

**FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RECESS MEETING**

August 16, 2023

10:00 AM



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



MINUTES-RATIFIED

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

Ratification Date: September 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Robert L. Pitts

10:00 a.m.

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

Robert L. Pitts, Chairman (At-Large)

PRESENT

Bridget Thorne, Commissioner (District 1)

PRESENT

Bob Ellis, Vice-Chairman (District 2)

PRESENT

Dana Barrett, Commissioner (District 3)

PRESENT

Natalie Hall, Commissioner (District 4)

PRESENT

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

PRESENT

Khadijah Abdur-Rahman, Commissioner (District 6)

PRESENT

INVOCATION: Reverend Clifton Dawkins, Jr., County Chaplain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recite in unison

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA**23-0519 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 Recess Meeting Agenda for separate consideration. **(ADOPTED AS AMENDED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to adopt the Consent Agenda as amended by removing item #23-0536 for separate consideration and to be heard after item #23-0507 as requested by Chairman Pitts. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Ellis

23-0520 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing "Big Boi Appreciation Day." **(Hall)**
August 11, 2023

Proclamation recognizing "Eagle Scout Yash Choudhury Appreciation Day."
(Thorne)
August 12, 2023

Proclamation recognizing "Eagle Scout Joshua Justifus Appreciation Day."
(Thorne)
August 12, 2023

Proclamation recognizing "Eagle Scout Vikhyat Arun Appreciation Day." **(Thorne)**
August 12, 2023

Commissioners' District Board Appointments**23-0521****Board of Commissioners****ANIMAL WELFARE HEARING BOARD (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

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

Term = 2 Years/3 Years

Commissioner Hall nominated Laurel-Ann Dooley to replace Kathy Crawford for a District appointment to an unexpired term ending December 31, 2023.

23-0522**Board of Commissioners****FULTON COUNTY REPARATIONS TASK FORCE (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

The Reparations Task Force shall have the following members: Each Commissioner shall appoint two (2) members, for a total of 14 members. Each member shall be a resident of Fulton County at the time of the appointment. A member shall serve for a two-year term and subject to removal by the appointing Commissioner for cause. No member's term shall exceed that of the appointing Commissioner but shall remain as a voting member until replaced or reappointed by the successive Commissioner.

Term = 2 Years

Chairman Pitts nominated Carole Sykes to replace Tamika Jackson for an unexpired District appointment to a term ending December 31, 2023.

23-0523 Board of Commissioners**COMMISSION ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS (APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

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

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

The Commission on Disability Affairs appointees shall be made for the purpose of maintaining diversity.

Term = Staggered two (2) year terms

Chairman Pitts nominated Gloria Weaver for a District appointment to a term ending December 31, 2024.

Open & Responsible Government**23-0524 Finance**

Request approval of a Resolution by the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County, Georgia, Amending the Fulton County Employees Retirement System to Modify the Qualifications and Election Requirements for the Trustee Holding Position Number Eight on the Board of Trustees of the Fulton County Employees Retirement System, To Correct a Scrivener's Error, and for Other Purposes. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Arts and Libraries**23-0525 Library**

Request to approval of the recommendation of the Fulton County Library System Board of Trustees to change the name of the Alpharetta Friends Bookstore to the "Barbara Selwyn Memorial Bookstore." **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0526 Library

Request to approve the recommendation of the Fulton County Library System to receive a donated exhibition by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service ("SITES") entitled "The Bias Inside Us." The exhibition will be displayed between August 26, 2023 to September 24, 2023 at the Central Library Branch. SITES will pay all associated costs for the exhibition. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Health and Human Services**23-0527 Department for HIV Elimination**

Request approval to amend existing contracts to increase the spending authority of "Ending the HIV Epidemic" grant subrecipients pursuant to the Health Resources and Services Administration award UT8HA3393 in the amount of \$861,165.00 per year, in fiscal years 2023 through 2024, subject to Federal funding. Contracts are 100% grant funded with no Fulton County match. Requests authorization for the Chairman to execute contracts with nine selected subrecipients. To protect the interest of the County, the County Attorney is authorized to approve the contracts as to form and substance and make any necessary modifications thereto prior to execution by the Chair. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0528 Community Development

Request approval to enter into Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) contracts with the following: College Park (\$214,125.00), East Point (\$134,100.00), Fairburn (\$315,000.00), Hapeville (\$54,075.00), Palmetto (\$60,000.00), Union City (\$336,830.00), and Metro Fair Housing (\$66,099.00) to deliver community development activities. Total award amount is \$1,180,229. Authorize the Chairman to disburse funds, execute and administer the 2023 CDBG contracts and related documents consistent with the federal program regulations and this Board action. Effective upon BOC approval. 100% grant funded. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0529 Community Development

Request approval to accept a name change and authorize the Department of Purchasing & Contract Compliance to reflect the name change of Kingdom Mentoring Center, Inc. to Kingdom Mentors International Corp. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0530 Community Development

Request approval to accept a name change and authorize the Department of Purchasing & Contract Compliance to reflect the name change of The Lionheart School, Inc. to The Lionheart Life Center, Inc. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0531 County Manager

For spreading on meeting minutes. Medical Contract for Services Agreement between Fulton County, Georgia and Morehouse School of Medicine to provide health care services for Central and South Fulton County, in the amount of \$1,593,606.00 as a one-time payment for capital improvements and \$1,555,891.00 for FY 2023 for operational support. The Agreement was effective upon Board of Commissioners' approval on April 19, 2023 (Via Resolution 23-0287) through December 31, 2023 and shall automatically renew for four (4) successive one (1) year terms ending on December 31 each year subject to appropriations of funding. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Infrastructure and Economic Development**23-0532 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval of a Sewer Relocation Easement Dedication of 550 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Green Implementation Group, LLC for the purpose of constructing the Reserve at Newtown Project at 9435 Nesbit Ferry Road, Johns Creek, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0533 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 10,006 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from D R Horton, Inc., for the purpose of constructing the Oakhurst Glen Phase 4 Project at 0 Butner Road, South Fulton, Georgia 30213. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0534 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Water Line Easement Dedication of 13,404 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from GRBK North Point, LLC for the purpose of constructing the Ecco Park Phase 3 Project at 1275 North Point Drive, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0535 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 13,404 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from GRBK North Point, LLC for the purpose of constructing the Ecco Park Phase 3 Project at 1275 North Point Drive, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

23-0536 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Resolution for a First Amendment to Lease Agreement between Wilmington Trust, National Association as Trustee, for the Benefit of Holders of J.P. Morgan Chase Commercial Mortgage Securities Trust 2018-PTC, Commercial Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2018-PTC and the Future Advance Lender ("Landlord"), and Fulton County, Georgia, ("Tenant") for the purpose of extending the lease term for office space for the operations of the Office of the Fulton County Tax Assessor at 235 Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia; to authorize the Chairman to approve the First Amendment to Lease Agreement and related documents; to authorize the County Attorney to approve the First Amendment to Lease Agreement and related documents as to form and to make modifications thereto in order to protect the interests of Fulton County prior to execution; and for other purposes. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Pitts

Did Not Vote: Thorne

23-0537 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Resolution authorizing approval of a First Amendment and Extension to Lease Agreement between Fulton County, Georgia and LIT/ Hodges Industrial Trust, to provide warehouse and office space for the operations of the Fulton County District Attorney's Office; authorizing the Chairman to execute the First Amendment and Extension to Lease Agreement and related documents; authorizing the County Attorney to approve the First Amendment and Extension to Lease Agreement as to form and make necessary modifications thereof prior to execution; and for other purposes. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Justice and Safety**23-0538 Superior Court Administration**

Request approval of a statewide contract - Superior Court Administration, SWC #47100-GBI0000165, in an amount not to exceed \$173,066.80 with Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics, Inc., to purchase medical/drug testing supplies for random drug testing for Superior Court Accountability Courts, State Court and Juvenile Courts. This procurement is primarily grant funded through the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. Effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. 100% Grant Funded. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

RECESS MEETING AGENDA**23-0539 Board of Commissioners**

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to adopt the Recess Meeting Agenda as amended by removing item #23-0510 as requested by Chairman Pitts; revising items #23-0502, #23-0545 as requested by the County Manager; and moving up items #23-0467 as requested by Commissioner Thorne, #23-0545, #23-0507, and #23-0502 as request by Chairman Pitts. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Ellis

Did Not Vote: Barrett

23-0540 Clerk to the Commission

Ratification of Minutes. **(RATIFIED)**

Regular Meeting Minutes, July 12, 2023

Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, August 2, 2023

Special Called Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, August 2, 2023

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

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

Absent: Ellis

23-0541 Board of Commissioners

Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates. **(NONE)**

PUBLIC HEARINGS**23-0542 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)**

8 Speakers: Ginger Bradshaw (Voting Issues); Annie Bridges (Tax Increase); Paul Hershey (Roberts Rule of Orders); Amber Connor (Tax Increase); Vera Robert (Tax Increase); Mike Russell (Tax Increase); Rev. Keyanna Jones (Fulton County Jail) and Michael Collins (Fulton County Jail)

3 Zoom Speakers: K. Bennett (Tax Increase); Wykeisha Howe (Tax Increase) and Nasima Camp (Tax Increase)

23-0543**Finance**

Fiscal Year 2023 General Fund Millage Rate public hearing. **(CONDUCTED)**

PUBLIC HEARING CONDUCTED**17 SPEAKERS**

10 Speakers: Ginger Bradshaw (Millage Rate); Earl Ferguson (Millage Rate); Amber Connor (Millage Rate); Paul Hershey (Millage Rate); Nancy Saunders (Millage Rate); Dr. Mai-Li Dong (Millage Rate); Victoria Salvia (Millage Rate); Mike Russell (Millage Rate); Debra Wathen (Millage Rate) and Gibran Green (Millage Rate)

5 Zoom Speakers: Kevin Muldowney (Millage Rate); Derrick D. Blassingame (Millage Rate); Seth Yelner (Millage Rate); Ben Howard (Senior Services) and Florence Mcilwaine (Millage Rate)

2 Emailed Comments: Joyce Lavinder (Millage Rate) and Zane Placie (Millage Rate)

COUNTY MANAGER'S ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****23-0544****County Manager**

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

23-0502**Finance**

Request approval of a Resolution of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners establishing a reserve account designated for the Jail Bridging Plan and replacement Jail construction costs using overruns above the \$636.4 million expected to be generated from a 96% collection rate of current year property taxes; and for other purposes. **(HELD ON 8/2/23) (HELD)**

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Vice-Chairman Ellis, to approve as amended. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Arrington and seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, to hold. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nay: Thorne

Absent: Pitts

23-0545 Finance

Request approval of a Resolution adopting the 2023 Millage Rates for the General Fund, General Obligation Bond Fund, and Fulton Industrial District Fund, as well as the 2023 Fulton County Board of Education millage rate. **(APPROVED AS AMENDED WITH A MILLAGE RATE OF 8.87)**

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Vice-Chairman Ellis, to approve fully rolling back the millage rate to 8.22. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Arrington and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to adopt the millage rate of 9.272 as recommended by staff. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Barrett, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Nay: Pitts, Thorne, Ellis, and Hall

c. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Hall, to approve a millage rate of 8.87. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nay: Thorne, and Ellis

23-0546 Finance

Request approval of August 16, 2023 Budget Soundings. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0547 Finance

Request approval of 2024 premium rates for the Medical and Pharmacy, Dental and Vision Plans effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve items #23-0547 through #23-0552. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0548 **Finance**

Request approval to renew existing contracts - Finance Department, 19-RFP060519C-MH, Employee Healthcare Benefit Plan with Aetna Insurance Company Inc. (Atlanta, GA) to provide medical and pharmacy benefits as a fully-insured option to Medicare eligible retirees/beneficiaries and dependents. The plans administered are: (1) Basic Medicare Advantage Plan and (2) Enhanced Medicare Advantage Plan (*Buy-Up Option*). This action exercises the fourth of four renewal options. No renewal options remain. Effective dates: January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve items #23-0547 through #23-0552. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0549 **Finance**

Request approval to renew an existing contract - Finance Department, 21RFP071321C-MH, Voluntary Worksite Benefits with (A) Continental American Insurance Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Aflac Incorporated to provide Accident Insurance; Critical Illness Insurance; Hospital Indemnity Insurance; Whole Life with Long Term Care Rider and Flexible Spending Accounts (Ameriflex Administrator); Commuter/Transit, Dependent Care, Limited Purpose & Traditional Health; (B) Pre-Paid Legal Services, Inc. dba LegalShield to provide Identity Theft Protection; and (C) Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to provide Short-term Disability Insurance & Legal Plans. Voluntary Benefit Plan Premiums/Contributions 100% employee paid. This action exercises the second of four renewal options. Two renewal options remain. Effective dates: January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve items #23-0547 through #23-0552. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0550 Finance

Request approval to renew existing contracts - Finance Department, 19-RFP060519C-MH, Employee Healthcare Benefit Plan - Dental with Aetna Life Insurance Company (Atlanta, GA) to administer: [1] Dental PPO (DPPO) Plan on a self-funded basis and [2] Dental HMO (DHMO) Plan on an insured basis, to eligible employees, retirees, beneficiaries and their covered dependents. This action exercises the fourth of four renewal options. No renewal options remain. Effective dates: January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve items #23-0547 through #23-0552. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0551 Finance

Request approval to renew existing contracts - Finance Department, 19-RFP060519C-MH, Employee Health Benefit Plan - Vision Benefits provided on a self-funded basis administered by EyeMed Vision Care, to eligible active employees, retirees/beneficiaries, and their eligible dependents. This action exercises the fourth of four renewal options. No renewal option remains. Effective dates: January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve items #23-0547 through #23-0552. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0552 Finance

Request approval to renew existing contracts - Finance Department, 19-RFP060519C-MH, for Employee Healthcare Benefit Plans with: (A) **Anthem (BCBS) of Georgia** to administer the self-funded Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), Point of Service (POS), and CDHP with Health Savings Account (HSA) Plans to active employees and Pre-65 (Non-Medicare) retirees/beneficiaries, as well as the Medicare HMO, Medicare Indemnity and PPO Plus [Closed] Plans to Medicare-eligible retirees/beneficiaries and (B) **Kaiser Permanente** (Atlanta, GA) to administer a fully insured HMO plan to active employees and Pre-65 (Non-Medicare) retirees/beneficiaries; and the fully insured Senior Advantage Plan to Medicare retirees/beneficiaries. This action exercises the fourth of four renewal options. No renewal options remain. Effective dates: January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve items #23-0547 through #23-0552. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0553 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval to increase the spending authority - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 20ITB125868C-CG, Glass and Plexiglas Repair and Replacement in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.00 with Brad Construction Company II, LLC (Fayetteville, GA), to provide replacement of two SAGE glass curtainwall panels at the Fulton County Juvenile Court building located at 395 Pryor Street SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30312, and anticipated repair/replacement work for the remainder of FY2023. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Pitts

23-0554 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval to increase the spending authority - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 21RFP130049C-CG, Landfill Post Closure Services in the amount of \$155,000.00 with Atlantic Coast Consulting, Inc. (Roswell, GA), to provide corrective action plans for investigation and remediation of the underground storage tanks (UST) at the Fulton County Jail located at 901 Rice Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30318 and the Stonewall Tell Maintenance facility located at 5601 Stonewall Tell Road, College Park, Georgia 30349. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Pitts

Did Not Vote: Arrington

Justice & Safety**23-0507 County Manager**

Request approval of a contract on behalf of the Office of the County Manager and Fulton County Sheriff's Office for Strategic Communication Services with Burson & Cohn Wolfe in an amount not to exceed \$385,000.00 to provide communications and engagement services to ensure that key stakeholders have access to timely and factual information about the Fulton County Jail in light of matters of high interest from constituents, media and policy makers. Effective upon BOC approval through December 31, 2023. **(HELD)**

a. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Ellis and seconded by Chairman Pitts, to deny. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

b. A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Barrett, to approve as amended by establishing the Board of Commissioners as owners of the contract. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

c. A motion was made by Commissioner Arrington and seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, to hold with a friendly amendment from Vice-Chairman Ellis to suspend any work being done. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Health and Human Services**23-0508 Community Development**

Request approval of a contract between Fulton County and Fulton County Schools in the amount of \$250,000.00 to support the Community School Initiative - Student and Family Engagement (S.A.F.E.) Centers in response to the growing need to address barriers to student learning; and to authorize the Chairman to disburse funds and execute and administer contracts, and other related documents consistent with any necessary agreement in support of this funding allotment. The term of this Contract shall be upon approval through December 31, 2023. **(HELD ON 8/2/23) (FAILED)**

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

Yea: Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman

Nay: Thorne, and Ellis

Absent: Pitts

Did Not Vote: Barrett

b. A substitute motion was made by Vice-Chairman Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to deny. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Thorne, and Ellis

Nay: Abdur-Rahman

Absent: Pitts

Did Not Vote: Barrett, Hall, and Arrington

23-0555 Public Works

Request approval to renew existing contracts - Public Works Department, 21RFP129860K-JAJ, Standby Engineering Services in a total amount not to exceed \$1,800,000.00 with (A) Goodwyn Mills Cawood (Montgomery, AL) in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00; (B) Gresham Smith/CERM, JV (Nashville, TN) in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00; (C) Prime Engineering, Inc. (Atlanta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00; (D) Stantec Consulting Services (Lexington, KY) in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00; (E) Jacobs Engineering (Atlanta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.00; and, (F) Benchmark Management (Atlanta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.00, to provide standby engineering services. This action exercises the second of two renewal options. No renewal options remain. Effective dates: August 2, 2023 through July 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Absent: Pitts

Did Not Vote: Barrett

23-0556 Public Works

Request approval of a Public Private Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (P3MOU) between Fulton County and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for sewer relocations associated with Project PI-0017124, to rebuild and add two (2) new, barrier-separated express lanes in both directions of I-285 between South Atlanta Road and New Northside Drive in Cobb and Fulton Counties, at no cost to Fulton County. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Did Not Vote: Pitts

COMMISSIONERS' ACTION ITEMS**23-0510 Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of a Resolution to rescind a motion previously passed by the Board of Commissioners to refrain from taking any action regarding the composition of the Board of Ethics until certain matters are no longer pending before the Board of Ethics; and for other purposes. **(Pitts) (HELD ON 8/2/23) (REMOVED)**

ITEM TO BE HEARD AT A LATER MEETING

23-0512 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of a Resolution requiring contracts or other written agreements to accompany agenda items appearing on the meeting agenda of the Board of Commissioners to uphold transparency in governance; providing exceptions for those contracts or agreements processed by the Department of Purchasing and Contract Compliance and for those excluded under the Georgia Open Meetings Act, or for emergency situations; and for other purposes. **(Thorne) (HELD ON 8/2/23) (HELD)**

a. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve. **(NO VOTE TAKEN)**

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

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

Nay: Ellis

Absent: Pitts, and Arrington

COUNTY MANAGER'S PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**Infrastructure and Economic Development****23-0557 Public Works**

Presentation and request approval of the Fulton County Executive Airport - Charlie Brown Field Master Plan Report and Airport Layout Plan.
(PRESENTED/APPROVED)

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

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

Absent: Pitts, and Arrington

COMMISSIONERS' PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**23-0467 Board of Commissioners**

Discussion: Open and Transparent Government **(Thorne) (HELD ON 7/12/23 AND 8/2/23) (DISCUSSED)**

23-0558 Board of Commissioners

Discussion: Proposal for review and update of Board of Commissioners' rules & procedures **(Barrett) (DISCUSSED)**

EXECUTIVE SESSION**23-0559 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: Vice-Chairman Ellis, Commissioners: Thorne, Barrett, Hall, Arrington, and Abdur-Rahman; County Manager Dick Anderson; County Attorney Y. Soo Jo; and Clerk to the Commission Tonya R. Grier. Chairman Pitts was absent.

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

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

Absent: Pitts

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RECESS MEETING
AUGUST 16, 2023
10:00 A.M.

Alexander Solution, LLC

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this meeting of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. Today is August 16, 2023. It is 10 o'clock a.m. Madam Clerk, please call the roll."

CLERK GRIER: "Chairman Robb Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Bridget Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Vice Chairman Bob Ellis. Commissioner Dana Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Present."

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

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Present."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 2, Consent Agenda **23-0519**, 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 Recess Meeting Agenda for separate consideration. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have one item to be removed for separate consideration as

requested by Chairman Pitts. On page 6, 23-0536, Real Estate and Asset Management: Request approval of a Resolution for a First Amendment to a lease agreement for the purpose of extending the lease term for office space for the operation of the Office of the Fulton County Tax Assessor. This item is removed from the Consent Agenda and to be heard after item 23-0507 on the Recess Meeting Agenda."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's it? All right, I'll entertain a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. A motion to approve by Commissioner Abdur Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote "

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

CLERK GRIER: "On the bottom of page 6, Recess Meeting Agenda, **23-0539**, Adoption of the Recess Meeting Agenda. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have amendments to today's Recess Meeting Agenda. First, on page -- item to be removed on page 11, 23-0510: Request approval of a Resolution to rescind a motion previously passed to refrain from taking any actions regarding the composition of the Board of Ethics. This item will be moved to the September 6th meeting sponsored by Chairman Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Meaning it's held. I'm asking it to be held."

CLERK GRIER: "Moved to the September 6th, yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And the reason is: We have not gotten a response from the Board of Ethics yet."

CLERK GRIER: "Items to be revised on the Recess Meeting Agenda; on page 8, 23-0545, Finance: Request approval of a Resolution adopting the 2023 Millage Rate. This item is revised to include the final 17.140 millage rate for the Fulton County School District. On page 7, 23-0502, Finance: Request approval of a Resolution establishing a reserve account designated for the Jail Bridging Plan and Replacement Jail construction cost. This item revised to include an amended Resolution. Items moved up on the Recess Meeting Agenda: On page 11, Commissioner Thorne would like to move up her discussion item, Open and Transparent Government, to be heard before her Action Item on page 11, 23-0512. Chairman Pitts has requested to move up three items on the Recess Meeting Agenda. On page 8, 23-0545: Request approval of Resolution adopting the 2023 Millage Rate, item to be heard after 23-0543, on page 7. 23-0507, County Manager, on page 10: Request approval of a contract to provide communications and engagement services. This item is to be moved up and heard after 0545. And the last item to be moved up, 23-0502: Approval of Resolution establishing a reserve account designated for the Jail Bridging Plan and Replacement Jail construction."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What page is that one on?"

CLERK GRIER: "Seven. And that item is to be heard after 23-0536. And that's all I have."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Repeat the order again."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. So the items moved up; it will be heard after the Millage Rate Public Hearing and it will be 23-0545."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Give the page number first."

CLERK GRIER: "545 on page 8, 507 on page 10, 536 --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- slow down. Slow down."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. 545, 0507, 0536, and 502. And that will come after Public Hearing."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: (Not on the mic.)

CLERK GRIER: "After 536."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: (Not on the mic.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is your mic on?"

CLERK GRIER: "Right. So, actually after -- what's -- Public Hearings, the 0543, that's when all the moved up items will be heard after 543."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And the order of those is 545, 507, then 502?"

CLERK GRIER: "536 and then 502."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion on the floor is to approve the agenda as amended. Motion to approve by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "23-0540, Ratification of Minutes, Regular Meeting Minutes, July 12th. Regular Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, August 2nd, and Special Call Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, August 2nd, 2023."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, it's seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. This is on the minutes. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 7, 23-0541, Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, there are no Proclamations or Presentations today.

Public Hearings 23-0542, 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.fultoncountygga.gov. Priority for public comment will be given to Fulton County citizens and those individuals representing businesses or organizations located within Fulton County. Speakers will be granted up to two minutes each. The public will not be allowed to yield or donate time to other speakers. The public comment portion of the meeting will not exceed 30 minutes. 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. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have received eight speaker cards here in Assembly Hall. Will the first five speakers, please come down: Ginger Bradshaw, Annie Bridges, Paul Hershey, Amber Connor, Vera Robert."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. As always, when you have 15 seconds remaining on your two minutes, I'll simply say 15 seconds. And that will be your clue to begin to conclude your remarks. It is 10:10; let's say 10:11 a.m."

GINGER BRADSHAW, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. I would like to comment that I'm completely embarrassed and very concerned that Fulton County is prosecuting people who question the government in America and Fulton County. We do not seem to be able to question the government, although there are laws on the books to allow for questioning. Of course, the obvious is the indictment of President Trump and those around him. But another suit of less visibility was heard on this Monday; I attended this. The Fulton County government sued Phil Chin for \$38,000 as the Fulton County government alleged he filed a frivolous lawsuit in an Election where he lost by 113 votes. I believe the suit was an effort to stop others who questioned things that go on from seeking justice and truth. The original ask from Mr. Chin was a hand recount of the ballots. Why was that denied? A hand recount would have settled the issue once and for all and saved Mr. Chin and the county from the

expense of two lawsuits. I'm sure all of you are aware of the Commission race in DeKalb County where the machine count, third-place candidate actually won the race when the ballots were hand counted. You, as a Body, run Fulton County. We, Fulton County citizens, deserve a government that looks after and protects the rights of all Fulton County citizens by following the law and not their own partisan agenda. So I would just appreciate it if y'all would go by the law and the people under you, advise them not to -- to try to settle things in --"

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

GINGER BRADSHAW, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and I got you -- than filing lawsuits. And if someone asks for a recount, give it to them. Thank you."

ANNIE BRIDGES, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Annie Bridges. I stand before you --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- come closer to the mic please, ma'am."

ANNIE BRIDGES, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. My name is Annie Bridges. I stay in Fulton County, Southeast Atlanta. And the reason I'm up here today, I'm calling about my taxes. For over 28 years in my house, I've been paying only \$14.75 on my taxes. And this year I've got a notice that you're asking for over \$1,200 for my taxes and for my home this year. Also, my son has an empty lot in Fulton County. This year, they're asking him to pay over 1,900 and he's paying -- now after these property taxes and they're asking for sewer. This is an empty lot. So I'm just addressing this issue because, you know, it's just an empty lot and they're asking him to pay sewer and property taxes on an empty lot over \$1,900; and that's in Fulton County. He stated that lies in Fulton County also. Thank you."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Paul Hershey. At the July meetings, I was recognized by the Chairman of the Commission. I made a motion that was seconded by the floor. I was recognized by the Chairman. That motion is following Robert's Rules of Order. I have not received any information back on that motion nor does anybody seem to know about it, but yet it's in the minutes, it should be in the minutes, and it was in the video. That motion was legal. I asked for specific items from this Commission, and I've not receive them. I want to know, A, when I'm going to receive them; and two, why weren't they acted upon? And the motion was legal. You recognized me from the floor, I made the statement that I now have the floor, you have recognized me, I followed Roberts Rules of Order. Commissioner Arrington knows Robert's Rule of Order and so does your County Attorney. Those motions were legal and binding. So I want to know what the answers are to those questions. Thank you."

AMBER CONNOR, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Priorities: The fact or condition of being regarded or treated as more important. Potholes, city affordability, and speaking of

affordability, I need to address our property taxes. I'm a big believer in capitalism; however, I do not agree with or condone the behaviors of crony capitalists. As we watch monopolies move together in a mass formation, we see many citizens getting left behind because of cost-of-living and one of the bigger cost are our property taxes. The promise of homeownership or land ownership seems to have been simply a talking point in order to garner votes to win elections. We can see now that our elected officials are walking lockstep into a huge globalist agenda headed by entities like Black Rock, Vanguard, Staple Street, and funded by NGOs and foundations. I do not know how these entities have gained control, but at this point, it looks like we have many elected officials that are compromised, black-mailed, or bought off. Now, we see how our government has integrated into our corporations and that -- it is at the very definition of fascism. Your government overreach and unconstitutional behavior has reached unprecedented levels. Yes, even heaven itself. Please remember that when we overreach as government when we have control, that when we lose control, someone else steps in our seats and they overreach as well. We should stop the madness, follow the Constitution, allow free speech, and not behave in such ways that later we get compromised, owned, and ruled over as we pretend to rule as our elected officials, and we have no say so."

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

AMBER CONNOR, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- as the elected official itself. So may God be with you and let us know if you need any help so we can make sure that you're not compromised anymore. Thank you."

VERA ROBERTS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I'm Vera Roberts. I came to talk about the taxes that have gone up so high. When they sent out the estimation of the tax, they did it different than they did last year. I didn't understand it. I'm 81 years old. So I sent in an appeal letter, and I probably checked the wrong thing off. I didn't mean to send nothing to hurt myself. I paid 5648 last year. The estimation of this year, 843.72. And I've been in my home, I believe, at least 50 years. And I just don't understand it. We want to live until Jesus call us home, you know. I want to keep my home, and I don't have much more to say. I sent an appeal letter. I don't know whether I checked the wrong thing, that 100 percent mileage, or 85 percent, But I didn't mean to send nothing to hurt my own self. So I wrote -- I gave them some space to write on. I told them I didn't understand it, it's confusing to me. So I thank you. I'm through already with my speech. Thank you. Have a good day."

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

CLERK GRIER: "Last three speakers in Assembly Hall; Mike Russell, Kenyanna Jones, and Michael Collins."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "My name is Mike Russell and I'm a resident of District 6. The lady who just spoke is the reason I'm here today. In my district, there are

plenty of folks who are suffering already who are barely keeping a roof over their head. Every week, I work with individuals -- this last week, a father of five, five daughters, can't pay his electric bill. 62-year-old with \$1,100 a month, 605 rent, which is going to go up if you raise these property taxes by your proposed 13 percent. How is she going to stay in her home if you raise property taxes by 13 percent? And I cannot understand for the life of me that you say you care for these people when we have record evictions in Fulton County. And Mr. Arrington says well, if we pass this, we'll have plenty of money. Well, Mr. Arrington, there's folks like this lady and this other lady up here, they don't have plenty of money. They're being put on the street. And this needs to stop. If you don't have a conscience, if you don't care about these people, then you ought to think about the next election because some of y'all are in trouble. You have ethical violations, you're up here acting like a bunch of petulant children calling each other names. You've completely ruined the hospital, because you did not act for years. And now you can't even decide how much to spend on the jail that's falling apart. This county is becoming a laughing stock of America. But the bottom line is, I don't care about Trump or any of that other stuff."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- I care about is the people in Fulton County, in my district, in my city, and y'all have a responsibility to do the right thing. And the right thing is to keep the current millage rate and do not raise taxes by one red cent."

KEYANNA JONES PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Reverend Keyanna Jones, and I am here to speak about the condition of the Fulton County Jail, the Fulton County Sheriff's office. I'm perplexed, and somebody used a good word earlier, compromised. What types of compromises have been made that there is a federal investigation into the Fulton County Jail, yet the Sheriff is still working? When other offices are under investigation, those who lead those offices are usually suspended. Now, there's a case that broke about a young man who was hired here despite a felony record, and you all watched an investigation into that young man, and I'm sure that that young man is probably suspended. But there should not have been any investigation into him. The investigation should have been into Commissioner Hall and whether she was following your hiring practices and policies and whoever's in HR. It's not his fault. He has a sealed record so that tells me that he made some moves and some things have been done legally, so he should be off the hook. But why do you keep letting Sheriff Labat off the hook when people are dying left and right in Fulton County Jail; and why in the world would you give more money for a new jail and he tearing that down. Y'all look just as dumb as the City of Atlanta trying build Cop City when they haven't taking care of what they had. And you see how the people are coming out, right? You know you gone be next. Because it's already happening. And don't make a mistake that because we get in the streets and we tell y'all what's really good that we don't have electoral policy in the back of our minds either. Don't think that we're not politically savvy just as much or not. Even more so than many of you. The

last thing that I want to say is that when I came out on Monday with a group of my comrades, we were walking down the street, we were encountered --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

KEYANNA JONES, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- by a group of Fulton County Sheriff's deputies. And what I saw was the saddest thing ever: a bunch of big black men over six feet walking up on me and pushing on me like I was a threat. The real threat is right there in your jail, get that Sheriff out of there."

MICHAEL COLLINS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Thank you. Hi, everybody. My name is Michael Collins, and I am the Senior Director for Government Affairs at Color of Change, one of the nation's largest racial justice organizations. Three months ago, I testified on the need for this Board to work together to address the systemic failures that's caused so many deaths and so much harm in Fulton County Jail. I remain concerned that this Commission is on a path to approving funding for new and bigger facility. We all know that what is happening in Fulton County Jail is a national tragedy. That's why the Department of Justice has opened a civil rights investigation into the conditions in the facility. Last week, as you know, the jail saw its six death in eight months, on Christopher Smith, aged only 34, was found dead in his cell. Court records show he had been waiting for three years and ten months for his trial. That should offer a clue to the problem the county is facing and perhaps a solution. Why is someone waiting almost four years for trial? Is this the norm at the jail? One problem I'm told is that the jail is full of people who have felony cases waiting to be indicted. And the person responsible for indicting felony cases is DA Fani Willis. Judges cannot stop work on a case until it's indicted. So the system is somewhat at the mercy of the DA. And if the cases that DA doesn't move, I'm told dryly that the focus is on people who are out of jail awaiting trial, rather than people who are in that terrible facility. This Body gave the DA \$5 million recently to relieve the backlog. Has progress been made? We encourage the Commission --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MICHAEL COLLINS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- to gather criminal justice stakeholders that will focus on lowering the jail population so we can work together and avoid the need for a two billion-dollar facility. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we have 29 speakers on Zoom. And I think they -- and they're wanting to speak for both public comment and the public hearing."

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

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good morning, Commissioners. I'm speaking for the public hearing. I'm Kevin Muldowney, a District 2 resident. I'm sure you'll all agree --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- excuse me, Mr. Muldowney. Excuse me one second. Repeat what you said, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "We have 29 speakers on Zoom and the majority want to speak for each, one for public comment and the public hearing on the millage rate."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "They want to speak for both?"

CLERK GRIER: "Yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Continue, Mr. --"

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- thanks, Chairman. My name is Kevin Muldowney, District 2 resident. I'm sure you all agree that most of your constituents is facing tough economic times. Inflation is at a forty-year high. Housing for many has become unaffordable, gasoline prices are on the rise. This is hardly a time to raise the millage rate. Due to this inflation, the value of our tax digest has increased handsomely. This is not the time to jack up our property taxes by almost 13 percent. What we need is a rollback, we already pay too much. The county just had a 20 million-dollar surplus, and this Board added another 40 million to the budget they couldn't cover. This is arrogant and irresponsible. This will necessitate raising taxes on all Fulton citizens from Ben Howard's seniors to young families struggling to afford housing, food, and gasoline. As Commissioner Arrington so eloquently said, it's all smoke and mirrors. We have a 15 million-dollar surplus. If we go from 9.1 to 9.33, we'll have another 15 million. Well, hell, let's just go to ten. That's pretty much a direct quote from a Commissioners meeting from earlier this year. This cavalier arrogant attitude has to stop. We need to get our fiscal house in order. Irresponsible spending and soaking the taxpayers for more money has to end. Thank you very much."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Derrick Blassingame."

DERRICK BLASSINGAME, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I'm Derrick Blassingame, next person to speak here. I appreciate the opportunity to address this Body. I'm Derrick Blasingame. I function as a governmental watchdog through the exercise of my First Amendment rights of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, and freedom to petition the government for redress of grievances. Today, I filed this petition for redress of grievances before you today, in reference to the tax increase that you all are leveling against the Fulton County residents. I am concerned for our elderly, our low income -- our low income homebuyers and our potential homebuyers, future tax bases, and so forth and so on. Fulton County, under the leadership of Democrats, has

been a tax-to-spend county for decades. This needs to end. My question to Fulton County taxpayers is has your life changed since the majority of your Democrat Commissioners are seated? Has your taxes gone down? Has the quality of your life gone -- increased? Has the quality of the cost of living in your community changed since Democrats have been leading this county? Property taxes increases are hallmarks of Democrat leadership. We have a rogue DA who spends frivolously on a witch hunt, political endeavors, while over 13,000 plus cases are pending indictment in Fulton County. Instead, the DA focusing on Fulton County issues and preventing crime, reducing crime in our county, she's attacking the former United States President. We also need to look at the -- I want also to say that I support Sheriff Labat. Every sheriff have challenges. He has turned that department around. You can feel it in the atmosphere. He has shown Fulton County residents that he is the top law-enforcement dog, and his command staff is superior to any other county besides here from Fulton County to Cincinnati. Has not one of you on this Body has a business mind to find another way to increase tax revenues of this county? Has not one of you on this Body has a business mind to find out a way to increase tax revenues for this county? Has not one of you have the ability or the fortitude or the gumption or compassion to --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DERRICK BLASSINGAME, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and clear your dissent that we will not levy another tax increase on Fulton County residents. That we will be creative and decisive. Derrick Blassingame, the government watchdog."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Seth Yelner. Seth Yelner."

SETH YELNER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, guys, Seth Yelner in Zone 6. I just got simple question. I just want to know why they increased this to 12 percent. I wanted know, you know, if this is the make up for the four million lawsuit? Is this the (inaudible.)? I'm wondering why do we can't pay, you know, (inaudible) (inaudible). \$5 million is a significant increase. Just, you know, I understand repairs, you know, renovation and all that is necessary, you know, with upkeep and all of that. But I just want to know like why so much (inaudible), that's really all I wanted to know today. This that -- this the (inaudible), you know, a bunch of abandoned buildings that could also be used for Cop City or, you know, to kind of preserve the course and what little that we have here. (inaudible) to explore. So that's all I have today. Thank you."

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

BEN HOWARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Greetings one and all. Ben Howard, Senior Advocate, Public Policy Analyst. The Fulton County Commissions on Elder affairs sets an example for other county boards and commissions by publishing the summary minutes of its meetings in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act. To the Department of Senior Services, if you were to itemize the categories in your monthly

reports and the fiscal year reports to the Commission on Elder Affairs Minutes, inquiring minds might investigate the rumored staffing shortages in one senior multipurpose facility kitchen. To the Housing Authority of Fulton County, please, correct your minutes. Ben Howard stated he would not – n-o-t be making an open records request simply to obtain Housing Authority bylaws. If the bylaws of the Housing Authority of DeKalb County can be made available to the public online, the Housing Authority of Fulton County ought not be a shrinking violet when it comes to full public transparency."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Florence Mcilwaine."

FLORENCE MCILWAINE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello. Good morning, everyone. I'm here as a concerned member of our community to ask that you do not increase our millage rate. Many of us are already facing financial challenges, and an increase in our millage rate will only add extra burden on the taxpayers of our city. While I understand that municipal revenues are essential for the effective functioning of our community, it is important to strike a balance between revenue generation and the financial well-being of our citizens. Increases in the millage rate would 100 percent impact the cost-of-living for individuals and families in our area. This would include homeowners as well as renters as their rental costs will have to go up. Raising the millage rate not only affect homeowners, but also local businesses that contributes significantly to our economy. Higher property taxes could lead to reduced spending power among residents petitioning them to decreased consumer spending that would ultimately negatively impact our local commerce. Our Fulton taxes are already incredibly high and instead of relying solely on increased taxation, I urge you to explore alternative avenues for revenue generation and cost-saving measures within the city's budget that will maintain the quality of services without continuously burdening the taxpayer. I implore you to prioritize the financial working of our community and seek ways to maintain a fair and sustainable balance between revenue needs and the ability of residents to bear the cost. Thank you for your time."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Althea Parker. Althea Parker. The next person to speak is Charise Morris. Charise Morris. The next person to speak is Dena DeGrafferreid. Dena DeGrafferreid. The next person to speak is J.Q. Beaman. J.Q. Beaman. The next person to speak is Janice Weston. Janice Weston. The next person to speak is Kathy King. Kathy King. The next person to speak is Joyce Lavinder. Joyce Lavinder. The next person to speak is Louise Geddes. Louise Geddes. The next person to speak is Nasima Camp. Nasima Camp. The next person to speak is Mona Freund. Mona Freund. The next person to speak is Shan Thomas. Shan Thomas. Shan Thomas? The next person to speak is Sharon Jackson. Sharon Jackson. Okay. I think that will do it for the Zoom comments. There is one person that has their hand raised for the public hearing."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, I'm not sure -- I'm not sure what happened, but this is one of the things we're going to talk about at this retreat that we're going to have. So

we have one more person. We got -- we got one more person on the regular public hearing; is that correct? All right, is that person on the line?"

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Actually, it's two. And I've pulled them up now. The first -- that person --

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Go ahead."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "That person is K. Bennett."

K. BENNETT, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Can you hear me?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

K. BENNETT, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. So I understand that in order to increase our taxes, we have to have three public meetings. On July 24th, on fultoncountyga.gov, it was advertised three meetings were going to be available on Zoom; August 2nd, 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Many residents of Center Hill attempted to join and those Zoom links did not work. I would like that two more meetings be held, or at least one more be held, because currently, it's one thing you can say, oh, we didn't used to have Zoom meetings. It's another thing to advertise that you're going to be able to join on these. People take time off their schedules to set aside to join because it's very important because their mortgages are going to go up, and they're unable to join. So I would very much like one or two or more meetings to occur, to allow these residents to join that tried to join on August 2nd when the Zoom links didn't work. So that's the first thing. The reason that the property tax increase affects us so much in Center Hill, you know, we are not a wealthy neighborhood. Many people our living on limited incomes. Many people have trouble getting employment. All of the prices have increased. You've drastically increased our property values, so we're paying a lot more taxes anyway because the property values are so much higher. So increasing the millage rate just makes it that much worse. In addition, food has increased, gas has increased, healthcare has increased; repairs to your house to your car. I mean, we have to have a car because there's -- we live in a --

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

K. BENNETT, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and what has not increased is salaries. So, you know, we're not making anymore more money yet we're being expected to pay more to try to keep our house. All right. Thank you."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Okay. There is two others. Wykeisha Howe. Wykeisha Howe."

WYKESHIA HOWE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. Can you hear me?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

WYKESHIA HOWE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: Okay, my name is Wykeisha Howe. I am a lifelong resident here in Atlanta, Georgia. Me and my family's first-time homeowners, and I heard about this increase through our -- I think, an MPU meeting, I think from my Commissioner, Natalie Hall's assistant. I want to say that I've been here all my life. I know a lot of you guys. I don't get to come down there, but I'm so sad to see this happen, because like the previous speakers, we are having a hard time just keeping up with life. And to increase our taxes -- I find that really troubling, and I find it hard to believe that like I just heard about this a few days ago. And, thankfully, I was able to hop on the meeting to do public comment, but we really need some more engagement around this, maybe some education on what resources that could be available to our communities. I think about my neighbors who are senior citizens, who cannot afford this increase. Like the previous public comment, I mean, everything is just so expensive. I just really hope you guys would just consider just not increasing their property taxes right now because all of us just can't afford it. And I know people would want to speak up about it, but it's a working day. If you have more engagement around this, we would greatly appreciate it. Thank you."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The last to speak is Nasima Camp. Nasima Camp."

NASIMA CAMP, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hello. Hello. Good morning, everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I was -- so I wanted to know if you all could provide a justification on why the taxes are going up so high; and, like, what is the plan forward? I also wanted to -- I bought my house, I bought in the West End in 2013. I use Investment Atlanta so that I could afford it, which I felt at the time was a blessing. I have enjoyed living in the West End, and I would like the opportunity to stay in the West End. But if your -- if the taxes are -- my taxes are already increased double to the point where my mortgage is higher, the taxes are higher than my mortgage. So what -- how do you all think people are supposed to sustain any type of living? Any type of anything? I'm not a homeowner who just bought in the last two years. Well, I didn't pay all of this tremendous amount of money for my home, so I live within my means. So I don't understand why is it that you all are increasing taxes to the point where it is completely unaffordable -- and is untenable. So what is the justification for this? I would like for you all to provide an explanation on why is it that you all are using taxes, property, homeowners --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

NASIMA CAMP, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- in the City of Atlanta to push people out of -- of the City of Atlanta. Thank you so much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is this the last speaker?"

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "This concludes the Zoom comments."

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

CLERK GRIER: " **23-0543**, Finance, Fiscal Year 2023 General Fund Millage Rate Public Hearing. We have received ten speaker cards here in Assembly Hall. Will the first five speakers, please come forward: Ginger Bradshaw, Earl Ferguson, Amber Connor, Paul Hershey, and Nancy Saunders."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, this is the third and final public hearing on the 2023 General Fund Millage Rate. It's 10:45 a.m."

GINGER BRADSHAW, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I want to thank y'all --

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- we'll open -- just a minute, ma'am. We're opening the public hearing on the millage rate, third and final public hearing on it. You have the floor."

GINGER BRADSHAW, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. Again, my name is Ginger. I live in Sandy Springs, and I want to thank y'all for having the two separate comments because there are many issues affecting us. I'm opposed to raising the millage rate. I agree, I don't think anyone has come on and said that they would like their -- the millage rate to be raised. As I mentioned earlier, you, as a Body, are responsible for running the county; and that's a huge task. It goes from the jail, to the DA, to the Board of Elections, and a lot of other things that I'm probably not even aware about. I used to -- you know, the infrastructure. I don't really know. But you all talk about, you know, the buzzword is affordable housing. We need affordable housing. Well, as you can hear from these people who have called in, you put in this millage rate and what was affordable is not going to be affordable, and these are real people, and these are real lives. It might not affect me as much, I'm sure it won't affect any of you sitting here as much. But Fulton County isn't just made up of the people in this room. A lot of the people can't come down here because they're out working, you know, an hourly job to pay their bills. So if you raise taxes, you'll put many people on the street, and is that what you really want on your watch? You gave five million to the DA and look what she's done with it? She hasn't improved as someone mentioned. The people in the jails are still in the jail because they can't get a court date. So spend the money at the present rate, I would even like to see a rollback. And spend it wisely and efficiently. I'd like to see y'all double --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

GINGER BRADSHAW, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- double down on some of these agencies that you're responsible for and tell them to cut their budgets. Thank you very much."

EARL FERGUSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Earl Ferguson, a Fulton County resident, and I'm here to represent AMAC, the Association of Mature American Citizens. We have -- we've organized by House District Chairs of U.S. House Districts. We have about 6,000 to 8,000, members in that district, not all of whom live in, of course, in Fulton County. My guess is about 6,000 missed -- as seniors we're either retired or we are looking at retirement; invariably that involves a fixed income provision. So this directly impacts senior citizens who are past working age. And to add insult in Fulton County, we must also continue to pay school tax, which is unfair, considering that our children, if we had them, are long gone in neighboring counties like Cobb do not charge the school tax. And I have neighbors that are moving out of Fulton County because of that. There is no justification for this increase in tax. It will have a severe impact on senior citizens and I request that it be denied. Thank you very much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next speaker."

AMBER CONNOR, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "These sneaky property taxes -- let me get this straight. So our government uses the excuse that the pandemic has caused city services to lag behind, and we are told we need to be patient about receiving the government services our taxes pay for; and in the same breath, we are told our taxes are going up. At this point, I do not trust how you are spending our money. Your overreach is abhorrent and debilitating to the very constituents you supposedly represent. So if the left and the right are in agreeance on property taxes, then the only thing that would make sense is that you were pushing to make most people renters in order to push for smart cities for the oligarchs from Davos, that's in Switzerland. Instead of your constituents, you took an oath to represent. Who knew that us as constituents would be put on the back burners so that you could go on vacations and be bought off and swear that you're going to look out for us as your constituents; as you sell out to the globalists, the globalist agenda, as if we have a king from another country who makes the decisions for our local government. My family lives here because this is the Civil Rights capitol of the world. It won't be any longer once the Hollywood of the South and the Davos people take it over. So just remember when you sell your own people out and the people who support it and love this city --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: " -- 15 seconds."

AMBER CONNOR, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- you know, we've warned you and any help you need from us is -- you don't have to sell it the globalists, please let us know, we'll be right there right there on the left and the right to help you."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "My name is Paul Hershey. I'm new to Fulton County. I live in Milton on Seabiscuit Lane. After my retirement from the Marine Corps, I managed gated communities from anywhere five to 15,000 homes, and they were all at different levels of economic values. The bottom line is the last one I had was \$25 million, that was their third home, and I'm hearing a motion now to put the jail in a

reserve? Are you telling me that Fulton County does not have a capital fund, and you're not adding to it? If I didn't meet that requirement in Nevada and again in Scottsdale, I went to jail because that was my fiduciary responsibility. I sit here and listened in January to your controller say that the millage rate should be a 8.7. Commissioner Arrington said, well, let's just move it to 9.3, and then he flippantly said, it's all smoke and mirrors. And then he turned around and said, well, let's just raise it ten and we'll have more money than we need. Where are you? Why are you -- you swore an oath to meet your fiduciary responsibility and you're not doing it. Who audits your books? There should be a third-party administrator auditing your books. The line items that you've got in your budget are not being followed. And number two is, is if you're going to -- if you're going to go after your constituents, make the budget readable to your constituents, because they have no idea of what's going on, and you have not met your requirements on when you added the \$38 million, that was not even -- that was not even authenticated to your constituents. So you violated that oath. And you sit up here and talk about ethics? I think you need to look in the mirror, all of you --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- because there's something missing here, and I really don't understand what it is. But you don't operate any -- you don't operate in like any community I've ever lived in. It's appalling."

NANCY SAUNDERS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Nancy Saunders, and I'm a long-term Fulton County resident and I'm also a retiree. And I'm just here to speak on behalf of so many of us who -- you've heard from all the folks who are really, really challenged. I know everybody's been challenged with the inflation rate. We've all had to struggle with it. And, you know, raising the millage rate really will put people out of their homes, people who have been in Fulton County forever. It's kind of a tax on unrealized gains; and those of us who don't plan to move, you know, until we have to, that it is a tax on something that just isn't real for us. And I know you've heard the people who we're just so-so challenged -- that nobody's -- nobody's untouched by the inflation rates and the different things we have to, you know, take care of and spend money on. But I really, really hope that you'll -- I know tax -- tax and death, I guess those are the two things that are a certainty in life. But the timing is really the biggest, biggest issue. I hope that you'll roll back the millage rate and give people who've just been crushed in the last two years in particular. Give people a little breathing room and a little light at the end of the tunnel. It's just not the time, you know, to greenlight a surplus, and we're seeing a \$10 billion surplus in this state to raise the millage rate. So please, please reconsider the timing and, you know, there will be other times, but we are all tightening belts, and I just hope you'll consider it at a different time. And thank you, I know these are tough decisions."

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers, please come down: Dr. Mai-Li Dong,, Victoria Salvia, Mike Russell, Debra Wathen, and Gibran Green."

DR. MAI-LI DONG, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I'm Mai-Li Dong and a Fulton County resident. Recently retired clinical physician, who has served the greater Atlanta area of South Fulton in particular. I consider it a mockery to Fulton County residents for the Board to consider -- even consider raising the millage rate. You know, everyone else has talked about the cost of living and many have expressed these issues that they cannot survive with anymore increase. So we need courageous leadership to administer with common sense our money. We residents must tighten our budget, and we expect likewise from the Commissioners. So, lower rather than raise our property taxes, while you cut excessive administrative spending. Tell everybody else to cut their spending; cut out pet projects and you can choose to redeem Fulton County from being a pejorative byword of mismanagement in Georgia and beyond. Thank you."

VICTORIA SALVIA, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Hi. My name is Victoria Salvia. I am a citizen journalist, blogger, media content creator, and member of the -- on the executive committee of the Libertarian Party of Georgia. I also happen to be an Uber driver to bring some extra cash in. So I happen to be in contact with every single kind of person all over the City of Atlanta and beyond, in the suburbs, everywhere. And believe me, lots of people love to talk to me. So, just in the past few days, I was in contact with a prisoner that just got released from the Fulton County -- from the jail system, a sex trafficker victim; also, a computer programmer from New York who works for a very high profile company. So basically, I only have a bit of time here. That what I heard from the prisoner who just got released, she was in jail because she missed a court date because her announcement for her court date was sent to the incorrect address, and she was in jail for 36 days; why is that? Also, the sex trafficker victim was in jail for 18 months because she had to kill out of self-defense the person, her perpetrator, who had kept her in prison for six years? She was sent to jail. Who else is being sent to jail? In addition to the Cop City that's being built, for more people to be on the streets to put people in jail. Also, I heard from the gentleman from New York, and I was reminded that actually the prison business is big business. The feds pay for the prisons and a lot of prisons are actually privately owned"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

VICTORIA SALVIA, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- So the taxpayers pay for the prisons to be built and then the private citizens get paid from the taxpayers to have these prisons done, so that's why it's big business to keep arresting people and keep them in jail. Thank you."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "You know when you're reading the Bible about how people in ancient times hated tax collectors? It's kind of hard to understand until you see what you guy's are trying to do, and then you understand it fully. People barely can make it to keep food on the table, to keep their lights on, a roof over their head and you are going to frivolously raise taxes, but you have a way out of this. You can go back and do your homework. You can go back and decide what needs to be cut. You can go back and prioritize that budget from A to Z. You can go back and do as has been

suggested many times and reevaluate how commercial multi- million-dollar commercial properties in this county are taxed. You haven't done your homework, and I implore you to go do that before you start putting people on the street. A lot of my seniors wanted to come down here today, but they couldn't because they're either at their doctor's appointments, or the ones who are still healthy are taking others to their doctor's appointments. But they're not going to forget this, and for those of you who are coming up on election next year, we're going to make sure they don't forget. I don't normally like to get emotional in public, but when I heard this lady talk and I witnessed this every single day, seniors in Grove Park, Center Hill, English Avenue, Vine City struggling just to make it day-to-day. And you're going to increase their property tax by 13 percent? Those people are going to be on the street. And then you have the audacity to say that you care about them. The proof is not in what you're saying, it is in what you do. You have an opportunity today to either one --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- the best thing is to keep the old tax rate. And if you can't do that, you need to table this motion until you've done your homework and come up with a better solution than putting people on the street. Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

DEBRA WATHEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I'm Debra Wathen, and although I chair the Buckhead Counsel of Neighborhoods, I come to you proudly as a senior citizen. And I really am -- I want to impress upon you that, you know, all taxes start in Fulton County start with Fulton County Assessor's Office, and they have raised our millage -- I mean our appraised values significantly. And so, there's already an increase there. And so, for you to raise the millage rate adds to that burden. And it just trickles down, you know, into our school tax, our city tax and so forth. So I really want to challenge you. You know, a lot of people have said and called you a lot of names today. But I'm calling you bright, intelligent people and say, I challenge you to go back to that budget and find a way to tighten your belt the way you're asking the Fulton County citizens to tackle, to tighten theirs. So I'm giving you that challenge today and I hope you'll take it. Thank you."

GIBRAN GREEN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Gibran Green. I'm a Fulton County resident. I want to say right now in the time that we're living in, there's a lot of division right now. But if you listen to everybody in this public hearing right now, everybody is united that they want you to roll back the millage rate. Think about the things that I'm going to say that you've heard echoed all morning long. Inflation is at a forty-year high. Our insurance is high. Our school board has raised our insurance. I've lived here four years. My mortgage has gone up \$400 a month, and I'm on a fixed income. I'm just one person. If you're for affordable housing like I hear a lot of people say that they are for affordable housing, this doesn't just affect obviously homeowners. It affect renters, it affects everybody. And right now, please, listen to the public. Please listen to everybody that's come up here before me and has

spoke on behalf of rolling back the millage rate. Right now, during these tough times, we don't eat out for dinner. We don't go on vacation. We're taking the steps that we have to make to get through these tough times. I'm urging you all to do the same thing. And to please listen to everybody that's come up here before me and echo the same thing that I've said, and roll back the millage rate, please, and stop raising our taxes. We need the help right now more than you could ever imagine. Please help us with this. Thank you very much for your time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. That's the tenth speaker. Anymore?"

CLERK GRIER: "We have two e-mailed comments."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "How many?"

REGINA WALLER, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The first e-mail comment is Joyce Lavinder. Given the financial strain of inflation on Fulton County families and the excessive reassessment of property values, the proposed millage rate for 2023 should be rolled back and reduced to below prior period. Commercial properties are undervalued and thus not contributing a fair share of tax revenues. Tax abatements for large projects should cease. These project owners have no long-term incentives to see the long-term economic success of the county. Large projects proposed by the County Jail should be funded via long-term financing, not out of residential property taxes, which should cover operating expenses. The county is too dependent on residential property taxes and should look for a more viable long-term model. The next public speaker.

Hello, this is from Zane Plessy, Chairman of the Libertarian Party of Fulton County. I regret that I cannot speak to you in person. The Fulton County Commissioners are planning to raise our taxes to spend \$1.7 billion on a new jail. For context, adjusted for inflation, Mercedes-Benz station cost \$1.79 billion to build. The Commissioners are building the Mercedes-Benz Stadium of jail and are reaching into your pocket to pay for it, not to mention that this vanity project comes on the heels of one of the inmates being eaten to death by bedbugs. Apparently, nothing short of \$1.7 billion can possibly prevent this from happening again. For the Commissioners, the formula is simple, squander any amount of money they get, then complain that they need even more. We should not be enabling this embarrassing behavior. This concludes the e-mail comments."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Anyone else in Assembly Hall who has not spoken who would like to be heard at this time? Anyone else?"

(Whereupon, no response from attendees was made.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. That concludes the public hearing. Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we will start with the first item that was moved up on today's Recess Meeting Agenda: On page 8, **23-0545**, Finance: Request approval of a Resolution adopting the 2023 Millage Rates."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Madam County -- strike that. CFO, anything you want to say at this time?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to notify the Board of Commissioners that we did provide the Board with a revision to the agenda item late yesterday evening to incorporate the information received from the Fulton County School District, which modified their recommended millage rate from 17.24 to 17.14 mills for the year. Other than that, what is before you is the millage rate for the General Fund, the Fulton Industrial District and the County Bond Fund. The General Fund is a proposed increase of .402 mills from 8.87 in 2022 to 9.272 in 2023. The Bond Fund is a reduction of .02 mills from .20 in 2022 to .18 in 2023. And the Fulton Industrial District also represents a reduction from 9.55 in 2022 to 9.34 in 2023. As you indicated earlier, Mr. Chairman, this was the last of our three legally required public hearings. And, at this point, I'm not sure if Mr. Anderson has any comments that he wants to make, but Mr. Oshikoya does have a one-page brief presentation for the Board."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Mr. Manager, anything?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "No, sir."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Sir."

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, DIRECTOR, FINANCE: Good morning, Commissioners. I'm not sure if the page is going to be displayed. Okay, Commissioners, while the page is being displayed; I just want to call your attention to the fact that at the Recess Meeting on August 16th, you approved a tentative millage rate of 9.2724 for us to use for advertisement. And since then, we have two notices that, you know, I have posted in agency as required by state law. We also had two public hearings with the third one, you know, that we just had this morning. Also, the Tax Assessor actually provided us the estimated appeal value of \$28.7 million from the initial amount that we presented to you in July. That initial amount was \$23.7 million. The Tax Commissioner advised us that our (inaudible) will only accept a three decimal digits. In other words, you know, the rate that you have approved before, which was 9.2724, the system will not allow us to have .2724. We can only do 2.272, if that's what you decide to approve. So for that reason, we are recommending a 9.272 millage rate for General Fund and we're recommending the millage rate of 9.34 for FID, which is the rollback rate for that district, and then 8.18 mill for the library dinner obligation binder, which is also the rollback rate for that fund. I'm just going to go over this presentation briefly with you. So we're doing that comparison with the comparison of two numbers, or the two millage rates, which

have the impact of each being provided to you at the bottom of the page. So with the 8.22 millage rate, which is our rollback rate, it will generate a total of \$595.8 million for us in current year tax revenue. That amount, when compared to what we have in the budget, in order for us to remain balanced we will be short by \$40.5 million. Because when the budget was approved in January, it was approved with \$636.4 million. So a rate of 8.22 millage would result in a shortfall of \$40.5 million in the budget, and that represents 6.37 percent of our budget for this year, and the impact of this would be – that'll be insufficient revenue in the amount of that \$40.5 million that I indicated. And in order for us to ensure that, you know, we remain balanced at the end of the year, we will have to institute some kind of spending control measures that, you know, we'll put in place. The problem with that is we only have about five more months left in the fiscal year for us to react, in order for us to be able to cover this \$40 million. If this had happened in January, then one could look at it and say that, you know, you have twelve months to do this; but, you a shortfall of this magnitude to recoup that in five months, and it's going to have significant impact on the level of services that we're able to provide. There will not be any additional funding for Jail Bridging Plan in the event that, you know, it is necessary. Also, there won't be any funding available for the jail reserve, which as the Board is going to be considering the Resolution after -- at discussion on the millage rate. And then for 2024 Budget, there will be limited funds available for us to use to provide that enhancement, in the event those requests are received from the departments for additional funds on their programs -- to fund their programs. The next one is at the rate that we're recommending which is the 9.272 mills. That rate, compared to the rollback rate of 12.8 percent, it would generate \$672.1 million, which is a difference of \$535.7 million to the amount that we have in the budget. That is 5.31 percent. What would this do to -- you know, for the county budget if we're able to get the approval, you would provide no sufficient revenue for that 2023 year, the current fiscal year that we're in; it will also help us in continuing to be able to manage county finances as well as we've been doing. And there will be funding available for Jail Bridging Plan, funding available for the jail reserve. This will be that 35.7 if the Board approves the Resolution that's coming up, the \$35.7 million that is showing there excess amount that is needed above the 636.4 that is squared to balance the budget this year. That will go to the jail reserve fund, which would be a documents toward the cost of the replacement jail. And then there will be improved revenue base for 2024 allowing us to do enhancements as required. That is what I have, Commissioners. If you have any questions, we are ready to respond accordingly."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Thank you, sir. So your recommendation is that we increase to go from, what is it?"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, DIRECTOR, FINANCE: "For 8.87 to 9.272."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "To go from 8.87 to 9.272. That's the department's -- administration's recommendation. All right, the lineup is as follows: Commissioner Thorne, Vice Chair Ellis, Commissioner Arrington, Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Commissioner Thorne, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you, Hakeem. I just had a question because the advertised five-year history of the levy, it says in 2018, the increase was zero, then 2019 went to 30.4 million; 2020, 20.9 million; 2021, 11.2 million, and then 2022, 15.5 million. And then 2023, it's 116 million -- 116.461 million. But on the slide, it's just saying the revenue generated is not that -- is not that much. I was wanting to know the difference in the numbers, but it's only generating --"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, DIRECTOR, FINANCE: "-- yes, Commissioner. The five-year is based on 100 percent of the value. And the amount that -- the \$35.7 million that, you know, we're showing, it's based on a couple of things. It's based on 96 percent collection rate, not the 100 percent, you know, collection rate. That's one thing. And also, there are several exemptions that we've taken into consideration in calculating that \$35.7 million that, you know, would be left. One of those exemptions is the TAD, you know which is the tax allocation district funding. Because when you use a hundred percent, it's a gross digest. However, from that gross digest, there are several adjustments that we make, when we're doing the calculation for, what exactly is coming into the county. And those calculations are based on the TAD exemptions, Homestead exemptions, and you know things of that nature. And also, we consider our mills, the \$28.7 million that, you know, I gave you as the value for mills. That is also -- you know, that was taken from the 116 that you're looking at, because, no, it's not something that's coming into the county. It's something that's going to be available to taxpayers in the event that, you know appeal, you know the property value. And the part (inaudible) says that, you know, they're -- I'm entitled to a certain amount of value back."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. It just seems like quite a -- quite a big jump, like over 10 times the amount compared to last year. I am a new Commissioner this year, but I remember listening to the millage rate meeting last year. So really, who cares about the millage rate? I mean really, who cares about this? Because you guys decided to roll it back to 8.87 last year. I mean, there was some compromises put in there, maybe a 9.0, maybe a 9.3. But yet, you guys decided to roll back, and the county team did a great job of trying to step into gear to cut back expenses to tighten their belt, to get to that 8.87 millage rate. But then, January, my second meeting as a Commissioner, all this spending came in because we had a \$22 million surplus. We had a \$22 million surplus. How dare we save that money? We know we have a jail, we know we have a huge capital expense, and all this does, in all these things got rolled in, and pretty soon we were \$20 million over budget. Mr. Anderson, CEO Anderson said that's never happened before. Like normally Commissioners try to stay constrained within the millage rate that they had just passed. But no, we were technically operating -- we raised your millage rate back in January when that budget was approved. We were operating at 9.37. So what does it matter about this millage rate hearing, if we can't control our spending? We heard about people -- we pay over a third of our budget goes into our safety partners. We pumped in \$75 million in ARPA money last year. In that budget, with that spending we gave an additional 16, 17, 18 million to our justice partners. Where is that money going? We have a DA that's over there on a

trial. I asked her how much does it cost? I hear people commenting and asking me all the time, how much is this costing us? I don't know. I haven't gotten an answer. But I do know that the average wait in our jail is 70 days when it should be about 28. I do know we have people dying in our jail. We have people dying -- somebody died just the other week. We have LaShawn Thompson, I know some people mentioned that in their public comment. We use taxpayer dollars. We don't have insurance. We use taxpayer dollars, \$4 million, to settle that lawsuit. People are dying while they're waiting for their indictments in jail. I look at the school taxes: The school's rollback, they went from 17.24 to 17.14, because it's still a raise on all the citizens from Fulton County Schools. The rollback rate was 15.95 million, so everyone's getting hit with school taxes. I was in a town hall last week with John's Creek and listening to those councilmen, how they watch every single penny they spend. Our cities are watching every single penny. They were talking about their pine straw contract and how they thought they could maybe lower their pine straw contract. Yet, we just throw money around like it's nothing. Oh, it's only 0.2 percent of our budget, I've heard. I don't care if it's 0.2 percent of our budget or if it's \$2.00 of our budget. As Commissioners, we're responsible for every single dollar that our taxpayers are paying us, and I don't see that up here. I don't see us being very responsible in our spending. We listen to all the people. A millage rate -- it may not affect you or I or some other people up here. It affects the low income, the fixed income people the most. The people who are spending 30 to 50 percent of their income to stay in their homes. The people who are trying to grapple with the inflation that's hitting everybody's pocket; the people that are grappling with they're not getting a raise in their salary to cover those costs, and now we're going to be taking more of their money. So I also look at the mortgage rates that have gone up. People are going to have to refinance, and now their mortgage rates are going up to boot, and their taxes are going up. We're going to be forcing people to leave their homes. To leave and move into a more affordable county than Fulton County who has one of the highest tax rates. So for me, who cares what we set the millage rate. We have got to control our spending. That is why I want to make a motion to fully roll back the rate to 8.22. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Ellis."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Thorne, could you place your motion in there so that I could second it?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I'll make a motion."

VICE CHAIR ELLIS: "Well, on the screen. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Your motion is --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- to rollback -- full rollback of the millage rate to 8.22."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "I'll second that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion on the floor by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Vice Chair Ellis to roll back the rate to 8.22. All right, Vice Chair Ellis, that's the motion on the floor."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And keep in mind the recommendation from the department was 9.272."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Yeah, just to follow up on a few different remarks. You know, this -- this Board did approve a budget, you know, on a 4 to 3 vote, that that did add in a bunch of spending that a lot of us weren't in favor of, or at least three of us weren't in favor of. See some of the manifestation of that in terms of the impact of that and what that means up on the screen right there. You know, but in addition to that, we've appropriated \$431 million, which I got this number from our finance folks earlier in the year, related to the various justice agencies. That's an increase of 16.5 percent over the prior year, unprecedented amount of additional funds for all the justice-related entities, sheriffs' courts, et cetera. What do we got as a result of that additional funding that's been applied? Worst results. I mean you'll see them in our operational report coming up. Nothing is better. We have what has been before us would be the equivalent of a catastrophe, right, on a natural disaster level. And instead of doubling down and going in and rolling up their sleeves and getting results, and seeing our jail population come down, seeing our average length of stay come down, seeing cases get processed faster; instead of that, we have gotten worse results, so it doesn't -- maybe it doesn't even matter what amount of money is given to them. Because the results -- I mean the results don't -- the results aren't improving. Instead, this is the kind of stuff that we get. Last week, what did we have? We shut off a street out here and sent a bunch of people home for we have like a weeklong snow day with no snow? What was the concern that people were going to get hit by a CNN van? For God's sake. I mean, if that happened in the public schools, parents would be up in arms. And that's the kind of stuff we get. We've got people running off to fancy conferences. We got public fights between two court officials. We got public spectacles such as this YSL trial. I mean, there's another event obviously that we're all aware of that a lot of people have a lot of strong feelings about on both sides of the issue. I get that. But I mean, in your bailiwick? It's supposed to be criminal prosecution? And we've got this circus of a YSL trial where you haven't even set a jury, and you've wasted how much in taxpayer money screwing around with this? If this is the tactics you want to take, you should be able to manage it. We've got the notations of the Destin jail. I mean just this past couple days ago whenever there was a reference, I saw the news story on Sunday, I wasn't aware of it. An individual died in the jail. They have been in there since 2019; October of 2019. The exact explicit reason we put all this additional investment into the court system dealing with things like Project Orca to get that kind of stuff through. Maybe this individual was guilty of the crimes that they were charged with, but by gosh, he probably should have been given due process and either found innocent or found guilty and

sentenced and moved on to where they should be; either out of our facility in, you know, an innocent let go, or guilty into a state facility for whatever sentencing they had. And we're rolling on three years, and this is the kind of stuff that manifests itself in our system. You know, and then we've got all kind of funding that we've laid into, you know, kind of our -- for detention officers, et cetera, which I'm in support of paying our detention officers more. I believe it's a tough job. They've got to be managed and supervised appropriately. Instead, we've been regaled with stories of overtime abuse, inappropriate relationships, lack of supervision, lack of monitoring of inmates, et cetera. If you're going to have funding, you better get results. The taxpayers expect it and they haven't gotten it. It is a personal affront to us as a Board who allocated the money and to taxpayers for the public misuse of funds that has occurred at the hands of our justice system. In addition to that, outside of the justice system and even within it, we've got a credibility problem with the public. And that credibility problem is created by elected officials engaging in public misconduct and abuse of office and abuse of funds. And there may be a lot of things that are needed, but the public doesn't trust us because of that kind of activity. And I am sick of it. I feel bad for our employees that work here who do a damn good job every day, who come in here with the right intentions of serving citizens, and then we just get out and out public misuse and abuse by elected officials; and that kills us from a credibility standpoint. Two things can be true: We may need a new jail facility and people can be underperforming and just not performing at all. I'm not going to support any kind of, you know, increase in the millage rate when we got all of this kind of stuff going on. I've seconded this 8.22. I think it's going to result in about, what did they say, \$40 million difference in terms of what we're going to need to make up, and you can take it out of the justice partners budgets whose were more increased most recently. And you take it out of some of the Commissioners budgets, too. You start with that. I would exclude the juvenile court, and I would exclude public defender, and the child attorney. Those folks aren't elected officials, and I believe that they're playing a very important role. But, you know, look, the other thing I'll say is -- well, actually, I'm just going to stop with that. And I hope this Board votes to rollback this thing to 8.22 and it deals with the hard choices of saying no to people who have come in here and asked for additional spending and then gone out and not used it in the way that it was intended; and then have them deal with the scarcity that they need to have to come to grips with so that they get the results that the citizens and the taxpayers deserve."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. It was the best of times; it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness. It was the epic of belief. It was the epic of incredulity. It was the season of light, it was the season of darkness. It was the spring of hope, and it was the winter of despair. Everything in this life depends on how we look at it and how we view it. Do I want the taxes to go up? No. Do I want my taxes to go up, no. And I want to thank the people that know how to make a presentation to us without attacking us. As many people have said, these are hard decisions that we have to make. If I'm voting selfishly, I'm going to

consider my pocket. If I vote selfishly, I'm only going to consider me and whether I want my taxes to go up. But I think that's selfish. Someone talked about the Sheriff -- we don't have any control over the Sheriff. He's a constitutional officer. Frankly, I think he's doing a pretty fine job. I think he inherited a facility that was already deteriorating. The experts say that the building has a 30-year shelf life, and the building was built in the 70s. So we're 20 years past the shelf life of that jail. The jail must be replaced. It costs -- it's going to cost about \$2 billion to replace the jail. And I know, I think the number was 1.68 or 1.7 somebody said; that's \$2 billion. We're going to have to find a way to finance that somehow, because we have to consider the fact that we are responsible for housing these people and making sure that they are housed humanely in a facility that is not -- not only deteriorating but unsanitary. We also have to make sure that there are options available -- alternatives to just putting people in jail. Because if putting people in jail was the answer, we'd already be at the solution. And the idea for the new jail is to have a facility that will allow for alternatives, and still be able to house the people that we unfortunately have to house. The people that are in our jail are there because the police have arrested them because they have violated state laws. They're there because they have been arrested by the police for violating the laws of the State of Georgia, which are established by the General Assembly. They're not in that jail because somebody said oh, let's go round some people up. The jail is empty, we need to put some people in the jail. They are in the jail because they have been arrested by the police. So where does that leave us? For me, I have to prioritize the life safety of the people that we are charged with housing over my own personal interest to have my taxes decreased. I feel I have a responsibility to those people that we have to house to make sure that they are housed in a facility that is not only sanitary, but has the capacity to accommodate the numbers that we are seeing. We don't exist in -- we don't exist in a vacuum. We exist in a real world. We cannot act like we did not have this little thing called COVID. How quickly we forget. I've been practicing law in this county for 27 years. Prior to COVID, it took two years for most cases to resolve based on my 27 years of experience working in the justice system. That's prior to COVID. COVID shut down the ability to have jury trials and for people to convene for two to three years. We can't forget that -- we just can't glaze over that when we have these discussions. We have to acknowledge that that happened and that we had to react to that. The other thing that we have to acknowledge is that the cost of everything has gone up now. The cost of labor, the cost of constructing the jail, the cost of hiring detention officers, sheriff's officers, everyone -- everything has gone up. And so, it's a untenable position to be placed in to have to make a decision where I probably will want -- this Board has voted over the last few years to roll back the rate. We've probably had a streak of eight years of rollbacks. So, again, I want to thank the people that know how to disagree without being disagreeable; and know how to put forth a point and make an intelligent point without attacking someone because this is not -- this is not about attacking people. This is about making decisions, and for people to say that they want to -- if you don't like the way that elected officials are operating, put your hat in the ring. Put your hat in the ring. If you don't like the way elected officials are operating, put your hat in the ring. But I guarantee you, be careful what you ask for. Be careful what you ask for because you just might get it. So, no one up here wants to displace any residents or seniors. No one

up here wants to force someone out the county. For me, I'm not going anywhere. People make choices. I'm not going to make a choice to leave my home city and my home county. That's just me. I'm not going to make that choice. So people say people forcing people out of the county that really doesn't make sense. People make choices about where they want to live and people may choose to live somewhere else and guess what, there may be some other people that come to choose to live here. Maybe -
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CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- Commissioner?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- that's just how it works. So, I'll stop there for now, but we've got a two-billion-dollar jail to pay for, and we've got to find a way to pay for that. We also have an issue with emergency care and its unavailability in this county, particularly in South Fulton and we've got to find a way to address that. Those are life safety issues. And so for me, I have to prioritize those life safety issues over other issues. So I'm not going to be able to support this recommendation. There's been at least eight years of rollbacks in a row. And with us facing the building of a two billion-dollar jail, and with us facing the emergency care problems and other life safety issues in South Fulton, I'm not going to be able to support the rollback despite the fact. It would be better for me personally; despite the fact that I don't want to pay a tax increase. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. It's a couple things I want to say, but I want to ask a question first of the County Manager. What will be the consequences if this Board goes with the rollback as opposed to the recommendation? What will be the consequences of that?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, ma'am. Let me give a little bit of perspective as we thought about this recommendation. Thank you for that question. First of all, these are questions I ask myself as a businessperson and then also if I were sitting in your seat. Number one, 9.27 is the only level where revenues match expenses. So, in other words, if we were running this in some kind of businesslike fashion, we would be interested in what generates breakeven. And that does generate breakeven. By the way, that level of expense is 33 million or so below the budget, which we have been able to achieve and project that we will achieve, and that's after absorbing the incremental expenses that we all are aware of coming from the situation at the jail and the Jail Bridging Plan. But again, 9.27 generates breakeven. Number two question I always asks is, does it leave us with a healthy fund balance? 9.27 leaves us at about 244 million in fund balance, which has been very consistently where we have been in the last several years. By taking it all the way back to the rollback rate is almost a hundred million less in fund balance. At 244, of course, what we have also coming up is a Resolution to reserve about 35 million of that for future expenses relating to the jail and 44 for expenses that, at this point in time, we don't know. And I think

having some level of cushion in addition to what we're required to have in fund balance makes sense. Number three question that, again, we attempt to ask ourselves and then provide you as the Board as much information as possible is, are we planning for the future or just the end of the year. Because I've said many times, it's fairly simple to get from here to the end of the year, generally speaking. Every time that this discussion is held, it's much more difficult when you look forward into the future, particularly with the nonsecutor of a \$1.685 billion jail which in and of itself, of course, equates to a 110 to 120 million at minimal, I think, in debt service cost; plus then whatever operating cost will come along with that expanded set of services that we would want to provide. So I do think if you're planning for the future, you'll have to take into account that it's difficult to take a step back, and then realizing that you're going to have to take, perhaps now two steps forward, in terms of what the millage rate requirements would be. The last question that we again attempt to ask ourselves, I think this one is probably the one where the most benefit occurs, and it is, given all of the above, can we offset the impact of the property tax payer? Because I think all of us should be interested, and each of you are obviously interested in that. And so, as we begin to thought through the answer to that, is I think we are doing a number of things. We did increase our loss distribution from the city, not much as we wanted, perhaps if, you know, if we could rewind the clock and have an objective view of that by the cities and obviously by the public itself, there was a billion dollars in incremental loss available over a ten-year period. I think I was asking Sharon to check. I think we got about 200 million of that allocated to us or about 20 million a year. The taxpayer would've been much better off for that billion to come to us to offset these unavoidable costs versus being spent on things that perhaps are not as critical. But nonetheless, we did get an incremental aspect or our incremental distribution that's helpful. This Board is also focused on TAD resources, and as we know as these TADs close, we're now putting those monies to the side planning for the future. I think that's extremely prudent and helpful. Number three, we are pursuing and had, I think, very productive meetings both with our lobbyist and with ACCG as it relates to the potential of a sales tax, at a fraction of a penny, full penny, all of which, of course, would spread that cost beyond just the property taxpayer to others that visit and come into Fulton County, and I think that holds the most promise. It's just a very difficult path, as we all know, to get through legislatively and with public having now done it on T-Splot. And then the final one is the one that, you know, still holds much promise, and that is, you know, aggressive cost reduction/ prioritization that this Board would have to direct us to do. Because when confronted, and I think bringing up COVID was a good case in point, you know, when confronted in March of 2020 and not knowing what we didn't know, relative to both the expenses that we'd likely would incur as well as the impact on tax revenues, we implemented very aggressive cost reduction, probably not sustainable over long periods of time and then offset on federal dollars that became available. But we do know how to do it, and that's the more short term, the prioritization effort meaning what do you want to spend money on and then not spend money on is, of course, the other lever to be pulled and one that could be pulled more aggressively. So it's a long answer to say if I were looking at it, I would take all of those into account: Does this keep us at breakeven? Does it give us a healthy fund balance or plan for the future? Are there more things that we could do to offset the impact on the taxpayer?

And so, from that perspective, rolling all the way back creates a situation where you are at a bare minimum of meeting the fund balance, and we will need to find a way to reduce further this projected expense to account for the fact that the revenues will be significantly lower."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You have nine minutes remaining."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Chairman, don't start. Because I want to have my time to speak. Now, with all due respect, because the County Manager, we pay him and we paid this team to tell us what's best that we need to do."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "His time is not counted against yours."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "But what I want to get off my chest is that nobody wants to pay more taxes. It is a sentiment shared by many individuals as the burden of taxation can often be seen as a hindrance of personal financial growth; however, it is equally important to recognize that an increased capital outlay is necessary to fulfill our responsibilities and meets the needs of our community. When we had this same issue a year ago, the Governor had to step in and give money to Grady. Well, the Governor was running for governor. I don't think the Governor is going to give Grady money this year. And so, when we make decisions that affect people, I have to look at everything my taxes are going to go up. But if a senior citizen or anyone, the lesser of these are affected by the decisions or our inability to make the hard decisions - see it's easy to come down here and make a decision when everybody agree; but when it's a disagreement, then you have to go to your executive leadership. You have to go to your County Manager. You have to ask where do we need to do better. First of all, let me say what we could do better at. We need a jail period, point, blank. And I sit here offended that since the last Board of Commissioners meeting, another death has happened and I had to find out on it on the news. As a sitting-elected official, I find out on the news that another person have lost their life. Now, I understand it. I get it. When we're talking about people and their taxes, I get it. When we're talking about people of brown and black, I get it. But we cannot continue to kick the can down the road when it comes to the jail. We're putting ourselves at a great risk -- DOJ, Department of Justice, is breathing down our neck. Would you prefer for us to give the solution or for them to give it? Because as a sitting member of this Body, I want us to find a solution. This is why I teamed up with Vice Chair and asked for accountability from the Sheriff. Now, let me be crystal clear about the Sheriff: I support the Sheriff, but that does not mean that I'm not going ask for accountability. Because at the end of the day, we have to all be stewards of taxpayer dollars. The thing that we seem to have when we come down here, is we make it a us versus them. Why can we not tighten our belt? We can. But it's not going to be enough, and that's the reality that I, as a sitting elected official, have to tell you; tightening our belts is not going to be enough. Do we have some processes that we can do better at, yes. Do we have some elected officials that don't realize that this is your money, yes. Because they don't carry themselves like it's your money. And then we become the enemy because the county has to pay out

because somebody didn't know how to act. So I say to you, as someone who understands my colleagues to the left and right, I agree with Commissioner Thorne that there is areas that we have to look at, that we have to tighten our belt. That's a reality. But I also understand we need a jail. I also understand when it comes to our seniors and the service of behavior health, we are just now getting ready to open up a behavior health, County Manager, and we needed that for how long? And we're just now opening it up because it got kicked down the road. You can say, well, the county was one place, the state was another; it doesn't matter. The need is there. Inflation does not take a day off with Fulton County government. We hit inflation too. So what I say to you is this: I can support tightening of a belt. I can support us making sure that we hold everyone accountable, including me. But I cannot, in good conscience, sit here and tell you that we cannot raise it. Cobb County had to do it. Gwinnett County know they have to do it. We have to do it if we're going to have a balanced budget, if we're going to be able to do the forecast past the end of 12/31/2023. But I'll be the first one to tell you, we have to do a better job of tightening our belts. We have to do a better job of holding accountability of all our constitutional officers; but we have to hold ourselves accountable with our decisions that we make or lack of decisions that we make. Because what we're doing is kicking the can down the road if we do not do what we need to do to be fiscally solvent at the county level, thank you."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all of my colleagues for, you know, expressing their beliefs and passion about this issue. I am not going to repeat a lot of what's already been said in the interest of time. But I do wish that we had kept the agenda in the order that it was originally published, because there were a couple of things that would have come before this that I think would have been helpful. And one of those was the County Manager's report actually, and I think there -- you know, there's been a lot of accusations about no forward progress in our justice system. And I think, you know, all of the reports we've seen month over month have shown that there has indeed been progress. Is it sometimes slower than we would like, yes. Are there certain areas that still need some improvement, yes. But in particular, I want to, you know, thank our DREAM office and, Joe, in particular -- I wanted thank Alfred on your team it was very helpful after a flood in my office yesterday. But I think you guys have done an incredible job in terms of responding to maintenance request around the jail. That is something I think we're doing quite well. And so if we again, as Commissioner Abdur-Rahman said, if we start to cut funding, does that change? Does that get cut? Does that make the conditions of the jail worse, as an example? We, you know, tightening our belt means, you know, a lot of different things, but it can also can have detrimental effects. We've heard one of our colleagues talk about taking all of that money back from the Justice Department. I'm not even sure how we would do that at this point in the year. To be clear, we're talking about a budget that we're already, you know eight and a half months into. So I guess that's a question for Madam CFO. And if we were to try to take \$40 million back from the Justice Department at this point, what would that even look like? Is that even something that could be done?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I would have to go and do the analysis on that, but the mechanics of it would be that we would have to sweep it back through a budget soundings process; pull it back and stick in nonagency so it wouldn't be spent. Yeah, I would have to go to look to see exactly how much of that could be pulled back."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Right. (inaudible) also, how much is left for the year and who would it come from and all of those things, right? So, it's easy to say that, but it's not necessarily as easy to achieve it. I think going back to the 8.22 rollback rate would be irresponsible. I think for people -- you know, I don't think a lot of people necessarily study what a rollback rate is, but essentially the rollback rate would negate all of the gains that happened in the tax digest. So, you know, we've heard a lot people in public comments speak about assessed values going up, and the 8.22 essentially says, we don't capture any of that. We put it back to where we're dollar controlled essentially. And it's just not something that we can afford to do, because in addition to everything else we do have inflationary costs. We do have increased population and all of our costs go up. Our, you know, we have the same expenses that are going up due to inflation for us as you all do. Anyway, I don't want to speak to far about all this. I just, you know, I just want to say that I think there a lot of things that we are being forced to spend money on, as my colleague to my right, Commissioner Abdur-Rahman said, that we are not in control of. I mean I understanding that we're an easy Body to come and speak to. And I appreciate that, and I really do appreciate hearing from everyone. The state could be doing a lot more. One of the public commenters mentioned, I think -- I think she said 10 billion that the state has in overage. I think it's actually -- I think it may be less than that. I think it's five, but six, okay. Thank you. But nonetheless, write to the governor; write to your state representatives. They have more than enough money to fully cover the cost of a new jail facility. So we're being asked to, you know, to fund this. And in order to do that, we need to potentially raise the millage rate, and they are sitting on your money from your income tax, and they don't need it. So, you know, the tax burden is not just property tax, it's all across the board. There are a variety of things we can go into detail by detail, all of that to say once again, I can't support 8.22. I just don't think it's responsible. I agree with all my colleagues that we can do a better job on our expenses. I also wanted to point out that one of the other places I really believe we could be doing a better job on, is the commercial property tax collection. And we have had a lot of discussions, not at this Board table, but behind the scenes, I've been spending a lot of time on this issue working with our External Affairs Department and looking at our legislative agenda, because once again, we can't do as much about that here at the county, but the state can. There are a number of state laws that contribute to the fact that we are not able to collect as much as we should be from the commercial properties. So, I'm asking all of you who are engaged and active to reach out to your state representatives and to the governor and ask them to look seriously in the next session at the laws that are hampering our tax assessors from properly collecting from those commercial properties. And I brought this up on a variety -- a couple times on this Board, and I, for whatever reason, my colleagues have not really wanted to engage on

this issue, maybe because we feel like there's nothing we can do here; it can only be done at the state level. But there are potentially -- there's potentially enough money there, or a good portion of it, to go towards these big expenses we have coming up to the debt service on the money we will likely have to borrow to build this 1.68 billion-dollar facility. So rather than casting blame at folks across the board, you know, it seems to me that we should be looking at ways to work together to make this better for you all and also so that we're providing the most efficient and effective government we have."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I want to make a substitute motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. And the motion on the floor; motioned by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Vice Chair Ellis, is to set the millage rate at 8.22 mills."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, I want to make a substitute motion that we adopt the recommendation put forth by our staff."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That would be the 9.272?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes. You know, part of the increase and reason we have to --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- let's see if we get a second. We have a motion -- all right. Motion by Commissioner Arrington to set the millage rate; substitute motion 9.272, seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "You know, it's unfortunate that we have to pay extra money and extra expense to block off a courthouse because there may be another attempt to overthrow the government. That is a shame. And, frankly, that burden, that financial burden, should be borne by the person who caused it, and not by the Fulton County taxpayers. Unfortunately, we have to bear that cost; we have to make the decision and have to pay that cost through use of tax money. We didn't know someone was going to try to overthrow the government on January 6th. We have people getting death threats; so there are extra expenses that have to be borne to make sure that those people stay safe. That's not our fault. I didn't try to go overthrow the government."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. (Chairman sounds gavel.)"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So, I know who you can blame, but it's not us. No one -- no one up here, that I know of, was at the Capitol on January 6th trying to overgrow the government. That's not our fault. None of us were there. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You done? All right. Now the motion on the floor is a substitute motion -- just a minute, y'all let me preside. The substitute motion on the floor by Commissioner Arrington, seconded by Commissioner Barrett is to set the rate at the recommended rate by the manager and his team, the 9.272. That's the motion on the floor. Commissioner Barrett, do you want to be heard?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yes, sorry, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to add one more thing to my earlier comments. And I had mentioned, wishing you had sort of stayed in the order of the agenda as it was originally presented to us, and the other reason I wanted that to happen, is because we had a Resolution that we were going to be looking at before this too, as we already heard, to say that any additional funds collected over and above the, you know, balanced budget amount would go into a specific fund that would only be able to be used -- and Mr. County Manager mentioned again, also for the building of this particular facility. And so, it would have been nice, I think, if we had considered that and hopefully passed that first just to avoid any confusion about the fact that we're not trying to just throw more money into a pot for whatever random spending, but in particular, if there is additional monies collected, that we would be using those specifically for the jail replacement building. And, in particular, I appreciate what you said, Mr. County Manager, about being sort of future focused. And that's not something that, from a financial perspective, we have done a lot of. And, in this case, we know we have this big expense coming, and we need to do everything we can to prepare for that. And I also just want to point out very quickly, is that the millage rate has been decreased every year. I have the numbers in front of me from 2016, so we were at 10.45 in 2016, 10.38 in 2017, 10.2 in 2018, 9.89 in 2019, 9.78 in 2020, 9.33 in 2021, and then 8.87 last year. And in the two years, 2021 and 2022, the last two years, in a period of high inflammation, we rolled back. So that caused us to tighten our belt in a way that was certainly challenging for our executive team and has sort of put us where we are today. If we had adjusted appropriately over the last several years, we would not be having this conversation at all, right now, likely. In any case, once again, I support Commissioner Arrington in taking the advice of the team that we pay to do all of the analysis for us and to figure out what are the best steps to move forward."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, the motion on the floor -- substitute motion, is to set the millage rate at 9.272. And at some point, we have to vote and talk it to death. We have not heard from Commissioner Hall. Commissioner Hall, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will start off by saying what I have been saying from the very beginning: I'm an absolute, no to increasing the taxes on the backs of our Fulton County homeowners. It is a hard decision that is not one that should be the burden added to the pockets and the pocketbooks of our residents. It is very evident from what we have heard so far that there is still open questions that need to be answered. One in particular is what are the other alternatives? This has been asked by many of the residents who've spoken today, and still there is a lot to be discussed. I asked at previous meetings about the county looking at the National

Association of Counties and asking them how have other counties actually been able to implement a new jail and not raise the property taxes on the backs of the property owners. I have not heard anything in response to that question. We do still need to look at what the seniors have consistently raised as an issue for them. They want to know about eliminating this school tax for seniors whose children are no longer in the school system. We still need to hear about that. So today, I would definitely not move forward with raising the property taxes on the backs of our residents. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, Commissioner. The motion on the floor -- the substitute motion on the floor is to set the millage rate at a 9.272. Let's vote."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That motion fails. Excuse me, please. Now, back to the main motion, that motion was made by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Ellis; was to set the rate at 8.22 mills. Vice Chair Ellis."

VICE CHAIR ELLIS: "Okay, just one thing before we cast our vote, Mr. Chair that I want to say on this is: If you cast your vote on this, I hope you back it up with your actions in terms of reduction in spending. The mindless trope about school tax which we don't have anything to do with, going to NACO and saying they're going to help us build the jail, which ain't going to happen. This is about figuring out how we're going to control spending and making the hard choices around it. So if you're going to cast your vote with it, I hope that you're going to be prepared to do the necessary work that's going to be required. I'll tell you one thing, I don't represent any residents of the City of Atlanta, but I got a lot of notes from several of them. One thing that does happen in the City of Atlanta is, you don't have floating homestead exemptions on all your taxes. You don't have it on school taxes necessarily. And you've got much higher millage rates for your city tax -- Atlanta City taxes as well as your school taxes. I looked at two comparable homes of individuals in a person outside, residing in North Fulton, similar valued home and in a person in Atlanta. Obviously, you know, their Fulton County millage rates are the same. Their cities and school taxes are different. A resident of the City of Atlanta is paying 60 percent more, 16,105 in the case that I was looking at, and the resident of North Fulton was paying about 10,275, similar valued homes and have been in there for similar periods of time. City of Atlanta residents are getting taxed out the wazoo. And, you know one thing that we can talk about, you know, raising -- you know, trying to do this with the legislature, asking the state to send us money, but there's \$60 million, 55 or 56, or whatever a million dollars is, whether it's sitting in Fulton County taxes that are paid by citizens. They're being rerouted into TADS in the City of Atlanta. We can say we're done with that. Bring it all in and fund this stuff and provide taxpayers relief. So if you're going to vote for this, be prepared to have that discussion and be prepared to seriously act upon it and not walk a tight rope about, I didn't vote for a tax increase, but yet I want to advocate for a lot more spending or I don't want to do the tough work in

terms of dealing with the challenge that that presents. So when you cast your vote, I hope you're prepared to actually follow through with the action that's required."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Barrett, the motion on the floor is 8.22."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I want to sort of second what Vice Chair Ellis just said. I appreciate that when Vice Chair Ellis said that he wanted to keep the rate at the 8.22, he -- well, I don't agree with the particular suggestions that he's given on where we find those dollars. I appreciate that he's at least giving suggestions for where we might find those dollars. I would ask that the others on the Board who are suggesting that we can move forward in a fiscally responsible manner at 8.22 would come in this meeting right now with how we're going to do that. So saying we're just not going to raise the tax at all, but approving a budget that had a lot of additional items in it and then not be willing to, you know, own up to that now, I just don't understand. So I would ask my colleagues who are going to support an 8.22 rollback rate to be very clear about what we're going to cut. And I mean very clear. Like let's give the questions to Madam CFO on specifically how many dollars we'd get if we cut X, Y, or Z. How much is left in this year's budget for X, Y, and Z to cut? I cannot support this. I think it's completely irresponsible. So I'm going to make a substitute motion to set the millage rate at 8.87."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. The substitute motion by Commissioner Barrett is to set the millage rate at 8.87. Seconded by Commissioner Hall. And the 8.87 would be what, Madam CFO, the status quo?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That's what the 2022 millage rate was, yes, Mr. Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. That's what I support. Do you want to be heard? All right. Commissioner Hall, do you want heard? You've separated. Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "And so, my question to you then, Madam CFO, is with that particular rate, where will that put us, as far as, our -- what we're trying to do with the jail and as far as operating until the end-of-the-year and moving forward? Where will that put us? I need to hear the numbers today in front of the cameras."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner, at the 8.87 millage rate, we would meet our revenue budget amount and, depending on how we end the year, our current best estimate today for our expense projection would leave us with roughly about 51 million in fund balance surplus of which 6.5 could be set aside into a jail construction reserve fund if approved. And we would still be able to meet our end-of-year fund balance reserve requirement."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: 'Okay. So, that I be crystal clear on this. With this 8. -- what did you say Commissioner?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "8.87."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "8.87. We're going to be able to do all the funding that we have in the budget for the rest of the year; is that correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Well, the numbers that I gave you were based on projected expenditures which are less than the budgeted amounts. So the budgeted amount is 897 million. We're currently projecting that we will spend roughly 865 million of that. But, yes, ma'am, at the 8.87, we will meet our revenue budget for the year, our current year property tax revenue budget for the year, assuming we have a 96 percent collection rate, of course, is something -- have to caveat it by saying if something happens with tax billings, and we don't hit the 96 percent collection rate, then we would have a timing difference between this year and next year. But, at that millage rate, it would generate another property tax billings that at the 96 percent collection rate, we should cover our budgeted revenues. And our current expense projection is less than budget, so that would leave us a little cushion to work with through the end-of-the-year."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "And so, thank you for adding in about the tax collection rate. My next question to you, as far as us going into the next year with the revenue that we need for the -- because we never want our revenue to -- balance rather, to fall under a certain amount of, you know, what is considered the best option as far as what amount we need to go into the next year. We will be fine with that, County Manager?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: (Nods head.)

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. All right. And as far as our Jail Bridging, what we're doing with that and everything, we still will be able to move forward? Okay, thank you."

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

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I'm just curious from -- I don't know where County Manager or CFO, if 8.87 is enough for us to meet everything, then why the recommendation of 9.272? Why put us in front of the target if 8.87 will get it?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "I think it's your definition of what getting it means. In other words, under 8.87, we would put into the jail reserve 6.5 million, based on the Resolution that's before you. If you went to 9.27, you would put into the general reserve 36 million. So one is better, you know, mathematically than the other. But it

doesn't say that 8.87 doesn't allow you to both, you know, basically meet the expense projections, have a fund balance, and a fund balance surplus, and contribute something to the jail fund. It's just less."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And thank you for that answer, Mr. Anderson. That's a great answer. I love it. Now, why is the recommendation for 36 million for the Jail Bridge fund instead of six million?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Well, the way it -- I probably didn't do a great job explaining my logic previously. But my view is, it's not necessarily just the difference between 36 million and 6 million, because 35.7 and 6.5. So let's say it's \$30 million. The bigger issue is you can look forward and absent some alternative revenue source like a sales tax, we have shown in painstaking details over these retreat meetings that the millage rate, a smooth millage rate to finance the expenditures that we anticipate, most notably the jail bed costs, will be about 10.4 in terms of mills. So you would either -- you're going to do one of two things; you're going to take a step fundamentally back to 8.87 from what you anticipated this year of 9.37, and then in the next year need to go to 10.4. So that's one scenario that will be implied in this decision, absent against any sales tax. Or you would be taking what I would see as more of a gradual path up -- just like a path down that we've taken over the last six years, it would be more gradual path up, because you would go from 8.87 this year to 9.27 to then 10.4. Otherwise, you're going to go down low and then back up. So that's the reason, if you want from a looking forward prospective that you would choose 9.27 versus 8.87. And again, it's always about more about the future than it is just the end of year, and that's why when answering the question about the end of year, almost any of these can work; 8.87 is better than 8.22 because we don't have to go find 40 million to take out of the expenses, so that's good. It's just, you know, in our view not as logical as a smooth up in accounting for the \$1.685 billion jail that's coming in the future."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you for that answer. I think it's helpful to me. I hope it was also helpful for the public. You know, I made the motion for the 9.272, so that's really where I am, but it sounds like that was already defeated. So perhaps the 8.87 is a good compromise in between the complete rollback and the recommendation, right? I personally would rather have the 36 million for the Jail Bridge fund rather than the 6.5, but that vote's already been cast, so. All right. Thank you."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to add: I supported the 9.272 because, in my mind, fiscal responsibility includes a future view. When we think about being fiscally responsible in our households, we don't ignore the fact that we will need to someday send our kids to college or retire. We put money aside for that. And so, to me, I agree with Commissioner Arrington. Putting this money aside now to be used next year in the coming four to five years towards this major set of expenses we have, not only with the Jail Bridging Plan or Replacement Jail, but the healthcare expenses and, et cetera, et cetera, I think is the fiscally responsible choice; that said, does not seem to have the support here, which is why I went to the 8.87. But

for me any -- you know a point or percentage point that we can inch up is just more money that we're putting aside to be fiscally responsible in terms of the future -- the short-term future, the next five years. So I would be happy to go a little higher if anybody's willing, but that's why I put up 8.87."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. It sounds as though the will of the Board, at least the tea leaves I'm reading, is going to be the 8.87. Now, I'm going to go with that, but I would be less than who I am if I don't openly say -- now, you're saying that you're not going to put certain things on the backs of the taxpayers, and you're not going to do this, and you're not going to do that; well, when it comes to budget time, stop putting in special friends in special projects and all of that. Because you can't show one face one time and another face another time. Because, if we continue to have people to die in the jail, we're being fiscally irresponsible. We need a jail. We need a well-ran jail and we need some diversion. And so, to sit up here when the cameras are rolling and say, oh, I'm not going to do that, I'm not going to do this, I'm not going to do that, and then next year, oh, let me put in this, I want 250 thousand for this, I want 300 thousand for this, I want 400 thousand for this; stop playing with the taxpayers, because they see what you're doing. You got two faces you're talking out of, and you do a disservice when you come here with your colleagues who are really truly - all of us, some way or another, are trying to find a way to balance this budget. But you can't say one thing and your actions say another. If you say you want to balance it when it's time for the budget, stop putting in stuff that you know that we're not going to be able to fund just because you want somebody to help you with your reelection campaign. Y'all, don't to hear me. Y'all don't hear me right now. So I'm going to repeat this. Stop playing with the taxpaying citizens of Fulton County. You're saying not to put it in now, oh, we can't put it in now, and then when it comes to budget time and we got this great leadership team over here that works at our direction and then we want to come and tell them, oh, I want to put in ABCDEFG at budget time. Stop playing with the Fulton County taxpaying citizens. I'm going to support this County Manager. Chairman I'm going to support this, but I'm also going to ask for the tape to be rolled back when it's time for budget time, thank you."

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I'll be brief. Planning for the future, for years, you know this jail is coming. We knew that we had this jail when we passed the budget when four people up here passed the budget, we knew. And now all of a sudden, oh, give us more money, because we're planning for the future. Oh, we want to be fiscally responsible now. We weren't fiscally responsible back in January when we voted for that budget where everything was thrown in. And now I'm being told that I'm fiscally irresponsible for wanting to roll the millage rate back. I'm offended by that statement, especially since so much fiscal irresponsibility was given back in January. I refuse to be told that it's fiscally irresponsible. I think we can trim the budget. Yes, the TADS like Commissioner

Ellis said, those TADS that we put all over those millions of dollars of taxpayer money, why not every penny come back to us now? But, no, there's some of us that sit on boards, we don't want to give Atlanta, we don't want to hurt their TADS in any way. We close the TAD and then reopened it back up again. Fulton County Schools has pulled out of TADS because they don't see the need to fund it anymore, so now it's only us and the City of Atlanta in some of these TADS. It's the taxpayers of all Fulton County that are in these TADS. We need to maybe relook that. I'm not saying close all of them, but there's some of them to have great -- they're funded, they don't have any more projects. We need to look at income from other sources, not the backs of the taxpayers. I want to be fiscally responsible. I want to protect the taxpayers. There were comments made that, you know, we approved a clinic for 15 million; it's only 2 percent of our budget. I don't care. Fifteen million is a lot, especially when you look at how our cities run their government. We need to be fiscally responsible with our money, and I feel like if we pass a millage rate that's low, it's going to force us to be fiscally responsibility because no telling what's going to happen when the budget season comes around in January. Are they just going to ignore this millage rate like they did last year? They can do that. I think we need to tighten any new -- I think we need to cut back. I think we need to do whatever we can to help the property owners. Yeah, you know, we make a choice to live in Fulton County. Some people here are making that choice for them. They're not going to be able to afford here. They're not going to be able to have the choice to live here. They're going to be forced to leave. There will be gentrification of the neighborhoods, because we're forcing people to leave. That's all I have to say. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The motion on the floor is to approve the rate at 8.87. Let's vote. "

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "The next item that was moved up is on page 10, **23-0507**, County Manager: Request approval of a contract in an amount not to exceed \$385,000 to provide communications and engagement services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, any comments Mr. Manager or self-explanatory? Well, I do have a question then we'll get to the Vice Chair. The caption reads approval of a contract on behalf of the Office of the County Manager and the Fulton County Sheriff's Office. Now, what does that mean?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, sir. I think -- brief comments. I think we have worked together to recommend this assistance and particularly during this period, when we feel like we are both challenged in the current environment with

conditions at the jail; but we also need to again think to the future in terms of generating confidence in the public that we are managing the situation and planning appropriately, so we have worked together. The signator on the contract, the owner of the contract, Mr. Chairman, is you as the signator and the owner is the Board of Commissioners. I would say, just as a brief background: We thought several weeks ago, three, I think, Jessica, you can remind me -- that this might be an emergency purchase given the conditions that we were facing, and the Jail Bridging Plan that we put together. You will recall having a fifth pillar, which was communications. After consulting with the purchasing director and the County Attorney, we think the more prudent course, we thought the more prudent course, was to bring that forward as a standard procurement, and we have asked other firms for a response on this and only received one from CBW, or CBW was the only firm that responded. They are a world-renowned firm in this arena, having dealt with the Tylenol crisis and other issues. We also believe that they can be very helpful in terms of clear messaging, disciplined delivery, and an alignment around what the issues are. And I hope that the Board will give favorable consideration to this. And the last thing I would say is, Mr. Chairman, as you remember from our meeting with the Mayor of Atlanta, and talking about things in general as this came up, he cautioned us specifically about paying a great deal of attention to this area, perhaps spending, you know, two to three times this amount based on their experience with their public safety training center and the reaction in getting behind the power curve of public opinion with that. So that's why this is before you now. It cannot be an EPO, this firm has been working -- they are working with both the Sheriff's Office and us in the context of this Jail Bridging Plan."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, my only comment though, Mr. Manager, this would be a contract between Fulton County or the Board of Commissioners and this firm, if at all and not the Office of the County Manager and the Fulton County Sheriff."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, sir."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's all I have to say on it."

DICK ANDERSON: "Yes, sir. That's the way the contract is written."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "But that's not what the caption said."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "I agree. And I explicitly decided not to change the caption from when it was first on the agenda."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So what is it? Is it as is written here? That's how?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "No, sir. The contract is written with you as the signator, and the contract is with the Board of Commissioners. So the Sheriff --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Here is incorrect?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Well, I guess it's a distinction without a difference in my mind. But nonetheless, the contract is between the Board of Commissioners and CBW."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "We need to straighten this out then because I'm not going to sign it otherwise."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, it's not a distinction without a difference. We need to know. The Sheriff is a constitutional officer, so if it's with the Sheriff or if it's with us, we need to know."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Vice Chair Ellis, I'm not going to support it if it stays the same."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Yeah, understood. I'm going to start with a motion to deny it."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'll second that motion."

VICE CHAIR ELLIS: "Okay. So you've got that recorded a motion to deny with me approving that; and Chairman Pitts has seconded it, correct?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. All right before we get to that, Mr. Chair, I want to clarify for the Clerk that you have recorded our previous vote as also, not only addressing the Fulton County General Fund Millage Rate, but also the other millage rates that were noted in that Resolution."

CLERK GRIER: "Correct, alone with the school."

VICE CHAIR ELLIS: "School, Bond Rate, or acceptance of the school's rate, our Bond Rate and then our approval of the FID Rates."

CLERK GRIER: "That is correct, yes."

VICE CHAIR ELLIS: "Okay, all right. All right. Well, I'll speak on this issue. I definitely think this it's a motion to deny this. I don't know why we're spending \$385,000 to allocate -- you know, allocate that for basically spend purposes. I mean I'm looking at this thing, telling our positive story, putting together editorial calendar for pitches to target reporters. You know, PowerPoint, focus on introducing messengers to key techniques for handling challenging questions. Well, I would like an official -- we've spent a lot of money on this stuff. Tell your own story. Tell what we've done. We've allocated a bunch of money, you know, if we want to get into some sort of serious thing

about how we're going to utilize, you know, a firm to help us with a very clear strategy about how we would go out and present, you know, construction of the jail, funding of that, have public meetings and all this sort of stuff, that's one thing. But this right here -- we just talked about fiscal responsibility, you know, ad nauseum, this is just throwing money in the trash."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. The motion on the floor is to deny."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "A couple of things I -- I don't understand why the heading was there, County Manager. I don't know if that was just a oversight or whatever, but I would caution us in giving the appearance that constitutional officers can sign off on contracts. My understanding in the three short years that I've been here is that the Chairman signs off on the contract. And so, I would be very careful that we do not give that in any way, shape, or form from my opinion, okay. Because I can only speak for myself that we should not even have that on there. But I do have a question. You know, sometimes, I take the position that if I'm tempted to say something not to, and to say it when I'm not tempted. However, this is not one of those times. I don't think, as much as I support the Sheriff, that he has had the ability to tell the story and get it out there like it needs to get out there; and that's not to put him under the bus or anything. That's being a sitting elected official and know that at the end of the day, we are tied to the Sheriff just like we're tied to the DA. If you don't believe that, y'all need to see the amount of calls I've got threatening my life yesterday. So what I'm saying to you, County Manager, maybe somebody on the team, please explain to me why we need this, because at this point, sitting in this chair today, I am not comfortable with the Sheriff Department telling Fulton County's story. I'm not. And I'm just -- I just got to be honest about that. So what is the purpose of this or more importantly, what benefit will it be to this Body for us to do this?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, I thank you for that question. And I'm sorry about the messages you're getting, I've seen that across the county. So several months ago, in June, when the Jail Bridging Plan was presented, we began talking to this Board about the need for communication around the replacement jail specifically, and around the investments that Board of Commissioners is making along with coordination with the Sheriff's Office to improve conditions today in the Fulton County Jail. So Mr. Davis and his team, for example, have been doing a maintenance blitz and making improvements within the facility. You, at your last meeting, chose to give direction to move forward with the facility, in the midst of that. So we -- when we first started talking about this, our intention was to focus on proactive messaging to help the community understand what those dollars are going for, so things like fact sheets, developing a webpage, FAQs, information factual timely information, to help people understand what's happening and what you, as a Board are doing to address the concerns. The Sheriff, as you said, we are working in lockstep. Mr. Davis cannot have a crew come into the jail unless the Sheriff's office has been able to work with him to move inmates to another area. So it's

a very cooperative effort with all of our teams. In the midst of that, since we started that discussion in June, we've had several high-profile stories, I'll just say it that way; and we have been under increased scrutiny; and we're also seeing a greater demand for information from people inside Fulton County, such as people who spoke at public comment today, and reporters from all over the world. We are finding it challenging to meet that demand for information, and that is why we accelerated this process to engage an agency to work with us to develop those communications. I understand that the perception sometimes a public relation work, is that it is that not substantive. I feel differently about that work. I feel that this is really designed to help us provide factual information, help people understand the investments in diversion programs, help people understand the investments in capital work. We have to work collaboratively with the Sheriff's Office, otherwise we're telling two different stories two different ways, and it is -- there has to be one source of truth, and I think that's what we're working toward. I understand that there are many elected officials with seven of you, the Sheriff, other people in the justice system. And I understand that sometimes they're going to be messages that compete with each other. That's just how it is. But I think our work is really designed to develop a set of common facts and information that the public can rely on."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "So, County Manager, I'm going to tell you what my perception of this is, and you are free to tell me if I'm wrong, and if I don't have the correct understanding. My perception of this particular contract is to make sure that we have the key stakeholders in place to make sure that the correct information is going out to work with the Sheriff's office, given the -- given the height of -- that we've had multiple things happen almost back to back to back. We probably need to have a team in place to make sure that we are on top of this. My concern that I want to be addressed today is that we tell our story. That Fulton County tells the story. We can do it collaboratively, but we need to assure that we are telling the story, presenting the facts, presenting what's going on; but it is still a contract that would be signed by the chairman; is that correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. Chairman, I don't know, if I'm incorrect, you can tell me if I'm incorrect. I want to make a substitute motion that we do this, but we make sure that the contract is one that's only -- that your name is on it or the applicable of what we've been doing in the past. Because I feel very strongly that this is needed, especially at this time. Especially at this time. If we ever needed this in place, we need it now. But we need to be in control of it. I mean, I'm just being candid with you. And so, Chairman, I would offer a substitute motion that we enter into this contract with just your name -- you as this signatory on it. That's my substitute motion."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is there a second?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Can I just speak for a second? I will second it, but with some friendly amendments or possibly hold it, one of the two. So I'm going to say second."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, I was going say I need more clarification because the Chairman signs all contracts. So I don't know what the distinction is that the Chair is responsible for signing all of the contracts, so I don't."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Well, the only reason I said that, Commissioner Arrington is that because this agenda went out and it had something differently than what is going to be done. And so that's the only reason that I offered up what I offered up. I hear what you're saying, and contrary to what it may have said on the agenda, the fact of the matter is the Chairman is going to sign it. The Sheriff is not signing it, but if one of our constituents has this agenda, they would not get that from them. And so, that is the reason that I put that forward. And also, I'm making an assumption, but I don't want to make an assumption. Is this not time sensitive?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "The firm is already working for us, because we thought it was going to be an emergency purchase. It is time sensitive. Either we need to fish or cut bait. But what I would ask you to do is think of this and vote it up and down on its merits. In other words, if you think we need these services, it's -- the contract is positioned just like you want it to be positioned. And that is, it's with the Board of Commissioners with the Chairman signing. I take responsibility for the phrasing, if you will, of the agenda item, but the reason it is phrased like that is to ensure that you know, as well as the Sheriff knows, that this is, in its best case is to have a single set of messages, not two competing messages that are going out. Yes, it is a contract with the Board, but as we've been working, I think it would be highly detrimental to have conflicting messages from two aspects of Fulton County, the Fulton County government and Fulton County Sheriff's Office. So that's why it was phrased in that matter. And if that creates a problem, I apologize for that. The contract itself though is exactly what you're -- I hear you're saying that you're asking for it. That's separate and apart from do you even think this is valuable? And that's, to my mind, the true thing to vote for, is this of value."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. And County Manager, let me go on record saying from my position, I don't want this to be adversarial. I think this is good to make sure that we're working together. We know that we cannot tell the Sheriff how to run the jail. That is his responsibility, and there may be some things that we can't be lockstep with him on that's a reality of a constitutional officer. So my premise of putting this in now is to make sure that we collaboratively work together with him, but we make sure that we're doing the work, that we make sure that we have the people in place, and there is a set goal of collaboration, but making sure that the correct story and not competing stories are getting out."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "I think that is absolutely our intent, Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you, Chairman. So the \$385,000 is going to come out of where? What budget?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It's included in the funds that we've set aside for a Jail Bridging Plan."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "It's out of the Jail Bridging Plan, okay. So the 6.5 million or whatever, we just voted and approved or --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "No, ma'am. We've already gone through and made some budgetary sweeps to identify the funds for the Jail Bridging Plan. So that's where it will come from."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. So it's \$385,000 until the end of the year. That's three and a half months. So how much is it going to be next year, because I assume this is going to continue for a long time?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Commissioner, I think that's a very important question. We have not, and at this time, requested a cost going into next year. So I would suggest -- that would be a next step in the process that after whatever the Board decides to do today, that that would be a next step to carry us into the next year."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Also, like I know, back in October of 2020, before the election, you hired -- just brought on staff, somebody to help with messaging with the elections, not really knowing that you were going to have immediately like why don't we hire somebody? Because I know your office is overwhelmed and would it be beneficial just for your office to hire an additional employee or two just to work on the jail communications."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Commissioner, certainly I think that's something that we're considering as we prepare our budget requests. In 2020, we assigned a staff member who was already employed, but we did not hire additional staff for that purpose. We did engage, you know, advertising, paid advertising in an app and some other things. But we didn't have, as I recall, -- it's kind of a blur. But I don't recall us having a new position. But certainly this is something that we are sensitive to, the justice system in general. We are seeing lots of -- lots of interest in telling, you know, a cohesive story about how our justice system works. And I think the public has a great deal of interest in that. And so that's something that we, as we prepare our 2024 budget submission, we will consider."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, I would think it would be beneficial, especially if this it's a \$400,000 expenditure for a quarter of a year, less than a quarter of year, and if we're going to quadruple that in 2024, you know, we're looking at 1.6 million for 2024. So I think it would be very responsible if we start looking to hire not have this outsourced."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Let me be real clear now. In addition, I have two problems. Number one the caption and, number two, I don't believe under any circumstances that this contract is even needed at this time, to be real clear about my position. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I want to say, Jessica, thank you for all of the work you have been doing around this issue for quite some time and all. I know you guys have a lot on your plate, and you are, you know, trying to coordinate with the Sheriff's office, and I know a lot of this has been challenging, especially with all the incidents that have occurred. So I certainly see the need for collaborative communications; and I think when I said I would second Commissioner Abdur-Rahman's motion, it was because I support the idea that being a standard contract just signed by the chairman and not anyone else, but also I was sort of trying to say that I felt like there was more needed substantively in the scope of work, in the presentation that Vice Chair Ellis was I think reading from, that was sent to us in e-mail. My main concern, I think, is that there wasn't anything listed I saw, and please correct me if I'm wrong, about the community engagement piece, in particular making sure that we're hearing it's not just us speaking about us listening, and that we're getting information back on a regular basis from the community and the various activities and such that have an interest in what we're doing here. So that's an important piece of it I didn't see listed there. And then, you know, other thing is, it is expensive, and so we are and we just came through with this long conversation about the millage rate and all that, I did some back of the napkin math. I don't have it in front of me right now, but the number of days logged in this year and the price per day and per month, and I believe it was something like 80,000 a month. And so I would sort of agree with Commissioner Thorne, in a perfect world, we would have our own staff member that, you know, was working on this. Because I see this need going on for not just the next few months, but certainly at least the next few years logically. So maybe in my mind I would be, okay, with us doing this through the end of the year because we are sort of in this important moment, shall we say, but that we look to getting our own person in next year's budget trained and ready to go or maybe half way through next year, whatever the appropriate thing is. That would be where my head is on all that."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Thank you. I think that's great feedback. I just, I want to mention, specifically, on the community engagement because I think that what we've what we seen -- I'm an Atlanta resident, like many of

you, I see what's happening around us, and the very intense engagement around public safety issues. And so I think that very attuned to that, and one piece of the work that has -- we have started, as the Manager mentioned, we have begun work, is there really robust stakeholder engagement identification looking at because we have many, many groups of people who have an interest in and a voice in this issue. So, you know, the advocacy groups you mentioned, taxpayers across the county, clergy who have been working within the jail, you know, there are many others, Legislators, because I know this Board has expressed an interest in the sales tax. We need to let our Legislators know the scope and breath of the issues we're facing as they consider a sales tax as a part of our funding package. So, just wanted to mention those things that that work absolutely would be part of it, and working with all of you in that stakeholder engagement."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Sorry. Yeah, so I, as I said, I think I'm in this -- I'm okay with the spirit of it. I just want to make sure we're getting really some strong clarification on exactly what we're getting for the money."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So that's kind of where I land on that."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, I was going to ask was this bid, and how do we get with them? But I guess, with the emergency thing is how it came up. I think it's probably best if we just hold this, because 100,000 a month is a lot of money. That's like, 20 people at \$5,000 a month."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is that going to be your motion, to hold?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, but --"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I second."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- I'm -- my motion is to hold. Like, I don't know what is the hourly rate? How many hours are we getting per month? Like what -- there's not enough information for me to make an informed decision. And so I would rather hold it than to just deny it, and maybe there's an opportunity to present some

additional information that might make something make sense. But I don't know that hiring 20 people at \$5,000 a month will ever make sense."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Well, let's dispose of the --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Mr. Chairman, and with that -- with, you accepted a friendly amendment to the hold motion and also any work being done with them be suspended until it's brought forward and we make a decision. I don't want us to be paying them in the interim, while we're waiting around --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "He said, yes."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay, thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Everybody understands the motion, properly made and second -- now, anything is better than approving it today. All right, so let's vote on the motion to hold. And no further work."

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

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "Next item will be on the consent agenda on page 6."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Chairman. Who pulled this off the agenda?"

CLERK GRIER: "Chairman Pitts."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. The Chairman pulled this off? Can you ask him if he wants this to be -- is this a time-sensitive item?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, DREAM: "Yes, it is."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Not really sure why it was pulled off, appears to be time sensitive. The -- you've sound that item? We have anybody in the queue that wants to speak on this particular issue?"

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. On page 6, **23-0536**, Real Estate and Asset Management, request approval of a resolution for a first amendment lease agreement for the purpose of extending the lease term for office space for the operations of the office of the Fulton County Tax Assessor."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I can speak to this a little bit because I did have a conversation with the Chairman about it yesterday, and I also spoke to the County Manager's team about it yesterday. And I think, I had some initial concerns when I was reading over the consent agenda, and especially in light of the fact that we were very much going to be talking today about, you know, tighten our belts and all of that, that we are leasing space and it looked like a long-term lease for approximately, I believe, it's about 800,000. Do I have that number right? I think it's 800,000 a year for the next five years, 70,000 a month, something like that. So my question to the County Manager, when I initially met with him was, you know, why are we doing this? Is there a way to consolidate the Tax Assessor, you know, into this building, which doesn't seem to be full when you're walking around day to day, that's just anecdotally. And so I, you know, I was sort of glad to see that the Chairman asked to have this pulled off. Because the answer I got from the County Manager yesterday, I think, really satisfied my questions. So I'm going to kind of ask you to reiterate a little bit, Mr. County Manager, the conversation we had, the plans to bring the Tax Assessors back into this building, et cetera, et cetera."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, ma'am, thank you. So if everyone will recall, we have an overall modernization and pandemic proofing plan for 141 being funded from the ARPA funds, 28 million that you allocated now, a couple years ago. When that space, when this space is reconfigured and updated, modernized, we're anticipating about 50 percent of the employees will be here on a full-time basis. The rest will be supported in a, more of a remote work, hoteling, touchdown space arena. With that space being available, the Tax Assessor's office will move back here. And that will be a major component, I think, in improving customer service for that function, giving the citizen a one-stop shop with the Tax Commissioner and Tax Assessor being located at 141 Pryor. The other part of that plan is to also move the functions that are at 137 Peachtree today, to the Central Library. It's another utilization of underutilized spaced at Central Library, and that includes the Community Development Group, the Ryan White staff, and Senior Services, I think that's it, right, Dr. Roshell? So, when that group moves into the Central Library, the next, if you will, thing to happen is make 137 available for the expansion of our justice partners. They also have to leased space in some cases, and are also pretty constrained in the space that they're in. So they will move into 137 Pryor. So those three fundamental big moves, the Tax Assessor moving back here once this building is reconfigured, the folks at 137 moving to the library, and then the justice partners who need additional space, taking 137 would kind of complete, if you will, the maximization of owned space in downtown. And -- excuse me -- and then the lease, I'm sorry, which really brings this question up, Joe can explain further, as

well as any specifics on the timing of those moves is, we have the ability to terminate for convenience. So we're not signing up for a multiyear, we're signing up for purposes of having space available for them at their current location until this renovation work is completed."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So a couple follow-up questions, we -- the ability to terminate doesn't come with any penalties or anything like that?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, DREAM: "Commissioner, yes, there are penalties in the lease, which is typical in the industry. And those penalties are tied to whether or not we intend to use any tenant improvement money provided by the landlord. So if we do not use tenant improvement monies and we move forward with terminating the lease, for example, in the first year of the lease, if we notify the landlord that we'll be terminating late next year, we have a penalty of \$361,000. That penalty steps down to \$190,000 if we don't use any tenant improvement funds between now and that time. And we don't have any plans to build out the space any further than it already is. So ultimately, our penalty would be \$190,000 for terminating the lease."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Does that stay the same year over year? Does it depend on when we terminate?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, DREAM: "It goes down with each (indiscernible) year."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "That would make sense, okay. So that's not ideal, obviously, but I don't know that we have a choice to do anything else. Is there any way, Mr. County Manager, that we can accelerate the plan to get the Tax Assessors back over here?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "I'll ask, Joe, if you can just give a brief update on the moving parts that go into the modernization of this building. I think this will answer the question."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, DREAM: "So the RFP for the design-build services for the restacking plan, as the County Manager indicated, not only covers the Government Center, but also the Central Library build out. That is currently on the streak with a closing or deadline of September the 6th. Our goal will be to review those proposals, and make a recommendation to come to the Board no later than the first meeting in November, preferably the second meeting in October. At which point, with the time frame for contract execution, we're looking at beginning demolition by the end of the first quarter of 2024. Right now, our intent is to do the library renovation and the tenth floor of the Government Center Tower simultaneously. However, we are leaving the door

open, based upon the overall time land -- timeline of accelerating by including more floors simultaneously. So are plan was to originally do those two. But we may get into the design-build process and determine that it's best for us to go ahead and do three floors at a time."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you. One last question, on the savings from whenever we're able to get out of the lease situation, Madam CFO, I guess this is directed to you, do we -- have we incorporated those savings into our five-year outlook in terms of spending?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I don't think we've built that in yet to the model, because we really didn't have a date certain yet for -- for that. But we can certainly, once the design-build team is on board and we have that mapped out a little better, we can go in and update our model for that. But certainly, we would, you know, show that in the model, reduce those costs, and have those funds available to use for offsetting some of the other costs that are going to be incremental."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, I mean I realize, percentage-wise it's not a huge part of what we're looking at in terms of the replacement jail, et cetera. But it'd be good to know if we're able to save a couple of million even. Every dollar counts, so it'd be good to know. And as I mentioned, Mr. County Manager, when we spoke yesterday, and you know, this is sort of just a, kind of a wide-open directive for a future date, but I think it would be helpful to have a review of kind of our -- our real estate assets in the bigger picture of what we have, what things are costing, what we're leasing. And just so we can have an understanding of how much money is going into those things and if there are areas that we could be more frugal. So anyway, that's all I've got on that."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "When is the lease up? If it's an emergency that we get this passed today."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, DREAM: "The lease ends, terminates currently, December 31st of 2023. So we have a provision that indicates that we normally will notify the landlord by October. So we're simply trying to move forward with the renewal of the lease and not incur any current-year penalties."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. But we need to approve it today? We can't hold it for when Chairman Pitts is here? Because I met with him over this topic as well, and I know he had concerns."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, DREAM: "I'll ask Mr. Dimond, our Deputy Director, to comment towards the sense of urgency."

TIM DIMOND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DREAM: "Good morning. Tim Dimond, Deputy Director. The landlord has held the rate, and they're very anxious in that sense for us to accept that rate. So what I'm worried about is if we delay it, they may escalate the rental rate to us for the lease because it's not executed. So we're trying to avoid the additional sums of money that might occur as a result of a rate increase that he might put in place if we don't execute the lease."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Anything further? Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "So basically, what you're saying is, if we don't move on it today, you could possibly go back and they may escalate it and we -- this is to mitigate, maybe to keep, make sure that we don't incur additional costs. I think that's what I heard from you."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "That's -- to me, that's the emergency. Because even though we may have until October, if they decide, as a landlord, to say, hey, we got somebody else, this deal is off, you know? So I would -- I would say in that --"

TIM DIMOND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DREAM: "It could absolutely be the case --"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Yeah."

TIM DIMOND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DREAM: "-- due to the fact that we expire in December."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. All right, thank you. That's what I wanted to make sure that my colleagues understood that. Thank you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay, thank you. Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I just want to make a comment. Commercial leases are down especially in the city of Atlanta, I think it's 30 percent vacancy rate, 19 percent up in Alpharetta. So I -- I don't know, maybe they can threaten to raise the rate on us, and it's just inconvenience to move. But it seems like they might even want to give us a bargain rate to stay in longer, given that the commercial property is struggling right now. People are foreclosing on buildings right now."

TIM DIMOND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DREAM: "They are. But the rate that we're being -- the rate that we are paying for this lease is well below market. So we are realizing the significance in the market relative to our rental rate, and have achieved a very fair rate from where the rents were and still are in some parts of the city."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay, anything further? All right, it's a motion on the floor to approve by Commissioner Barrett, and seconded by Commissioner Arrington."

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

CLERK GRIER: "Last item moved up is on page 7, **23-0502**, Finance, Request approval of a resolution establishing a reserve account designated for the Jail Bridging Plan and replacement jail construction costs, as amended."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Mr. Manager, you want to outline or Madam CFO, kind of outline the changes and what this entails? I think you had provided us a memo."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Vice Chairman. We did circulate this revision yesterday, incorporated with a memo outlining the revisions that were made to the resolution as a result of this discussion at the last Board meeting. So we did clarify that the replacement jail facility cost is 1.685 billion. The use of the jail reserve would be limited to cost pertaining to planning, designing, and construction of the replacement jail. We had changed the millage rate from 9.2724 to the 9.272 for the same reason that Mr. Oshikoya referenced in his remarks about the millage rate. If this item is approved now, we would need to change that millage rate to what was just approved, 8.87. And then we change the potential revenue amount that could go into the jail reserve to approximately 35 million, which is what would have been reflected based on that 9.272 millage rate. So that amount will decline as well. And then we added in a provision that the jail reserve could also be funded through additional measures in the future if funds became available. Those were the primary changes to the resolution. And I think Mr. Oshikoya has indicated that the County Attorney's office has asked that we also change --"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "The title."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- the title of the resolution?"

HAKEEM OSHIKOYA, FINANCE DIRECTOR: "Yes, to, I believe we have \$636 million in the title. So instead of 636, it will be 636.4. So that amount will correspond with the amount we have in the body of the resolution itself."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. A lot of changes. We got a motion to approve this as amended. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah, I'm going to offer a substantive motion to hold. It sounds like a lot of changes and adjustments that still may need to be made based upon the vote that we just did earlier. So unless there is a reason or a rush to do this, then I'll rather hold and wait."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Any objection, or anybody like to speak on that motion to hold? Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I don't think the changes that were made, and correct me if I'm wrong, materially changed with the 8.87. I think there were sort of examples in there about the 9.272 and how much money it would net. But the wording is to my reading still says, any overage, essentially over the budgeted amount, budgeted revenue amount, would go in there; is that correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, ma'am. The intent of the resolution is to establish a fund balance reserve where we would place any property tax revenue receipts above the budgeted amount at the 96 percent collection rate."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Right. And the verbiage that is in there now, while it doesn't reflect the millage rate we approved, doesn't -- what's in there now, doesn't actually change what's going to happen?"

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So I would say, there's really not really a reason to hold. I mean, I -- ideally, this -- this, it could go forward as is. I don't think it changes anything. It's not an issue for me."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Duly noted with Commissioner Barrett's comments. Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Yes. Vice Chair, I think for the sake of transparency for the public, there is one, two, possible, three changes. And if it's not pressing and it can wait two weeks, I think -- I understand it, and probably everybody else up here understands it to -- to what Commissioner Barrett is saying. But because of the fact that we want to make sure that those that follow our agenda, those that look at things that we do, make sure they have the correct information, and so -- or understanding, or time for questions. And so if it -- if it won't do us a disservice to hold it to the next meeting, I -- I'm in full support of it. But any time I see here two or three

more changes, I just automatically, for the sake of public, just decide we would -- we may need to hold it."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "So that is my reason --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- that -- behind holding it."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right, duly noted. We got a motion on the floor to hold, seconded, properly moved and seconded. Let's vote."

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

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "What's the next item? Is it the operational report?"

CLERK GRIER: "Yes."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioners, I -- I'd make a recommendation that we hold -- we finish up the action items first, and then we can kind of come back to the operational report. Is there any objection to that? No objection? Can you sound the next item, next action item."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay, on page 8."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Yeah. So this starts with the budget soundings, right?"

CLERK GRIER: "Correct."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

CLERK GRIER: "**23-0546**, Request approval of the August 16th, 2023 budget soundings."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Any discussion? Properly moved and seconded."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'd like if the CFO can just --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- state those for the record for the public."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Madam CFO."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's one item before you today. It is a change to the annual hardware-software maintenance list. It is a request to increase the spending authority for AML item number 32, Neighborly software in an amount of \$1,800, to bring the total for FY2023 to \$11,800. It is budget neutral. This is for spending authority only, no additional resources needed."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Anything further? Any questions, comments? Hearing none."

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

CLERK GRIER: "23-0547, Request approval of the 2024 premium rates for the Medical/Pharmacy, Dental/Vision Plan."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioners, before we jump into this, just to sort put this on the floor. I know many of us have gotten -- I think we all got memos, many of us have been briefed by our Finance team on all healthcare items, which start at 0547 and continue through 0552. Do we want to take those as a block, or do people want to hear individual discussions on these?"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Can we take it as a block?"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Is any objection to taking these as a block? Can you sound them all as a block?"

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. 23 --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "What -- which ones are we doing?"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "This would be beginning with item 0547, and continuing through 0552. And these are all related to health, dental, vision, pharmacy rates, plans, et cetera, approval."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "No objection."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

CLERK GRIER: "23-0547, Request approval of the 2024 premium rates for the Medical/Pharmacy, Dental/Vision Plan. 23-0548, Request approval to renew existing

contracts to provide medical and pharmacy benefits. 23-0549, Request approval to renew an existing contract to provide accident, critical illness, hospital indemnity, whole life, and flexible spending accounts. 23-0550, Request approval to renew existing contracts, employee healthcare benefits to eligible employees, retirees, beneficiaries, and their covered dependents. On page 9, 23-0551, Request approval to renew existing contract, vision benefits. 23-0552, Request approval to renew existing contracts for employee healthcare benefit plans."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. All items have been sounded. We've got a motion on the floor to approve by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by Commissioner Thorne."

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

CLERK GRIER: "23-0553, Real Estate and Asset Management request approval to increase the spending authority to provide replacement of the two SAGE glass curtain wall panels at the Fulton County Juvenile Court building."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Any discussion? Properly moved and seconded, let's vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "23-0554, Request approval to increase spending authority in the amount of \$155,000 to provide corrective action plans for investigation of the underground storage tanks."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Properly moved and seconded, any discussion? Let's vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 10, under Health and Human Services, 23-0508 Community Development request approval of a contract between Fulton County and Fulton County Schools in the amount of \$250,000 to support Community School Initiative."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. I'm in the queue on this. I don't know if others want to get in the queue, but I'm going to offer up a -- we have -- we do have a motion on the floor to approve by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman and seconded by

Commissioner Hall. I'm going to offer a substitute motion to deny. We had a discussion about this at the previous meeting. And I think we also discussed, you know, at nauseam again, sort of fiscal responsibility. This was an item that was added on in our budget, nonspecific, just a general amount to be allocated to -- to programs with -- in jointly with Fulton County Schools. Fulton County Schools has a millage rate that's double ours. Their responsibility is to educate the students. They have their distinct responsibilities, we have ours. I'm in support of this program, it's a nice program. But I don't think this is a responsibility of Fulton County Government. And given the challenges that we have before us that we need to focus on in terms of principally funding our main responsibilities, I think it's irresponsible for us to go outside of the scope and engage in extracurricular spending that's not required of us. And that motion to deny is seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Vice Chair. We left off with trying -- well, least, let me say, I, left off with trying to get additional information, which I did. But for the sake of transparency, Dr. Roshell, if you would explain where this is, how we are invested in it, and if we don't, what possible -- I don't know, I think -- I think -- well, go ahead, I'm going to let you -- because I have a follow up --"

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

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- question. Go ahead."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, ma'am. Thank you for the question. So, the Safe Center is a program that is a part of the Fulton County School System. The objective is to assist students in two ways: One, recover from the learning loss, due to COVID. And number two, to provide resources that are non-academic to help students excel in school. It is developed around a community school framework, which primarily means that the funding model for this program comes from a variety of sources. This particular initiative is funded through the Department of Education along with CARES and American Rescue Plan dollars received by Fulton County Schools. The program also looks to the community to help support this initiative."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "And so, to make sure this -- was this a add-on, or was this something that we had already decided on?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "It was a Commissioner item that was added on and approved during the January budget process."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. That's what I thought. So my understanding, this is a collaboration, okay, so is it true that other entities, the City or whether other stakeholders actually provide funding as well?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, ma'am. So the funding model, because it is a community school framework, they look to federal sources and local community sources for funding for this initiative."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. I've seen the work that they do. And here again, you said this was a Commissioners' added-on item during the budget?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, ma'am, and then it was assigned to a department because of the nature of the -- it was assigned to Community Development because it is a Department of Education item. And we have the Department of Youth and programs within that, that department. So that's how it ended up in Community Development."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. This -- this does great work. I've seen the one in South Fulton. And I've seen, not only the work that it's -- that's being done, but I've seen just how the students and the teachers have begin to see benefits of it. But I will be remiss if I did not bring it to my colleagues' attention, unintended consequences, because we just got through talking about the millage rate. And so now, you put stuff in that's needed, that's clearly needed, and then we task the County Manager and the executive team to go in and find the money for it, and then we come back and say, oh, well, no, I'm not going to put -- put -- I'm going to go with another amount, not that amount. I support this because I know the hard work that's being done in the community, and I know that this is a collaborative effort. It's not just Fulton County, it's other partners that are at the table. But we have unintended consequences of our actions when we flip-flop, when we put in something that is well needed, it is needed, it is needed. And we -- we sat here today and listened to, you know, the colleagues here, say, you put something in at budget time and then your vote doesn't reflect it, and you don't stand behind something that you put in. And now, students got to possibly suffer for it. This is tomfoolery at best. So I'm going to support this, but I don't support the foolishness of why we're at this juncture of this may not pass today, I hope it does. I hope I can win over my colleagues, because it is needed. It is so, so needed, and I have seen the results of it. But here again, unintended consequences of actions we take when we do one thing, and then come and do another. So I support this, but, hey, we're here now because of what we were talking earlier."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Had a lot of discussion on this. Got a motion on the floor to deny, got a couple -- couple more folks in the queue. So maybe we can express ourselves and take a vote, one way or the other. Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you, Vice Chair. So Dr. Roshell, when we notified them of the funding, we have this \$250,000 to give you, they had to come up with an area where to assign that funding, correct?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Because I visited the Safe Center. I was at the opening of the one in North Springs. This is only for three schools; it only serves three Fulton County Schools. And it is, it's an amazing program. I agree with you, Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, what they do is amazing. But at the opening, I was asking about the funding, and it seemed that their program was fully funded through grants, community groups, I think, Goddard was in there providing fresh food. They had counselors, they had staff hired. It was a very well-run operation. And I was encouraged that they had so much funding. But I also went and listened to their School Board meeting when they were setting their millage rate last week. And they were proposing a 17.24 rate. The rollback rate was 15.95. And someone proposed a 17.04 rate, just 0.2 reduction, and they shot it down. Even -- they didn't have anything they needed to spend it on. You know, their reserve, they had more than they're required by law in their reserves. At one point -- I mean, I heard it's kind of a moving target day to day, but they had \$600 million in their reserves, I was told by a board member. They had plenty of money, their enrollment is down less than it was in 1990. They have less students. So they have no capital projects, no building of schools on their horizon, they -- yet they refused to rollback their rate to 15.95 because just in case, just in case. So I wish we were in that circumstance. I wish we, you know, could rollback and have 600 million reserves, we could easily fund that jail, but we can't, we're not in the situation, especially right now. I think this is one of those hard, got to tighten our belts. It's a great cause, it'll be great to support everything, but we just can't. We're asking our taxpayers, who already pay a majority of their taxes to the School System, to take our money and put it towards the School System. When in reality, I feel like the School System should be paying us money for our youth and community programs, given us \$250,000 for our Youth Empowerment conferences and stuff that we do for leadership and developing the youth programs in our county. So I -- although it is, I completely agree, it's a great program, it's wonderful to see. But I think right now, we need to make some hard decisions, and I vote to deny."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. This was sponsored by the former Fulton County Commissioner Liz Hausmann. And when we came up for a vote, she contacted me and said, can you please check and make sure that Fulton County Schools is still going to receive their \$250,000 that I have always sponsored in the past. And I asked that question, and Dr. Roshell said, yes, it's automatically there, and the one for Atlanta Public Schools, because we had two. We had Atlanta Public Schools, and we had Fulton County Schools to receive 250,000. And that's how it had been for more than one, more than just the last budget. So that's how this came about in the first place. But I'm really glad to hear that this is a great program. I don't know anything about it. I never had Fulton County Schools in my district, my district changes of January. So, glad to hear that this is a positive program. Thank you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I don't know -- I'm going to support this, and the only reason I'm going to support it is because we put it in our budget and we told them that we had the money. And I don't like going back on my word. If this were just coming up, and we had to vote on it now, I probably -- I might not have supported, because Commissioner Ellis is right. They've got their own money, they've got their own budget. But I feel -- I feel it's disingenuous for us to approve it in a budget, inform them that the money is there, have our staff and team work with them, and then not approve the contract. And so I don't want -- I think that establishes a bad precedent for us. And I don't want to establish that bad precedence. I'm going to -- I'm not going to support the denial. I'm going to -- I'm going to support the money, but only because it was approved, already approved in with the budget, and we contacted them. And I don't think that's fair for us to go back on them at this point."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Lot of discussion. I'm going to just -- I think everybody's sort of said their peace on it. Let's vote at the current motion to deny before us, open the vote on that."

CLERK GRIER: "Vote is open on the motion to deny. Motion fails; two yeas, one nay."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Brings us back to the original motion."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open on the motion to approve."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

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

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Proposing that we take these last two action items and then recess for Executive Session."

CLERK GRIER: "23-0555, Public Works, Request approval to renew existing contracts in a total amount not to exceed \$1,800,000 to provide standby engineering services."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Duly approved -- motion approved and second is -- let's open up the vote, doesn't look like we're -- anybody want to comment on it."

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

CLERK GRIER: "23-0556, Request approval of a Public Private Partnership MOU with the Georgia Department of Transportation for sewer relocations."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Properly moved and seconded. No discussion, let's vote."

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

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay, all right. Commissioners, we --"

CLERK GRIER: "Six yeas with Commissioner Thorne."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Commissioners, we've got one Commissioner action item and then, I believe two, two Commissioner discussion items, and then two presentations from County Management Team. We have no further action items. And I understand, we don't have -- should not have any action items, just discussion items for Executive Session. Is it the will of the Board to recess for -- recess for Executive Session, and take these discussion items up afterwards? Or is there a desire to hold these until -- hold the further discussion items until the next meeting? Okay. So, we want to come back after Executive Session for these discussion items? Okay, all right. Get a motion to approve, seconded, vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Move to Executive Session for litigation, real estate, and personnel."

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

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Hopefully we can dispense with Executive Session as quickly as, like, eating at the drive-through."

Recess for Executive Session at 1:43 p.m.

Back in Regular Session at 3:02 p.m.

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right, Madam Clerk, call the meeting back to order."

CLERK GRIER: "On the bottom of page 7 under Open and Responsible Government, 23-0544, Presentation of the Fulton County Operational Report."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Mr. Manager, I think we've all seen this, maybe we can kind of figure out what you -- you want us to just open this up for question, or you want to present something specifically?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "I don't think we need to present anything specific. We have, of course, Project ORCA data, which is always of interest. And here, Mr. Adams would be pleased to answer any questions about that. There is the Jail Bridging Plan, and I think, Doug Schuster from EMSI is to be online to present to that if, again, if of interest. Doug is not here today due to having COVID. And then the back piece of this are pretty routine financials. So, I think if we answered any questions --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "-- Mr. Vice Chair, that would be appropriate."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Commissioners, anybody have any specific questions about the operational report they'd like to bring forth?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I think it would be beneficial to get some of the project ORCA numbers. I mean, I think there have been statements made about the progress or non-progress in the criminal justice system. I think it would be important for us to -- or at least for the public to receive that information."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Mr. Adams."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "And he could present slide 6 and 7."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Okay. Good afternoon, Commissioners. Happy to take any questions on the overall presentation. To date, as you can see from slide six, we have disposed of a 1,008 cases since the beginning of Project ORCA. And we have

approximately 39,500 cases remaining. Our current rate over the last two months has been approximately 1500 per month, disposed of. And we have a bit of a seasonal slowdown. And as I've stated in the past, as we start to get closer to these cases being trial cases, jury trials, we are, in fact, going to see a slower pace than we did at the beginning of the project. Per the next slide, what you can see is that, we still have a bit of a cushion. We are 34,000 cases positive to the -- to the plan that was put together, really a straight-line plan from when we started to when we expect to end in October of 2024. We're obviously using up that cushion, as we expected. As you can see from the numbers on the left-hand side, the variance for July 2023, we continue to make some progress across the entire system. The Solicitor tends to ebb and flow. He did call me and let me know that those numbers are going to change based on the number of the diversion programs that he is going to be launching. So overall, happy to take any questions. What I would say is, a bit of a slowdown, a predictable slowdown, a seasonal slowdown. We continue to make progress, and we will continue to eat away a bit at the cushion, but feel like we continue to make some progress in terms of moving the cases through the system."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I just had a question. You mentioned the Solicitor General's numbers there. But the Magistrate number, the variance is not looking too good either. Have you had any conversations around that?"

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Many. And the Magistrate numbers tend to be a challenge. There was a lot of progress in the early stages from -- for the Magistrate Court. But over the last, I'd say six months ago, six months or so, that progress has slowed down dramatically. As you know, the -- or else you can see from the hiring plan, they have four open positions. Those positions have been open for the last five months. And so it's not a resource issue as much as it, in my view, more of an operational and execution issue."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you. I would also -- unless somebody wants to talk about something else regarding those, I'd also like to see the jail population slides and walk through those."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Okay. I believe those are page -- page -- let me see, where are we."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Slide 15?"

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Slide -- that's correct. Slide 14, I believe is where it first starts."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Yep."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Okay. As you can see from this slide, we appear to be to have leveled off and trending for the last month at approximately 3600 individuals, give or take, in the jail. That continues to be high, relative to where we were pre-COVID, where the number was approximately 2600. What we have on the right-hand side displayed is where those individuals are, in fact, housed across the various facilities that we have. As you can see that also includes the South Annex, where last month we reopened the South Annex and moved a number of individuals to the South. And so, I think I would point out two things, one, we continue to have 466 people on the floor across the various facilities, primarily at Rice Street. And the number down at the bottom, which is the net number, which indicates with a negative that we're booking in more people than we are booking out on a weekly basis, which means we are not moving the needle and reducing the number of people in our various facilities. The next slide is a -- I'm sorry, go ahead, I'm sorry, Commissioner."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "It would be helpful on this slide if the capacities of each facility were next to the facility names. The slide before, previous slide."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Gotcha. Well, if you look -- actually, I think you set me up for page 16."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Because page 16, per Commissioner Ellis' request, gives you a sense for where we are in terms of overall beds available, and then how many of them are being utilized by the various facilities that we have. Is this kind of what you're looking for?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "So, if you look at this, what it says is that, here again, we have more people in at Rice Street than the beds would allow. ACDC, we have 700 beds available, and we have at this -- when this was published, 425 of those beds being utilized, and so on and so on. If you look at the South Annex, we have a total of 285 beds, 178 of them, approximately, being utilized. So this gives us a sense for the overall capacity in the system potentially, versus what we have being used at this point in time. The biggest issue we have, and we've talked about this in terms of the

utilizing those space, is resources. The Sheriff doesn't have the Correction Officers to be able to move individuals up to these facilities at this point in time."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Barrett, any other questions on this?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "No, that was it. Thank you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Commissioner, did you have anything else or, no?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "No, not in particular, but maybe if you could do 17 and 18 as well."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Okay. 17 talks to the makeup of the individuals in our jail or in jails, and looks at the number of individuals unindicted, which we have talked about in the past as a key factor in being able to move individuals through the system. We took a bit of a step back. I think we're at 33 percent last month, back up to 36 percent, which is where we were a few months ago. That is a key leading indicator of our ability to move people out of the Fulton County Jail. And so it's one of those things that we are tracking on our, kind of a highlight board that we publish every month. But that is one of the metrics that's moving in the wrong direction, and one of the things that will be -- that needs to be -- to move, if we in fact are going to get people out of the jail. The next slide talks to some of the initiatives that we have on the way across the system. I won't go into all the detail. I think what I would point out is, we have a number of them that have been launched including expanding the C3 Program, which is particularly important for multi-defendant cases. Moving the civil cases from Superior Court to State Court, that's begun. It's a -- and it's a bit of -- bit slow in terms of -- at least certainly from my perspective, in terms of going, getting going, but we have begun that program. And we have a number of the Senior Judges, who in fact, are hearing our criminal cases, which is a big deal for us. The next big step for us, I believe, is having weekend court. As I mentioned previously, Judge McBurney has volunteered to be the Judge for the pilot. And we've got a couple of things that need to be worked out in terms of logistics. But that is something we're targeting for September. We had a bit of a disappointing setback at the last Superior Court Bench Meeting. The initiative to create a Competency Court, which I believe, is a best practice and something that's really required, given the number of individuals in our jail who have mental health issues. Did not receive the votes that it needed, but my understanding is, it's going to be coming back in September. And that's important, and hopefully that will move through, and we can get on with -- with moving those individuals or giving them the attention that they deserve. And then the next slide just talks really to where we continue to focus, obviously, continuing ORCA case resolution, implementing what I just

talked about briefly, the jail reduction plan across the entire agencies, and then a big focus in priority and making sure that we don't build a post-ORCA backlog."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Vice Chair. On page 18, it was good to see these dates move up. And I only had one question, and that was under establish a Competency Court Calendar. It says, Superior Court voted against creation of a dedicated Competency Court Calendar at July Bench Meeting. Why?"

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "The -- I guess the short answer is, there are some of individual -- the Judges on the Bench who believe that they would like to keep things the way they are. In other words, they'd like to have civil cases, they'd like to have competency cases, they'd like to have criminal cases. And they feel like they do a pretty good job of that. And so the thought that we would change that in a way to potentially advance the way we deal with this particular group, was something that they didn't want to proceed on. Now, my understanding is that, there may have been some communication issues. I'm hoping, I think we're all hoping, I think Judge Glanville is hoping that the Bench would get behind this. But I will tell you there's been a lot of effort put in by Judge McBurney and Judge Ingram, in terms of having conversations with Savannah that does have a Competency Court, looking at other models across the country. And I think I'm -- I remain hopeful that we'll get this across the line. But it was a bit disappointing that it wasn't embraced, because it seems to me, the word I used with Judge McBurney is, a seemed to me to be a no-brainer. And obviously, is a bit optimistic, but I'm hopeful that we will -- we'll get folks to kind of embrace this as we move forward."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right, thank you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Could you go to slide 10? Sort of good segue to your last remark on that. So, I guess when -- kind of to sum up that, the stuff you were talking about on the jail population, we've got, in the facilities, we got 466 people on the floor, and we have 417 open beds in facilities that we control, right? So there is that, so, we sort of have continued optimization issues there in terms of, you know, kind of using our facilities in a way that, you know, we better -- that we have better care for detainees. So hopefully that number will improve. And this is sort of what I was eluding to earlier today. You know, we hear about all these initiatives and that many of them are well documented. They all sound well, but quite frankly, they're not getting any results. Our jail population is stubbornly insane. We can't keep adding people in. I know the public doesn't want to hear about seasonal holidays. We all don't have seasonal month-long holidays, particularly when we're in a crisis in our court system. I mean, so I don't know

if it's seasonal holiday and expected decline means that instead of a thousand cases cleared, we're going to see 500 this next month. Maybe we have two months off, I don't know. But this is the scorecard we adopted. So see, there's not really a whole lot of progress being made here. And the one thing I would ask, the Board did pass this by majority vote, that we communicate this to all of the elected officials and other partners in the justice system that has not been consistently been done. I think it's been out once, and it didn't go out to all the people. I would respectfully request that we do follow through with the intent of that particular communications, and that this particular scorecard be shared with all of those folks, post this meeting, not just a select few of them. Thank you. Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you for that, Vice Chair Ellis, because it made me remember page 16, which is the Jail Population Facility Utilization Report. In this part was concerning because we can see that with the main jail, Rice Street, there are 353 beds needed. And then Marietta is now showing a need in the amount of 12 beds. And so the question was, what happens in this situation that now, I don't ever remember Marietta having a need for beds before. And it seems like we're starting to increase in the number of beds that are needed at our main facility. And so what are we doing to address that, and what happened? Because, you know, when you look at it like this, we're utilizing a lot of other resources, a lot of other jails to help us out."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "That is correct. Couple of things, Commissioner Hall, Marietta, as you know, because you were a big sponsor of the program, used to be where we had the Canine Cellmates Program."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes, yes."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "When we discontinued that with COVID, and then we had to start using it as a place for detainees. And so when it says 50 beds and 12 -- and means that 12 people are on the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Basically, that's what that means."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Same thing with Rice Street, it means that 353 individuals, at a minimum, right, are on the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "It could be more because of classification. So that's what that -- that's what that implies."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes. And so what are we doing to try to address that? Because like I said, I don't ever remember Marietta having an overage of people and having any people on the floor. That -- unless I -- that's something that just happened?"

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "Well, we started using Marietta again once we discontinued the Canine Cellmate. We haven't resumed that, at least not at that location. So what that means is, we have 74 people at Marietta, 12 of the individuals are on the floor. The number -- to answer your question, I mean, Marietta is kind of a microcosm of everything we're trying to do, which is get people out of the jail as quickly as we can."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "I think one of the things that may start to move things along is that the expiration of the speedy trial restriction. I think that expired in July. So now, it will in fact, allow attorneys -- and I'm not an attorney, so I'm going to defer to Commissioner --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay."

ALTON ADAMS, COO, FC PSS: "-- if I say this wrong way. But I do believe that will provide some impetus for attorneys to be able to appeal -- not appeal, but to request that these -- some of these calendars move forward faster."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay. All right, thank you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "No further comments, we can move to the next item."

CLERK GRIER: "Next item will -- it's on page 11, Commissioner Thorne moved up her discussion item before her action item. **23-0467**, Open and Transparent Government."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "You have the floor, Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you. Do we have a slide?"

CLERK GRIER: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So, back several months ago, we approved the Morehouse Clinic. And this discussion is not about the clinic, the approval or

disapproval of it. It was on our consent agenda. If I wanted it to be about the clinic, I would have pulled it off the consent agenda. But it was something that was approved with absolutely no documentation. We discussed it in Executive Session, and then two weeks later it was on our agenda item. Since it was addressed in Executive Session in about ten-page PowerPoint, none of it could be discussed with my staff --"

(Slide presentation clip from previous meeting.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Agreement between Fulton County and Morehouse School of Medicine."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "There is an agreement?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "We were working on an agreement, and that agreement, all of that's --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Wait, wait, wait, wait. You can't approve an agreement until it exist, which is why it was amended to say the negotiation, right? So you can't approve an agreement until the agreement exists. So I don't -- I don't understand. What is the substitute motion? And what are the differences between the amended item and the substitute motion?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "The substitute motion goes back to the original, which was request the -- request approval of the resolution, which authorizes the agreement. Is that not correct, Madam County Attorney?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "That is correct. The substitute motion is to revert to the original language that was published with the agenda."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON: "What is -- what is the difference? How -- so we're going to enter into an agreement without any negotiations? What -- I don't understand, what is the difference? What are y'all talking about? Is this bizarro world? You can't enter into an agreement without doing negotiations. So what is the difference between the agenda items, someone, anyone? Buehler?"

(Slide presentation ends.)

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So that's in reference to what I was talking about. We had a contract for Buggy Works. Initially, it was 5 million for the first year, and 2.5 for the next four consecutive years. It was a \$15 million, in all, project. And we approved that with no documentation, with no ability to discuss the item with any of our staff, much less any professionals in the field. We -- I think you can go to the next slide. And the problem was, the public never got to chime in. So literally during the meeting,

someone chimed in and told me that across the street, Grady has a clinic. We were not told that. We were not told that. We were -- we were told that it was close to a MARTA station. Well, it is close, but you have to go -- you can go to the next slide. You have to go up three flights of stairs. You have to cross a 150-foot bridge, you have to go down three flights of stairs and an elevator, you have to cross the street, and you have to go to the end of Buggy Works. It's an eight-minute walk for a healthy individual, much less someone who's ill, maybe hurt or has a child or some other issue of going there. We were presented with a health disparity study, outlining a health desert, but this clinic isn't even in the health desert was addressed. We were told -- we weren't told or we weren't presented that Grady Hospital is opening two more clinics, one, three and a half miles down the road, one, five and a half miles down the road. So none of these steps were ever followed, yet we approved a contract with Morehouse for a clinic -- you can go to the next slide. See, there's the map where Buggy Works is, there is the map with Grady, you can see MARTA. You can go to Grady, it's directly across the street, it's on a busy street. You can go to Buggy Works, you got to cross that bridge, cross over and that's walking to Buggy Works? Next slide, please. If you look, there's no shortage of clinics in that area. We were told that they're going to have -- you know, it was going to be open 24/7, which is great because I think the people in South Fulton really need urgent care. They needed care available 24/7, but in reality, it's open five days a week from, I think, 8:00 to 5:00. And they said they might offer some extended hours at some point. So again, it's not about the actual agreement, because that's signed, that's done. And fortunately, the executive team negotiated a contract that, it's not 5 million for the first year, it's 3.5, and then it's 1.6, about that, for the next four years. Because they had some Dean fees or something that we didn't need to be paying for. So fortunately, they did a great job in negotiating the actual contract. But I feel like we did a poor job of not letting the public chime in, not having the ability to discuss it, the actual details of the plan with supporting documentation. So, that's the purpose of this discussion, if anybody would like to discuss."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Vice Chair. I don't even know where to begin on this. And I don't want to make an assumption. So Commissioner Thorne, do you think just having a Grady clinic right there is sufficient for that area?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I think I'd put four more million or whatever, three and half million and try to get the Grady clinic to be open on weekends to extend the care hours that it currently has, rather than opening another clinic that serves basically the same population that's basically an eight-minute walk away."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioners, just, and we can have this open discussion. But are we having a discussion about the validity of this particular clinic? Or are we having a discussion relative to a procedure we want to change --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "No, I was hoping to have --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "-- as a result of --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- procedurally, because --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- I feel like we approved something without the transparency --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. I think we --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- for the public."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Not that this is not a valid discussion point, but I think if we want to have a discussion around whether or not we should be engaged in this and have an agreement with them, I think that's one point of discussion. But if we want to have a discussion, an and/or an action about, want to change some point of our particular procedures as a result of what occurred here, I think those are -- they're two distinct issues --"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "It -- with all due respect --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "-- and I'd just encourage us to stay on that point --"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- yes, Vice Chair, that's what I was trying to get to."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Because I do see -- with all due respect, I do see where you're headed. I don't see how this is proving that case. And so I would really -- I don't want to say, caution because I don't -- I don't want to caution you, you -- you're my colleague. But I would say have a conversation with who's ever representing that district. Because at the end of the day, if you don't have information, they may have the information that you're seeking. Now I'm not offering an excuse as to why it was not in the books, the information should be in the books. And as a sitting Commissioner that called it out when it wasn't in the books and the agenda books and it had to be moved to the next agenda because of that, I clearly understand what you're

saying. What I am kind of, not necessarily taking issue with, but as your colleague, maybe this could have been done a little differently. Because the message that you're sending to me, is different than the message of what I think you're trying to send. And so it becomes convoluted and it opens up other conversations, not only about something that we've already voted on, but then with me, and it's no secret, I'm very passionate about us not having the healthcare we need. And so all you got to do is say, health, you ain't even got to say, care, health plan, or whatever, and my antenna go up like this. And okay, I admit, it's a trigger for me. But I want you to know why it's a trigger for me, because it affects my family. And so I understand clearly, because guess what, you and I are different in a lot of cases, day and night. But we have conversations, we talk to each other. So I know right off the bat, what -- what you're trying to say. The problem is for me and those that would be concerned about it, that's not the message I'm getting from that."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "You can back up the slide, Tonya? If you back up the slide."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "And so, as your colleague that is very concerned that we our being respectful of each other, I would say, if we need more transparency, it has to be at a level, not only before we get it, but after we get it. Because I get stuff all the time that I'm saying, well, wait a minute, this doesn't seem right, or this doesn't seem to be the message that I think that it is. But then I go and have a conversation with the executive staff or another Commissioner or someone that has absolutely nothing to do with Fulton County, because, guess what, I don't know everything. So I guess what I'm saying here is, when you say concerns about using resources efficiently, is that to -- is that to say that we didn't do it with that? Because I don't -- I don't -- I don't think we need to do that here. At least, I would hope that we would not do it here. And so, I think I know where you're trying to go with this. But I think what happens is that we end up having these other conversations that probably don't have anything to do with what we're talking about. Because I think in my mind, generally speaking, all of my colleagues want to be transparent. All of my colleagues want to be open, in my mind. Does that mean that I get everything that I need to have for a vote that's coming up? No, I don't. So, I -- just -- just as your colleague, respectfully, I think we need to work on a communication's issue. I think we need to work on making sure that every Commissioner here has what they need to have, but there's still a learning curve. You can have everything that you think you're supposed to have, but you're still not going to know the process until you get your feet wet, until you make some mistakes, until you realize, oh, I could have went over so and so and had them to pull this information, I could have went over to so and so and had them to pull this information. So, not to belabor the point, in all due respect for the Vice Chair,

because he hit on it. I think we have to be very careful in how we frame stuff. And I think we have to be more collegiate in having conversations with each other. I don't have to like you to have a conversation with you. I have to respect you. I don't have to like you. You don't pay my bills, I don't pay yours. You know, my name's not on your check, your name's not on mine. But I think we need to have conversations. And we need to use the resources that we have at our disposal, whether it's the County Attorney, whether it's the County Manager, whether it's the CFO, whoever it is, use the resources. Because I -- I just -- I just -- I'm going to be honest with you, Commissioner Thorne, I'm a little uncomfortable with what I just saw and the message that I think it sent from my perspective, could have been totally different, versus the message that I think that you were trying to send."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay, Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you, Vice Chair. Dr. Roshell, didn't I have multiple conversations with you over this clinic?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, ma'am, we did meet."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And Soo Jo, didn't I have multiple conversations with you over the clinic?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes, we did have several discussions."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "The problem is, is I couldn't discuss it with my own staff, that's the problem. Because it was discussed in Executive Session, and none of the material was made available. Soo Jo, can you tell me, is this a typical way that contracts are normally done in the county?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I would not say it's typical, but I -- it's not unprecedented, but not typical."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So for me being a new Commissioner, I need to be informed when we make decisions. I don't care if it's a 0.2 percent of our budget. I'm accountable for every dollar we spend. And I believe in basic economics, opportunity costs. We spend money one place, we're not going to have money to spend in another place. And right now, we have got to tighten our belts, and spend the most efficient way we can. And I felt like the way this was handled, was not transparent, nobody knew, nobody could speak on it. My staff didn't know. And I was limited in who I could talk to. Yet this was passed back in March, it was just now put on our consent agenda in August -- or it was passed in May, and it's just now put on our consent agenda in

August, so that even the public hadn't seen the actual contract until now to chime in. So again, I had to use an example, because this is an experience that I had and it -- I feel like it was a lot of money, even though some people don't think it was that much money. To prevent it from ever happening again in the future, I want to take action now. Thank you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Vice Chair. You're a sitting elected official. If your staff can't give you the information, your staff know where to go and get the information from. If your staff doesn't know where to go get the information from, then that's an issue. And here again, I don't -- I don't want to seem to be adversarial. But having sat here for three years and Commissioner -- Commissioner Barnett and I had this conversation. She said to me, telling me this is the way it's been done, or telling me that this is how they did it in the past, is not an adequate reason. So, I get it. But what responsibility do you have as an elected official to make sure that you go seek out, because I promise you, you are not going to get all of the information you need, you're not. I have never, sitting down here for three years, had all of the information I needed. I needed to reach out to somebody and then this person gave me information that was totally different from the person who I thought had the information from me. So now, I had to go even further. And so, here again, I'm going to limit my comments on this, because I really don't -- I don't -- I don't want to beat you up, and I don't want to come across like I'm beating you up. But I also know, as a sitting elected official, whether it's Fulton County, whether it's the State Representatives, whether it's a Congressperson, you got to get in there and find your way. Nobody is going to make it easy for you. But you have to walk in your own strength, your own power. You have to ask, if you did not get something, you have to ask for it. And as a sitting elected official, I'm not going to know everything. So guess what, I ask other elected officials, I ask County Manager, I ask executive leadership, I ask other elected officials that's not even with Fulton County, depending on the actual issue. And so, I don't want this to sound con -- I don't -- I don't, you know, I don't -- that's right, Commissioner Thorne, I don't want to convolute it or belabor it. But I also don't want a message sent that we're entering into these contracts, and we're doing all this stuff that we should not be doing. And then we have an example that you may have strong feelings about that may be 360 degrees different from mine, so I cannot get to the gist of what you are trying to say based on the message. I know the messenger, so I'm not killing you for the message. But I would not be who I am -- see, other folks going to go behind closed doors and not say this to you. And I would do you a disservice if I did not tell you right now, that's the issue I have. I know exactly what you're saying. But I don't think that that was the best example of what you're trying to say and do. And so, I'm going to close out on it. I

never said that you didn't talk to Soo Jo, I never said that you didn't talk to Dr. Roshell, so I'm not sure where that came from. But what I'm saying is, if you are not getting the information as a sitting elected official who was sent here by your constituency base, that's a problem. But does that problem become --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner, let's wrap discussion up --"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- your colleagues, or is that yours?"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "We need to wrap this discussion up. And then -- and just -- just a quick point again. I think that you both -- both expressed, you know, kind of, opinions on this. I think this is in tee up into an action item and a response to Commissioner Thorne's statement that she didn't feel like information was properly provided to us or to the public to make a decision. And she would like to offer a proposal to, you know, allow that type of thing not to occur in future."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes. And I need to --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Is that where we're moving toward?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- defend my staff, because my staff was criticized in the previous comment. You have to understand, we have rules when we're in Executive Session. We are not allowed to discuss anything that was discussed in Executive Session even with our staff. So, yeah, I can say, you know, hey, can you look up this clinic in this location. I might be leaking information. It's a thousand dollar fine if a leak information outside of Executive Session to anybody except those that were in Executive Session. So that left me Soo Jo, Dr. Roshell, and Dick Anderson, and Tonya, you too, I guess if you wanted to get involved. But that is why, as an elected official, I tried my best to learn what I could, given the constraints I had on me that this was discussed in Executive Session. And no material was really provided to us before the agenda item came out. So that would lead me into the next item. Thank you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. Sound the next item."

CLERK GRIER: "**23-0512**, Request approval of a resolution requiring contracts or written agreements to accompany agenda items appearing on the meeting agenda of the Board of Commissioners to uphold transparency and governance, providing exceptions for those contracts or agreements processed by the Department of Purchasing and Contract Compliance and for those excluded under the Georgia Open Meetings Act or for emergency situations, and for other purposes."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Barrett. I mean, I -- go ahead, Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "It's sort of -- this is sort of two conversations lumped into one, since it's sort of a continuation. But I want to say that Commissioner -- Commissioner Thorne, I fully appreciate your intent with this resolution and your discussion item. I think unfortunately, the presentation of including the details of a specific issue, did sort of turn the conversation upside down a little bit, which I think was not your intention. But -- and I respect your need, and you have every right, and you were right to respond, because, you know, that did sort of call some of us out in a way. But I want to put that aside and focus on your original intent, and just say that I put a discussion item on the agenda as well because I -- I fully agree with you that we need to be given more information, not just on contracts, but on any agenda item. And I think, you know, you and I, Commissioner Thorne, have talked about this offline. I think it's been one of the most surprising things about coming into this world, and sort of getting these agendas with sometimes just a headline and no details, or getting a last-minute changes to details or contracts or whatever and trying to vote on them in that way. I wish Commissioner Arrington was still here because he and I have had conversations about, you know -- and he has had agenda items on for the last several meetings that have been held regarding changing some rules around procedure and how things are done. The Chairman has expressed some issues around procedure. Vice Chair Ellis and I have had some conversations around the procedures having to do with budget. So, I think I've had conversations with almost everybody about some policy or procedure. And so that is why I put my discussion item on there. So I'm not, not in support of what you're doing here, Commissioner Thorne, pardon the double negative. But I would prefer that we either hold this or just include it in this larger conversation about the rules and policies and procedures altogether. And, you know, we can get to my proposal specifically later, which is just a discussion item. But I'd make a motion to hold on this."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. I'll offer a substitute motion to approve."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Wasn't it already a motion to approve?"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Well, I motioned and there's not a second. Is there a second?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So then, I'd like to make a motion to hold, no? Can I do that? Now, I'm confused. Substitute motion to hold. Does that work?"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "I mean, we're going to wind up in the same spot so, let's just move it along. All right. Motion to hold on the floor, let's vote."

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

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right."

CLERK GRIER: "County Manager's Presentation, **23-0557**, Public Works Presentation and request approval of the Fulton County Executive Airport Charlie Brown Field Master Plan Report and Airport Layout Plan."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. Thank you. Mr. Clark, we thank you for you all being attentive and being here all day. If we don't keep a lot of your time, don't interpret that as to mean we don't care about this. Interpret that as meaning that you've done a great job in terms of getting this teed up, so."

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "Thank you very much, Commissioner. David Clark, I'm the Director of Public Works here for Fulton County. With me is Jim Duguay from our consultant, Michael Baker, as well as the Airport Manager for Fulton County, Jonathan Gauthier. I'll quickly go through this presentation. But I did want to take a moment, this is really a milestone for the Airport. This master plan represents about three years of hard work, primarily by these two gentlemen right here. This will allow us to apply for a number of federal and state, federal grant monies to make improvements to the Airport that have been so really, sorely needed for a number of years. And we'll be able to put the Airport in the position that we need it to be to compete for traffic in the upcoming decade. So with that, could you go to the first slide, please. Just kind of showing you where we're at. Like I said, this is a three-year project process that started back in the fall of 2019 when we did the Airport Visiting Study that really was the foundation that we built this master plan on. We've had a number of times where we've had some community involvements and some outreach. And we've had good communication with our neighbors, especially the residential community as well as users of the Airport. We recently received GDOT's concurrence with our plan. And so this is basically, the step we're at now. We need final approval from the Board of Commissioners so we can submit it to the FAA, and that takes about six months to get to their final improvement. Next slide, please. The master plan has to be based around a specific type of airport -- or aircraft. And I want to make it clear that at no time as part of our master plan, did we ever think that we wanted to expand the airport in such way to attract larger aircraft. No cargo planes to serve UPS, which some

people at times thought that maybe that's what we were looking for. Certainly, not commercial service with 737s, for instance, those types of things. Instead, we really want to make sure that the airfield serves the existing type of planes that are there. Right now, the Gulfstream 550 and the 650 that's on the screen, are the planes that are coming into and out of the Airport. The problem is the way that our airfield is configured right now, the full use of those aircraft, primarily how far they can travel, cannot happen because, for instance, our runway is too short for them to make its nonstop to Central Europe, like they can when they're fully fueled. We need a larger, longer airport for that -- or a longer runway for those types of activities. Next slide, please. So, I'm not going to go through every single one of these. But you can kind of see the various areas that we have identified is part of the master plan here. And we'll highlight just a couple of the main ones starting with the next slide please, Tonya. I'm sorry? Oh, that's them, okay. I was giving you too much credit. I thought you were in charge of the clicker. The first -- oh, next slide, please. The first project is really a short-term extension of our runway. Our runway today is 5800 feet. We have a project in mind that allows us to extend it to about 6100 feet to identify some immediate needs, runway safety issues, and we've already started that process. But once the master plan gets submitted, it will allow us to actually go into design and construction elements of that. Next slide, please. One of the things we've talked about in the past was the closure of our Crosswind Runway, our 14/32 runway, which is primarily used for prop planes, which we do not see very many of anymore. Most of our traffic is air -- is jet traffic, which uses our main runway. So this smaller runway is underutilized. We use it for overflow parking a good part of the year, because we just don't have the use for it to actually serve as a runway. If we permanently close it, it would allow us to probably add a number of new hangars to the area, which the area sorely needs it. We think we can get between four and six additional hangars that could be used for corporate-based tenants along the way. Next slide, please. One of the areas on the north side, next to the Norfolk Southern Hangar that's been there now for about two years, is a plan for a customs building to serve our international tenants as they come in from international, Europe, Caribbean countries, for instance, to be cleared by TSA before they can deplane from the airplane. As well as, when we have a RFP on the street right now that recently closed, to put another hangar tenants right next to Norfolk Southern. And we should be able to bring back a recommendation of who that tenant may be in the next 60 to 90 days. Next slide, please. Once we close the main -- or the Crosswind Runway, 14/32, it does open up some additional land for developments on the west side -- I'm sorry, the east side of Fulton Industrial Boulevard, shown there in blue, as well as the area in green is what we've talked about in the past, as part of the visioning plan, a proposed Business Park. That elevation is too tall, too high up to actually serve any aircraft purposes. But it would allow us an opportunity to redevelop that into some sort of park. And this is what

we're working with Select Fulton on for both these areas, if in fact, the master plan gets implemented. Next slide, please. Now, all of this leads to, really, our main project in the master plan is to increase our runway to 7,000 feet. That 7,000 feet is the magic number because that allows that Gulfstream 650 to leave fully fueled and make it nonstop from our airport to Central, and even Eastern Europe during certain parts of the year. Right now when they have, for instance, when Coca-Cola leaves our airport to go over to Europe, what they have to do is, they leave here partially fueled, fly over to Hartsfield, that gets in the Hartsfield airspace pattern, land at Hartsfield, go over to a fuel facility there, fully fuel the plane there, and then get back into the rotation to leave from Hartsfield to fly to Europe. If we went to 7,000 feet, it would allow us to be able to have that exact same plane leave here fully fueled, not have to disrupt the Hartsfield traffic, and be able to serve Coca-Cola for as an example, much more easier. As part of this project, it would require an extension of the runway over Fulton Industrial Boulevard, very similar to the way that the fifth runway at Hartsfield went over 285, obviously on a much smaller scale, but the same engineering principles are at play. So there's the highlights of the master plan. And with that, I will certainly open up to any questions of the Commissioners."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Mr. Clark. Commissioner Abdur-Rahman."

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Vice Chair. I just wanted to -- from seeing the Airport from when my mentor, the late Emma Darnell represented that area, seeing the three years that I've been here, you all have done a phenomenal job. I've been in conversations with people who, for whatever reason, have had to use the Airport and had business. And they talk about it as a jewel, but I think the biggest thing that I am really proud of you and the Manager and the team there is, I have constituents that love the Airport. They love how you all have it set up, how they've been able to come and take a tour, how they've been able to have their children to be part of the classes over there. And I just wanted to openly thank you all for the very hard work that you all have done. And I've -- I see the fruits of your labor, and I do really appreciate what's going on with that Airport. Thank you."

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "Thank you very much, Commissioner."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I just have a couple questions. And some of them stem from me not being here at the beginning of this process."

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And I do have to say, in light of the conversation we were just having, if anybody presented too much information ever, it might have been y'all. I think it was 800 and something pages that was attached to the agenda. So, thank you for presenting that, actually. But I was reading through it, just a little light reading. And I noticed the discussion about the grants for the federal -- or applying for the federal funds, rather, and some local funds as well. So I just had a question sort of about percentage-wise, how much of this is coming from federal funds, how much from local? And what's going to be the budget impact of those local funds in 2024 and beyond, I guess?"

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "Most of the projects that we get that are qualified for federal funds, they are funded 90 percent by the FAA, 5 percent from GDOT, and 5 percent from the locals. And so on average, we've been estimating between two and \$4 million a year that would be our local match, depending on the project. Obviously, the runway over the Fulton Industrial Boulevard is going to be much more expensive project than some of the smaller projects around the taxiways and the runways. So that's the overall, kind of, budgeting that we've looked at in the past. That all leads up to about a hundred million dollar overall local project over the 20-year process -- project."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "A hundred million total from --"

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "For the 20 years of the master plan."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So then next year, the budget amount, we don't know? Nothing?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Well, we do know. It's -- and Sharon can correct me. But this is, more or less, self-contained. So the good news is they generate revenues exceeding expenses."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Right."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "And we have a reserve still left for that area. So we do not anticipate any impact on the general fund."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So the other question I had just was ROI. With all these upgrades and changes, what is that -- how does that impact traffic and dollars coming in in the future? What's the sort of long term ROI?"

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "Sure. And as the Manager was just saying, we did not receive any general fund at all. All of the money that we generate at

the Airport, stays at the Airport. And we primarily generate money, revenue that the Airport three main ways. The first and most highest use is the leases that we give to the various tenants out there. We own ground leases, they own the buildings. And so we bring in all of our lease money from that. And part of that is, includes the UPS rental because we still own the property where UPS is. We have a ground lease with them as well. The second area is the fuel that is sold there, we received a cut from that. And then the last area is -- it is a area that has a lot of filming happening at there. And we receive daily expenses associated with that. So all that brings together on average around \$4 million, so, annual revenue stream."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And that's going to increase because of all --"

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "That -- that would increase over that, because we'll be able to have more area leased when we close the Crosswind Runway. We'll be able to have more planes, and be able sell more fuel."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Got it."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. I just want to say, congratulations on a job well done. It has been a long journey from back when Anna Roach was here and the former Airport Manager and the presentations and the walk-throughs and the tours of the new hangar and those proposals that were being put forward. So you guys have done some really awesome work. And just, thank you for what you presented to us today. It's a long time coming."

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "Thank you, Commissioner."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "All right. I don't believe we have any other comments, so, thank you all."

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "We do need a motion."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Oh, a motion to adopt this plan?"

DAVID CLARK, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes. Thank you very much."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "So, all right."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Presentation, request approval, see that now. All right, should have had you up earlier."

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

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "**23-0558**, Discussion, proposal for review and update of Board of Commissioners rules and procedures, sponsored by Commissioner Barrett."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Barrett, how do you want to proceed with this, given we don't have a full Board here for a discussion."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, I'm not asking for a vote, so I'll just introduce it to you all, and get your feedback. And we'll make it real quick, because I know everybody wants to go. I did include a memo with -- that is in the agenda with sort of what I was proposing. But to shortcut that, essentially, it sort of talks about why, which we've already talked about a little bit today. I just sort of shortcut all of that. But I think what -- what I would like to see happen is a retreat meeting, a special-call retreat meeting for the full Board with the intent of updating, reviewing and updating all of our rules and procedures. Some of this probably can be done ahead of the meeting by the County Attorney, County Attorney's office and the County Clerk's office to try to get us some ideas of what's outdated and that kind of thing. But the idea would be for us to have a retreat meeting, agree on the updates, and then also discuss things like what Commissioner Thorne brought up today, and what Commissioner Arrington has brought up and I have brought up and the rest of us regarding some of the rules, and how we would like to see things change so that we can work more collaboratively and have more time for research, study, conversation, et cetera. And of course, just to note that none of this would be -- the intent here, I think for all of us with these rules changes, is not to slow down the business of the county, but rather just to make sure as a Board, we're operating in the best possible way for our citizens. Again, the proposal would just be to have a -- an off site with an agenda, ideally designed by a qualified third-party, such as ACCG or the Carl Vinson Institute of Governments, that it would include all of us, all seven of us ideally, the County Attorney, and the Clerk, along with that facilitator from that third party to sort of keep the discussion flowing and get us to the goals of the sort of having this new updated rules and procedures. So I just wanted to bring this to you all today as sort of a discussion item. And if everybody is sort of straw poll okay with it, I don't even know that we need a vote really for this. But if we could direct the County Clerk to start organizing it, is kind of where I'm at."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And I mean, you did all hear the Chairman say earlier that he was in support, so."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I'm --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Oh, sorry. I'm all in support of, you know, discussion. I think the intent of this is really good. I just wanted to understand the logic of not having the executive team involved."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "The logic was that this is really about how we operate as a Board. Certainly, anything that we do that might affect their operations of their business, of the business portion of what we do, we would certainly run it by them. I'm not suggesting we would do this and then sort of shove it at them. But I think having less voices in the room and really, just have it be a Board discussion. The only reason I'm suggesting the County Attorney and the County Clerk be there are, the County Attorney is the Parliamentarian and can give us advice regards Roberts Rules and the various laws we already have on the books. And that the County Clerk is the one who has to implement it all directly. So I felt like she needed to be there as well and be able to give her input in terms of how things have gone in the past and that sort of thing. But that was the idea behind that."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Just long as we're not -- because I learned from my resolution that I ended up holding last meeting was because Purchasing, Felicia brought to my attention some concerns she had about a resolution I was about to pass, and how it was going to impact her department. So I made sure, you know, that I had her look it over. And she was just a very valuable resource in something I didn't -- I didn't know. I didn't see her perspective. So that, I feel like their perspective is much needed in the conversation. But as long as we're running things by them first --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah. And that's why I brought it up as a discussion item today, Commissioner Thorne. I think you make a really good point. And I think -- I like still, the idea of a smaller group of us. But I think you're right that we wouldn't, we certainly wouldn't come out of that meeting with, like, okay, here's the rules, take this, you know, County Manager and sorry, too bad, so sad. Like, I don't think that's the intent at all. So, certainly, we could have a process in which we come up with our proposed set of rules, and then we kind of run it by the executive team for feedback."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Any further discussion, anyone?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "No. I would just ask from a straw-poll perspective, are we okay with moving forward generally? Do you want to take a vote? Do we want to -- does anybody have any thoughts at all?"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, what's your view?"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Out of respect for Commissioner Arrington and the Chairman, I know they probably -- well, I wouldn't know about Commissioner Arrington, but I know that Commissioner -- Chairman Pitts did say he would support it. I don't know if we need a straw poll. But I do think we're moving in the right direction. And I think -- I do have some questions, but it's not questions that would keep me to not support it. I guess that's what I'm saying. So, however way we need to move forward, I would want to make sure that they are included. Because we're talking about really changing how we do things here and how we've done it in the past. And in the past, if you had your four votes, it didn't matter if you had somebody, whether they were for it or against it, it didn't matter. And so, I think that moving forward -- and that's not saying that you don't have yours. What I'm saying, just moving forward, if we can make sure -- having one person absent, that's -- that's kind of okay. But when you got two Commissioners absent, I just think that we just need a little bit more discussion or a little bit more time with it. That would be my only concern."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So how about this, how about if we move forward on just taking some -- getting some dates and some preliminary thoughts from them, but we don't actually make a move forward until the next --"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Do we have to do that right now?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. Moving on, Vice Chair, back to you."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "I mean, I think -- well, we can put it forth a vote, whether or not we want to move forward with circulating dates, or we can have further discussion on it at the next meeting. What's the pleasure of the Board?"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Further discussion."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "I mean, it's one or the other. We either provide direction to circulate some dates, or we have further discussion at our next Board meeting before we try to start circulating dates. I mean, it's -- pick one."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I mean, I don't see the harm in starting to move forward because it's not like --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Well, let's call a vote on it. I mean, I --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I mean --"

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "I mean -- speak with one voice or not. I mean, let's just ratify it up or down. We want further discussion, or we want to, like, start circulating dates?"

COMMISSIONER ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I will be comfortable with further discussion. If that's not -- if you're not -- if you're open to that, Commissioner Barrett, I go back to the thing that I said, we not only have one, we have two Commissioners that are absent. And they probably do support this. But just in a spirit of moving forward, I would like for us to have further discussion on this. Like I said, I don't have a problem with it. But if we can have further discussion, I would appreciate it."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. Well, since the idea of the agenda item was for discussion, then let's just leave it as a discussion, and we'll consider that -- consider the rest later."

VICE CHAIRMAN ELLIS: "Okay. All right. Well, if anybody, I think in between, has feedback for Commissioner Barrett on the concept, I think it'll be useful to sit down and have that conversation with her. All right, any other items to come before us? All right, with that, meeting is adjourned."

(There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.)