

**FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

April 10, 2024
10:00 AM



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



MINUTES-RATIFIED

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

Ratification Date: May 1, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Robert L. Pitts

10:01 a.m.

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

Robert L. Pitts, Chairman (At-Large)

PRESENT

Bridget Thorne, Commissioner (District 1)

PRESENT

Bob Ellis, Commissioner (District 2)

PRESENT

Dana Barrett, Commissioner (District 3)

PRESENT

Natalie Hall, Commissioner (District 4)

PRESENT

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

PRESENT

Khadijah Abdur-Rahman, Vice Chair (District 6)

PRESENT

INVOCATION: Reverend Clifton Dawkins, Jr., County Chaplain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recite in unison

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA**24-0220 Board of Commissioners**

Adoption of the Consent Agenda. All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the County Commission and will be enacted by one motion. No separate discussion will take place on these items. If discussion of any Consent Agenda item is desired, the item will be moved to the Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration. **(ADOPTED)**

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

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

24-0221 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing "Georgia State University Black Law Students Association Appreciation Day." **(Abdur-Rahman)**
March 23, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Eagle Scout Rushik Peddi Appreciation Day." **(Thorne)**
March 23, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Eagle Scout Ryan Todd Feldstein Appreciation Day." **(Thorne)**
March 23, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Ray Carter Appreciation Day." **(Pitts)**
March 28, 2024

Proclamation recognizing "Alonzo F. Brewer, Jr. Remembrance Day." **(Abdur-Rahman)**
April 1, 2024

Arts and Libraries**24-0222 Library**

Request approval to award a contract without competition - Fulton County Library System, 24SSN141498B-RT, Movie Performance License in an amount not to exceed \$16,166.00 with Swank Motion Pictures, Inc. This action will satisfy federal copyright requirements to allow library facilities to show legal movies anywhere inside Library buildings. Effective upon BOC approval for a 12-month period. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0223 Arts and Culture

Request approval of an art contract in the amount of \$8,000.00 to commission Karen Anderson Singer d/b/a Tiny Doors ATL LLC to create an original 3D sculpture that embodies the rich history and sense of place of Fulton County and 20 small scale replicas that will be gifted to visiting dignitaries, and authorization of the County Attorney to approve this contract as to form and to make necessary changes to the contract to protect the County's interest prior to execution. The term of this contract is upon BOC approval through December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Infrastructure and Economic Development**24-0224 Real Estate and Asset Management**

Request approval of a Water Vault Easement Dedication of 376 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from 116 North Main LLC, for the purpose of constructing the 116 & 126 North Main Street Project at 0 Christine Drive, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0225 Real Estate and Asset Management

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

24-0226 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a Sewer Easement Dedication of 2,779 square feet to Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, from Moslem and Leila Eskandari for the purpose of constructing the Avalon Village Project at 2385 Old Milton Parkway, Alpharetta, Georgia 30009. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0227 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of an Indemnification, Maintenance, and Land Use Agreement for Private Improvement (Indemnification Agreement) between Fulton County, a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, and Stonewall Tell Home Builders, Inc., for the purpose granting conditional approval to allow stormwater infrastructure within a portion the County's existing sanitary sewer easement at 0 Campbellton Road, South Fulton, Georgia 30331. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

Justice and Safety**24-0228 Emergency Management**

Request approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement for animal control services between Fulton County, Georgia and City of East Point for a period of time that shall terminate at 2400 hours on December 31, 2028. The purpose of this Intergovernmental Agreement is to provide vital and necessary animal control services for the County's homeless pets while enforcing the animal control laws of Fulton County in a manner that reflects quality and professionalism. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0229 District Attorney

Request approval of the 2024 Equitable Sharing Agreement and Certification with the U.S. Department of Justice for the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, establishing the requirements for participation in the Federal Equitable Sharing Program and the restrictions upon the use of federally forfeited cash, property, or proceeds. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0230 District Attorney

Request approval of Subrecipient Grant Contract between Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency ("GEMA/HS"), an agency of the State of Georgia ("State"), the FY24 Georgia Gang Activity Prosecution Grant (Grant) and Fulton County, Office of District Attorney and Fulton County Sheriff, named as a sub-recipients in the Grant in an amount not to exceed \$73,149.00. Effective upon BOC approval through the term of the Grant. 100% grant funded. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

24-0231 District Attorney

Request approval of an award without competition - District Attorney, 2023 Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) FY 23 Improving Adult and Youth Crisis Stabilization and Community Reentry Program Award Number 15PBJA-23-GG-02254-CSCR, in the amount of \$750,000.00 with Morehouse School of Medicine named as a sub-awardee in the Grant in an amount not to exceed \$300,000.00. Effective upon BOC approval through the term of the Grant. 100% grant funded. **(APPROVED UPON ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)**

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**24-0232 Board of Commissioners**

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

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

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

Did Not Vote: Arrington

24-0233 Clerk to the Commission

Ratification of Minutes. **(RATIFIED)**

Regular Meeting Minutes, March 6, 2024

Recess Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, March 20, 2024

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

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

24-0234 Board of Commissioners

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

Proclamation recognizing "Meak Productions Appreciation Day." **(Hall/Arrington)**

PUBLIC HEARINGS**24-0235 Board of Commissioners**

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

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

(CONDUCTED)

20 Speakers: Commissioner Arthur Ferdinand (Cyber Security Leadership); L.A. Pink (Fulton County Jail); Mike Russell (Fulton County Jail); Brother Anthoney Muhammad (Citizens for Human Rights); Derrick D. Blassingame (Fulton County System); J. Wesley Day (Justice/Solicitor Office); Joseph Williams (Justice/South Training Center); Paul Hershey (Elected Officials); Renee Pate (Fulton County Jail); Siegfried White (Fulton County Jail); Maria Gaudio (Fulton County Jail/Elections); Duwon Robinson (Tax Commissioner Office); Sandra L. Williams (Item #24-0247); Linda H. Williams (Women Jail Services); Greg Fann (Item #24-0247); Eric Richardson (Fulton County Jail); Hakeem Williams (District Representative/Fulton County Jail); Rodney Floyd (Cyber Security Leadership); Robby Caban (Lifeline/Fulton County Animal Services) and Holly Kesler (Fulton County Funds)

5 Zoom Speakers: Kevin Muldowney (Registration and Elections); Maureen Sheeran (Fulton County Jail/Animal Services/Item #24-0247); Matt Rowenczak (Elections); Bree Sharper (Fulton County Animal Services) and Ben Howard (Senior Services)

COUNTY MANAGER'S ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****24-0236 Finance**

Presentation, review and approval of April 10, 2024, Budget Soundings and Resolution. **(PRESENTED/APPROVED)**

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

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

24-0237 Finance

Request approval of the Supplemental Pricing Resolution Authorizing, among other things, the Issuance and Sale of General fund Tax Anticipation Notes in the Aggregate Principal Amount of \$225,000,000.00. This Resolution provides acceptance of the lowest acceptable bid for the short-term borrowing arrangement for the County's 2024 Tax Anticipation Note which matures December 31, 2024. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

24-0238 Human Resources Management

Request approval to modify the classification section of the Classification and Compensation plan by adding the new titles of Seamstress, Sheriff's Office (Grade 12), Fixed Assets Accountant (Grade 19), and by moving the existing title of Cyber Security Program Manager (Grade 53) to the key classifications section at Grade K11. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

24-0239 Information Technology

Request approval to extend an existing contract - Information Technology, 20RFP894152K-BKJ, Office 365 Implementation Services, in an amount not to exceed \$424,270.00 with B2B Technologies, LLC (Atlanta, GA) for an additional 12 month period for additional technical needs related to the upgrade of IT infrastructure associated with the implementation of Office 365. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

24-0240 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval to increase the spending authority - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 22ITB134934C-MH, Moving Services in the total amount of \$252,000.00 with (C) Tuxedo Logistics, LLC dba Allied Commercial Services (Columbus, GA), requesting additional funding to cover the costs in support of Phase II relocation of Clerk of Superior and Magistrate Courts and the IT Records Division to the newly renovated Fulton County Central Warehouse located at 5600 Campbellton-Fairburn Road, Atlanta, GA 30212. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

24-0241 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval to increase the spending authority - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 22ITB121622K-DJ, Industrial Racking for the Fulton County Central Warehouse in an amount not to exceed \$104,522.00 with McGee Storage & Handling (Norcross, GA) to cover the costs to purchase, deliver and install 74 total bays of additional pallet-racking, equipment cages and related components for the Department of Registration and Elections at the Fulton County Central Warehouse located at 5600 Campbellton-Fairburn Road, Atlanta, GA 30213. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Did Not Vote: Pitts

24-0242 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of recommended proposals - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 23RFP138733K-BKJ, Standby Professional Services for Facilities Related Planning, Design, Engineering and Assessments-Architectural and Engineering Services in the total amount not to exceed \$1,600,000.00 with (A) Sizemore Group, LLC (Atlanta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$400,000.00; (B) KHAFRA Engineering Consultants, Inc. (Atlanta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$400,000.00, (C) Heery + Russell, a joint venture (formed by Turner & Townsend Heery, LLC. and H.J. Russell and Company, Inc.) (Atlanta, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$400,000.00, and (D) WSP USA Environment & Infrastructure, Inc. (Kennesaw, GA) in an amount not to exceed \$400,000.00, to provide standby professional services for facilities related design, engineering and assessments in the areas of architectural and engineering services on an as needed, task order assignment basis for a variety of capital projects in support of the Department of Real Estate and Asset Management. Effective upon BOC approval through December 31, 2024, with two renewal options. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

24-0243 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval of a change order greater than 10% - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 23RFP041723K-JA, Design/Build Services for Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Center in an amount not to exceed \$3,066,235.31 with Hogan Construction Group, LLC (Norcross, GA) for contract modifications required in order to complete construction of the new facility and connected areas at the Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Unit at the Oak Hill Child. Adolescent, & Family. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

24-0244 Real Estate and Asset Management

Request approval to increase the spending authority - Department of Real Estate and Asset Management, 22ITB134934C-MH, Moving Services in the total amount of \$105,295.00 with (A) Beltmann Relocation Group (Stone Mountain, GA) in the amount of \$22,975.00, (B) ALS Van Line Services, Inc. (Atlanta, GA) in the amount of \$47,320.00, and (C) Tuxedo Logistics, LLC dba Allied Commercial Services (Columbus, GA) in the amount of \$35,000.00 to cover the costs for additional moving services in support of the upcoming 2024 Presidential Primaries and General Election runoffs for delivering and picking up voting equipment and related materials to designated Countywide voting precincts for the Department of Registration and Elections. Effective upon BOC approval. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

Did Not Vote: Arrington

Health and Human Services**24-0245 Community Development**

Request approval of a contract between Fulton County and Destination Tomorrow, Inc. in the amount of \$100,000.00 to support the Wellness Journey Program, a comprehensive HIV testing program aimed at increasing awareness, reducing stigma, improving access to testing services within the community and addressing all the barriers which impede a healthy productive lifestyle for individuals; 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, 2024. **(HELD)**

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

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

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

24-0246 Public Works

Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder - Public Works, 23ITB139950K-DB Hembree Road Water Tanks Rehabilitation in an amount not to exceed \$1,613,760.00 with Tank Pro, Inc. (Northport, AL), to provide construction and rehabilitation services for the elevated Hembree Road Water Storage Tanks. Effective upon issuance of the Notice to Proceed for 180 consecutive calendar days. **(APPROVED)**

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

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

COMMISSIONERS' ACTION ITEMS**24-0247 Board of Commissioners**

Request approval of a Resolution establishing policies limiting the use of Fulton County staff for certain events by members of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners; and for other purposes. **(Thorne) (HELD)**

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

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

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

Nay: Pitts

Did Not Vote: Thorne, and Ellis

c. A motion was made by Commissioner Hall to overrule the Chairman's ruling regarding the validity of amending her vote to Nay.

Motion failed for a lack of a second.

d. A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, to reconsider item #24-0247. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Thorne, Ellis, and Abdur-Rahman

Nay: Pitts

Did Not Vote: Barrett, Hall, and Arrington

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

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

Nay: Barrett

Did Not Vote: Arrington

24-0248 Board of Commissioners

Request approval of an Ordinance to change the term “Regular Meeting” to “First Regular Meeting” and the term “Recess Meeting” to “Second Regular Meeting.”
(Pitts) (APPROVED)

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

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

Did Not Vote: Hall, and Arrington

COUNTY MANAGER'S PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**Open & Responsible Government****24-0249 External Affairs**

Presentation of 2024 State Legislative Session Update. **(PRESENTED)**

Infrastructure and Economic Development**24-0217 Select Fulton**

Presentation: Renew the District redevelopment initiative along Fulton Industrial Boulevard. **(HELD ON 3/20/24) (PRESENTED)**

COMMISSIONERS' PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**24-0250 Board of Commissioners**

Discussion: Fulton County Procurement Review - Presentation of Findings **(Ellis) (DISCUSSED)**

24-0215 Board of Commissioners

Discussion: Time-keeping and use of temporary/part-time positions. **(Ellis) (HELD)**

ITEM HELD AS REQUESTED BY COMMISSIONER ELLIS**24-0251 Board of Commissioners**

Discussion: Election **(Thorne) (HELD)**

ITEM HELD AS REQUESTED BY COMMISSIONER THORNE**24-0252 Board of Commissioners**

Discussion: Outstanding water bill from City of Atlanta **(Pitts) (DISCUSSED)**

24-0253 Board of Commissioners

Discussion: Animal Services **(Barrett) (DISCUSSED)**

a. A motion was made by Commissioner Arrington and seconded by Commissioner Hall, to immediately restore Animal Control Services to the City of Atlanta. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: Pitts, Hall, and Arrington

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

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

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

Nay: Arrington

Did Not Vote: Pitts, and Hall

EXECUTIVE SESSION**24-0254 Board of Commissioners**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Did Not Vote: Abdur-Rahman

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

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

d. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve the transfer in item #6 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

e. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Commissioner Thorne, to approve the request for representation in item #7 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

Commissioner Arrington requested a point of order to publicly disclose his involvement as a party in item #7 as discussed in Executive Session.

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

f. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrett and seconded by Chairman Pitts, to approve the request for representation in item #8 as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed by the following vote:

Commissioner Arrington requested a point of order to publicly disclose his involvement as a party in item #8 as discussed in Executive Session.

Yea: Pitts, Ellis, Barrett, and Arrington
Abstain: Thorne, and Abdur-Rahman
Did Not Vote: Hall

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 10, 2024
10:00 A.M.

Alexander Solutions, LLC
"A Court Reporting Firm"

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Good morning, everyone and welcome to the Regular Meeting of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. Today, it's April 10th, 2024. It is exactly 10:00 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: "Commissioner Bob Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Dana Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Present."

CLERK GRIER: "Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Present."

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

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Present."

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

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

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 2, Consent Agenda, **24-0220**, Adoption of the Consent Agenda - All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the County Commission and will be enacted by one motion. No separate discussion will take place on these items. If discussion of any Consent Agenda item is desired, the item will be moved to the Regular Meeting Agenda for separate consideration."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Any items? All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne. Is there a second? Seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Please vote on the consent agenda."

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 4, Regular Meeting Agenda, **24-0232**, Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Any items? Commissioners, anything? All right."

COMMISSIONERS: (No response.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I'll entertain a motion to approve. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Thorne, seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0233**, Ratification of Minutes. Regular meeting minutes March 6th; Recess Meeting Post Agenda Minutes, March 20th, 2024."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0234**, Presentation of Proclamations and Certificates. The first proclamation is recognizing 'Meak Productions Appreciation Day' sponsored by Commissioner Hall, cosponsored by Commissioner Arrington."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Madam Clerk this is cosponsored by Commissioner Arrington. That's not reflected on the agenda."

CLERK GRIER: "Yes, that's correct. I reached out to the district office and Mr. Vail in External Affairs, and from my understanding, this proclamation was written and dated March 20th."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. That's fine. I'm just saying it doesn't reflect, it does -- okay, thank you."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Meco Evans and friends, family, come on down. It's so good to see you. Don't stand behind; stand up front. Stand up front. Come on, up front. Well, it is an honor and a pleasure to present this proclamation to you. We have known each other for quite some time, and your work in the community speaks for itself. It was an honor to present this to you about a month ago at the state capital and to now bring you here to Fulton County. And the -- and you're smiling so hard. And the proclamation reads: WHEREAS, Meak Productions, Inc. is the world's first LGBTQ exclusive talent agency and production company originally conceived in May of 2003 in Northwest Atlanta and fully launched in August of 2007; founded by Atlanta native, Meco A. Evans; and WHEREAS, Meak Productions became the first in the nation to produce an all-inclusive LGBTQ 12-month calendar featuring independent artists, models, and talent from all ethnicities and gender identities within the LGBTQ plus community released in January of 2009; and WHEREAS, Meak Productions pioneered LGBTQ Internet radio and podcasting in Atlanta via its historic syndicated partnership with the Tenth Amendment Media Group in August of 2009, becoming the company's first LGBTQ liaison and consultant. Meak Productions created its first online streaming radio show, Same Gender Loving Expressions, as a result of this partnership; and WHEREAS, Meak Productions made history as the first online media partner and sponsor for some of Atlanta's historic annual LGBTQ and allied events from 2009 to the present including Atlanta Black Gay Pride Celebration, Atlanta International Day Against Homophobia Trans-phobia, Trans- Day of Remembrance, Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Community Breakfast, State of Black Gay American Summit, the Gentleman's Ball, Out Lawn Film Festival, Southern Fried Queer Pride, Rainbow Days at Six Flags, Pure Heat Community Festival, four US sports tournament, Journey to Change Conference, and many others; and WHEREAS, Meak Productions made history as the first Internet radio and online media partner collaborator for historic and renowned charitable organizations and small businesses including Atlanta Black Pride Incorporated from 2009 to 2022, Out on Film 2012 to present; Metro Atlanta Association of Professionals 2012 to present; Out Georgia Business Alliance 2021 to present; Peach Media Imprinting 2021 to present; EVA/MAN Media 2017 to 2022, and many others; and WHEREAS, Meak Productions made history by creating and producing the annual Black Pride Press Conference under the brand name History of Black Gay Atlanta in August 15th, 2011. The press event is now an annual signature in the city. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners celebrates with Meak Productions, Incorporated on its 20th conceptual anniversary; and does hereby proclaim Wednesday, March 20th, 2024 as 'Meak Productions, Incorporated Appreciation Day' in Fulton County, Georgia. Congratulations Meco A. Evans."

MECO EVANS, RECIPIENT: "First of all, to God be the glory. I'm very grateful to be here. This is a first time for me, and I'm so glad to see my Commissioners here, some I know, some I voted for, for a long time. Shout out to, Robb Pitts. I remember the first time he ran for office. But I'm just glad to be here. Grateful and thankful to my mom who is standing right here right now, one of my signature talents, Angela Hudgens, who's been with me since 2016? She'll be inducted into our Hall of Fame next year. And so, just and grateful and thankful to be an original Atlanta. There's a difference between an original Atlanta and a native; just want to let you know that. I'm born and raised; been here all my life. So just thank you all so much. Natalie Hall, thank you for recognizing us and also for continuing the legacy of the late Joan Garner. Thank you so much for taking the mantle and doing what you're doing here in our community. Once again, thank you so much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "On page 5, Public Hearings, **24-0235**, 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 60 minutes. In the event the 60-minute time limit is reached prior to public comments being completed, public comment will be suspended and the business portion of the BOC meeting will commence. Public comment will resume at the end of the meeting. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, we'll start with the speakers here in Assembly Hall."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "How many total speakers here?"

CLERK GRIER: "We have received 19 speaker cards. Will the first five speakers, please come forward: Dr. Arthur Ferdinand, LA Pink, Mike Russell, Brother Antony Muhammad, and Derrick D. Blassingame."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Speakers, as usual, when you have two minutes -- strike that -- 15 seconds left of your two minutes, I'll say 15 seconds, and that's your clue to begin to terminate your remarks. So two minutes each including elected officials. Dr. Ferdinand."

DR. ARTHUR FERDINAND, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Thank you, Mr. Commissioner. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Board of Commission, County Manager, if he's here. Good morning. I'm Arthur Ferdinand the Fulton County Tax Commissioner. I want to take this

opportunity to publicly thank you for the support and leadership you provided during the cyber-attack on January 26th. I'm not asking for anything today. Is that nice? Just the way the County leadership handled this event was -- which was intended to inflict maximum harm should be a textbook study in crisis management. The County's quick response mode to issues large and small, particularly when it came to our front facing public's core functions, allowed me as a Tax Commissioner to focus on what my responsibilities are. As a result, all my offices remained open to serve the citizens during this cyber-attack. We were able to maintain customer service functions and collections even though it meant reverting to manual mode for most of our services. I want to thank the public for their patience during this period and for their continued support. For the most part, we maintain our service levels at a very high level during the attack, particularly regarding senior citizens --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DR. ARTHUR FERDINAND, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- where we had 450 payment plans for the year. We maintain our collection functions at a high level, and our collections were distributed on time to the school boards, the city of Atlanta. Mr. Chairman, I thought elected officials --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I didn't hear you, Dr. Ferdinand."

DR. ARTHUR FERDINAND, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I thought elected officials had no limit."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No. Not under -- under the new rules, everyone's two minutes."

DR. ARTHUR FERDINAND, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Okay. I'll wrap up then. Finally, let me again thank your leadership."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Dr. Ferdinand. Dr. Ferdinand, I'm sorry, sir. Just two minutes. Two minutes. Time's up."

DR. ARTHUR FERDINAND, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Change the rule?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "About three or four meetings ago. Thank you, sir. Next speaker."

LA PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I would love to say good morning, but today has already started off rough. We have another dead body at Fulton County jail up under the leadership of Sheriff Labut, which is sickening and sad. Why he's taking a TPO out on me, it should be reflected towards his jail. That's who needs the protection. So as they stood there talking about an inmate, without even thinking about his family, had to include the fact that there was money taken and how hurt he was. Well, it hurts today to sit here especially looking at you, Ike Arrington, to even stand there with foam on your mouth; to even stand there to belittle the rest. I can see you doing that to

Commissioner Hall chasing balls because she's with you. But to do it to the other ones; well, I'll exclude Dana, too. But to put the other people off in here that are working to get help and to want to know where the money is going; how dare you? But, of course, you have a kickback somewhere off in there, so we'll take that. So as we stand here today, to just figure out why there hasn't been an investigation, and we're talking about a forensic audit investigation, I'm asking for you today to request one. Because -- and Arrington on you, too, yes. And Commissioner Hall chasing balls you as well. See, Pitts, you was up to something when you was looking at that inmate welfare funding, but somehow you dropped the ball --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

LA PINK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- somewhere off in there. But I'm asking for the rest of y'all to pick it up. Because if not, y'all going to be talking to the alphabet boys."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I'm here once again to call for a immediate full independent investigation of the Sheriff's office and a full forensic audit of the books today. We need four votes this morning. We have another inmate dead today. Did you hear what I said? We have another inmate dead today. So we need -- in addition to these dead inmates, we had three officers fired this week because of their supposed affiliation with Mr. J. T. Brown, an opponent of the Sheriff. We have a temporary protective order issued against a private citizen for expressing her opinion; where she received a court date before she had been served. How is that possible? Then we have Mr. Arrington and our sheriff spending our taxpayer dollars in Martha's Vineyard. Did you hear what I said? They went to Martha's Vineyard on our dime. What benefit did the taxpayers of Fulton County derive from them styling and profiling in Martha's Vineyard on our dime? And now, today, we have another death in this jail. We need an immediate -- today, we need four votes this morning to call for an immediate investigation into the books; how that jail is run. We're becoming the laughing stock of the world not just Fulton County. How long is this is going to go on before something is done? How long are we going to sit here and not do anything? We've lost a million dollars this year --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MIKE RUSSELL, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- based on Ms. Hall's action. Are we going to lose another million dollars based on what the Sheriff did, firing those three officers? Sending deputies to their homes to collect their uniforms? For what reason? We need it done. We need the vote today."

BROTHER ANTONEY MUHAMMAD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I am that I am, Brother Antoney Muhammad, not a religious man, no, no. In your scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, not one person, not one human was born from a woman womb. Mr. Pitts, you know, we go way back. Ms. Overstreet, my District 11 Representative, we have had a neighbor moving out of the community with dogs, pit bulls, to be exact. We have had

Solicitor General, Dana Gardner tell me two and a half years ago, get the reports, get the dog reports, get the police reports. Get all of those, bring them to me. Twenty reports she has. I have went in January of '24 to the court and the council, we started March 27th. We have no resolution. But on talked to Ms. Gosh, the executive assistant to Mr. Gammage, about Ms. Tina Moore did not even have my material given to the new lawyer. Ms. Dana Gardner had told me keep them as early as November of '23. We had a court date of September, and the woman was a paralegal. But she came back and let the dogs out in the November, Mr. Pitts. Now we had another court date back in January of '21. You know how long ago, we had COVID. But what is I'm saying? Why is it you can watch the news in Oakland, Michigan, a young brother, Caucasian, killed four children; the mama and dad had got charged, ten to 15 years for something that should have been at the representative and work out --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

BROTHER ANTONEY MUHAMMAD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- so I got a neighbor got children to call me other things than what you call your God, for over two and a half years, on Section 8. And I asked Ms. Overstreet, I'm asking you, Mr. Pitts, Ms. Gardner dropped the ball, so what will we do about it?"

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers: J. Wesley Day, Joseph Williams, Paul Hershey, Siegfried D. White, and Renee Pate."

DERRICK BLASSINGAME, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Where my time at? All right. So, Derrick Blassingame, I'm a government watchdog amongst other things that I do. And today I want to address you all on the issues that I have experienced, especially with the Sheriff using his office to silence a taxpayers. That to me is astonishing because since 1954 under Sullivan, New York Times versus Sullivan, public officials are not allowed to criminalize a person's First Amendment behavior. You cannot tape somebody, you cannot get a TPO on a citizen unless they have done something violent or aggressive or blatantly violated the law. And you all need to look up that because I don't want citizens being TPO'd or, you know, because you don't like what they're saying. You don't like their political discourse. If you're going to sit in this seat, you're going to have to learn how to have some thick skin. My other thing is I have an issue with your system. Issue with your system, your system, your system. It doesn't work. Because what it does to guys like me, is it keeps us chronically homeless, chronically unemployed, chronically in the shadows. I'm tired. Since 2015, I've been -- I'm tired eating out of your soup kitchens. I'm tired of sleeping in your homeless shelters. I'm tired of sleeping under your bridges. I'm tired of sleeping behind your dumpsters. I've been here since 2015. God is going to make you a celebrity. God is going to make you famous. I came to this County with the hopes of expanding my vision for life, in the pursuit of happiness. And I have not found that in Fulton County. All I've found was homelessness, unemployment, this government has put me in a criminal justice system for charge of which I'm going to prevail, because I have more than enough evidence that the Fulton County Police colluded and conspired to violate and deprive me of my

civil rights. This County needs to get it together. Ms. Hall, you cost this County over almost a million dollars. Arrington, you're suing the County at the taxpayer's expense, the audacity of you. "

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DERRICK BLASSINGAME, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- in 15 seconds, you all need to get together. Because what you're doing to me I'm going to fight back until the last breath, until the last bat of my eye; do you understand me? I'm Derrick Blassingame, and I don't take no shit."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I toil and suffer at the hands of Keith Gammage and the Fulton County criminal justice system. In Fulton County, it should be all about facts, Ms. Hall. The law and procedure. My name is J. Wesley Day, and I was beaten due to my sexual orientation at the Joystick Gay Bar on Edgewood Avenue, in 2018. I captured my assailants on camera calling me fags, sissy, you suck dick, we're gone beat your ass; we're going to stomp you into the ground. And they did everything that they said they were going to do. But guess who ended up being charged? I was, by Keith Gammage. My photo shows that I was the non-aggressor, I was on the curb. How did I get charged? To add insult to injury, Keith Gammage upgraded my case to a felony, to Fani Willis. But he dismissed the case of one of my assailants, the main one on camera taunting and slapping me. How does that make sense? As a result, I lost my job with Delta Air Lines. My son, I had withdraw from University of Wisconsin, because I ended up going homeless. I don't understand -- someone can make us -- paint a symbol on a crosswalk and y'all sent the whole US marshals to find them. But with me, no one does nothing. Mike Vick --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

J. WESLEY DAY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- y'all sent him to jail for dogs. What am I? Is a dog more important than my life? My mother already lost three sons. She almost lost a fourth, and now Fani Willis is threatening to put me in jail. Please help me."

REVEREND JOSPEH WILLIAM, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "To the Board of Commission, my name is Reverend Joseph William. I have a disabled child. We had a center open on Fairburn Road when the pandemic came. You all closed the center. Stuck us over there at Central. We was south training center. You stuck us over there with Central. You only gave us two-day transportation. We had to transport our loved one by vehicle. Now, you all act like disabled people is not important. You promised to give us another place and you haven't did anything. You told us the first of the year that the money will advocate -- advocated for us, for y'all to start developing a new center on there on Fairburn Road where the old mental health place was. But you haven't did anything. I called Marvin Arrington's office; I talked with the lady there. She promised me this money have been allocated for this purpose. You still haven't did it. Give us three months. We going to start. You noticed what month this is? This is April, and no

evidence, no work you have started over there. Do you really care about disabled people? I want you to know that God sees everyone of you --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds.

REVEREND JOSPEH WILLIAM, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- God loved his disabled people, and you sit here and won't even act when you tell lies and say you have advocated money to do what you're supposed to do. We need a center."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Morning. My name is Paul Hershey. Let's just talk about some facts. Number one, if you look at the procurement review that just came out, it talks about two areas, your constitutional election officials both in the DA and the Sheriff violating totally your procurement protocol, violating every act that you've got in their protocol. Anybody that's got a black express card has violated the protocol statutes. And the bottom line is, is you're sitting here doing nothing about it. But what the funny part about it is, is every time you start talking about the budget for the DA or for the Sheriff, Commissioner Arrington stands up and says oh, they are constitutional officials; we don't have that authority. The review just came out and said not only do you have the authority, you've got the responsibility. You are not following your fiduciary responsibilities. And, ladies and gentlemen, you can be held accountable. Each one of you can be held accountable. You think it's a joke. There is a constitutional law on your fiduciary responsibility, and you're going to follow it. Because you're going to start to see those lawsuits coming. And Commissioner Barrett, you sat up here when you first came to a meeting, you need to go back and look at your video. You talked about how screwed up the budget process was and now you're right in the middle of it. With 32 million-dollar additions, you can shake your head all you want, but the bottom line is you're part of the problem. Now, the issue is, is this: Do your job. I keep coming up here and saying that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

PAUL HERSHEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- you've got a job to do. Do your damn job. Follow your rules, follow your protocol. I have called each one of you to meet and the only person that sits up there in the four or five democrats --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you. Next speaker."

RENEE TATE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I'm Renee Tate. This is the wrong -- about the Fulton County jails. The recent deaths of Fulton County jails has cast a sober shadow over the community. Highlighting the urgent needs to reform within the criminal justice system behind the cold bars and creating walls lies a system failing to uphold its fundamental duties to ensure the safety and well-being of those in his custody. Every life lost within these walls represent a failure of our society to provide adequate care and protection. The tragedy underscores the dire need for improved mental health resources and medical care with correctional facilities. Too often individuals with mental

health issues are left untreated, but inadequately cared for, leading to preventable deaths. Additional systems issues such as overcrowding and understaffing exacerbate these problems, create an environment where tragedy becomes all too common. But amidst the darkness, there is a hope for change. It is imperative that we demand accountability from those responsible for overseeing our jails and prisons. We must push for comprehensive reforms that prioritize the dignity and rights of every individual regardless of their circumstances. Moreover, we must address the root cause in incarceration involving poverty, systemic racism, and lack of access to education and employment opportunities by investing in community-based programs and initiatives, aimed at addressing these underlying systems --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

RENEE TATE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- we can work toward the future while incarceration is no longer seen as the default solution. Therefore, the County jail serves as a stark reminder of the work that lies ahead. It is a call to action for all."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next speaker."

REVEREND SIEGFRED DARCELL WHITE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "My name is Reverend Siegfried Darcell White, founder and CEO of Concerned As Inc. LaShaw Thompson, Shemar McElroy, Christopher Gray, Montes Stanson, Christopher Smith, Alexander Hawkins -- what do they have in common? They all died at the Fulton County Jail. They all died. We have to get rid of this two system tier. Thank God, the next sheriff, JT Brown, who is sitting in the back, thank God for him, who's going to be our next sheriff. Thank God for him, and I'm also -- I am supporting LA Pink, a very nice lady, married, love what she's doing. Now, I'm looking at the Commissioners, you, Mr. Marvin Arrington, Jr., the money that you may have if your son or daughter get in jail, you can get them out. A person should not die in jail because they're poor. The last death that we had, the guy couldn't afford the bond, and he's dead. Let's change that system. Let's give fair bonds to poor people. Mr. Pitts, I'm afraid if I get locked up, I will not be able to pay for the bail. But it's a possibility I can die -- get killed, get stabbed --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- you have 15 seconds."

REVEREND SIEGFRED DARCELL WHITE, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- to death because I am, what? Too poor to pay for a bail. It takes about \$19 million to staff -- to make sure guards are there."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, thank you, sir. Next speaker."

CLERK GRIER: "Next five speakers: Maria Gaudio, Duwon Robinson, Sandra L. Williams, Linda H. Williams, and Greg Fann."

MARIA GAUDIO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Maria Gaudio, Fulton County. This morning, I am wearing pink to support LA Pink who's a marvelous activist in her community, and I am just -- just astonished that the Sheriff would put a temporary restraining order on her when he don't like what she says, and it's just her freedom of speech that hurt his little feelings. You know, dude, grow a pair. You've got a badge, you've got a gun, plenty of bullets, and the whole arsenal of the Fulton County Sheriff's Office at your disposal, and we've got people dying in the jails and you have nothing better to do then to chase an activist who's trying to help members of your community? Grow a pair and then use them in your next porn video. Next, I'd like to talk about our elections. The situation has not being mitigated where we still have no standard operating procedures. Nadine and Bernice are refusing to produce information for other members of the Election Board, and I'm just appalled that Election Board member and Commissioner Thorne were turned away from observing at our election hub. What the hell's going on down there? You know I volunteered as a poll watcher nine of 19 days of early voting and during Election Day, and I can tell you that each site was different. And I saw improper chain of custody --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MARIA GAUDIO, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- at one of those locations. In terms of financing, the busiest -- the busiest place that we have every year we do pre-election is --"

DUWON ROBINSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Board. Commissioner Rob Pitts, I want to thank you, man, for not showing any favoritism to the County Tax Commissioner, the crook. He's the biggest crook in Fulton County. Anybody that's a friend of Arthur Ferdinand, Mr. Bob Ellis is an enemy to the Fulton County citizens. When you all talk about homelessness, majority of the people are put out of their home, Ms. Thorne and Ms. Barrett, because of the Fulton County Tax Commissioner and what Investor Services is doing. How long are we going to allow this guy to do -- he hadn't reported to y'all since 2010 the money and the fees that he's making and collecting. How long are we going to stand by and allow this to happen, Fulton County? How long? How long? Since 2010, he have not reported to y'all, Mr. Bob Ellis. What he -- he got a 911 tax? What that got to do with the Fulton County Tax Commissioner? A dollar a parcel, Ms. Bridget Thorne? A dollar a tax, Ms. Barrett? What he and Investor Services is doing is criminal. He moseyed his way down here because somebody running against him. Y'all ain't never seen it. He come down here and you don't know rules because he ain't been down here. He reading off a card and he give it to this one lady here, a speech that he wrote, he the Fulton County Tax Commissioner for 27 years? Ms. Khadijah, what he doing is criminal. It's criminal. We got to look into it. We got two former employees, Mr. Pitts. Ms. Terry Noble and Ms. Gladys Brassfield are double dipping. They are contracted employees in his office. Retirees, Mr. Arrington, from Fulton County are double dipping. Let me say that again so nobody won't say they didn't hear. Terry Noble and Gladys Brassfield. Arthur Ferdinand is one of the biggest

crooks we don't allow in this County, Ms. Hall. He's the biggest. And anybody want to be a friend of his, is --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

DUWON ROBINSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- is an enemy to your voters and constituents. What they are doing is criminal. Criminal. Investor Services got a contract that they didn't have to bid for. We need to look in to that today. Thank you."

SANDRA LEE WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. I am Sandra Lee Williams, the President of the Atlanta North Georgia Labor Council. So I'm here today to talk about Resolution 24-0247, which speaks to the possible resolution or approval of limiting the use of Fulton County staff for certain events. I just want to say, and I won't be long, Fulton County has long impressive history of working in community and bringing service to the community. The examples I'd like to cite were the public health department. They came forth during COVID and we worked in partnership, the Atlanta North Georgia Labor Council worked in partnership with Fulton County to provide testing as well as vaccines. One of the very first times that I had a opportunity to meet Mr. Pitts was at a job fair where we also had the solicitor's office. You may remember you came by where you were campaigning, and I also -- and I urge all of you to participate in the community with the labor council, because it gives you an opportunity to actually see the partnership that you have with labor. The second thing I want to say is: It is very, very important to understand that many times the services that you provide are a reflection of the great work that you do here as a part of government. And I would not like to see that limited, but to see that prolonged. So I ask you to reconsider any limitation of those services and I thank you again for your service to this community."

LINDA WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Linda Williams, and I am CEO and founder of Beginning Today, Inc. I teach cognitive behavior therapy to the women in the Fulton County Jail at the Atlanta City Detention Center. CBT aims to help you deal with overcoming problems in a more positive way. So we focus on the problems and the situations and not those of your past. We show the women how to change their negative patterns to improve the way they think, they feel, and ultimately they act. I've been homeless, an alcoholic, and a victim of domestic violence. I am now sober for 25 years, an international best-selling author -- thank you - - a property owner, and I have my own business. We all have a past, but by the grace of God I was never incarcerated. It wasn't because I didn't do anything wrong; it was because I didn't get caught. And if we are truthful with ourselves, we have all made bad decisions. But someone came along and helped me. They helped me to change my thinking and, therefore, it changed my life. And if we're honest, we all can admit we all need help. That's what we're trying to do. We're trying to help these ladies help themselves; and now we need your help. I do what I do because this is what I feel my purpose is, to empower and in-store women. It is not a political platform. This is a humanitarian platform. And if we can provide these individuals with the tools they need

to reintegrate into society and becoming taxpaying citizens, that's a win-win. So I shared it with the ladies --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

LINDA WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- and they wanted to do something. So I have shared letters that they have written to you. What I ask is that you reconsider the benefits of our program and approve the contracts for the vendors that serve the women of Fulton County. Thank you."

GREG FANN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. I am Greg Fann, as many of you already know. And I represent too many entities that you talk about. But today I am here to represent the community. And I want to talk about agenda item 24-0247. One thing that this Commission has done for years is allowed staff to go to community events to discuss things that you guys don't have the information. You have professional staff that has the information. When you're talking about cutting out the time to 5 o'clock, they get off at 5 o'clock, but a lot of them make a whole lot of money -- a whole lot of money, and you're saying overtime. But we really need that community engagement. I mean, somebody said something about campaigning. Well, all y'all campaign. And I don't know one politician that's running for any office, or any office do not be campaigning. You campaigning now. On your votes you're campaigning because you're trying to continue to stay there so the people will vote for you again. So to stop the community and to infringe taxpayers -- I heard a lot of talk about tax payers, tax payers, tax payers. You infringe the tax payer. Do you know people who go to MPU meetings and community meetings work? They don't see this meeting. They work. They can't be in no meeting at 5 o'clock. And then after the weekend, many of them working, they got to be at a meeting on the weekends. So I would hope that you will reconsider his Resolution and vote against it. Thank you so very much, and God bless you and God bless your family, and God bless America. Thank you."

CLERK GRIER: "Last five speakers in Assembly Hall, please come forward: Eric Richardson, Hakeem Williams, Rodney Floyd, Holly Kessler, and Robby Caban."

ERIC RICHARDSON, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Eric Richardson. I am the president of Coalition of Black Trade Unions. I'm also the Executive Director of Atlanta North Georgia Labor Council. But the main thing is I'm a citizen of Fulton County. I recently took a tour of the Fulton County Jail at Rice Street on my own, and with a group, because I had to see for myself. What I found out it is horrible. I was a telephone repairman with Southern Bell when that building was built. And one month after it started receiving inmates, they were tearing it apart then. The concrete hadn't settled, and they were tearing that place apart. And here we are, 50, 60 years later -- how long its been there? And you all turned down money that would help that jail? I don't care who the Sheriff is gone be, they're going to have the same problem, unless you replace that facility. Or I tell you what, what you ought to do is spend a week in there and see how it is. These folks -- and I pray for all the families

who have lost members in that facility, but when you've got staff that's overworked, denied overtime, but they shouldn't be working overtime. They should be fully staffed, and a replacement facility should be put up by this County. So I guess what? If you all want to turn down the money, turn in your resignation or we'll put you out."

HAKEEM WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "How y'all doing? Hakeem Williams, coming from Bankhead. I come down here to give comments and concerns in regards to Commissioner Khadijah. We've been requesting you a year and a half in our community at Grove Park to come to at least one meeting; your Chief of Staff over here in the corner tried to argue with me at last meeting and say that it's not your job to come to the meeting, whatever he was saying -- we need you to come down to Grove Park. We're the biggest community in your district and we haven't seen you. It's a shame that I got to come down here and address the whole Commissioners because you ain't came down here yet. I'm seeing candidates for Sheriff, District Six Commissioner, Fulton County Tax Commissioner. I see everybody else coming down, but we have yet to see our person that we elected. The deaths at the Fulton County Jail is unacceptable; and I just want to talk about the humanitarian side of things. Yes, we need a new jail, but when you go to jail, is it, okay, for you to be fed scraps? Is it, okay, for you to be fed at an adverse time like, yes, it's jail, but we've got to get back to what the jail is supposed to be doing, which is rehabilitating people. So you feeding them BS meals is not going to get us nowhere. I mean like they should at least have a hot meal while you in jail. Like that should just be the basic. Down here in Southwest Atlanta, that jail is in our district. So that means every death that happens there, APD has to investigate, and it goes into our crime stats. Zone One had the lowest crime in the city last year. So the more deaths that happen in the jail is going to affect the crime in Zone One, and we need to work together because Major Morgan is doing a great job in Zone One."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Fifteen seconds."

HAKEEM WILLIAMS, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "So I encourage y'all to work together, stop this reality show, and become actual Commissioners."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: Just a minute. Just a minute. Just a minute. Just a minute. Just a minute. Just a minute. Just a minute. Sergeant, where are you? Sergeant, yes, sir, you have the floor."

RODNEY FLOYD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Rodney Floyd. I'm here to talk about the cyber security attack that just occurred. The Fulton County cyber security attack was a house on fire. You had put out the fire, figure out what caused the fire, and take steps to prevent fires taking place in the future. I'm here to thank the leadership of Fulton County, the Board of Commissioners, the County Manager and his team, the response team, and the Tax Commissioner of Fulton County because of the efforts you put together, we were able to keep the 15 municipalities that we collect on behalf of, the two school boards, the CIDs Tax Allocation Districts, all of their money flowing, and it was because of the work that was put in. We had a lot of

challenges, but we were only closed for two days when it comes to the Tax Commissioner's Office because of the cyber security attack. We started taking collections after two days. The County was told it would be an extended lift of time before we were able to get back up on our feet. But because of the leadership of Dr. Ferdinand, the County Manager, Members of this Board of Commissioners, we were able to get back up and running in two days. That's unprecedented for an attack of this kind, and sometimes people are quick to point out the failings of leadership. I just came down here to point out and give everyone who acknowledged the -- when you do it right. So I'm here today to say thank you so much for your leadership. Thank you so much for your support. And thank you for letting us to continue to serve the citizens of Fulton County and do the job that they have put us in place to do. Thank you so much for your time."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Point of order, Mr. Chair. I think we all understand that there are public comments are going to be made that things that we would disagree with or whatnot, and folks that have made comments and people have disagreed with, but we would request that the folks in the audience be respectful of other people that are providing comments and not speak during the time that they are providing comments."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue."

ROBBY CABAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Here again like I told you I would be. I am a taxpayer of Atlanta and Fulton County and, frankly, I believe I'm being defrauded. You all are paying or asking city of Atlanta taxpayers to pay for a contract regarding animal control that affects public safety that you know is in default. You have an e-mail out of 03/31 4:44 p.m. All of you have received it, and it has 14 links; links from whistleblowers who are under duress, staff members who say that they're being abused, they're sexual harassment, they're told not to enforce our laws. According to Section 34-316, those are ordinances that you all in Georgia Code 1610 are violating your own oaths and your code of ethics state in 2.78 that you're supposed to be in compliance with the law. I've already written all of you. This is a whistleblower who risked his career, another one. Amanda Brennon was here last year, same problems. If the County provider vendor, Life Line could fix it, they would have done it already. All these people here are talking about budget deficiencies. They're talking about problems, corruption, malfeasance. Yet you all are failing to act and expect taxpayers like me to pay for a contract that is in default. Rob Pitts, you went on a press conference about it. Dana Barrett, you said we could turn off services like that. Well listen to the expert here, this is what you said, and you have the e-mail."

(Whereupon, public speaker plays a recording.)

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

ROBBY CABAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "You all received the e-mail; I know you did because it didn't come back undeliverable. Stop defrauding Fulton County taxpayers. It is illegal, it is against the law, and I will file ethics complaints on all of you."

HOLLY KESLER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. My name is Holly Kesler and I'm the Georgia State Director for Citizens Defending Freedom. We're a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization; and part of our mission is to hold the government accountable through transparency and accountability. I'm here today to inquire what oversight and authority you all exercise over contracts, the procurement process, and the expenditure of taxpayer funds. As we've heard today, there's a lot going on with the finances here. I filed an ethics complaint, and they have not yet refused to hear my complaint, but they did refuse two other complaints. The issue is that they're saying that Fulton County is not responsible when, in fact, Fulton County does have contractual authority. I've left some paperwork with these sweet ladies over here today, and she's going to make sure that each of you get a copy of it. There are also questions in there and my contact information. I look forward to hearing your responses. Thank you so much."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Ten on Zoom. We have about 15 more minutes. All right."

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

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning, Commissioners. Commissioner Thorne's questioning of Nadine Williams in the March 20th meeting was a breath of fresh air. The Fulton BRE wastes so much money. Cobb County was about 30 percent less registered voters than Fulton. It was projected to spend just over \$ 6 million running their entire elections department in 2024. It looks like we're in line to spend over \$40 million. Based on that, Fulton spends almost five times more per registered voters than Cobb. Maybe, Ms. Williams should reach out to her counterpart in our neighboring county and inquire how they accomplished this. Voting is not a jobs program. It is an essential function that must be performed with accuracy and efficiency. There was an audit performed in our elections department a number of years ago that found, among other issues, that the Fulton Department of Registration and Elections was in dire need of standard operating procedures. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe this is still the case in a department where job one is an accurate, complete, and secured account of our vote. There is still no standard operating procedure. Commissioner Hall, who's so rich that you accuse Commissioner Thorne of bullying. I guess that's your area of expertise. Sexual harassment is a type of bullying. Commissioner Thorne was doing her job figuring out why the gross inefficiencies of our elections department has caused us to be the laughing stock of the country or have

caused us to be the laughing stock of the country in 2020, and how to avoid this happening again in 2024."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

KEVIN MULDOWNEY, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "I'm done."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Maureen Sheeran."

MAUREEN SHEERAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Three things I want to address. First, I want to echo the other citizens' concerns about the conditions of the Fulton County Jail. It is the County's bare minimum response. People have to be safe and healthy. Second, I want to address the animal services conflict between Fulton and the city of Atlanta. I live in 30310, which has one of the highest intake rates of stray animals in the County. Since the city lost access to animal services Friday, my community has lacked resources to appropriately handle at least six stray animals. We've reached out to our city council rep. He directs us back up to Fulton County and I suspect Fulton County will direct us back to the city. We do not care who owes what. We care about restoring our access to essential services that we pay for and rely upon. Please exercise leadership and work the city to restore our access to animal services. Third, I want to urge you to vote against Commissioner Thorne's Resolution limiting how Fulton County staff (inaudible.) constituents. Many of our neighbors cannot take off work to attend the County meetings during business hours. We would benefit from an engagement from County representatives during MPU, neighborhood association, and community events. Please keep this line of connection to the constituents open and vote, no on this Resolution. That's all I have to say."

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

MATT ROWENCZAK, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "We have several elected and unelected officials in this County that clearly don't like sunlight. We have had and continue to have an issue with excessive spending and a lack of transparency. As an example, in the previous meeting it was shared that our elections department hired almost 200 individuals that solely handle provisional ballots. How many provisional ballots? A hundred and fifty-nine provisional ballots. They hired more individuals than they had provisional ballots. Does that sound like a sound competent decision to you? This is the same department that wants to spend \$40 million this year. We now know that individuals in this country are skipping meals so that they can pay their rent, and we have a department frivolously spending our money. Let me say again for context how out-of-control this is. Cobb County that spends about five or \$6 million in a federal election year. They have approximately 75 percent of the voters of Fulton County. Therefore, that would equate to about \$8 million in Fulton County terms. Yet Fulton County wants to spend \$40 million. When Commissioner Thorne had some questions

for our elections director last meeting, Commissioner Hall, you said it was bullying. That takes quite some gall. Maybe, we should ask your ex Chief of Staff about bullying. Are you triggered by sunlight. Did you know that Fulton elections has kicked out public observers from polls for simply being present? Do you remember from the previous audit that they have no standard operating procedures? Were you aware that they misplaced early voting votes in a municipal election back in the fall and had to do two more re-tabulations? Did you know that they provided zero supporting documentation to the Board of Elections for the most recent presidential primary? How does the board certify an election with zero supporting documentation? We, in fact, have a problem. We need more sunlight and more transparency. Thank you."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is Bree Sharper."

BREE SHARPER, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Good morning. I am Bree Sharper, a proud resident of Sylvan Hills in 30310. I want to state that I am here to talk about animal control services, but before I do that, I do want to share that I have a concern about our Fulton County Jail and stand with the residents who have spoken earlier today. I have sent e-mails to Commissioner Pitts, Commissioner Hall, Mayor Dickens, Councilmember Lewis because I am told that the city and the County want engagement from the residents. So I am trying to be engaged. I have not received any e-mails back. So I am here. I also attempted to address Commissioner Hall or her staff person at our recent MPUX meeting on Monday night about this, but there wasn't any representative there. So I am here. We are being told by Councilmember Lewis in the city of Atlanta statement that there was an agreement on the books basically waiting to be signed on Friday the 5th of April. But that was tabled because feelings got upset when Mayor Dickens spoke out about the Fulton County Jail. So animal control services agreement was put to the side as a gotcha. I'm not sure if this is this true. I asked this in my e-mail. As I stated, I have not gotten a response. If it is true, I'm disappointed that leaders shouldn't be proving points at the expense of County residence and their animals. If it's not true, where are we with solving this problem? Without animal care services in the city of Atlanta, we have a danger to our community. We have free roaming animals and also a teacher in the city school system. We have animals roaming our property. I am telling my principal, there is no animal control --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- 15 seconds."

MAUREEN SHEERAN, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "-- I'd also like to state that there is some confusion about what ZIP Codes are listed for not accepting animals. My friend lives in 30337, which is the city of College Park, and she was told she can't turn an animal in."

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

BEN HOWARD, PUBLIC SPEAKER: "Greetings, Commissioners and Staff. And special greetings fellow citizens. Ben Howard, senior advocate public policy analyst. The new information for community living, the federal agency specializing in matters

related to aging, has announced that the theme for Older Americans Month 2024 is Powered by Connections. Connections through social resources. Yes, the year and the days of Dot Benson, Dalene S. Mills, and members of the Council on Aging, this auditorium was graced with the presence and aura of myriad gray-haired man and women. Come to the County seat to be remembered and materially respected. It might be right in the month of May this year to allocate time so representatives from the senior citizen centers and the multipurpose facilities could each momentarily express their general sentiment of their peers at their respective facilities. Just a thought. Stay tuned."

RICO DOLLAR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "The next person to speak is this Ossunka Amato. Ossunka Amato. The next person to speak is Ellie Hansen. Ellie Hansen. The next person to speak is Hannah Sacularis. With that being said, that concludes the Zoom public comments."

CLERK GRIER: "No further speakers."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No further speakers. Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "Continuing on page 5, County Manager's items under Open and Responsible Government --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "-- Mr. Chair, can I just take a point of personal privilege? Certainly, there's a lot of times in public comment, there's discourse and so forth that makes us uncomfortable that we may not like. But we all have various First Amendment rights. I'm concerned and I'm disturbed of the fact that we've had other elected officials potentially use the judicial process or a court process or threats thereof to try to stifle comments, whether you agree with them or not, or whether I agree with them or not. And I just -- I think it's worth, you know, kind of maybe for our own attorney to circulate to these other folks that if we get ourselves sued over this, we're not going to defend you. You know, people have the right to come down here and say things. I've heard a bunch of stuff, been down here. We've all been called, you know, old so-and-so's and probably will continue to be. And there's a bunch of stuff that's said that's factually wrong. We all know that. But that's not the point of this to sit up here and tell somebody they're factually wrong or stifle their commentary. So, you know, I just want to go on record with that, because it's -- I can't have this sort of turn into kind of a bunch of just -- using and abusing it, an other process to try to stifle folks -- citizen's comments; it's just not right."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner, I've asked the County Attorney to review the legislation that was cited and any other that would address that matter. All right. Continue, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0326, Finance. Presentation, review, and approval of the April 10th, 2024 Budget Soundings and Resolution."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Madam Chief Operating Officer, in the absence of the manager."

CLERK GRIER: "CFO, sir."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "CFO. Madam CFO."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The item that's before you today includes a number of adjustments to the annual hardware and software maintenance lists. These are items that were not provided to the finance, budget, and procurement office during the development of the final budget document and need to be included as part of this year's AML list. There are no additional resources being requested. It's simply to add items to the AML list. And the second item included in the sounding's package is the action to reduce the District Four budget by 200,000 and increase the transfer to the risk-management fund. This is the spreading on the minutes, if you will, of that action that the Board took by Resolution."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "24-0237: Request approval of a supplemental pricing Resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of general fund tax anticipation notes in the aggregate principal amount of \$225 million."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "24-0238, Human Resources Management: Request approval to modify the classification section of the classification and compensation plan by adding new titles."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. We have a motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Just a quick question: What's a seamstress in the Sheriff's office? What is that?"

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Good morning, Commissioners. A seamstress is a position that is primarily going to be focused on maintaining the uniforms that the sheriff deputies wear, putting on patches, you know. It allows the Sheriff to buy uniforms in bulk and do the alterations on-site versus working with the various vendors."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is it a full-time position?"

KENNETH HERMON, CHIEF HR OFFICER: "Yes. And actually what's happening, Commissioners, is that currently there is an employee in the Sheriff's office that is conducting this work, but they're in the wrong classification. So we're just putting them into the right classification. I think they're currently classified as a security specialist."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 6, **24-0239**, Information-Technology: Request approval to extend an existing contract in an amount not to exceed \$424,270 to the upgrade of IT infrastructure associated with the implementation of Office 365."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0240**. Real Estate and Asset Management: Request approval to increase the spending authority in the total amount of \$252,000 to cover the costs in support of Phase Two relocation of Clerk of Superior and Magistrate Courts in the IT Records Division."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Favorable motion by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Commissioner Ellis, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Not necessarily a question specifically about this item, but when will full occupancy of this thing be completed?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "We are shooting to be fully occupied by the end of 2024. We have several other projects with regards to various departments, IT, Clerk of Superior Court where we are cataloguing assets in terms of storage items. All that takes time, but we are targeting the end of 2024 because most of the leases expire at that time we're removing these entities from."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So we will meet by the end of 2024? Is there any reason we would not be complete by the end of 2024?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "I don't see it at this point."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So we need to, in order to get out of some of these leases; is that correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Let's vote. Motion is to approve."

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0241**: Request approval to increase the spending authority in an amount not to exceed \$104,522 to cover the cost to purchase, deliver, and install 74 total bays and additional pallet racking and related components."

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

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

CLERK GRIER: "**24 -0242**: Request approval of a recommended proposals in a total amount not to exceed \$1,600,000 to provide standby professional services for facilities, related design, engineering, and assessments."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, motion to approve by Commissioner Natalie Hall, seconded by Commissioner Arrington. Let's vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 7, **24-0243**: Request approval of a change order greater than 10 percent in an amount not to exceed \$3,066,235.31 for contract modifications required to complete construction of the new facility and connected areas at the Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Unit."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "Mr. Chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to provide a brief update regarding Oak Hill, if that's, okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes. I was going to ask you particularly in light of this request of additional, yes, ma'am."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "Yes, sir. So the Board generously approved \$15 million from the American Rescue Plan for the capital of the construction of the behavioral health crisis center. This three million-dollar change order represents the advice that we have received from our operator, Grady, and the State to address safety and certification concerns."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So that came after we had approved the original 15?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "Yes, sir. This has come during the course of construction of the facility."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "So Grady saw something that we had not seen?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "Yes, sir, for specifically we have to address issues in the pharmacy. There will be a full pharmacy in the facility, and that pharmacy has to be certified by the State. And so, it has to be constructed in a specific way. Once Grady came on board and shared their insight from their years of service in this industry, we made those changes. We also were provided advice from the State regarding elopement from the facility, based on how it was constructed on the exterior. The good news is, is the \$3 million has been absorbed within the \$15 million. So, there is only a slight overrun of \$160,000, and we had set aside one million additional dollars in ARPA as a contingency. So this is certainly not a request for any additional dollars, but we needed to bring this to the Board's attention that there were change orders within the scope of work, and those change orders represent \$3 million."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Thank you for that explanation. The motion on the floor is to approve. Please vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0244: Request approval to increase spending authority in the total amount of \$105,295 to cover the costs for additional moving services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, motion to approve by Vice Chair 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: "Under Health and Human Services, 24-0245, Community Development: Request approval of a contract between Fulton County and Destination Tomorrow, Inc. in the amount of \$100,000 to support the wellness journey program."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Why is this going to this organization versus Mr. Cheeks?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "Mr. Chairman, during the 2024 budget process, the Board approved additional funding for this organization."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What is Mr. Cheeks who is -- what's it called, HIV-AIDS --"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "The Department of HIV Elimination. That program is funded to the tune of \$33 million from the federal government."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And this is outside that is basically what you're saying?"

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. All right, motion on the floor is to -- Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I did have a follow-up to that. Was this a recommendation that came from?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "Yes, sir. During the budget process, this organization was recommended for this specific amount."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "No, was it recommended by our offices, so that has a responsibility for dealing with this particular issue?"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "No, sir."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. They've vetted this organization or provided us with any feedback on them or if we've ever done business with them before?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I never heard of them."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "The funding was placed in the budget for Community Development, and so the Department of HIV Elimination was not a part of the process. I can get information for you regarding whether or not the County has previously funded this organization? I do not recall this organization being previously funded, but I can confirm that."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I'd like to offer a substitute motion to hold until we get some additional -- I mean what -- they may be very fine and well, but what I do have some concern about is if we're expending funds to do something duplicate or that we're already doing. And I don't have enough information to go on."

CLERK GRIER: "Open on the motion to hold; and the motion passes unanimously."

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0246**, Public Works: Request approval of the lowest responsible bidder in an amount not to exceed \$1,613,760 to provide construction and rehabilitation services for the elevated Hembry Road water sewage tank."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. A favorable motion by Commissioner Ellis, seconded by Commissioner Thorne. Please vote."

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

CLERK GRIER: "On page 8, Commissioners' Action Items, **24-0247**: Request approval of a Resolution establishing policies limiting the use of Fulton County staff for certain events by members of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and for other purposes sponsored by Commissioner Thorne."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, motion on the floor is to approve by Commissioner Thorne. It is seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Commissioner Thorne, Commissioner Arrington, Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Commissioner Thorne, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Thank you. So it seems like there's a lot of misinformation that was put out there to the public. We discussed the use of staff for events, and this is only for Commissioner Events. It has nothing to do with the other departments. It has nothing to do with the Board of Health. I'm not telling them they have to limit their staff. It has nothing to do with voter education and outreach, they can

go ahead and do -- the individual departments are free to do what they want. The problem is that certain Commissioners are demanding that staff come to events, which is fine. We need to hold events, we need to make the public aware of what the County is providing for them, and that is a basic need. But we just need to reel it in a bit. So the purpose of this Resolution is outlining an exhibit. Commissioners shall prioritize using their own district staff to support events. I have an event tomorrow, my staff has been working on that for several months. From what I hear, Commissioner Abdur-Rahman, Sequoia does a great job planning her events. She's working on her events for the fall. Secondly, Commissioners shall avoid the appearance of using County staff and facilities for campaign purposes. It is not good the job of individual commissioners to schedule events intended to -- it's primarily the job to raise awareness of County services, not for campaigning. During this past month, we've had an influx of events that's put a tremendous strain on the County staff. So we need to respect our County employees. We need to use our County tax dollars wisely and not for the appearance of campaigning. Commissioners must provide in writing a minimum of 14 days in advance of an event. We gave an exception to D.R.E.A.M. and External Affairs of 30 days. This is just so the individual departments can allocate staff on a weekend. If they need them on a weekend, maybe they could say, hey, you work Saturday, I'll give you Friday off. Overtime, late -- well, they can accommodate the staffing instead of it coming last minute, and they've already planned their schedules for the next two weeks. There's been an issue with it taking away from the normal duties of the staff because of the last-minute requests by certain Commissioners. We're limiting that they should only request County staff for one event per month that takes place at a non-Fulton County facility or after normal working hours; any time on Saturday or Sunday or a holiday. The after working hours will also apply to Fulton County facilities and non-Fulton County facilities. I think this is a reasonable request. We don't -- we're not saying that you can't have events. You can still have events, but just limit the use of trying to pull in all the staff from all the County. County staff shall not be expected to stay at an event after the main program has ended. For example, the County staff should not be asked to stay after the program has ended to take pictures and videos. That's just an expectation. They may -- they may on their own accord, say, hey, I don't mind staying. I have the time. Commissioners shall not expect County staff to obtain or provide supplies, materials, and equipment to an event of a municipality, government agency other than Fulton County, nonprofit or commercial organization such as vendor fairs, MPU meetings, events, town halls, grand openings, and ribbon cuttings. It is often that the staff is asked to bring goodie bags, event stages, microphones. So this is just kind of trying to reel in and limit that use. County staff shall not be used to boost coverage of a Commissioner's attendance at a third party event. For purposes of this section, a third party event is defined as an event that is not held or funded by the County department or where the event is not approved, held, or supported by the full Board of Commissioners. County staff should also not be requested to prepare materials or goodie bags for commissioners to take the third-party events. So basically our County staff is valuable; they have jobs they have to do for the County, and it's great that they come and support us, Commissioners. They're wonderful to have. I invite you all to my town hall that I'm having tomorrow. We've been planning it for months. You know, we

will showcase some of the County staff there. I'm not -- and I will reiterate -- I am not cutting Commissioners from having County staff events, I'm just limiting so that we're courteous to the Fulton County employees that we work with day in and day out. And I want to say, we didn't just come up with this on our own; it wasn't my department. We sent out surveys to every single County department and ask direct questions, how does this impact you? How as Commissioners, how can we serve you better? How can we work together so that both of us are supported? That you're able to come to our events and we can respectfully ask you. So we did. We reached out, did surveys, and we held meetings to come up with these guidelines, and based on what the County staff told us, these are the guidelines we drafted. So I want to clear up -- a Ms. Sandra Williams from the Labor Council, I had nothing to do with the public health department or the job fair that the Solicitor has. None of this is relevant to that. I want to bring up Greg Fann. He wanted to discuss the events in the overtime. I think, you know, obviously, we may still have overtime with the events that we have scheduled, but it shouldn't be an exorbitant cost to Fulton County taxpayers to attend all of these events. So I think that's an irrelevant issue. And then Maureen Sheeran, she was against it as well. I don't know why, of all the things. You know, I just think that we, as Commissioners, need to have some guidelines in place -- some guardrails in place, so that we are respecting our County staff. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess we should always have some type of limits, but it's funny to hear words respect and courtesy come out of her mouth, and she didn't have the respect or courtesy to contact me or other Commissioners to get our opinion and to get our input. So, it's just crazy what's going on right now. It's political season. You know, y'all going to do whatever y'all want to do anyway. But, you know, from my experience in being here nine years, not one year, from my experience in being here nine years, the MPU meetings are the meetings that are the most well attended in the city of Atlanta by constituents. We had numerous meetings trying to get the word out about elections and health and other things, and there would be no one there. And so, the best place to reach the people specifically in the city of Atlanta is at those MPU meetings. You know, I guess people can't, you know -- I guess people have been trusted in the past to limit themselves. And perhaps again there are some limits that are needed; but to talk about respect and courtesy and not offer it to your colleagues is laughable. You know, they gone do what they want to anyway. It just doesn't make any sense. But, hey, it's political season, y'all. It's campaign season. So they gone do whatever they want to try to limit people. But limiting the use of Fulton County staff -- I mean the unintended consequences of this -- I mean, it just -- it might make a little sense, but it probably will make more sense if we had been allowed to have input. But they gone do what they gone do, so swing away."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. You know, what's interesting about this, is the fact -- I do believe that it needs some tweaking, but what's interesting about this, I have been here four years, okay? I have had senior leadership people -- and I'm not going to call no names, that feel undue pressure when they've already given an answer to one Commissioner for supplying their time to an event and another Commissioner wants to come a day before, two days before, three days before, and tell them that they got to be somewhere. And they're not going to tell that person, no. And so, you don't get the right to abuse your authority as a sitting Commissioner to mistreat staff. Now, you can paint whatever picture you like to paint of Vice Chair Commissioner Khadija. But when you're wrong, you're wrong. Now, what I'm going to ask my colleague to do, is to hold this, to tweak it a little bit better since individuals have decided to spread lies in the community. So we're going to need to tweak it, but the need for this -- let's call a spade a spade. Individuals have abused their authority of Fulton County staff and the staff thinks their job is on the line. So, therefore, we're going to put accountability in place. So I'm going to ask my colleagues to hold this. I'm making a motion to hold to tweak."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The motion offered by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman is to hold. Is there a second? Is there a second on the motion to hold? Is there a second? Commissioner Arrington, second?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I sure did."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. The motion is properly before us. The motion on the floor is to hold. Let's dispose of the motion to hold."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "Two nays with Commissioner Hall."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Point of order. We had a vote recorded that the motion to hold passed; and then we have a Commissioner citing that their vote was wrongly recorded."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I didn't decide. I accidentally pressed --"

CLERK GRIER: "Oh, so you had voted, yea."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I didn't know it was --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So, this would ask for a ruling. Is this thing properly held or is it to stay before us?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Point of order."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes? What's your point of order?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN.: "My point of order is, is there any other Commissioner that accidentally voted incorrectly or accidentally hit the wrong button? If we are going to extend that to one, we have to extend it to everybody."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What was the vote."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I just -- I abstain."

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS "We have a motion to reconsider the vote."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What was the vote, Madam Clerk? Just a minute. What was the vote?"

CLERK GRIER: "The vote with Commissioner Hall voting yes was four yeas, one nay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. I'm going to rule that the motion to hold was approved."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "You can't approve a vote that I didn't give."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You already voted. You can overrule my vote. I'll entertain a motion to overrule my ruling. Is there a motion to overrule?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "My vote was nay. You can't say what my vote is."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is there a motion to overrule me? Is there a motion to overrule? Then continue, Madam Clerk it's held."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0248 --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "-- excuse me. Excuse me. I know what my vote is. He cannot vote for me. I vote for myself."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue, Madam Clerk."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "My vote is, nay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue, Madam Clerk."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "On holding 24-0247 . This is just an example of the type of childishness that this Board has adopted, excluding Commissioner Arrington and I and Commissioner Barrett, -- who is saying that the Chairman can vote for me?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue Madam Clerk."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "The Chairman cannot vote for me."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Madam Clerk, Madam Clerk, please continue."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. So how are we going to record this vote?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It's held."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Motion to overrule --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It's held. It's hold. Fail."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "-- the Chairman's ruling to try to vote for me."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Can we have a point of order? Can I ask the Parliamentarian, can we have a motion to reconsider?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes, that is (inaudible.)"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What's the motion?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Motion to reconsider to hold so we can vote again."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Is there a second to the motion to reconsider?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, seconded by Commissioner Abdur-Rahman. Let's vote on the motion to reconsider."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I want to speak. I'm in the queue. I mean, I'm in the queue. We can speak, right?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "No, this is not a speaking thing, right?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "-- you don't speak on that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. Just a minute. Commissioner Hall -- do you want to speak? Go ahead. The motion before us now is to reconsider, which is a proper motion. But the motion before to overrule me failed for lack of a second. Now, there is a motion to reconsider, which is a proper motion. You have the floor."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I just -- there's a couple of things I want to say here. First of all, we had a retreat meeting several months ago in which we talked about a variety of things including use of County resources. And at that time, we assigned, you know, groups of two Commissioners or three Commissioners to work on certain issues including this one."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. On that point, who was assigned? Do you recall?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I do not recall."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I do. I recall: it was Commissioner Thorne and Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And did they work on it together as a team?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "No, we did not."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So that did not happen. We also talked about them working on it as a team and then coming back to a second retreat meeting to discuss with the group so that we can come to a consensus on how best to handle this issue. By Commissioner Thorne, going ahead by herself and coming up with this Resolution, I think that sort of circumvented the whole idea of us collaborating and working together, which is what I believe the people would like to see us do. I also think that there is a lot of work that needs to be done on the wording here. I agree with the spirit of the Resolution in that we should not be taking advantage of County resources. However, for example, I'm talking about business working hours doesn't actually hold for all of the departments in the sense that the libraries are open on Saturday. So does that mean a Commissioner cannot hold an event at a library that's open on a Saturday anyway? I mean that's something I'm doing. By the way, just for the record, had no events last year. This year I've had several at the Fulton County libraries, in partnership with them, in which I have given plenty of notice, but they are on the weekends, when the library is open. This would outlaw that."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I understand, sir. But I was not given an opportunity to speak, so I'm going to speak."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "The motion on the floor is to reconsider."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I don't think we should be holding this or reconsidering this or voting on this at all. And I think I have a right to say why, so --"

VICE ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- but it's on the agenda so we had to do something with it."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Well, I understand that. I'll supported your motion to hold to get further information."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. Just a minute. Commissioner Barrett. Commissioner Vice Chair, please. You have the floor."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And by the way, everybody else on this Board has spoken about the underlying issue when there's been a motion to hold. So it is unfair to just have that standard for me not to be able to speak. When you talk about -- well, first of all, number two on this agenda -- I'm sorry on this exhibit, says that it is not primarily the job of individual Commissioners to schedule events intended to raise general awareness of County services. That is incorrect. That is a part of our responsibility to communicate to citizens the services of the County. But you also then said in your comments, Commissioner Thorne, quote, 'we need to make the public aware,' unquote, of general services, so which is it? The language in number three says -- talks about the 14 days and the 30 days, and then it says request outside of these time frames should not be sent to department heads, but it doesn't say they should not be made; and the implication there is they can send them to somebody who is not the department head and still have the event. So I don't understand how you even uphold this. The language needs to be fixed. Well, I agree with that. I would support that."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute. Just a minute. Commissioner Barrett has the floor."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So I already talked about number four, which was the issue that, you know, there are County facilities that are staffed on the weekends, and that is normal working hours for some of our staff and, therefore, the people can attend. In fact, the program, that I do at the libraries gives students and adults in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods and families, the opportunity to get a free laptop from a nonprofit at a session at our libraries. They cannot come during the school day. They cannot come at night. They are working families -- or sorry they cannot come during the work day. They come at night or on the weekends. That's the only option for those folks. So when it says in number five, that County staff shall not be expected to stay in an event after the main program has ended and then it gives an example about photographs. What if County staff needs to stay after an event to close and lock the

building? I mean, saying they can't stay after doesn't make any sense. Number six talks about Commissioners shall not expect County staff to attend or provide supplies, materials, et cetera at meetings that are not, you know, our meetings. But then, you know, somebody who works in our County management, whether it's External Affairs -- or Dr. Roshell or somebody can correct me here, but there are times when we go to other events, and it benefits the County, to bring information about what the County is doing to those events. So this is another one that doesn't make sense. These third-party events, for example, where you're saying the County shall not be used to boost coverage. I'm not quite sure what that means. But we have events, for example, that we go to with Invest Atlanta. It's not a County event, but we participate with the city of Atlanta on investing in economic development. Are we not allowed to promote that we're helping the city of Atlanta with economic development at those events? I mean, this whole thing is just not thought through, which is why we had the idea of a task force, and we were supposed to bring it all back together at another retreat and discuss it further. So, you know, I don't know how -- what motion I can make here, but I'd love to make another motion to hold, because this motion to reconsider is -- I mean, this whole thing should not -- we should not be having this conversation at all right now."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute, Vice Chair. You finished, Commissioner Barrett?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I'm finished."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Commissioner Barrett and Commissioner Arrington. You're absolutely right. No one should take advantage of County staff, and no Commissioner should be demanding any County staff to do anything. They have management and department heads and a County Manager, and a COO. Will you stop talking? You're like a child."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner -- Vice Chair, please. Commissioner Hall has the floor. Commissioner Hall, continue."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "So you're absolutely correct, that should not be happening. Every request that is coming from the community should come from the community. And if it doesn't, then, of course, it would be for hopefully a Commissioner's hosted event. That's how all of mine come in. They come in from the community. They ask for what they want --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair, please."

COMMISSIONER HALL: ""What are you talking for?"

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

COMMISSIONER HALL: "So disrespectful. Yes, please pray for us."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Commissioner Hall, you may finish."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "No, I'm not."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You may continue."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "So first let me address number three, because Mr. County Manager said that he actually changed the 30 days to 14 days after my Chief of Staff asked him for his input on this. He said he changed it, but I don't see that change in the actual document, which is entitled Exhibit A, Policies on County Staff Support for Commissioner Events. So Mr. County Manager, can you please explain the change? From 30 days to 14 and why you actually recommended that."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, ma'am. And again, we're not the author of this Resolution, but we gave input; and the input was that we did not need 30 days. And I think the only caveat, Dr. Roshell; you can correct me, unless there was significant logistics and/or PR support."

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Yes, sir. That's correct."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "So, I'm not sure why it did or did not make it in, but that was the only input that I recall. Is there any other --"

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS: "That's right. No, sir."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right, thank you. And I want to apologize to Sandra Williams, the Head of Atlanta North Georgia Labor Council and Greg Fann who is -- wears many hats in the community because -- no, you did not get it wrong. You read it correctly. You didn't misinterpret anything. You read it correctly. This is a farce. Why would we have our County departments use taxpayer dollars to fund events when there events in the community that the community is doing on their own and all the County departments have to do, is attend the event and bring materials that are related to their department that support the community? That's all they have to do. Number seven specifically says, for purposes of this section, the third party event is defined as an event that is not held or funded by a County Department or where the event is not approved, held, or supported by the Full Board of Commissioners. There are events in the community -- the neighborhoods have events that they request departments to come to. There was a point when our County Manager, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, you stated to me that these were opportunities that allowed us to get the message out about how good Fulton County is and all the great services and programs that we have. Is that not correct, Mr. County Manager?"

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

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay. So why would we try to limit our departments to only providing information to our constituents that is only funded by the County? There are many more events that allow us that opportunity to get out across Fulton County and show how great we really are. And then number six, Commissioner shall not expect County staff to attend or provide supplies, materials, and equipment to an event of a municipality, government agency other than Fulton County, nonprofit, or commercial organizations such as vendor fairs, MPU meetings/events, town Hall meetings, grand openings, or ribbon cuttings. These are all where Fulton County residents are located. The municipalities inside of Fulton County serve the same people that we serve, and if we are afforded an opportunity for our departments to get out into other municipalities, which would be the 15 cities that reside inside of Fulton County, as well as such as Atlanta Public Schools, city of Atlanta, the neighborhood associations, business and civic associations, why would we try to ban our departments from being able to do so? Read it. You don't have to listen to people making up what it says; t's right here in Exhibit A, Policies on County Staff, Support for Commissioner Events. So, yeah, it does need to be tweaked. That is correct. It absolutely does. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Can I call the question?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, question's been called. Is there a second?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right, let's vote on the motion to call the question."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Back to the main motion which is on the floor, and that is to reconsider."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "-- point of order, Mr. Chair. What -- what are we reconsidering?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "The motion -- well, the motion that was approved was to hold. And I ruled that that motion was -- had the requisite number of votes. There was some objection to my ruling. Then I asked for a motion to overrule my ruling that did not -- there was no such motion made and there was no second. Then there was another motion made to reconsider, which also just failed. Now, we're back to the main -- rather

we're back to the motion to reconsider -- not to reconsider, but back the original motion. Madam, you're the parliamentarian, but."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Chairman, is it your position that we are back to the motion to hold having been upheld?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "All right. That is where we are then, because the motion to reconsider did not pass -- did not get enough votes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah. So, Madam Clerk, continue."

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0428**: Request approval of an Ordinance to change the term Regular Meeting to the First Regular Meeting, and the term Recess Meeting to the Second Regular Meeting, sponsored by Chairman Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Hopefully, this is a motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne, and I'll -- seconded it by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Historically, the Second Meeting was referring to as a Recess Meeting when we considered zoning issues, which we no longer do. Rarely, rarely do we do so. To give some consistency to it, so the First Regular Meeting of the month will be referred to as the First Regular Meeting, then the change would be instead of calling it the Second Meeting of the month -- the second Wednesday, a Recess Meeting would simply be called the Second Regular Meeting. All right. The motion on the floor is to approve. Let's vote, please."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

CLERK GRIER: "County Manager's Presentations and Discussion under Open and Responsible Government, 24 --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "-- Mr. Chair."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I'd like to ask for -- I mean, it's like the remaining items we have coming up are all discussion-related items. We have an outside party that's providing a presentation on 24-0250. I'd like to request that we move that up and hear that before we adjourn for executive session."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Which one?"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "24-0250. Fulton County Procurement Review."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Any objection to hearing that one before lunch? Any objections? All right, no objection. Sound that one, Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0250: Discussion. Fulton County Procurement Review, presentation of findings sponsored by Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I like to ask our County Auditor and our folks from Cherry Bekaert to come down, and while they're coming down here, I'll introduce this. They're going to do just a brief, very brief presentation. You all should have received a couple of documents; one was from the summary document of -- of this particular report, and then the other was sort of a more lengthy version of the report, the summary report tries to get right at it. So they're key findings which our audit committee met and they presented to our audit committee, and it was the recommendation of the audit committee, I would say universally with very strong wording that this be presented to the Board and needs to -- in the particular points that they're going to highlight be shared with the Board of Commissioners. By way of some background, in terms of how we got here, I believe that this particular audit was commissioned back in -- when did we engage you all?"

ANTHONY NICKS, COUNTY AUDITOR: "I think August 20th, sir."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "August, right. So, I think, we began discussing this to the commission around July. So the impetus for this was both, I think, frustrations that were coming out of, and stuff we were hearing out of our own purchasing department about procurements that involved other elected officials and some challenges associated with many of those procurements. So we asked for, you know, this group who our auditors are going to give a little bit more background on, to do a look at our procurement operations as a whole, as well as procurements done outside of our standard County procurement process. And that work has been done, a very thorough report, and I'll let Mr. Nicks sort of provide a little bit of background on the firm and introduce them folks to allow them to get quickly into their presentation for us."

ANTHONY NICKS, COUNTY AUDITOR: "Thank you, Commissioner. Anthony Nicks, County Auditor. Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair, other distinguished Members of the Board: As Commissioner Ellis stated, this report came out of discussions held in our audit committee meetings about some of our processes, and the committee is very engaged in trying to understand and make sure that our processes are functioning as intended. And so, to that end, we hired an independent firm to take a look at

purchasing; and to give us an overview of the purchasing process, but also to look to make sure that we were following rules and regulations, and federal laws, so forth and so on. And we have a very good report that contains some very good suggestions. And so to that end, I would like to introduce Christian Fuellgraf and Paul Folkers, and I'll turn it over to them to do their small presentation."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Pitts, and Members of the Commission. My name is Christian Fuellgraf. I'm the partner that leads our government/public sector industry for Cherry Bekaert. I'm not sure who available for the slides. Next slide, please. So the purpose of this engagement that you Auditor just referred to was to provide a general review and assessment of procurement practices being used and in place by the County. We were asked to -- a couple of different things. One is primarily actionable results, things that were able to be acted upon, real life, not theoretical, type of recommendations, which I believe I did. Our presentation today is taking a 50-page report and about a 20-page supplemental and condensed into few slides. So we'll hit at things at a high level and then progress onto the areas of high risk, which Commissioner Ellis asked us to do at the audit committee. The governing direction from the Auditor and the committee is we started was to report exactly what we saw, don't hold anything back. It's an honest subjective advice, and as I said, provide for actual areas of improvement and not an academic type of report. Next slide, please. So the approach we took was a -- we call it a risk-based approach methodology where we broke things into areas of high, medium, and low risk. We have looked at governing rules, policies, procedures, and statute complaints being followed by the County. And with that, we also looked out generally accepted successful procurement practices utilized in public sector. There's really no best practices. There's common and successful practice that are used around the country, when it deals to -- when it comes to public procurement. And then we also considered reviewed outside stakeholders, some of the writings that we saw, such as advancing toward counties, help other counties in Georgia were doing as well. Through this process, we interviewed about 20 different departments and agencies in and around 30 different individuals, not including some of the follow-ups we did and such. Next slide, please. So, really to talk about it in one slide, what our report and supplemental refers to, the County procurement -- when things are done through County procurement, there's a low risk. Procurement operation runs really low. You have extremely confidence in your leadership, who have earned credentials, not given. They've earned them, that run procurements very, very well. It runs in a timely manner, and it follows a set of internal controls which present results that are consistent and go well. We -- during our review, and one of the things we were asked to really look at was outside of general government with the independent elected officeholders. Take a good look and see how those go. And that's where we found the areas of high risk and medium risk that were trending up, specifically with the Sheriff's office and their procurement policies; we consider to be high risk. In the District Attorney's Office, at the time, we indicated that they were a medium risk, but growing. And I think that's really where we're going to focus for the conversation today. Paul's going to talk about some of our recommendations.

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah, I just wanted to highlight some of the recommendations, and again, there are extensive recommendations throughout the report, over the report. So I'm just going to really kind of highlight a number of those recommendations, and I think, you know, the positive news is really there's quite a few recommendations that are really within the County's control and, you know, the departments and agencies that are under the authority of the County Commission. There's a whole bevy of recommendations that can be implemented, then it becomes a bit more challenging when it goes to areas where there seems to be, areas where it's maybe uncertain in terms of, you know, the independent authority or the level of independent authority in terms of the different constitutional officers or countywide elected officers. But in terms of what the County can do, one of the things that I did want to specifically highlight, because I think it's a great opportunity, is and I've seen it elsewhere in terms of the I spent almost 30 years working in local government, and that's establishing a procurement committee. It is a really a valuable tool for involving the users of the procurement department in being able to identify issues and opportunities for improvements, and it's really just a great gauge for, you know, to be able to take a temperature in terms of how things are going, maybe work on improvements and, also, a great venue for communication on procurement issues. And so, some of your adjacent jurisdictions here do utilize those procurement committees as well. And then really within the system, within the procurement department, there's, you know, the system is well set, and it's transparent. It's accountable systems -- all of the policies and processes, although they could be updated, and they do need to be updated in some areas, you know, they're there. But it's really the challenge and the opportunities are really when those procurements do not go through County procurement, and they're handled in alternative ways, and that's where the risk comes in, and that's where there's a need to really better address those gaps and really kind of account for a creative accountability as well as transparency, in terms of how those decisions are made. I did want to highlight too, the upgrade to your financial system. One of the things that we found out when we went around, there's a lot of folks who weren't necessarily familiar with the departments that the County IT department was planning this upgrade to your financial systems. That is a significant opportunity and tied with that upgrade to really look at your procurement system and look at opportunities to be able to improve your procurement processes along with that upgrade in the financial system. We looked closely at your grants and your, you know, indirect cost as really an additional opportunity, and that's an area where we think there is significant potential for the County to be able to -- to recover funds that are either to gain more funds that are currently not being accrued through the grant funding or to be able to recover funds that are currently being let go. But the last thing that I kind of want to cover was really, I think, a core issue. Again, many of these recommendations are within your authority, but the areas where there's really -- that come at a high risk, those procurements that take place outside of County procurement department. You know, there's a range of, I think, options in terms of how to address that. And I know that, you know, looking at some of the literature on it, there's been litigation and, you know, so it doesn't look like there's really clear settled, you know, law in terms of where that

authority rests. And so there's, I think, a spectrum that could be looked at in terms of how to address that. One is to be able to, you know -- the County did seek to, as much as possible, either through its own County procurement code or through policies and procedures to try to really highly encourage and entice or otherwise require those agencies to utilize County procurement. If that's not successful, another way is to go to the state legislature and try to seek specific authority for Fulton County, based on your size and complexity, to be able to have that authority; to be able to work with your constitutional officers and countywide elected officials to be able to have -- work as a single integrated system. If that's not feasible, there's another option would be to go to join -- I'm sure, if Fulton County is grappling with these issues relative to procurement authority, it's likely other counties are as well in the state of Georgia. You can see common cause with those counties and really try to seek changes in state law that would allow more of that integrated authority at the county level. And then, if that's not viable, the other option would be to really -- right now, there seems to be not a lot of extensive state law that's applicable to these constitutional officers and elected officials in terms of procurement, is really a good of a state and the state could actually look at ways to be able to implement requirements that they would be subject to in terms of their procurement systems where they have that and are seeking to exercise that independent authority. But we think that there's the opportunity to be able to try to work with those constitutional officers and countywide elected. The procurement committee could be a way to be able to bring those folks together in the means of a task force committee to really be able to identify their issues and concerns. And to the degree that they could be enticed and encouraged that the system is meeting their needs, they should be incentivized to be able to use County procurement, and if there's areas where their needs aren't being met, it could be a way to be able to look at how those needs could be met. But with that, I'm going to turn it over to -- turn it back to Christian who would kind of go back into the high-risk areas that were identified."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Go to the next slide, please. So before I start, just to follow up on what Paul just talked about, there was a quote that I'd like to read to you that came from the District Attorney's Office. And I think -- it shows the underlying, maybe frustration and lack of clarity on the governing laws around procurement within the County. And the challenge seems to have come from the ambiguity that's in code either from the State or within the County, and different County attorneys have also provided similar but slightly varying direction. And the quote is, yes, this office will make every attempt to abide by these frustrating process, but, no, know this office will not fail in its job because of an outdated set of rules that had been placed upon us with no legal authority. And the no legal authority is the part that, you know, represents some of the challenges. There's a lack of clarity around it. So when we looked at the Sheriff's office, the first thing that was brought to our attention is what they referred to as the black card memo, which refers to the American Express black card, with unlimited purchasing power. The way it's used is the office will make procurements as they see fit, send the invoices and purchase orders to the purchasing department with a memo on top stating that they have unlimited authority to make these purchases based on the law, and they have to be processed. The purchasing department has

been informed by the County Attorney's Office that they need to process those. That's within the law. So a very abnormal process to go through. And then there's little visibility into it how the procurements are taking place, what the selection looks like, and then how the money is being spent and how the things are being followed up on, which goes into really the next part on general procurement activities. The food service contract, which was awarded last year, as we were informed -- the black card memo by the way is all in our report. We have these documents in our report for your review. The food services contract, we have the final contract, but we don't have the procurement documents although what was shared with us by multiple individuals who were comfortable saying this was the case, was that a recommendation was made by a selection committee for one particular vendor, and that was overturned by the Sheriff. The reasons weren't given except that he had the authority to do that, and so they entered into a contract with a different vendor than was recommended. Also, as part of that, when we were doing a review of the contract, there is -- there's requirements for capital investment by the food service provider which, at the time we finalized, our report had not been made and people weren't aware of it and weren't doing follow-up. And it was a significant investment in equipment at the jail and food service equipment at the jail and other things. There was also an issue with what they referred to as the sprinter van, which was --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Repeat, what was that? Repeat that."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "A sprinter van."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Sprinter, S-P-R-I-N-T-E-R, is a type of van. It's a larger -- it's a larger van that was specially equipped. And this was during COVID. Part of it was they -- it was purchased again outside of any typical procurement process. It was ordered, outfitted. The invoice was sent to be paid. Procurement was informed, yes, they had accepted delivery while during a spot review or spot audit going back, they found out that, no, they actually didn't have the van. It had been delivered. It took about two years -- around two years for delivery of that van after the invoice. They have it now, but it was paid significantly in advance of what delivery would be. And it was discovered that that took place during a review by the -- either by the audit or procurement department just to check to make sure that things were, you know, delivered as were expected. Again, very outside the norm of any typical or public sector procurement. And then lastly, was the inmate welfare fund. And during our interviews, we recognize that there was challenges when we asked what the inmate welfare fund was. And they described how it was funded, and then we asked how it was used, and what the determinations were made; and for -- the way we were informed was, we know it when we see it, when there's inmate welfare issues. So it could be whatever they felt was appropriate, whatever the sheriff deemed to be appropriate, and the money was spent as they wanted to. But as we went through and reviewed the rules around inmate welfare fund, there is actually a process in place, a

committee that's supposed to be approving all funds, all expenditures out of the inmate welfare fund, which hasn't been followed in quite sometime anyhow. And it should be the Sheriff, the Chief Jailer, and a Member of the Commission."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Chair, Chair; not a Member?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yes, sir. It should be the Chair or his designee; and that process has not been followed. I know there's other issues with the inmate welfare fund, but that was another one that -- or other special funds that fall under the Sheriff. I want to say, underlining this all, and I should have said this at the beginning, but the areas of higher risk we really believe are systematic. And I mentioned the systematic of the challenges and the procurement authority. I think the quote that I read it shows that. There's a lack of understanding. There's not clarity. And then let me -- if there's no questions, I'll move the District Attorney's Office, Mr. Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Your question is on the Sheriff at this point?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yes."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is that what you're asking? You want to finish it, okay."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Okay. When we spoke to the District Attorney's Office, we identified them at a medium risk, but increasing. There's a term that they use which is prosecutorial discretion, which -- it makes a lot of sense, really. You've got a trial going on; you need to get a blood spatter expert in or some type of expert testimony. You don't have the time to go through a large procurement. You have to find the right person and bring them in. But the use of prosecutorial discretion has expanded. There were holsters, for example, that were purchased -- there was an incident, another deputy or a member of their staff who was wounded. So they bought new holsters. You just use it to outfit cars and buy office supplies. In our view, as we reviewed it those are things I could see programmed for purchases as they go are really not an emergency type of procurement. They also, both offices, seemed to have a lot of pushback when we suggested reporting to the Commissioners, and emergency procurements are necessary in government. I chair a board in government where we -- we oversaw state purchases, and not unlike this discussion, but when agencies had to make emergency procurement, they had report it to us. And both offices didn't feel that that was -- that was required or even necessary, and we were told very clearly that by both offices that the Commissioners' authority stopped after the budget. They were given the money and it was up to them to spend it as appropriate. Next slide, please. Or just some conclusion thought or concluding thoughts. So just to reiterate: The procurements here in the County central procurement process is an office. They're low risk. They're done well. You have a great team. There's always some opportunities for improvement and we've laid them out in a report, but it's when you get outside of that with the other agencies, and things do start to trend to medium

risk. Some of our, you know, initial recommendations are high-level recommendations is to maximize utilization procurement office. They do well. Use them. The establishment of some more clear policies and procedures where independent procurement authority exists. If it stays that way, what are the policies they need to follow? If you're going -- you just don't go out and buy something. You report back to the Board, how you have to go through competition or not; and then, to work directly with the constitutional officers and other countywide elected to address the procurement issues. What are your challenges? How do we make it -- how do we make it better? And this is about, you know we talk about internal controls, it's hard to put two worst words together than those two, but this is about process improvement. There's a lot of opportunities to save time and through processes and save money. There's actually some revenue-generating opportunities we've outlined in our report as you go through the whole thing. With that, Mr. Chairman, this concludes our representation."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, sir. All right. Commissioner Ellis, Commissioner Thorne, Commissioner Natalie Hall, and Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Commissioner Ellis, you have the floor.

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah, thanks, Mr. Chair. First, I want to start with a positive definitely sort of the recognition that -- and as you pointed out -- that the procurement system we've had is sound when it's done through our County procurement, and I applaud our department head and her operations. You've also provided some other, you know, things that we could look at in terms of opportunities to continue to strengthen that, right? And I do think there's a lot of good material here that should be digested, and I would like to see the management team digest that and think about, you know, some responses to that in terms of, you know, are there some things here that we think would work for us organizationally to strengthen what we're doing. So I think there's some good content there, and I would encourage us to sort of do a deeper dive on that, and then some recommendations being brought back to us for some potential tweaks and changes there. You know I want to shift to the areas of elevated risk because we had a fairly lengthy discussion on this in our audit committee, and our citizen members, just so all of you are aware: I mean these are folks who are, for a living, CFOs, you know, heads of internal audit departments et cetera, right? And this is what they do. And I would say to say that they were alarmed and shocked at some of kind of what they heard relative to the way purchasing was being done outside of our system. And what was being provided back to us is sort of a governing body would be an understatement. Would you agree with that?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "I agree --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "-- Mr. Chair. And now I think that certainly we could get lost into a discussion about who has an authority to do something and that's one thing which, you know, we've wrestled with and whatnot; but when it's being done regardless who may have the authority to do it, it should be done in a way that's generally accepted in terms of government procurement practices. You all will agree on that, right? And,

you know, I think what you all observed particularly, I guess related to the Sheriff's office, if I understand it, was that there appeared to be no oversight in practices or accountability there; is that a fair statement?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I think that's a fair statement, Mr. Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So in terms of, I mean, you've been doing this work and looking at this. And so, in terms of sort of egregiousness or alarm and stuff that you've seen comparatively, you know, the work you've done, it sounds like you'd rate this pretty bad."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah. I just want to pick up on your last statement as well too, is that I think how I'd kind of say this, I think what we found is, in looking at the Sheriff's office, right now. There's really lacking infrastructure that you would need to be able to support sound procurement, and that's -- that would be staff trained in procurement, understanding of best practices, trained, as well as policies, procedures, you know, all those things that do exist within the procurement department."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. So lack of any internal control structure and a purchasing structure inside that department?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yes. Basically systems that really can provide accountability, but then also transparency so that -- so that the vendors that are competing for business as well as citizens can understand why decisions were made the way they were."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right. And I think that's the key take away. I think we can wrestle with this point about who may have authority to do something or not, but that piece of it needs to be cleared up and addressed and, you know, we can have a debate about what the answers to it are, and whether it should all flow under our procurement or not, but it's an excusable if you are going to do it, that you don't have a system that's transparent and accountable, appropriate controls around it. And, you know, I think that three things -- I mean you've highlighted a couple areas, and I wanted to just note, you know, two or three from, you know, kind of your summary report to us, and just, you know, read some of the words. I mean, because I know that sometimes this isn't the most exciting topic, you know, for people to delve into, but it's tremendously important. Black card memo: Several discrepancies and errors were discovered upon reviewing sample purchases made using black card memos. The term refers to a unlimited purchasing ability of holders of the AMEX black card. The lack of review and approval mechanism was evident, raising concerns about accountability and oversight in procurement processes using this alternative method. Several procurements like a control structure, procurement solicitation, justifications, selection or delivery acceptance criteria, which is what were just speaking about. And then this procurement of the inmate services or the food contract, I think what's important, you know, for folks

to understand there is this was a procurement that started and was in our standard procurement system. Am I correct on that, for our purchasing?

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right. So we are going through a normal process, your evaluation committee had made a recommendation around a vendor, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "And then before it came to us for a vote or anything, based upon the procurement that was out there, the Sheriff arbitrarily made the decision that he was going to select a different vendor and then just entered into the contract."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, FC PCC: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So didn't like the result that was generated through a standard procurement process, and then just arbitrarily said, because I want to or because I can, I'm going sign up these folks even though it costs more money, I'm not going to provide you justification about what I'm doing. That's basically what -- "

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "That's how we were -- that's how it was expressed to us, yes."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. So that's, you know, even when we get to a piece where we're running through a standard procurement processes, there has to be an integrity to the system where you're in you have to be -- you have to be in. You can't decide that, well, I don't like it, so, you know, I'm going to go do something else. And then these specific procurements, and I -- so this is a Mercedes sprinter van; is that what these are? Is that these fancy, you know, kind of long vans; is that what those -- is that what a sprinter van is?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I don't -- I don't know if this is a Mercedes, but it's something similar. We're talking about the same type of van"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. All right. All right, so -- so we buy all these vehicles through different procurements, right, Mr. Manager, and Mr. Davis, right? We buy -- we've bought standard vehicles through for the Sheriff's department through typical procurements."

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. So, what you're reporting here is that there was a sprinter van that was bought, not through a procurement process, but was just bought through the Sheriff's Department, and you made a payment in -- we paid for this

somehow in 2021, the vehicle was received in 2023, but we're told that this vehicle can't be found? Is that accurate? I mean, the thing says that it was found not to be in the County's possession."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "If I could, Commissioner, again, we're relaying what we've heard. So this kind of based on interviews and so it's not like we did a specific investigation. It was based on interviews and then based on the documentation we were able to receive. But it's our understanding that there was -- it might have been a -- that the van was eventually received, but that there had been a spot check that was done and the van was not found at that time, but that understanding that the van was eventually received."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Where is it? I mean, this is like a 90,000 -- what is this, a \$90,000 vehicle? A \$125,000 vehicle?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "At this time it's in services is what we were last informed."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I mean, what's the price of this vehicle?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah, a hundred to two hundred thousand."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So a \$200,000 vehicle or something like that, whatever it is. A significantly priced vehicle, but we don't know what this vehicle is for, where it's at, whether it's in service, whether it's, you know, somebody's traveling around the country using it as an RV or what not. Okay. The fact that we have no asset control over something that's a six-figure item is a problem."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Mr. Ellis, if I may. We weren't saying that it was lost. We were saying there was a -- it was purchased, it was ordered, paid for, eventually delivered. But during a spot check, it was not there after the payment was made. It has subsequently been located."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. All right. And then lastly, you know, on the inmate welfare fund, and this -- I want to point out, this work that we commissioned you to do was long before we had had any discovery or discussion around the inmate welfare fund. You all were engaged separately to do sort of a deeper dive look on that, correct?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Correct."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So we'll be hearing back from you on more of a forensic look at that. But I want to just highlight your last statement in the summary of that, where you said the Sheriff's representative informed us that the Sheriff has sole

determination over what the inmate welfare and the justification for expenditures. You know so no real, again, oversight or accountability, more a one-party decision. And then -- I mean, my last question for you -- and I do think that this -- given our degrees of risk, you know, I think principally the Sheriff's office is the highest degree of concern. It's a huge amount of expenditures I think we have some of our largest procurements, you know, rest within the confines of that office. It's the biggest single sort of, you know, spending area. And for citizens, we all deserve transparency around this, and we've got to do a better job with it, right? I mean we want to support other elected officials that's not sort of what the intent of this is to sort of, you know, try to do somebody else's job, but there's going to be transparency when it comes to contracting and procurement. And then lastly, on the district attorney, it sounds like you didn't necessarily didn't have a lot of transactions necessarily to look at, but it was just more of this concept of pushing the boundaries of the concept of prosecutorial discretion."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "That's correct. We weren't looking at a lot of individual transactions. It's more of a trend and a belief that prosecutorial discretion could expand, right? It just could keep -- it could keep going."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah. And to me, I think that sort of the takeaway from me personally here is, you know, look, we all have jobs that we want to do, right? The department heads -- you know, has got something they're task with doing. The elected officials has got something they're tasked with doing. But using your role to say rules don't apply to me because I need to get my job done in a way I want to get it done, that's not good policy. You agree with that from a procurement standpoint?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I do."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Right? We have to have a meeting of the minds on this, is my point. And you know, and I just would encourage, you know, kind of the -- you know, the officers that we're talking about here to reflect upon that and us to work together to come up with an approach that is transparent for the public. It should not be that hard. We haven't had a lot of these issues before. Many of them have transpired just in the course of the past three or four years, and I hope we can take this report and turn it into something that's positive, because I do think that that will -- if we can, we can make some changes. It will provide a lot more comfort to, you know, our citizens as a whole and provide a lot more confidence in County government."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Thank you. You've covered a lot of points there, Commissioner Ellis, so I won't try to be redundant. But I do want to compliment Felicia Strong-Whitaker and her department for the excellent job. If you ever have to work with her, she can give you more details than you want on a certain procurement. She runs a very tight ship. So going back to the van, we have a two hundred thousand van -- potentially \$200,000 vehicle that's roaming around. I look in it as a -- is there any way

we could make all of our County vehicles have some type of tracking device on it? Not that we track somebody individually, but if there's a need, if we need to go back and see where this vehicle has been, kind of like we have cameras. You know, we don't really go back and look at the cameras unless we need it and it's a time of crisis. So, I don't know if that's a possibility or something that we could implement countywide."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "It's definitely a possibility contingent upon approving the funding. It is not a cheap endeavor to produce the GPS devices that would have to be installed on all County vehicles. We have -- excuse me. We have a few select vehicles in certain departments that are currently have a system of that nature, but with the size of the County fleet, we would have to simply get some pricing and then determine how to fund it."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. That would be great, thank you. And I'm not going to rehash what Commissioner Ellis said, but I do agree that the BOC, their comment that the BOC authority stops once we give them the money, they are accountable to the citizens. In this campaign season, I hope we will get some candidates that will be accountable to the citizens, not only us, but them, to show that their money is spent wisely. Transparency and accountability, I'm all for that. One other thing that you didn't mention in your slides here, you talked about grant funding and how we seem to be missing out. We have a loss of federal and state funds that we're missing out. Could you expand on that a little bit?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Certainly, Commissioner Thorne. We looked at grant funding going to comparable size counties. There's some nuances to that. So it's not just apples to apples, but Fulton County in general, I would say that it appears the County does an extremely good job at managing the grants once they come in, which is important for claw backs and compliance and, you know, all those things which can be a problem. But it struck us during our conversations with departments that there wasn't a large push a button get grants, to bring them in. To fund different initiatives, look at different things, and we think that's an opportunity for improvement, really a revenue enhancement for the County. Grants are pretty powerful."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Just to briefly add to that, too, and I think the nexus between these two issues too was our kind of interest in understanding procurement, especially that didn't go through County procurement relative to federal funding because there's strict requirements in that regard. So, we were interested in it from that perspective, and I think our read was that, you know, with the County's grant office that there's a strong effort through the County's grant office on the compliance side, that there could be an opportunity, more aggressive in terms of going after grant opportunities for the County."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So we basically have a grants office that does more compliance than going after and trying to seek and see what monies are out there on

the table; but we hire -- we hire lobbyists, don't we, federal lobbyists and state lobbyists? Do they help us at all?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes. I'm not sure what their basis is for revenue enhancement and grant. That would be like in my old days saying I can pursue more sales opportunities. We have an extensive list of grants that we pursue, you know, starting with an airport, which would be a hundred million dollar grant, and then on down from there. Every department bubbles up grants, and then we have a grant office that helps with the writing of grants. So I don't know what the benchmark is that they're referring to nor from my perspective, are we reluctant to pursue grants. I have no idea."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, I know. I spent a day in DC going around with the city of Roswell and the company they hired to help them procure more federal funding, and just visiting the independent agencies, and the money that was out there, I'm like, hey, how come we aren't getting this, you know?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Commissioner Thorne and County Manager, it wasn't a -- it was an observation. We believe there was more opportunity. We've -- it struck us as being a fairly low number for a County the size of Fulton. So we did some benchmarking. It was a peripheral, as Paul said, when we were looking at how are procurements run, when they involve grant money, because there's very strict rules; if you don't follow them, they claw it back. And so, we thought, hey, while we're here, let's look and see what other similar size counties are getting. And like I said, it's not purely apples to apples comparison. We included and we thought it was a good scenario that was worth looking into further. Not as a criticism in any way"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes. No. No. And if I could get that information of what, if you have a chart of some of the surrounding counties and what they're getting, I would love that. In the future, that would be great, thank you."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. I want to go back to this sprinter. Well, first let me say, does anyone have a copy of the presentation that we are seeing on the screen? Because it's not attached to the agenda item, and it's not up here on our desks which is usually what happens when their late. And there's a lot of texts that were on some of those pages that we just did not have time to read, and I'd like to be well informed."

ANTHONY NICKS, COUNTY AUDITOR: "I'm sorry, Commissioner. I just reached out to someone in my office to ask them to provide the entire Board with the presentation. I don't know why we failed to get it in the deck, but we are certainly sending it out."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "You just had them e-mail it to us? Oh, okay. Well, it's a -- well, it's a little bit late. But who was interviewed for this audit? Was the actual Sheriff of the Sheriff's department interviewed and Madame DA, Fani Willis, since those are the two I see on the screen and that I hear being discussed? Where they actually interviewed?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Commissioner, no. They were not available. We tried to interview them directly. They weren't available. In the Sheriff's office, we met with Ronnie Stenson and another staff member, and with the DAs office, we met with Dexter Vaughn and two other staff members."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right. And as it relates to this sprinter vehicle: When you went to -- you said you went to look for it and it wasn't there?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I'm sorry. No, no. I'm sorry for the misunderstanding. We did not go to look for it. It was what was reported to us. The procurement, the process. This was a review, it wasn't an audit. So I'd like to just make sure there's a --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "-- oh, this is a review, not an audit?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Right. There is a difference."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Yes, there is."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "So as part of that, we were informed of this procurement. We're looking at different procurements. We were asking, are anything that's irregular? Is there anything that's worth taking a look at, and with the system may have broken down someplace, and this was one that was brought to our attention. We did ask the Sheriff's office about it. And in the timeline of everything we talked about was what they concurred with -- with the timeline and how things happened in the process."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "So were you informed that the sprinter was actually being upfitted at the time?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah. It was specially outfitted. They did tell us that, yes."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay. And so, I want to -- is Jo over there? I can barely -- yes, I see you now. Mr. Davis, how long does it take to upfit a vehicle of that size? Does it take -- can it take up to a month or so to upfit?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "The time frame varies due to the requested upfit and how complex it may or may not be as well as the type of vehicle. So a month

is very conceivable that it could, or it potentially could take two the three months. It depends on what's being put in the vehicle, the availability of those components and so forth."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "So was this sprinter ever sent to be upfitted?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "Not by D.R.E.A.M."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'm sorry. Who's talking? You work for the Sheriff's Department?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Hold it, Ms. Just a minute. Just a minute. You want to hear from her?"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "No, she said something in the middle of --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- excuse me, Ms.

COMMISSIONER HALL: "-- Mister. -- okay. So, I'm sorry. The interrupting thing threw me off. Can you --"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "-- yes, ma'am. That vehicle was not up fitted by D.R.E.A.M."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "It was not upfitted by DREAM?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "No, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay. Then who -- do you know who it was upfitted by?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner Hall, I believe this was the command unit vehicle that the Sheriff required that had to be manufactured and up fitted, and the vendor was a company called HG2 Emergency Lighting."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Lighting?"

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

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay. So it was being upfitted for lighting on this vehicle?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It's being manufactured, I believe, and the invoice is for the unit itself, window tint, windshield, two front windows, blue lights, siren, 360-degree package. Convert Sheriff edition, the delivery charge, and an alarm security and a weapons storage system."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Oh, okay. So -- which is just normal for a command vehicle of this type. So that appears to be the reason why it wasn't where some thought it should be, because it was being up fitted. Thank you very much."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman Pitts. I have to apologize. I'm just hearing about this sprinter, so I need to ask a few questions if somebody here can answer it. When was this printer purchased? Can anybody answer that?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "The invoice is dated November 28th, 2021."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "2021. And what was the cost of the sprinter?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "The unit itself was \$185,000 With all of the additional upfit charges \$201,199."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "201,000?"

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

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "The procurement process this went through, was it an emergency procurement process? Or was it a process -- because I just want you to educate me. Is it a process that would have went through our procurement, or is it a process that it would have went through Sheriff's, and was it considered an emergency? I just would like to know. Does anybody -- can anybody here answer those questions."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "It was an item that the Sheriff acquired independently using his constitutional authority, and then presented a request to the purchasing department to issue a purchase order so that we could issue payment for the item."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "So I take that as a, no. No procurement with us. The Sheriff made a decision based on his needs to buy a \$200,000 sprinter, that's what I take that as, because it didn't go -- it didn't go through any of the process that we have in place over here."

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

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay. That's a concern for me. Do we not have a vehicle -- wait a minute, this was done during COVID. This was purchased during COVID. That concerns me. Let me ask you gentlemen something because I'm thinking you all the subject matter experts in my eyes. Based on the size of Fulton County and the duties of the Sheriff, would something, a purchase that type, been something that

would have been outside any type of an infrastructure or a procurement process? I'm just trying to see is that normal, abnormal? Is it routine? Because I see you all as the subject matter experts. I'm assuming that you all do other cities, states, counties of this comparable size. So I'm just trying to get some education now."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "And, Commissioner, we probably both want to answer this question. I think there's a couple of parts to it. And both of us have experience with actually this exact type of purchase. Paul is a city County Manager, and I came from state government. First comment is, we're not questioning commissioned appropriateness of the vehicle. We're just talking about the process on how it was purchased. And that came up. But to your question, I would expect that law-enforcement would need to have some type of command center, especially a place the size of Fulton County would need to have some type of specifically outfitted equipment for that to meet that mission need. Again, we were just -- we're talking about the process from payment -- from purchase to payment to delivery. That's where our risk review took us."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I'm not committing on if they need it or not."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Got you. Got you. Can anybody speak to whether we have a command center outside of the purchase of the sprinter? Does the Sheriff have a command center? A mobile command center? Can anybody answer to that?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That was the stated purpose of this particular unit was for a mobile command. Are you asking do other Fulton County law enforcement agencies --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- what I'm asking, before the purchase of that, did we already have a mobile command center for the Sheriff? Did the Sheriff already have a mobile command center?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That I do not know."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "You don't know? Okay. I would ask that that question be asked, and I would need an answer in order to try to get an understanding of why almost a 200 -- a little over \$200,000 command center, and we don't know if it's been fitted. Has it been fitted already? Outfitted yesterday? I mean -- excuse me. Outfitted, yes? As of yet? Does anybody know that?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "My understanding is that the unit has been received at this point."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Madam Vice Chair, the Fulton County Police do have a mobile command center."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Fulton County Police has a mobile command center?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "They do have one, yes, ma'am."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "But we don't know if the Sheriff has a mobile command center other than what was purchased."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "I do not."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay, thank you. And so, what I'm asking you for clarity for me, a two hundred and something thousand mobile command center was purchased by the constitutional office through his whatever he has in place; is that what I'm hearing today? Okay, thank you. That's what I needed to know. Moving to the District Attorney, I see you said risk level is medium. You may not be able to answer this. If you can't, don't feel pressure to. I know that our District Attorney has taken on some very high-profile cases. I know that she has received some death threats. So when I hear the risk level medium and may be rising; I'm trying to find out the understanding of the use of prosecutorial discretion as a justification comes with a risk of being used with greater frequency. So I'm wondering and here again, you are the subject matter experts; I'm trying to educate myself. If, in fact, you have a -- two of the probably highest profile cases that a District Attorney could be processing or prosecuting at this time, would that play into that medium, or am I off the mark with that? I'm just try to understand for myself."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I guess, I really can't -- go ahead."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I think, you know, our evaluation; it was really kind of looking at the types of purchases. Certainly, you know, the District Attorney, based on caseload and there's all kind of needs, I'm sure, for interims of expertise and so forth. But it was really, what Mr. Fuellgraf kind of mentioned, is the types and the types of purchases, whether it's gun holsters or other things. I think it's really trying to point out that when there's that independent authority, again, in question in terms of how far that goes with that independent authority, I think there could be a natural temptation or inclination to want to expand upon this case prosecutorial discretion. I need it, I want it, therefore, you know, there could be a temptation to want to push the boundaries and make other purchases and try to fit it under prosecutorial discretion. I think it's pointing out that as a risk in terms of the potential growth abuse of that as a procurement method."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Okay, I understand now. And when you look at the size of Fulton County and the size of our District Attorney's Office in the area

comparable to other counties, this medium risk, is that something -- and if you can't answer that, it's fine. But I do want to find out. Is that medium risk like what I would say normal, abnormal? Does it matter on the location? Do some comparable counties have a District Attorney Office dependent upon what protocols they have in place have a lower risk? Would that factor in, or does size not have anything to do with it?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "So I think, we could really just speak to Fulton County in terms of what we did in terms of our engagement here in looking at the departments and offices. But I will kind of say in general, that it really kind of needs to be looked upon. Again, we look at kind of low risk. So we're saying you've got a very strong procurement department. If it goes through that department it's low risk. Things that have happened outside because there's not clear structure and infrastructure in place in terms of staff and training, policies, procedures, that automatically is going to increase the risk level. So I think what we're kind of saying, if it doesn't go through County procurement department from our vantage point, yeah, I'm going to have to bump up the risk because there's not the infrastructure in place to show, you know, a process, policies, procedures, how decisions are being made, transparency, you know, in terms of justifications for procurement decisions that are made. You know, so, in terms of other jurisdictions, I mean, it's going to -- it's going to likely kind of vary based upon --"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "-- it varies?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: If I may, Commissioner. I'd like to follow-up. I think as a general rule of thumb though: When you're looking at the bigger the government, the more spend you have. The more spend you have, the more controls you need to have in place. You have to have processes. As a former public servant myself and Paul, you like to have the processes there, right? The internal control structures. Smaller governments, you get townships, counties -- or townships, small cities. They tend to be more lax as they have to get business done. But as you start getting bigger more sophisticated, dealing with more funds, your procurements become larger, right? It's more visible. So as a general rule, the larger, the more processes they're going to have in place to ensure the public trust."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "That's what I needed. What I wanted to make sure that our viewing public understands what you just said, the larger the government, the more fail safes, that's what I call it, in place. And so, if we were smaller, less -- and so, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but what my understanding is, based on the size, we don't have the infrastructure and we don't have the fail safes in place to maybe bring these level of risks down; is that correct?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "That is correct."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "But you look like you want to --"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Again, you know, I can't say that I know the particulars of the state in terms of, you know, and the structure. But I think that appears to me that that's kind of a challenge maybe even at the state level, in terms of right now, in terms of levels of authority between county commissions, between the constitutional officers and other directly elected officials where that independent authority arises. And then if -- you know, so if they have that independent authority, what other -- what other kind of oversight is there, in terms of those procurement systems, that is. You know, is there anything that the state level or otherwise that instills that type of accountability within the procurement system."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you. As I close, I'm going to ask, and, Chairman, if I'm out of order, I'll be free to not ask. But I just got supposedly pictures of the sprinter van. It does not look like a command center on the inside. So I'm going to need something by the next -- I'm going to go on record asking for the Sheriff or his designee to be at this next meeting, because I'm seeing a very luxurious van with some very nice pictures. Now, I will disclose that, whoever sent me this, I don't know. It's coming from an unknown number, and I don't know if this is the inside of the sprinter that the Sheriff owns, but this is not a command center. Thank you, gentlemen."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Commissioner Barrett followed by Commissioner Arrington and back to Commissioner Ellis and it's 12:57."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll keep my questions and remarks fairly brief. But I do want to start by expressing my gratitude and congratulations, essentially to the County Manager, the CFO, and Felicia Strong-Whitaker for, you know, getting such high marks. And I think we all knew all along that you do a great job, but I think it's really great for the public to hear that as well. So thank you for your hard work and efforts on making sure our procurement is done well. As to the report, I have a couple of questions. You talk about risk, and I would love -- and I know, there's some -- some documentation in the longer report that sort of explains what risk factors you were looking at. But I would love if you could sort of speak that onto the record, essentially, because so far, all we're hearing is the word risk. And when I hear that, I think, you know, the sky is falling, we're going to, you know, get sued for hundreds of millions of dollars, or, you know, the ship's going to blow up, or I don't know. So I would love it if you could really quantify what risk we're talking about here."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Commissioner, yes, certainly, we -- we broker, we do risk compliance and a methodology, which we do outline in the report, as you mentioned, on page 5. We looked at inefficiencies, accountability and compliance risks, missed opportunities, wasteful spending of county funds, legal, reputational risks, opportunities for corruption, public mistrust and general ethical concerns, procurement methodology, and loss of funding."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And were these weighted numerically in terms of importance?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No. We put, essentially, the same weight on all of them. We did use a standard set of questions that we -- when we talked to people to guide the discussions, as well as leaving time for open-ended discussions, asking people for their opinion and what they -- what they thought."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So you would mark corruption and inefficiency as equally risk?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "For the purpose of this, looking for areas to identify risk, right. Again, this wasn't an audit where we're going in and saying, is this inappropriate? That's not what we were -- that's not what our scope was, it was to look for these areas that -- to present them to -- to you, to the auditor, and the audit committee, to say, here's what we found are areas that you may or may not want to look into further."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I mean, I'm a big proponent of efficiency. On the other hand, one of the first things we were told when we take office is the job of government is not efficiency, it's service of the people. So if sometimes we have to be inefficient in order to provide service to the people, then that is something we have to do. So a certain amount of that, I would -- is assumed. And I just feel that it's disingenuous to say that, you know, missed opportunities is equal to legal risk or corruption. And I mean, it feels very much like if you're going to evaluate processes and procedures, and make a decision, a rating, that there should be a little bit more science behind it, a little more numerical evaluation --"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "There was, and I -- if you go, if you look at the next page, and this was what we just answered. We did have -- we did have these risk factors broken up in three categories from high, medium, and low. So to -- maybe to further answer your question --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "But they're not the same -- they're not the same word choices there on that second chart."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "But it was -- it was it a balance between the two as we looked at them to come up, what is -- again, this wasn't an audit, right?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I understand."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "This was a review."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I understand."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "So we were -- we're bringing our real -- our real world experience to it. And efficiencies is a -- it's an art not a science, right? Government, the wheels of government turn slowly, and they turn slowly for a reason. But it's to make sure that these processes are followed, that you go from point A to point Z in a methodical order, and that the expenditures are done appropriately. And without question, right, transparency, it's -- your lack of transparency just breeds questions, right, and speculation."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, I think it would be helpful if you all would provide sort of a little bit more detail in terms of how, you know, the ratings were determined. Because we sort of have these charts and then we have, you know, some words around this is high, this now -- based on our evaluation, this particular department was rated as high risk, this one medium, this one medium-plus. The presentation that you presented today, also, I mean, from my perspective seems a little bit biased, in that there are some things in this report that you cover and gave to us but did not highlight today, such as the statement on page 11, the -- I'm sorry, it's on page -- I'm going to find it, I marked it, hold on. Here it is, page 13 that says, in fact, there is some low-to-medium risk about our spending threshold. And under observations, the bottom of page 13, number 1, it says during the interviews 50 percent -- 50 percent of the departments expressed concern at the spending threshold set by the County are too low. I mean that's concerning if we're not able to achieve what the departments need to achieve. And 50 percent of our departments are saying that, that seems worthy of mention. And you know, calling, you know, out -- you talked about grants. Again, somebody else brought it up already, and I forget who now. You list that as medium. And yet, you decided to put the DA up here and list as medium-plus. Well, based on what numeric calculation was that determined to be higher than this? I mean, the -- it just feels that it's a little bias, this report."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "It certainly isn't intended to be bias, ma'am. The -- when we did our interviews, we went back, reviewed our notes, went through our matrix, and just talked it through, okay, where do we see this going? Where do we see the trends going? How do we assign this? What's the appropriate, you know, assignment of a risk level for this? As far as the information that we have in the -- in this, we were asked to come in and give a 15 or 20-minute presentation --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Sure."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "-- so we had to limit it down to a slide. And that was our intent, it wasn't to leave anything out --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "There also --"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "-- but you were provided this and the supplemental."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. Well, I would love to see, if possible -- looking past you to Mr. County Auditor, more of the background detail of this, if possible. I do have some concerns about how this was done and presented. And I understand that's not an audit, so it won't be as thorough as what we're used to in some cases; however, I do have some concerns. I also want to talk about our recommendations, your recommendations and what we can actually do. And just because my understanding from, you know, this was back a while ago, more than 15 to 20 minutes ago, certainly, when you talked about what the possible solutions are. And it sounded to me, and I did read this, or at least most of it, that the repercussion -- oh sorry, the resolutions to some of these problems or suggested fixes are that we try to get state law changed, or we sue somebody? I mean, those were two of the solutions I saw that we consider litigation and that we try to get state law changed. Did I -- is there something else that --"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah, Commissioner, I think what we try to convey is really, if you look at all of the recommendations within the report, the vast majority of those recommendations are within the county's authority to be able to work on and implement on its own. So -- but then it really, when you get to the issue of though, the independent authority that may be exercised by constitutional officers and other countywide elected officials, that's the issue, you know, that then gets into those other options that I kind of laid out in terms of what -- how can the county possibly address those in terms of working with -- working with those officials, but also whether it be working with the state or other counties as well, because they might have similar issues. But it's really kind of focused on those issues of independent authority, the procurements that don't go through the county. The county --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I mean, I understand that, but you've also basically said that the two biggest areas for problems are with other elected officials and constitutional officers who have that specific issue. So what -- again, correct me if I'm mishearing you right now. But what I'm hearing you say is, for those two situations, we can either try to get state law changed or we can sue somebody, which we really can't do because we'd be suing ourselves. So I'm not quite sure what that is about."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No. I think, again, we were characterizing procurements that go through county procurement, through your department, as well as your policy procedures, your code as being low risk. Those that don't, are automatically being picked up. So that's why it honed in on the Sheriff's office and the District Attorney's office."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I get that, but what I'm saying is that the recommendation, the only sort of solution -- and I want to bring the County Attorney in to this, if I may, because she was mentioned earlier in the discussion as well as having, you know -- you know, set to go ahead and approve these black -- or the Sheriff's black card memo or whatever because that is, by law, what we have to do; is that correct?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I believe the memo that they're referring to was advice that was given prior to my entry to this role. But even at that point, it was not without caveats, it wasn't a blank check to spend whatever, without any kind of restrictions. It was simply delineating the difference between procurements made through a constitutional officer's independent power to contract, versus procurements done through the county procurement process."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "A couple things that I'd just like to unpack that you mentioned. We weren't suggesting suing. We mentioned litigation. It was something that when we had a conversation with County Attorney's office, as a possible remedy, have a court decide what is actual -- what is the actual authority? It wasn't suing yourself, it was friendly litigation, for lack of a better term, say, how do we handle this, and go to the courts, decide. Changing of state law, there are a number of places that the state dictates the laws for procurement for the county. So you would -- you're only going to ask for a change of state laws, maybe these exclusions. But there's an awful lot of this that could be done through changes in the procurement policy or code from the County Commissioners. So that's how we tried -- that's how we tried to put it together --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yes, but I'm just -- not to interrupt you, but I know we've already been going on for quite a while. Yes, but we don't have the authority, from my understanding, and again, I'll -- looking to the County Attorney here, to make procurement policy for the Sheriff's office or the DA's office or the other elected officials. I believe we can, and I know we have, I believe we have said if they are using our procurement, then they have to follow our procurement rules. But if they decide not to, we do not have the power to force them to do something else. We budget a certain amount of money and they have some discretion as to how to spend that money."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "That is accurate. And may ask who, if you recall, you spoke with in my office?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Denval."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Denval Stewart? Okay, thank you."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "To that end, I think I'd also, you know, I don't want to, again, keep going on forever. But I do think there's some confusion about who was spoken to, to prepare this report. So if possible, we'd like to -- I'd like to have a list of everyone that was spoken to across all departments, and the attempts that were made to reach out to some of the higher ups in the departments who you did not speak to. That feels important to understand, whether or not this is really sufficient to make decisions from. That's all I have."

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

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you. I want to apologize to you gentlemen in advance. I'm an attorney and so it's probably going to feel like you're being cross-examined. What is the difference between a review and an audit?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "An audit has to follow specific standards. I'm not a CPA. It requires CPA to do so, so it has to follow guidelines under the AICPA standards, which this did not. This was under a consulting standard, which is just best practices, looking at what are common practices. A review like this is typical, it would not typically be a review where you going, you know, line by line, checking every - every box like -- like the County Auditors would do, reviewing a department expenditures."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. So you're not a CPA. Sir, are you a CPA? Okay, so neither of you are CPAs. So I heard someone say you were experts. What are you -- what are you experts in?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I spent 10 years in government. I left as a State CFO, where procurement came under, a Chair of the Board that read -- that approved all capital expenses and the majority of operating expenses over \$50,000. I've been involved in government exclusively for about the last 24 years. I've helped a number of governments do exactly this type of thing, both here and overseas."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "What did you do in government, you said?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I was the Deputy State Budget Director, President of State Controlling Board, and Acting Director to the State CFO."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. In what state?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Ohio."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Ohio, okay."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Paul has --"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah. I spent almost 30 years in local government management, Assistant City and County Manager, two cities, two counties. So, covered the range of local government management responsibilities, departments."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. So have either of you ever served in a law enforcement role?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No. But one of the staff person we had on this is a CPA. And she -- she oversaw procurement and grants for Fort Worth Texas Sheriff."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay, and --"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Or Sheriff Police, I guess, actually."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And neither of you have served as a prosecutor?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. So you're not experts in law enforcement, and you're not experts in prosecution, correct?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. And this is a review, not an audit."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "That's correct."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "And neither of you are CPAs?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "That's correct. Although, the one person on our team is a CPA."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "What was the timeframe of this review?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "It took place over a number of months. I think the original plan was to do it over three months, and ended up going about six months because of the follow ups we had, the document reviews that we performed and the follow-up interviews and questions just to make sure we had the data to support any observations we had for recommendations."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I apologize again, let me ask a better question. What is the timeframe that this review covered?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "It was a review of current policies and procedures in practices in the county as they were taking place. There wasn't a specific timeline that it would take place from, you know, December 1st to -- of a certain year."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So you said this was a review of current policies and practices?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "It was a review of -- yes."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. Because I heard you mention COVID."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I was going to say, I characterize it more really a coming in as a review of the as-is procurement within the county."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. Why would someone mention COVID and purchases during COVID?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah, I think you're talking about the Sprinter van purchase. So it's part of the -- the interviews that we did, there were different issues that were brought up and things looked in. So we did get some documentation and ask him, that's how some of the issues were identified. So that was basically -- that one was identified and that goes back to 2021, based on that particular issue that was identified during our interviews."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "But COVID is not current anymore, is it?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I -- not quite sure of the question there."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Well, you said that you -- your review was for current practices and policies, and the you mentioned COVID. COVID is no longer affecting us, is it?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, Commissioner. I think we're basically on that issue, it went back to -- it's -- it went back to a -- and for a time period, the van as we understand it, was received in 2023."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes, sir. But my question is about COVID."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Okay."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Not about the van. I didn't ask you anything about a van. I asked you, are we still going through COVID currently? Because you said this is a review of current practices and policies. Is COVID current, right now as we sit here today?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I am not a physician, Commissioner, or an expert there. We are not under the state of emergency, so most everybody is back to usual practices. And so I'm not quite sure else how to respond to your question."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. How many emergency procurements were made by this government during COVID?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I -- Commissioner, I don't think we have the answer to that."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So you highlight one procurement during COVID, but not the others? What is the full range? How can you highlight one without talking -- oh, let me ask another question. Were there any other policies, were there any other purchases outside of the procurement process during COVID?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Commissioner, I'm certain there were. I can't document them. This was a -- this was a high-level review. This -- we are not making accusations. We're -- we are simply pointing out areas that we identified as a risk, where there were procurements that were made that were outside of what would be considered generally normal sort of -- normal practices."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "How many procurements were made outside of generally normal practice during COVID?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I can't speak to that. This one was highlighted to --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "But how could you talk about that without knowing that? We might have made 10,000 during COVID, because guess what, COVID wasn't normal. So for you to highlight one out of a potential 100,000 procurements during COVID, that's called targeting. You're targeting someone because you want to highlight one. You don't even know what the entire universe is. How can you highlight one without knowing all of them or evaluating all of them? And say, oh well, during COVID, they made this many purchases and this one was out of place. You don't know how many we made during COVID. You don't know how many were out of place. You don't know how many followed procurement or not, do you?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "To answer that basic question, no. But again, this wasn't to make an accusation, it's simply to point out something that was, I'll call it anomalous. And it just worth highlighting, right. Our report is giving updates for improvement, not saying something was wrong, per se, here, this is something that -- that could maybe be done better. And look, I can't speak to the other procurements that were made during COVID. Governments all around the country, all around the world had to go through different types of processes. This is just one that was highlighted to us as we were doing interviews. And remember, this was a high level, this wasn't meant to dig in deep. And there may have been other ones, but this is the one that was highlighted and brought to our attention. So this is where we gathered the information on."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "That's the one that was highlighted and brought to your attention, okay, great, awesome. Next question, what was the scope of your engagement, and where is a copy of your retainer agreement?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yeah, the scope is on the first slide. We can provide a copy of our proposal. It's, I'm sure it's a matter of public record. It was -- yeah, it was on the second slide. This is a high-level view of the scope."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. And so did you speak with the Sheriff?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "We did not. We spoke with one of his staff -- a couple of his staff members and was unable --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. Did you speak with the DA? Did you speak with the District Attorney?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No. She was unable to speak with us. Although, she did call --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Did you speak with the Tax Commissioner?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, we did not."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Did you speak with the Clerk of Superior Court?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "We coordinated with the County Auditor's office. Basically, we were looking at a cross section --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm sorry, sir. These are yes-or-no questions. You can provide all of the explanation you want to after you answer my question. Did you speak with the Sheriff?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "The Sheriff's office, not the Sheriff."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Did you speak with Sheriff Pat Labat?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Point of order. The gentleman --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "What's your point of order?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I have to call him gentlemen. Commissioner is berating a presentation, and we could have respectful dialogue. The rules of decorum --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm asking questions, and they are not answering my questions --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "No, you are shouting. And you're out of order."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Look, I have the floor. You do not have the floor."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington and Commissioner Thorne --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "You can talk when it's your time. This my time."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Rules of decorum."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "This my time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Please. Commissioner Arrington, Commissioner Thorne. Gentleman, try to be just responsive to his question. And colleagues, it's 1:18."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Oh, I got time today. Did you all speak with Sheriff Pat Labat?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, we didn't."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Did you all speak with Sheriff -- DA Fani Willis?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Did you speak with the Clerk of the Superior Court?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Did you speak with the Tax Commissioner?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "No, sir."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Are those the constitutional officers?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yes."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay. Does your scope say including constitutional offices?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Yes. Can I elaborate on my response?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Please."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "So again, this was meant to be talking to a cross-section of departments and agencies, constitutional officers, other countywide elected. It wasn't meant to be engagement that talks to everybody or looks at all procurements, it was meant to be a cross-section. And so those meetings were set up, and we coordinated with the County Auditor's office. Those meeting were set up. We would have been happy to meet with the Sheriff or any of those other spokes. But oftentimes, as you might know, those meetings can be delegated to other staff to meet and discuss those issues. So we met with who was available to meet with us."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you. Now, let's get back to this Sprinter. So this was, according to our CFO, this vehicle was manufactured, so it was a custom-build vehicle; is that correct?"

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I don't -- I do not have all the details on -- in terms of that particular --"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "As I understand it, it was ordered in order to be fit out, yes, it was customized to accommodate the mission needs of the Sheriff's office."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Do you think someone would customize a vehicle without you paying for it in advance?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "I have seen instances where they'll be down payments. Again, we're not making a judgment on the criticality of it, of what was purchased. We were simply talking about how the purchase was made, delivery --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yes, sir. But my question is, do you think someone would start manufacturing a custom vehicle without you paying for it in advance?"

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Paying in full, I think that probably just place it -- to do as a down payment or some type of partial payment. I don't -- I don't know. All I know is the agreement that was made here."

PAUL FOLKERS, CHERRY BEKAERT: "If I could briefly too, Commissioner, I think, again, we -- we just looked at things if there was documentation, if there was something would convey justification or why certain things were done. So say if there was full payment made in advance, there could very well be a good reason why that might have been done. If it was there though, it was just in -- we -- it was nothing that we saw that provided justification for why payment was made in advance, two year in advance of delivery of the vehicle."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All right. And I'll -- I'm going to -- I started off by apologizing to you, and I'm going to end by apologizing to you. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Natalie Hall. Colleagues, it's 1:22."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to publically thank Commissioner Barrett for her thorough review and breakdown. And Commissioner Arrington, I've always told people that they don't understand that you're simply cross-examining. You're so used to being on the -- in court, and that you're simply asking questions that you'd like to have answered. And why does she always have to talk when I'm talking? She has a real problem, right? Because you're --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair. Vice Chair."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "-- ignorant and childish."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair, please. I -- we'll deal with that. Vice Chair, please."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. So I want to go back to the Aramark contract. There was something said about there was no rationale for why that contract was not awarded to Aramark. Was that what I heard? I made a quick note, but I wasn't sure."

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "No, Commissioner, what you heard was, it did go through our procurement process. The evaluation committee's recommendation was a different vendor. And then the Sheriff made a different selection. Yes, he did provide in an email, why he chose to do it that way; however, my procurement code does not address those kind of things. So that's one of the hard issues with Purchasing, our procurement code, constitutional officers, my procurement code does not address constitutional officers, and how they can do their procurements. That's one of the problems that -- that we do have."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Oh, okay. So your procurement code doesn't address constitutional officers. That makes sense, because it sounds like from what I've been listening to that some need to go back if they haven't already attended the law class provided by the Association County Commissioners of Georgia. Because that attorney, he is awesome, and he breaks down -- would you like to speak? You can get in the queue."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I said --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute, please, please. Commissioner Hall, you have the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thought so. So she can't help herself, it's like --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall, please."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "-- demonic possession."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Continue, Commissioner Hall, you have the floor. You have the floor."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the law class is an outstanding class, and that particular attorney is really -- all right. And the attorney who provides the class is a very good instructor. He actually breaks down the whole constitutional officer situation very well. And he makes it very clear that they have rights under their position that allow them and afford them certain things that they could do. Just waiting for you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall, come on."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Whoa, she is out of control."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay, so -- so I want to make it clear because when that whole conversation about Aramark was happening, I recall that there was an email that was forwarded to my office concerning that. And so thank you to my Chief of Staff for pulling that. She can read my mind. And this email clearly states that during the 12 years providing service at Fulton County Jail, there has not been a sustained pattern of excellence for improvement. And Sheriff Labat seeks to disrupt that current pattern of providing barely-adequate services for those individuals within his care. And that was the reason that was put in this email for why he did not choose Aramark. And so I don't understand what the whole conversation was about. He made it very clear why he didn't make the choice. And all these innuendos and insinuations and everything, are really uncalled for. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Sorry, I just have one last thing. I was maybe not understanding the methodology until Commissioner -- some of Commissioner Arrington's questions. So I just have a question. You mentioned that this was not meant to be of thorough review of everything but a cross-section. How were the departments selected to be a part of this so-called cross-section?"

ANTHONY NICKS, COUNTY AUDITOR: "During the Audit Committee, there were discussions about what departments that may be problematic, or may have different

type of purchasing issues. The committee basically had some concerns about some, not others. And so our department went ahead and made those selections."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So, I'm sorry, just for, again, for people to understand and be clear. Who sits on the Audit Committee?"

ANTHONY NICKS, COUNTY AUDITOR: "The Audit Committee is two commissioners and three citizens members. The citizen members are, one is an Executive Vice President Auditor of one of the largest food service firms in the world. The other is a CPA who is in business. The other is a Executive Vice President of a bank that has had 30 years or so of experience."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And they are -- oh, I'm sorry, don't go away yet. And they are nominated how?"

ANTHONY NICKS, COUNTY AUDITOR: "They're actually approved by this Board."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And the two Commissioners that sit on the board are?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Me and Ellis."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And is it safe to say that the three citizens don't actually know about the inner workings of the county, that they would have to rely on the two Commissioners to know about each department and how they work?"

ANTHONY NICKS, COUNTY AUDITOR: "It would be safe to say that they do have an understanding of how business works and how government works."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I don't -- I don't deny that. I'm just saying, you pick departments based on the Audit Committee's recommendation. I'm just pointing it out that departments were picked based on the Audit Committee's recommendation. And the two people who sit on the Audit Committee with the most knowledge about what's happening internally at the county are the Chairman and Commissioner Ellis. So I'm assuming that it's their knowledge of the various departments that is what led to the cross-section that was selected. And I'm going to continue to contend that that is a biased approach to picking the cross-section departments. Not to say that your analysis of the ones that you chose is wrong or right. But rather, if we're looking at a cross-section, to Commissioner Arrington's point, of elected officers and constitutional officers, should we not have looked at others, not just two who they notably, politically are against?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Anything else? Just a minute. Are you finished Commissioner Barrett?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I am finished."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah. I just want to thank you for your time. I do want to point out a few things. You know, this group is unbiased, in terms of the way they approached the stuff. The majority of our members are independent members, you know, in terms of the makeup of what the Audit Committee is. It -- and I'll just sort of just point out, and just for -- sometimes I think this Board struggles with the codification of common sense. But if you were doing a review of anything, would you not focus particularly on somewhere where you're going to have the highest degree of activity and volume? Is that not pretty much a common thing? Yeah."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "That is, yes, sir."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. So by default, the Sheriff's office, given that they're going to have the highest degree of volume and highest about of, you know, non-procurement activity going through, going outside of our system, it was going to get a look, all right. So the idea that that was somehow a target is nonsensical, okay. All right. So again, and I want to go back to, you know, kind of the similar remarks that were made at the beginning of the meeting. I think we get hung up on whether or not there is an authority to do something, versus what is the infrastructure around that when that authority is exercised. And what we had from these gentlemen who reviewed this, who have been expert in this, they've been doing it for a long time, was apparently, the absence of an internal control system in order to do it. And I think that's the piece of it that does not need to get lost. And somehow, we've got to, you know, put all sorts of differences aside, to come up with an approach that works and that's transparent to citizens. This can't be all framed as, oh, this person didn't like that person, or this is some sort of political thing. We got to get beyond that. And I think there's a good framework that's sort of been identified for us to begin to knock some of that stuff out. And it's a two-way street. Both from officials that are elected who may have some -- some purchasing degree of authority, sometimes limited, sometimes specific. And I also want to, you know, go back to something that was said, and I think I want to highlight this and I want to emphasize this in terms of particularly what was going on during the construct of COVID, when it comes to the emergency procurement. We had meetings, I sat through every one of them. We all sat through those, sometimes on Zoom, sometimes when we're here. We did use emergency purchasing authority. But what did we do with every situation where we did? They were -- come back and they were disclosed to us after each and every meeting. Am I correct on that?"

FELICIA STRONG-WHITAKER, DIRECTOR, PCC: "Yes, they were."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "They were identified, they were itemized. If there were questions around why there were done, you responded to them, you answered to them, you're provided detail. Justification matters, whether or not you have the authority to do

it or not, you have to step back and provide the justification for why you did it. And I'm going to end with that. And again, I want to thank you for your time. And thank you for the report. And I think that there will be some things which maybe we don't like to hear right here. I think we need to kind of all reflect upon it, and come up with some positive ways which we can change county government and make it better for our citizens. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, Commissioner Ellis. It's 1:33, and I'm going to entertain a motion to recess for lunch, Executive Session, where we may consider some real estate issues, litigation, and personnel. Can I get a motion, please? All right. Motion by Commissioner Thorne."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And seconded by Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman. Gentleman, before you leave, before we vote on the recess, for the public's information, Cherry Bekaert is one of the premium firms in the United States of America. We may not like their conclusions, and we don't have to abide by their conclusions. But their conclusions are what they are. And this Board will do whatever it feels is best in its wisdom. And the Audit Committee, on which I serve, will do what it believes it has to do. And the two points that you made, what are our --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point of order, Mr. Chair, we're on a separate agenda item. That item is over. The time for discussion on that item is over. Right now, we are on the item of Executive Session."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Let's take a vote, and we'll recess."

CHRISTIAN FUELLGRAF, CHERRY BEKAERT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

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

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

(Recessed for Executive Session at 1:34 p.m.)

(Resumed Regular Session at 2:33 p.m.)

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

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "It seems to be a motion to approve by Commissioner Thorne and seconded by Commissioner Barrett. Let's vote."

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion regarding the two requests for representation in items 3 and 4 of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Motion to approve by Commissioner Arrington, seconded by Commissioner Barrett."

CLERK GRIER: "The vote is open. And the motion fails; two yeas, one nay, and one abstention."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Next item."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Is there a motion to approve the transfer in item 6 of the Executive Session agenda?"

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

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

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

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Point of order, Mr. Chair. I need to disclose on the record that item 7 involves my lawsuit against the individual members of the Board of Ethics. I will not be recusing myself. I will be voting. But I'm disclosing it, giving -- providing full disclosure for the record."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Let the record reflect Commissioner Arrington's public disclosure on this matter and his upcoming vote, all right."

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

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "And is there a motion to approve the request for representation in item 8 of the Executive Session agenda?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Motion to approve Commissioner Barrett and it's seconded by -- all right, I'll second it. How do I do this? Where? Okay."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yes, sir, Commissioner."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "This matter is -- I'm also involved, and it's suit by Mesha Mainor against me. And I just want to disclose that again for the record. I will not be abstaining, I will be voting. But I want to provide full disclosure for the record."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Thank you, Commissioner. Record, so reflect."

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

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Madam Clerk, where are you? Where are we?"

CLERK GRIER: "We're back on page 8, County Manager's Presentation and Discussion items, **24-0249**, External Affairs Presentation of the 2024 State Legislative Session update."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Good afternoon, Commissioners. We are going to provide kind of a wrap-up update, coming out of the 2024 Legislative Session. Next slide, please. Just as a reminder, we had -- we've shared previously, our Legislative agenda for 2024. And we are very pleased that we made progress with many of the items that we discussed during -- that you all included in your Legislative package. Next slide. Sine die happened on March 28th. And we are now in the period following the Session, awaiting the Governor's veto deadline which is May 7th. So we will see some bills signed and potentially some vetoes. Although, we aren't anticipating anything related to our package. There were a number of highlights, and I won't go into all of that, for the adopted FY25 budget. And we previously reviewed the FY24 amended budget. Next slide. Wanted to give you an update about the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities budget for the Behavioral Health Crisis Center. The state of Georgia, last year, we received a little over \$5 million. We -- the state Georgia DBHDD in their FY25 budget request asked for an additional 500 or five-plus million. In the end the final amount, which was -- what was included in the Governor's budget was 3.7 million. So that is annualized funding of a little more than 9 million. We have done some additional review since that time, and have determined that this is the amount that has been provided for other BHCCs around the state. We were hoping, of course, to get the full amount that the Georgia DBHDD had asked for. But this is the amount that DBHDD has allocated for other Behavioral Health Crisis Centers around the state. We are working with them to align and make

sure that the operating model for that facility matches the funding when the facility opens later this spring."

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

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

DR. PAMELA ROSHELL, COO, FC HHS/PUBLIC WORKS: "Can I just add here, a little more clarity around the implications for the county and operations with the \$1.8 million. So specifically, the \$1.8 million would cover a crisis intervention component for the BHCC. And so that is why we were seeking that additional funding. So the funding that Jessica is referencing of the 9.4 million, is for Behavior Health Crisis Centers that do not have that component. So we will certainly have conversations with the state as well as Grady to determine how we move forward with the operations of this facility. We do remain excited about opening the facility. Perhaps, we're tracking mid-June right now. And we are tracking substantial completion of the facility for May of this year. So we certainly will keep you updated regarding any open house and further opening specifics as we get closer to that date."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Thank you, Dr. Roshell. I also wanted to mention that the budget includes \$500,000 in funding for a new Behavioral Health Crisis Center in North Metro Atlanta. That's what the budget document says. So we will be in further conversation to understand what the plans are and to engage on that facility. We are going to continue to work with Georgia DBHDD again, in hope of adding that additional component that Dr. Roshell described. And we'll keep you updated as we go through this over the next couple of months. Next slide, please. We were very pleased with the partnership with ACCG that resulted in the passage of House Bill 581. This is a really comprehensive Bill that addresses the property tax appeals process. It makes a number of changes, many of these will go into effect next year. But it creates a number of, we believe, positive changes in the property assessment process that will support efficiency and -- and also address some of the issues we were concerned about in the appeals process and the perception and, you know, risk within the appeals process for large commercial properties. So specifically, the three-year lock statute only applies if the taxpayer receives a reduction in value in their appeal. It also -- I think, every year, we, when the assessment notices go out, we receive calls from constituents who are concerned about the estimate of taxes that is printed on those notices, knowing that it is inherently inaccurate because millage rates for that year have not been set yet. So this would remove that estimate. It also requires taxpayers to participate in the settlement conferences. Sometimes folks don't show up, and that creates a backlog or some challenges in scheduling. Especially in a large county, we have hundreds of these cases. So I won't go into all of these details. We will provide for all of these Bills, a more detailed written summary about the impact, but wanted to address some of the highlights. Next slide, please. This is kind of a quick rundown. We've chosen a couple of Bills that we've highlighted here. The anti- -- definition of anti-Semitism Bill, which was one the Board supported last year, that

was adopted in January. Access to traditional personnel benefits in State Court, House Bill 825, that was passed, and will take effect in July. The Election Day allocate -- equipment allocation provision is included within House Bill 1207. So we were very happy to see that. That gives us more flexibility in determining equipment allocation based on any number of factors including early voting participation, and other issues. The Board of Commissioners' salary adjustment passed, and that will take effect in July. There are several Bills related to both evictions, as well as squatter's issues. And so those will take effect in July. And then I think we're going to go to the next slide and review the Certificate of Need revisions. So House Bill 1339 does a couple things. One very important provision related to Morehouse School of Medicine, and this is something that they lobbied for, creates an opportunity for an additional hospital, a short-stay hospital, so called, within a specific timeframe and within 48 months of a hospital closure. So this is something that we will continue to track. But this something that they worked on very closely. There are also other updates regarding the Certificate of Need process. And that will require some revisions in the state plan every five years. In addition, there is another study committee, there was some discussion about Medicaid expansion, of course, and then some very close votes. But that is something that will be reviewed further in the upcoming year and an initial report requested by December 1st of this year. Next slide, please. Some additional priorities and positions that this Board had considered: Senate Bill 19 addresses passport fees by Clerk of Superior Court; Senate Bill 439, an additional senior homestead exemption for Atlanta Public Schools; Senate Bill 533 create some additional opportunities for jail-based competency restoration programs and increase some additional opportunities for collaboration with Georgia DBHDD. And then Senate Resolution 37 creates a study committee on homeowners associations. Next slide, please. Some things that did not pass, there was a Bill that would have created some additional homestead exemptions in certain ZIP Codes, that did not go through. The Senate Bill 82 on the Crown Act did not make it through. And then some other legislation on sports betting did not make it across the line. We did not see legislation introduced on some of these issues, but we are continuing to look at these and work on them for the next Session. Next slide, please. I wanted to just highlight this, Commissioner Arrington, I know this is one you've worked on very closely, that creates the -- a five-person Senate study committee looking at a number of both HOAs, condo associations, property owners' associations. So we will track that during the summer. Next slide. A couple of other highlights, and I won't go all over all of these, but there are other study committees looking at issues like artificial intelligence, veterans' mental health, which is something I think we will be tracking as well. Next slide. And I think that's -- that concludes our presentation. We want to thank all of you for being so engaged in collaborating with us during the year, the County Manager and Executive Team for their support, as well as the Department Legislative Liaisons, and our Lobbying Team and staff."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Arrington, followed by Commissioner Thorne, followed by Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you, Jessica. What are the salaries listed in House Bill 1454 that'll take effect July 1st?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Thank you, Commissioner Arrington. The District Commissioner salaries are set at 65,000. And I believe the Chairman's salary is at 100,000 -- Jasmine, do you recall, 120? 120,000, thank you. And those take effect in July."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes. I just wanted to mention that with Elections, the rule changes. HB1207, it now requires that all Election employees have to be US citizens as well."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Yes. And our team, Mr. Hermon and team are looking into that. And so they've already begun that process even though the Bill has not yet been signed."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, and it wouldn't take effect until July anyway to give --"

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- them a heads up. But our Director Nadine Williams told us we didn't have any --"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "That's my understanding."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- noncitizens, but Mr. Hermon has found a couple. That would also apply to our temp staffing. And I don't know how we can enforce it with the temp agencies as well."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "I know that we have other policies for validating citizen status is in some other procurements. So I'm sure they can -- they can make that part of their requirement."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And I also wanted to take note that in HB1207, it gives poll observers the rights to observe and protections as it does poll workers from harassment. So I think that's something we need to really keep in mind --"

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- when we have observers in our Elections Warehouse."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Thank you, Commissioner. And I don't want to interrupt you, but I did want to mention that we, as I said, we will have additional detail. There are a number of the Election Bills, as I think you know, that we didn't highlight here. We focused on that one provision, but we will provide you some additional information."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "I know you are very --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah, yeah --"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "-- a part --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- and then the one that -- that one with the scanning and all that, that's --"

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- yeah, that's -- doesn't really affect us yet."

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "We'll just see what happens there. I also wanted to note, we had previously been under investigation. But there was no budget for the volunteers who came and now they have budgeted that. The State Board of Elections now has their own private investigation teams because things weren't really looked at closely in the past. And there's going to be much more detail coming aboard with the State Elections Board so we need to take note of that as well."

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

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "And that's it. Thank you."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "Hey, Commissioner."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Just a comment and a question."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: The comment, first of all, I just want to thank you and your staff, Jessica. I know it was a busy Session, and I know it's a lot of work to do --"

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- in a condensed amount of time. So I appreciate all your efforts there."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And then just a question on the equitable property tax --"

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- issue. Is there anything in there that sort of -- I understand this will kind of help us going forward. Is there anything that will impact anything retroactively? Does that make sense?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "It does. I don't believe so, Commissioner. I think that's a great question for -- I think what I hear you may be embedded in that question is, perhaps pending appeals or existing issues --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Or if something's really out of alignment, is there -- does it get up to speed in any -- you know, does it get kind of Trude up in any way, like that kind of thing."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "I think this is really forward facing. I don't know that it addresses current issues. But that's something -- you know, because if a person feels that there is an issue, of course, there is an annual appeal window, and that may be something that they want to take note of, given this change in law."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Yeah, of course, I'm also thinking about it on the flip side as looking at the commercial properties that we see as potentially, you know, not paying their fair share, so to speak."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And so, you know, if there is a commercial property that, you know, I don't know what we're calling it these days, under assessed or whatever, whatever the term is we're using. Is it going to take, you know, at least three years to even sort of get caught back up? Yeah."

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "And that's a great question. I think that now that we're past Session, one thing we're doing is talking more with departments about the implications of these Bills that were passed. So I think that's something that we can note as we talk with Mr. Conley about their -- the next steps."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So is that something we can come back to you for --"

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- or would you prefer that we go to them?"

JESSICA CORBITT, DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: "We can -- either is fine, but I'll be glad to follow up with you."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Awesome, thank you so much."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is that it?"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I'm done."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Anything else? Thank you."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Madam Clerk."

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0217**, Select Fulton Presentation, Review the District Redevelopment Initiative along Fulton Industrial Boulevard."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Good afternoon, Commissioners. Samir Abdullahi, Director of Select Fulton or the Economic and Workforce Development arm for Fulton County Government. We've got a nice, slick slide show for you. It might be a little grainy, just given all the video we put in there. Commissioner Hall, I agree, maybe we should upgrade from the I-5s to maybe an I-9 for upstairs. But pleased, again, to come before you to speak around, as the County Manager likes to say, Fulton County's largest redevelopment activity to date. Over the last five years, as many of you are aware, multiple departments, many personnel have been very invested and involved in helping to transform the Fulton Industrial District. One, not only the, you know, one of our largest concentrations of industrial-commercial real estate and activity that will show that services not only the county, the metro region, but much of the southeast. We've got a major of county operations over there in the

form of the Executive Airport. There's really an opportunity to grow the Metro Atlanta region. So, next slide. We've worked hard to really condense what is Renew the District. The way we like to describe it, it's \$180 million public and private initiative to both revive and future proof both of those assets, the Fulton Executive Airport and the Fulton Industrial District. And again, I always encourage, if you hear anyone talking about the Charlie Brown Airport, that's in the past. We are the Executive Airport for the city of -- or for Atlanta and the region. So, next slide. How are we doing that? Right now, the county's taking a lean-in posture, we're committing over \$80 million in public funds towards the Executive Airport that you'll see there in blue, towards commercial redevelopment. And I really consider it strategic commercial redevelopment. If I had a bigger piggy bank, I'd buy a lot more buildings there to help to transform that area. But in working with the CID, the Chief of Police and others, these are really the most strategic assets in acquiring to help reduce some of the criminal activity and other things that really dragging down investment in the area. And then lastly, we've leaned into some modern public services and facilities in the area. Again, what I love about this visual, it helps to demonstrate not only a significant dollar amount that we're investing in this part of town, and as a way to describe kind of Fulton Industrial, it's really concentrated at Fulton Industrial, and 20, what we consider the gateway area. But also speaks to the private community, and shows them the amount of impact that we're having across this gateway area. So, next slide there. I do want to kind of focus in on the importance of Fulton Industrial. I think all of us who are familiar with the area understand it's a great concentration of industrial property. It's probably one of the largest concentrations of industrial property in the southeast, it's 55 million square feet. So when you think about office submarkets like a Midtown or a Buckhead, those are 30 million square feet. So quite substantial in the amount of dollars invested in the ground, up to 30,000 workers, over 1,000-plus businesses in the area. If you look at land values for those properties, they're nearly 2X what they would be if you looked at property just outside of the city of Atlanta here in Fulton County. So really driving towards value and taxation availability for the residents here. It represents almost 33 percent of our industrial space. And is you know, that spreads out towards areas like South Fulton and Fairburn, some north as well. But a large concentration, a third of our industrial space is located right on that corridor. Major industries that you'll see and represented by some of these top employers around food production, manufacturing and logistics. Much more the first two, the way to think of it is all those consumer products that you're seeing in the Targets of the world and the Kroger's and the Publix's, the bakeries, and everything else, a lot of that is concentrated and distributed from that locality. And again, not just to the benefit of Fulton County residents, but Metro Atlanta region and kind of beyond that. So again, quite significant industrial area, something that we want to stay focused on. But as you've been out there, these buildings are a little more legacy. The ceiling heights aren't as tall as we'd like them to be for modern uses. The column spacings aren't as wide for modern uses. So it is somewhat of a legacy area, and really requires attention for redevelopment, which is under Renew the District. If you shift to the right there, again, focus around the Executive Airport. It's the who's who in the corporate world for -- for in terms of our major users. One of the things I like to talk about, Peachtree-DeKalb Airport, which flies over my head all the time at my house,

it's very active. Those are people playing golf in single-prop planes up in Chattanooga and the like. The Arthur Blanks of the world, the Home Depots of the world, the decision makers and the big corporate entities that make up Metro Atlanta are located at our Executive Airport. So 75 percent of our takeoff and landings are private jets, not these single-prop planes. And again, a proud standpoint that we should reflect a little bit more often is the fact that we are the only other 24-hour FAA operated -- I put tower there, but tower in the state of Georgia other than Hartsfield-Jackson Airport. Hartsfield-Jackson does not want private airport activity. So they really lean on us to pick up the pace on that and to take on the volume of inventory that's needed to support I guess, as we all know, is the sixth largest region in the United States now, bigger than DC, bigger than Philadelphia. Next slide, there. Getting a little click video, then maybe, we look at the raw version, looks a little bit nicer online. This is a great map that we got from the CID that really shows where trucks are going and coming from. Again, I just, I highlight all of this to say that Fulton Industrial is not just exclusive for the benefit of Fulton County and its residents. It really services not only Metro Atlanta, but much of the southeast. And as we know, not only being the sixth largest metro region in the United States, the southeast continues to outperform other regions of the United States in terms of economic and population growth. So there will be a continuous need to grow this area. Next slide, please. So we'll talk about airport enhancements in detail. An important factor there is, we're working on our messaging especially with external stakeholders is, you know, Metro Atlanta, Fulton County's ability to grow especially from a business and commerce standpoint, is almost single-handedly driven by our ability to grow this Executive Airport. And I want to commend David Clark and Jonathan who runs our airport out there, for the works that they've done most recently in helping to expand new hangar spaces on developing an airport master plan that'll help us to get to new destinations through our Emergency Management Department, that's helping to bring on-site Fire Rescue, which is kind of a basic minimum requirement for insurance for a lot of our corporate users. And again, growing aviation jobs out there. Next slide, please. So there's definitely been focus around, you know, Downtown and the Gulch. And kind of the narrative there has been, this is our front door especially in anticipation of the World Cup, this is our front door to Metro Atlanta. I don't want also those people with that messaging to forget that our Executive Airport is also the front door, especially for those of you know, means and capabilities to help transform communities, this is their first entrance to Metro Atlanta. And we want to make sure that this airport reflects the quality and standard that we have, not only for the county, but again, as a leader in the region. So on the left there, you'll see some of the new hangars that have come out of the ground. The Norfolk Southern hangar that's built on the north side there. Again, a lot of that was enabled through the strategic lease that we've done with UPS on the north side of the airport property and providing space so that we can actually grow hangars. I think at the last Board meeting, you approved the Nova Solutions that led by -- I always have to say ba-ba-billionaire, who's going to put his aircraft there. Again, this is the driver of corporate interest in Metro Atlanta. They got a place -- they have to have a place to put the jets. And we've got real-world use cases like Norfolk Southern that are here in Fulton County, because they have a place for their jets. And others that are in places like South Carolina because we didn't have space for them. Again, hats off to

the team over there in two-to-three years' slog in getting the FAA to approve our master plan. Our master plan really is our vehicle to go seek federal funding to enhance this airport. And there are many plans in way to enhance in future proof this airport. There's been smaller dollar, although nothing is small dollar at an airport, investments that have happened in terms of improvements. So we've got a brand-new state-of-the-art kind of airport administration office. Similar like what we like to do in Select Fulton, reflect our customer base, you feel confidence in and kind of a sense of you're on the same level if you look the part and your offices look the part and you kind of talk the talk. So I'm glad to see that they've made that significant investment in upgrading those facilities, as well as that'll house our on-site fire and rescue teams. There's a lot of filming that occurs out there. So it's not just stagnant for airport use. I forget which one, the Captain America, or I'm not -- I'm not a Marvel fan or anything like that, but a lot of filming that has occurred in some of our legacy buildings, so additional revenue streams that we've been able to capture. Again, just as a reminder, the airport is self funded, it's self funded through gas fees and landing fees and the like. So any of these additional revenue sources that we can capture are very helpful towards the plans of future proofing this airport. Again, I included the simple things like new taxiway lights, these matter for flight operations, and they definitely communicate that up to their executive team, as this is a great place to fly into, or maybe not such a great place to fly into. Similar to what you'll see with many of the activities we're doing as a part of Renew the District is stakeholder and community engagement is a critical piece of all of this. I think two years ago, some of you joined us where we had our Federal and Congressional Delegation out there. Again, they're the ones that'll help us unlock some of this FAA funding to modernize the airport. We recently had the Metro Atlanta Chamber over there. Again, we're not going to be able to expand this airport by ourselves. So we've got to get our stakeholders, just as much as the Metro Chambers doing work on South Downtown and the Gulch, they also need to be doing work on our airport and figuring out how do we grow it for corporate presence. Again, John and his team recently have an Aviation Career Expo. These are one of these great community engagement pieces of bringing people who don't traditionally use the airport, especially none of us, I don't think have a G-5 or something of the like, to be able to get on site and experience the airport. And it's not just an asset that sits behind the -- behind the gated fence there. So there's been a lot of intentional work around opening the airport up for -- for what it means for others, but also for new investment. So, next slide there. Next, I want to talk about commercial redevelopment. That's really where our team in Select Fulton has taken to lead in partnership with DREAM and Tim Dimond. So they, again, we've made strategic -- we've made strategic investments to acquire properties along this gateway area, again, around increasing safety, around removing a lot of the foot traffic that you would see at I-20 and Fulton Industrial. If you know any users in the area, they would tell you over the last two years, it's dramatically down. Again, I'm getting calls from some of the convenience stores there saying their foot traffic is down 30-40 percent. I'm kind of okay with those phone calls. So now that we've removed that piece, the next iterative step is how do we leverage the site for new amenities, new investments, again, priming the pump to get the private community to invest dollars not only in our properties, but in our properties and beyond integrating, creating new investments,

creating new jobs, as well as retaining the jobs that are already out there. Next slide, please. If you look at the top left corner there, these are really the properties that we're focused on right now, one through six. Property seven that sits outside the airport area, similar like with UPS, we'll have to go to FAA and get an exception on use for this for a commercial, maybe, non-aeronautical use. So a little bit more lead time on that one, but again, focused around properties one through six, that's somewhat have natural alignments is condensed site. So two and three together; four, five, six together. Again, as I said, for the airport side of things, we've done a lot of stakeholder and community engagement, understand what would the community like to see out here? What would make sense? But also aligning that with market reality so we can deliver something in a manageable timeframe. Next slide, please. So you know, the most notable one maybe, is the Airways Motel, which was really at the entrance of -- of our Executive Airport. Unfortunately, people were flying in, and they pulled up to the light right there. It was not the prettiest sight to see as you kind of first major entrance into Metro Atlanta. Again, I've got horror stories of recruiting companies that have looked at Metro Atlanta and their experience at our Executive Airport prior to some of these demolitions and more. BAE is a commercial real estate consultant that we bought on, again, to provide those market disciplines and market thought process as we go to market these sites for redevelopment. Again, we don't want to get ahead of what the market would actually deliver. We've just closed on an RFI, so request for information to solicit to the development community, although we've kind of done that quietly behind the scenes at the Jamestownes of the world to Seligs of the world. If they had these properties, what would they do with them? So we're really getting a sense, again, both from community stakeholders as well as the private community, what they will and won't do with these properties. We've partnered with many different groups, including the CID, they funded at Kimley-Horns, somewhat charrette with the property owners on Fulton Industrial, which is -- which is mainly what that CID is made up of. And in the partnership with the City of South Fulton, which all of these properties lie inside of the City of South Fulton. So we want to make sure that our partners there are always included as a part of these discussions so we don't get out of sync as to what they have an appetite for. A lot of where that study leaned towards is amenities for users of the district. It's hard to find a restaurant on the district. It's hard to park a truck on the district. And when you don't have places to kind of go for people to do, nuisance and some of these other things that are unwanted or undesirable in the district start to bubble up. And so that's really been our focus is how do we market these properties for new amenities, simple things like food and the like, a safe place to park your truck as a way to enhance the district. We also recently just held an open house over at the Emma Darnell Aviation Culture Center, again, in partnership with the CID, just to show the properties to make the development community aware that these are going to hit the street here shortly. Kind of the two pieces that I think are great as to why the county owns these versus maybe a private party, again, get we've done a lot of emergency management training and the like on these buildings, as well as Tim Dimond and his team are taking the lead on doing demo for these buildings. They have no half life beyond their current state. So something that I don't think someone who had this in the private side of things would take the initiative on. So while they're fenced away and they're dormant, they're definitely still being used

in some form or factor for public benefit. And then lastly, you know, we've made an investment to make and transform these properties. We went out and sought to get an - state opportunities and a designation for all of our properties, one through six there. We were one of three that actually got approved by the state of Georgia in 2023 to provide a \$3500 tax credit for every new job that's created out there. So again, co-investment in the redevelopment of these properties, not just our dollars in the ground, but now the State's got to pony up and put some dollars when we bring great employers to these properties. We're very much moving from the idea stage to the activation stage. So you'll continue to see our marketing ramp up. We've got a micro site. We've done little kind of spot pieces in Georgia trend and the like. And I imagine as we start to release these properties on the streets, we'll do a lot more engagement around the marketing. But again, I think the storytelling is not exclusive to one silo, it is how does all of this wrap up into the public entity, priming the pump for reinvestment both at our airport, and the district."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "So take a breath, and just make sure that you understand on this in particular, remember we bought the seven properties. That eliminated a lot of the blight. Now, we're demolishing the properties. This company, BAE, is going to come back to advise you on how to -- what the best redevelopment options are augmented by this request for information from developers who are interested. So we may see a where we may see a range in -- and Commissioner Arrington, you had asked me several times when we bring something back, so now we're at that stage. As soon as this work is completed with an RFI from the development community and our consultant, BAE, looking at these properties, we'll bring that back to the Board to -- for you to make a decision on what's the highest and best use of these for potential development. Any questions about that? Just want to make sure, because if we were blowing past a lot of things, right, with a lot of information. That's the, you know, that's really big -- along, obviously, with the airport redevelopment. Yes, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I was just going to ask, because it is riverfront property, that these properties are more in the front along I-20, correct?"

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "A little distance from the river. You know, there's kind of stream buffer you're not allowed to build on. So they sit off set, but not on the river necessarily, no."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. But we -- are we doing anything as far as the river trails or lighting and stuff to make that an attractive area that development came in, it may be a live, work, play type --"

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Yeah. We've provided us letters of supports really to the Chattahoochee River Keepers that have been the main driving force on top of the CID. There was some property that became a part of the CID

that was Fulton County controlled as a way for them to fund the study. So it's kind of ancillary to what we're doing."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "But it it's still a part generally of it."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Okay. Thank you."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Yep."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Hey, Samir, you may want to check with City of South Fulton and Reginald McClendon. They just rezoned, I was at their Council meeting last night, they just rezoned a lot of properties over in that area. So just want to make sure."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Yeah."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Hopefully, it wasn't any of the properties that we own."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "No. I -- the Councilwoman for the district, Dr. Rowell, is aware as well as Reginald have been very involved in the process."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "What we're hoping to get to, they've been fairly agreeable to it is basically, a letter from his office saying as long as a property meets X-Y-Z zoning requirements, then we're generally okay with a rezoning in this form factor. Because right now, it's all in one, so if it comes in retail, and they have to rezone, providing that assurance on the front end, we'll get a lot more developers interested as opposed to our public process, then their public process. So I appreciate that. Next slide, then. Lastly, just closing out kind of a third leg of Renew the District is around modern public facilities. As everyone is aware, the animal -- the new Animal Services Facility is really a marquee building. Again, I think stands true to the -- to the brand and the quality and excellence that we want to deliver in terms of Fulton County government facilities. And again, sets that expectation for any private development partners that come along the area. This is kind of a standard and expectation that we would have of you, kind of adjoining to that facility that continues to be work around our new Public Safety Training Facility. And again, this CID who's done so much work, both at the gateway area, so a lot of beautification, a lot of safety protocols and the like, has taken the lead in investing private dollars to make this area stand out. Next slide, there. I just want to show as many great pictures of this Animal Services Facility. I told my

wife, if I injure myself downtown, I want them to take me over to our new facility instead, it looks so nice. But it really -- I mean, it really is a world-class facility. Again, I can't reflect how much that is important to demonstrate for a private investor who's putting at risk their dollars to show the public entity. He's invested in the ground, and not for a two or three-year period, but for a very long period. And to your point, around the Chattahoochee River Keepers, again, many other groups that we have partnered with, including the City of South Fulton, the CID, who have taken on some of this additional work around public safety and landscaping. That's not really a focus priority for us, but ancillary to the efforts that we're currently conducting. And then just our last slide here. So to the County Manager's point, it's a lot. It's a lot of information. It's a lot of different activities. And I commend him in his leadership for -- for helping to establish the vision for Renew the District. I think I'm the orchestrator at this point, but -- but bringing all these again, I think, disparate efforts under one house and one brand identity to help move each one individually. Again, very pleased that we're moving, this is why I'm in front of you today, from the planning stages to much more of the activation phases. But I think the most important piece here is, we can't do this alone. We can't be successful alone. It really requires leaning on our external partners and stakeholders to help make us successful. I'm happy to answer any questions you we have."

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I just have a quick question, well, maybe two. You mentioned sort of being a front door to kind of some, you know, big influence, influencer-type folks who have the dollars to spend in our county, et cetera, et cetera. In and around in particular, World Cup, FIFA World Cup. So I'm just wondering, timeline wise, what is it going to be looking like when that -- when that event happens?"

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Kind of maybe the two biggest components, as you know, we've got two runways out there. There's kind of the Crosswind Runway that's not being used very much, if not at all. And that was really for smaller planes, we don't have small planes out there so we don't need that extra runway, as a way to immediately create additional hangar space. And again, this is Jonathan his team and Public Works being very clever of navigating the FAA to basically say, we can shut down this runway, scrape off some of the paint and turn it into a space to park a jet for now, not a hangar, not a permanent thing, but at least to park a jet. Because I think they're getting calls from nations like super cup -- the Super Bowl. Like, entire countries are calling saying we're going to bring 10 jets. So times how many countries that are going to come through, I think we're holding 12 or so games, just having space, whatever it looks like for them to park, is important. The other part of that is having a potential on-site customs facility. Right now, we have to call them to come on site. There is a grant that we're going after as a way to build a building. So basically, they land their jet, they pull up to the building, they come on site, go through customs to get this nice executive experience. And then they go park their jet and go off to the games and the like. So there's definitely been focused around how do we take some of these efforts and sync them up with the World Cup, to your point, around being

their front door, their front entry. Whether that includes, you know, we talked about things like a business center in the new executive administration offices and the like. But those are some of the ones that come most top of mind."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "The only other question I had, and you may have said it and may have missed it, you talked about -- I think of the first slide, maybe, or first or second, you gave sort of a total number and said, public-private --"

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Yeah."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- partnership. And did you give a breakdown?"

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "So it's a 180, it's -- 80 of that is us, 100 is what we would expect on a private market."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Got it, thank you."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Yeah."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Well, 100-plus, we'll say plus, more than that."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "All right. So then, you know, we got the branding with the district. What are we -- what's our official name for the airport? Is it Charlie Brown, Browns Field, Fulton County Executive Airport?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Fulton County Executive Airport is our official name."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Official name."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "And the FFA adopted it --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "-- but more -- but we can't get rid of Brownfield, it's some process."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay."

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "So it's kind of --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So --"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "-- if you will, a sub --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So when we further the branding like, Fulton County Executive Airport, Where Decision Makers Take Off, or something like that, right?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yeah."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "That's it, okay. All right, thanks."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Anything else? All right. Continue, Madam Clerk."

SAMIR ABDULLAHI, DIRECTOR, SELECT FULTON: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "3:18."

CLERK GRIER: "24-0215, Discussion, Timekeeping and use of temporary part-time positions, sponsored by Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "I want to hold that."

CLERK GRIER: "Okay. 24-0251, Discussion, Elections, sponsored by Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "I was going to hold that as well because I've been reaching out via email. And I -- the Elections Department has been unresponsive. But I have -- do have a meeting scheduled now. So I'm going to wait and hold that until next meeting. But another item has come up that Chairman Pitts, you want to take the lead?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah. Are you going to -- you're going to hold this one?"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "No, I -- I'll just put it back on next time, because you want to discuss --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No, you can --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "-- another matter that's come up."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No, hold is okay, because you and I will be meeting with the --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "With Patrise."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- the Chair the Board, I think, Thursday or Friday. However, while we're on Elections, most of you are probably aware that Patrise Perkins-Hooker is going to start a position as City Attorney for the city of Atlanta beginning -- when is it, May what?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "After May 8th when the current City Attorney retires."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "After May 8th. And she currently serves as our -- as the Chair of the Board of Registration and Elections for the county. And she and I had a brief discussion about that. And she informed me that in her opinion, there was no prohibition from her serving in both capacities. But I just -- what I said to her that I need to do some thinking on that. Because even though there may not be a prohibition, I just got a work that through and see how that -- what the Board's position is going -- going to be on that. Because at times we are, you know, adversaries or on different sides of issues. So we get -- at some point, we'll have to discuss this in more detail. But we have some time because it does not become effective until May what?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Either on or just after May 8th."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. And she and I will be meeting with Commissioner Thorne on Thursday or Friday of this week. And I plan to speak with her in more detail about it at that time. So I'd like to get some feedback from the Board before we have that meeting. Commissioner Thorne. All right."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I just got to hold --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "You're going to hold your paper. You're going to hold the paper, but on the issue --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I see the perception of a conflict with her taking that new role as a County Attorney there, especially in light of ongoing litigation we have going on right now. And also, representing the city of Atlanta, her impartiality being a Board of Registrations Elections might be a conflict."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah. I think the -- yeah, I think more -- more important for post -- piece to focus in on that is less around whether there is a prohibition, versus conflict. And just on the face of it, it appears to me that there likely is high enough degree of conflict in the importance of this role for us and the demand -- the demands are going to be placed upon us, just given the realities of, you know, kind of what's

ahead of us. I think it's -- would probably be in our best interest to, if she's to this other position, interim or not, to pursue a different -- different Chair during that time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. First of all, Patrise Perkins-Hooker is aboveboard. I think she's a community person. I know her family, I know husband, Doug. However, having said that, the appearance, I believe of conflict and I just feel it's going to be lightning rod. I feel as though it's going to cause problems in the long run given her position with the BRE. That's reality, whether you like it or not, it is reality. So I would have to go on record right now saying if, in fact, she's going to take that position with the city of Atlanta, I believe that it is best interest of the county, that she relinquishes her position. That is too high of a position, too public of a position. And just the slight, not her, because I think she's aboveboard. I think she's a pillar of the community. But here again, you're talking about a position that's going to be a lightning rod and cause problems. So I think it is the best interest of the county that she relinquishes that position."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I don't believe that there is any conflict of interest. She is not serving as the Attorney for the Board of Elections. She is serving as the Chair of the Board of Elections. I think it would be a decision for her to make, you know -- you know, it may be more of a practical conflict, if anything. It may be, she may not want to be at a BRE meeting and have some work to do with the city of Atlanta. But I think that's an internal decision that she would have to make. I don't think there is any ethical, moral, or legal conflict that would not only prevent her or -- from serving, continuing to serve as Chair of the Election Board. You know, I -- it's -- there's just nothing there, right. I mean, somebody would have to show me something in writing. I have to see something some where, because right now, this is just conjecture and speculation. There -- there is no conflict, absolutely not. I mean, the other Board Members have jobs, the other Board Member works for the City Council President. How in the world would it be a conflict for her and not for him? Come on, now. Come on."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yeah. I'm a little confused, I have to admit, by this some alleged conflict here. I mean, I -- the only thing I can see, and I have not spent a lot of time thinking about this, because we all are just sort of finding out about this over the last couple of days. But I'm just -- I mean, the only thing I even see as connected at all, it would be the Municipal Elections that we perform for the cities. And I would assume, and especially given her experience in the past as our County Attorney, that she would recuse herself if something came up with the Board that she was unable to weigh in on. So I don't think that this is something we need to

engage ourselves in, in terms of making that decision. I think, you know, unless she were to prove that she was not recusing herself in some way, when it was appropriate to do so, then maybe it would make sense to take a look at it at that point. But I think this is premature for us to even be talking about this. And we're, you know -- you know, predicated some future disaster that there's no basis to assume is going to happen."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "There may not be a statute or a limitation preventing her, but elections is a very important process that we undertake as a county that we're responsible for. And we need to develop trust, and have full trust. And if there's a perception of a conflict, that's going to destroy any trust in our election process. Commissioner Arrington, you talk about Aaron Johnson being Doug Shipman's Chief of Staff. That's who the Democrat party appointed. We had to approve the Chair. No -- the part -- we approved the party's appointments. But we approve the Chair, so it's on us if we want to eliminate that perception of conflict. So if something like Commissioner Barrett just said, if something that just came up, I think we need to give some thought. Perhaps, listening to Patrice herself would be very helpful on -- first, before we determine anything, to talk to her to see how she thinks she can handle it in a fair and just manner."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I'll be brief in my comments, Chairman. Nothing has to be written for someone to say the -- even the appearance of it, first of all. I -- that is not the rule of thumb for me that it has to be written in black and white for it to be an appearance. I do believe that we will have situations that will come. And she, in her capacity, would have to pick and choose. She should not be in a position where she has to pick Fulton County or city of Atlanta. That's my personal opinion. Now, having said that, I think she's aboveboard. I think that this has less to do with her as a person, and more to do with the positions. The position with the city of Atlanta is a high-ranking position. And the city -- the position with the BRE, we are already nationally on the map for our elections and what's going on. Why would anybody want to add more fuel to that is beyond me. My opinion. Now, County Attorney, not asking you to give a legal opinion today. But asking you if an appearance of conflict, if that is enough or not?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Aspirationally, the Code of Ethics for Fulton County does advise to avoid the appearance of impropriety or conflict in addition to actual impropriety or conflict."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'll save my comments."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Vice Chair? Okay, next item."

CLERK GRIER: "**24-0252**, Discussion, outstanding water bill from city of Atlanta, sponsored by Chairman Pitts."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. During my several conversations with Mayor Dickens will last Thursday and Friday, he brought up to me that the county owes the city approximately \$5.7 million in outstanding, past-due water bills. And I said that I was not aware of that. But what I can -- what I committed to him was that if we owe a dime, that we would pay. I spoke with the Manager and asked him to review the matter. And I asked -- also asked the Mayor to have his people send over whatever proof that they had. And what we received from the city of Atlanta was a one-page spreadsheet. And so I said to him that probably what we'll need to do is put a working group with a time certain together to review any evidence they have on their side, any evidence that we have on our side. And if we can't reach a conclusion, take it to mediation and let the chips fall where they may. So Mr. Manager, where are we at this point?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "Yes, sir. I'll defer to CFO Sharon Whitmore, who has already begun working on this. I do think this dates back decades. So there's quite a bit of work to -- spare work to do to get to really what the numbers are. But Sharon, if you'll update the Board."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Thank you, Mr. Anderson. I mean, just briefly, we have over 90 individual accounts with the city of Atlanta. The largest account is the 901 Rice Street location, which is the Fulton County Jail. It's also the account that they indicate has the largest outstanding balance according to their records. We have been working with them dating back to early mid-90s on clearing old reconciling balances or outstanding balances. Some of this relates to a sewer escrow account that was established in the mid-80s that we requested. The details of how they held the account, they applied payments for our sewer charges against that account. So we asked for the details of how that account was utilized. Those details were never received. Then again, in the early 2000's when the city transitioned to United Water, we received some communication at that point in time about an outstanding balance. No details provided. We've been, at least two or three times since then, through various communications and reconciliation processes with the city. We have not made it all the way to the end of that process. And in large part, because of turnover both at the county and the city. Utility accounts here at the county are managed out of the Department of Real Estate and Asset Management. So what I've done is I've asked the Finance and the DREAM team to pull all of the documentation from all of these previous discussions together. And we're starting our own reconciliation process to identify from the records that we have, what we've been billed, what we've paid to see what those two numbers look like. In essence, to see, you billed us a dollar, we paid a dollar, or

you billed us a dollar and we only paid you 50 cents. So we're going through that process now. As well as I reached out to the city's CFO to set a meeting between our offices, DREAM and Finance, and the City CFO and Watershed in order to address, document, and resolve this issue. So that's where we're at, Mr. Chairman."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Oh, what a tangled web we weave. We turn off their animal services, and now we owe 5.7 million in water. What if they turn off water to the jail? What if they turn off water to this building like we turned off animal services? Hmm, Arsenio Hall said, things that make you want to go, hmm. Oh, what a tangled web we weave. I'm going to make a motion that we restore to water -- the -- oh, we're not on that yet, we're on water bill. Okay, I'm going to make a motion on the next one."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you for doing all that research or, you know, I guess, starting the process again of doing all that research, Madam CFO. As it relates to this new sort of request, I guess, that we owe this money, I don't know how -- how to sort of contextualize it. This was sent to the Chairman's Chief of Staff, correct?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That's who I received the spreadsheet from. So I would assume so, yes, ma'am."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "So this new sort of -- or reviving of this old sort of water bill argument, we have not heard anything about this through official channels in how long, would you say?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I believe the last communication was 2019 regarding the accounts. And at that point in time, I think a request was made for some more detailed information and a meeting. And I don't think that we heard back from the city at that point."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So to be clear, five years ago-ish, we were still having some kind of discussion about this or it was brought up again. We asked for additional information in order to validate whether or not we owed the money. We were never given that information. No meeting happened. The subject was dropped by the city of Atlanta?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes. I would say there was no further communication."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. And then this go around, we get this spreadsheet sent to the Chairman's Chief of Staff in the midst of negotiation about a completely

different issue. But never did it come through your office or through facilities, who pays this bill traditionally, correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Okay. So it does seem that the city has decided to, you know, pull this out as a way to further negotiate -- negotiate with us on this animal services issue. That said, I concur with you, Mr. Chairman, if we can get to the bottom of this, and I think it would be best if we could get to the bottom of this once and for all, and come up with whatever the number is if we owe it and get it paid. And if we don't, that we get in writing that this has been resolved and we don't owe it so that every five to 10 years, starting from the 80s, this can't continue to bubble up. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah. This kind of reminds me of those, somebody coming back looking for some timeshare dues from about like, 10 years ago, trying to chase you down, right? I mean, this doesn't have squat to do with Sir Walter Scott, or -- or anything else, right? This is just a smokescreen, just a squirrel. So I don't even know why we're discussing this. It should be ignored. If they've got some sort of demonstrative proof, take it up, deal with it separate. This shouldn't be commingled with this particular issue. We should deal with it individually and move on."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Natalie Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't find anything funny about it whatsoever. In 2019, you said, Madam CFO, that we were told that we owed this money to the tune of the same amount? Five-point -- is it seven million dollars?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "No, ma'am. That was not the dollar amount. I'm not -- I'm not, to be honest with you, Commissioner Hall, the communication that I saw, I was not copied on it. I don't recall there being a dollar amount listed on that communication in 2019. It was sort of like a, hey, we need to talk about these outstanding balances. But I don't recall there being a dollar amount listed."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Were you copied on the email?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "That email from 2019, no. It was an email between someone at Watershed and someone in the Department of Real Estate and Asset Management."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Which is the proper department to address it?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "For us, DREAM manages our utility accounts, all of our utility amounts, water, gas, electric, all of them."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Who was the head of that department at the time?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "That would be me."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "That would be you? So do you still have the email? I know I have my archives from back when I was Chief of Staff to Joan Garner."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "I do have a copy of the email at the time --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Can you forward it to me, please?"

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

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'd like to see what is -- what we're discussing. Also, who was the mayor in 2019? Because I believe Mayor Dickens, he was sworn in in 2022? It would have been Keisha Lance-Bottoms, right? So this came to Fulton County under her administration?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I see correspondence and discussions going back to Mayor Franklin's administration."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "But nobody here at Fulton saw fit to try to even address it whatsoever? Just what did we do on this side?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Commissioner Hall, we've been communicating at various different levels of the government with various different levels of people at the city of Atlanta for very long time. I have copies of correspondence from former Chairman Mike Kenn, where he communicated with them explicitly asking for some specific information to be provided. I have communications from former County Manager, Tom Andrews, where -- and this was around, I believe the time that we had the United Water situation where they did not send us monthly bills. And then they sent us a, you owe us this extensive outstanding balance. And so we had to go through a process of getting caught up with that. So there have been numerous communications at numerous levels of both organizations for a very long time. It seems -- it seems as though we get to a certain point each time, and then somebody leaves, or a person who needs to make a decision doesn't make a decision. And it lays dormant until it comes back around for whatever reason that causes it to come back around. So that is the cycle that -- what I'm seeing in the documentation going back, like I said, you know, to the -- to the mid-90s when it started with, hey, you owe us money because your escrow funds have been depleted. But yet we had not really been getting bills for that either. So it's just -- it's been a long, long-standing issue."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "So you just took us back to Mike Kenn in the 1990s. And so this bill has just been growing ever since then?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Well, I will say that we have done some reconciliations during the, you know, during periods of time."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "How?"

DICK ANDERSON, COUNTY MANAGER: "So if you go and you look at the amounts that were billed between 2007 and 2019 and the amounts that we paid, whatever amount they billed is the amount that we paid. You know, maybe there may be a difference in the thousands, not in the millions, right. And that could be related to a current billing, timing of a, you know, a current billing. So we're paying, we are paying our utility bill. We're paying the current charges. The amount that they indicate is outstanding is a long-standing balance that they have not been able to substantiate to us, which is why it hasn't been paid. So we've paid current. There are also probably, they apply late fees if they don't receive our payments. Over the years, we've done all sorts of things. We've gone back and we've looked at our outstanding checks. And reviewed outstanding checks, and found where some of the payments that we had made had never been cashed. So we reissued those checks. And you know, then they were able to take that and apply it to whatever account it was related to. But we have actually, you know, from our perspective, we had paid the bill because we had issued the check. But the check, for whatever reason, never made it, never got cashed. So we've done those sort of things. We went through that same exercise over the last two days, looking at outstanding checks. We found two dating back to, like, I think it was 2020, that one of those outstanding checks dated back to. So we'll go through the process of reissuing that payment, you know, trying to make sure that it gets into their hands. We're also going to look at implementing an e-payable solution for our utility accounts, so that we get out of the check issuance business completely and make payment, you know, directly. So that's the other -- the other thing that we're doing from a perspective position. But I really think that this balance is going to be connected to that -- either that escrow account and the handling of that or when United Water took over the billing for the city of Atlanta, and things did not go very smoothly with that, that there were balances that were brought forward that were incorrect balances. And so I think that we may be where we end up. I mean, it may be that we have to, you know, agree to some sort of a settlement where nobody is really satisfied, but it resolves the issue. And we can, you know, have a legal agreement in place, clear the accounts, and move forward."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Thank you. You are truly the expert that Commissioner Emma Darnell always spoke of. That was great because now, it's more clear about what has really -- now, it's more clear about what really took place, and that this could be an issue with escrow or when United Water took over. And I just want to ask one question because I've always known the City Water Department to be the place where

everyone pays their water bills. Is that the same place where these bills are supposed to be paid as well?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yeah. That's who we work with is the Watershed."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Watershed Division."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "So when this issue was brought forward, are there account numbers that are associated with this debt?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "There are account numbers. And again, the account numbers have changed over time as they've gone from the city doing the billing to an outside third party doing the billing, then back to the city, the account numbers have not stayed the same. But we do have account numbers for each -- for each account, yes."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right. That makes sense."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And you're --"

COMMISSIONER HALL: "You got a question?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "No."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Okay. So right now, we know exactly what account numbers they're speaking of? Did they provide account numbers?"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "That's what I was -- would you make one -- make that -- give everybody a copy so we'll all have the same information, won't be any misunderstanding about what was sent over. It's a one-page spreadsheet. Make sure before we leave here today, everybody has a copy of that same sheet --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, I'll --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "-- with the account numbers."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I'll forward that. It did -- it did have some account numbers on it, yes."

COMMISSIONER HALL: All right. Thank you. That -- that'll work.

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Yeah. My goal is to get this resolved one way or another the next couple weeks. If we owe, I -- my commitment to the Mayor was, we're going to pay if we owe. Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yeah. I did see that one page that came across while we were trying to negotiate with the animal contract that one day. It came to your office. And just immediate glance, when I looked at it, it looked like there was a duplicate on there right away. The second and third account on the spreadsheet was a duplicate."

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I think that was the case, yes, Commissioner."

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "That is correct. It was a --"

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "So they were off by half million, about half a million dollars?"

JOE DAVIS, DIRECTOR, D.R.E.A.M.: "495,000 to be exact."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "Yes, 495,000. So even their accounting that they sent over to us was incorrect. So I really think it needs to be researched. If they can't put together a spreadsheet that's correct and it's half a million off, and they still going to the press and saying it's 5.7 when it's really 5.2. So they need to get things corrected as well."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And we need a copy of that spreadsheet for everybody before we leave. Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So Madam CFO, so your understanding, we're current on paying our utilities?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "Yes, we pay. We're paying --"

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. That's all --"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "-- the current portion, yes."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "-- we're current on paying our utilities. If somebody came back with me with something from five to six years ago, if one of the government called me up and say, you owe us whatever for water from five to six years ago, I sure as heck ain't going to be paying it unless somebody's got a clear justification, documented 10 times, nine ways to Sunday, and not two lines on some Excel spreadsheet. I mean, I don't think that there's anywhere in the realm where we would -- we even -- they even have any legal standing on this issue. And why we're just hearing about it now is, again, I reiterate, nothing more than a smokescreen related to this other issue we're going to

talk about next. This is the same Atlanta Watershed, I guess, during that time, they had multiple people indicted for overruns, bribery, et cetera, right, during that period of time? Nobody can answer that. You can go look it up on your own. So, I mean, we're current on our bills, and this is just now getting thrown out there. Read between the lines."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "All actions upon open account before the breach of any contract, not under the hand of the party sought to be charged or upon any implied promise of undertaking, shall be brought within four years after the right of action accrues. So if these are bills from 30, 40 years ago, even 10 years ago, five years ago, there is no basis for recovery. The only bills that's -- oh, let me give you the site: Official Code of Georgia annotated 9-3-25, adopted in 2020. Anything that's older than four years old is a nullity. There's no -- there's no way to bring an action. A water bill is an open account, you get billed for it every month. Anything -- it's --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "10th."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "April 10th. Anything before April 10th, 2020 is irrelevant. Don't even waste your time looking for anything that's over four years old. The only thing that matters is anything in the last four years."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Arrington brought that to my attention during recess about the statute limitation. So Madam County Attorney, I need you to weigh -- not now, but review that, and if it applies, we may have nothing to talk about."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "We are looking into that. We're researching that now."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner -- Vice Chair Abdur-Rahman."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. I just want to go on record. I've been in office for four years. And I don't believe it's been a month that has passed that I have not had constituents that were either in my district or in someone else's district that had a problem with the water bill. I know mistakes happen, but from a constituent's perspective, once it's came to light, a lot of constituents reached out to me and said, I waited a year, I waited six months on an adjustment on my water bill that I knew was incorrect. How do we as Fulton County taxpaying citizens know that the bill is correct. I cannot answer that question. So I just want to put it out there. It's going to take more than a one-page document with account numbers on it. Because if I have constituents that I have had to go to bat for, for their bill to be changed after someone promised them that they were coming out, they did not come out, and then the bill supposedly was supposed to be changed in three months. And in some of these cases, it took a complete year. I'm not trying to throw anybody under the bus, but the reality is, city of Atlanta has a billing problem. I have known that from the very first year I sat

here. So I would ask, County Manager, County Attorney, and CFO, whatever we owe that is within the statute of limitations, please make sure that it's something that we owe. That's all I ask. Thank you."

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

CLERK GRIER: "24-0253, Discussion, Animal Services, sponsored by Commissioner Barrett."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Colleagues, I put this item on the agenda on Friday morning because we were still having some back and forth at that time, and I did not want to miss the agenda deadline. So when I put it on there, I didn't have a particular, you know, line of thought that I wanted to follow or something I wanted to discuss. But having said that, I feel like there's been a lot of discussion back and forth in the press. And I think, as we all know, the press will tend to, you know, just take out a sentence or two of what anyone says. There's been, I think you and I both seen some letters from our, you know, constituents who live nearby where we are, with some confusion about whose responsibility is what, and why this is happening. I think, you know, it's worth stating that the overall impression I'm hearing from folks in my district is that this is a contract for animal services, why can't we just get it worked out? What is the problem here? And I agree with that. I mean, I think it's sort of odd and puzzling as to why we are where we were here. But I think we here on this Board all know why we built a new animal control facility. From my understanding, of course, I was not here at the time when the decisions were made, but I understand that the old facility was, you know, not in good repair, and was not meeting Department of Agriculture standards. And it was, you know, too small for the capacity of animals that were in our care. So the decision to make or to build the new facility was deciding on by this Board. It was not a secret to the city of Atlanta. All along the process of building that facility, whenever there were tours, all of the cities were invited to come on tours; is that correct?"

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

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "And from what I understand, all we got was positive feedback about what we were doing. Along with that, last July, and again, I'm just going to give you my recollection of this. But last July, we were all, each of us as Commissioners, were given a presentation by Alton Adams and team about the new facility and the changes to costs that we were going to be asking the cities to pay in their new intergovernmental agreements when the old ones expired at the end of 2023. That information, that same PowerPoint slide deck that we all saw was then taken to each one of the 15 cities in the month of July, I believe. And that presentation was then

given to each of the cities. And, you know, if there was ever a time for a discussion of about how much fees we were charging people who came in for adoption services, or spay or neuter or whatever, if there was any discussion to be had, it would have been at that time to talk about how we calculate usage or whatever else. Those requests were not made, at that time, to my knowledge. October of 2023, the IGAs, the legal IGAs were presented to each of the 15 cities to sign. And as we entered the -- and look, all of the fees went up across the board, for all of the cities. And I think we can talk through the various reasons that that is the case. I mean, one, again, it's the size of the new facility, means there are more operational costs, everything from heating and air to more staff to maintain the facility and clean the facility and all of those things. In addition to inflation that I think we've all experienced, nothing is what it used to cost years ago, and increase in population across Fulton County in particular in Atlanta, and increase in the number of dogs that I think we all know happened in large part because of COVID. So everybody else, all other cities, signed their IGAs except for city of Atlanta. That is sort of what led us to where we are now. I think it is critically important that we understand Georgia state law as it relates to this issue, and whose responsibility it is to perform animal services with inside the city of Atlanta, or frankly, inside any of the cities within Fulton County. So let me just read this for you. In the Georgia Constitution, Article 9, Section 2, page 3, subparagraph -- I'm sorry, paragraph 3, subparagraph A, list a variety of services that a county may provide, including -- that a county may provide, including animal control. But goes on to state in subparagraph B, quote, no county may exercise any of the powers listed in subparagraph A, including animal services, or provide any services listed therein in the boundaries of any municipality, except by contract with the municipality affected. May not perform services without a contract. That is in the Constitution of the state of Georgia. We all took an oath to uphold the Constitution of the state of Georgia. So anything we want to do to be helpful to our citizens to -- to supplement the fact that city of Atlanta is not upholding their responsibility to do animal services is not within our jurisdiction to do legally. We are not allowed to do it. We were operating in good faith for the first few months of this year, continuing to provide these services because we had no indication at any time. And you, feel free to jump in, Mr. County Manager if I'm wrong. But we had no indication at any time that the city of Atlanta was not going to sign their contract. Yes, they grumbled about the increase in price as did the other cities. But there was never an indication that they were going to look elsewhere to provide these services to another vendor or to provide them themselves, which by the way, they have the legal right to do. So this is where we stand today. Add to that, that this Body on -- at our last meeting on March 20th, I believe it was, took a Board vote, which said we were no longer going to continue to operate in good faith, and we were going to, because they were not, and they were not signing the IGA, and we were out of, you know, jurisdiction and did not have the right to perform these services, took a vote and said, we were going to stop services and midnight on, I believe it was --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "3rd."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "-- Wednesday, April 4th."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "3rd."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "3rd, okay. And that was the Board action. So there's no new Board action that has occurred, and there's no IGA that's been presented. To my knowledge, the Constitution of the state of Georgia has not been changed. Therefore, we cannot provide these services, period. That's where we stand as far as I'm concerned and as far as the law is concerned."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. And I'll give you some more background. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "So I don't know if it really makes sense to -- for anyone to be finger pointing, for city of Atlanta to finger point at us, nor for us to finger point at the city of Atlanta. My understanding was that they signed a letter of intent, and sent it back over. Regardless of all of that, I want to save lives. I want to make sure it's no people out there getting bit by dogs, and that Animal Services is up and running. So I'm going to make a motion to restore service. Because I also understand, not only did we get one or two signed letter of intents last week, but we also got -- we also got -- we also got a third signed letter of intent today. Whether we got one or two or three really doesn't matter. I just want to help save lives. So I'm going to make a motion to restore service. My understanding is, we have a signed letter of intent that'll be presented to the city of Atlanta on -- at their next Council meeting. They were on recess for spring break. We were on recess for spring break. That's why the whole date of April 3rd was a crazy date to begin with, anyway. And then we didn't turn it off on April 3rd, we waited two days. Well, if we voted to turn it off on April 3rd, why not turn it off? Because we were in negotiations, we were in active negotiations, and they signed and sent a letter of intent. And now we've got a second or third letter of intent. Look, forget all that, let's save some lives. I move that we restore services immediately. We have a signed letter of intent. The Council is going to get to vote at their next meeting. And my understanding is the signed letter of intent states that it should be signed off and final approval on or before May 8th."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. We have a motion by Commissioner Arrington to restore animal control services within the city limits of Atlanta immediately, I assume. Immediately? Seconded by --"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Immediately."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Seconded by Commissioner Natalie Hall. May I put -- you have the floor, Vice Chair. May I put this in context based before you speak, you mind? As was correctly stated by Commissioner Barrett, this Board took a vote at our last meeting to terminate providing animal control services within the city of Atlanta on April the 3rd."

That did not happen, as Commissioner Arrington has indicated. At some point on the 3rd, it could have been around 11:00 o'clock, the Mayor and I began with a series of one or two conversations about what we were going to do and how we were going to get through this. At some point, there was a -- there has been one or two versions of a letter of intent, not an intergovernmental agreement, which is required by the Constitution of the State of Georgia. In the afternoon, on the 3rd, on the 3rd, which would have been Thursday or Friday, I said to the Mayor that, if you send -- I had no authority to do it, if you give us or me a letter that would indicate that you will, not plan to, but will sign the intergovernmental agreement at the meeting of the City Council on the 15th of April, then I will accept that as a stopgap measure, and in good faith and in good spirit to take that to the Board at today's meeting. Well, that didn't happen. There were several variations of that letter. After two or three that afternoon, County Attorney crafted a letter at my suggestion, one sentence that would state and did state that they plan to -- he will sign the IGA, intergovernmental agreement and take it to the City Council on the 15th for approval. That was rejected. They sent back a revision with some changes, which were not acceptable to us. And another exchange took place. The last exchange that took place, and I'm as familiar with the workings of the city as probably pretty much anybody. First and foremost, I think the Mayor has the authority to sign the IGA and have it approved and ratified by the Council. But that -- that didn't happen. So we get back to this second or third letter of intent. And then yesterday afternoon, I believe, Mr. Manager, you were contacted by his Chief of Staff, saying that when the Mayor came back from Jamaica or wherever, that he would, would in fact, sign a letter of intent. Now, that letter of intent, which was identical to the one that we first presented on the 4th, I believe, the 3rd or the 4th, correct?"

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Identical."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "The 4th."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "On the 4th, which they had rejected. But they signed that one, and you received that letter last night at some time."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "And I think -- does everybody have a copy of that? But that's the stopgap letter that I'm talking about, which was not an IGA, intergovernmental agreement, but a letter of intent. And I was going to loosely interpret that, hoping that I could, you know, appeal to the Board to accept that. On top of that, though, and at the same time, our very-learned County Attorney reminded us that we cannot provide animal control services within a city without, in the absence of an intergovernmental agreement, which we did not have, and still do not have. And as Commissioner Barrett just read from that site at the session, that no county may provide such services, except by contract, contract, meaning the intergovernmental agreement. So that's where we

are now. We do have a signed letter of intent, which the Manager received last night. But it's not an intergovernmental agreement. I agreed on Thursday or Friday of last week, that I would accept that during the interim to bring it to the Board to see if that would satisfy us while we get through this. But then the other little problem is, they meet on the 15th. If, at the meeting on the 15th, there is what the city and City Council refers to as a resolution, that can be approved on that same day by a majority vote of the Council. If, however, it has to be an ordinance, that requires two meetings, which means that it would have to go before a committee and then back to the full Body, which would not take place until May 15th -- May --"

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "May 6th."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "6th."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "May 6th. So that's where we are now. The earliest that it can be signed by the Mayor is May 6. So between now and May 6th, we will still be operating contrary to the Constitution of the state of Georgia and contrary to the advice of our County Attorney. So that's the background. Vice Chair, thank you."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Thank you, Chairman. I'm not sure why we're discussing this. And the reason I said why we're discussing this, this conversation started last year, way before the year ended. There were self-imposed deadlines by the city of Atlanta and the Mayor that they did not meet, not that we did not meet, that they did not meet, self-imposed. But I want to tell you, based on the constituents that live in the city of Atlanta and Fulton County, and also Mayors that have told me, it's 15 cities, 14 have signed. What message does this Body send the other 14 cities when it comes to fair play, when it comes to contracts, when it comes to doing what is right? I had an actual constituent that reached out to me and said, city of Atlanta just get to do what they want to do. And what was I to say to that when we were told, and County Manager, you can weigh in on this, we were told that we were going to receive something by 11:00 p.m. We did not. We were told we were going to receive something the next day. We did not. The constituents that have reached out to me, have said, quote, if I don't pay my mortgage, I get foreclosed on. If I don't pay my insurance, I have no coverage if somebody hits me. If I do not pay my taxes, my property gets sold off. What message are we sending Mayors of other cities who did the right thing, that city of Atlanta -- I live in the city of Atlanta. I'm Atlanta born, Atlanta bred, and when they bury me, I will be Atlanta dead. But right is right, and wrong is wrong. There should have been some sense of urgency, and it wasn't. It is a liability issue. I don't know what better way, Commissioner Barrett has said it, Chairman Pitts. And I'm going to ask for the sake of those that are listening, County Attorney, if we operate without an IGA, without a signed contract in the city of Atlanta for animal services, is that a liability?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "Yes, Vice Chair. It does expose us in a way that we would not be exposed if we were operating within our governmental authority. In

addition to the Constitution, as cited by Commissioner Barrett, Georgia Code 4-8-22 states that a county's jurisdiction for enforcement of animal control extends to the unincorporated -- unincorporated area of the county, and that a municipality's jurisdiction, shall be the territory within the corporate limits of the municipality. The written agreement that is referred to and required in order for the county to have jurisdiction to provide animal control services within a municipality, additionally, based upon a -- based upon Georgia Code 3610-1, is required to be in writing and entered on the minutes of the governmental entity as well. So it needs to be a formal document that is entered on minutes."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "So I would say to my colleagues, I would say to the Body here that we have done everything in our power to the point of we're sending the incorrect message to other Mayors. We're sending the incorrect message to constituents. We cannot do this. I personally think we went too long because of the liability issue. But that being said, we cannot go back and go cut a deal, so to speak, because somebody didn't meet self -- self-imposed deadlines. And we send the wrong message to the other 14 cities. And we send the extremely wrong message to the Fulton County taxpayers, who we owe our first allegiance to because we are stewards of their taxpayer dollars."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Commissioner Barrett."

COMMISSIONER BARRETT: "Call the question."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. The question has been called. Is there a second?"

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Second."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Properly moved and seconded. Let's vote on the call of the question."

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

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. On the motion on the floor, it's a motion by Commissioner Arrington to resume service immediate, to resume animal control services in the city of Atlanta immediately, that's the motion on the floor. Let's vote."

CLERK GRIER: "And the vote is open. And the motion fails --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute --"

CLERK GRIER: "-- two yeas --"

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute, just a minute, just a minute. Where's my thing here? Where is it? Yes."

CLERK GRIER: "Yes? And the motion fails; three yeas, four nays."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Commissioner Barrett -- strike that -- Commissioner Thorne."

COMMISSIONER THORNE: "I just wanted to say, I was privy to some of the negotiations. And they started throwing in all these things like a new cost allocation formula, fees, something with the Jefferson Place, water billing, FIFA, and then the next round, things came in, something with the Fairburn Road property. And I was with you Commissioner Pitts, I did not want to shut off their services. And I was trusting that the conversation you had with Mayor Dickens, that they were going to just have their meeting, his hands were tied, all he could do was give us this letter of intent. But then after seeing how they said their letter of intent also had negotiations in that they weren't going to pay from January to April, basically. They were going to have calls funneled through the APD instead of Animal Control Services. I'm like, wait, they're renegotiating the contract in their letter of intent. So I didn't agree with that. And I felt like our hands were tied. And I -- and I thought Commissioner Barrett was right all along that we do need to discontinue services. Now, with this new letter of intent, I think it's -- it's great, but I don't think it does enough. They can easily hold a special-called meeting and resume services, and get an IGA signed right away. And we'll resume services as soon as we have that IGA. So right now, I think we need to obey the law. We need to be law abiding. And we can't operate and poke the liability on the taxpayers of Fulton County by operating without an IGA. In the future, my office has been working a lot with the animal control issue. We've been doing research, trying to find better practices. I mean, we could build bigger and better facilities all day long. But we're not solving the animal control problem, which is that we have too many dogs. So I'd be quite willing and open to work with anybody in the city of Atlanta, or any other city that wants to actually work on the root of the problem. And then hopefully lower our cost, lower -- appease the animal advocates that come down here all the time, saying that we're not doing enough. But come up with some real solution that's going to benefit the whole county. And I'm very open to that, but for right now, I'm against starting services again."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Okay. Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I just pray no one gets hurt. I mean, this is -- so I heard the County Attorney very closely. She said there needs to be a contract, and it needs to be on the record. A signed letter of intent is, in fact, a contract. So all we got to do is put it on the record. I just pray no one gets hurt. I just pray no one dies. Right is right, and wrong is wrong, but life is life. Life is life. And this isn't about right and wrong. This is about saving lives. We operated without one from January to now. So what's the problem with giving them time to have another Council meeting? We had a spring break. We didn't meet last week like we were supposed to. They didn't meet like

they were supposed to. They're going to take it up at their next meeting. It's an ordinance. It requires two meetings. We got a signed letter of intent. Shut up."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a moment, just a minute."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Shut up, I'm talking."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm talking."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "You're not talking to me."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Shut up."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "You're not talking to me."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Shut up. I'm talking."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Make me."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm talking."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Make me."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I'm talking."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Make me."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "This is my time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Just a minute, please."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Make me."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "It's my time."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "Make me shut up."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "It's my time."

VICE CHAIR ABDUR-RAHMAN: "I didn't think so."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Yeah."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Is that off?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "No, it's not off. I'm still talking. It's still my time."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Well, it's -- the recording is off?"

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "I was interrupted."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Now, just a minute. Just a minute, Vice Chair. Vice Chair and Mr. Arrington. You have the floor, Commissioner Arrington."

COMMISSIONER ARRINGTON, JR.: "Okay, thank you. A signed letter of intent is a contract. All it has to be do is put on the record. That's what the County Attorney just said. I just pray nobody loses their lives."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Sir, Mr. Barasoain, would you just for the record, so we get all the facts out, I would like for you to let the Board know what the activity has been with respect to Animal Control Services in the city of Atlanta since -- well, actually, the 4th, the 5th, and the 6th, up until today, by day if you have that, if you have that information. And the other point that we need to clarify here is that some believe that we're asking the cities to pay for the brand-new facility. That's incorrect. What we're talking here is only the operational costs of that facility. The county is bearing the total cost of the construction of the new facility. And the third point that -- second point, rather, that comes up is that when we look at this, of whatever the cost of operations is, and I'll put this on the record, 86 percent of that cost is borne by four cities: City of Atlanta, East Point, then City of South Fulton, and Union City. And the reason for that is, that's where the calls come from. And 55 percent of all calls come from the city of Atlanta. Sir."

JOSEPH BARASOAIN, DIRECTOR, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: "Good afternoon, Commissioner. Yes, that's correct. So since Thursday, we've had about 40 dogs brought to the shelter from Atlanta residents since Thursday. I mean, there's a breakdown. But there's -- we've averaged -- I mean, we do over 4,000 dogs a year from the city of Atlanta into the shelter. Not counting, you know, that's not response -- responses to the city. This is what's actually brought into the shelter, dogs coming in, into intake. So we've had some that have been -- needed medical care. And my conversation with county leadership was, you know, we're not -- we're not going to turn them away. They're showing up at a shelter, and they need a medical -- you know, they're medically -- there's a medical issue with one, we've been taking them. There was actually -- but the citizens are bringing them. And we've kind of seen that along the way. If we said, no, don't leave them here, I mean, we know they're going to be tied up in, you know, on the fence line, outside the shelter. So as far as the care for the animal, we've been receiving them if they get there. As far as calls for service, we have been fielding some phone -- some phone calls, transferring back to Atlanta, redirecting people to Atlanta's 311. But we have been fielding quite a bit of calls at the shelter from Atlanta residents. And we've been kind of guiding as best we can. And just one more thing, so

when -- just to give you comparison, I know, because we just received some calls from the breakdown. Some of the cities did ask that. But just real quick, we did compare to six other jurisdictions. And we narrowed it down to the two that were the closest. One was Charlotte Mecklenburg, North Carolina, one was Orange County, Florida. So when we did this cost comparison, I actually visited those shelters, and I sat with their folks and kind of looked at their processes. And you're absolutely correct, there is a -- we're not solving the bigger issue here, which is -- but at this point, we are working through those issues with community education and other things that we've started since we hired a Division Chief over Animal Services."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Thank you. Commissioner Ellis."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "So letters of intent aren't legally binding, right?"

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I was trying to chime in earlier, but my microphone was not working."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "I did want to make a note for the record that a letter of intent is a promise to enter into a promise. It is not legally binding."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah."

Y. SOO JO, COUNTY ATTORNEY: "And even if it could be, the Mayor has already specifically represented to you, Mr. Chairman, and to this Board that he is without authority to bind the city of Atlanta in this matter without an action by the City Council."

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Yeah. So it's kind of like that, kind of Lucy, she's going to hold it in place, just this time for you, Charlie Brown. Nope, sorry. Now, did we receive any consideration with this letter of intent that came over? Was there a payment that came over with it?"

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

COMMISSIONER ELLIS: "Okay. So there was no consideration, no -- we've received no funds. So there's outstanding bills and there's no signed agreement. So that's where we are. This isn't going to -- I don't know why we're styling this as a negotiation. This isn't negotiation. They have an agreement, they can sign it. We will gladly pick up the services. I don't know why that we have -- they've allowed us to waste considerable amount of management time. We've bent over backwards, tried to be tremendously accommodating. I'm sorry that they had to go out and enjoy spring break, while their citizens were worried, maybe worried about this issue. I know when our citizens get called down and they have to obligate themselves to jury duty and things like that, they're not afforded near these levels of grace. In fact, we've got some of our Judges

that have threatened imprisonment in the Fulton County Jail, and go pull them out of the Fulton County Airport. So, hey, you got a pressing issue, we all know how government works. If you want to get it worked out and call special meetings and get it executed and move on. I do agree with Commissioner Arrington. Unfortunately, it is a public safety issue. But the onus is upon the city to act upon that and eliminate that issue and execute this IGA, and we call move on. I'm out of here."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "All right. Anything else? Commissioner Hall."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "Just really quick. Did we not get a payment from city of Atlanta in February? Madam CFO, did we get any kind of payment from the city of Atlanta?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I will have to research that, Commissioner Hall. I don't -- I don't know off the top of my head."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "I'm sorry?"

SHARON WHITMORE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: "I do -- I mean, I will say that Hakeem has confirmed with the staff that the amount that Atlanta owed for all of the services for 2023 has been paid. It's possible that that was the payment that was received if there was one received in the first quarter of this year. I would look on the financial system, but I don't have access right now to be able to answer that for you. So -- but I will find that out and tell you exactly when we did receive the last payment from the city of Atlanta."

COMMISSIONER HALL: "All right, thank you. And I just want to say to all of the constituents who contacted me not only in my current district, but in my old district, we tried. Thank you."

CHAIRMAN PITTS: "Any other matters to come before us today? All right, in the absence of any other matters that come before us today, we are adjourned. Thank you."

(There being no further matters, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.)