position; hence their terms expire when their positions with the County terminate. Trustee Positions #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, and #12 are held for four (4) years, after serving the initial staggered terms prescribed in the enabling Resolution.

Term = 1 Year / 4 years

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Commissioner Khadijah Abdur-Rahman (**Trustee Position #2**)

**Chairman Pitts nominated Commissioner Abdur-Rahman for a Full Board reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2025.**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Arrington

**25-0081 Board of Commissioners**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE FULTON COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (APPROVED)**

Term = 1 Year / 4 years

Term below expired: 12/31/2024

Commissioner Dana Barrett (**Trustee Position #1**)

**Chairman Pitts nominated Commissioner Barrett for a Full Board reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2025.**

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

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

**Did Not Vote:** Arrington

**25-0082 Board of Commissioners****BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE FULTON COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (APPROVED)**

Term = 1 Year / 4 years

Term below expired: 12/31/2024Vice-Chairman Bob Ellis (**Trustee Position #3**)**Chairman Pitts nominated Vice-Chairman Bob Ellis for a Full Board reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2025.**

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

**Yea:** Pitts, Thorne, Barrett, Ivory, and Abdur-Rahman**Did Not Vote:** Ellis, and Arrington**25-0083 Board of Commissioners****BOARD OF ETHICS (APPROVED)**

Each member selected after the initial terms of office have expired shall serve a term of three (3) years or until the termination of his or her membership in the organization from which he or she was selected. The chair shall serve as chair for the remainder of the calendar year and until a successor is chosen. (See Fulton County Code of Laws, Section 2-80).

Term = 3 years

Term below expires: 2/12/2025Louis Levenson (**Pitts/BOC**)**Chairman Pitts nominated Louis Levenson for a Full Board reappointment to a term ending February 12, 2028.**

A motion was made by Commissioner 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**Nay:** Arrington

**25-0084 Board of Commissioners**  
METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MARTA)  
**(APPROVED)**

All appointments shall be for terms of four (4) years except that a vacancy caused otherwise than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired portion thereof by the appointing entity which made the original appointment to the vacant position, or its successor in office. A member of the board may be appointed to succeed himself or herself for one four-year term; provided, however, that the board membership prior to January 1, 2017, shall not be considered in calculating limits on length of service. Appointments to fill expiring terms shall be made by the appointing entity prior to the expiration of the term, but such appointments shall not be made more than 30 days prior to the expiration of the term. Members appointed to the board shall serve for the terms of office specified in this Code section and until their respective successors are appointed and qualified.

Term = 4 years

**Chairman Pitts nominated Elizabeth Bolton Harris for a Full Board appointment to a term ending December 31, 2028.**

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

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

**COUNTY MANAGER'S PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Open & Responsible Government**

**25-0085 External Affairs**  
Presentation: 2025 State Legislative Session Update. **(PRESENTED)**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**25-0086 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-Chairman Ellis, Commissioners: Thorne, Barrett, Ivory, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman; County Manager Dick Anderson; County Attorney Y. Soo Jo; and Clerk to the Commission Tonya R. Grier.**

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Ivory, 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

b. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve requests for representation in items #1, #2, and #3 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

c. A motion was made by Commissioner Ivory and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to reject the settlement offer presented in item #4 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONER'S  
SECOND REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 29, 2025  
10:00 A.M.

Alexander Solutions, LLC  
***"A Court Reporting Firm"***

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

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Second Regular Meeting January of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. Today is January 22, 2025; it is exactly 10 o'clock a.m. Madam Clerk, please, call the roll."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Chairman Robb Pitts."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Present."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Commissioner Bridget Thorne."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Present."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Vice Chairman Bob Ellis."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Present."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Commissioner Dana Barrett."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Present."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Commissioner Mo Ivory."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Present."

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

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Present."

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

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

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

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**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "One more time. No, I'm going to say one more time: there is no comma after, trust me if you don't believe me; look it up. There's no pause. All right, Madam Clerk."

\*\*\*\*\*

**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 2, Consent Agenda, **25-0047**, 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:** "Any items, Madam Clerk?"

**CLERK GRIER:** "I don't have any

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right, Commissioners, none?"

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right, motion to adopt by Commissioner Thorne; seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please vote."

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

\*\*\*\*\*

**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 9, Second Regular Meeting Agenda, **25-0066**, Adoption of the Second Regular Meeting Agenda. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, I have one amendment to today's agenda on page 11, Finance, 25-0076. This item is revised to amend the requested action to include the wording: request ratification of an application and agreement for insurance coverage and execution of an intergovernmental agreement."

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

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Let's vote, please on the agenda for today as amended."

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

\*\*\*\*\*

**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0067**, Ratification of Minutes, Second Regular Meeting Minutes, December 18th, 2024; First Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, January 8th, 2025."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to adopt by Vice Chair Ellis; seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0068**, Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates. Proclamation recognizing 'Medico legal Death Investigations Professionals Week' sponsored by Vice Chairman Ellis with Full Board support."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Thank you. All right."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Good morning. Pleased to have the folks from our Medical Examiner's Office come down here and join us as we recognize them with this proclamation. So, without further ado: WHEREAS, the Medico legal -- am I saying that right -- all right -- death investigator is a trained professional who investigates deaths that are unexpected, unexplained, suspicious, or violent; and WHEREAS, the investigators respond at the scene of the death, collect evidence, and determine if further analysis is needed; and WHEREAS, the Fulton County Medical Examiner's Office investigates an average of 3,000 cases each year, whether reports come in from hospices, hospitals, police, and sometimes funeral homes; and WHEREAS, the investigation unit consists of 14 team members including one chief investigator, two senior investigators, and 11 medical legal death investigators; and WHEREAS, each investigator will handle an average of 215 cases each year with the department operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including all major holidays; and WHEREAS, this continuous work schedule is essential for investigating sudden or suspicious deaths, they can occur at any time; and WHEREAS, FCME is the only County Medical Examiner's Office in Georgia with at least one investigator working in-house 24/7. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes Medico legal Death Investigators for their tireless work to ensure justice for all citizens; and does hereby proclaim the week of January 19 through 2025, as 'Medico legal Death Investigators' Week -- Investigations Professionals Week in Fulton County, Georgia. Let's give them a hand. And they certainly do fantastic work very quietly in the service that's, you know, hopefully none of us really want to encounter, but they do it with grace and dignity, and we really appreciate, you know, the work you do for Fulton County. Would you like to share a few words?"

**CHRISTINE, RECIPIENT:** "Good morning, everyone. My name is Christine; I'm one of the death investigators with the Fulton County Medical Examiner's Office. And on behalf of our agency, I'd like to sincerely thank you for taking the time to acknowledge our work and dedication. Every day we strive to serve our community with professionalism, compassion, and a commitment to uncovering the truth and often difficult circumstances. Your recognition today reaffirms the value of our role and the trust you place in us. It is an honor to be part of a team that contributes to justice and public service in such a meaningful way. Thank you for your continued support. It motivates us to keep doing the important work we do for Fulton County. Thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Continue, Madam Clerk."

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**CLERK GRIER:** "Continuing on page 9, Public Hearings: **25-0069**, Public Comment. Citizens wishing to participate in public comment will be allowed to appear in person or may choose to participate virtually via Zoom videoconferencing or by submitting their comments in writing; registering on the county's website [www.fultoncountyga.gov](http://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 have received 27 speaker cards. Will the first six speakers please come forward: Chief Magistrate Judge Cassandra Kirk, Chief Judge Kenya Johnson, Stanley Turner, Christopher Escobar, Alex Acosia, and Shelby Hofer."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Speakers, as always, when you have 15 seconds left, I'll say 15 seconds; that's your key to terminate your remarks. We have one hour -- repeat one hour for public comment. There are 30 here, that's one hour. I got 37 on Zoom. So we're going to have to -- I'm going to try to accommodate everybody within an hour. So if what you were going to say has already been said by somebody, please don't feel compelled to repeat it. We hear you. All right, Judge Kirk?"

**CHIEF JUDGE CASSANDRA KIRK:** "Good morning, Commissioners. Cassandra Kirk, Chief Magistrate Judge. For a decade, the Magistrate Court has transformed how we serve our community through innovative and -- through innovation and determination. We've created pathways to justice that simply didn't exist before. When COVID-19 threatened our community, we acted decisively. We became the first Magistrate Court to offer rental assistance to landlords and tenants. With Commissioner Khadijah's support, we expanded the program to include navigation services on site creating a model that others followed. Our commitment to accessibility revolutionized court services in Fulton County through professional videos, easy-to-understand written materials, and a self-help navigation clinic that provides parties access and understanding of our court processes. We've also expanded mediation services and efficiently made court services available across four locations throughout the County. Our groundbreaking misdemeanor mental health court highlighted with Judge Patsy Corder, behavioral health team, Public Defender, and our Solicitor General was the first to offer direct jail-to-treatment pathways, we hold an annual mental health resource fair to connect citizens with essential services. National grants have enabled us to manage 80,000 annual cases innovatively. The resources enhanced are

technology, through virtual access, expanded our court-based social media presence and facilitated stakeholder engagement. We formed groundbreaking partnerships with community organizations, churches, Fulton County Library, AVL, to bring services directly to the people through initiatives, like Magistrate Court 101, the housing court, and the housing court assistance clinic. For us, education doesn't stop at the courthouse. We support access through town halls on radio in the community, discussing new legislation, court processes, and their impact. Additionally, we support youth through our Bang the Gavel Court Program. These aren't just programs, they represent --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**CHIEF JUDGE CASSANDRA KIRK:** "-- our promise to deliver assessable justice to every citizen. Despite challenges, we continue to innovate and serve. Our achievements demonstrate our unwavering commitment to justice in our community. Thank you for consideration."

**JUDGE KENYA JOHNSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, County leaders. My name is Kenya Johnson, and I represent Fulton County Probate Court. Thank you for your work to balance the County's budget and bring needed services to residents. In these times of competing priorities and political uncertainty, there is one thing that is certain. Our loved ones will pass away and age. Probate Court provide services for grieving families and families in crisis. We submitted a budget enhancement request for a new associate judge and trial team to be housed at the North Fulton Annex at revitalization of once what they heard hearings back in the 80s and the 90s. Probate Court has the largest caseload of any Probate Court in the state, yet we have the least judges, and it takes the longest time for contested matters to be heard up to six months; which is unacceptable. A North Fulton Court team is only appropriate because most of the lawyers and customers that we see in Probate Court all come from ZIP Codes further north than the North Annex. And it has been proven that citizens would rather not come downtown, battle traffic, inconvenience, and parking fees to hear contested matters. Probate Court humbly ask for a budget enhancement in the amount of less than \$500,000, which would allow us to provide benefit and convenience to the North County residents so that their families can handle their business, pay taxes, and grieve. Thank you for your time."

**STANLEY TURNER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. Thank you, Chairman Pitts, Vice Chairman Ellis, honorable Members of the Commission. My name is Stanley Turner. I'm a resident of Fulton County. I'm also a practicing attorney, primarily practicing in the Probate Court of Fulton County. I'm here in support of Judge Johnson's request for the Probate Court to have an enhancement to their budget for this year. And first of all, I'd like to recognize Judge Johnson for the wonderful work she's done. I'm reluctant to say that I wouldn't want to appear before her anymore than I do, but we need another judge in the North Fulton area. I live in Sandy Springs and I practice in the North Fulton area for about 30 years now; and there's a great courtroom

there. The Annex would provide the additional support for a hearing for people who are reluctant to go downtown, perhaps don't file estates, and that produces a problem in the change of property that might otherwise be on the Fulton County digest where people just live in property and don't transition their property to, you know, correct the status of exemptions and senior, you know, other credits that they have for the Tax Commissioner. An associate judge would allow the Probate Court to schedule hearings sooner than the current six- to eight-month waiting time to have important family business resolved. As Judge Johnson said, Fulton is the largest county with the highest volume. Probably 20 percent of the entire Probate Court cases in the state are handled by Fulton County, and that's probably a low figure. Downtown parking is limited and expensive, and traffic is --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**STANLEY TURNER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- for preventing persons who've got court appearances. I represent older clients, and they prefer the shorter drive, and there's a great facility in Fulton Annex that we could use. Thank you very much. I appreciate it."

**CHRISTOPHER ESCOBAR, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. My name is Christopher Escobar. I am the executive director of the Atlanta Film Society. I'm also a business owner owning the businesses of the Plaza Theater on Ponce De Leon Avenue and the Tara Theater on Cheshire Bridge. I've appeared before you all before. First, to thank you for your continued support of arts and culture and of Fulton Films. I've talked before about a case study of what one arts organization had an affect on the Plaza Theater and its property taxes, sale tax generated. Most recent, I came and talked about how, from a workforce development and from a career development standpoint, our organization has done that. And I'd like, just to put a final point on it, look at it from a macro standpoint. The Sundance Film Festival is going on right now in Utah. That one organization gets a combined \$5 million in support from city, county, and state resources; and has generated more than \$18 million in tax revenue, not economic impact, not total spend. What those public sources got back more than three to one return. In the state of Georgia, the arts organizations -- nonprofit arts organizations alone -- and I'm up here wearing green along with many of my colleagues behind me, who you'll hear about talking about all the kind of incredible work they do throughout the state, and especially here in Fulton County. Spent over \$1.2 billion from both those direct arts organizations and those audiences going, doing direct spend as a result of attending their programs. And of that \$1.2 billion, over \$27 million was generated just in city and county local taxes; over 16 million of that here in Fulton County. Now, you all know what's in the budget, you all know that's an incredible return, so I want to just emphasize --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**CHRISTOPHER ESCOBAR, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- don't do it for the right reason, don't do it because they deserve it. Don't do it because they need it. Continue to

support arts and culture because it is sound fiscal policy. Thank you so much for your continued support."

**ALEX ACOSIA, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners, and thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Alex Acosia, and I'm the founding Executive Director of Soul Food Cypher. Your support has been instrumental in helping us transform lives and build community through the power of freestyle rap. Thanks to the funding we received last year, Soul Food Cypher has achieved major milestones. We expanded our youth education programs like our partnership, with the Kindezi School where students improve their vocabulary, their self-confidence, and their public speaking skills. And with our partnership with the Atlanta Beltline, we brought nearly 1,000 residents together for ATL Park Jam, celebrating hip-hop culture and community. And we showcase Fulton County's creativity on an international stage in Marseille France; representing Atlanta as a global hub of cultural excellence. But this isn't just about events, it's about impact. With your support, we've trained the next generation of emcees through our (inaudible) Next Program, equipping young artists to use their voices as tools for advocacy and community change. Your investment in the arts, create spaces where creativity thrives and stories are told. Spaces that build unity, foster pride, and make Fulton County stronger. Now, we face an urgent challenge: the Federal pause on funding for NGOs threatens the humanities, arts, and cultural sectors. It's not business as usual. And we cannot afford to go backward. To sustain progress that we've made, I urge you to fund the arts at no less than \$3 million --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**ALEX ACOSIA, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- or increase this critical support. The arts is not an expense, it is a lifeline. The arts preserve our stories. Their documentaries inspire our future. Thank you for ensuring Fulton County remains a leader in culture and creative excellence. Thank you for your time."

**SHELBY HOFER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, I'm Shelby Hofer, co-artistic director of Push, Push Arts. We turn 28 this year, and are now proudly located in downtown College Park, a historic underserved area, and as you know, just three minutes from the world's busiest airport. We now have over 20,000 square feet of programmable space including a theater, art gallery, performance café, and more than 20 artist studios. We serve over 500,000 artists annually. Through our work and partnerships, we've created countless meaningful opportunities for artists and the community making Push, Push Arts a key part of the downtown College Park revitalization. The arts are proven to boost SAT scores, mental health, and overall quality of life. When the arts thrive, so do communities. Fact, we're deeply grateful to the Fulton County Arts Council for their support, but it is simply not enough to meet the growing demand and fully activate all of the spaces and the vision for this one-of-a-kind campus we've worked tirelessly to build. Along with so many arts groups here, we've done the heavy lifting and build a strong foundation, and now we need Fulton County to meet us where we are and provide the needed support to help realize this campus

envision that we've worked so hard to create. We can't claim to be the cultural capitol of the South without backing that promise, sustaining and growing the arts funding that no less than three million, the fiscal year 2024 level of support is crucial for all of us in the arts to keep enriching lives in this community. Thank you. Thank you for your time, your support, and your commitment to the future vibrancy of Fulton County."

**JIMMY GOUGH, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Hi, my name is Jimmy Gough. I'm on the Board of the Academy Theater in Hapeville, Georgia, a lifelong Atlanta resident. I've been living here since it was apartheid, and I've been watching it bend towards the right side. We're not there yet. We're not there yet. I can't thank David Manuel enough. This guy is a prince, although, he's not the prince, but you know what I mean, he's a prince. He has helped us immensely. He comes to the shows. He's supportive. He's always got a smile. Arts are education; and you know, I was reading about Jefferson when he said this whole experiment is based on educated populace, right? Carl Sagan said there's nothing more dangerous than ignorance and power. (Indiscernible sound.) I don't know who he was talking about; but I'm here to say thank you so much for your support. Thank you so much for giving us the time. The arts generally get, you know, oh, whoa, whoa. People think of Walt Disney as the arts, or the movies as arts. But I know for young person when I saw paintings by Ernie Banks, the world of black culture was open to me in ways that it just wouldn't have been otherwise. His paintings were so profound. When I read James Baldwin, whoa, I was introduced to another culture. When I heard Robbie Shankar play music, whoa, another culture. I'm sorry, I probably can't even say DEI in here anymore, but I'm all about it, the arts are all about it. We're about making this one love, one world, one thing; and it's about teamwork and helping the youth just learn how to --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**JIMMY GOUGH, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- learn how to read. Learn how to talk. Learn how to look people in the eye, okay? That's what we're losing if we lose the arts. Y'all are the best, thank you."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Next six speakers, please come forward: L.A. Pink, Beverly Williams, Conrhonda Baker, Sheleph Harper, Angela Harris, and Laura Henninghausen."

**L.A. PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "So as we know, more corruption in Fulton County and the streets is talking. We feel like the responsible thing for the Board to continue to do is keep the budgets the way that it is because of the funding that's coming in from the federal government. And we know that it's going to affect our elders' property taxes, and we don't want that to happen. So as I get into what's going on in Fulton County -- of continuously talk about Sheriff. On the 10th, he was sworn in by Kenya Johnson, and we want to know who -- what surety bond was shown as she swore him in. On January the 2nd, I came down here and spoke to someone in the Clerk's office, and there was no bond. And as of code -- Georgia code 15-6 -- 15-16-7 and 15-16-5, we know that there was supposed to be a bond there for the public to see, because Pitts, you put out

a news report stating that you didn't understand what was going on for the taxpayer dollars. And we understand what you were talking about, because \$5,000 was given, and we don't know if that was given out of the inmate -- well, I guess some stuff in the inmate welfare fund. But, however, it sits under the Sheriff's budget or the general funding, or was it given out of the County Risk Management, because as we know, Ike Arrington is putting up to take your place, Robb Pitts, which we know that's not going to happen, and put Helen Willis in his place from what the streets are saying. But we know that Helen Willis was paid \$5,000 out of inmate welfare funding as well as her husband was paid -- well, paid for her school a thousand dollars out of the inmate welfare funding --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- all right, 15 seconds."

**L.A. PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- which that is a red flag for the community. And so, today, with everybody coming down here begging and asking for money, and some in a good way --"

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

**BEVERLY WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Hello. My name is Beverly Williams, and I am here --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- pull the mic down for her, please."

**BEVERLY WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- I am here asking for some assistance related to my experience I'm having at the Section Eight over 55 in the senior residence in Alpharetta. It's called Emblem Alpharetta. I have had numerous multiple ongoing issues with not only management, but the HHFC, who governs Section Eight in Fulton County. And they're ambivalence, inaccuracy, inconsistency, and ignoring me in my effort to settle things that management has been charging me illegally. For example, I'm supposed to pay HOA. That's amenities. I don't think that's a law under HUD. I've done my best to inform Mr. Pitts' office and Mr. Bob Ellis' office. I sent multiple, multiple e-mails, even for meeting with management; set meetings, which are all ignored as late as last Friday. They don't show up in management. I'm being charged four different utility bills, overcharged my monthly contribution to this apartment building. It's more than what the Fulton County Section Eight pay and it should not be that way. There are guidelines set by HUD as to things they cannot charge, and they just ignored it, and I have to wonder why, because there is a liaison in HHFC office who was supposed to, I would assume, be objective in what she refer to communicate with management and keeping us, the tenants --"

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

**BEVERLY WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- the tenants. I'm asking y'all, please, I have given this long list of monthly bills that I cannot afford, and it shouldn't be that way

for management, and they're not acting responsible. Please I'm asking you all to look at it."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Get that list. Thank you. Next speaker."

**CONRHONDA BAKER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, distinguished Commissioners. I'm Conrhonda Baker, program officer, for Arts, Culture, and Creative Enterprises at the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. At the foundation, we aim to inspire and lead our region toward equity and share prosperity for all. We do this primarily by serving as a conduit for charitable giving, through various endowments and donor advised funds. We are proud to align our efforts with our municipal partners like yourself; working together to uplift our cultural sector. In fact, 55 percent of this Fulton County Arts and Culture 2024 contract for services, recipients also received support that was stewarded through the community foundation. This collective investment empowers our creative businesses to grow, innovate, and continue being pillars of economic strength and cultural enrichment. Your ongoing commitment to the arts funding is more than a budget line item. It exemplifies local government by, for, and of the people. Because your investment is a local appropriation, your funds are guaranteed to have a direct impact on Fulton County constituents. Moreover, your support serves as a signal to the foundations' donors and philanthropic partners; affirming our local creative businesses' quality, professionalism, and legitimacy. As you deliberate, I urge you to consider the far-reaching impact that your influence and your seal of support has on our old arts organizations. Moreover, it's incredibly critical that we work together as we prepare to host a global audience during the upcoming World Cup. Thank you for your support, and I encourage you to retain no less than \$3 million of funding --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**CONRHONDA BAKER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- in our community. We appreciate you. Have a good day."

**SHELEPH HARPER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. My name is Sheleph Harper. I'm here with the BOE, Board of Equalization. As you know, in eight years it's been since we have gotten a raise. And during that time in 2023, we did over 42,000 partials, which brought revenue of \$7.2 billion in 2023 for Fulton County. Just found out other county -- in DeKalb County just got another raise for the -- been approved for one. We don't know exactly how much, but it should be around \$175 a day. But we are asking for the BOE that you all would consider to give us a \$200 a day raise simply because we work maybe one to two days a week, and yet and still, we think that it's very, very fair if y'all would just consider that. And thank y'all for your service and all. Not going to worry your patience; just wanted to put that on your heart. Thank you so much."

**ANGELA HARRIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Angela Harris. I'm the executive artistic director of Dance Canvas. I'm also an adjunct professor at Spelman College and at Emory University. I wanted to thank you for taking the time to hear from all of us today. I want to thank you for your continued support of the arts in Fulton County, and on behalf of my organization, Dance Canvas. Thank you for all that you have done for us over the past 17 years. And I'm here to ask you today to maintain, if not raise the budget for Fulton County Arts and Culture and the essential work it does for the Fulton County community. Last time I spoke in front of you, I highlighted the thousands of community members that we've reach each year. The many artists that we work with to provide career building resources and job opportunities, and the thousands of youth that we've trained into careers in the arts, education, and public service. I would also like to take today to highlight what attracts people to live, work, and play in Fulton County. It's the quality of life that you all provide. I moved to Fulton County in 2008, and I decided to found my organization here because of the community and the vibrancy of what Fulton County has to offer. When I travel to other cities, I always ask what is there to see and do, as I'm sure many of you do as well. And the arts and culture are what people see and do. Support for the arts is also essential to keep experiences accessible to all. Though arts in Fulton County represent hundreds of small businesses, independent contractors, and the arts and culture are the heart and soul --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**ANGELA HARRIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- of why communities exist. All of my colleagues behind me represent those entities, and we really thank you for taking the time to listen to us today."

**LAURA HENNINGHAUSEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Laura Henninghausen, and I'm the director of Strategic Philanthropy at Purpose Possible. We are an Alanta faith-based consulting firm that specializes in serving nonprofit organizations. For the past year and a half, I have had the honor of working with a groundbreaking collaborative of arts nonprofit leaders and private funders investigating the state of arts funding in the 11 county metro Atlanta region. Our collaborative is called Arts Capital Atlanta, and we advocate for the support and recognition of more than 200 incredible arts organization in the Metro area. Our data shows that of the approximately 210 currently operating arts nonprofit organizations in the Metro, 110 of them are located in Fulton County. Several of them are in this room, and all of them benefit from Fulton County support of arts and culture, through direct contracts for services or other important resources. The American's for the Arts, Arts and Economic Prosperity seeks support and definitively proves that arts and culture drives commerce to local businesses. One third of attendees travel from outside the County in which the activity takes place. Those folks spend on average \$60, which is twice as much as their in-County counterparts. And when local attendees to nonprofit arts and culture events are asked what they would have done if the event that they were attending had not been available in their county, 51 percent said that they would have

traveled to a different county to attend a similar arts and culture event. A vibrant arts and culture community keeps residents spending locally. The arts bring value to Fulton County, yet our local arts organizations are in danger --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**LAURA HENNINGHAUSEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- the state of Georgia has been ranked second to dead last in per capita arts spending, and the Georgia Council for the arts budget is declining this year from 4.7 million to 1.5 million for the entire state. This is not the time for Fulton County to decrease spending for arts and culture. Thank you."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Next speakers, please come forward: Violet Crawford, David Reingold, Lauren Bryant, Rachel May, Lisa Bonner, Rivka Levine."

**VIOLET CRAWFORD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Violet Crawford, and I have been a resident of South Fulton County for over 45 years. I am also the chairperson of the planning committee for the Atlanta Black Theater Festival. During the 45 years that I have lived in South Fulton County, I've seen a lot of changes to the area. One of the things that I would like to see a lot more of and that I think are needed, are programs in arts and culture. The impact of arts and cultural on the community has been shown to be a strong component in economic development in Fulton County and beyond. A commitment to sustaining the fiscal year '24 funding going toward the arts, would have a strong impact on the organizations, such as the Atlanta Black Theater Festival. The Atlanta Black Theater Festival is a 14-year-old organization and appreciates being a part of the arts in South Fulton County. In 2024, they held their annual festival at the Southwest Arts Center, and they have committed to do so again in '26 and '27. We would like to establish a home for the Atlanta Black Theater Festival in South Fulton County; having the ability to acquire additional sources of funds, and a permanent or long-term rental of a facility would help the Atlanta Black Theater Festival's commitment to the preservation of black theater and culture. With additional funding, these programs as well as others will be able to provide a broader gateway to the arts and the community as well as bringing in visitors from outside of the community and with it, contribute to the County's economic impact and the citizens they serve. As I mentioned earlier, I have lived in South Fulton County for over 45 years, and I'd love to see the area grow and thrive with the expansion of arts and culture --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**VIOLET CRAWFORD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- thank you for your time, and I hope that you would consider my request."

**DAVID REINGOLD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. My name is David Reingold. Today, you've heard from and will continue to hear from many of the leaders in arts and culture in our County. I am not one of those people. I am just a guy who works in theater and dance and opera around our city. I'm a lighting designer, I'm a dancer, I'm a

creative collaborator, and these people behind me are the ones who allow me to continue living in this city and to continue doing work and telling stories and bringing the arts and culture to our city. It's a struggle. It's really -- I have to do like 20 shows a year to make a living, which is more than two a month. And I have a lot of friends around who are also freelancers who are being forced out of the city because there's just simply not enough work. The work that exists doesn't pay enough, and they're moving to New York, they're moving to Chicago, and that's not okay, because we need to keep the arts and culture here in Atlanta. People are going to tell you a lot of reasons why, and I am one of those people who was born here. I grew up here, and I really, really would love to be able to stay here, but to do that means that the theater and dance and arts need to be able to pay me to do my job. And again, I really appreciate all of the funding that this Commission has given to the arts over the past; and it will be really great to be able to continue to live and work here, and to continue to tell stories, to bring stories from other places here to Atlanta, and to continue to bring our stories as a community to the broader world. So thank you very much."

**LAUREN BRYANT, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Members of the Board. My name is Lauren Bryant, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak to y'all today. I'm an attorney, and I opened my own law firm in Fulton County a few years ago, and I'm here today to support Judge Johnson's budget request for the Probate Court. I actually worked as a hearing officer in Judge Johnson's court to help with the COVID backlog, and so, I feel like I can speak pretty well on the topics that were addressed by Judge Johnson. The budget request would include additional funding for an associate judge. Fulton doesn't have one. Every other county in the Metro area has more than one, and Fulton's volume definitely necessitates an associate judge. It would also include additional funding for staff attorney and litigation manager. In my practice, I've seen firsthand the challenges that are caused by the current delays in scheduling hearings, which can take six to eight months or more. The delays affect families who are often going through the hardest things that they've ever been through in their lives: death, disabilities, minor compromise claims; and these families are facing urgent and emotional decisions regarding these estates and guardianships. I can't tell you how heartbreaking it is to have to tell clients that their minor settlement is going to have to wait another year, or ten months before the child can have money because that's how long some of the cases take to adjudicate; especially where there's cases involving emergencies that require swift adjudication. Fulton County is just falling behind. It is really hard to get things done, not for lack of desire or trying -- Judge Johnson's done an amazing job. Again, I had the pleasure of working with her directly. I represent a lot of clients. My office is in North Fulton, and I represent a lot of clients who are in that area. As we all know, traffic is unpredictable. It took me almost two hours to get here this morning, from my office in Alpharetta --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**LAUREN BRYANT, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- and that's just unacceptable. I think if we are allowing the Probate Court to utilize the North Annex, it would not only save clients

money, it would save attorneys from having to bill those clients for the extra travel time that they often incur coming down to Fulton. Thank you for the opportunity and for considering my request."

**RACHEL MAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. My name is Rachel May. I'm the producing artistic director and cofounder of Synchronicity Theater. Our mission is to uplift the voices of women and girls, and to build community through theater. We are incredibly grateful to Fulton County Arts Council for, and all of you, for support of over 27 years of our existence. Fulton has always been one of the strongest supporters of our organizations and many, many, many arts organizations. You have heard many things about the ROI and the benefit of the arts. I think we all know that. We know how they impact the economics of our County, and we know how they impact every single person who encounters the arts. I just want to speak for a moment about the amplification of impact when you give to arts organizations. It is baked into our DNA to partner and to grow community. It's what we do. And one example is Synchronicity this year has a new partnership with the Fulton County teaching museum. Through that partnership, we have brought our shows to the teaching museums, both in North Fulton and South Fulton; and we have impacted, 40 different schools have come to see our shows this year, who normally would not be able to do that. That is because of your funding of the teaching museum and your funding of Synchronicity Theater that allowed that to happen. We look for ways to make every dollar that you all give us have as much possible impact and reach as many people as possible, and we are really, really good at it. So we ask you, we encourage you, we implore you, we thank you for the funding you have given. We ask you to keep it, or as one of my colleagues said, increase it, but definitely do not lower it from the \$3 million budget. Thank you so much."

**LISA BONNER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Chairman Pitts, Vice Chair Bob Ellis, and esteemed Members of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. My name is Lisa Bonner, and I have the honor of serving as the newest chair of the National Black Arts Festival Board of Directors. On behalf of the entire NBAF Organization, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to this Board for your steadfast support as our founding entity and your continued commitment to NBAF as a legacy partner. For over 35 years, the partnership between the National Black Arts Festival in Fulton County has been a cornerstone of our success, allowing us to fulfill our mission of celebrating and advancing the contributions of black artists and their cultural impact. Your generous support enables us to deliver transformative arts, education programs to children throughout the Fulton County, inspiring creativity, fostering innovation, and providing opportunities that may -- that many young people would not otherwise have access to. In addition to our work with youth, your investment allows us to support local artists and creative professionals who play a vital role in the cultural and economic fabric of Fulton County. Through workshops, mentorships, and showcase opportunities, we help these artists thrive, contributing to the growth of the County's creative industries and enhancing its reputation as a hub for culture and innovation. The National Black Arts Festival is proud to stand as a testament to the power of public investment in the arts,

and we deeply appreciate the vision and leadership of this Board in recognizing the value of this work. As you consider the 2025 budget, we hope that you will continue to prioritize the arts and the incredible impact that your contribution has had on our community. Thank you for your time, your dedication, and your unwavering belief in the power of art to educate, inspire, and uplift. Together, we are shaping a brighter future for Fulton County. On behalf of the NBAF, we all thank you."

**RIVKA LEVINE, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Hi. I'm Rivka Levine with the Atlanta Shakespeare Company. Your decision last year to allocate \$3 million for the arts tells your constituents that you understand the difference between a community that simply exists and one that thrives. We implore you to uphold that again. When you fund the arts, you're not just funding entertainment and a good time, you're funding outreach work that impacts kids experiencing homelessness, students on the spectrum, youth from immigrant families, underserved students in Title I schools, and kids with learning challenges who need the programs that we offer in order to succeed academically. Among other things, arts and education in the theater teaches our kids the use of complex language. The ability to put thoughts into words makes it possible to form concrete plans for achievement, to problem solve, to express oneself effectively in a job interview or a business meeting, and to lead others with new ideas and ways of thinking. All the critical skills for any young person as they form personal relationships, but these skills also impact Fulton County citizens' chances of being hired at higher wage jobs or successfully negotiating a raise in pay. The fact that we are speaking to you today proves that language is power, and the arts teach that. Please hear the needs of your constituents once again and sustain arts funding at no less than \$3 million. Thank you so much for hearing us today and for your support for the arts."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Next speakers, please come forward: Laura Fuische, Collins Desselle, Paul Hershey, Charmaine Minnifield, and J. Wesley Day."

**LAURA FUISCHE, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Laura Fuisch. I'm a resident of Fulton County and the executive director of MODA, the Museum of Design Atlanta. I'm proud to say we serve -- we turned 35 years old this year, and we're located in midtown. I'd like to thank you for the support that you've shown for arts and culture in the past years, but I'd also like to say how much I admire the work you do every day to make Fulton County a thriving, prosperous, healthy, and happy place to live and work. You take on complex challenges; issues that require enormous creativity and innovation to address effectively. Your leadership moves the County forward, and I thank you for that. It's precisely for that reason that we should sustain arts funding at \$3 million or increase it. The robust arts ecosystem in Fulton County is not just a cultural asset. It's a critical driver of our economy, our well-being, and our community's resilience. The arts make our neighborhoods vibrant; they attract businesses and talent, and improve our quality of life. They're a visible symbol of creativity and innovation that define Fulton County. But even more than that, the arts are an incubator for the skills we need to continue building a better future. When people engage in the arts, whether as creators or audiences or students, they strengthen skills

of creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking; and you know very well that those are the skills that fuel innovation, economic development, and progress. If we decrease arts funding, we don't just --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**LAURA FUISCHE, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- diminish access to cultural experiences; we limit our collective capacity for creativity and innovation. Thank you for your investment in the past, and we hope you'll continue to do so this year."

**COLLINS DESSELLE, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. My name is Collins Desselle. I am the associate director of Institutional Advancement over at the Alliance Theater just up on Peachtree Street. We are in the heart of District Three in Fulton County and have been for over 50 years. And we produce theater, and most people know that, and we do it really well, as do many of my colleagues in the room today. And as David was saying, we are a place of employment for so many artists, the reason that so many stay here in Fulton County; and also the reason why Broadway producers come to Atlanta to work here and invest in the County. But we are more than just a place that produces extraordinary theater. Like I said, along with my colleagues in the room, we at the Alliance feel that theater should be a community resource. It's not just producing theater for theater's sake. We are using the theater skills, imagination, and creativity, critical thinking, all of these things go in to it to invest in young people and improve their lives. And other county agencies and businesses around Fulton County see that value and what we can support and come looking to us to help do things like address the US Surgeon General's declaration about isolation in young people and its effects on mental health. At the Alliance alone is working with DBHDD, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Fulton County Schools, CDC, and that's just a few on different things like combating isolation, investing in youth mental health, reading --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**COLLINS DESSELLE, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- reading scores and so much more. So thank you for your support and encourage you to keep it at three million for this year, and I look forward to seeing you all at the Alliance soon. Thank you very much."

**PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. Good morning, Vietnam. Here we are again, SOSDD. Same old stuff; different day. Let's talk about some facts: Number one, there is a manual, directive. It is called the constitutional officers budgeting, contracting and other critical issues, fourth edition. It states very empathically you control the budget of elected officials. I talked to the Superior Court Clerk: there is no violation, no findings of what the standing is, and everybody says that that is correct. So Commissioner Arrington's position on that is being gaslighted. Number two, you've got a task force that you gave \$210,000 to. You still haven't found the documentation on where the money went; and what's really strange is Commissioner Barrett, your Chief of Staff, was assigned to that committee or that task

force, by the County Attorney. So they ought to know where it's at. And if it's not, why? And then lastly, and lastly, you're going to hold a class at the public library for African-Americans only for dementia, which is a violation of civil rights, and it's discriminatory; and the money is being funded through DeKalb County, and it's being sponsored by Emory. I respectfully demand that either two things happen, that class get canceled or it gets opened up to all races, colors, and creeds. We are one nation under God, one people. This committee -- this Board of Commissioners --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- need to stop treating the I-20 highway as the Mason-Dixon Line, and that's exactly what you continue to do and you gaslight everybody. So I respectfully demand a response for what's going to happen this Saturday."

**CHARMAINE MINNIFIELD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Praise houses were small wooden structures that we would gather in, in secret safe spaces doing enslavement. We would preserve our identities in plain sight by gathering in a circle and singing in a call and response; in a full-body rhythmic prayer called a ring shout. Praise houses are seen along the Gullah Geechee Corridor, but are actually are the origins of the black church and faith practices, our black liberation practices, across this country. It is critical now to remember our histories and our stories just like our ancestors did during the ring shout. When they channeled freedom into their bodies, this is our chance to remember freedom again. My name is Charmaine Minnifield; I'm the founder of the Praise House Project. I received a National Endowment for the Arts, Our Town grant, to present a sight-specific installation of a praise in communities where our histories have been erased. Our next installation of remembrance will be at the site of the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre at Southview Cemetery. We are moving the praise house. We first presented it at Oakland Cemetery to honor the 800 unmarked graves, and we went to Emory University to acknowledge slavery and dispossession, and it rests now at Freedman's Town in downtown Decatur. In 2025, we would hope to move it along the path of the massacre and rest then in Southview where the victims now rest; alongside 80,000, of our ancestors, including the civil rights heroes of our time, all rest at Southview. We want to invite Fulton County to continue its investment in the arts as a healing and a tool for change in what ails our society today --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**CHARMAINE MINNIFIELD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** -- we want to center our practices of gathering, our memory, and medicine of love; and we want to remember our ancestors with dignity as we imagine a new freedom with you all. Thank you."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Last three speakers in Assembly Hall: Michelle Taylor Willis, Caitlin Barringer, and Melanie N. Williams."

**J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. My name is J. Wesley Day, and I am here to humbly ask you not to provide Keith Gammage with any additional budget, and here is why: Keith Gammage has little to no oversight. He has no guard rails, which means if you utilize your First Amendment right as I had, Keith Gammage will retaliate against you. I have provided you with a 17-page report at the last meeting titled Facts Do Not Lie, But Keith Gammage Does. If you had the opportunity to read that report, it proves that Keith Gammage does not follow the law. If so, the law would have never led him to escalate a misdemeanor to a felony. The laws would have never permitted Keith Gammage to add an additional charge of obstruction to a police officer when the police did not initially cite it. This is considered torturous misconduct. Keith Gammage's office operates without processes or procedures which means, he does not have to check any boxes to escalate a misdemeanor to a felony. He does not have to check any boxes to add additional charges: for example, when I say check boxes, does this person have any criminal background, in which I did not; that's a reason not to escalate or add charges. Is this a violent crime --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- sitting at the Cheesecake Factory waiting on a hundred dollar order is not a crime that you should add or escalate. Keith Gammage does not follow the evidence. If so, the evidence would have never led him to escalate or (inaudible.) charges. Please do not add to his budget. Thank you."

**MICHELLE TAYLOR WILLIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. Michelle Taylor Willis, here. As always, thank you for your time and for the opportunity. So a quick question: for what does Fulton County want to be known? Do we want to be known as a thriving community or do we want to be known as a surviving community? And the record shows, statistics show that there is a direct correlation between communities with higher incomes, higher revenues, higher education, and those that contribute to the arts and education programs. Communities and cities with an intentional focus on those monies dedicated are thriving communities and they're not surviving. We need arts funding for events and programs just like the Taste of Sofu and the Sofu Legends Ball. Because of the support of Commissioners like Arrington, Thorne, Abdur-Rahman, and, of course, people like David Manuel, we've been able to touch, in the past few years, over 10,000 residents. We've touched over 100 local artists. We've donated over \$10,000, to local arts organizations around the eight cities, specifically in South Fulton County. These get bigger every year, which means the revenues get bigger, the tax implications get bigger, the incomes get bigger, and the communities thrive and become bigger. There's a huge economic disparity in Fulton County, and we know, based on statistics, that's a direct correlation between art and education. I'm not just speaking to you as someone who is, to put it eloquently, begging for money, but I'm speaking to you as a mother who all of her kids --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**MICHELLE TAYLOR WILLIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- have played instruments. I'm speaking to you as a community advocate. I'm speaking to you as an actress and a performer, someone who doesn't just stand up and talk, but actually walks. Thank you for your time."

**CAITLIN BARRINGER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Caitlin Barringer, I'm a neighborhood leader in District Four, and I'm privilege to work at Open Hand and the Mighty Six where we are honored to serve all of Fulton County. Open Hand, along with the American Heart Association," Grove Park Foundation, South Atlanta Civic League, together the collaboration for equitable health have been collaborating on ways we can improve health outcomes by offering produce prescription programs. With this program, we provide access to fresh produce plus access to nutrition education to provide knowledge to sustain these healthy lifestyles once the program concludes. It's one thing to give people produce, but if they do not know what to do with the produce, how to prepare it, and how to properly store it, it can end up going to waste. We are also showing people how to read food labels and shop on a budget. This program is taught by a registered dietitian or trained nutrition educator. Our outcomes from previous produce prescription programs have already shown an increase in fruit and vegetables consumption, lowered blood pressure, and increase confidence in procuring and preparing healthy foods. We are asking for you to allocate \$60,000 to pilot access to this program across all of Fulton County. This would cover three three-month cohorts throughout Fulton County. We have received referrals from healthcare partners for people experiencing nutrition insecurity. Food and nutrition insecurity is not just an issue for one district, healthy eating can affect all of Fulton County. According to Feeding America, nearly 12 percent of Fulton County residents are food insecure. In addition, data from Fulton County's community health assessment states that leading causes of death in the County are heart disease, hypertension and stroke; all of which are also leading causes of hospitalizations in Fulton County --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**CAITLIN BARRINGER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** -- poor nutrition is a key component to developing these conditions. These programs prevent and treat these diseases, lower health care costs and utilization, and improve quality of life. Together, we can work together for a healthier Fulton County. Thank you."

**MELANIE N. WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Melanie Williams. I'm a Hapeville resident, Fulton County resident. I, in fact, live in one of the homes expertly crafted by Commissioner Ivory, so I have a lot of connections to this County; but I'm here today primarily as a mother. My daughter had the opportunity to star in the production of Madeline's Christmas where she played Kate, and it was an amazing experience for her. So I am asking you to continue to support and fund the arts, and make an investment in programs like it. It was really a life-changing experience for my daughter, and it was a program where it didn't matter who I

was, who her -- who any of the parents were, and whether you had the money to pay; they got outstanding training and excellent experience, and I don't know what the next few years will look like. Things are so uncertain and unstable, but I ask you to continue to fund programs like this. The children really need them. My daughter needs them, and I think that -- I mean I don't have a lot statistics. Again, I'm just speaking as a mother, but I think that things like this are necessary and will make all the difference in the world, so I ask you to continue to look at those closely. Thank you."

**IMARA CANADY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. I don't need to introduce myself, because we've spent a lot of time together, but I come to you today in one of the roles that I am the proudest that I've ever been able to hold onto during my tenure as a young child growing up in Fulton County to now as a professional in Fulton County, and that is, as Vice Chair of the Fulton County Arts Council. As you are well aware, one of the primary purposes of the Fulton County Arts Council, individuals throughout this community that you appoint, is to be your voice and the liaison to your districts and the constituents that you serve. And so, what we hope that you have experienced today is just a sampling of individuals that represent the thousands, and dare I say millions of constituents that both reside in every corridor of Fulton County. To all of those in surrounding area; and dare I say in the region and the country that come to enjoy the artistic expressions and value of professional opportunities that Fulton County has had a legacy of supporting. So yes, as I've said to you numerous times, I would not dare want to sit in your seat because you have daunting tasks to undertake to ensure that we are a safe community that young people thrive. But what we ask you to do is to also remember as been stated so beautifully by my colleagues that are in the trenches of this work each and every day that when you fund art and culture, the substantial dollar value that you invest in community; not just things on a stage or performances. You invest in people's lives. You invest in safety. You invest in young people. So we ask that you today continue at minimal to continue the investment of \$3 million in arts and cultures for Fulton County --

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- 15 seconds."

**IMARA CANADY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "-- to ensure that Fulton County can be the beacon of light that it continues to be all across this country. Thank you and God bless you for the hard work that you continue to do on behalf of all of us."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we now have 34 speakers on Zoom."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. Here's where we are: 34 on Zoom; two minutes each; that's another hour. We've got four minutes left in the hour that's allocated for public comment. We can ask that those on Zoom to limit their comments and extend the time today. We typically do this at budget time for another I'd say another 30 minutes if there are no objections, to hear from those on Zoom. We've got 30 minutes, and I would ask that you limit your remarks to one minute each, so we can accommodate everybody."

Typically, all of those who've signed up for Zoom do not appear, so we may be able to do so. So, first Zoom speaker."

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

**KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Morning, Commissioners. It's annual budget time. Again, the theme is to throw more money at problems and hope it fixes them. Commissioner Arrington, I see you want to throw a hundred million to comply with the Consent Decree. Our jails are definitely a problem, but if Fulton actually had a functioning DA, we could at least address the overcrowding problem in our jail. Give the criminals their constitutionally guaranteed trial and either send them to prison or set them free. Good old Fani's been wasting a ton of taxpayer cash and time on ill-advised and unsuccessful RICO trials with nothing to show for it except for a crappy overworked jail busting at the seams. Speaking of overfunded departments, the elections department is coming to the well again to fund vehicle rentals. This time they've reduced the cost to a little over \$400,000. But what's this? In the fine print is a return date of December 22nd, but the estimate is only until September 8th --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right, time is up."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "The next person to speak is Ravi Windom."

**RAVI WINDOM, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, everyone. My name is Ravi Windom. I represent the Hammonds House Museum, and I just wanted to thank you all for your continued support of the Hammonds House Museum and arts community as a whole; and a warm welcome to Commissioner Mo Ivory. Last year and over the last few years, we have been able to maintain and sustain our beautiful historic African-American Museum in the heart of the West End, and have added an amazing new permanent installation of the John Rodan Sculpture Gardens to our grounds. With your past support and hopeful continued support, we will be able to present hundreds of thousands of students, families, educators, and more with art exhibitions and programming that speaks to all people, but specifically people of color. I've learned that when giving student group tours that less than ten percent of them have never visited a museum, and even less percentage have been able to visit an African-American Museum. So this is so important to continue expanding these opportunities to these students, and we can continue to make strides with their continued support of the arts and culture."

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

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Next person to speak is Waduda Muhammad. Waduda Muhammad"

**WADUDA MUHAMMAD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Can you hear me?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Yes."

**WADUDA MUHAMMAD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. My name Waduda Muhammad. I'm the Executive Director of Georgians for The Arts. Georgians for The Arts is the designated statewide arts advocacy agency from our federal partner Investment to The Arts, under the direction of National Endowments for The Arts. We advocate for funding for the arts at the state level which influences the Governor's budget in all 159 counties across the state. Firstly, thank you Board of Commissioners, for your continued support of the arts in Fulton County. Your support for Fulton County arts and culture is instrumental in being a model for all counties across the state of Georgia. Funding from Fulton County is traditionally higher than the state's budget, which is about 1.7 million. This year, going into fiscal year '26, the state of Georgia is receiving a substantial cut to its budget. It has been receiving an additional \$3 million of COVID relief funds for the last three years and an additional \$1 million in endowments --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- thank you."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "The next person to speak is Lucia Frazier."

**LUCIA FRAZIER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, Commissioners. I appreciate hearing all the comments about the arts today and its asking constituents as well for supporting that. I do support a lot of the programs that are free to students and – but the performing arts that are getting paid, I feel like they're profiting and able to support themselves. Second thing, on the agenda packet, for the elections item, page 139, page 140, I do appreciate the breakdown of the vehicle rentals that the elections team is asking for. Please, you know, continue providing more of that. If there's still some items that seem to go for eight months on vehicle rental, and I think that might be an issue. And lastly, again, for the elections department, please manage and reduce the budget for that, because even with our tax dollars, we're not getting the election data that we are supposed to get, such as the electoral list before the election and the numbered list after an election. We never received that. Thank you very much."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "The next person to speak is Matt Rowenczak."

**MATT ROWENCZAK, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning Commissioners. The budget can certainly be reduced and the burden can be taken off of the taxpayers. Again, if there was a true due diligence done at the department level, you would see that as an example, right? We've got an elections department that asks for more money. They never spent it. They ask for more money. They never spend it. They ask for more money, they never spend it. It happens every single year, right? But we don't make any adjustments. You got a 12- to 13-million excess in that department alone, and you've got very competent, capable Board of Equalization people coming, asking for a raise that hasn't received one in eight years, right? Something is up, not to

mention the Probate Court issue that's been brought up. So the elections issue that's on the agenda too, is proof of that. It's not the full year. It's going to end up being a million dollars for vehicles."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "The next person to speak is Jennifer Aker.

**JENNIFER AKER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Hi there. I am a freelance theater artist, and I am going to advocate for not lowering the budget. In fact, hopefully, you could raise it. I just want to speak to job creation. I'm currently directing a show at a theater. We have seven actors, three swings, five technicians five full-time arts admin, five contract artists, and we actually have a partnership with the local university serving countless other students in mentorship experiences. So that's just one production, a relatively small production, in fact; and we have 25 professionals and a bunch of young people being mentored. Multiply that by every theater show that's in rehearsal or production, and let's add dance, let's add visual artist, let's add music. There are lots of jobs being created. Thank you. If we don't have work, we will either leave the city or we will come for your jobs, and we're funny and charismatic and smart and, you know, you don't want us there, so let us keep our jobs. Thank you so much for listening to us, and thank you for your leadership."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Next person to speak is Aisha Greenlee. Aisha Greenlee. The next person to speak is Amy Duffy. Amy Duffy. The next person to speak is Christopher Swain. Christopher Swain.

**CHRISTOPHER SWAIN, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. Can you hear me?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Yes."

**CHRISTOPHER SWAIN, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning, my name is Christopher Swain. I'm here on behalf of the Hammonds House, and I ask that you continue to support the arts. Same in the city of Atlanta, it's vital that we keep this going. Not only for the Hammonds House, but all the arts in Atlanta is not just esthetic. Arts are the very fabric of who we are, and we need to -- we need every dollar we can get to sustained that. Arts is what sustains in our worst of times. When we went through COVID, arts is what helped keep us together, keep our minds sane. So please keep that in mind as you're voting on the budget today to make sure that we all continue to enjoy the quality of life that we have come to expect. Thank you so much for your time."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Next person to speak is Cory Phelps. Cory Phelps. The next person to speak is Danielle Gray. Danielle Gray. The next person to speak is Darisia Mia. Darisia Mia. The next person to speak is Emily Russell. Emily Russell.

**EMILY RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Hi, yes. My name is Emily Russell. And I am representing the Whole World Improv Theater in Midtown Atlanta. We have just

celebrated our 30th anniversary, and I implore you to please not cut the budget for the arts communities in Atlanta, and I echo all of the sentiments of my colleagues. Thank you so much for your work and thank you so much for your time today."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Next person to speak is Heidi Howard."

**HEIDI HOWARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Hi. Yes, hello? Hi, I'm Heidi S. Howard. I'm the artistic director of Seven Stages Theater, and I echo all of my colleagues, please do not cut funding. The impact is an ongoing rolling affect, not only here locally in Fulton County, across Atlanta and Georgia, our nation, and our globe. Continuing to support the arts is a cultural duty and a necessity for the ongoing of our humanity and the betterment of our world. Thank you all so much for your support and leadership. Onward we go together, friends."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "The next person to speak is Erin Dreiling. Erin Dreiling. The next person to speak is Jacob Smulian. Jacob Smulian. The next person to speak is Karen Turney. Karen Turney. The next person to speak is Kat Stoneback. Kat Stoneback. The next person to speak is Lashanon Johnson. Lashanon Johnson. The next person to speak is Marguerite Simmons. Marguerite Simmons. The next person to speak is Megan Lee. Megan Lee. The next person to speak is Melodi Ford. Melodi Ford. The next person to speak is Daricia Mia DeMarr."

**DARICIA MIA DEMARR, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Hi. I'm sorry I wasn't ready before, but I just want to echo all of my colleagues in the arts community. I am an arts professional in Fulton County. I live in Fulton County and I urge continued funding, sustained, or increased. Arts are very important to our community. Thank you."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Next person to speak is Patricia Jeter. Patricia Jeter. The next person to speak is Princess Blama. Princess Blama. The next person to speak is Rob Shaw-Smith. Rob Shaw-Smith. Okay. Next person to speak is Terri Cohen. Terri Cohen. Next person to speak is Tony Henson. Tony Henson. Next person to speak is Patricia Jeter."

**PATRICIA JETER, PUBLIC SPEAKER:** "Good morning. I'm speaking on behalf of Hammonds House. Arts are essential to our community and to the public at large. Please consider this when you make your decision; and help us retain funding for Hammonds House and other arts venues. Thank you."

**RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Next person to speak is Vanessa Slayton. Vanessa Slayton. The next person to speak is Vanya Foote. Vanya Foote. The next person to speak is Virginia Kriho. Virginia Kriho. And that concludes -- I'm sorry one other, Thyrsa Gravely. Thyrsa Gravely. And this concludes our Zoom public comments."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. All right. We made it, thank you. Madam Clerk, continue."

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**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 10, County Manager's Items under Open and Responsible Government, **25-0070**, Finance: Review and approve the Fiscal Year 2025 final adopted budget and Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Resolution."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. As you all aware, we are to approve the budget no later than the second meeting of each year. And due to the weather, we were not able to meet. But we are here today, and it's my hope and expectation that we will approve the 2025 budget today. There are -- been a lot of comments about requests from departments, enhancements, if you will, that were not funded; so unfunded enhancements from departments, those enhancement requests, if my math is correct, total about \$130 million. Our millage rate that we approved is 8.87. So the question is, where do we get the \$130 million of yet to be funded requests by departments? The millage rate is set. The two pretty obvious areas, number one, we spent a lot of time at the last meeting talking about the fund balance, and there's about \$86 million in a category called Other, but that Other does not mean that that money is not earmarked for certain functions, but there's \$86 million there. The second source of funding, if we're serious, is the fund balance. We have a policy of 16.67 percent for the budget for fund balance. That's just our policy. We can do away with that if we choose. Currently, that 18. -- strike that, 16.67 represents about \$165 million in our fund, what we call fund balance, or reserve. So if you add the \$165 million in the fund balance with the 86 million in nonagency, that's \$251 million. The unfunded number once again, is just 130. So there is a source to do that if you choose to do so. All right, Madam -- Ms. Whitmore -- I was going to call her Bookkeeper. Madam CFO."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the Manager had some remarks that he wanted to make about the budget."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Mr. Manager."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Yes, sir. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. I've provided a short deck that will summarize our thoughts from the last meeting. Just I want to make some comments up front. You know, having spent ten years here now, and then almost 30 with AT&T, I believe we have a very sound financial planning process. I want to disabuse, you know, the notions of nonagency as a slush fund, a purpose for over budgeting and nonagency; cavalier disregard of departmental requests, as well as some kind of nefarious plot to frustrate department heads. None of those are accurate. Since 2015, we have driven a 16 percent reduction in the millage rate. We have now held flat at 8.87 if we do so in 2025 for four years in terms of millage rates. We've increase the general fund expenditures by over 55 percent since 2015, or \$345 million. And in this last year, achieved a AAA rating from Fitch. Being from Kentucky, I'd call that a trifecta. But we know and respect that you make the final decision on this budget recommendation, which is what it is. We also

know that you shape the expectations that lead us to today, and I hope, after I go through it quickly, these ten slides, that it'll be clear how nonagency has served us well, how the departmental budgets do have flexibility within them. That we have presented a multiyear financial planning approach which, if you are trying to look forward and consider things beyond the current year and plan for those appropriately, that is what you would do, and I would encourage you to look at again. And then lastly, that we'll reiterate that we still stand with the previous recommendation, which is keeping your powder dry and reserving 13.9 million from underruns against what we know now to be unknowns in the DOJ Consent Order. Madam Clerk, if you'll just go to the first slide in this presentation. So I'm just going to start with nonagency. We think it's a valuable element in our planning approach. It has allowed us to withstand disruptions. I've picked, you know, five over my tenure. There have been others, but the property tax reset in 2017, the COVID-19 response, the jail population crisis in 2023, and the bridging plan, the cyberattack last year, and now the Consent Order. And we have utilized 15 to 30 million annually without the need to adjust millage rates or implement significant changes in operating budgets or expense controls. So it is a, I think -- now to anticipate some of these things, more feature than a glitch, as they say; and quite frankly, we can justify 30 to 50 million in contingency as opposed to 1 million. One million is what we budget. We end up finding 30 to 50, and I'll explain that on the next chart, if you'll go to that, please. By virtue of the fact as nonagency is budgeted for, it's generally for items like pension and utilities, which are straightforward, but also strategic initiatives, which stretch across sometimes years as well as across multiple departments. You can just see from this brief list what was budgeted last year and then what was fully expended. They are now, in retrospect, easy to determine, like jail debt service. We did not get all the way down the path to doing an assessment, issuing a bond. Therefore, the 10 million in jail debt services was unutilized. We most likely though will in the coming year to year and a half. So to budget for that is appropriate. To not have expended it is just fundamentally a timing issue in the same way with the Grady Debt Services for the freestanding emergency department. Again, it's a key initiative approved by the Board, the timing slips, and then, therefore, it frees up some money. As I mentioned, we have one million explicitly budgeted for contingencies. We probably need to budget something significantly more if we didn't have this to rely on, because, as I've said, this has been more consistently used for that in many years. Next slide, please. As I've really already said, these underruns really are there and they are not, as we discussed I think in the last meeting, captured in the same way that the state government does, which builds and builds and builds over a number years. They've got 16 billion in a fund balance now, or are they distributed as they would be in a commercial environment to shareholders. They're used the next year. Each year we use whatever underruns we have to continue to budget at a certain level that does exceed generally the anticipated revenues that are going to come in. So they don't evaporate. I'll say it that way. They're used each year. And if you eliminated any of those underruns, pushed them out, and expended them, plan to expend them with no ability to pull back, then you'd find yourself in the very next year having to either increase the millage rate or reduce the expenditures. Next chart. So again, this is the fundamental use for countywide expenditures, partial execution or delayed is what

generates underruns and, again, those savings have been key to the flex that we've had. If you'll go to the next chart. And then it kind of leads to, do departments have any flex within -- go to the next chart, please -- in their budget. So I just simply took these as an example. This is from last year's budget. This is about 330 million worth of budget, an underrun of 4.4. So 1 to 2 percent of that, in terms of an underrun, is not unusual and not -- not something that I think is a bad fact, but shows if you get concerned about can I find another 50,000, 100,000, 150,000, within budgets, you generally could find it. That could be found before it ever gets here, either by anticipating underruns and reallocating or reprioritizing. Next chart, please. And then as we prepare the budget, this is something I want to make sure that I communicate -- and by the way these are my personal thoughts that I communicate clearly. You know, each budget cycle, we bring back the assumptions before we start the process. The proposed millage rate, the projected growth rate, the collection rate percentage, and generally since we are now four years into a flat millage rate, we have used a rules-based approach, as we've defined it, which doesn't allow for salary increases, new programs, program expansions, or continuation of expired grants like ORCA. So it should not be -- it should not be a surprise when those are not included, and sometimes I think we look at these and think there's -- there are compelling cases made. So it's not out of not hearing the case or reviewing it or being sympathetic to it; it is the system is designed to produce what the system is producing. It's producing a balanced budget with these assumptions, and the primary assumption is what revenue you anticipate receiving, driven by the millage rate. So again each year for the last three to four, this has been the approach. Next slide, please. If you recall different from that, and I know not everyone participated in this exercise, but many of you did, back in 2023, we took a global view of all anticipated expense drivers out into the future, and admittedly this, you know, was really trying to look aggressively and certainly was subject to being reduced and was, most specifically in terms of the \$1.68 billion jail debt service. That was included in this view. It's, of course, taken out and now we're headed in a different direction, which is great. There were a number of other things that you'll see at the bottom of that chart, many of which now pop up in discussions when you're considering the budget. Like, for example, enhancement requests from departments. We have built in 15 million into this model. We now really don't have those by definition because, again, we're not looking to start new programs, expand current programs. Sometimes when you hear about employee salaries, yep, that's not in there. So, yeah, there may be a pressure point in the Superior Court. There might be a pressure point in the Solicitor's office, but that's not accounted for because, again, a rules-based approach eliminates that. So I just want to remind you that this was not insignificant in terms of the impact on the budget -- or excuse me, the impact on the millage rate out into the future because it would move back into the mid-10s, which is where we were, more or less, when I was appointed, and that was not the direction of the Board choose. So there is ample reason here for why we are where we are, in other words, it was presented, the Board decided not to follow this path, and, in fact, is following the path that we're, you know, attempting to manage to. Next chart. So in light of that path, you know, our recommendation is to continue to reserve against, you know, what are now known unknowns, and that's predominately in the DOJ Consent Order. However, as we

all know, we walk in yesterday and find that the administration has paused federal grants for the time being. We don't know -- again, if that would be in that vernacular, that would have been an unknown unknown. We had no way to run a scenario with that contemplated. And we had just begun to try to determine what that implications may be, but, you know, near term, it's 80 plus employees are fully funded. If I have the numbers right, it's tens of millions of dollars. Of course, a big part of that is in the Ryan White program, so we'll have to both watch that closely and make a decision, are there some aspects of the general fund that need to be applied against this, at a minimum to maintain the staff that we have to administer these grants hopefully once they're returned. But that's another, again, example of if we do not have some flex in the way that -- in a way that we budget, we will find ourselves in, I think, a untenable situation. And then lastly, you know as you consider what you'll consider today, using the approach that we used, we did not go through and necessarily try to vet or rank order every enhancement request. Why, because there weren't the resources to address them. So as you do that, you'll have to somewhat use your own judgment, if you so choose -- so choose to do so. And then next chart, please. I think this is as best a visual and terms of the waterfall chart that we have used in previous years to identify where those unfunded requests still remain, and I would remind you. I'll ask the CFO to correct me if wrong, but I think we had almost 200 million in enhancement requests excluding capital. This represents, you know, somewhere in the neighborhood of a hundred and twenty --129,000,000 or 130,000,000 or so still yet to be funded. So the point being we did find ways in the underruns that we had and in the millage rate that was assumed, to address some of the enhancement requests. So it's not that none have been addressed. The most pressing, the ones that we felt like were either life safety or more significantly directed by some kind of law or regulatory change, we did fund. So it's not that none have been funded, but there are clearly some that are left unfunded. And then, we put in the appendix so we don't need to go to, just looking backwards, because there were some questions raised in the last meeting, I think, on what was the millage rate or what was the fund balance, so we've included that, and then we've also included what was at least explicitly discussed. I'm sure there are more of these in today's discussion, and it's included as the last page in the appendix, the list of items that as we've heard them come up. So let me ask, Mr. Chairman, if the CFO wants to add to that, then otherwise I think we're ready to answer questions and participate to the degree that you find helpful."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Ms. Whitfield [Verbatim]."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the only comment that I would add is really, in reference to your opening remarks, Mr. Chairman, where you identify fund balance as an available source of funds for use. And I would like to just to remind the Board --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- excuse me. I was not advocating that. What I said was, there's that category called Other -- Other, that some don't understand what that means, and they think that that's money that's available, that's what I meant."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** Yes, sir, and then you also mentioned our fund balance --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** -- that's correct. Our policy can be changed; I hope that we would not; that's served us well."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Yes, and I was simply going to add that fund balance reserve policy has served us well, and that it was, you know, part of the reason why, in 2024, our credit rating was upgraded from AA to AAA."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Absolutely."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "So I was just going to state that if we did make a change in that policy, it would more than likely result in a downgrade."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Mr. Manager."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Yes, sir. I turn it back to you and, again, we're here to answer questions and be helpful."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right, Commissioner Ivory."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Madam CFO, can you explain, in that 16.67 fund reserve, which is also sometimes called fund balance. You just mentioned that there -- well, the Chairman mentioned it was about 165 million in that, and that that 16.67 was a Resolution that the Board decided was the amount that we would keep in reserve, which I think you just said has an impact on the County's credit rating, which then enables us to borrow for things like the jail expansion or large projects where we would have a bond offering. So can you just explain why it's important to make sure that that stays stable and that the credit rating of the County stays at a high level?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "She'll explain that, a high level, in layman's terms."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Yeah, in layman's terms."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "In layman's terms. Typically, in public finance, county government, city governments, the rule of thumb is you try to have at least two months' operating expenses available."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "And does that 16.67 signify two months of operating expenses for the County?"

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

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay. Thank you. So that is the logic?"

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

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Questions, Commissioners?"

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "One other question. If the Board decided in all thoughts of trying to find dollars for enhancement requests, which I think it's important for folks to understand the amount of enhancement requests that there are. It's not just the participants that come to public comment. It's entirely across the county, and that amounts to, we said somewhere about \$250 million. Is it, for education purposes, in order to find extra money to fund any of these enhancement requests across the Board, the Commissioners could put a Resolution or to change that reserve amount from 16.67 if they wanted to, but then deal with whatever the consequences of that change would be on the county's credit rating; is that correct?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "That's correct."

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

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay. Thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Other questions or comments? Commissioner Barrett."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam CFO, on that bond rating, how long have we had a AAA bond rating?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "I believe we were upgraded during 2024, I believe in the August timeframe."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "So all the years prior to that, we had what, a AA? Is that what it was, or a AA plus or something like that, is that what it is?"

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

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "And what is the difference in terms of our ability to borrow between the AA plus rating and a AAA rating?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "It really will impact -- potentially, the most impact would be in the interest rate that you would receive the higher credit rating that may drive the interest rate down."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Sure. Sure. Sorry, I mean specifically, like, what is the interest rate you get currently for, if you have a AAA versus a AA plus rating?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "I would need to go look at what other AAA credits have, whether any have issued bonds recently and what those rate differences have been, Commissioner. I'm not able to respond to that."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "I appreciate that. I'd love to know that at some point if we're able to get that information. I think, you know, while having a AAA bond rating is a wonderful thing and, you know, it's certainly something we aspire to have, we've certainly also gotten along without having a AAA bond rating for all of our years of existence until now; and we've borrowed without a problem. So I'm not suggesting that we lower the fund balance, I just want people to understand that that is an option and that, you know, it's important to understand the implications of what we are doing and how much we're holding aside when we have real significant issues in the County that need to be addressed. So, you know, if there are other ways to fund those needs, which there are, I still believe -- thank you for the presentation, by the way, Mr. County Manager, on the nonagency, you know, line item, and all the things that fall underneath that, but I do believe a 25 percent underrun in nonagency is significant, and it is significantly higher than -- I believe that was a nonagency/ Other; but it is significantly higher than the department underruns that you showed, and I think -- I'm not suggesting again that we cut 25 percent from nonagency, but we could cut 3 percent, we cut 4 percent. And also, we can creep the millage rate up. I want to also point out that the Chairman stated in his opening remarks that, quote, the millage rate we approved and, also, that the millage rate is set. That is not accurate. The millage rate does not get set for 2025 until well past the middle of the year. We make an assumption of what we want the millage rate to be when we create the budget, and that is what we did, based on last year's millage rate. I believe it was two years ago, we passed the budget at a assumed millage rate of, I think it was -- and someone correct me if I'm wrong here, but I think it was 9.03 or something like that? When we reach midyear, it turned out we did not need to actually set our millage rate at that. We had enough underruns midyear that we were able to keep it at 8.87, but by setting the assumed millage rate at 9.03, we were able to fund the arts, we were able to fund veterans, we were able to invest in our justice partners with some enhancements there. We were able to accomplish all of that by assuming a slightly higher millage rate at this time, and then, you know, spending efficiently as the year wore on. So yeah, I think these are all things to take into consideration. I have a list of enhancements that I would like to see in this year's budget that I think are all investments in our future and will ultimately make us stronger financially in the long run as well as from every other perspective from a community perspective, a humanitarian perspective, et cetera, et cetera. So I will probably want to talk about this, but I think I'll hold off for now."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Arrington."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "Thank you. When was the AAA bond rating -- when were we upgraded to AAA bond rating?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "In August of '24, Commissioner Arrington."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "So I'm curious how -- I'm curious how the fund balance was responsible for the upgrade to AAA. Because I remember my first day or first meeting, first or second meeting, Commissioner Ellis, in 2015, we adopted that policy of 16.67. So you're saying it took nine years for the credit rating to upgrade on a policy that was adopted in 2015? Why didn't it upgrade in 2016? Why didn't it upgrade in 2017, 2018, '21, '22? How could we assume that a policy that was adopted in 2015 was responsible for the upgrade to AAA in August of 2024? That does not make sense to me. Somebody, please explain that to me."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Commissioner Arrington, our fund balance reserve policy was one of many factors. My comment was meant that it would put us at risk because the rating agencies would potentially look at that in light of it being a reduction of reserves and available -- and available fund balance. So it was not the only reason; it was one of several. And why did it take nine years for that to happen? Only the rating agencies can tell you. They look at a lot of different factors. They look at -- they look at growth in the region; they look at a County's debt position. They look at our growth in our real estate market; they look at our reliance upon, you know various different revenue streams. So fund balance reserve is one of many, but it is something that potentially would put the County at risk for having that upgrade that we just received taken away from us."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "Would it take nine years?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "They may go faster on the way down than they go on the way up, sir."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "So, you know, I don't know that we necessarily need to -- I think -- Commissioner Barrett's point, I think, is well taken, because what we did for the budget a couple of years ago was assume a higher millage rate than the current millage rate. See, the millage rate gets confusing because we adopt it in the middle of the year. So the millage rate was adopted for 2024. Commissioner Barrett is right, we have not adopted a 2025 millage rate. So what we did a couple years ago was assume, for purposes of the budget, that we would adopt a higher millage rate later. And that provided more revenue for purposes of the budget. And she's also correct that come midyear, we did not have to -- based on the expenses that had been expended, we did not have to adopt that higher millage rate. We just did it for purposes of the budget. And so, I don't know why it took nine years for the upgrade or how long it might take for a downgrade, but we do not necessarily have to adjust the -- we don't necessarily have to adjust the fund balance or decrease the fund balance or the fund balance percentage. We could assume for purposes of this budget that later in the year we would have to adopt a higher millage rate and that would provide more income to the County. I think our Chairman even said at the last meeting that we probably would

have to increase the millage rate this year. Not only do we have this Consent Order and all the other things surrounding that. So -- but I think our County Manager also confirmed at the last meeting that typically we have about 50 to \$75 million in underruns left over at the end of each year for the last ten years. So I don't know that we necessarily have to adjust the fund balance or lower the fund balance, or take a risk that in nine years they might decrease our rating again because it took them nine years to respond to the first policy change of adopting the 16.6 -- what was the rate that we had prior to adopting the 16.6 in 2015?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "It was 8.33, which was equal to a one-month reserve; and I believe we had a goal percentage also stated in the reserve policy of I want to say it was 20 percent. I'll have to go back and double check that."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "That's correct."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "So colleagues, you know, I don't know that we necessarily have to decrease our fund balance percentage in order to find more income. I think we can just assume that as we did a couple years ago, that we're going to adopt a higher millage rate for 2025 later in the year. And by doing that, and not using the 2024 millage rate as the basis for our budget that we could generate the necessary funding to fund most, if not all, of these requests. The other option is that, you know, even if it were reduced, even if the Board decided to reduce the fund balance, I mean, I don't think anyone is talking about reducing it to zero, right? I mean, it could be reduced to \$100 million, and then that would create \$65 million, right? If there's a 165 in fund balance and we'll adopt a policy that says, well, we just want to maintain a minimum of a hundred million. Well then, that would create an additional 65 million; but for me, I would probably prefer -- and maybe there's some combination of maybe reducing fund balance some and an increased millage rate, right? Because increase millage rate falls on the back of all taxpayers, right? But again, we're not really voting on the millage rate, we're just assuming that we will adopt a higher millage rate later, but we still have the flexibility at that time come July or August when we adopt a millage rate. I remember vividly it was August of last year because I was out of town. So, you know, come August, we can make that decision; we'll have a better idea of how much we've had to spend on compliance with the Consent Decree, the Consent Order for the jail. And so, I think we'll be in a much better position. You know, personally, I would prefer to assume a higher millage rate for purposes of the budget than reducing the fund balance. That's just my personal preference. But there are several ways to get there and, thank you, Commissioner Barrett, for bringing back up that we assumed the higher millage rate -- we assumed that we would adopt a higher millage rate for purposes of the budget which created more revenue, which created more opportunity; and then come midyear review, we can look at that and determine whether we, in fact, do have to adopt a higher millage rate. And -- even if we assume that we could adopt a ten-point millage rate up from 8.87, we might get to August and say, okay, well, we don't have to assume -- based on expenditures, it doesn't have to go up to 10. It could go up to 9.1 or 9.2. So, I would

rather see us, because we do have a lot of things to address. This Consent Order is not just about the jail and the Sheriff, it is essential. The Sheriff is responsible -- the Sheriff has no control over the population at the jail. The Sheriff simply does not have any control over the population at the jail. He is charged with housing the people that the police bring to him, and he is charged with releasing the people that the courts and the judges tell him to release. He simply doesn't have the control. So the Consent Decree and Consent Order is going to require additional resources for all of the justice partners, particularly those involved with the jail, the courts, the Clerk; because those are the people -- the whole justice system is really who controls the population at the jail; not the Sheriff. So I just want us to be mindful of that. Thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Ellis, you have the floor -- Vice Chair, I'm sorry."

**VICE -CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Call me whatever you want to call me. Thanks, Mr. Chair. And I want to thank the County Manager for walking us through their presentation to help us, you know, kind of understand, you know, kind of the dynamics of all of this, right? Because it's, you know they're multiple pieces with it, and I'm glad that you all have touched on a couple of these. I mean, there's one piece in which we haven't touched on, but I'll just go reiterate, you know, the piece about our fund balance reserve and our policy. This isn't some drastically conservative policy that we have. This is a policy that Ms. Whitmore, you're -- I think we have several CPAs on our staff, right? And I think all of you belong to this -- what's the governmental -- is it the Governmental Finance -- what's GFOA stand for?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Government Finance Officers Association."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "And their recommended policy is that, you know, all governments regardless of size follow this policy, right? And most governments do. And buyer beware: it's citizens beware if you are living, and again, underneath a government who is not engaging in that, for the potential ramifications of it. So you know there's absolutely no reason for us to be looking at deviating from that policy. The other thing that I would just -- just want to just point out again as I listened to some of the dialogue, I would have thought that we were cutting our budget, you know, significantly. Just raw numbers -- what's that -- what's the -- the total proposed 2025 budget is what?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "The general fund proposed budget is \$989,772,984."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Okay. And what were our actual expenditures in 2024?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "866,772,399."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** And that represent a difference of what? Percentagewise."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Well, it's over a hundred and twenty million."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Over a hundred and twenty million. And percentagewise that's what?"

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "I think it's 12. Let me just see."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Fourteen."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "How much?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "I was going to say about 14 percent."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "All right. So the point being, it's like we have -- we have a very well-funded budget, right? In terms of relative to what we spent last year. And as you outlined, you know, within your remarks -- the Manager outlined within his remarks, you know, there are many things which we're are going to be able to do throughout the course of this year. They're going to be able to handle within the normal course of folks' budgets without adding additional enhancements. And I also think, just as we have done in the past, they're going to be opportunities for us to look at things midterm, which we have -- we are, as sort of outlined, we do have a lot of uncertainties, both the ones that we have been factoring in as well as potential ones that we don't know what the impacts are right now because of just recent noise at the federal government level. So we're all required to exercise prudence in terms of our constitutional duties and the oath that we swore in. And I think this budget is set up with a high standard of prudence and but just give us the allowance to consider things as we move along, and we have certainties around those where, perhaps, funding is not going to be able to utilize, and in turn, we can deploy that funding into many other things that we have heard from citizens about, as well as things that we have evaluated with our own that we have an interest in that we think are in the best interest of our citizens. Regarding the millage rate, which hadn't necessarily been talked about, I certainly have no interest whatsoever in us raising our mileage rate. And I just wanted to just point out one thing, you know, relative to our millage rate. And this is for all our citizens out there who are busting their butts doing two jobs, doing other things that don't have the opportunity to come down here and engage in dialogue with us. But as tax rates for homeowners in all of Metro Atlanta core five counties exceeded the national average tax rate of .87 percent with the exception of Cobb County, those who reside in Fulton and Gwinnett paid the highest property tax in all of the Georgia counties assessed by Adam last year, with taxes on average of \$6,931 in Fulton and \$4,276 in Gwinnett. You know, so the notion of this sort of just callously throw out increased millage rates is a way to solve things and kick the can down the road when you have to face those citizens come August or September is a joke, and it really insulted them. And I can't -- I can't, you know, approve any sort of

budget this is going to assume an increase in a millage rate. But again, I think you all are presented a sound case with this. We've evaluated a lot of these things. We've talked about them over the course of, you know, the past two to three months, and I'm going to go ahead and make a motion that we approve the budget as you have proposed, which is also inclusive of a 13.9 million reserve, inclusive of \$4.9 million into the risk-management fund for the DOJ Consent Order litigation and additional compliance cost, 4.9 million for the operating reserve for the DOJ Consent Order as well as 4.9 million for facility reserve, and that this budget contains no enhancements as you have proposed right here, and no additional enhancements, but it is as you have proposed."

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Second."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to approve the budget as it has been presented by the Manager; seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Commissioner -- Commissioner Barrett."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I cannot support the budget as listed here and as described by Vice Chair Ellis for a variety of reasons. But among them is the idea that we should hold the \$13.9 million in underruns aside because we're going to have spending related to the Consent Decree, and wait possibly until halfway through the year to even know what those expenses are. In other words, wait to take action with these funds until we know specifically what they are for. I think we all know that 13.9 million is not going to be enough to address the issues in the Consent Decree and in the DOJ report about our jail. So I would like to recommend that we approve a budget that includes spending for the justice system proactively instead of reactively. And I would like to recommend that we spend \$3 million -- that we allot \$3 million to the Sheriff's office for the purposes of sign-on bonuses that will help him attract and retain staff, along with overtime pay, and the staffing analysis that we know that he will need to do as part of the Consent Decree. I'd like to let that department get started on some of those things now rather than waiting until halfway through the year to start on them. To Commissioner Arrington's point and the point we've heard from many others along the last several weeks and beyond, the DA, the Solicitor General, the Public Defender et cetera, that all of justice, all of the criminal justice partners are responsible for the number of people that are in our jails, or are in our custody. And so, to that end, I'd like to allot \$3 million to the District Attorney's Office, 2 million to the Solicitor General --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- excuse me, one second. Madam CFO, would you keep a running tab of what Commissioner Barrett is talking about, so we'll know?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "I think we're all taking notes, Mr. Chairman so, yes, we're trying to do that."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "I'd hope that we had something here --"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "-- I can also provide it for now if anyone wants it."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "I'm doing it in my head, but if you want to summarize it when you finish."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Okay. So what I said was three million for the Sheriff, three million for the District Attorney's Office, two million for the Solicitor General office, 2.5 million for the Public Defender. I believe the Superior Court number I have is \$1,017,086 that came from a direct request from them. The Magistrate Court at \$711,000, and the Clerk of Superior and Magistrate Court for \$1 million which is to include the raises for the Board of Equalization, State Court \$1,695,032 again from -- directly from a request for them for a total of \$14,923,118. And essentially if we took the 13.9, plus slightly more that we have in underruns, we would be able to cover just that portion alone. This is all in order for us to be proactive in addressing the situation in our jail. I don't think any of us should be waiting to be told what to do here. We know that we need to make real change in our criminal justice system and we do not have to wait to be told to do what is right. We can take steps -- proactive steps, to do what is right. I've put together a list of some additional spending that I will like to see happen predominantly to either increase staff to a workable level and/or to continue levels of funding that we have traditionally done. That would include \$5 million to the County Attorney's Office, so that her department is set up to handle everything coming along with the Consent Decree; \$1,000,000 to support our veterans; 1.7 million to support our arts department and arts funding. The million dollars for veterans and the \$1.7 million for arts are just to continue the current levels of spending. This is not new funding, this is not an enhancement. It's not an addition. It is to continue current levels of funding. A very small amount, \$180,000, additional to the Metro Atlanta Land Bank for the same reason, to continue their current level, a one million-dollar pilot of federally qualified health centers that is to address health inequity in our County, which persists, and which we must address, despite the fact that we have issues at the jail. We can't put all of our focus solely on that and ignore the other needs of our citizens. And lastly, just over the last couple of days, we have a couple of requests that have come in from the Marshal's Office and the Juvenile Court. I put those in there. The Juvenile Court asked for \$150,000 to meet a legal mandate, and the Marshal's Office asked for \$834,446 to address backlogs and evictions, and to improve safety in the courtrooms among other things, they have quite a long report. That total is \$9,864,446 for a total expenditure increase between the justice department and these other ones I just listed of \$24,787,564. My proposal is that the sources of funding to handle this could be achieved without changing the assumed millage rate, but that we could do it with using the 13.9 million in underruns and reducing nonagency by 4.5 percent. Keep in mind that in the document that the County Manager presented to us today, he showed all the other departments that the sample of departments that he showed had underruns that amounted to about \$4 million. Nonagency had underruns closer to, I believe, I don't remember the number now, I brought it up last week, but it was over 30 million. So there's -- I believe that there -- in all the different line items in nonagency shaving 4.5 percent off should be doable, and that would allow all of this funding to be included in

the budget without increasing the millage rate -- the assumed millage rate -- but allowing us to provide for our community and our citizens and to address the Consent Decree, and the disastrous situation that continues day by day by day in our jail. It is also important, I think, for me to mention that the majority of the dollars that I'm suggesting here need to be considered recurring, because every year, we asked these departments to come back and beg for the same dollars over and over and over again -- and let me ask a question, Madam CFO; in the enhancement request list that you've provided us, how many of those requests or how many dollars of those requests were for staffing additional positions or increases in salary, or sign-on bonuses, that kind of thing? How much was related to payroll?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "From the original -- excuse me -- from the original enhancement requests, there were -- I can't tell you how many positions were requested. There were quite a few agencies that asked for additional positions. There were a couple of agencies that asked specifically to increase the salary of their -- of their employees. I do believe in one of our tranches we identified the employee items that were not requests for new positions, but were requests to increase -- well, as I look at the list, its things that benefit employees, not the salary increases. I don't have that summarized like you just asked for it; the number of positions, new positions that were requested, or the specific salary increases off the top of my head. There were a few that asked for cost-of-living increases that ask to increase salaries for specific sets of employees, and there were many that included additional positions."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Can you give me a ballpark of how many dollars we're talking about in staff positions or how many -- I need a ballpark."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Well, the Sheriff alone asked for -- excuse me -- let me get to my page. The Sheriff asked for the refunding of positions that he has unfunded."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "How many did the Public Defender asked for, as an example?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "How many specific new positions?"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Yes."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Four, eight, 12, 16, 19, 21 -- about 30."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "And how many times has he asked for those positions in the past? Or how many years now has he been asking for additional positions, let me put it that way."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Truthfully, I couldn't tell you. I mean, I've been with the County 30 years, so there've been many, many years that the Public Defender, current and previous, have asked for additional positions."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Well, I can certainly speak to the fact that at least since I've been here, it's been repeated year after year and denied year after year. My point being that we have a whole host of stakeholders that we have to be thinking about. We have our citizens, number one; we have our small businesses and our business community, but we also have our employees. And funding our employees at a level that is reasonable; providing enough staff to do the work that has to get done, and then paying them at a reasonable salary so that they can feed their families without working second jobs or being on government programs, should be a goal of ours. These additional positions are not being -- we talk all the time about this rules-based funding in which we're not funding new programs, but so much of what being asked for has not anything to do with any new program. It's literally additional staff to complete the work they have to do today. And these requests need to start being met. We can't year after year have this rules-based approach that doesn't allow for any new positions. We have more work. We have more citizens. We have more cases in our courts. We have to be able to address those things; and you can't keep putting more work on the same people who are being underpaid. They leave. We know this. So at some point, I'd love it to be this year, we would stop doing that and at least fund this 14 million and then, in total, this 24 million, and make the portions of that, that need to be recurring, recurring."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "If that's a substitute motion, I'll second it."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "I will -- I will make a substitute -- I will make a substitute motion, I'm sorry?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "We'll get to your motion."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Okay."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "You're ready?"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Yes."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. So you have a -- I was really close -- the report that you have provided us totals, I had 23 and some change; it comes in -- everything you talked about totals \$24,587,348. So your motion then is to amend the motion on the floor to include all of these items, just to conclude, totals 24 million plus; is that correct?"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Well, the motion on the floor included putting the 13.9 somewhere else. So it would be a substitute motion."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "I understand. A substitute motion, that's what -- let me finish. All right. And that's seconded by Commissioner Arrington."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON:** "Yes, absolutely."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. All right. Commissioner Thorne, you want to be heard before we dispose of this or afterwards?"

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "I can go afterwards."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Commissioner Arrington, you want to be heard before or after we vote on this?"

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "Before. Colleagues, I would hope that we could -- that you always support these budget request enhancements. And again, I don't really know that they're enhancements because, as Commissioner Barrett said, a lot of these are just maintaining people at their current staff levels. One of the biggest problems we have in Fulton County is not only hiring people, but retaining good people. And you don't want to just hire anyone; you want to hire quality, competent skilled staff. A lot of these positions are high skills staff. This is not just, you know you can hire someone and say, okay, hey, push this button. These are high-skill jobs. I would really hope that, you know, that we continue the \$1 million a year for veterans and veterans' services in Fulton County. I would hope that we continue the \$3 million in money for the arts and artists communities; and the other money is really just to support to make sure that the District Attorney and Solicitor General and Public Defender and Magistrate Court can process the people in and out of the jail. Again, the Sheriff has no control over the jail. And if Public Defender has been coming down for five or ten years asking for more staff and more money and hasn't gotten it, and I know, because the first few years, it was a 10 percent decrease the first six years; I was here it was a 10 percent decrease per year in every department's budget. And so, you know, I think these requests are minimal; I think they are -- I think we have a responsibility -- well, see -- we are charged with holding these people, housing these people in the jail. We've already - - if we didn't already know before the DOJ report, we certainly know now, they are not being housed constitutionally. And for us to not do anything to address that is preposterous. For us to not allocate any money to deal with the Consent Decree and the Consent Order is crazy. How -- I just -- I don't understand how someone can walk out of here knowing that no money has been allocated towards addressing the Consent Decree. And so, adding more money for the Sheriff doesn't do it. It's the money that's needed for the District Attorney, the Public Defenders, the Solicitor General, the Magistrate Court, the Clerk of Court, and the State Court. Those are the people that control the amount of people that come in and out of our jail, not our Sheriff. And we are responsible for the facility. The Sheriff is not responsible for the jail: we are. We have to maintain that physical facility. He's responsible with housing those people or withholding those people that are brought in there. And so, I certainly, Colleagues, I would hope that you all will support the substitute motion. I think Commissioner Ellis

even said at the last meeting that he was fine with maintaining the \$3 million for the arts and a million dollars for the veteran's services, because people have come to expect those. And I think the County, the community, our arts organizations, our veterans have come to expect those. And so, I would hope that you all would adopt this substitute motion."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. The substitute is before us. Let's dispose of that, and you want to -- just a minute. You wanted to wait until after this, right? Do you want to wait until after we vote? Okay. Our substitute --"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Can I ask a question, because I'm --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- what's your question?"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "-- before the vote. Sorry. One of the things that was listed -- my list here was the \$5 million for the County Attorney, but I want to make sure I have that right. Is that already in the budget somewhere because it's something that we had all talked about and committed to? Is that something, I was -- in some conversation, I believe it was maybe that could come out of the risk fund or something. Is that tucked in there somewhere, or no?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "As proposed in the 13.9 million, there was an additional transfer to be made to the risk fund for litigation, but there has been nothing to specifically increase the County Attorney's budget."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Okay. Got you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Let's vote."

**CLERK GRIER:** "And the vote is open on the substitute motion. And the motion fails; two yeas, five nays."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Back to the main motion which is to approve. Commissioner Thorne, you wanted to be heard?"

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Yeah, I had a quick question on slide number three, which is the considerations of what's in nonagency. The second line item there, the East Point Clinic, that's the Buggy Works Clinic. We budgeted 1,947,260, and I wanted -- we've decided to do this clinic to address the health inequities. We made a commitment as a Board, so I don't want people to think that we're not trying to help the health inequity thing. But their actual spend was 2,618,035. How does that happen and how as a Board we're not aware that they're overspending what we actually budgeted?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "Thank you, Commissioner, for the question. At the end of 2024, they presented us with the balance of an invoice for the funds that we approved for them in 2023 for their -- the capitol infusion portion of the commitment. And so, we ensured that we covered that because it had been a commitment of the Board, they did not invoice us for that last year. So that is the reason why there is more shown as an actual expense. The 1.9 represented the planned 2024 operating contribution for that particular clinic."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "And budgeted for this year, we budgeted like 1.6; is that correct, somewhere around there, 1.66?"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "That sounds right, but if you'll give us a second, we can confirm the correct amount."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "I think that's for three years, three additional years."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "1.8 -- 1.8."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Okay. Okay. So then on slide number six, I think, you know, talk about that we're under funding a lot of these positions. I guess -- yeah, slide number six. The District Attorney left -- didn't spend a million dollars that we budgeted for her and, you know, all these courts and everything, they left money on the table, so I just want that to be pointed out and addressed. The funding for the veterans last year, we did give a million dollars, only 250 was spent initially in the first round, and then we spent the additional 750 in the second round. I did speak with the chairman of the Veterans Board and told her that we're really struggling. This is really a hard thing for me to try to cut that funding, and I want to look at it more as a pause in the funding. She said they're having a difficult time getting a quorum. But they have -- some of us haven't made appointments on that Board, and we need to fill those positions. She told me that it could be accepted as a pause here to kind of regroup and make sure that that \$1 million can be spent -- better spent in the future, potentially as a capital project. I know that there's some veterans groups that are working on a capital project in the North, and we could look at maybe trying to get a veterans project in the South as well. But I want to look to the future on that. We always talk about having, you know, a midyear budget discussion because the Solicitor General, the Public Defender, the State Court, Probate Court, the Juvenile Court, the Marshal, they all make excellent cases to expand their budgets, but it seems like, in my two years that I've been here, we never have had that midyear discussion that we have some money on the table, and could we spend it. So I would ask if we could actually put on our July meeting calendar, a midyear review, to see if there's any way we can address some of those concerns. And then that way, we will kind of hopefully know more what our millage rate is going to look like in August. I'm hoping that we'll know more about this Consent Decree, what we're looking at spending, as well as we had that federal grant suspension right now. I really believe that we do have to look at -- seriously, look at the millage rate trying to keep that at a level. I know some Commissioners on here don't want to worry about

that, but I have a lot of seniors in my area, and I also have a father-in-law that lives in Forsyth County, and the amount of taxes he pays is so small compared to what the burden we put on our seniors here. To get a tax break here, there's a \$39,000 threshold as a senior. So there's some that are making \$42,000 having to work outside their retirement. I'm talking about retired schoolteachers that aren't able to make ends meet, that aren't able to pay their property taxes; they're having to take jobs just to pay their property taxes to try to stay in their homes. So I would beg my fellow Commissioners to not be flippant about raising a millage rate. And then lastly, there's a comment made, we're not doing anything to address the Consent Decree. It's preposterous; I think was the word that was used. We're reserving 13.9 million to address the Consent Decree and we don't know if that's enough. We have a lot of unknowns, and I don't think we can sit here and just go ahead and spend money thinking it will help. We don't know it will help. We don't know what they're going to tell us to do. I think it would be irresponsible of us at this time to go ahead and spend money not knowing exactly how much we're going to have to spend. Commissioner Barrett, I do agree with our County Attorney's Office: with that being said, that she does need to increase her staff, because we have so much litigation. The public isn't privy to our Executive Sessions, but the amount of work that office does and it's the burdens we're putting on that office, and primarily a lot of it is our Sheriff and our DA. I would blame them more on us having to redirect funds that we would normally spend on the arts, we normally spend on the veterans, we normally spend on the Metro Land Bank -- I want to put that blame where blame's due, and I would put that on some of our elected officials. So with that being said, I think I would support the budget as it stands, and I thank you for all of the hard work the County team has put in; and it is some hard medicine to have to swallow, but I am hoping that midyear that we can actually talk about rewarding some of those justice partners that are doing a good job and do have some legitimate things. The Juvenile Court, they have a \$150,000 to meet a legal mandate. I'm hoping that they don't have to sue us to get that \$150,000. I'm hoping that maybe perhaps we can find that somewhere. It seems like a small amount of money, and they have enough in their budget to cover it, but that would be a definite on the midyear review. And that's it, thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. The motion on the floor is to approve the 2025 budget as presented. Let's vote."

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

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "Continuing on page 10 --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "-- well, let's wait a minute. It's 12:37. Okay, continue. We got busy bee back there."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Okay. **25-0071**, County Manager, Presentation of the Fulton County Operational Report."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Mr. Manager."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Thank you, sir. We'll move into the operations report. As you know, we'll be wrapping up the ORCA reporting today with 93 percent of the cases being disposed, and less than 10,000 outstanding. We've also, through Steve's work with the courts, developed a perspective at the court level for those final adjudication of cases; he'll be prepared to cover that. I think Project ORCA, again, was a tremendous success. It's been recognized nationally as well as within the state. It's a terrific template, I think, for engaging our justice partners meeting specific objectives, investment, and clear results of tracking. We continue to track the justice system's scorecard, and we do see some slippage in performance; we'll highlight that. But the jail population continues to decline and is below 2500 in total and, most notably, 1600 at Rice Street. We will propose today, at least broadly, additional measures for court backlog, case management, and then the jail capital improvement program as it moves along. There's still some work to do to develop that, but we have been asked by you how we would refine this report once ORCA is not reported on; and again, we've been working on those ideas. You'll see that the jail blitz plan, which will follow Steve's report, continues to move along. We're now through six housing units' completion date before midyear next year. We do have some specific, I think, progress with the zone locking doors, so that's good news. So we'll continue to press forward on that very important. And then also, give you updates on additional items that we have been discussing like elevators, the kitchen units; and then we've had a very good report -- follow-up report, with the state Fire Marshal recently. What we will also report on today, and Joe Davis and his team will do this, is our sustainability efforts. We have not covered that in some period of time, so we'll briefly cover that. I think you'll be pleased with that directionally and what we've been able to do. And then lastly, just as we finish out the year, I'm very pleased to report that our animal shelter population targets were met. We closed the old animal shelter after remediation of the paint issues in the new facility, so kudos to emergency management, DREAM, Lifeline, and Mike Rowicki, who helped focus us all on a weekly call. And then, of course, the report includes our financial review and ARPA reports. So Steve, I turn it over to you."

**STEVE NAWROCKI, FC STRATEGY OFFICE:** "Thank you, County Manager. Good afternoon, Commissioners. Steve Nawrocki, Strategy Office. As the County Manager mentioned, we have reached our final program milestone with the completion of project ORCA. Of the original 148,000 cases, we've disposed of 138,599 with 9,650 cases remaining. If we move to the next slide. Go to slide five. And with all those case dispositions, we have achieved a 93 percent completion rate for Project ORCA. Next slide, please. And here we have a breakdown of those remaining 9600 cases just to highlight each of the different departments. Superior Court had remaining about 2900, State Court had about 3800, Magistrate was about 2200, and the solicitor was 599."

And as previously reported the DA has already cleared her original 16,300 cases. Next slide. And here is a final wrap-up report. We did want to show just a bit more detail of those remaining cases by case type for each department. State Court and then more specifically, the timeline for when each of the departments anticipate reaching final closure for the opening cases. For State Court and the Solicitor, they're expecting to conclude all active cases in Q4 this year. Superior Court expects to conclude their active cases by Q3, and then you will see that TBDs in Magistrate Court, we were unable to get the resolution timelines before we prepared this -- or I should say submitted the court package. Next slide. Here we do have our final monthly dispositions for the -- excuse me, our final monthly disposition counts as well as what was achieved project to date. Superior and State Courts had 185 and 124 dispositions respectfully, with Magistrate Court and the Solicitor General at 36 and 29. Dispositions giving us a December total of 374. And for the overall project ORCA, including cases that moved from the prosecutors to the courts, we achieved 146,426 dispositions since December of 2021. Next slide. And here we have a historical look at all the ORCA staff hired over the course of the entire program. Of the 523 hired over the past three years, more than half have transferred to full-time positions at 286. The balance of the 237 did separate from the County. And you can see here, eight of the 11 departments had always 50 percent or more of their staff transfer to into permanent positions."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "So on that point, you said 286 of the ORCA people found full-time positions with the County?"

**STEVE NAWROCKI, FC STRATEGY OFFICE:** "Yes, sir."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay."

**STEVE NAWROCKI, FC STRATEGY OFFICE:** "Next slide, please. And finally, I did want to take a moment here to thank all of our stakeholders and partners who contributed to the success of Project ORCA. First, to our Board of Commissioners, for your ongoing leadership and support over the past three plus years; next, I want to thank the County Manager and administration for providing critical support across the areas of finance, HR, purchasing, and facilities. And to those who did the work to achieve the dispositions. Thank you to all of our judges along with their administrative staff and clerks. To Madam Clerk Alexander, who played a key role in establishing Project ORCA in the early leadership of the program; to our attorneys in the Public Defender's office, the Solicitor, and the DAs office; and of course, our law enforcement and the Sheriff's office, and the Marshal's department. And I do want to give a final acknowledgment and shout out to our retired chief operating officer, and my former boss, Alton Adams, who had the vision and leadership to create this whale of a project. From that, we'll move on from ORCA for the final time. Next slide. Under our justice scorecard, please, next slide. And here we have our justice system's scorecard. The average length of stay in December was 48 days, marking a one-day increase from November. The unindicted jail population saw an improvement in December, with a two percent decrease down to 16 percent. The clearance rate for felony criminal cases saw

a 3 percent decrease down to 88 percent in December. And finally, cases disposed within 180 and 365 days both saw decreases down to 28 percent and 56 percent respectively. Next slide. Now, we move to our jail population update. Next slide. First looking at the average monthly Jail population, December continued to see a downward trend in average population; down to an average population of 2,564 individuals, and we saw a further decrease with a one-day snapshot in the midpoint of January at 2,476 individuals. Next slide. And here's the chart representation. Next slide, please. Next slide. In the spirit of the wrap up report, we also want to show the jail population trend since we began reporting this in April of 2023. The period between April and August of 2023, we saw our jail population crisis peaking at 3,638 in August. And in response to this, both the DA and the Public Defender's offices ramped up their efforts to identify inmates eligible for Consent Bonds, and placed them on ankle monitors. In January of 2024, we, of course, had experienced the cyberattack which required all justice agencies to operate offline with manual workarounds leading to a small spike, you see there. The justice agencies largely recovered though by March or April of last year, and we have continued at a relative steady state since then. Next slide. Here we have our facility utilization for the jail population for each facility. Occupancy remains largely consistent at each facility relative to last months' reporting in the past few months. Next slide. Here we have the inmate analysis of the jail population, 67 percent or 1,553 inmates are either indicted or accused, while 16 percent or 377 are unindicted. You can go to the next slide to look at that breakdown. Looking at the aging of the unindicted by days in jail, 304 or 81 percent have been incarcerated for 90 days or less. Comparatively, we've seen -- we've remained stable at this level over the past few months; and same for the other time periods listed. Next slide. Here we have a brief update on our County funded ankle monitor program: 842 participants are currently on - - or should say on ankle monitors as of December 31st. About 59 percent of these participants have been on monitors for a year or less, and we have had some positive movement for the periods greater than one year. We now have 19 fewer participants for over one year in December relative to our count from November. Next slide. And finally, and the County Manager teed this up: we do have our proposed reporting topics for 2025 and beyond. We will continue to provide monthly updates for the justice system scorecard and the jail population analysis. We are working currently to identify and quantify backlogs that may exist within the courts, the prosecutors, and the Public Defender. To combat any backlogs, we are looking at collaboratively identifying and using case management standards for both the backlog and the case management standards. We are working through this process now, and we'll just start reporting in the coming months. And starting in our February Ops Report, we will be providing a monthly update on the process of the jail capital improvement program. I'm happy to say we are targeting mid-February to have boots on the ground to start the comprehensive facility condition assessment. And with that, I can take any questions."

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

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "No questions. Thank you."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Thank you, Steve. I'll ask Joe Davis to overview the Jail Blitz Plan. Joe, quickly."

**JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.:** "Good morning, Commissioners, good afternoon, rather. Next slide, please. So this first slide is just a review of where we are with the overall Jail Blitz Project. As a reminder, the Jail Blitz was a comprehensive approach to upgrade or restore the functionality of the jail's housing units, which was a major pain point for the Sheriff's Office. As you heard the County Manager indicate earlier, we have completed six housing units. We did encounter a delay in the seventh unit, which is 5 South. There was an additional scope of work that was outside of the original Blitz scope when we discovered there was an issue with the zone doors that allowed detainees to, I guess, interfere with their operation and presented a security risk. We worked with a vendor that installed our locks and doors back in 2014. That entity had developed a retrofit, however, we encountered some delays due to scheduling conflicts with their other customers. However, I'm very happy to report that as of today, they are 80 percent complete with that zone door work. We were anticipating a week, this week being an off week from them, and resuming next week with the completion on February the 7th. However, they made some adjustments in their schedule, and have staff on site working through this week. So we are still holding to the February the 7th completion for the zone door work, although we do anticipate that it will be finished a little bit sooner. We have 98 percent of housing unit 7 North complete. So we're working to try to get two full housing units ready concurrently. The only delay with 7 North while all the work inside is mostly complete, the one thing that we're waiting on is a back order of a door position sensor. That sensor allows the Sheriff's Office personnel on the floor to readily identify the locking status of a door, whether it's secured or unsecured. At this point, we're projecting, based upon these delays, that the overall completion of the Blitz will be sometime in May 20 -- 20th of this year. Next slide, please. This is to get -- just give you all a overview of bed availability. We're showing here on this slide, 540 beds currently unavailable. 5 South and 7 North are currently, as you heard before, active Jail Blitz locations. All of the listed areas will be interested in upcoming Blitz areas. I would be remiss in my responsibility if I did not point out that the number we're showing here in 540 beds unavailable, does not include 204 beds that are currently not in use on 1 North, which is the lowest part of the Rice Street facility. We're continuing to have some flooding on that particular floor due to the introduction of contraband items in the facility, particularly what we'll call para cord or twine, that inmates are able to get their hands on through the use of drones, and they're introducing it into the system, trying to flush it, and it's causing major backups. And so the Sheriff's Office indicated that it is very difficult for them to facilitate the quick movement of inmates in order for us to address those backups. So we're not occupying 1 North until such time as we have a solution for that problem. We are diligently working it. One of our plumbing contractors has identified a device that we can install on 1 North that chews up, it's a grinder that we've now determined fits in the actual physical structure of the pipe chase on 1 North that will chew up the things coming

down that's been causing us problems with backups on this floor. Next slide, please. Here is a jail maintenance overview. I do want to point out that this was the data as of January the 16th in preparation for what would have been a January 22nd Board date. But just to give you an overview view of corrective maintenance, in the month of January -- excuse me, in the month of December, there were 1453 work orders issued, of which 832 of them were completed. Please note this represents work orders that were issued during the month and actually completed within the same month. Out of that group, 224 work orders were completed in the month of January, which would bring the cumulative completion for corrective maintenance to 72.7 percent for the month of December. The month of December also saw a market increase in our ability to complete preventive maintenance work orders, completing 92.3 percent of all scheduled preventive maintenance for the month of December. In our efforts to continue to report on the work order backlog and to evolve the -- the reporting of the statistics, we did a little bit more digging into our maintenance back -- computerized maintenance management system, Maximo. As of January the 16th, we have a full backlog of 1794 work orders. There are 884 of that 1794 as of January 16th, are in upcoming Blitz areas. The reason they remain outstanding is that the work that's required to address those will require the movement of detainees, which we're kind of pushing those out to the Blitz. But you'll see here the charts below, we have a running tally from October through December that gives you a breakdown. The first set of bars indicate the total number of work orders issued for October and November and December. The second set reflects the number of work orders that were issued in the month and completed that month. The third set indicates the number of work orders in an individual month that were completed that were issued in the prior month. And then the last set of bars gives you a sense of, as of January the 16th, the total number of work orders that were completed for those three months, whether they were from work orders in the month or prior months. Next slide, please. As you are aware, the Board approved \$3.2 million for several critical repairs or upgrades. We are making very good progress. We finally had our fire alarm upgrade contract executed on January the 10th. We held a kickoff meeting with Siemens, the selected vendor on January the 17th. We were advised that there is a four to six week lead time on the materials that are needed, but this particular project will move a long way -- move us forward a long way as it relates to overall safety and regulatory compliance with the state of Georgia. There was \$260,000 allocated for padded cells. We don't show it here, but it was also for showers to be resurfaced at the Jail South Annex in Union City. That project was also completed on January the 17th. We have a Board item that is routing for the next meeting that will replace several pieces of equipment, as determined by the kitchen provider to be the most impactful to their overall operation. I've already been in contact with the vendor who's trying to, in advance in the anticipation of Board approval, to minimize the delivery time to the jail. We also have a project for laundry equipment replacement. We have somewhat slowed that project down, simply because all equipment in the laundry at the jail is currently functional. And so we're looking for the February the 19th Board agenda to further that initiative. We have completed the elevator modernization assessment by Lerch Bates, which is the first and most critical step in terms of identifying our path forward with the jail's elevators. We met with the vendor last week to review that report and establish

our priorities based upon their findings. They have had some questions for us that would allow them to finalize the specifications for the subsequent procurement that will ultimately result in the modernization of the jail's elevators. Next slide. And I'm free to answer any questions."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Any questions?"

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

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Arrington."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "Go back to that last slide that said the assessment will be available by 1/21. Do we have the assessment?"

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

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "All right. I guess if you can just send that to me, that would be good."

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

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "Thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Other questions or comments?"

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Thank you, sir."

**JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.:** "Thank you."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Joe, do you want to introduce the next subject, which is energy and sustainability."

**JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.:** "Thank you, Mr. Manager. So coming to the podium is Jessica Lavender, our County Energy and Sustainability Manager. As you heard the County Manager say earlier, we haven't really updated the Board on what all we're doing as it relates to initiatives in this particular program area. Ms. Lavender works tirelessly to further the county's energy and sustainability goals. And she's going to go through a presentation and then, of course, make ourselves available for any questions."

**JESSICA LAVENDER, ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY MGR:** Thank you. Good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm here to update you on the Sustainability Plan, which was adopted by the Board in 2019 with goals and strategies to help make the County

more sustainable. And the goals were actually updated in 2022 to be more aggressive. This is our energy and water use goals, which are to reduce county building energy use 50 percent and water use 30 percent by 2030 from a 2018 baseline. The graphs on the right show energy use at the top and water use at the bottom. The orange bars show our energy use and water from 2018 to 2023. And the blue line shows our goal. Some of our initiatives in this area are that our capital upgrades are energy and water efficient. For example, the new Animal Services facility is a lead or Leadership and Energy and Environmental Design certified building. Also, many of the FCURA projects are saving us energy, like the new HVAC equipment at the Justice Center. We're also working with Georgia Power to make sure that all of our street lights are LEDs, which is a more efficient technology. And we are exploring an energy savings performance contract, which is a financing mechanism where an engineering firm would come in recommend upgrades, and then we would actually finance the upgrades with the utility cost savings. Next slide. Next is our solar goal, which is to offset 25 percent of county building electricity use with solar by 2030. The graphs show that we currently have seven buildings with solar panels. And we will have 53 buildings with solar panels thanks to a contract amendment that the Board approved in December to add 46 more buildings. And just as a reminder, our provider owns the panels, and we're just paying them for the electricity produced. And we're actually paying them less than we would be paying our electricity providers. Next slide. For public --"

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "I'm sorry. How many buildings total do we have? It'll be on 53 buildings, but like, 53 out of how many?"

**JESSICA LAVENDER, ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY MGR:** "Like -- okay, 240."

**JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.:** "Roughly 240, sir."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "Thank you."

**JESSICA LAVENDER, ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY MGR:** Next slide, thanks. The goal for public EV charging stations is to provide charging stations for the public at all county buildings where feasible. We are scheduled to install charging stations at the Metropolitan Library and the Animal Services facility. And then we're planning to install charging stations at the North Fulton Service Center and the Customer Service Center, but we're still figuring out funding for that, and then we're planning to reissue an RFP. So our goal is to find a vendor that wants to install and own their own charging stations on county property so that we don't have to pay for it. We issued this RFP in 2023 and we couldn't find a suitable vendor, but that is -- that was kind of a newer concept, and it's evolving. So we're hoping that this year we'll be able to get better proposals. Next slide. For fleet electrification, the goal is that 25 percent of the county's light-duty administrative fleet will be EV or plug-in hybrid by 2030. And light duty is just a regular sedan or small truck, and administrative is a non-law enforcement vehicle. Right now, we have two plug-in hybrids and two charging stations in the Government Center parking garage. We have a Fleet Electrification Plan that was written by a summer

fellow. We will be receiving a \$150,000 grant from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority for fleet-specific charging stations. And once those are installed, we will explore leasing EVs for staff. And the Sheriff purchased two EVs last year. Next slide. Three final initiatives: The first one is sustainable purchasing. The goal is to establish a Sustainable Purchasing Policy by 2030. This is something that takes all county departments and staff really to implement effectively. And so our initiative here is to reestablish something called The Green Team this year, where staff from all county departments would get together once a month to discuss environmental and sustainability goals, specifically ones like sustainable purchasing. For public outreach, the goal is to promote educational programs about sustainability and resilience. For this, we have the Fulton County Citizens Commission on the Environment, which some of you are familiar with. They have the annual award ceremony every October. They also meet once a month to discuss relevant environmental topics. We're also building a resilience hub at the Metropolitan Library. They have materials for the public about how to prepare for a climate emergency. They've also had resilience kit giveaways, programmable, thermostat giveaways, and community meetings about what the hub could do. And we're in the process of getting a backup battery system connected to the solar panels that are there, so that if there was an emergency and the power was out in the community, the library would still have some functionality. And then lastly, we have a sustainability page on the County website that has a lot of helpful in links for the public. And then for partnerships, the goal is to foster partnerships for a plan implementation, where an active member of the Southeast Sustainability Director's Network, which is a group of sustainability leaders from the local government sector in the southeast. And we've been able to partner with some universities and nonprofits to get some free interns and fellows, which has been helpful. Next slide. And I'm happy to take any questions."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Vice Chair Ellis."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "I'll be real quick. Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thanks for the presentation. I think particularly, slides 106 and 107 are, the energy and water use and solar generation are good things for us track. And hopefully those are the sort of common things we'll see as dashboards and see how we have improvement related to those. I think, you know, I think the key to really, particularly as, you know, governments engage in sustainability programs and that sort of stuff, being able to show the citizens the benefit, you know, that's a good thing. That's what we want to see. And what we want to avoid is things that detract from the credibility of the program. And you know, one thing, I'll just sort of highlight is the types of things that we want to avoid here on page 109, when we're talking about the EV stuff, you know, a gratuitous purchase of two EVs by the Sheriff's Department, you know, does nothing in terms of, in number one, add credibility to our Sustainability Program or really do anything to benefit the County or the citizens, it's just a waste of money. So, you know, let's focus on the things that, you know, kind of are credible, provide benefit and bring those forward. And it would be interesting, too, in terms of just sort of the -- it seems like the targets and so forth we set for solar and then the water use are things that we can monitor and track,

and are good targets. But as we get forward and continue the discussion, particularly around EVs, you know, kind of should -- should these types of things be revisited? Should we look at different targets? Should we look at different utilization, et cetera, based upon just sort of the feasibility to be able to implement it with charging stations, et cetera, and or the feasibility for utilizing those vehicles in our fleet? So I'd be interested in as we move along, and hearing a little bit more about, sort of our -- how we want to kind of truly utilize EVs in our fleet and the impracticality of being able to do that over, you know, a period of time."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. Next."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Just very quickly, I'm going to ask Mike Rowicki to come up and highlight the, again, the Animal Services and the management to population. Again, kudos to Mike for putting together a weekly meeting for all of us with metrics and tracking. I want to, again, call out Joe and Vern in EMA, Rebecca and Audrey in LifeLine. And Joe and Tim, who helped with the facility. Again, we have met the targets, closed the old facility, and then hopefully managing well this year. Felicia is supporting us as well in this effort as it relates to the contract, so I want to thank her. And then forward looking, of course, on this, I do think one of the things you're going to be surprised by, and that would be the number of intakes and the amount of increase in certain animals that are showing up at our facility. So Mike, again, thank you for your leadership."

**MIKE ROWICKI, STRATEGY OFFICE:** "Thank you, Mr. County Manager. Next slide, please. So, Mike Rowicki, Strategy and Performance Management Office. Today, I just wanted to kind of highlight, actually, what we've done with Animal Services by taking these weekly meetings, making an impact, driving this animal population down. So currently, as of the 16th, the population was 387 animals in the shelter, which is well below our 475 total population for the shelter. Of that, we have 352 dogs, which again, which was 24 below what our number of dogs needed to be. Again, these weekly meetings, going through the data information, taking the initiatives that we've been doing to get that population down, have worked tremendously for us. And we hope to continue that. That then led to the closure of the old shelter by the end of December, so we are very happy again, as Mr. Manager said, with our partners that have helped us to get to this point. Next slide. One thing that we did want to highlight for you guys is just the amount of work that our partners have been doing. It has been a tremendous increase with trying to balance out the number of dogs and animals that are coming into the shelter. So you can see that from 2023 through 2024 that 2,808 intakes that have increased. That was a 43 percent increase in the number of animals that have been coming in and going out through our shelter in order to meet that. So again, great work done by LifeLine to help us through this process and all of our partners with the Fulton County departments. And with that, we're open for any questions."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Questions?"

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "No, sir."

**DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER:** "Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman, I think that'll conclude our report, unless someone has any questions about the ARPA reporting successfully concluded. I want to thank Sabrina and the work that she did, along with everyone. All of the funds are either all -- either expended or appropriately obligated, and they -- of course, we included the monthly financial reports through the -- through the end of the year. So if no questions that will conclude our report."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Thank you, Mr. Manager. I'll take, entertain a motion to recess for lunch, Executive Session, issues of real estate, litigation and personnel."

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

**Recessed for Executive Session at 1:12 p.m.**

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**Resumed Regular Session at 2:02 p.m.**

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

**Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY:** "Thank you. Mr. Chairman. Is there a motion to grant the requests for representation as presented in items 1, 2 and 3 of the Executive Session agenda?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Motion to do so by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please cast your vote."

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

**Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY:** "And is there a motion to reject the settlement offer presented in item 4 of the Executive Session agenda?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to do so by Commissioner Ivory, seconded Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

**CLERK GRIER:** "And the vote is open to reject."

**Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY:** "No further action item -- oh, I'm sorry."

**CLERK GRIER:** "And the motion passes; six yeas, zero nays. Unanimously with Vice Chair."

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

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Thank you. Continue, Madam Clerk."

\*\*\*\*\*

**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 10, **24-0891**, External Affairs, request approval to renew an existing contract in an amount not to exceed \$407,875 for Strategic Communications Planning and Support."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Ms. Corbitt. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Is there a second? Seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Just briefly."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Good afternoon, Commissioners. Jessica Corbitt, Director of External Affairs. This work will continue our efforts begun in 2024 to really improve the way we communicate with the public and educate constituents about the services that Fulton County offers. And there are a series of specific deliverables that we will accomplish in 2025 that will include development of collateral for the County as a whole, as well as our departments and our Commission Districts. It will include public relations support with specific placements for local news coverage as well as national and regional coverage, development of a partner -- partnership marketing plan. And this will be particularly important as we approach the World Cup in 2026. That will help us better demonstrate the ways that Fulton County is working with partners to make an impact in the community. In addition to that, we will be launching a new website, the experience, the difference, site that really talks about the ways that Fulton County is having an impact in creating a community where people can thrive and be proud of their home and their community. In addition, we will be measuring, we did a brand awareness survey in 2024, and we'll be continuing to benchmark against that, to measure our progress in improving brand awareness and perception of Fulton County Government."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "That's it?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes, sir."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Barrett."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Corbitt. I, you know, in a perfect world, you know, I'm very supportive of efforts to communicate with the public."

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

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "But given everything and the limitations of the budget that we just passed, it would be really hard for me to approve something that, you know, builds us another website when I feel like we could make improvements to our own website. You know, where we're marketing, you know, our efforts with World Cup, when we have, you know, departments that can't get funding that they need, and veterans not getting funded and Arts not getting funded. So I appreciate the effort. I'm not saying forever, no. But I feel like for me, it's a pause for 2025 on this, I can't support it."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Thank you, Commissioner Barrett. I appreciate that. And I just, I would like to respond to that, because I'm very sensitive -- I've spent 25 years here at Fulton County, and I'm very sensitive to the kinds of impactful services that our departments deliver. And I just want to -- I certainly understand your position. Would just like to say that really, our goal is to shine a light on those services and how important they are. Because the people who are reading to children in our libraries, who are caring for seniors in our centers, we really want to shine a light on their work, and that's really what drives all of this. So thank you."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Yeah. And to be fair, I want that light shone, but I think we can do it for less than \$407,000."

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

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "You want to reduce the amount, or not at all?"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "No, I'm going to support it."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay, all right. Commissioner Ivory."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "This is a renewal, correct, on work --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "-- that has already begun --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "That's correct."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "-- so that they're sort of in the second phase of the work --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "That's right."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "-- they did last year. And along with making our platforms more user friendly, when you say that they would be creating collateral for the districts, would they be -- does that -- would that include, you know, a hand -- tangible --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "-- collateral that we would be able to take to seniors and folks like that to better understand, for example, the budget process or something like that?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Things like that, yes, exactly."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay, thank you."

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

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Vice Chair Ellis."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Yeah, just sort of clarify. This is in your proposed budget?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes, sir."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Anything else?"

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion on the floor is to adopt. Please vote."

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

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

**CLERK GRIER:** "And the motion passes; six yeas, one nay."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Next item."

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**24-0899**, Registration and Elections request approval of a statewide contract and -- in the amount not to exceed \$494,000 for the rental of box truck, passenger vehicles, cargo vans for the Public Service Commission's Elections."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Commissioner Thorne."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Hi there, Ms. Williams."

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "Good afternoon."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "I just had some questions. Thanks for the -- the detail on the -- I think you sent us an email explaining why you need the box trucks, which clearly agree with new equipment and having to transport them in trucks versus cars or vans, given the cases that the taxpayers spent to make it easy set up for precincts. But have you looked at possibly purchasing? Did you do any analysis with how possibly purchasing box trucks, or --"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "Yes."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "-- is that --"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "We have asked in -- for several years in our enhancements to purchase box trucks and other vehicles."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "And do you know what -- how much enhancement that is?"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "I don't have the numbers on the top of my head, but it has been a request."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "And do we know what the enhancement? Because I didn't see it on a list of --"

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "I believe that they have requested box trucks. They've also requested some smaller vehicles as well along the way. There was an analysis that was done to do some cost comparison on purchasing -- beginning to purchase the number of vehicles. They use a larger number of vehicles, you know, for shorter periods of time throughout the year. So we were looking at that. Mr. Davis has been completing a lease versus purchase analysis. I don't recall if we got the box trucks included in the first pass of that. But it is something that we have -- we have been reviewing and considering. To purchase all of the vehicles that they would need at one time would be cost prohibitive at this point. So we are looking at a way to be able to stage in and perhaps have a mix of more vehicles that we own and still have -- we would still have a need to lease, but not as large of a need, if that makes sense."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Yeah."

**SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** "It's kind of a hybrid between purchase and leased vehicles."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Okay. Yeah, I like to just see if this is just like the most cost-efficient way to go about. So, yeah, if you could work on that, that be great. And then have system -- I've received some whistleblower complaints from past and previous employees about the use of the vehicles. Have you put in some measures to check to make sure vehicles are being used --"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "Yes. I believe you submitted an audit on the Voter Education Division. And there was no misuse of vehicles, per the report. But we do have checks and balances in with regards to our --"

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Like, do you have a -- do you have check-in procedures and mileage --"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "Yes."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "-- write-downs, and all of that?"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "We do, yes."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Okay, great. Thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Thank you, Chairman, I'll be brief. I remember doing my tenure, I'm not sure if my colleagues to the left or right were here. But I remember you asking for the purchase, and I remember County Manager or maybe Ms. Whitmore, I remember at the time, the issue was not in as much as the cost as the maintenance of them if we were to purchase them, at least that's what my memory is. And at that time, the maintenance of them coupled with the cost outweighed leasing or outweighed, you know, having the contracts. So I just wanted to put that on the record that I remember you asking. And I also remember the answer was that the purchase, plus the maintenance was higher than what we have now. And so I would still like to, when you all, you know, bring back the information, make sure that's still a part of it. Because I remember that conversation. And I remember the reason why we opted for this as opposed to the purchasing and maintaining them as well. So I just wanted to put that on the record. Thank you, Chairman."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Thank you. Commissioner Ivory."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "With the near-flawless execution that took place in the November Election, is this equipment that you need to have that same result for the Public Service Commission Election coming up this year? Is this why this is here?"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "Yes."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay."

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "So if we do not receive vehicle rentals, we will not be able to deploy our carriers, which would be -- to change our complete operations."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "And with all eyes always on Fulton County Elections, you need these vehicles to be able to do that?"

**NADINE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ELECTIONS:** "Yes. It will be a ripple effect of problems."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay, thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Other questions or comments?"

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "None? All right, please vote. The motion is to adopt."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0072**, Real Estate and Asset Management request approval of a statewide contract in an amount not to exceed \$1,213,795.02 to retain a contractor to perform state of Georgia requested capital improvement projects."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0073**, Request approval to amend an existing contract for Industrial Racking for the Fulton County Central Warehouse in an amount not to exceed \$260,000."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 11, **25-0074** Finance request approval of a recommended proposal in an amount not to exceed \$94,500 to provide Professional Property and Casualty Brokerage Services."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0075**, Request approval of a recommended proposal in an amount not to exceed \$217,000 to provide Financial Advisory Services."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0076**, As amended: Request ratification of an application and agreement for insurance coverage, approval of a resolution authorizing membership in the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and execution of an internal governmental agreement."

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

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "Under Health and Human Services, **25-0077**, Public Works request approval of the lowest responsible bidder in an amount not to exceed \$382,764.50 to provide easement maintenance in both the North and South Fulton Service areas."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "Under Infrastructure and Economic Development, **25-0078**, Public Works request approval of a contract in an amount not to exceed \$323,584 to provide Annual Air Traffic Control Night Coverage Services."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Ivory, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 12, Commissioners' Action Items, **25-0079**, Request approval of a resolution to provide the financial resources necessary to comply with the consent decree, sponsored by Commissioner Arrington."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Arrington."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "I would just say, we can take this one and the other one that I submitted. We already voted on the budget, and you know, I don't know if it's going to have any effect. I would just withdraw them and take them off."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. That was withdrawn, Commissioner -- Clerk -- Madam Clerk."

**CLERK GRIER:** "So noted."

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**CLERK GRIER:** "Commissioners' Full-Board Appointments, **24-0080**, Board of Trustees of the Fulton County Employees Retirement System, Chairman Pitts has nominated Commissioner Abdur-Rahman for a Full-Board reappointment to a term ending December 31st, 2025."

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

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0081**, Board of Trustees, Chairman Pitts has nominated Commissioner Barrett for a Full-Board reappointment to the term ending December 31st, 2025."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Motion to approve by Commissioner Ivory, seconded Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Please vote."

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

**CLERK GRIER:** "25-0882 --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Wait a minute. Why didn't I vote? Excuse me, the last one."

**CLERK GRIER:** "For 881, it's a, yea vote for you?"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Yes."

**CLERK GRIER:** "Six yeas, zero nays."

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**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 13, **25-0082**, Board of Trustees, Chairman Pitts has nominated Vice Chairman Bob Ellis for a Full-Board reappointment to a term ending December 31st, 2025."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Motion to approve by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "**25-0083**, Board of Ethics, Chairman Pitts has nominated Louis Levenson for a Full-Board reappointment to a term ending February 12th, 2028."

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

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "I object to the reappointment of Louis Levenson. The whole board needs to go. They are unethical themselves. They do not comply with their own rules. They all need to go."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Okay. Motion on the floor is to adopt. Please vote."

**CLERK GRIER:** "And the vote is open. And the motion passes; six yeas, one nay."

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**CLERK GRIER:** "25-0084, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, Chairman Pitts has nominated Elizabeth Bolton Harris for a Full-Board appointment to a term ending December 31st, 2028."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Ivory. Commissioner Arrington."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "I'm happy to support this lady. But I just wanted to reiterate something that was brought up at our last meeting. There are other entities that have put in less to MARTA that have more board appointments than we do. So I want to make sure that it's part of our Legislative Agenda, Ms. Corbitt --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Ms. Corbitt."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "I want to make sure it's part of our Legislative Agenda, to make sure that Fulton County has just as many, if not more, than the other county and governmental organizations that have board members on with MARTA. And more importantly, the biggest problem that we have is that Fulton County gets three board appointees to the MARTA Board, and the North Fulton Mayors get to decide two of those appointees. And the -- this Commission recommends the third. And so I'm just at a complete loss. If the North Fulton Mayors get to decide who they're going to choose, why don't the South Fulton Mayors get the same treatment. So I'm just at a complete loss. And it's been, you know, longer -- this happened before I was here. But it makes no sense. And this is something that was done at the Georgia Legislature, Ms. Corbitt. If the North Fulton Mayors are going to choose, the South Fulton Mayors need to choose. If the committee -- if the Commission is going to recommend, then the Commission needs to recommend. It is illogical and unexplainable why the North Fulton Mayors would get to choose two out of three MARTA Board positions for all of Fulton County. And the South Fulton Mayors don't even get to make --"

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Point of order, Mr. Chair."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "-- a recommendation."

**VICE- CHAIRMAN ELLIS:** "Point of order, Mr. Chair. This doesn't have anything to do with this particular item."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Motion on the floor is to adopt. Let's vote, please."

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

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**CLERK GRIER:** "On page 14, 25-0085, External Affairs Presentation 2025 State Legislative Session update."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "And let's address what Commissioner Arrington was -- because I happen to agree totally with that."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes, sir. And it is part of our legislative agenda, and I do want to address that. Thank you. And I'll just ask the team to please pull up our slides. We are -- while they're doing that, we are now in the third week of Session. We had a bit of disruption last week with the winter weather we experienced. But we -- they are continuing to work right now in the budget. Next slide, please. This Session convened first on January 13th, going through April 4th, for our 40-day Session. The Governor has outlined his priorities for the year. We'll talk a little bit about that. One of those is -- includes, which is relevant to our -- our legislative agenda is about Medicaid and about the Pathways Program. It does not -- this is not full Medicaid expansion by any means, but it does extend eligibility for the Pathways Program to households, parents and guardians of children aged zero to six at or below the federal poverty level. So we are continuing to assess what impact that has in Fulton County, but it does open that door to some additional residents. The State of Judiciary was delivered, I believe, today, Jasmine, by Chief Justice Boggs. And the Appropriations Committee is beginning this week to look at the amended fiscal, FY25 budget. Next, please. And in the General Assembly, they have the big budget, which is the upcoming year. And then, I guess, they sometimes call it the little budget, which is amendments to the current fiscal year. So some of the Governor's highlights, I mean, I won't go over these. But a couple of them do specifically affect Fulton County. One is about gangs and sex trafficking. And I know Commissioner Abdur-Rahman has a Human Trafficking Forum tomorrow evening. There's also funding to replace voting machine batteries. That is a cost that we would incur if the state did not fund that. Funding for additional forensic beds at state -- the state's three regional mental health hospitals. So that does -- one challenge we have at times is clients or detainees in the jail who need to be transitioned into a state hospital and forensic bed. And sometimes those beds are not available. So this addition would be impactful for Fulton County. They will also be making some capital repairs in the state's mental health hospitals. 25 million for Morehouse School of Medicine for a new academic building, that is one of the Governor's budget requests. Additional funding --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Wait, repeat that. Repeat that."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "\$25 million in the Governor's budget request for an academic building for Morehouse School of Medicine. Excuse me --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "That was in the budget, in the Governor's --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "That's in the Governor's budget, yes, sir. Additional road funding, and of course, we've read in the news about the conditions in the state prison system, so additional funds, capital funds to make

improvements across that system. In addition, he has proposed a state income tax rebate for taxpayers. Next, please. Just to review Fulton County's adopted legislative priorities, the top three are there in orange. But Commissioner Arrington, I did want to assure you that the transit is -- the Transit Board representation is on that list. And that is a conversation we're having with our members. Our delegation will be meeting tomorrow at 4:00 o'clock at the Capitol. So we're going to be reviewing these in more detail with our delegation members, but have also had some other conversations. You're right that the change that you're describing goes back more than ten years. And it is something that we have ways with our members previously, we've not cracked that nut yet, but we are continuing to have those conversations."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "And what -- yeah, what feedback are you getting from the delegation?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "It is a very -- it's one, I think, that some of the issues that existed at the time are still there, Chairman Pitts. So we haven't received -- I think we have some members who agree with us strongly, and some do not. MARTA legislation is general legislation, and can't be done as local legislation or even within just the MARTA supporting counties, unfortunately. So that is one of the challenges we face with that is it has to go through the full system. But again, I don't know that I could share much more than that right now, Mr. Chairman."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "So you -- are you optimistic, or?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "I'm neutral right now. I don't know that I have -- I don't know that -- we haven't seen as strong interest in making the change yet, but it's certainly one that we want to continue to pursue. We recognize how important it is."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Wait a minute. It's one more. Is anybody carrying the water for us, in the House or the Senate?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "On this item, not right now. Yeah, I think we can --"

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "I spoke with Senator Halpern, and Derek Jackson both about this. I don't know if they're going to carry the water or not. But I know that Senator Beach had previously committed to this issue to MARTA term, but that was a couple years ago."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Thank you. I'm just going to go down to the next slide, please. So again, we've just discussed these previously. And as you requested, the beginning of the year or late in December, we are going to try to shorten our updates for you a bit. But there are two items with Superior Court. One is about an additional judgeship, and one is about Judicial Officers. And I know

there's varying perspectives on that issue. But we have -- we are in the process, we have draft Bill Legislation on Judicial Officers, or draft Bill language on Judicial Officers, and are -- have several members who've expressed an interest in supporting that item. We do not have sponsors yet, like, they have not introduced the Bill yet. They did, our House Delegation, and I'll get to this in a minute, convened on Monday for the first time to officially organize. And today, the Senate Delegation is meeting. So once those meetings happen, then we can begin the process of introducing local legislation. So we have that now in the House, and we'll have it after today on the Senate side."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Do you have any idea who you're going to be speaking with about, again, carrying the water for us on this, these two?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "We have several members that we have talked with. Again, Mr. Chairman, until we have -- until they've introduced the legislation, I think we want to make sure that we have a firm commitment before we share that. So as soon as I have that, I will communicate that with you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "The reason why I asked is because the clock is ticking."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "I understand that, yes, sir. And with the Superior Court judgeship, the feedback we're getting is that that process, that does have an impact on the state budget. And we'll also need to work through the state budget process. So that again, is general legislation. Next slide, please. State Court, again, we have -- they have -- we do not have introduced Bill, but we do have some likely sponsors who have expressed, verbally expressed their commitment. So as soon as we have that Bill introduced and we have those sponsors confirmed in writing, then we will certainly share that. We do have draft Bill legislation on this. And we have -- providing them additional documentation, as you recall, the State Court conducted a study that determined the number of additional Judges that they need. And they are seeking two judgeships. Next slide, please. Behavioral Health is our third priority. This week, Commissioner Tanner will be presenting his budget. We are also, as we meet with the delegation tomorrow, providing them updates about the operations of our current Behavioral Health Crisis Center, the funding gap that we still have in place. As we mentioned, the Governor's budget does talk about forensic beds in our state mental health hospitals. But that is an ongoing need that we're monitoring. And we will be working with our Behavioral Health team to come and present to the delegation, just with more specificity around our needs here. Next, please. We wanted to mention one piece of legislation that has been introduced, which is Senate Bill 7, and it is related to jails and specifically to the Atlanta City Detention Center. If this Bill has been assigned to committee, and has not had a committee hearing, and we're monitoring this at this point."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Can you explain what -- what it means, as you understand it? Because I read it several times, and I'm still not clear on what it means."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "It does have some language that is -- offers, I would say, some ambiguity. But it provides a process for counties to access existing municipal jails under very specific conditions. And those include a fee cap, so that the municipality cannot charge more than the cost of operating the jail. The Bill as written, speaks to funding for the Sheriff. It stipulates that the Sheriff is the person who must make the request to the municipality. It -- they are -- given that Fulton County has already had the experience of leasing jail space with municipalities, not just Atlanta, but also with other municipalities and in other counties, I think we have some lived experience with the -- this process and understand that there are some other -- other questions that we may have about how this would be implemented to your point, Mr. Chairman."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "I don't know what that means."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "So are you saying that that would mean that a current lease situation for a municipal jail, this would do away with the need for having a lease? Because then this would allow, in certain situations, where there would be automatic access?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "It's not automatic, and we'd still have a cost. So it simply -- and it doesn't stipulate -- one of the things that is not clear in the Bill is, is this agreement in perpetuity? Is it time -- is there a time limit to the access? So those are some of the things, Commissioner, that are, you know --"

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Well, what is this clarifying or giving us -- what is gaining us? Or what is it clarifying?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "For -- again, the County did not introduce this legislation. This is a Bill that was introduced, and there was a special subcommittee last year from the Senate Public Safety Committee that was related to the jail. And transfer of the Atlanta City Detention Center was one of the recommendations from that special subcommittee. And so this is -- this was introduced by members of that special subcommittee. And from their perspective, would create a pathway to the county accessing potentially more of the Atlanta City Detention Center."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Or it could also affect the fee. So there's still some questions though that we certainly have at this point. And we're still firming some analysis."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Arrington."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "So I'm probably supportive of this in general. I think we should also make it a little more expansive. So it should not just be cities inside of a county, but it also should be surrounding counties. I mean, maybe you start with a municipality inside the county. But, I mean, we were looking at sending people to Alabama or somewhere. And Douglas County Jail is 40 percent, only 40 percent occupied, right? So I -- this may be a good start, but I don't think it really hits all of the issues, right? You know, not only does it need to be -- it makes sense that you would start in your own county. "

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Right."

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "But if the facility or space is not available in your county or a municipality in your city, it would seem then that the second next place to go would be a surrounding county like Douglas County, who's at 40 percent population in their jail before we have to even think about trying to send somebody to Alabama or anywhere out of state."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "I think, Commissioner Arrington, you raise some really good points. And one thing I don't think I was clear about, like I said, we -- this was not Bill -- a Bill that we introduced, or was part of our package. But we wanted you all to be aware of it. This Bill, as written, only applies to the Atlanta City Detention Center. It is specific to a municipal jail in the jurisdiction of the -- the Capitol Police. So it would not apply to any other municipal jail even within Fulton County. But I think that you make some very good points about -- "

**COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.:** "So this is a -- it's a local Bill? This is not a general Bill?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "It is, it is a general Bill. But it was written in a way that is very narrowly defined."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "And can I ask before we -- I'm sorry, do I --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "No, go ahead now."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Can -- I don't want to jump out --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "No, no, no."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay. Then can I ask that before we go to Fulton Day at the Capitol on February 20th, that we have a meeting of -- or some information about where this stands, who we're -- who exactly is putting this --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "-- forward? Like, the names of the people that are putting this forward and any research that we need to be able to be prepared --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "-- when we go to Fulton Day, to discuss this very specifically?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes, Commissioner. And I'll just say that we do know, I'll share the sponsors of the Bill. This was it introduced by Senator John Albers. And Senator Randy Robertson, who was also a member of the special subcommittee on the jail --"

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Yeah, he chaired the committee, if I recall correctly."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "He did, that's correct, Mr. Chairman. Also, two other members of our Senate Delegation, Senator Beach and Senator Still, as well as Senator Payne. What? Okay. He's on the Public Senate Public Safety Committee as well, but is not part of our delegation. But to your point, yes, we are conducting additional analysis, and we'll have, I think, certainly more information about this."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Barrett. Okay. Anybody have a question on this jail?"

**COMMISSIONERS:** (No response.)

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right, continue."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Thank you. Next slide, please."

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Chairman, I'm sorry. I didn't have a question. I just wanted -- for the sake of my colleague, there's nothing that keep us from having conversation --"

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Right, that's --"

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "-- with the Senators, Commissioner Ivory. So I've talked to Albers before on issues. And so I know we do have a lobbying team, however, sometimes it weighs differently it comes from you."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay."

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "So I just wanted to suggest that you reach out."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Yeah, I wasn't sure of the protocol of --"

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Yeah, you can."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay."

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Elected official to elected official."

**COMMISSIONER IVORY:** "Okay. Great, thank you."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Thank you, Commissioner. We also just want to make you aware of House Bill 92. This is related to House Bill 581 and the homestead exemption that was approved by -- through the state for the opportunity for a floating homestead exemption that was approved by voters statewide in a referendum in November. This legislation would extend the deadline for opting out of House Bill 581 and that special exemption from March 1st, which is the current deadline to May 1st, which would potentially provide the additional time for those jurisdictions. This Bill did pass out of Committee this morning. We are, right now, our team is monitoring the municipalities within the Fulton County and just creating just sort of for you all, a report of who has chosen to opt in and out, so that you just have that for your awareness. And we can also share that with our delegation if needed. And so again, we're tracking this one, because the Board of Commissioners opted into the homestead exemption, which is very similar to the floating homestead exemption we've had for about 20 years. That is some -- this would not have an impact on us, but could on our municipalities. Next slide, please. As I mentioned, on Monday the House Delegation had their organizing meeting. Representative Cannon was elected Chair again. She was reelected Chair of the Delegation, Representative Debra Bazemore as Vice Chair. And a new member of our -- of our Delegation, Representative McQueen is the Secretary of the Delegation. The Senate is meeting, like, right now, any minute. So they will have their officers elected as well. And there will be a joint meeting tomorrow, in which we will review our legislative priorities. And I believe we've provided notice with you all of that meeting, just at 4:00 o'clock tomorrow. Next slide. And again, this is just really our legislative -- our legislative -- some of the calendars and the highlights that are coming up. With that, we can take any questions, Mr. Chairman."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "All right. Commissioner Barrett."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just had a quick question on the MARTA issue. When we are talking about this, are we suggesting that the County should have all of the votes, or are we suggesting it be split between --"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "We have --"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "-- the North Mayors and the South Mayors?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "We have provided -- and I think we'll -- we'll recirculate this. We have analysis that looking at both Fulton County, DeKalb County, and Clayton County as -- and the city of Atlanta as the -- as the MARTA jurisdictions -- and I'm sorry, I would like to look at that with fresh eyes, Commissioner. But there are several options that would be more equitable than where we are today, or that would be -- when I say equitable, meaning, more in line with our peer jurisdictions. Fulton County, as we are -- as a laws are in now, is a bit of an outlier compared to Fulton -- excuse me, to Clayton County, DeKalb County, and the city of Atlanta, which are the three other MARTA jurisdictions. So I don't know that we had a specific -- and the Board has not said, this is the way we want to fix it, but has expressed an interest consistently in being more in line with our peers, who are also MARTA counties, especially the city of Atlanta and DeKalb, which were like Fulton County, original MARTA counties."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Are we asking for more seats, or are we just trying to change the picks?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "I think it's more about the process for selection. And there are ways that -- and I believe in DeKalb, not -- not looking at it in front of me --"

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Sure."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "-- but my recollection is that DeKalb does have a process that gets some input from their municipalities. I just -- let me look at that again and share that with you fresh."

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Yeah, I just, I guess my thinking is that we would just want to have a really solid ask."

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

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Because if we're just sort of saying, we want this to change, but we don't really know what we're asking for, it's likely to get pushed aside. So, you know, not critical that I get anything --"

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

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "-- today or tomorrow. But it would nice to see in the next week or so --"

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

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "-- kind of a real plan for what we're -- at least we know what we're asking for, and we have a clear ask. So when we are talking to Legislators, and --"

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

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "-- as we are, want to do, we can sort of advocate for whatever the plan is."

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

**COMMISSIONER BARRETT:** "Thank you."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Commissioner Thorne."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Yeah, I just had a Bill that I saw. I don't know if it's made it out of Committee or not, but it was to make all county elected officials nonpartisan."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "I don't think -- I'm going to ask Jasmine if she could speak to that one, please."

**JASMINE CAMPBELL, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Yes. I don't know the Bill number. But we are tracking that Bill. There haven't been any Committee hearings really on Bills this week. They're mainly been organizational meetings, like Jessica said last week with the snow, that kind of threw off their schedule. But I do know that we're tracking that Bill, and that was also something yesterday that Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael Boggs mentioned. So it came actually from the higher courts. So that's one of his legislative priorities, and he mentioned that yesterday in the State of Judiciary."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "I think you're referring, if I recall correctly, to Judges only. Because I know there's some thought in that all of us should be -- it should be nonpartisan. But that one, I think, it really -- solely and exclusively to Judges."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Commissioner Thorne, we'll pull that Bill. I would -- just to -- and we'll circulate that with everyone, and we'll include it in our next update. To my knowledge, in Fulton County, our Judges are all nonpartisan elections. But that, perhaps that's not the case in some other parts of the state. But we'll check into that."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "Yeah. The Bill, I briefly read. Someone sent it to me, and it -- and the people that sponsored it, never mentioned or reached out to me on it, so it's quite a surprise. And I don't know which side to take, so--"

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

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "-- would love the -- if we could understand the ramifications if that was to go through, because we do make some partisan appointments."

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

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "And it would be hard if you have all nonpartisans to do that."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Thank you. We'll definitely pull that and provide that for you."

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Commissioner -- okay, I was waiting on you say something, Chairman. Yes. I remember when this came up before, because I took the lead on fighting it. Because here in Fulton County, the consensus in Fulton County, on both sides of the aisle, from my appreciation, was that they did not want it. And so according to Judges, I can understand that. But I know when it came up before, it was pulled, and it was only pulled, Chairman, after it was a uproar, Commissioner Mo -- I know I should be calling you Commissioner Ivory, but --"

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

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Well, you know, we -- I don't follow directions all the time, Chairman, you know that, come on now. But the point I'm trying to make is, before, when it happened, there was such a groundswell. I don't know if you remember it, but they pulled it. And because it was -- it would have affected us, we would have been all nonpartisan. I don't agree with that, because some of our areas are heavily Democratic, some of them are heavily Republican. And so you take, to me, in my appreciation, you take the power away from that district for what the constituency base is. Now that's my opinion, and you know what they say about opinions, so please, I would like to know where it's going, because I fought that successfully last time when they did it."

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "Thank you, Commissioner. We will circulate that Bill this afternoon so you can see it. And then we'll track it and include it in our next report."

**COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN:** "Thank you."

**COMMISSIONER THORNE:** "I do think it'll apply to the Sheriff and everybody. So not just us, but -- which I could maybe see a Sheriff being a nonpartisan race more than us."

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

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "That's it?"

**JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:** "That's it. Thank you, sir."

**CHAIRMAN PITTS:** "Madam Clerk."

**CLERK GRIER:** "No further items."

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

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.**