

**FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

January 10, 2024

10:00 AM



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



MINUTES

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 7, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Robert L. Pitts

10:02 a.m.

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

Robert L. Pitts, Chairman (At-Large)

PRESENT

Bridget Thorne, Commissioner (District 1)

PRESENT

Bob Ellis, Commissioner (District 2)

ABSENT

Dana Barrett, Commissioner (District 3)

PRESENT

Natalie Hall, Commissioner (District 4)

PRESENT

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

PRESENT

Khadijah Abdur-Rahman, Vice Chair (District 6)

PRESENT

INVOCATION: Reverend Clifton Dawkins, Jr., County Chaplain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recite in unison

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA**24-0001 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 Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration. **(ADOPTED AS AMENDED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Hall, to adopt as amended the Consent Agenda as amended by removing item #24-0003 as requested by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Arrington

24-0002 Clerk to the Commission

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

Proclamation recognizing "Keona Jones Green Remembrance Day."
(Hall/Arrington)
December 19, 2023

Proclamation recognizing "Vanessa Manley Appreciation Day." **(Hall)**
January 5, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Lowell F. Dickerson Appreciation Day." **(Arrington)**
January 10, 2024

Commissioners' District Board Appointments**24-0003****Board of Commissioners****HOUSING AUTHORITY OF FULTON COUNTY (REMOVED)**

Nine (9) members serve on this authority. Seven (7) regular members (each Commissioner appoints one person to serve) and two (2) housing resident members are appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The enabling statute calls the Housing Authority Board members "Commissioners."

Term = 5 Years for BOC Appointees
1 Year for Resident Members

Term below expires: 7/13/2027
Ronnie Shakir (**Abdur-Rahman**)

Commissioner Abdur-Rahman has nominated Ernestine Pittman to replace Ronnie Shakir for a District appointment to an unexpired term ending July 13, 2027.

ITEM REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA AS REQUESTED BY VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN

24-0004**Board of Commissioners****FULTON-DEKALB HOSPITAL AUTHORITY D/B/A GRADY HEALTH SYSTEM
(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Consists of ten (10) trustees (members). The Board of Commissioners of Fulton County appoints seven (7) trustees (members) and the Board of Commissioners of DeKalb County appoints three (3). (See Fulton County Code § 13-2-11). The Fulton County Code does not prescribe the method of appointment; however, historically, each Commissioner has appointed one person to serve.

Term = 4 years

Term below expired: 12/31/2023
Shannon Georgecink (**Ellis**)

Commissioner Ellis nominated Shannon Georgecink for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2027.

24-0005 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: 12/31/2023

Pamela Smith (**Pitts**)

Chairman Pitts nominated Pamela Smith for a District reappointment to a term ending December 31, 2025.

Infrastructure and Economic Development**24-0006 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval of an Indemnification, Maintenance, and Land Use Agreement for Private Improvement (Indemnification Agreement) between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and AIJ Milton, LLC for the purpose of granting conditional approval to allow stormwater drainage and walkway improvements within the County's existing water line easement area at 13625 Arnold Mill Road, Milton, Georgia 30075. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Justice and Safety**24-0007 Superior Court Administration**

Request approval to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with CaringWorks, Inc. and Fulton County on behalf of the Superior Court Accountability Court, effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, with four (1) year renewal options for the provision of services by CaringWorks to the participants of Fulton County Accountability Court via their Oasis of Hope program. No additional funds are required or provided. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**24-0008 Board of Commissioners**

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Hall and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to adopt the Regular Meeting Agenda as amended by revising item #24-0011 as requested by Commissioner Hall and removing item #24-0015 as requested by the County Manager. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Ellis

24-0009 Board of Commissioners

Appointment of the Vice-Chairman. **(APPROVED)**

Appointment of the Vice-Chairman of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners for a one-year term, in accordance to the current Fulton County Code § 101-36 (b), amended by the Board on October 20, 2021 (Item #21-0839).

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Chairman Pitts, to nominate Commissioner Abdur-Rahman as Vice-Chairman of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nay: Arrington

Absent: Ellis

Abstain: Hall

b. A motion was made by Commissioner Hall and seconded by Commissioner Arrington, to nominate Commissioner Arrington as Vice-Chairman of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Hall, and Arrington

Absent: Ellis

Abstain: Thorne, Barrett, and Abdur-Rahman

Did Not Vote: Pitts

24-0010 Clerk to the Commission

Ratification of Minutes. **(RATIFIED)**

Regular Meeting Minutes, December 6, 2023

Recess Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, December 20, 2023

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

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

Absent: Ellis

24-0011 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing "Michel "Marty" Turpeau, IV Remembrance Day."
(Abdur-Rahman/Arrington/BOC)

Proclamation recognizing "Lt. Col. Mike Russell Appreciation Day."
(Thorne/Pitts/Ellis/Hall/Abdur-Rahman)

Proclamation recognizing "Digital Equity Day."
(Barrett/Ellis/Thorne/Hall/Abdur-Rahman)

~~*Proclamation recognizing "Atlanta Business League Appreciation Day."~~ **(Hall)**

Proclamation recognizing "Marvin Wooley Appreciation Day." **(Hall)**

**** Proclamation recognizing "Randy Marshall Appreciation Day." (Arrington)**

**removed during the meeting*

***added during the meeting*

PUBLIC HEARINGS**24-0012 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 30 minutes at the Regular Meeting, nor will this portion exceed thirty minutes at the Recess Meeting. In the event the 30-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. Similarly, written comments (that were timely submitted) not previously read, may be read at the end of the meeting. For more information or to arrange a speaking date, contact the Clerk's Office. **(CONDUCTED)**

26 Speakers: Judge Cassandra Kirk (Item #23-0967); Solicitor General Keith Gammage; Jimmy Gough (Arts Funding); Paul Hershey (Elections); Michelle Taylor Willis (Arts Funding); Marysa Sutton (Arts Funding); Brother Anthony Muhammad (Citizens for Human Rights); Shelia Mante (Arts Funding); Ravi Windom (Arts Funding); Donna Watts-Nunn (Arts Funding); Julie Allen (COVID-19 Information); Waverly Lucas (Arts Funding); Mara Gaudio (District Attorney); W. Imara Canady (Arts Funding); Brian Allen (Item #24-0013); Janet Hill (Property Fraud); Ron Shakir (Housing); Margie McCleod (Injustice); Earl Ferguson (Voter Integrity); Jane Zoellizk (Arts Funding); Charmaine Minniefield (Arts Funding); Lisa Adler (Arts Funding); Matt Rowenczak (Elections); Devin Barrington-Ward (Fulton County Jail); Prophet Curtis Martin Hairston (Homelessness) and Alma Lott (Homelessness)

2 Zoom Comments: Ben Howard (Senior Housing) and Kevin Muldowney (District Attorney)

14 Emailed Comments: Jeffrey Mullavey (Item #23-0967); Ayanna Marshall (District Councilmember); Cyne Alexander (Arts Funding); Joni Per-Lee (Arts Funding); Jacquee Minor (Arts Funding); David Dunagan (Arts Funding); Renee Hall-George (Arts Funding); Beth Lenkey (Arts Funding); Virginia Kriho (Arts Funding); Kirk and Michele Sarkisian (Elections); Peter Hardy (Arts Funding); Lindsay Bytof (Arts Funding); Laura Kurlander Nagel (Arts Funding) and Stephanie Galer (Arts Funding)

COUNTY MANAGER'S ITEMS

Open & Responsible Government

24-0013 Finance

Review and approval of the FY2024 Final Adopted Budget and FY2024 Budget Resolution. **(DISCUSSED)**

24-0014 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidders - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 23ITB138741K-JAJ, Task Order Contract for Minor Construction in an amount not to exceed \$6,000,000.00 with (A) Brad Construction Company II, LLC (Fayetteville, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000.00; (B) Hawk Construction Company, LLC (Ellenwood, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000.00; (C) Complete Contracting Partners, LLC (Powder Springs, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000.00; (D) Rubio and Sons Interior, Inc. (Hoschton, GA), in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000.00; and (E) Osprey Management, LLC (Marietta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000.00, to provide standby repair, alteration, modernization, maintenance, and rehabilitation construction services. Effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, with three renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Arrington

Health and Human Services

24-0015 Public Works

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder - Department of Public Works, 23ITB458876A-KM, Small Water Meter Installation in an amount not to exceed \$620,000.00 with Jewel of the South Inc., (Conyers, GA), to provide small water meter installation services effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, with two renewal options. **(REMOVED)**

ITEM REMOVED FROM THE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA AS REQUESTED BY THE COUNTY MANAGER

24-0016 Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Request approval to amend an existing contract - Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, 22RFP038A-CJC (D), Fulton County Behavioral Health Network with Grady Memorial Hospital d/b/a Grady Health System (Grady) (Atlanta, GA), in an amount not to exceed \$11,377,838.00, for the expansion of behavioral health services to provide full-service operation and management of the new Fulton County Regional Behavioral Health Crisis Center (BHCC), located at 2805 Metropolitan Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30315. The County Attorney is authorized to approve the amended contract as to form and to make modifications thereto prior to execution. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Ellis

Justice and Safety**23-0961 Sheriff**

Request approval to re-program the use of unspent emergency capital funding in the amount of \$1,362,563.00. This funding is in the Fulton County Sheriff's Office capital fund budget. The FCSO proposes to utilize \$595,032.45 of the funds for Brown & Root Industrial Services (\$585,032.45) and Khafra Engineering Consultants Inc (\$10,000.00) for the Staff Toilet Upgrades at the South Annex Jail. The restrooms at the South Annex Jail meet ADA requirements to moving back in. This leaves a total of \$767,530.55 to be re-programmed. **(MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED ON 12/20/23) (APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Pitts

COMMISSIONERS' ACTION ITEMS**23-0915 Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of a Resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to dissolve the Housing Authority of Fulton County; and for other purposes. **(Arrington) (HELD ON 12/6/23 AND 12/20/23) (REMOVED)**

ITEM REMOVED FROM THE REGULAR AGENDA AS REQUESTED BY COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON

23-0964 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of a Resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners directing an external review of the Board of Ethics; and for other purposes.

(Arrington) (MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED ON 12/20/23 AND 1/10/24)

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

Yea: Hall, and Arrington

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

Absent: Ellis

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

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Hall, and Arrington

23-0965 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of a Resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to revoke every action taken by the Fulton County Board of Ethics from January 1, 2014, through December 20, 2023; and for other purposes. **(Arrington) (HELD ON 12/20/23) (MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED)**

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

Yea: Hall, and Arrington

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

Absent: Ellis

23-0966 **Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of an Ordinance to amend Chapter 2 (Administration), Article II (Officers and Employees), Division 2 (Code of Ethics) of the Fulton County Code to disband the Board of Ethics and to replace it with a slate of Ethics Hearing Officers; and for other purposes. **(Arrington) (MOTION TO APPROVE FAILED ON 12/20/23 AND 1/10/24)**

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

Yea: Hall, and Arrington

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

Absent: Ellis

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

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Hall, and Arrington

24-0017 **Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of a Resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners in Observance of the 95th Birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. **(Abdur-Rahman) (APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Ellis

EXECUTIVE SESSION**24-0018 Board of Commissioners**

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

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

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

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Arrington

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

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Thorne

c. A motion was made by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to adopt the recommendation and decision from the hearing conducted by the Housing Authority of Fulton County on July 20, 2023 and to remove Commissioner Ronnie Shakir from the Commission. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nay: Pitts

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Thorne

d. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, to approve the transfer of property located at 2925 Lakewood Drive to Atlanta Public Schools. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Ellis

e. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve the transfer of property to the City Sandy Springs for a roadway/sidewalk improvement project around the Sandy Springs Library consisting of a right of way and temporary construction easement for this project. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Ellis

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

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

Alexander Solution, LLC
"A Court Reporting Firm"

(Whereupon, the meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Good morning, everyone, and welcome to regularly scheduled meeting of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. Today is January 10th, 2024. It's 10:02 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. Commissioner Dana Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Khadijah Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Present."

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

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

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 2, Consent Agenda, **24-0001**, 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 Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have one item to be removed from today's Consent Agenda as requested by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. On page 2, 23-0003, Housing Authority of Fulton County; Commissioner Abdur-Rahman is removing her appointment of Ernestine Pittman to replace Ronnie Shakir for district appointment."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's being removed? Held or removed?"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Held."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Held."

CLERK GRIER: "Held, okay, and removed from today's Consent Agenda."

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

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, I'll entertain a motion to --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "-- I'm sorry. Excuse me. I am requesting that the Atlanta Business Legal Appreciation Day' proclamation be removed. It should have been requested."

CLERK GRIER: "So noted."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What page is that on?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "On page 5."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Page 5. That will be where? All right. All right, a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Is there a motion? All right, is there -- all right, motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Hall. Please vote. Well, actually raise your hand. It's approved. Five yeas -- five yeas. Continue."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 4, Regular Meeting Agenda, **24-0008**, Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have amendments to today's Regular Meeting Agenda. On page 11, 24-0011, Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates; Commissioner Hall has requested to remove the 'Atlanta Business Legal Appreciation Day' proclamation. And we have a proclamation to be added recognizing 'Randy Marshall Appreciation Day'."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Chairman?"

CLERK GRIER: "And on page 6 --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- hold. Go ahead. On page 6?"

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, we're removing an item, 24-0015, Public Works: Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder to provide small water meter installation services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. All right, Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Chairman, with all due respect, I asked if the proclamation honoring 'Marty Turpeau' be moved to the beginning. We do have members of Development Fulton that need to get to another meeting. And so, if it's, okay, with the colleagues, if we could take the proclamation first, I would really appreciate it."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "First among the proclamations?"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Yes, please."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Now, is this working out or not?"

CLERK GRIER: "It should be, yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, we have a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Motion to approve by Commissioner Natalie Hall, seconded by Commissioner Dana Barrett. Let's vote, please."

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0009**, Appointment of the Vice Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Thorne, we do at the first meeting of each year. Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I just want to say that Vice Chairman Ellis is doing a great job being our Vice Chair and it's unfortunate that he can't stay on for two years. And Commissioner Barrett and I, we need to be on at least two years before we could be Vice Chair so, therefore, I'm nominating Commissioner Abdur-Rahman to be new Vice Chair to replace Ellis."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, is there a second to that? All right, I'll second. Other nominations? Any other nominations? Does that work?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'd like to nominate Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I thought that this -- that we had a Resolution that said that we were going by seniority and that we simply added that you had to be on the Board of Commissioners for two years before you could do this. So I will go ahead and nominate Commissioner Arrington because, based on the original Resolution, he would have been the next person in line based on seniority."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay, is there a second? All right, properly moved and seconded."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I think we need to know what the Resolution says and is there seniority, so I guess we need to ask the County Attorney then."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is the question whether the Resolution includes qualifications?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes, specifically seniority as a qualification."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "The ordinance says the Vice Chair must have served at least two years on the Board. Is that the question?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No, we amended that -- a couple years ago. Before it rotated and we made a change -- a couple years ago and we take nominations and we vote period. All right, we have two names: Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and Commissioner Arrington. Commissioner Thorne, do you want to be heard?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'm sorry, what was the answer to the question about seniority being included?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes. It says, WHEREAS, in accordance with current policy adopted on January 24th, Fulton County Code Section 101-36B allows the Board to select Vice Chairman."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Can you speak into the microphone, please?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Allows the Board to select the Vice Chairman amongst all the members based on member seniority depending on their prior and current service in that capacity."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. So the answer is, yes, seniority is included."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, two names before us. First name properly moved and seconded is Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. The second name is Commissioner Marvin Arrington properly moved and seconded."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point of order, Mr. Chair; if the Resolution goes by seniority then what -- either seniority is a requirement or not. And if the next most senior person -- I don't believe that there is a question as to who the most next senior person is, and so that would mean that that was the only -- that person would qualify. So, I need to -- I guess we need more direction and a better answer from our County Attorney because Commissioner Hall had to answer the question. Is seniority a requirement or not, and what specifically are the rules?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Listen, we made a change a couple of years ago on this, and we take names at the first meeting. Before it rotated, we made a change and we take a vote and whoever gets the most votes is the Vice Chair, period."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'm in the queue."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Well, you can be in the queue, fine. That's what we decided. Now, Commissioner Hall, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have Resolutions, policies, and procedures for a reason, do we not, Madam County Attorney?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes, they should be based upon rationale, yes."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "They should be based on what?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I'm assuming that's a rhetorical question. Yes, they are there for a reason."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "My question is simply a question. Shall I read the ordinance that -- okay, well, I'll just read it because we seem to be having some confusion here: Ordinance amending Section 101-36B of the Fulton County Code relating to the selection process for the Vice Chairman of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners Board desires to adopt the formal policy of the Fulton County Code 101-36B, which require an election by four affirmative votes for it's Vice Chairman's position for amongst all members; and WHEREAS, in accordance to

the current policy adopted on January 24, 2018, Fulton County Code 101-36B allows the Board to select its Vice Chairman amongst all members based on members' seniority dependent on their prior and current service in that capacity; and NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County, Georgia that Fulton County Code 101-36B shall be amended to read as follows: The Board of Commissioners by four affirmative votes shall elect the Vice Chairman at the first regular meeting held in January; and the Vice Chairman so elected shall be authorized to preside at meetings of the Board of Commissioners in the absence of the Chairman and fulfill all the duties of the Chairman due to the death or vacancy of the Chairman. Now the board members shall serve as Vice Chairman until the member has served at least two years on the Board. Be it further ordained that any ordinance, as in parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance, are hereby repealed so passed and adopted this 20th day of October of 2021."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So I believe your question was, is the seniority language in this ordinance mandatory as in people must be taken in sequence based on their precise dates of seniority? The language of the ordinance indicates that seniority is a consideration. It does not have mandatory sequence language. And so, I would interpret this to mean that it is definitely consideration, but it does not mandate that it be taken in sequence."

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

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'm sorry; I'm still in the queue."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You have the floor, Commissioner, go ahead."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You finished?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "It has been the procedure of this Board to always go in sequence of seniority, and we always continue how we have always done in the past. So in the past, we have always selected based on seniority."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Anything else, Commissioner Arrington?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "No, sir, not at this time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. We have two nominated: Commissioner Abdur-Rahman was recommended by -- nominated rather by Commissioner Thorne and I seconded it. Let's vote, please."

CLERK GRIER: "Mr. Chairman, we're on the substitute motion by Commissioner Hall."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Substitute motion to do what?"

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, that's the one -- we can't go back until we dispose of this one."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. All right. On the substitute motion by Commissioner Hall, nominating Commissioner Arrington, seconded by Commissioner Arrington. Let's vote, please."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Back to Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0010**, Ratification of Minutes, Regular Meeting Minutes, December 6th; Recess Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, December 20th, 2023."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is there a motion to approve? Motion to approve by Commissioner Natalie Hall, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Let's vote."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 5, **24-0011**: Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, how many do we have now?"

CLERK GRIER: "We have five."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Five. All right, we got 30 minutes for proclamation. It's 10:20."

CLERK GRIER: "The first proclamation is recognizing 'Michel 'Marty' Turpeau, IV Remembrance Day' sponsored by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, cosponsored by Commissioner Arrington with Full Board support."

VICE-CHAIR, ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Will all of the family, please come forward, of Marty Turpeau, and if the Development Fulton Authority, if you would join us and any other family and supporters. Any other Development Fulton employees, board members, Executive Director -- all of the above, can you all fall in on both sides, please? It is with great honor and respect that Fulton County recognizes Marty Turpeau. This is sponsored by me and my colleague, Commissioner Arrington, Jr., Marvin Arrington Jr., with Full Board support. We do have a video that we would like to show -- a quick clip. This is what we call a Son of the South -- Southwest Atlanta. And so, we want to make sure that all of Fulton County and those that are watching understand why it's so important that we recognize not only this family, but this great citizen of Fulton County that passed way earlier than any of us anticipated, so can we please get the video to play. Now, I know our Netflix subscription is paid up, so what is the problem, you all? Because you know the Chairman is going to be on me in a minute. Do we have the video?"

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: "Yes, we got it."

VICE-CHAIR, ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Please play it. Do you want me to go ahead, Chairman?"

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: "Hold it. Just a moment."

VICE-CHAIR, ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Do you want me to go ahead, Chairman? Okay, well I go ahead with the proclamation. If he's still working I'll put it at the end. This is a proclamation honoring the work that Marty Turpeau has done -- this is actual legislation -- you can Google this a hundred years from now and it'll still come up. I take special pride in being a cosponsor because this man and his wife have been mentors and pillars in our community. And to give of themselves, and to give of their son; Marty, I consider a friend of mine, a confidant of mind. We didn't always agree but one thing about it, he know how to make me laugh. And so, it is with great honor that, WHEREAS, Michel Marty Turpeau -- and is that the fourth or fifth, you all; I can't see. The fourth, okay, was a native of Atlanta, a graduate of Frederick Douglass High School, Morehouse College, bachelor's degree at Clark Atlanta University, his master's degree. Michel completed a graduate internship at the Bank of NL Rothchild in London, England in foreign currency and bond portfolio analysis; and WHEREAS, Marty was the principal of the Aaron Group, Incorporated started in 1991 by Hank Aaron and Marty's father, Aaron Turpeau, Sr. He was also the chair of the Development Authority of Fulton County appointed by District Five Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr., where he influenced the authority to adopt meaningful and inclusionary provisions as a part of the awards process; and WHEREAS, Marty was a successful entrepreneur with projects in product licensing, Airport News and Gift Concessions, airport staffing operations, In Country International Business Development, and municipal parking infrastructure rehabilitation. He was also a community leader with an in-depth background in diversity, equity, and inclusion to opening businesses opportunity to women-owned businesses and minority businesses; and WHEREAS, Marty was a member of many

organizations including the Georgia Economic Development Association, Counsel for Quality Growth in Georgia, Minority Supply and Development Council; and WHEREAS, Marty served on several other boards including the National Forum of Black Public Administrators, National Corporate past council chair of the Joint Development Authority of Metro Atlanta, Treasurer and Secretary of Fulton Technology and Energy Authority, Atlanta Metro Chamber of Board of Advisors, the Georgia Chamber in Atlanta, Aeropolis. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes Michel Marty Turpeau for a life -- a very full life, of integrity and dedication to the city of Atlanta, Fulton County and beyond; and does hereby proclaim Friday, January 5th, 2024 as Michel Marty Turpeau, IV, Remembrance Day in Fulton County, Georgia. Would you please put your hands together? I am going to turn the mic over to my colleague, Commissioner Marvin Arrington, who appointed him."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Good morning. It is my sincere honor and distinct pleasure to -- for us to present this proclamation to Marty's family today. You know, he was all that stuff for the development authority, but more than that, he was my friend; and both graduates from Frederick Douglass High School, and both attended Cascade United Methodist Church. So glad his brother, mom and dad, his partner, Karen, are here and others -- his son, Micky, back here, come on up here, man. You know, Marty was truly special and he would surely be missed; but we are better because he was here. And so, we are thankful for that and we will continue to ask you to send blessings for his family and friends. Thank you so much."

Vice-Chair ABDUR-RAHMAN: "So to present -- we going to let the -- it's rolling now, thank you."

(Video playing of Marty Turpeau.)

Vice-Chair ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you all. We're going to take a few moments for the family to speak. You want to come up, dad?"

AARON TURPEAU: "I'm shy. We want to say thank you for all the support that we received from Fulton County and friends going through these rough times. Nobody expected this to happen. And obviously, Marty was all those things he was doing -- when she read those boards and stuff that he's actively involved in, I said man, no wonder I didn't see him; but he loved it and he got joy out of doing things for the community to help who he could help. We're proud to have raised such a son that's humanity. You can't say it without crying."

MR. TURPEAU, BROTHER: "Thank you, Board of Commissioners, for honoring my brother, Michel Marty Turpeau. He really -- he grew up here in Atlanta. He loved Atlanta. He gave back to the community. He was passionate about it; he was very passionate about his working with Develop Fulton. They'll be conversations. He was -- always on his mind, and so, he was very dedicated to serving the community. And we just want to say thank you to each of you. Thank you all for keeping his spirit alive in

such a meaningful way. Thank you, Commissioners, and we really appreciate you all, too."

MICKY TURPEAU: "Hi, there. I'm Marty's son. I just wanted to thank everybody for -- I don't know. This is cool. It's hard to think of words right now. My dad gave back all he could to the community whenever he could, and he was just awesome. So, thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "The next proclamation is recognizing 'Lieutenant Colonel Mike Russell Appreciation Day' sponsored by Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "This is amazing. There is a lot of everybody coming down here to stand. Mike Russell. Wow, it gives me great honor. When I started my journey in political life, I met Mike. He's truly an amazing person, and I'm so blessed to call him my friend and a mentor as well. He is so active in the community trying to help -- help his neighbors. He is truly a friend that you want to have, and he is a friend for all. And I knew he was a veteran, but I didn't know he was a hero. It just -- the more and more you get to know him the more and more you are just fascinated with this man. So I was thrilled when -- and I want to thank John Ossoff, Senator John Ossoff's office for procuring this medal that was presented to him in December in Washington, DC. So I just wanted the Fulton County residence to have their chance to also honor this great man. WHEREAS, on Saturday, December 9th, 2023, retired Army Lieutenant Colonel Mike Russell was honored with a bronze star with the device for his heroism during the 1989 United States operation, 'Just Cause' in Panama; and WHEREAS, Lieutenant Russell's unit came under an intense sniper and light machine-gun fire when he led a strike team to storm the enemy when he and his team were under fire to help Lieutenant Russell move forward and eliminated the enemy forces attempting to return to his unit. Lieutenant Russell was pinned down by another shooter when he shot out a streetlight and directed two M-16 machine guns to engage the enemy position eliminating it; and WHEREAS, Lieutenant Russell served as a military police officer for 28 years before his retirement. During his service in the army, he traveled to 26 countries, served in the United States, Central America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Europe; and was deployed overseas on eight major missions, six in combat; and WHEREAS, Lieutenant Russell graduated from Campbell University in North Carolina as a distinguished military graduate, and received his commission as a second lieutenant in the United States Army where he was assigned to the Military Police Corps. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and all associated with the United States Army and the 108th military police company recognize Lieutenant Mike Russell for his valorous actions and dedicated service to his country; and does hereby proclaim Wednesday, January 10th, 2024, as 'Lieutenant Colonel Mike Russell Appreciation Day' in Fulton County, Georgia. Thank you. Thank you."

MIKE RUSSELL, RECIPIENT: "Does anybody want to say anything? We would be up here for all day. I'm very humbled to get this. I'm standing here in spite of myself today. There are a lot of people who made it possible for me to be here starting with my parents and my maternal grandmother, my family, my two children and their mother who

suffered a great deal during all of those deployments. A lot of crusty old NCO's who kept me safe and kept me straight. And there's one person I want to mention today -- I could go on -- there's so many people who've helped me over those 28 plus years, but there's one in particular. On the day that this happened, we were in downtown Panama City and I was the company commander, the 108 MP Company, that's why it's in the proclamation. And we were taking the sniper fire, machine-gun fire, and I decided I was going to go across the street and take these guys out, and one soldier followed me. Well, after he got a little hot, he got smart and he went back. So I was stuck out there by myself, and I wasn't thinking. I was just upset that these guys were trying to kill my soldiers. So I went forward and I did what I had to do, and on the way back, like she said, this guy from above in a tall building started shooting down at me and so he didn't get a sniper's badge, because if he did, he's the worst sniper in the world. I'm 6' 4" and he couldn't hit me, and he had me pinned down under an eave, under the door. And about that time, I realized I've made a mistake by crossing that street. And the first sergeant, I can still hear his voice, yells out, sir, what in the F. are you doing outside the perimeter? You're the commander; you're supposed to be inside the perimeter. I said, yeah, that's right. Well, first sergeant, I figured that part out, now help me get back across the street. So he said shoot out that light and we'll get you back across the street. So we did, and as I was running back across the street, I stumbled, lost my balance, cut up my left hand and my knee, and so I got over there and we directed the machine-guns and we took him out. And he wasn't happy with me and he let me know it. And he -- he thought what I did was foolish because he said, you know, you're the commander, you should have been there to lead and not do what you did, but it was just about caring for the guys. So I just want to say thank you to First Sergeant Fossett, he's no longer with us. He passed away two years ago of cancer. And him and all the other great NCO's and officers that mentored me and literally, if it hadn't been for him, I would not be standing here today. So thank y'all very much and thank you, Commissioner Thorne, and Edward and all of you guys and again also to Senator Ossoff's office, and finally to Major General Thigpen, who's the commander of U.S. Army South and the Sixth Army who pushed this award not only for me, but for other soldiers -- there were seven of us. Four of us got our awards, three, we're still looking for and hoping we can find them so they can get their awards as well. But General Thigpen pushed this thing all the way to the Secretary of the Army in record time to make sure these awards were approved and presented. So, thank you to everybody and thank you again, Commissioner Thorne, and all the Commissioners. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "The next proclamation is recognizing 'Digital Equity Day' sponsored by Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I am getting ready to present a proclamation in support of the Digital Equity in Fulton County, so I have joining me up here, Dr. Gayle Holloman from the libraries. If there's anybody else here from the libraries or Select Fulton that's been working on digital equity and, of course, all of my good friends from Inspire EDU, are up here as well. I'm super proud to stand up here with all of you. These guys at Inspire EDU have been a force for digital equity in our community for over 16 years."

Last year alone they served 2,825 qualifying families through a hundred and 38 free workshops where they provided training and a free laptop. The work they do is critical, not only to bridging the digital divide, but to creating a more equitable Fulton County. Our library system as well has been committed to digital equity. Select Fulton has been committed to digital equity, and I'm looking forward to working with all of them as we move into 2024 and continuing to move forward on this front. With that, I will read the proclamation: WHEREAS, digital equity is a critical component in achieving equity in education, healthcare, and career opportunity; and WHEREAS, digital equity is achieved when all people who have the hardware, software, skills, and connectivity to succeed; and WHEREAS, Inspired EDU a 501(C) 3 headquartered in Fulton County works to bridge the digital divide by providing youth and adults with hardware, software, and training at no cost; and WHEREAS, each year Inspired EDU partners with thousands of schools and community based organizations; provide families with thousands of hours of hands-on training, fully loaded laptops, and technical support; and WHEREAS, in 2024, Inspire EDU will celebrate its 16th year of operation in Fulton County and continues to grow and serve more citizens every year; and WHEREAS, Inspire EDU is committed to raising awareness around the importance of digital equity; and WHEREAS, Fulton County is committed to working towards a digital equity for all of its citizens. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes Inspire EDU for their continued dedication to improving lives; and does hereby proclaim Wednesday, January 10th, 2024, as 'Digital Equity Day' in Fulton County. And with that, I would like to ask Inspired EDU's president, Richard Hicks, to say a couple words."

RICHARD HICKS, RECIPIENT: "Thank you, Commissioner Barrett. Distinguished Commissioners, this is a great honor. I've been doing this work for over 15 years, and I've seen crises that we've had within our community and the transformation in technology in our basic digital life is starting to take shape in a more amplified way. It's woven into our finances; in our education, telehealth. The pandemic -- it didn't just bring it to light, it amplified the need that we've got to get it right, because if we're going to be evolving over the next few years, digital equity has to be something important. It is as basic as food now. And if we don't do that, then we're going to be left behind. And I'm proud to serve, and I have a wonderful staff and friends and supporters that really believe in the work that we're doing, and we want to thank each and every one of you for your support in the community in helping to really build this sort of coalition that we can move this forward. So thank you all so much, Commissioners, and we look forward to serving in years to come."

CLERK GRIER: "The next proclamation is recognizing 'Marvin Wooley Appreciation Day' sponsored by Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right, everyone here in honor of Marvin Wooley, please come down. Judge Taylor, good to see you. Marvin, good to see you. Everyone here in honor of Marvin Wooley, please come down. All right. Sierra, where are you going? So, I first heard about Marvin Wooley because of his outstanding customer service, his

heart for the people. I was told that he was being literally watched by this young lady, Ms. -- Dr. Sierra L. who is the manager of the well-known artist, Dejuan Hart, also known as Young Dro. Sierra is an advocate for people, who are in that eviction cycle, and she goes to the courts on a regular basis to assist, and Young Dro literally pays for people's evictions to resolve their issues and get them back into their homes, literally walking into the court and paying everything for them. And they observed that Marvin Wooley literally will help every single resident that comes into that court; personally taking them by the hand, taking them to the computer, explaining every document to them, helping them enter anything into the system, and advising them and it is just commendable, so it was my honor and pleasure to sponsor this proclamation for you. And it reads: WHEREAS, Marvin Wooley is an esteemed employee of the State Court of Fulton County and has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to providing exceptional customer service; and WHEREAS, Marvin consistently goes above and beyond his duty to ensure that every customer receives the highest level of satisfaction, and his dedication, professionalism, and attention to detail have earned him a reputation for being an outstanding customer service representative; and WHEREAS, Marvin consistently exhibits a positive attitude and treats each customer with respect, empathy, and kindness and his exceptional communication skills and ability to listen and understand customer needs have resulted in countless instances of successful problem resolution; and WHEREAS, Marvin's unwavering commitment to excellent customer service has contributed significantly to the overall positive experience of customers within the state court of Fulton County; and WHEREAS, Marvin's consistent demonstration of outstanding customer service has set a standard of excellence that inspires and motivates his colleagues. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes Marvin Wooley for his exceptional customer service and his unwavering dedication to ensuring the highest level of satisfaction for every person he serves; and does hereby proclaim Wednesday, January 10th, 2024, as 'Marvin Wooley Appreciation Day' in Fulton County, Georgia. Congratulations, and thank you for your service -- exemplary service. And I just want to say when you were working on this proclamation, my Chief of Staff and I notice how Judge Taylor jumped right in to provide some language for the proclamation. He admires your exemplary service as well, and I will hand the mic over to whoever wants to speak next."

SIERRA L.: "I am not a speaker. But I want to say that eviction being a part of the eviction process, and it's not just the eviction's part, but I have not only been just in the state court part, I've been in the Magistrate Court part, and the Superior Court, and I have never encountered in either courts or in society a human being like you. I see people coming there upset and they hurt because they're going to be evicted. I see them bothered; I see them yell; I see them curse, I see them cuss you out, and you still say, but ma'am, this is, okay, we can do this, and it takes -- I can't curse. It takes a person of a certain stature to be able to handle those type of people. When people come in eviction court, they come because they need you, they need help. And sometimes people don't know how to, because maybe they have not experienced that, and I don't know if you experienced it or if not, but what I can say is that you treat

everyone equally, and you treat them as if you have experienced it, and I completely appreciate it. So don't kick me out over there."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Judge Taylor, because you jumped right on that e-mail."

JUDGE TAYLOR: "You say you're not a speaker, but golly, I don't follow that quite frankly. Because what I was going to say is the same thing. Folks come to the courthouse and they don't come here because they want to. Nobody comes here because they're happy. Everybody has an issue and everybody has a problems; but every time I have ever gone by the self-help center, every time I've ever dealt with Marvin or ever heard of anybody who has ever worked with Marvin, he always has a smile. He always puts people at ease, and that is a skill that so few people have. I know I don't have it. And I commend you so much when dealing with all of that hurt and anguish and discord that people come into the courthouse with, and you managed to deal with it with grace and with a smile. Thank you so much for all you do. We appreciate it."

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: "Good morning, everyone. I just want to say that Marvin truly embodies the characteristics of a public servant. I've known Marvin now for about 15, maybe 20 years during his tenure working with state court. And the recognition that he's receiving today is consistent with what we've seen over the years. There's been countless numbers of e-mails, phone calls when someone just wanted to recognize him for the service that he's provided. As been said, it doesn't matter from which walk of life someone may come from, but when they enter into the self-help center, we know that they're going to receive true customer service from Marvin Wooley. So we are honored to have him as a member of the state court family and as not only just as an employee, but as a public servant. Thank you."

MARVIN WOOLEY, RECIPIENT: "Wow, this is flattering. Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Mr. Anderson, for the recognition. Thank you, Commissioner Hall, for the nomination. And on behalf of Fulton County's leadership, COO Dick Anderson, and the rest of the Commissioners, just Godspeed on the leadership you all provide the county; and for anyone else out there in the audience whether you you're a member of the public or another county employee that works in a different department, I just look forward to continuing to work alongside with you all letting in, making Fulton County a great place to live, work, and play. And it's been an honor serving under and alongside my state court personnel. Honorable Chief Judge Wesley Taylor, Mr. Talley, Chief Clerk, Deputy Chief DeAndre Moore and my immediate head, Daysha [Phonetic.] Battle. But again, it's been an honor serving and working with Ms. Anderson's nonprofit as well as the rest of the members of the public that we serve at the self-help center in State Court, so thanks again for the honor, everyone, and Godspeed."

CLERK GRIER: "The last proclamation is recognizing 'Randy Marshall Appreciation Day' sponsored by Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay, all right. It's my pleasure to present this proclamation to Mr. Randy Marshall. The proclamation reads as follows: WHEREAS, Randy Marshall is a native of Harlem, New York and one half of the award-winning directing duo, the Fat Cats; and WHEREAS, Randy is a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia where he was a theater and film major. After a few years of set work, he caught his first break directing a music video for legendary director, Keith Ward, and his company; and WHEREAS, Randy went on to direct a plethora of base music videos and his impressive directorial client list includes legendary artists including LL Cool J, Lil Wayne, TI, Ciara, Cee Lo Green, Mary J. Blige, 50 Cent, P. Diddy, Young Jeezy, Jermaine Dupri, Fabulous, Outkast, Killer Mike, Kanye West, and Academy Award winners Jamie Foxx and Three 6 Mafia; and WHEREAS, the Fat Cats also won best video at the 2005 MTV video music awards with Ludacris. The duo also has one various Dirty Awards, Ozone Awards, and received numerous BET Award Nominations; and WHEREAS, the Fat Cats own and operate a production company based out of Tyler Perry's studios in Atlanta. The directors work with artists including Little Baby, Megan Thee Stallion, Migos, Drake, Future, Gunner, Young Thug, and The City Girls among many others; and WHEREAS, we are continuing to celebrate 50 Years of Hip-Hop and arts and culture in Atlanta and Fulton County. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners, in honor of the 50th Anniversary of Hip-Hop recognizes Randy Marshall for his many contributions to the music and entertainment industry, and to arts and culture in Atlanta and throughout Fulton County; and does hereby proclaim Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 as 'Randy Marshall Appreciation Day' in Fulton County, Georgia."

RANDY MARSHALL, RECIPIENT: "I would just like to say I believed in the city of Atlanta. I started way back 30 years ago directing videos and started as a set PA. But I watched the city grow and I knew there was something special. Instead of going to New York, or back to New York, or to LA, I stuck it out, you know, with the help of Dr. Eichelberger over at Clark Atlanta and just people who believed in me. Kim, I got to give a shout out to Kim Wyae, who I went and spoke, as far as her husband was Easy Lee. He's a DJ from the Treacherous Three. I went and swept floors, got coffee, and just used to write treatments, and I sent them to record labels till one point, the lady called and said, you know, don't send us anymore treatments. When we get something, we'll give you a video, and that happened and then one thing led to another, and I was able to just watch the city grow. And I thank all of the artists that I've worked with that believed in what we wanted to do as visionaries, and make it so -- you know, when record labels and people thought about shooting videos, they would come to Atlanta. So I thank everybody who had, you know, anything to do with me being right here at this moment and having an appreciation day. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It's 11:02, Madam Clerk, continue."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 5, Public Hearings, **24-0012**, 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 by registering on the County website, www.fultoncountyga.gov. Priority for public comment will be given to Fulton County citizens and those individuals representing businesses or organizations located within Fulton County. Speakers will be granted up to two minutes each. The public will not be allowed to yield or donate time to other speakers. The public comment portion of the meeting will not exceed 30 minutes. In the event the 30-minute time limit is reached prior to public comments being completed, public comments will be suspended and the business portion of the BOC meeting will commence. Public comment will resume at the end of the meeting. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we will start with speakers here in Assembly Hall. We have received 27 speaker cards."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Twenty-seven?"

CLERK GRIER: "Twenty-seven. Will the first five speakers, please come forward: Judge Cassandra Kirk, Solicitor General Keith Gammage, Jimmy Gough, Paul D. Hershey, and Michelle Taylor Willis."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Again, for the record, when you have 15 seconds remaining of your two minutes, I'll say 15 seconds. That's your key to begin to conclude your remarks. That applies to everyone except elected officials."

JUDGE CASSANDRA KIRK, PUBLIC SPEAKER:: "Good morning, Mr. Chairman --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What is that? It's 11:03. So we have 27 speakers. So we're obviously going to go beyond 30 minutes, that's allotted, so I'd ask you to limit your remarks, it would be most appreciated. Thank you. Again, this does not apply to elected officials. Judge, you have the floor."

JUDGE CASSANDRA KIRK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of Fulton County Board of Commissioners. As you continue your budget discussions for Fulton County, I ask that you remember the Magistrate Court of Fulton County, a court, where since 2015; over 634,000 cases have been filed. And as of December 25, 2023, 593,000 have been closed. This is the busiest Magistrate Court in the state of Georgia. I am Cassandra Kirk. I serve as the Chief Magistrate Judge of Fulton County and today, I address you not just on behalf of the court, but on behalf of the people we all serve. I bring to your attention two critical issues before you: One, the recent decision to transfer funds from the Magistrate Court to the Superior Court; and two, the result of the assessment of the Magistrate Court of Fulton County, thanks to a grant that we sought and won from the State Justice Institute. First, in our ongoing commitment to a collaborative justice, we met in the Superior Court on January 5th, 2024, and have drafted language for an MOU that we are both considering. This meeting was crucial to identify both of our operational needs, and our goal remains to work in partnership, providing the effective coverage, and ensuring that our community's needs are met. Second, the recently completed

comprehensive assessment of the court, a copy of the executive summary was provided to you all; reveals a significant understaffing issue in the Magistrate Court. This shortage is not merely an operational challenge; it directly affects the citizens we serve by causing longer wait times for justice and unresolved disputes. To effectively address this, it is imperative to fund 53 and one half critical full-time positions. This action is not only vital for our court's efficiency, but also for ensuring that justice is timely and accessible for our citizens. A major concern highlighted in the assessment is the need to separate the Magistrate Clerk's office from the Superior Court Clerk's office. Currently, this intertwined structure leads to reduce productivity and delay case processing; affecting the timely delivery of justice to our community. Separating these offices, as seen in other courts across Georgia and even across Fulton County, will significantly improve our operational efficiency and service quality. Adequate funding for our Magistrate Court is essential for fulfilling our obligations to the citizens of our county. I urge you, Members of the Board of Commission, to reconsider your decision. Restoring the funding to the Magistrate Court is a step toward ensuring efficient and fair justice. It's not just an investment in our courts' infrastructure; it's a commitment to the welfare and rights of the people we serve. I'm available for any further discussion on how we can enhance our services and justice delivered in Fulton County. Thank you."

KEITH GAMMAGE, FC SOLICITOR GENERAL: "Good morning. I stopped in and Happy New Year again -- Keith Gammage, Fulton County Solicitor General -- stopped in briefly to say, thank you for the service that each of you provide, and for your leadership. You're juggling all of these important weights that are on all of our shoulders, and I thought it appropriate to start the year off by saying, thank you. And to the County Manager, Ms. Whitmore, Mr. Adams and the whole team along with the court officials, our law-enforcement partners, everyone who leans in to deliver, for our people who are counting on us. I just want to start by saying thank you. And to my team, who I hope is watching while they're working; I want to say thank you publicly to them. And most importantly, to those that serve together. I want to, here, publicly reiterate in this New Year, that I will continue as I know each of you will, continue to give my full measure and my all in service, so thank you all. With that, I'll be excused."

JIMMY GOUGH, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi, thanks for having me. My name is Jimmy Gough. I'm the chairman of the Board of the Academy Theater in Hapeville, Georgia. I grew up in Atlanta -- an Atlanta native, so, big change in the city, right? From two water fountains, from two bus stands, from two everything to one. All right? I see that as the product of the arts. I'm here to say come on, people, arts are education. The thing that brought us to this point where we're even sitting together, black and white people, and all kinds of people, is because the first fruits of emancipation historically started when black musicians brought the rest of the country into the game and starting in the 20th century. Jazz is what brought us. Whoa, white people all of a sudden went wow, what's going on here? What's happening with these people? They've got something to say. And once that got said, it could not be put back in the bottle. I grew up here. I saw the Beatles in Fulton County. I saw James Brown and Otis Redding endless times at the Municipal Auditorium. I went to Grady High School. This is my city. I sat with friends of

mine at Woolworth's when they were pulling all those kids out. They said what are you doing here? I said I'm sitting with my friend. They said well, you better get out of here. They were punching these other kids. Why didn't they punch me? White, white, and white, okay? All of the private schools in this city and in this county and this country have arts funding. They have good theaters. They have instruments. They have everything they need. The kids that need the stuff are in the Southwest schools, in the south schools that were just, you know, getting just like when I was a kid, secondhand books, secondhand desk --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds, sir."

JIMMY GOUGH, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- so, please, please support this. It's so important. Back in the day, Samuel L. Jackson and myself were going to Clark College to teach teachers to teach art, right? How do you teach them math with arts? It can be done. We can learn all of this with the arts. Please, do it. Thank you."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi, Paul Hershey. Before you start the clock, I'd like to thank one of the Commissioners. I guess you started the clock. Thank you, Bridget Thorne, for recognizing Mike. He's a hell of a soldier. True the vote, that challenge was taken up in the county, and the true the vote won their case. So what that means is, anybody that's called an election denier is slandered. Check it out. And you could become Giuliani's again if you don't do something about reinstating Jason Frazier into the Board of Election. You've got -- you've got the County Attorney and you've got a member of the Commissioners that's an attorney; you got a board of election chairman that says she doesn't have follow the law. I've got that video. It was in the video meeting with Bridget Thorne, and something ought to be done about it. And you do have the authorities to do something about it. Do it. The second thing is, is this: Why do you have two political offices in the DA's office? Why did you have to go out and get a special prosecutor that has never prosecuted a felony, has violated the law, and there is no DA in the county? We paid him \$650,000. Now, we've got three elected officials that have been playing hide the pepperoni with other people that they shouldn't be playing with, and the bottom line is two of them are in the Justice Department and maybe that's why you've got a backup in the jail, because they're spending more time somewhere else then where they should be --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and you, Commissioners, have the right to go to the IG and ask for a special prosecutor and an audit of the DA's office. And number two, you never should have allowed her to hire the --"

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers, please come forward: Marysa Sutton, Brother Anthoney Muhammad, Sheila Mante, Ravi Windom, and Donna Watts-Nunn."

MICHELLE TAYLOR-WILLIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Thank you for your time, Chairman, Commissioners. All right, so about 24 years ago, I decided to have my own independent study of the correlation between arts and education for our children. And I took each of my four children; I play classical music for them in utero. From zero to three, I play classical music while they were sleeping and during the day. I started all of them in piano at the age of five, and they were all -- to this day, they all play at least one instrument, most of them play two or three. They are significant thinkers and performers in math, science, reading, and reading comprehension. My 17-year-old is at one of the top private schools in the nation, and he outperformed all of his cohorts in math and science and reading. So I have significant data on my own to prove that there is a direct correlation between arts, music, and our children and how they perform. We're 49th in the nation as a state; and we're under health, we're under economic, we're undereducated, we're under art. Why would we slash and take money from a budget that will make sure and ensure the progress that education, the success, and the significance of our children, and then continue to be last in the city where we're number one in the county and we're number one in entertainment? It's a direct -- it's unorthodox. It's nonsensical. But our children really are the most important thing we have. Why would we take money --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MICHELLE TAYLOR-WILLIS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- out of their pockets as children and prevent them from being the best they could be when we know Georgia, Fulton County, and Atlanta is truly the best in everything else in the nation. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Excuse me, Ma'am. Please lower those signs. Thank you."

MARYSA SUTTON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Marysa Sutton. I'm the Associate Managing Director at Actors Express, a nonprofit theater located over on Atlanta's west side. Council Members, I'd like to thank you so much for your continued support of the arts in Fulton County. I'd also like to specifically thank our councilperson, councilperson Abdur-Rahman for everything that you and your staff do to make our counsel -- I'm sorry, our district a better place. Thanks to the expanded arts budget. We have been able to bounce back from the pandemic better and stronger than ever. We've been able to create partnerships throughout Fulton County including with Oglethorpe University and Cool Girls of Atlanta increasing our reach and being able to impact more and more lives with the arts. As you consider this budget, I would urge you to keep Fulton County arts funding alive. The arts are not just nice to have for Fulton County; they are a critical economic pillar. In addition to the funds generated with patrons attending event, we are employers of large swaths of Fulton County residents. In addition to our apprentice company that brings over 20 talented individuals to the county yearly, we also have patron service agents, administrators, artists, all being able to stay and maintain a life in Fulton County and generating tax opportunities in Fulton County. When many of the writers and actors went on strike, we were able to keep jobs in Fulton County because many of them worked at theaters during that down

time. Fulton County arts also bring in revenue to the county that would not otherwise be here. About a third of our attendees last year came from other counties and when they attended, three quarters of them said they would not have otherwise come to Fulton County. Thank you all so much for your continued support of the Fulton County arts community --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MARYSA SUTTON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I appreciate you all. Thank you."

BROTHER ANTHONY MUHAMMAD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I am that I am. Brother Anthony Muhammad. I'm a spiritual man. I'm more of a religious man. Why do I say that? Because here in the 21st century, Fulton County Commission, we live in the state of Georgia, and having the mistakes that everyone said, Georgia is one of the worst states out of the 50 states in the union. Why is that? We're having the majority of the city of Atlanta, the majority of the citizenry; all of the 260,000 people look like myself you have in Fulton County Jail. This past year over 15,000 died due to the lack of support of Fulton County and Mr. Dick Anderson. Why did that amount of people -- entire amount of people continue -- are not being treated fairly, according to (inaudible) because we have the Divine 9, Mr. Pitts, the Divine 9, Mr. Biden said. I am not stupid, unquote. I know who the power is; the Divine 9. Who is the Divine 9? This is a universal number. A universal number represent the creator that you call God. But the Divine 9 is a (inaudible.) fraternity who lay and represents the power in Atlanta. And the power in Atlanta don't have no love for poor folk. Mr. Pitts, you've been on the job a long time. I know you spoke with Mr. Hosea and many more about doing right, but you're one voice. And Ms. Hall, you're one voice. But my concern is I been talking to Atlanta is collaboration with the Caucasian that's on these boards in Fulton County, and those like-minded people that want to do real. You have ones that come on a board to understand why one is talking too much or not about the case. But I come to tell you it's time to do right, Mr. Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Fifteen seconds."

BROTHER ANTHONY MUHAMMAD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "It's time to tell the truth. When are we going to stand up in America? You got Martin Luther King's birthday next month. The man's got his brains blown out, Mr. Anderson, talking for the benefit of using the federal government money to help his people have housing. Help his people to have opportunities."

SHELIA MANTE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, everybody. I am Sheila Mante. I'm the founder of the Taste of Soul Food. I think most of you might know about the Taste of Soul Food. I saw such a need for the arts to be available for everybody, particularly in South Fulton, that I developed that five years ago. I am a native of Atlanta and I went to Northside High School when the performing arts was formed, and I saw how it has transformed lives. I also see the impact of the Taste of Soul Food. When I

saw a 5-year-old and a 95-year-old at the end of the stage dancing all night, it just proved that the arts bring everybody together regardless [Verbatim.] of gender, race, age. It's the one binding thing for all of us. So I just think it is very, very important that we continue to support the arts in Fulton County. Again, I have devoted my time and energy along with my partner, Michelle Taylor Willis, for making sure that the arts are available for everybody in Fulton County so that we can grow. I do want to thank Commissioner Khadijah because she has been a great support for the Taste of Soul Food, and have a good evening."

RAVI WINDOM, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Ravi Windom. I am an education and programs consultant with the Hammonds House Museum, and I won't stand here in front of you all and break out in an R&B begging and crooning song or a rain dance. We've had enough rain over the last few days for that. But I simply want to thank you all for your continued support of the arts, particularly the Hammonds House Museum, as we just celebrated 35 years. It has given Atlanta natives like myself a place to truly call home. It has been a place that I can be my authentic, creative self as well as a place to not only grow in the arts, but to also become competitive in the field. Too often, the south is looked upon as a slow, just kind of secondary place when it comes to the arts and fashion; and as we all know, over the years, we continue to thrive and build and as our great Andre 3000 of the SWAT says, the south has something to say as well as my good friend, Bank Joyner, that Atlanta does in fact influence everything. So thank you, and Happy New Year. Hopefully, we can still say Happy New Year. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers, please come forward: Julie Allen, Waverly Lucas, Mara Gaudio, Imara Canady, and Brian Allen."

DONNA WATTS-NUNN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I'm Donna Watts-Nunn, the managing director of the Hammonds House Museum, and I want to say Happy New Year to you all also. I just want to take a couple minutes just to say -- to really highlight why, you know, we want you to understand when you're looking at your budget why the arts and culture is so important in this town. Arts and cultures are not just for entertainment, they are the heartbeat of the community, fostering creativity, diversity, and a sense of identity; and, as you know, economic impact. The arts and the culture activities contribute significantly to our local economy. They generate jobs, attract tourism, stimulate business growth, community engagement. Arts and culture events provide a platform for community members to come together fostering a sense of belonging and unity. They contribute to the social fabric of our county creating shared experiences and memories. Education and enrichment: we're very deep in to education. We get -- do tours for children from public schools, private schools, home schools, you know. We just really are in touch with folks also in and out of Fulton County, but they like coming to our area -- our particular building because of we can, you know, give you a history for the neighborhood as well as the museum. Arts in the schools -- arts programs and committee organizations play a crucial role in education. They enhance critical thinking skills, problem-solving, and abilities for youth."

Additionally, they offer lifelong opportunities for residents of all ages and a quality of life. A vibrant arts and culture scene enhances the overall quality of our life in this county. It attracts talented individuals, families, and businesses making our community even more a desirable place to live, work, and raise a family. So I just wanted to reemphasize that, you know, we want to thank you as well for -- Michael Lomax would come in with an idea and even founding us 35 years ago --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DONNA WATTS-NUNN: "-- and we did have a wonderful celebration last year for 35 years. And we wanted to thank you for your continued support, and we're going to leave you with our first ever publication of our commemorative edition of our 35 years at Hammonds House."

JULIE ALLEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners, Happy New Year. I'm Julie Allen. Please review the e-mail I sent to you today, and I want to share with you that Friday, January 12th at noon, the US House of Representatives will finally host medical specialists who have vast experience in treating SARS CoV-2 infections and managing the injuries resulting from COVID-19 vaccination. The House will hear for the first time from medical subspecialists who have managed patients first hand extensively published and presented on the topic, and have been recognized as the clinical leaders in pandemic response. Our Georgia Congressman is participating in hosting this. Testimony begins at noon. Please register to attend. Yesterday, Cobb County Board of Commissioners meeting presentation by Kristy Miner shows death and disability are on the rise in Cobb County. Who is doing this risk assessment for Fulton County? How can data transparency be enabled with an automated data to further public health risk assessment and independent research? At the October 4th Commissioner's meeting, District Health Director, Dr. Lynn Paxton, publicly responded to a question by Commissioner Thorne stating that Florida Surgeon General, Joe Lidapo is controversial without data supporting her statement. Dr. Paxton's 2024 video promotes vaccines without data or risk assessment. January 3rd, Florida Surgeon General, Joe Lidapo, called for a halt in the use of COVID mRNA vaccines. Dr. Lidapo states, at the risk of DNA integration have not been addressed for mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. These vaccines are not appropriate for use in human beings. Dr. Paxton e-mailed Commissioner Thorne on January 5th sharing what she describes as an excellent award-winning newsletter about pertinent issues in public health. The newsletter begins and ends by dismissing Dr. Lidapo's safety concerns as rumor. My e-mail details the falsehoods of the fact check effort with assistance from Kevin McKernon, R&D lead on the human genome project at MIT, a renowned leader in the DNA sequencing technology. Moderna's own patent states that residual DNA isn't oncologic risk for insertion of -- sorry."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you."

WAVERLY LUCAS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Happy New Year to you guys, and thank you very much for your service. I'm Waverly Lucas, Cofounding Director and Resident Choreographer for Ballethnic Dance Company. I'd like to begin by saying January 15th, 2024, Ballethnic Dance Company will celebrate our 34th anniversary. Approximately 34 years ago, my wife and cofounder, Nina Gilreath and I were in the Buckhead CVS and ran into Maynard Jackson. We introduced ourselves and our vision for Ballethnic being a vital part of the arts and cultural fabric of the Metropolitan Atlanta area. He continued to engage us in conversation for nearly 30 minutes. From that encounter, he became a supporter of Ballethnic and would seek our opinion on the arts and culture. We began our journey with the Fulton County Board of Commissioners over 35 years ago as dancers with the Atlanta Ballet after dancing with the Dance City of Harlem. We were charged to be here to support arts and culture and accepted the challenge. Today, I accept the challenge with gratitude for long-term support through the Fulton County Arts Council. Atlanta began the process of becoming an internationally significant city. We must support and invest in the arts to achieve this goal. Ballethnic will be representing and honoring you as we perform internationally in Amsterdam at the Holland Dance Festival January 18th through the 28th, and in Toronto collaborating with the National Ballet School of Canada May 2nd. This summer, we will return to Tanzania East Africa where we've implemented the fundamentals of ballet program. Thank you for your support and investment. Thank you."

MARA GAUDIO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Martin Luther King, just in from the Promise Land, a voter in Fulton County. And I have a dream. Whereas, Fulton County population is greater than the four smaller states of the union. Whereas, the problems that we've got with our court system, the sheriff's office, debauchery within the Commissioners office, and the District Attorney's Office. People who have been laid up in the court, in the jail without being charged is just too much to have a -- a county government that does not fit the function. When the structure doesn't fit the function, I have a dream that Fulton County be split into at least ten different counties, each with their own district attorneys, each with their own County Commissioners, their own education systems; each with their own hospitals, each with their own jails. Where local management has the say so of what happens in their own respective counties. I have a dream there will be a Milton County, a Palmetto County, a Buckhead County, a Hapeville County and so on. I think at least ten needs to be split to be manageable --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 second."

MARA GAUDIO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- for the people. States were never meant to be -- counties were never meant to be as large as the state. When the United States became a country, it only had 2.5 million citizens."

IMARA CANADY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners, and Happy New Year. Good to be with you again, and as others have said, thank you for your service. As many of you all know, I have sat at the helm of elected officials, so I know the challenges before you, because every issue that is brought forward to you is an

important issue and it's critical to the well-being and lifeblood of our community. And today as you deliberate over a challenging budget, because there's challenging times in our communities, we just say remember the A, the arts. What I do know is that government is not a business, but there are business acumens that can help to continue to have government, you know, run effectively. So I want come to you in a business state of mind as you deliberate the challenges of this budget. There's a number that you should know, which is 29.2 billion. That is the economic impact in the state of Georgia, the creative industries. That's not something that came from me or came from others within this community that came from the US Bureau of Economic Analysis. That is close to five percent of the Georgia economy that employees over 150,000 individuals within the creative industries, most of who live in and around Fulton County. Secondly to you I say, and just look at the contract for art services. We fund 176 arts organizations, that averages out to about \$17,000 per arts organizations. It's money you can count on. Commissioner Thorne, and I just wanted to bring this to your attention, this is from your constituents in the northern part of our county. It's over a hundred signatures of folks who say arts matter in every corridor of this county --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

IMARA CANADY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- so we just say thank you, and as you go into this deliberation, remember the A, the Arts. God bless you."

CLERK GRIER: "Next six speakers, please come forward: Janet Hill, Ron Shakir, Margie McCLeod, Earl Ferguson, Jodie Williams, and Jane Zoellizk."

BRIAN ALLEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Brian Allen, Vice Chair Libertarian Party Fulton County, District 3 resident. I came to speak last month in and offered to meet with you and your staff to discuss the budget, namely ways to cut it in order to save taxpayer dollars. I'd like to thank Commissioner Thorne and Commissioner Ellis for taking me up on my offer and agreeing to meet with me. I'd like to think that we had a good and productive conversations; but feel free to ask them their thoughts. And my offer still stands; I'll meet with any of you. I've looked at the revised budget proposal and while it was certainly helpful, that a more detailed breakdown has been added, the numbers are going the wrong way. You need to be cutting the budget, not adding to it using underruns as an excuse. While I'm here, I'll go ahead dispel some fallacies that I've heard from others. The first is the claim that funding programs creates jobs. That's an economic fallacy. It's older than anyone in this room. It neglects the jobs that aren't created or even destroyed from diversion of resources. The money you're spending doesn't just come from nowhere. It comes out of our pockets, and there's a fund of economic resources at any given time. When the government does just spend money to do some (inaudible) that causes problems too, namely rising prices. The second is the claim that a bunch of people that are asked to support the funding. That gets into how the question is framed. People tend to support funding lots of things in the abstract. When you put into context of the trade offs that have to be made, things start hearing a different story. Let's be honest, the people come here to

talk are not a representative sample of the county. There's over a million people in Fulton County, and most of them are too busy with the regular 9:00 to 5:00 job or just life in general to be following the county budget process, let alone coming here to talk. So again, I ask you to do the right thing, say no to the special interests, and get the budget under control. Thank you for your time and attention."

JANET HILL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, and thank you for your time. I'm here today, again, respectfully requesting action to be taken on deed fraud. This is my third time here with the Commissioners on this issue. Scammers are using real estate agents, bar members, and Fulton County government services to steal properties. Fulton County has a duty to uphold and protect and serve our citizens; and also to uphold the Georgia and U.S. Constitution and the land records. This is a known systemic problem, and our citizens are being targeted, mainly African-Americans, seniors, females, and those that are vulnerable in these regentrified communities. And in the words of the Chief Justice -- Chief Judge that you just heard from, we are not receiving fair justice in Fulton County for these crimes. If you need assistance and you want to understand how this is being done, I am available and I will walk you through this process and what is happening in these land records. Thank you for your time."

RON SHAKIR, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Ron Shakir, Southwest Atlanta. Wow. That's what it's all about. Fraud. The idea and the obvious look of the fact that Atlanta is being gentrified by any means necessary with no sense of concern about the communities or how it was formulated or the history that these neighborhoods represent; the public housing, the low income housing, the unaffordable housing, the housing and sheds that people lived in before public housing, that before it was an idea that it's not robbery to provide safe, secure housing; but we tore them down. How can we do that? But what that young lady talking about is the robbery that mothers and grandmothers and fathers are losing their properties and don't feel like there's nothing that they can do. We're being told you guys is that don't say nothing, you know. A young lady spoke to the press about the situations that's going on with Fulton Housing Authority, and she was told by a member of this here council, don't say nothing. You know, before y'all got elected, you wanted your voices to be heard in the press; but now you don't want to have your voice to say nothing about citizens, insecure housing because of theft or the injustice? And, Ms. Dana Barrett -- Burnett. Please, please, please, don't think it's robbery that citizens have a right --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

RON SHAKIR, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and a understanding of the Constitution, and lift it up high. It's some people that more privilege than others and it didn't matter. But it's a new thing that we should support and upheld freedom of speech."

MARGIE MCCLEOD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good afternoon. Across the street, Robb Pitts, Chairperson, teamwork. We're not doing teamwork. It's just like that lieutenant just left off teamwork. City Council, the Housing Authority -- no money. The homeless,

you're not working together. Homelessness money, the people out here are crying and what you're doing the budget, spending unnecessary money not at all. It's not about that; I'm about the people. And the people put all y'all in -- Arrington, because you're sleep. But what I'm saying to you, Robb Pitts, why are you not working with the City Housing Authority? We're getting all this money coming in. What are we doing with it? You went to school with art; you had art, because I don't think you would be what you are today, because you have to have that in school. And then the courthouse, how are you not going to put money and that you're going to serve in a part-time position. I love the arts. I love them, but you put your money in the wrong place. That's what I'm all about. I'm a veteran to a veteran, but you wanted to a veteran but you didn't go in, but that's, okay. If you went in you would know teamwork because that's what it's about. All this money coming in Atlanta, what is -- who's been accountable for it? Where's the money going at? Where is it?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MARGIE MCCLEOD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- where is it, Robb Pitts? I want to know where this -- me and you talk, and you know where this money -- y'all don't work. The city say I run out. The Housing Authority has no money. Don't homeless people -- do you see them people out there when you go across the street?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. All right. Thank you. Next speaker. Thank you. Thank you."

EARL FERGUSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I'm Earl Ferguson. I'm a registered voter in Fulton County, and I've followed the activities of the Fulton County Registration and Election Board. And I've told them in the past that the number of registered voters exceeds the number of eligible people that we have in the county, according to the Census Bureau. The chairman disagrees with me, but she fails to realize or fails to state that the Fulton -- that the estimates include felons and non-US citizens who are not eligible to vote. This indicates that the Board is not fulfilling their obligations to maintain the voter roll, which is required by Georgia Section 21-2-228. At your November meeting, the Chair was here, and she stated that in no uncertain terms that the Board will not and does not take any action to manage the list. Now again, they are not in compliance with state law. So I challenged a number of voters -- Fulton County voters who had moved and changed their address to North Carolina and registered to vote in North Carolina, and we have a section in the law, 21-2-217, which establishes residents' requirements, and if you've registered to vote in another state, you're no longer a registered voter in Georgia. Simple. Straightforward. All of my challenges were denied. Actually, two years ago, I submitted similar challenges again with North Carolina, all of them were approved. The problem here is the Chairman. I strongly disagree with what happened. I'm filing a complaint --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

EARL FERGUSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- with the State Registration Board, and I'm going to be at the board meeting tomorrow to ask them to reconsider. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Last six speakers in Assembly Hall please come forward: Charmaine Minniefield, Lisa Adler, Matt Rowenczak, Devin Barrington-Ward, Prophet Curtis Martin Hairston, and Alma Lott."

JANE ZOELLIZK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi, I'm Jane Zoellizk, a resident of Fulton County, and I want to thank all of the Commissioners for your very valuable past support of the arts in Fulton County. I encourage you to maintain at least the 2023 funding level. The cultural heart of the south needs to continue to nurture a vibrant art scene. Your funding is so important to the Atlanta Metro arts community, to children, to art sizes of all sizes and abilities. It helps them fulfill their missions, and it makes the experiences available to Fulton County residents and visitors so much more vibrant than otherwise they would be, and that enhances our area's reputation. Not to overstate it, but you all set the stage. Please support arts in Fulton County by funding at or above 2023 levels. Thank you so much."

CHARMAINE MINNIEFIELD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. Happy New Year. Happy almost King Holiday. It's our season. My name is Charmaine Minniefield. I'm a visual artist, a product of Fulton County. My family lives in College Park. I went to Riverwood High School in Sandy Springs. I -- my first professional job was a Fulton County arts employee assigned to the National Black Arts Festival where I was the program director and community outreach director. So, I am a product of Fulton County and now newly an Executive Director of my own nonprofit, Praise House Project, Inc. My project, the Praise House Project, first premiered at Oakland Cemetery to honor the 800 unmarked graves that were discovered there, and it has gone on to receive a National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant, to present the project in three communities in the Metro area. It just closed at Emory University where it acknowledged their role in slavery and dispossession. It is moving next to Beacon Hill to acknowledge Freeman Town that are erased; and then it will go to the Southview Cemetery to acknowledge the 1906 race massacre and that civil rights history of our city since. While it sits at Southview Cemetery, our partners include Fulton County Arts Council, the city of Atlanta, the National Black Arts Festival, and a whole bunch of other folks that I work with and coordinate have been over the last few years. In the last year, we've employed almost a hundred artists. In this project, we continue to uplift preserving black narratives and preserving cultural historical identity of communities as a way to preserve space. Place making and place keeping is what we call it."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

CHARMAINE MINNIEFIELD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and we record our own history of our elders, and we are celebrating these histories so that they're not forgotten, and removing -- and legacies removed and, therefore, communities removed. And we thank you for your investment in the arts and continue to invest. Thank you."

LISA ADLER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello. I'm Lisa Adler. I'm the co-artistic producing director and cofounder of Horizon Theater Company located in Little Five Points, Inman Park. And I am here to thank you because the arts flourish in Fulton County. We are celebrating our 40th year, and the only reason that we are here is because Fulton County invested in a small -- very small, young entrepreneur when I was 24 years old here in Atlanta; and God knows I never expected to be here 40 years later. But for 40 years, we've been coming before this Board to advocate for the arts and to tell you how much that they matter to the community and how appreciative we are for the support. It's not the amount of money each organization gets, it's the investment. The investment brings more investment from the community throughout and by giving to the arts you are investing in success, and you want to invest in business success. Horizon, over these years, has served over a million people and hundreds of thousands of artists and patrons; and also generating millions of dollars for our neighborhood that people coming to attend. But I'm here really representing myself, and if there are 179 arts organizations being funded by Fulton County, that means that there are 179 people like me who are investing their lives, their spirits, and their passions in the community. And by investing in the arts, you're investing in those individual entrepreneurs and their boards who bring the arts to the community. So I wanted thank you for your support. I want to encourage you to have level funding for the arts for this year and, particularly, for the contracts for arts services programs which is what gets to those individual organizations"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "--15 seconds."

LISA ADLER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- thank you so much and God bless you in making some difficult decisions. Thanks."

MATT ROWENZCAK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. Matt Rowenzcak, Fulton County resident. Everybody in the audience today is coming to request money for arts whether it's senior services, the courts, the public defender's office; you want to know where the money is, it's in the elections department. It's 39 million proposed for 2024. In 2022, we essentially had the same election year as we're going to have this year. Do you know how much they requested; 37 million. Do you know how much they spent, 27 million. Yet you get people that come up here like robots and say fully fund elections, fully fund elections. Why don't you give us a reason why we should fully fund elections? What does that mean? We have Cobb County who's about 75 percent of the size and number of voters in Fulton; they spent five to six million a year in a federal election. You know, we're asking for 39 million. Those in the arts, if you haven't looked at the budget on page 17; it says you only get six million. I guarantee that you can get an additional million from the elections department that is throwing our money down the drain. Everybody in this county knows it. It's a matter of whether you'll admit it or not. So are you going take care of the taxpayer or are you going to continue to abuse our money? We've got the city of Atlanta that took \$7 million from the federal government and they're giving it to migrants. So if you're a Fulton

County resident, how do you feel about that? Gross abuse in the city of Atlanta and in Fulton County. And lastly, I find it also interesting --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Fifteen seconds."

MATT ROWENZCAK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- that Commissioner Arrington that two of your items on here that are related to the Board of Ethics, you have an ethics charge or more filed against you. That doesn't seem very appropriate. Thank you."

DEVIN BARRINGTON-WARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning -- good morning, Devin Barrington-Ward. We are about to celebrate the King Holiday, and I'm sure I'll see many of you all at Ebenezer, the march, and we'll be quoting Dr. King, but what I would like to see more than anything is for people to embody those practices of Dr. King. And one of the ways to embody that practice, is he talked about budgets reflect our moral priorities and our commitment to justice. And so, right now, you all are debating about how we are going to spend the money. I want to say that I'm here today to speak up for the seniors who need those Uber rides, and they shouldn't have to go through an additional process on whether or not they meet the income threshold so that they can receive the discounts of those rides, because they have contributed to this county for so many years. This is the very least that the county can do for them. So that shouldn't be on the table. I'm also here to speak up for the arts, because a simple Google search, arts and crime prevention show so many statistics and data that proves that when we invest in art, we reduce crime. We are investing in Public Safety. It's not me that's saying that; that's the Department of Justice; that is the Department of Health and Human Services; that is researchers who have done this work more than many of the people in this room. And so, I'm sitting here and we're talking about a budget that's also inclusive of potentially a \$2.1 billion for a new jail. I want a better value for my buck as a Fulton County taxpayer. I don't want just \$6 million for arts funding; I want more money for arts funding that shows an indication that we believe that when we invest in the arts, we are investing in our people, we're investing in our future, and we're --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DEVIN BARRINGTON-WARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and we're investing in public safety. And I also want to make sure that our budget reflects that we pay a debt to the people, the the seniors of this county who have given so much to Fulton County and we asked for so little in return. Thank you."

PROPHET CURTIS MARTIN HAIRSTON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Well, you know, I'm not asking for nothing. I'm demanding stuff. I'm not asking for a thing. I'm demanding in the name of Jesus. I'm walking past women who want to commit suicide because they're homeless on the street. I'm walking past women that have been raped last night on y'all's street. You got money, Mr. Robb Pitts. You sent 50 -- I think \$50 million back to the government, \$40 million back to the government, and I've never heard Bridget say anything on any issue. I've never heard Dana say anything on any issue. Now, you

know. You're talking to a very educated person. Don't judge the book by the cover. Don't judge the book by the cover. See, the legislator is over the governments. Who knows any legislative governor in this -- in this building? See, when looking at these people, you think these people are dumb. They're just as smart as you. Now, like I said before. Some of y'all ain't gone be around next year. I'm going to wave bye to y'all -- some of y'all. Bye, see y'all later, because you're not doing your job. Now, I'm not saying that as just somebody walking through that door. I know pastors from here to New York to LA, and city council all over this state. If you're not doing your job, we're going to find somebody else to do it. Do you understand? My voice carry weight. If I tell a person not to vote for you, they're not going to vote for you. Plain and simple. I'm not going to put no -- no, don't vote for that person because I ask you not to. So I'm just trying to tell you that. I take that -- I take that blame. Do you understand? People are dying on your streets freezing to death. I'm begging y'all to open up warming shelters. That's enough for me. People are dying on your streets, every day. People getting ready to go on your streets because they don't have shelters. Women walking past -- I've got two -- I'm breaking up mental-health fights on your trains. People mentally have cold outside --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

PROPHET CURTIS MARTIN HAIRSTON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- I'm breaking up fights. But y'all got the money and the buildings to change that, and you're not changing that. That's what I'm saying. Now, at the same time, I'm going to these church pastors telling them the same thing. Now, I know the Bible. Most of you remember, I know the Word of God."

ALMA LOTT, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "My name Alma Lott. I've been in this community for over 30 years. I never in my life witnessed so many homeless senior citizens and veterans in our community: West End, Vine City, English Avenue. Our representatives don't come out until it's time to vote, and it's shameful. One bad seed is a rotten seed. So that make it bad for everybody. Y'all need to stop -- I've seen y'all put up a color ribbon for a dog shelter. Gave all these millions of dollars, and all these black people are homeless. Senior citizens in my community where I've been working in and walking in for over 15 years. I took money out of my pocket to serve the people and feed them. They come and (inaudible) y'all for not one dime. It's a shame that we are doing us as voters. Y'all ought to represent us better than what you're doing. We don't want no more affordable housing in our community. We want low income housing in our community, because affordable mean a business, commercial and everything. That give them the right to come in our community. We don't want a 20-story building on Dr. King, where Dr. King walked at. We want housing in our community. We want y'all to vote down this 20-story building and start listening to your voters. It's a shame. It's a damn shame, I'm going to say it like that, that y'all could sit up here and walk in a parade with Dr. King name in the front --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

ALMA LOTT, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- I'm ashamed of y'all. I'm very ashamed of y'all. Y'all -- y'all have poor leadership in these organizations, and I mean it from the bottom of my heart. Stop what you're doing and help the damn people."

CLERK GRIER: "Mr. Chair and Members of the Board, we have six speakers on Zoom. Fourteen e-mailed in comments, but they are all similar and can be read in three"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "We got six on zoom. All right -- is that right? Let's go, quickly."

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

BEN HOWARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Greetings, Commissioners and staff. A special greeting to you, citizens of Atlanta. Atlanta Journal-Constitution and other media, please continue your investigative reporting of the Housing Authority of Fulton County and especially that investigation by the federal government. I rest my case."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Kevin Muldowney."

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. Back in on September 23, Commissioner Barrett sponsored a Resolution supporting Fani Willis in bringing RICO charges against Donald Trump and 18 others. Just this week, it has come to light that Fani's office may not be so squeaky clean. The Fulton DA's office under Fani hired a special prosecutor, Nathan Wade, who had never prosecuted a felony case in his career. Fulton County has apparently paid the special prosecutor a total of \$652,000. As I understand it, Fulton County never did approve his hiring but paid him anyway. It is alleged that DA Willis's special prosecutor Wade carried on a romantic relationship and took trips together in Napa, Florida, the Caribbean, time will tell. The real tale of this matter lies in Special Prosecutor Wade's billable hours submitted to Fulton County and approved by Fani. One entry is for an eight-hour meeting with the White House special counsel in May of '23. Kind of curious as to what Fulton County business was conducted over eight hours with the White House counsel. Another entry is for an eight-hour meeting September 18th, entitled interview with DC/White House. This was just three days after Trump announced his reelection bid. We don't yet know what was discussed, but what we do know is that Fani's office brought out a rush indictment announcement of the RICO case shortly thereafter. Seems to me we could have found -- seems to me we have found the real collusion, and it is between the Fulton DA and the White House counsel colluding to destroy a political rival of the Biden administration --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- Fani Willis and her special prosecutor should be suspended immediately and fully investigated. Fulton has been embarrassed in the past; we don't need to go down this road again. Thank you very much."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Angela Robinson. Angela Robinson. The next person to speak is Ayanna Mitchell. Ayanna Mitchell. The next person to speak is Kenneth Rye. Kenneth Rye. Okay, the last person to speak last four digits 9618. With no one responding, that concludes our Zoom public comment."

BEN HOWARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "That is Ben Howard. I've already spoken. Thank you."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "That concludes the Zoom public comment."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "We can combine those, what you call them, e-mails?"

CLERK GRIER: "Yes. Next, we will have e-mail comments."

REGINA WALLER, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The first e-mail comment is from Jeffrey Mullavey. I am seeking an explanation specifically from my District Commissioner, Natalie Hall, as to why taxpayer funds were used to pay a dedicated prosecutor without proper approval, as described in State of Georgia Title 15-18-20, additional personnel as state employees. Furthermore, I seek an explanation from Ms. Hall as to what qualities distinguish the chosen prosecutor from other candidates, given his lack of experience in Georgia racketeering law specifically. I am a resident of the Fulton County, and I live in the Old Fourth Ward. I want to make you aware of that I oppose the Resolution, 23-0967. The next comment is from Jacquee Minor. Ladies and gentlemen of the Fulton County Commission, thank you for making Fulton County a beacon around the state known for fostering a robust and enriching arts community. Your support of funding over the decades has helped to launch many arts organization and to sustain many more. Just as important as Public Safety, as economic development, as public health, arts and culture is a hallmark of a thriving community. Creativity is vital to our well being. I am uplifted every time I walk into a space like Hammonds House Museum, or the Alliance Theater, the Atlanta Symphony, Horizon Theatre, or anywhere in Fulton County where artists and performers practice their craft. Please continue your long-standing commitment to this lifeblood of our community. Please fund arts and culture at its current level in the 2024 Fulton County budget. Thank you for your consideration. Similar comments were also provided by the following citizens: Cyne Alexander, Joni Per-Lee, David Dunagan, Renee Hall-George, Beth Lenkey, Virginia Kriho, Peter Hardy, Lindsay Bytof, Laura Kurlander Nagel, Stephanie Galer. The final e-mail public comment is by Kirk and Michele Sarkisian. Given the recent judge's ruling in favor of the True The Vote relative to challenges on the cleanliness of Georgia voter rolls, it is imperative that you now approve Jason Frazier for the BRE. Your previous allegations that Jason Frazier was not fit for the

BRE despite his evidence supported, challenges to voter rolls, the judge's ruling, clearly proves your allegations are not valid, and have absolutely no bearing on Jason's ability to serve. In fact, Jason has saved Georgians time and money helping those involved in Georgia elections to better serve Fulton County, by providing useful information to clean the voter rolls of ineligible voters. You must quit denying Jason Frazier the opportunity to serve as appropriately submitted by the Republican Party representatives. It is important to meet your obligation to approve Jason Frazier immediately and allow the seat to be filled as requested. Are you approving Jason Frazier immediately as requested? This concludes all e-mail public comments."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. It's 12:06, about an hour for public comments over the 30 minutes. Madam County Attorney, you wanted to clarify?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Thanks, Chairman Pitts. I did want to make one point of clarification on the ordinance we were discussing earlier regarding election of the Vice Chair to the Board of Commissioners. I believe there was some confusion that arises from the fact that the version of the ordinance amendment that was in the agenda packet appears to be an earlier version that did not include the strikethrough of the language that was amended. We did pull the post agenda version, which is the official legislation that was passed by this Body in October of 2021, and it contains the strikethrough language which makes it much more clearer that the seniority requirement for Vice Chair was removed by this Body per the ordinance that was passed in 2021."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Affect the record on that. Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, County Manager's items under Open and Responsible Government, **24-0013**, Finance: Review and approval of the Fiscal Year 2024 Final Adopted Budget and Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Resolution."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Madam CFO."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the County Manager had some remarks that he wants to make."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'm sorry, Mr. Manager."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. We're pleased to provide some brief remarks. Pleased to provide this updated set of recommendations, given the 2023 final results on revenue and expenses and, of course, the spend millage rate of 8.87. As normal, there were a lot of puts and takes at the end of the year. I just want to say a huge thank you to Sharon, Hakeem, and Sabrina and their teams who worked through the holidays and really did a yeoman's job of pulling these numbers together. I think we have a clear and detailed

budget document for both the public and, hopefully, for you as well. And then, of course, with our departments being primary constituents in addition to all of the above. As I've said before and showed you in great detail during the work sessions, the assumed millage rate of 8.87 removes the margin perhaps for error and places a premium on continuation of current services, so that is the focus. It doesn't allow for expansion of programs, new positions at any scale or initiatives that have often been funded by one-time use of funds from the previous year. I also want to emphasize that our ordinance makes this the County Manager's responsibility to submit, not to decide. So we're prepared to make any changes today as well as in the next meeting to get to an approved budget during January. The good news in the end-of-year results were they were 30 million better than expected than the midyear review. And that's about 3.5 percent difference. I think that's about where we need to be. And revenues did exceed expenses, which is also, I think, important in that maintains the reserves. Using the tranches that we've talked about and kind of working from left to right, that allows us to both fully fund the first one, which is contractual regulatory and life safety needs, and we'll go through that. And in the document itself, you'll see again explicitly a departmental level of what those impacts would be if that was approved. It also importantly allows us to fund employee compensation enhancements. As you know, we talked about the necessity of a five percent COLA that's included. This, though, would bring compensation rates up to market levels based on studies that we have done. In addition, in that same vein of compensation, we were able to add a continuation of the Fulton County Sheriff's Office overtime approach for 2X over time for folks either assigned to the jail or predominately reporting there, which we thought was an important compensation issue. While there are many enhancements that would deserve further review, we did not choose to do that given the -- again, given the resources available. Certainly, you may see some or you may have already decided that some needed to be added, and we'll look forward to hearing from you on that. In our view, nothing rose to the level of current obligations -- the five percent COLA and employee compensation. We still struggle with attrition unexpected, generally where it's being driven by pay rates. A new living wage of 38,000 would take us from below most of our peers to above our peers, slightly. And I think that's an important signal to send, and that's being recommended as part of this compensation enhancement. We've also included all other funds. Of course, Sharon and Hakeem will, I'm sure, go through those. The new established inmate welfare fund is now a part of those funds, and it's a reminder as you look at all of those, that this is a \$1.3 billion enterprise run for the public benefit. I've also would want to say just as I turn this over to Sharon, we think that the allocation of these resources in 2023 greatly benefited citizens. We not only just finalized the contract with Grady with a signature by the principles yesterday for another ten years, but delivered, what I think or at least new iconic facilities in elections as well as the animal shelter, a new clinic that we opened with Morehouse and East Point, a breakthrough agreement with DBHDD to fund a behavioral health crisis center, which will deliver first part of 2024. A jail bridging plan, a jail feasibility study for the longer-term, as well as met all of our KPIs at 80 percent or above in all of our departments, which allowed us to make performance payment to our employees. So we anticipate a great year in '24 as this all comes together. Again, we look forward to your feedback,

changes, and modifications today up to including the next meeting when we'll need to approve the budget. So with that, Mr. Chairman, I'll turn it over to Sharon Whitmore and let her go through the specifics and then answer any questions."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Mr. Manager. Madam CFO."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have a very brief presentation focused today on the general fund, primarily on the final year-end results from '23 and the impact that those results have on the recommendations in 2024. So on this first slide, as the manager indicated in his comments; we did have better performance than expected from a revenue perspective. We have projected 832 million in revenue. We received 839, so it's \$7 million-dollar difference. On the expenditure side, we had projected expending 865 million. Our final year-end expense numbers were 836, that's a difference of 28.9. When you take those two together, that improved our overall fund balance position by 36 million at the end of the year. At the bottom of the slide, you can see how the improvement runs through the fund balance numbers, and we did indicate in this presentation that of that 36 million that was picked up, a portion of that really related to receipt of the funds that were paid over from the Sheriff's Department out of the inmate welfare fund, so we wanted to highlight those and ensure that they were carried forward into '24 to be used for that purpose. Next slide, please. This next slide provides you with the underlying differences -- or the underlying items really causing the differences in our final year-end numbers from what we had originally projected. On the left-hand side of the slide in the revenue column, we ended up again receiving more revenue than we anticipated. The top part of that slide shows where the overages occurred in the inmate welfare fund. You see the \$6 million that was received coming in. We did receive more in public utility taxes than we have projected. We received more in Commission on tax collections than we had projected. And in the bottom three areas, interest income was better, more fines and fees coming in from the Sheriff's office and then a laundry list of other areas that produced about an additional hundred thousand dollars in additional resources. As far as areas where we did not meet our projections in '23, current year property taxes was the biggest area. We had assumed a 96 percent collection rate in our projections, we did not meet that. We were just shy of 95 percent. So that additional percentage has been carried forward and included in our prior year receivable balance and included in the revenue for the proposed budget in '24 as an adjustment. Additionally, the local option sales tax, motor vehicle, and indirect costs all came in slightly below what we had projected. On the expenditure side, the end-of-the-year as departments were closing out their invoicing with various vendors, in looking at their purchase orders and contracts and remaining balances that they had opened, they identified 5.7 in purchase orders that were open at the end of 2023 that they knew they were not going to utilize, but that they would have invoices coming in, in '24 that we would need to have the spending authority to cover. So we have rolled the spending authority for those, but no additional resources to '24 to cover that. So 5.7 million of what we had planned to be spent in 2023 was tied up in these purchase orders that we knew we would have to pay against, but we just didn't have the invoices at the end of last year to do it. The next

line, 12.9 million, that represents the portion of funds that had been encumbered last year that we did not have any pending invoices against, and so those purchase orders lapsed, freed up that budget money, and that is what is driving that improved performance on the expenditure side. And then lastly, salary savings from unfilled positions, we ended up not using 12.4 of what we had projected that we would use in our midyear projections. Together, that's about 31 million in approved expense position at the end of the year. Next slide, please. So the impact that this has on the '24 budget from a revenue perspective; we had originally programmed 879 million in the proposed budget that we provided to you in November. Adjustments that we need to make to that as a result of '23's performance, is we need to increase the prior year property tax number by \$8 million. That's connected to that one percent that we had projected that would be collected in '23 that was not, and we need to bring that forward and increase our prior year receivable balance by that amount. The other item is, now that the inmate welfare program has been moved from the Sheriff's office to the county; in addition to the resources that we received last year, we will continue to receive commissions from that program, and we've estimated the commission amount at \$5 million for this year. So that would need to be included in our revenue appropriation as well. From a reduction's perspective, the revenue that we had originally included in the proposed budget, we need to reduce the amount of our prior year public utility collections because we collected more last year than we expected. So that amount is \$4 million. We've also reduced the commission on tax collections down so that it agrees to the amount of tax collections on the 2023 levee that the Tax Commissioner's Office provided to us, the estimated tax commissions collections on that levee. And then, lastly, because we expect to see some downward movement in interest rates, we've lowered our projection on interest income. All of this together results in about a \$5 million adjustment. It's a positive adjustment, but a \$5 million adjustment to our proposed revenue, bringing it from 879 million to 884 million. Next slide, please. On the expenditure side, I think the manager covered this as well in his remarks, but we made essentially three major adjustments to the expense budget recommendations. The first being to provide funding for that first priority tranche of enhancements that we were not able to fund in the proposed budget presented on November 15th. The second was to fund the second priority tranche, which is the funding for the single market rate pay plan adjustment. And then the last item is to appropriate funds for the inmate welfare fund in the county's general fund. So this includes both that carryforward balance as well as an anticipation of that \$5 million in additional commissions that we expect to see. The plan is to appropriate the full amount -- the \$6 million what was actually received and transmitted last year, and then appropriate the balance as we see those commissions being earned during the course of the year. Collectively, this results in a \$36.5 change in our total expense budget recommendation, bringing that total to 953.7 million. Next slide, please. And then lastly, with regard to fund balance position, our carryforward balance from 2023, which is our beginning fund balance, is 227.3 million. We would add in our proposed revenue -- revised proposed revenue of 884 million, reduce that, then by our revised proposed expenditure budget, 953.7 million, and that would leave us with roughly 157.6 million, which meets the minimum fund balance requirement. For the purposes of calculating the minimum fund

balance requirement, we did exclude this year the inclusion of the inmate welfare fund, because we have brought forward resources to fund at least a portion of that, and we wanted to get a sense of where those expenditures may actually end up before we include it in the calculation for the fund balance reserve. And with that, Mr. Chairman, we really focused our slides today on the general fund, but we are ready answer any questions or have discussion or comments, if the Board has any comments about anything in the revised proposed budget at this point."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, thank you, Mr. Manager and Madam CFO. Commissioners, any questions at this time? No questions? All right, Commissioner Thorne -- or comments."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "We used to fund the animal shelter and so that's no longer a part of the budget? What freed up -- what amount did that free up for us this year's budget?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner Thorne, we established a separate animal services fund. In doing that, we reduced both the revenue and the expenditures that have been previously earmarked for the animal shelter. We've had agreements in place with the city's generating revenue, and we had the expense budget in the general fund. We felt like based on opening a new facility, increasing the size of the facility, and its underlying cost associated with it, that we would pull it out and set it up in a separate fund. So what we've actually done is reduced revenue and expenditures in the general fund by the amount that we were expanding on the contract receiving from the cities and spending on the contract, with Life Line. And then we moved over the portion of the expense that the county is legally required to provide, which is the rabies control, so that is what is still sitting in the county's general fund as a cost to the county. Everything else has been moved over to that internal service fund so that we can track those costs cleanly and separately for the operations of that facility."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you. So, it's a net zero? Okay. One concern that I do have is our elections department. It was brought up today in public comment, the amount of money we spend. I think we could probably trim in that area more. As I said last meeting, using temp workers, a \$12.8 million contract for six months is exorbitant. No other county in the state, even Gwinnett whose similar size uses that amount of temp workers. And that amount, they're going to come back to us in May with more -- another contract to extend till the end of the month. So I don't know what they've budgeted for the July through December, but I think that's an area we can maybe trim some costs and free in some money. As well as voter education outreach, that was something that was created in 2020 when we had a lot of grant money. We no longer have that grant money. We're budgeted almost a million dollars for voter education and outreach, and I think we can maybe trim and free up some money there. No other county has a budget that size, or people don't even know what voter education outreach is when I speak across the state with other counties and other elections departments."

Another thing that was brought up in public comment was the \$7 million that Atlanta received for immigrants. Have we received any money or do we anticipate having problems? I've read articles in the AJC, and they interviewed immigrants that are up in Roswell, which is not the city of Atlanta. And why is the money going to the city of Atlanta and not coming here to the county and do we expect to have any implications from the immigrants?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner Thorne, I'm not aware of any resources that we are expecting to receive for that purpose, but I will take that back to our grant administration team and have them look at that and also to see if they can find the specifics on the resources that the city of Atlanta did receive, if it was based entirely on something that Atlanta submitted for Atlanta alone."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "As well as when we talked about grants; when I went to DC this fall, I met with different departments up in DC to see what grant money was available and, with arts; there seem to be money available to fund some of these nonprofits. And from what they told me is that we, as a county, had not applied. So I'd like to see if we can get any grant money to supplement our nonprofit arts programs on a federal level and not take it from our local county taxpayers. And lastly, lots of public comment today about our district attorney. I know she's asking for roughly four to five million added to her budget. I am not exactly sure what tranche that is in. I did meet with her last month, and I am thankful that she agreed to meet with me or asked to meet with me because I believe in having conversation. I'm trying to come into this with an open mind with the departments that we fund, so I'm thankful that we get did get a meeting, but transparency was not there when I asked her the very questions that were in this very lengthy filing by this attorney this week. I've never met this attorney, never talked to this attorney, but as I've skimmed through it, the allegations are frightening. I've asked numerous times as to why hiring special counsel hasn't come through us. Our attorney, Soo Jo, has been gracious with me and patient with me in explaining the legal aspects as to why she doesn't have to come through us, and there are some disagreements. But either way, this filing is shocking. The accusations are shocking. The potential of misallocation of county funds that were given to her in 2021, 2022, and this last year, I believe we need some transparency. As a Commissioner, I asked for transparency. I've asked her how much does this election interference case was costing the county. The answer that I got was that lady Justice has no price, and I wasn't given any amounts. I believe that, as Commissioners, we need to know how much this is costing us. While we're looking at spending \$2 billion on a jail, while we have people dying in our jail because they aren't getting their indictments, that we have a court backlog; I think the citizens of this county need to know how much is being spent and how much resources are being diverted, not only for her office, but closing down the street for multiple weeks at a time; having sheriffs on every corner being paid to guard the street. People are being told to work from home. There are a lot of costs associated with that, and I believe that the citizens, the taxpayers of Fulton County, need the right to know and those inmates that are sitting in jail and their families need

the right to know that. Thirdly, when I asked her about the Nathan R. Wade expenditures in particular, I didn't get an answer. I was told that I'm just picking on him because he's black, and I don't really care. At least I've never met him. I have nothing against him, and I think the citizens, the taxpayers, need some clarification, some clarity on that, if we are going to provide her a larger budget. I just wanted to kind of get that out in the open, and I'm hoping that you guys can assist us in giving us some clarification, some transparency; and not only for us but for the people that are concerned out there. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So just to be clear. Now, you're asking the Manager and CFO to research the issues that you've raised? Okay. All right, Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. On page 11, item number four, the increase in the budget for the nonagency department by \$13 million recurring --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- where are you, Commissioner Hall?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "On page 11."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "On the budget book, okay."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Of the -- let me give you the exact -- this is part of the memo from Dick Anderson to the Board of Commissioners from Sharon through the County Manager's office. Subject: Fiscal Year 2023 budget year end actuals in Fiscal Year 2024, recommended changes to the proposed budget. So, on page 11 of that document, number 4, which says 2024 second priority - tranche 2 - employee compensation. All right? In that paragraph, it says the funding will be used for compensation plan adjustments including implementations of the new living wage. I could not find a definition anywhere of the new living wage; and so, my question is, exactly what is that? What's the salary threshold, you know, the starting salary under this new living wage? Where does that put our Fulton County employees who were below the living wage? Does this set everyone that was below a living wage at a new living wage, and exactly what is that?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner Hall, I'll allow Mr. Hermon to answer all of those questions."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right, thank you so much."

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Good morning, Commissioner, and Happy New Year all Commissioners and everyone who's listening. Kenneth L. Hermon, Jr., Chief HR Officer. Commissioner, to answer your question directly, the proposed \$38,000 that we suggest and the Board adopted as the county's new entry-level salary would catapult the county back to the front of the line as the best employee of choice for public sector employees in a major area. Right now, we're trailing behind the city of

Atlanta and slightly above Gwinnett, but that \$38,000 salary will put us back to the front of the line ahead of Cobb, DeKalb, Gwinnett and the city of Atlanta. And so, what it would also do for employees, any employee who is currently making the \$32,000 amount, which is our current minimum, we would automatically move them up to \$38,000, and that will be the new compensation moving forward. And then any other employee being hired would come in at \$38,000, or if they're part-time or temporary, the hourly rate equivalent to that which is \$18.27, I believe. So that would be our approach moving forward if the Board adopts our recommendation for \$38,000 as a new entry-level salary for the county."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. And as we have discussed in years past, a living wage is not a living wage; and actually \$38,000 is still not a living wage in Atlanta and Fulton County. Although, that would put us, as you say, at the best in class amongst other governments, it's still doesn't put us best in class amongst the people who are making those low salaries. I don't know if you recall, some years ago before many of our new Commissioners were even on this Board, we had a discussion about the subsidies and the government assistance that people received when they are at these low salaries, these so-called living wages. And how once you try to increase their salary above the living wage, they start to lose the assistance that they are receiving from the government, which then puts them in a worse situation because now they don't get the food assistance that they had before; they don't get the daycare assistance, they don't get the housing voucher. Once you put them past a certain salary, they begin to have to take on those bills themselves, and they do not make enough money to actually do that. And so, I'm concerned that we still have not raised the bar high enough to ensure that people are making a wage that can sustain themselves and their families. But I do commend you on at least trying, but we need to still continue to look at this and we need to raise it higher. It really needs to be somewhere above the \$40,000 mark because I want you to go back and look at -- there was a document -- a spreadsheet that listed all the assistance that every person gets and then it listed the salary range, and it listed by what would disqualify a person from receiving that government assistance. And it showed the salaries, and it was well above \$38,000. So -- but thank you. I appreciate the response and the answer."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. Thank you, Madam Vice Chair. I just have a couple of questions. Just to follow up Commissioner Hall's questions, Mr. Hermon. On the \$13 million -- this might be you, Ms. Whitmore. On the \$13 million single market rate plan, is that all for the minimum, the lowest wage employees in the county, or does it raise other folks as well?"

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HR OFFICER: "No, Commissioner. That third step in our three parts compensation initiatives over the course of the 2024 cycle, what that intends to do is now also bring our entire pay plan into current market rate standards. Commissioner, before you were here, back in 2015 -- sorry 2015, when we had a group

by the name of the Archer Company coming to do an analysis and, at that time, it did establish a new compensation structure, and the Board had directed the HR department that every five years or so that we need to go out to make sure that our market salaries were consistent and competitive. So that's what we're proposing now that it's clear that the Archer plan -- it has become stale and we're starting to lag behind in all of the entry-level salaries, so the new proposed salary rate structure shows new hire entry-level salaries and again, again, if I'm a computer analyst, for example, and the new entry-level salary is \$65,000 for that grade and I'm making 50, my new salary goes to the new minimum as well. So you have a lot more employees also being impacted in that exercise, and I think it was a total of 686 employees will be impacted when we do the third tranche of the -- the implementation of the Segal study and, Commissioner Hall, I forgot to provide you, it's another 235 employees who would have their salaries increased to the new \$38,000 as well, if approved by the Board of Commissioners."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I was going to ask how many were at the minimum level, so thank you for that."

KENNETH HERMON, JR., CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Yeah, 235."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So do you know what the dollar amount is specifically for that 235 group?"

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Right now, we have an estimate of \$1.5 million with the implementation date of February 14th."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And are -- February 14?"

KENNETH HERMON, JR., CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Correct. Very strategic, Commissioner, you caught on to what we're doing."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well then that confuses me a little bit because, Ms. Whitmore, when we were speaking yesterday, I thought we were -- were we not delaying some of this until April?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "To Mr. Hermon's point, there are three items that are in the budget for -- that are compensation related. The first being five percent cost-of-living increase and, if approved, then our recommendation is for it to be effective January 31st; then followed by the change to the minimum salaries. So that would then be February 14th, and that would impact 235 individuals to raise them to the new minimum of 38,000. Then, with the funding that we have presented to the Board, we would be able to implement the Segal pay plan changes effective April the 10th and change the salary ranges for the balance of the workforce."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay, thank you. On the -- change in topic. On the inmate welfare fund, can you speak to -- I'm a little bit confused about what we're going

to be spending it on and first, what it has been spent on in the past and all of that. I know you have a list of the specific items, so I'm not looking for a list of those items, but rather -- I'm a little just confused because we moved over five million or so from this year, correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, ma'am. They transferred a little more than five -- 5.5, I think."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And that was money that was like -- was that all the money that was collected last year?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That was the balance of what they had in their bank accounts. So it would have included anything they collected last year and anything that they still had from any previous years' collections that they had not expended. So they transferred over to us their bank balance. And so, what we have done is to program that amount, plus we expect to receive additional commissions this year, and those will come directly to the county; and we estimate, based on previous years' collection data, that it seems like the commissions have ranged from four to six million, so we just said let's use five for the first year and see what is actually generated in commissions that would be sent to the general fund. So we've worked with the Sheriff's Department to get all of those set up and transferred to where the payments will come directly to the county treasury and be recorded in the county's general fund."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So I think what I'm a little confused about, is on the expenditure side of that, if they were bringing in around five million and there was an issue about what it was getting spent on, it was getting spent on some of incorrect things for what it was intended, and they had a carryover from previous years, they clearly weren't spending it all on the things that we're going to spend. Like, if it's blankets and the things in the list that you have, it seems like that expense is less than five million a year; is that correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Based on the information that we've had the opportunity to review, I think the range of expenditures for those items may be closer to the \$3 million level. Again, we won't know for certain until we really start working with the Sheriff's Department this year. Our intent is to bring the procurement package forward to the Board at the next meeting to go ahead and set this up."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt you. But we should have some idea. We should be able to budget for that for what was spent because they spent it in the past, and I'm assuming it went through our purchasing."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It did not."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So, they just brought things on their own?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "They did it. It was all done independent."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And they didn't provide that when an audit was done of it?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Well, they have provided their check numbers and the amounts and vendors, so we have some information for what they were spending the resources on. There were some items in the expenses, things like software packages, physical assets and things like that, that we would not expect to continue to pay for those out of this set of resources. But the things that they have that -- the things that we have on the list -- and I'm sorry, I don't have the expense detail in front of me, but I want to say that the amount that they were expending in -- of the things that were on the list was somewhere in like the two to three million-dollar range. I want to say it was like high two's low three's."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "All right. So here's what I'm confused about, and maybe I missed something. So just fill me in if I did. It seems like what you've said, at least in this presentation and what I thought I heard when we were speaking yesterday, is that we are bringing in the five million from last year, the balance, we're expecting to collect an additional five or so million, getting us to 11, so 5. whatever in both cases. And we're putting aside 11 million to spend on those specific things when it's only going to cost us three million. So it seems like there should be an eight million-dollar overage that --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- so what we were trying to do is to match the resources coming in that were inmate-generated resources to what we would have available to spend for inmate-related expenses. So again, because this was only recently transferred, I think we're still working through a lot of the mechanics and the details, but what we tried to do from a budget perspective, was to make sure that we don't take any of the resources that are being generated through these commissions on inmate commissary and phones and things like that, and use them for other non-inmate related expenses in the general fund. So all the money that came in and all the money that we -- the revenue that we expect to receive this year, we tried to match the expenditure budget to that. It doesn't mean that we will fully spend all of those resources, but we wanted to, at least, match it in the general fund so that what came in and what we plan to expend would be equal, and we wouldn't be peeling off any of those resources to use for a non-inmate related expense or something completely outside of the law enforcement jail arena, if that makes sense. So, yes, you're right. If we receive all of the revenue that we expect to receive and the expenditures do not come up to that same level, there will be some resources that are not utilized, and our plan is to try to continue to carve those out every year so that is clear we're keeping, you know, our expense and revenue matched up. Every year, it will

not be \$11 million. It's 11 million this year because we're bringing something in that we received at the end of last year."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Right. I get that, but I feel like we need that information so we can make decisions about this budget. And it does seem like, because whether right or wrong, I think we know wrong, there were things being spent out of the inmate welfare fund when it was managed by the Sheriff that are now not going to be covered by that money. So how are we correcting for that in his budget?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "We did advise him that he should submit a supplemental budget enhancement request, and he indicated that he -- you know, he put together a document that he reviewed with us, which I think is slightly different from a document he recently, I think, began circulating and reviewing with each of you all individually. But we did not make any changes to his recommended budget because he indicated he was going visit with the Board individually."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, it seems to me, and this is not a demand, just a comment, that the eight million or so over the three million spent this year that we're likely to have on specific things on your inmate welfare list, that that eight million -- now I couldn't tell you which line items in his enhancement request, but that that eight million should go back into supporting the jail in some form or fashion, so back into his budget to support the jail. Or if DREAM is picking up some of those things, to support those things for DREAM or whatever the case may be, but just having it sitting in a pot for us approve as we'll see what happens feels a little too vague for me."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "In the memo that we sent to the Board when we received the funds and we sort of outlined how we would plan to move forward with this, we did include in addition to the direct inmate items, we did include items that you could say would be DREAM-related, so things that may be directly related to inmate vandalism, that would require substantial expenditure. We would potentially be able to tap into these funds to cover those costs if we're able to tie the issue back directly to consistent and repeat inmate vandalism. So we did -- we did try to plan for some of those types of expenses that the Sheriff had included, but we wanted it to be connected to inmate vandalism."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I hear all of that. My sense is that, I would be far more comfortable approving a budget where that \$8 million is directed somewhere. And I, you know, what the appropriate spots are is, you know, certainly open for conversation, but to me that needs to be dealt with before we sign off on this. The only other thing I have to say just a comment, which is that the -- I just want to sort of be really loud, about the fact that the revenue that is projected is 844 million and the expenditures that are proposed are 953.7 million. So we are planning to spend significantly more than we are bringing in, and we have been doing this now for how many years? Anybody?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It's been a very, very long time. We typically use fund balance to help balance the --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- and the fund balances -- I mean, this doesn't seem like a sustainable practice. I'm just putting that out there from a business and accounting thought process. It just seems sort of unsustainable and, you know, I know, from the conversations I've had with the various elected officials on the justice side as well as some my colleagues sitting up here that there are things we'd still would like to see included in this budget, and so they'll just want to just increase that expenditure even more and not increase the revenue to even come close to matching what we're spending. So I mean, I think we have to be looking at -- as we make our request again, just a comment. I think we need to be looking at both sides of the equation, both the revenue side and the expenditure side and, you know, I've said before, which is, you know, I understand what some folks popular and some folks unpopular that I personally think raising the millage rate assumption that we're making in the budget is going to be necessary to accomplish all the things that we need to do. So I'll just put that out there for today. That's all I have."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I'll start off by saying I would like to see a budget with the art funding restored to 2023 levels as well as Fulton Films restored to the 2023 level. I also -- in speaking with -- I know the District Attorney's Office and with the Sheriff's office, let's start with the Sheriff's office. I understand that there's an \$800,000 grant and that they need matching funds or that we need matching funds in order to obtain the \$800,000 federal matching grant? Is that in the budget?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner Arrington, I believe that we transferred out of the Sheriff's underruns, we transferred an amount to the grant fund to support the first year funding requirement on that, so we've covered the first year -- an amount that would be equal to the first year."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay, thank you. And the 90,000 for the Governor's Office of Highway Safety grant, matching grant? Was that done as well?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I don't think we covered that one, no, sir. But we did cover the -- the one for the eight -- a portion of the one for the 800,000."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So I would certainly like to see that grant match the Governor's office of Highway Safety. They awarded us \$343,000, and apparently we need -- all we need to contribute is \$90,000. So I don't know why we wouldn't do that out of 1.3 billion, unless we don't want our highways safe. As for the DAs office, we've got this ongoing issue, and I think it transcends the DA's office. I think it

transcends all of our justice partners, as these ORCA positions and how we fund and make those positions full-time so that people don't go start looking for other jobs, because they think their money is going to run out midyear and I know we've accelerated that timeframe. So that money was supposed to last, I think, maybe August or September, and we said go on and pay it. So that money may be running out sooner, so if someone thinks the money for there is going to run out in June, guess what they start doing in February or March? They start looking for other jobs. So we got to find a way to make that money permanent, unless we just don't want the ORCA people. We could just get rid of ORCA altogether. But if we think that it makes sense, if we think that having ORCA funding makes sense and having those people make sense, then we need to adjust our budget accordingly to make sure that we have the resources to cover those ORCA employees and to make sure that they have full-time status. Now, what about -- I guess in previous years these departments, they were allowed to use salary savings but now they're not allowed to use those salary savings? Did we -- was there a policy change on use of salary savings?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "There's not been a policy change on the use of salary savings. We may handle it slightly different year to year depending on what else is going on, but I don't think that we denied anyone the use of salary savings last year. I will say this, at one point in time last year, we were holding because we were not sure what would be happening when -- if we would be increasing the total number of outsourced inmate housing. So we had held off a little bit on use of salary savings, but they can't take their salary savings and use it to create other permanent expenses, so they can use it for something that's one-time in nature."

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, DIRECTOR, FINANCE: "Attrition savings, you know that we used to balance the budget. You know there was (inaudible.) to recognize salary savings on the back end; we actually are recognizing some of the salary savings at the front end and using it to balance the budget, so we're not fully funding all of the positions the way we used too."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. So the DA's Office states that on November 27th, they were informed that the County was taking 22 positions that they deemed were vacant on October 30th; is that correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That would have been the attrition factor that was applied for the 2020 -- yeah, for the 2024 proposed budget. So there's an attrition factor that's applied."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So it sounds like there was a policy change to applying the attrition factor."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Honestly, I don't recall -- the DA's office, I don't think was included in the attrition factor that was applied in the '23 budget. We did the same thing in '23, but we may have ended up at the end of the

process excluding the DA's budget from that, but we applied the attrition factor across all departments in the general fund that had vacancies on the development of the '24 budget."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So when you apply that attrition factor, do you talk to the department? Because they say that 18 of those 22 positions were already filled. So is there any communication prior to applying the attrition factor?"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "Yes, Commissioner, departments were told. And also we used the information available in our system to determine, you know, which positions are vacant, which ones are not vacant. So we use that information, and then the way this is supposed to work, it's not like, you know, we're telling departments not to fill their -- not to fill their positions, but to manage their budget and do the hiring, you know, with the understanding that, you know, we've taken certain amount of salary savings up front."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Well, we need to get y'all on the same system, because they're saying that the 18 of the positions were filled in their system. And you're saying that your system showed the positions were not filled. So how do we get y'all the same -- looking at the same system?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner Arrington, we can go back and take a look at that. But my guess is, is that these may have some been positions that the District Attorney had either made offers on, that there is no way for us to see that when we're looking at the vacancies that are in the Human Resource System. So it -- you know, she will cycle through positions through the course of the year, and she will run a particular vacancy rate, as will every other department. So we look at it, it's a snapshot in time. And then it's management decisions on how they ultimately end up funding these positions. We have, historically, we have done this both ways. We've fully funded every vacancy for the full year, knowing that a portion of those positions would remain vacant for some portion of that year, and that other positions would become vacant and remain vacant for some portion of the year. So, you know, we do have at some point in time, have to take a snapshot of what things look like and make a calculation and apply an attrition factor, if you will, to every department that has and -- has vacancies and maintains vacancies through the course of the year."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I think it would also be helpful if we were to call and check in, and to make sure that those offers have not been made, and to make sure that that attrition factor -- if there's -- if your system is showing 22 jobs open, and she's got 18 offers out there, then that's a problem, right? Because then that means either she can't offer those 18 jobs or -- so I understand perhaps your system might show, but that's why I asked, do you communicate with them? Do you pick up the phone and say, hey, our system is showing you have 22 vacancies, can you confirm whether you have 22 vacancies? And they can say, no, we only have four vacancies because we have 18 offers out. There needs to be some type of checks and balances

so that we're not just looking at X and O's. We have to understand what these people are doing. And I understand you all are Finance, so all y'all do is look at the numbers. But there are real-life implications here. There are real-life people working behind those numbers, relying on those jobs, relying on the ability to make offers. They're trying to get these numbers down. They're trying to get the people out of the jail. They're trying to reduce the jail population. All of this stuff is interconnected. And so just looking at X's and O's, isn't really sufficient. And that's why, again, I asked, do we communicate with them? If there's going to be an attrition factor that is applied, it seems that we need to have a checks-and-balance system that says, hey, let's call them to make sure that these positions are, in fact, unfilled. So I mean, I think we need to certainly look at that as well. If they've got 18 offers or 18 filled positions, and you took away 22 positions due to attrition without communicating or contacting them, then -- and I mean, I assume that maybe they -- you contacted them, but let them know after you did it, rather than prior to doing it. And I think, you know, there are always unintended consequences. So those are the main things that I've been, you know, that I want to see in there. I think a lot of this stuff that the Sheriff is requesting falls -- you know, if it isn't in -- if there's no way to get it in the budget, training and development, they got be certified. We don't want our Sheriffs uncertified, do we? We don't want sworn Sheriffs that aren't certified with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, or the American Correctional Association. I assume we want them to be certified with those organizations. So we got to find a way to include that in there. And if not, those type of things have to be in tranche one. Sheriff and the DA's request, the Justice System request, in my mind, have to all be in tranche one. So the first thing to be considered -- and I like what the guy said earlier, take the Arts money from Elections. It sound like we got plenty of money left in the Elections, or Non-agency, you know that's your favorite place to hide the money, Madam CFO. And you do a great job of hiding and protecting. That is not a slight at all. That's what you're here to do, and I have a greater understanding for that every day."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I've got a couple of questions, and County Manager or either Sharon, if you all can give me some clarification. We have allowed our justice partners to use their salary savings. Are we not allowing that now at all for our justice partners?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "We still allow the use of the salary savings as it accrues."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. And so would it be -- would it be appropriate for me to ask if a particular department had salary savings, or is that a conversation you want me to have with you off-line?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I'm not sure I would be able to answer it. But effectively --"

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- I mean like, to be able to say exactly what their --"

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "That's fine."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- salary savings may have been this year --"

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I got you."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "So if you have a specific one you would like us to look in to, I'd be happy to do that. I'm just not sure I would be able to do that completely off the top of my head."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I got you, no problem. Mr. Hermon or maybe, Jessica Corbitt can speak to this. When we have actual employees that are at a point of, they're going to be making too much money to get resources, whether it's housing vouchers, or whether it's food stamps, or whatever, what do we have within our Lobbyist team to be able to go and see if those actual maximums can be raised? Because we're talking about even with a family of, say, five children, they -- the maximum that they can make, I don't think has been changed in years. And so I'm thinking part of our, maybe advocacy as Legislators, is to see how do we advocate for a higher maximum for, you know, anything from food stamps to any housing vouchers or whatever, I'm just trying to -- Commissioner Hall raised the point, the only -- the problem that I see that we may not be doing is using the bully pit of lobbying for the maximums to be raised, whether it's at the state or federal level, if you follow what I'm asking. So have we done any studies? Do we have any relationships or resources? Because I would hate for someone to say, you know what, I -- I don't really want you to pay me more money, because the minute you pay me more money, my subsidies for childcare go out the window, my subsidies for housing go out the window. And so I'm thinking part of what we can do is to be advocates for that. So if you can speak to that, I really would appreciate it."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Good afternoon, Commissioner. I'd like to take a look at the list that Mr. Hermon has. There are a number of public benefit programs that are administered by, as you said, both the state and federal government, different agencies. That advocacy is complex. Those programs are many times, statewide or generally, statewide, or national programs. But we could certainly look at that and bring that back to you, add that to the Legislative package if that's something that the Board would like to do."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I'd appreciate that. I think it would -- since we are trying to give a cost-of-living raise, I would hate for an employee to lose their benefits."

But on the flip side of it, they need more money. And so what can we do as Legislators to maybe have other organizations collectively say, you know what we need, the maximum raise for the housing voucher. We need the maximum raise for a household for heating, you know, heating, you can only make so much money to get additional help for heating. And so just, in my mind, I'm just asking because you all probably would have more insight than I would at that point as to who we would need. And Mr. Hermon, I'm more than happy to, you know, work with you --"

KENNETH HERMON, JR., CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Thank you."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- or give you some information on that."

KENNETH HERMON, JR., CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Thank you, Commissioner. I think Jessica and the Lobbyist team would be a great place to start with raising those thresholds, because we did, when we did this several years ago, when we got to the 32, we did look at the unintended consequences. And we also attempt to do that this year again. And we reached out, for example, to the SNAP program. But they indicated that they had so many different variables, number of individuals in households and the like, that they couldn't give us a definitive answer that this 36 or \$38,000 would kick someone out automatically. So I think whatever we could do collaboratively to work with our partners on the state side our in the Assembly, General Assembly, about raising the thresholds, would be beneficial for employees, particularly all employees within the County."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, I appreciate that. Thank you."

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

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "One other question I have, Sharon, does anyone have the amount that the Inmate Welfare Fund had at the end of 2022, or at the beginning of 2023?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "We may have that information. I don't have it readily available. We may have it in the audit, from the audit report, we can get it. I don't have it available, but we probably have it that we can provide to you."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Well, let me tell you openly, the reasoning behind that. If, in fact, there was something that was being paid through the Inmate Welfare Fund that should have been being paid with another fund, the unintended consequences or the increase in other areas, I would want to know about that. But the Sheriff did tell me that there was mistakes, stuff that was supposed to be paid in other areas were paid incorrectly with that funding. So just to be transparent, I would like to know is that going to be moved from some other part of the budget? If it was an accident, it was an accident. I have to take him for his word. He said it shouldn't have been paid with that, it should have been paid with something else. However, you know,

when we're talking about accountability that may be a hit that that department may have to take in certain areas, or that may be something that we may have to flesh out as to what was paid with that Inmate Welfare Fund that duly needed to be paid with another fund. So in my mind, it goes two ways. But I would openly ask, if there was something that was paid for incorrectly, per our Sheriff's comments that he either, one, return it, or two, not ask for it in this year's budget. Because if it was supposed to be paid for, and it was paid for out of a fund that it shouldn't have been paid for, then at the end of the day that is not our or the taxpayer's responsibility. So I would like some, and this is a conversation I'll have with him, but I'm only asking you all now because that fund has been renamed, I understand. You know, there's a certain procedure, but if there's something truly that he has a need for, and it's being asked for, and he had paid for it with that fund, I would like to know that. But if there's something also that was paid for with that fund, that wouldn't be paid for within any other fund, at the end of the day, none of the taxpaying citizens of Fulton County should be held liable for that. So I just want to put that out there. But I'll get with you, County Manager and CFO, and just ask about the salary savings because I'm -- I'm a little unclear on whether they had an opportunity to use their salary savings. And also I will echo what Commissioner Arrington said, I would like to see the Arts, at a very minimum and Fulton Films at a very minimum, stay at that funding level. I just feel in certain areas, the hit that we're going to take is -- will not be worth it. And so I just want to put that out there. But I'll get with you all with specific questions for salary savings for those particular departments. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. First off, all departments and agencies should be able to use their salary savings as they have always been able to do. Secondly, as Commissioner Arrington stated, the money has been sitting in Non-agency. We've heard today that there is extra money in Elections. And we know that we have underruns, and we address those things most definitely midyear, as far as the underruns are concerned. So we need to not wait to take this to the Lobbyists, take this to the state and federal government as it relates to wage for our Fulton County employees. We need to fund the new living wage at a higher amount for our Fulton County employees now. We all have experienced the increase in gasoline prices, housing prices, food, daycare. I did not know that daycare is like paying a house note. That is a travesty to a new parent. And I have one of my team. When I found out how much they pay in daycare now, I -- I'm just glad my kids are grown. So we need to look at utilizing Non-agency, Elections, underruns, and anything else that we can to go ahead and fund our Fulton County employees at a higher new living wage so that we can set the standard, period, statewide, be -- go beyond being best in class, because best in class is obviously not good enough. We shouldn't be putting people in a bad situation to take care of themselves and their families. And then I agree with many of the comments about the Arts and Culture funding, specifically, Contract for Services. Because I've sat here at the -- this meeting, the past BOC meetings, and listened to public comment from many of our residents and just taking note of what they have said,

time after time, about they want to see us fund seniors services. They want to see us fund veterans services. They want to see us fund the arts, the youth, the homeless. And so at one of the previous meetings, I read to you from the memo that was provided to us from Hakeem, our Director of Finance through our County Manager Dick Anderson, our Chief Financial Officer Sharon Whitmore, to the Board of Commissioners, subject line: Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Enhancement Operating Request, dated October 27, 2023. At it listed every single thing. It says titled: 2023 BOC items added to the budget, not funded in 2024. And for the Contract for Services for Arts and Culture, it says \$1.7 million. So if we're going to fund it at the levels of 2023 that means we have to put the \$1.7 million in the budget. And then they have an outcry for seniors, youth, homelessness, veterans. We have a new veterans grant. We need to make sure it's funded fully as it was in 2023. Our seniors, specifically, Mr. Devin Barrington-Ward spoke on the seniors today. We need to make sure that we do fund the ride-share program, that's your Uber and Lyft, and that we do not create a situation where our seniors cannot ride it as they have in the past. And this list goes on and on. I've read it before, I will not read it again. You can reference the meeting that where I actually read it. But there are plenty of items on here that were cut in community development, youth and homeless. We've heard many people come up here and say, we need to address homelessness at the same levels of 2023. Thank you, Mr. Commissioner Arrington for bringing to light the need for some of these additional things that ORCA paid for. The training that you spoke of that's necessary to ensure that our Sheriffs are completely trained adequately, guess what? The total is only \$49,000, not 49 million, just \$49,000. And let's move on to the body-worn cameras. That's on here as well, it says federal grant match. Thank you for bringing that up. But I also want to point out that the Solicitor General has -- needs a supplemental VOCA grant funding to cover personnel and operational experiences -- expenses. This says Solicitor General needs just \$248,000 to supplement those expenses. And then let's speak on -- you've already talked about the District Attorney, but don't forget the Marshal. The Marshals were literally on the news speaking about their needs. There's a overtime budget request from the Marshal to manage the current high volume of writs. So I think that there are some things that we still need to work out before we come to the January 24th meeting and pass a budget. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Just, I have a clarifying question about those 22 positions that the DA has brought up. And thank you for bringing that up, Commissioner Arrington. Again, I had the same conversation with her that some other did. But it was my understanding, as Commissioner Arrington said, that there work 22 positions where there officers were out or they were already filled, I don't know. But that at least 18 of them were in the process of being filled or already filled. In four I think -- I think the other four, she said offers were out, but I could be wrong about that. Regardless, there are people, I think at least in 18 of those 22 currently. And so have -- are those still in her budget for next year? Or have -- are those positions gone from her budget?"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "Commissioner, we just checked the DA's budget to see how many positions that are currently vacant. It's about 15 of them that are vacant right now. We have 15 vacant positions --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "What is --"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "-- that I'm looking at."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "What is -- how many positions is 4 percent of her total? Because her rate is always about 96 percent full, correct? In terms of her -- her vacancies are the smallest of most of the other justice partners, I think."

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "Last year, I believe, you know, she spent about 93 percent of her budget last year. So -- do you have the -- I think she had 200 and something positions; 269 positions, she has. So 15 of those positions are currently vacant."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So they are now removed from her budget for 2024 --"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "They are not removed."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "They're in her --"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "They are in her budget. She can fill them, she -- they just need to manage --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And so she has -- so she has 269, including 15 vacant right now. And how many did she have in 2023 total?"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "It would be the same, because we didn't take any. How many did we --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, what's the attrition factor in all that, that I'm confused about that then."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "So let me try to explain. Let's say you had 100 positions."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "And you normally run ten vacant, which is, some are filled, some are unfilled, they keep treading and being filled all across the course of the year. This exercise is designed to take the value, not the position, but the value of those ten positions and reduce it by 25 percent or so. In other words, 33, I forgot what the number is. But you take the salary dollars for those positions that

almost consistently are vacant, not the precise position, but the average, reduce it. And what that does then is when you come to the end of the year, the salary savings, which otherwise would have accrued, have now been used upfront to try to balance the budget. It does not take away any of the positions because generally speaking, they're going to be filled and vacated as they go across the course of the year. So to some degree, our desire to be precise has gotten in the way of just, what would have been a simple exercise, which is just to reduce salary expenses by some percent, recognizing that there will always be vacant as you go across the course of the year."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, I'm mean, I get what you're saying. I appreciate the explanation --"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yeah."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- Mr. County Manager. I think the only sort of -- this is not the right word, but I'm going to use it, troubling part of that is that, if we did not do it that way, they would have had higher salary savings, which they were using for other things that we didn't fund. So they, you know, may still be able to use their salary savings, but they're going to have less of that, because we're taking some of it upfront, correct? Yeah. So that may be things that they were able to pay for out of their budgets because there was that salary savings that they will not now be able to cover. And so I think we just need to be looking at, you know, very critically, and I know you all do, about any things that they are meeting or paying for in -- that weren't specifically budgeted for in the past, and they were using that money for, how critical are those things. You know, and I'm not suggesting that they shouldn't also be, you know, frugal in all those things. But I just want to make sure that something critical doesn't remain uncovered, so to speak. The only other thing I just wanted to jump in, since we're talking about, I think everybody out -- you know, it's only my second year here doing budget and only Commissioner Thorne and I only got half the process last year. So this is our first time doing the full thing. So I wasn't really sure when everybody was going to start sort of pitching in with what they thought should be in here additional. But I do think it makes sense to make sure that I -- the things I see have at least been delivered to you prior to the final discussion in a couple of weeks. So you know, I think, the way I see it, to cover some additional help for the Marshal, based on looking at what's in the tranches and the conversation I've had with her. And I think at least 1.1 million needs to be going to the Marshal. You know, I really strongly believe and I think we all know that healthcare in Fulton County has, you know, some of the -- the lack that we have in the south part of the county in particular, hasn't changed. Just because the hospitals didn't close this year and they're not in the news right now, we have not really fully addressed that problem. And so I do think it's important that we do a \$5 million healthcare reserve again this year, and proceed with our efforts that the Chairman worked out with the Morehouse folks and all of that to sort of continue down that road and continue to make progress on that. Certainly, that's a Jessica thing as well, just because Medicaid expansion obviously would help a great deal in saving us a significant amount of money in terms of what we're paying to Grady that might be able to address a lot of our needs

in the county. So I know, we're already focused on that for the legislative agenda, but I thought it worth mentioning here. I also think we should consider the 9 million for the ORCA positions through the end of the year. And you know, obviously, we're still going to have a lot of challenges when it comes to 2025, if every -- if all the ORCA positions end at the end of the year. But at least it would get us through this calendar year. And then given what my colleagues have brought up around some of the issues for the DA's office, the Sheriff's office, and some of the other requests for the Justice Department, I think there's a few small things still left for some of them that may or may not be critical that I see somewhere between five and 10 million that in the Justice tranche that probably needs to be looked at. And that's with that, I feel like I do need to do some further study and have some additional conversations on that front. But -- oh, and in the -- in the Arts too, I'll mention that just at a glance in the third tranche, I believe it is, which lists out all the community things. I think that the -- oh, I want to just make something clear to address Commissioner Hall's comments about veterans and ask this just for confirmation, Ms. Whitmore but -- or Mr. Anderson, that we did go ahead already and include the 1 million for veterans in the current budget, correct? Okay. So that tranche, I believe was about 8.9 million, including the veterans. So if you take that million out, it's now at about 7.9 million. And just again, at my first glance through it, there's at least about 3.5, that I think we need to look seriously at considering in this year's budget. So back-of-the-napkin math, you know, I think there's somewhere in the neighborhood of 30 million additional dollars, we need to look at spending. And I recognize that that's not going to fit into the current model. And so, you know, I don't know how you all want to address that, where money can be pulled from. I mean, the magical Non-agency, perhaps, I don't know. But on that front, Sharon, just one other question. I did notice on the -- on the general fund detail sheet, page 26 in the current book, the green-covered book, there is Non-agency listed out and broken in to some categories. But we don't ever -- we don't see the actuals for that, only the budgeted amount. Is there a reason for that?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "For the actual amounts by the individual categories; is that what you're oppose -- we have the actual for Non-agency as a whole."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Correct, by category."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "By the category."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Correct."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "No. I mean, I guess we could -- we could go back in and include the actuals from the previous years. We were just trying to -- because it's such large amount, we were just trying to show it into its broad, you know, broad-use categories. So --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "No, I --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- yeah, yeah."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I think it would be helpful to see that breakdown for the actuals too, just so we, you know, understand kind of the full picture of what's happening."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yeah."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "That's all I had."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "My back-of-the-napkin math, just heard four Commissioners talk about restoring Arts funding for 2023. So I want to make sure that's clear, and for Fulton Films. And so I think the Sheriff has outlined some of these things, \$275,000, iEvac, smoke, fire hoods, fire response, turnout gear. I mean, you know, I don't know how we not provide that type of stuff. I mean, again, these aren't just X's and O's. Anybody in the jail is working in a life-or-death situation. It's life safety 24 hours a day, seven days a week at the jail. So please keep that in mind as you, hopefully come back and give us something based off another, an updated budget based off of the input that you've gotten today. And certainly, I agree that the Marshals need more money and need more resources. And, you know, all of our justice partners need -- we need to find this ORCA money. And Commissioner Barrett, she can't tell you where the eggs are hidden. You got to go find them yourself. But no, seriously, hopefully, yeah, we can get an updated budget that will include some of these other items, other items, Prison Rape Elimination Act, you know, 19,000 to comply with that, right. I think we got to comply with that, we got to find that way, right, there's no way around it. So and some of these other things that are in there, again, I think from -- from my perspective, if they don't have updated radios and communication software at the jail and somebody calls for help, that's a life -- then there's another life safety issue. And so I think we have to think of these things just a little bit differently, look a little beyond the dollars and cents, the zeros and the ones, the binary numbers, and look at what's behind it and look at the people behind it you know, when making some of these decisions. So, you know, I'll leave it there. You know, it looks like they asked for some software that helps with the apprehension of violent offenders, human traffickers, sex offenders. You know, I don't know how we go against that. I don't know how we not find money for some of those things. So I'll leave it there. But hopefully, we can get a -- another modified budget, again that reflects the concerns and priorities as communicated by this Board today. And I would agree with Commissioner Barrett, maybe it's another 30 million or so. And I do know last year, we did assume a different millage rate for purposes of the budget. And so maybe that is another option for getting where we need to get for purposes of adopting a budget. So, but I think we need to just make sure that we take care of those. You know, some of this is just bare necessities. I mean, we want the jail population to go down. Either we want the jail population to go

down, or we don't. If we do, then we've got a support ORCA. Either we want evictions to happen faster in six to nine months, or we don't. If we do, we've got to support the Marshal's office. I mean, it's just -- it's just real simple. So I'll stop there."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Commissioner Arrington, you made me think about a couple of things. The -- I have not received a response from the County Manager or the Chief Financial Officer on the two youth conferences that I've hosted for the past six years, one of them actually started working on with Commissioner Garner before I was elected; \$150,000 for two youth conferences. I already have schools who are ready and waiting for the March Youth Conference registration to open, because they are used to being prepared to sign their students up. And their students actually look forward to it. So that, is that in here? Or if not, I'm requesting that it be put in there because my schools are looking forward to them again this year. And then on here, it caught my attention when Commissioner Arrington was reiterating and Commissioner Barrett. There were things on here like youth and homelessness, youth programs that an extra 1 million was provided. We have so many issues right now with the youth and homeless. I don't know if everyone saw the media where the bridge caught on fire just recently from the homeless living on the bridges. And the city is removing all of them from the bridges. And they are working on legislation to not have people living under the bridges because of the implications of what can happen. They could be a detriment to the bridges and to those who are living under there. So we need to, as a county, be ready and able to address the needs of those people. They've been living under those bridges for as long as I can remember, and I've been here over 30 years. But the county is supposed to be mandated by the state to provide health and human services. And that is inclusive of behavioral health, mental health, homelessness services, housing, and so much more that those individuals who live under those bridges need it, and they need them. So I'd like to see where our County Manager and team are looking at how to address the fact that these people are being removed from the bridges. Well, where are they going? Who's assisting them? We also fund so many nonprofit organizations that provide those types of services. What are our partners doing? What are we doing in relation to the partners to address this situation? So can anyone speak to -- have you even started to look at the situation? Because watching the news, it was just horrifying."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Thank you for that comment, Commissioner Hall. One of the challenges that we continue to face is how we, from a fiscal perspective, address needs in the city and the county. And so I know that Stan Wilson -- and what I mean by that is, as you are aware, our homeless funding is constrained by geographic boundaries. And so the city has funding for any homeless support services that are geographically located in the city, and the county is responsible for all other homeless services. We do have a good relationship with the coordinating group out of the city of Atlanta. And so I will certainly speak with our Director of Community Development to find out what, specifically, is being done in

relationship to that displacement of those individuals under the bridge. But I know that we are continuing to ensure that the funding that we receive for county-related services that it's getting to the nonprofits that need it. And we certainly will look at how we can continue to coordinate even better in 2024."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. And you're absolutely correct. I am familiar with the fact that, in just laymen's terms, that we cannot double dip because both the county and the city are receiving the federal funding from HUD. And you can't use both sides of government's funding. But however, that is why I've consistently requested budget enhancements in those areas because when we pull from our general fund and we utilize that money in those areas of homelessness and youth and whatever else, that general fund money allows us to actually fund those needs beyond the HUD funding. So thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. It's a quarter to 2:00. I'll entertain a motion to recess for lunch and Executive Session, issues of real estate, litigation, and personnel. All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Let's vote."

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

Recessed for Executive Session at 1:46 p.m.

Resumed Regular Session at 2:44 p.m.

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there a motion to approve the request for representation in items one, two, and three of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. We have a motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Let's vote."

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion to adopt the recommendation and decision from the hearing conducted by the Housing Authority of Fulton County on July 20th, 2023, and to remove Commissioner Ronnie Shakir from the Commission?"

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

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion to prove the transfer of property located at 2925 Lakewood Drive from the County to Atlanta Public Schools?"

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

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "And finally, is there a motion to transfer property to the city of Sandy Springs for a roadway-sidewalk improvement project around the Sandy Springs Library, consisting of an easement and -- excuse me -- consisting of a right-of-way and a temporary construction easement for this project?"

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

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

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "Back on page 6, **24-0014**, Real Estate and Asset Management request approval of the lowest responsible bidder in an amount not to exceed \$6 million to provide standby repair maintenance construction services."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0016**. Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities request approval to amend an existing contract in an amount not to exceed \$11,377,838 for the expansion of Behavioral Health Services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. We have a motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please vote. Is it working? All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Hall. Those in favor say, aye; opposed, no. It's approved. Next."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 7, 23-0961."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point, that was an \$11 million item. I don't think we could do that like that. There was no actual vote."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah, well, the machine wasn't --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "And what's on the screen says, quick index item. So, no."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "No one responded, no one had the opportunity to respond in the affirmative or in the negative, Mr. Chair."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. We will -- all right, no one said, no. All right, the motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Commissioner Hall. Any questions, any discussion? All right, those in favor, raise your right hand."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "It's working now."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "It's working now."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion -- the machine is --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Quick index?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What? It's open."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "It looked like it changed items or something. It went -- it originally had the original item listed, and then somehow it got to that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay, is it working now, or not working? All right. We'll take a voice vote. All right, Commissioner Thorne? Yes. Vice Chair?"

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett? I vote, yes. Commissioner Hall?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, yes."

CLERK GRIER: "Zero nays."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 7, under Justice and Safety, **23-0961**, Sheriff request approval to reprogram the use of unspent emergency capital funding to utilize \$595,032.45 for the staff toilet upgrades at the South Annex Jail."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. It's working now, correct?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes."

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

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioners' Action Items, **23-0915**, Request approval of a resolution to dissolve the Housing Authority of Fulton County and for other purposes, sponsored by Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Based on the action that just occurred, I would ask that this be removed."

CLERK GRIER: "So noted."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I object to it being removed. That's all right. He has a right to do so."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. **23-0964**, Request approval of a resolution directing an external review of the Board of Ethics and for other purposes, sponsored by Commissioner Arrington."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is there a motion?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah. I'm going to make the motion. You know, I stood here at the beginning this meeting, and we all did, we took a pledge of

allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and for liberty and justice for which it stands. What is occurring is not liberty and what is not justice. They have violated all of their own rules. They have violated the Georgia Open Meetings Act. They have violated the Georgia Open Records Act. They have violated the Georgia Constitution. They have violated the United States Constitution. The matter was dismissed on March 16, 2021. And anybody that does a Google search will see that Dale Russell from Fox 5 put out an article saying that it was dismissed. In fact, the proof that it was dismissed was that the complainant, Mesha Mainor then sent a letter to the Board of Ethics and to Fulton County saying she was going to sue us. And she did in fact sue us. There would not have been any reason for her to sue the Board of Ethics if they had not dismissed the matter. Everything that they've done needs to be evaluated. We need an audit of everything that they've done over the last ten years. They are incompetent. They are unethical, and their actions are illegal. They need to be removed. If I -- if someone wants to judge my ethics, we -- we have -- we're talking - - need to adopt Hearing Officers, as requested by the County Attorney. County Attorney, I will stand in front of any Hearing Officer or anyone other than these unethical and illegal people. These people must go. We need an audit of everything that they've done because they are violating their own rules. Their violating every rule around the world. And it is insane that we would allow them to stay and not take any action. And frankly, it's going to set the county up for further liability. I've had to sue them as a result of the fact that their are trying to continue a complaint that they dismissed on March 16th, 2021. Not only are we going to have to pay for their defense, but y'all going to have to pay for the money I collect against them for violating all my rules. Nip it -- for violating all of the Fulton County Code of Ethics, for violating all of my rights, not my rules, for violating all of my rights, and not to mention, my clients right. Because after I win my lawsuit, my client's is going to file a lawsuit against them because everything that they did was wrong. They have not done one thing right. And if they'll do it to me, they'll do it to you. And if they've done it to me, they've probably done it in the past too. They have exceeded their authority. They have no -- they have -- they have no defense. I don't even understand what this is about. This is the craziest thing in the history of the world. You have a group comprised of mostly lawyers and a judge that want to attempt to violate the attorney-client privilege. And they want to violate the Fulton County Code of Ethics, the Georgia Open Meetings Act, the Georgia Open Records Act, the Georgia Constitution, and the United States Constitution to do so. And none of you will stand up and call them out on what they're doing and say that it's wrong? Shame on you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'm going to ask the same question that I asked at the last meeting to our County Attorney, in that, what is -- what have you seen as it relates to this Ethics Board, and the things that Commissioner Arrington has just raised?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So in the interest of time, I will say that everything that is contained in the resolutions that Commissioner Arrington has put forward, in

terms of citing irregularities or inconsistencies and instances of not following their own rules, regulations, I can confirm that we have observed in my office, as we have been following these cases."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you very much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Madam County Attorney, I believe that we, when this came up last time, I asked if anyone had -- I think, you know, accepting that there were irregularities and rules not followed and things of that nature that, you know, had they been asked, as a Body, what they were going to do to change their policies and procedures and rectify the situation, if they were to continue on and this were not to pass?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I have not had communications with anyone on the Board of Ethics about that. I think the legal remedy that is typically provided, traditionally provided, is to exercise one's appeal rights. But I think that this legislation is seeking to address it on a -- on a more comprehensive level, and not just limited to the instances that have occurred in these particular cases."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Right. But what I mean is, overall, they have done some things, as you acknowledge, that are sort of not the procedure, not what they should be doing. And if that -- I mean, I would -- I don't know if they've done that in other cases or not. I'm -- and it sounds like you don't either."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I do."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "But the bigger question is, if that at least happened in this case, there are some guardrails that are clearly not there in terms of how they're operating. So I'm -- I don't know if you are the right people to ask to reach out to them and ask what their remedy is for these inconsistencies, or if that's something that needs to be done in a different way."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So at one point, it was requested that we reach out to them. So we did get back, for example, timelines and certain communications, but none of those communications consisted of and necessarily, a plan forward. That was not the nature of the information I received back."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay, thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So I want to be real clear. This specific agenda item is about an audit, an external review to determine who else's rights have they

violated. This is to determine on previous orders, who else's constitutional rights, how many times have they violated the Fulton County Ethics Code? The specific one is an external review, an audit of their past decisions and past actions. That is what this is. And I mean, it is just a shame that we have people down here that would do this. Even if they wanted, Commissioner Barrett, to propose some type of plan forward or whatever, the conflict is irrevocable. They filed a lawsuit against me. It's irrevocable. No Judge can sit in judgment of someone and go file a lawsuit against one of the parties that their sitting in judgment in front of. It's not allowed, it can't happen. Now, what they were supposed to do was allow to make a ruling and allow one of the parties to appeal to the Superior Court. The statute, the Code of Ethics also allows them the opportunity, what they could have done, they could have started -- they could have said, okay, well, March 16th, we finalize that complaint, we found no probable cause. They could have started a new complaint. They could have started a new complaint. They had the power on their own to start a new complaint. But they would have had to have another probable cause hearing within 60 days. They would have had to provide notice that there was a new complaint, right? They didn't do any of those things. They're not following the law. They're not following the Fulton County Code Of ethics. They're violating constitutional rights. Anytime you don't give someone notice you are violating their constitutional rights. The Fifth Amendment and the 14th Amendment require due process of law. And the idea that we have a group mostly comprised of lawyers, and a former judge being advised by another lawyer, and they can't follow the rules. The rule is real simple 2-81F. If a majority of the Board finds that there is no probable cause, the complaint shall be dismissed, or investigation terminated. That occurred on March 16th, 2021. Today is January 10th, 2024. This complaint was filed on November 9th of 2020. So on November 10th of 2023 was the start of the fourth year. This Board has exceeded their authority. They have violated -- let me ask -- let me ask some questions, Madam County Attorney. Has the Board violated the Fulton County Code of Ethics? Has the Board of Ethics violated the Fulton County Code of Ethics?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes. We have observed instances where they have not followed the Code of Ethics."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Has the Board of Ethics violated the Georgia Open Meetings Act?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes. We have observed instances that I would consider to be a violation of the Open Meetings Act."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Has the Board of Ethics violated the Georgia Open Records Act?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I don't have direct knowledge of it. But from reading through the pleadings, it appears they have not complied with the Open Records Act and --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Have they failed to provide notice? Has the Board of Ethics failed to provide the proper notice as outlined in the Fulton County Code of Ethics?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Is the failure to provide notice a violation of constitutional rights?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "It does not provide due process if the notice is defective."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "If the -- okay, so let me ask it again."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So, yes. Yes."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Is the failure to provide notice a violation of due process of law?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes, it can be."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And if they violate due process of law, does that violate the Georgia Constitution and the United States Constitution?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes, it can constitute those violations as well."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I rest my case."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Commissioner Arrington, you said that the complaint shall be dismissed. Do you want to interpret shall, the word shall?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "The word shall is compulsory. The issue, when we spoke, the issue that you're trying to conflate this with is the issue regarding the Board of Elections. And in that issue, the question is, it says the Board of Commissioners shall appoint. This is not about who does what. This is about the complaint. The complaint -- the complaint that was filed against me shall be dismissed because the majority of the members of the Board of Ethics determined on March 16th, 2021, after a probable cause hearing and hearing for both sides, that probable cause did not exist. The complaint shall be dismissed or investigation terminated. What they have done is the exact opposite. They have not terminated the investigation, and they have not dismissed the complaint. And that is the problem. And if any -- anybody in here could judge me, I don't care. You can go get anyone you want to judge me on these, on this complaint. But it's already been dismissed. And 2-81I says if it has been

dismissed, that decision shall be final. So the complaint shall be dismissed. The word shall is compulsory, unlike the word may or the will, right. Shall; the complaint shall be dismissed."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Anything else, Commissioner Thorne?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- do we have other Boards that don't follow the rules, don't follow Open Records Meeting Act? And what are the ramifications if a Board fails to do that? What have we done in the past?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "During my tenure, I'm not aware that that has come to the Board's attention for any other Board."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "For instance, the Board of Elections won't post their meeting minutes for six months, eight months. I mean, it's ridiculous. And when it says that you need to post them within X amount of days, yet we don't do anything there. So that's what my hesitation, when you say an external review the Board of Ethics, what's the difference between a review and an audit? Is it because there's no finances, or?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, just a -- I was assuming review instead of audit, because there are no finances. My point is, someone to look and determine if they have been complying with the rules. And you know, I can guarantee you that they haven't because I see 97 times that they haven't complied with the rules, in my one case. Ninety-seven times in one case, they haven't complied with the rules. So why would they ever comply with them? Where's the proof that they have ever complied with them? The difference between this and the Board of Elections is, there is a specific rule that says what shall happen if there is -- not because there's a -- not because they violated the Georgia Meeting -- Open Meetings Act, not because they violated the Georgia Open Records Act, not because they didn't provide due process, not because they violated the Georgia Constitution, not because they violated the United States Constitution. It says because they determined that there was no probable cause, the complaint shall be dismissed. And since they won't dismiss it, we should audit everything they've done for the last ten years because if they are violating people's rights -- if they will violate one of my rights, one of the Commissioners rights, what do you think they're doing to an average employee? How do you think they would treat them? So violate the -- so it's -- they can violate employees' rights, but they can't violate Commissioners' rights? They haven't done anything right. They've proven that they don't have the capability or the intelligence or the competence to do anything right pursuant to the Fulton County Code of Ethics. They should be ashamed. They should run away and hide in shame because they can't -- they're completely incompetent, completely incompetent, all of them."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Thorne, you still have the floor, you done?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah. I just have to say, I think the pressure by having a Commissioner involved in a case, puts an undue pressure on a Board. I know if I was on that Board, it would convolute things, navigating between a Commissioner and a normal employee. We do have a new appointee on the Board, you know, people will switch out. I think the value of having Ethics Board is necessary, instead of it -- someone coming for a hearing before an individual. But that's just my opinion from what I know. But I do -- Commissioner Arrington, you pointed out some excellent points. And I do see where they didn't follow the law. I think there's -- there was somewhat of some intimidation that -- not that you necessarily initiated, but they just felt intimidation in acting since you were a sitting Commissioner. So I just wanted to bring that forward. But I do think you have some very valid points."

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

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes. Thank you, Commissioner Thorne. The only intimidation that they got was from Mesha Mainor, who intimidated them by sending a letter telling them she was going to sue them, and they responded to that letter. So they were scared of being sued by her. Well, now they're actually being sued by me. And they have no defense. I sat quietly; I haven't said anything about any of this for the last three years. It wasn't until after they sent a letter November 1st of 2023 on a complaint that should have been dismissed on March 16th of 2021. I mean, what justification is there? I mean, no one disputes that they determined that there was no probable cause that day. Dale Russell, Fox 5 did a report, the lady sent a letter, the lady sent an ante litem notice saying she was going sue them, Fulton County, me, and Fani Willis because of this, and in fact, she did. She filed an ethics complaint against me. She filed a bar complaint against me. And she filed a federal RICO lawsuit against me. The ethics complaint was dismissed on March 16th, 2021 when they determined there was no probable cause. The bar complaint was dismissed, and the federal RICO lawsuit was also dismissed. All I'm saying is these people are not operating within the rules. I don't mind being judged. But you got to play by -- everybody has to play by the same rules. If you want somebody else to hear this, if you want another Hearing Officer or another Board to hear it, I'm glad to have them hear it. In fact, that's why I filed the lawsuit, a Judge is about to hear it. But we need a review of their actions of their past action to make sure that they haven't violated anyone else's constitutional rights."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Madam County Attorney, what would be -- if we were to go forward with this, what would the cost of an internal review be?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "We could get you an estimate. But given that the timeframe is rather expansive, I would anticipate a significant cost if we did it through outside counsel."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Like, ballpark?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I would have to look for previous investigations and audits to see if we could find anything comparable, or extrapolate from what we have."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "My concern is that we would spend a lot of money doing this review, and I don't know that the results of it would -- certainly wouldn't change your mind, one way or the other, right? Let's say it came back and this was the only case in which they did these things, do you think it's going to change your mind?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Unfortunately, the conflict is irrevocable."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Right, so --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "They've created a --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- what's the point of doing a multiyear review if that isn't going to change your mind?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "To prove how -- how far off kilter they are; to show their level of incompetence --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I mean --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- to the people of Fulton County."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- my take, Commissioner Arrington, is that they did wrong in this scenario. Whether they did wrong before, isn't really a big issue. They did wrong. They did some wrong things as it relates to your case. So my question, sort of ongoing, is what do we do with a sitting Board -- and I think this gets to Commissioner Thorne's question, and I think, you know, I wouldn't use the register -- the Board of Registrations and Elections as an example. But I know we have other Boards that don't follow open meetings the way they should, or don't post their minutes the way they should, and things like that. So what -- what recourse do we have as a Body, to address Boards, Commissions, Task Forces, Authorities, whatever they are, that we have constituted, that -- so not ones that are created by the state, but ones that we have constituted, that don't meet their obligations or break rules? Because whatever those -- whatever that course of action is, to me is what we should be pursuing here."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So if I may, I recommended a Compliance Officer, someone from the County Attorney's office to make sure that this Board, in particular, but we could apply it to all Boards, make sure that the Boards are compliant. The problem is you've got volunteers on these Boards. And so there's no one there to make sure that they comply with the rules. So we have to provide the Compliance Officers to ensure that they comply with the rules."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "So to piggyback on that, I know historically, to some Boards and Authorities are written in such a way that our office provides legal support. In this particular instance, I believe in an attempt to keep them independent, the Board of Ethics was given the ability to obtain its own legal counsel, independent of my office. That, which is why we were unable to ascertain the history of them hiring their current counsel because it was not done through the County Attorney's office. So I know that you had brought up this question before. And our office is currently working on compiling kind of a comprehensive view of our Boards and Authorities and what kind of oversight this Body has over them if they're not complying with the rules that apply to them. That is not currently complete, but what I will say is that the, in general, if this Body has created the Board or Authority, it will typically have the authority to modify any terms and conditions. So to the extent that the Board is interested in doing complete overview of what our Boards and Authorities are authorized to do, how people are appointed to the Boards and Authorities, how they can be removed, what consequences are provided for if they deviate from their mandate, that is something that we are working on and will provide a recommendation as to what your options are as a Board."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay, thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE- CHAIRABDUR-RAHMAN: "Call the question."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Question has been called. Let's vote on the call of the question."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. On the motion that's on the floor."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "23-0965, Request approval of a resolution to revoke every action taken by the Fulton County Board of Ethics from January 1st, 2014 through December 20th, 2023 and for other purposes, sponsored by Commissioner Arrington."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Arrington. Is there a second? Seconded by Commissioner Hall. Commissioner Hall, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. Now, I'll say what I was about to say before call the question. It is our responsibility to ensure that no employee's rights have been violated, period. And so therefore, we need to do everything in our power to ensure that there is no Board, no one who has violated the rights of our employees. Thank you."

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

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "23-0966, Request approval of an ordinance to amend Chapter 2 Article II Division 2 of the Fulton County Code to disband the Board of Ethics and to replace it with a slate of Ethics Hearing Officers; and for other purposes, sponsored by Commissioner Arrington."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Have a motion to approve by Commissioner Arrington, is there a second? Seconded by Commissioner Hall. Commission Arrington, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are people that are trying to imply that I am trying to avoid being judged by this Board. I'm willing to be judged by any replacement board or by any Hearings Officer. This has nothing to do with -- this has nothing to do with the -- the matter at hand. This has to do with them not following the process. This has to do with them not following their own laws. And it's really a shame that people will sit up here and vote, no, and not hold these people responsible. That -- it's really disappointing, and it's a shame. But, you know, c'est la vie, right? The court will make a ruling, right. And then this Body will have to pay the money, hey."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE- CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Call the question."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Question's been called. Let's vote on the call of the question."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point of order, Mr. Chair. Calling the question, doesn't it require a majority, a supermajority? It's not just a simple majority."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. No discussion on this. We need a -- the call of the question --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I made a point of order."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute, just a minute. We need a second, which I'll second. And let's vote on the call of the question."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Mr. -- Commissioner Arrington --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "A supermajority is required on a call of the question."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No, no. That's not correct. Let's vote."

CLERK GRIER: "The vote is open."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No discussion."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Madam County Attorney, can you make a ruling?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "The vote's been taken. Madam Clerk, is --"

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Next item. Yeah, on the -- the motion that's on the floor, let's vote."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0117, Request approval of a resolution by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners in observance of the 95th birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., sponsored by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

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

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Madam County Attorney, do you need a major -- supermajority to pass a call the question?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I'm not aware of that requirement, but we are double checking right now."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Double check it, thank you."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "And we'll let you know if that is the case."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you very much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Go ahead."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Anything else?"

CLERK GRIER: "No further items."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. No other matters to come before us today, we are adjourned."

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.