

**After
Agenda**

**Board of Commissioners of Spalding County
Work Session
Monday, March 16, 2015
9:00 A.M.
Meeting Room 108, Courthouse Annex**

The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session in Room 108 of the Courthouse Annex, Monday, March 16, 2015, beginning at 9:00 a.m. with Chairperson Rita Johnson presiding, Commissioners Bart Miller, Raymond Ray, Gwen Flowers-Taylor and Donald F. Hawbaker were present.

Also present were County Manager, William P. Wilson Jr, Assistant County Manager, Eric Mosley, Spalding County Sheriff, Wendell Beam and Executive Secretary, Kathy Gibson to record the minutes for Spalding County.

A. Opening (Call to Order) led by Chairperson Rita Johnson.

B. Invocation led by Chairperson Rita Johnson.

C. Pledge to Flag led by Commissioner Bart Miller.

D. Agenda Items

1. Representatives from the Spalding County Sheriff's Department to update the Board of Commissioners on Gangs in Spalding County.

William Wilson, County Manager, introduced Sheriff Wendell Beam who introduced members of his staff who would be making the presentation to the Board.

Sheriff Beam thanked the Commissioners for giving them the opportunity to address the Board regarding gang activity in Spalding County. Sheriff Beam stated that there has been a lot of concern and questions from citizens in the community regarding gang activity in Griffin and Spalding County. The information presented today is to inform the Board as to what is happening in the community.

Sheriff Beam then introduced Agent Sam Jones, assigned as a narcotics investigator with the Sheriff's Office and Investigator Tony Little who is assigned as a crime scene technician. Sheriff Beam advised that these two officers have received numerous hours of training in gang investigation and they both have done this because they have seen there is a problem and have taken it upon themselves to work on the problem. Both of these officers work on gang activities part time as they both have full time commitments to the department in their respective areas.

Part time gang investigators are not adequate because gang activity is full time.

Inv. Tony Little stated that he has been with the Spalding County Sheriff's Department for 14 years and during that time he has received over 100 hours of specialized gang training. He stated that he is a member of the Georgia Gang Investigators Association and he is a member of G-FORCE which is the Gang Enforcement Unit. On April 30, 2012, the Griffin Judicial Circuit deemed Inv. Little as a gang expert.

Special Agent Sam Jones stated that he is a special agent with the Spalding County Sheriff's Department. Special Agent Jones stated that he had been with Spalding County since 1995 and since 2001 he has been assigned to the narcotics unit. He stated that he is a member of the Georgia Narcotics Association and he has received 24 hours of specialized training with gangs and is currently actively pursuing training in gang activity.

Inv. Little and Special Agent Jones then gave a comprehensive presentation on what constitutes a gang, they outlined a comprehensive checklist utilized by the Sheriff's Department to identify gang members.

Inv. Little stated that many of the Blood gangs within Spalding County have consolidated now in to one larger unit known as the Rolling 20's making this gang much larger just in the last few weeks. Inv. Little stated that the gang mentality in Spalding County is one of violence and crime. He then quoted crime statistics related to gang activity since 2012.

Special Agent Jones then reviewed the results of several gang surveys which show that criminal street gangs often assimilate themselves into society by joining civic groups and becoming part of local government. Gang members then gain intelligence on the inside of local government and report back to the gangs.

Special Agent Jones then advised that gangs are currently making money in Spalding County by selling drugs, committing burglaries, robberies, home invasions and selling and/or pawning the stolen goods. He further stated that they are selling guns and Rap CD's, as most of the gangs in Spalding County operate under the guise of only being a "rap group". A gang's ultimate goal is to make a much money as possible.

Inv. Little advised that Spalding County has a population of 64,073 in 2014 and over 1% of the population are gang members. There are only 98 certified officers at the Sheriff's Office which equates to 1 deputy for every 8 gang members. Inv. Little advised that gangs are constantly recruiting, they want to increase their numbers so when they have a problem with rival gangs they will have a better chance of winning. He advised that over the last three years gangs have increased their efforts in recruiting Middle School and High School aged children. He further stated that there are music artists, athletes and actors that

are known gang members which make being a gang member look cool to kids causing them to seek out Street Gangs, or even start their own gangs.

The officers closed their presentation by stating “Denial will cause our gang problem to become a Gang Epidemic”.

Chairperson Johnson, adjourned the meeting for a 15 minute break at 10:15 a.m.

Chairperson Johnson reconvened the meeting at 10:29 a.m.

2. Matt Bidwell with MSI Benefits to present FY 2016 Health Insurance Renewal Information.

William Wilson introduced Matt Bidwell with MSI Benefits to present the FY 2016 Health Insurance Renewal Information.

Mr. Bidwell outline the changes in the Health Insurance during the 2014 Renewal. He then outlined the monthly enrollment premiums versus the claims year to date. Mr. Bidwell advised that the requested renewal for FY 2016 remains the same as last year; however, with the changes requested at the Retreat in February, the net increase would be 3.77% or \$138,267. Dental coverage will also remain the same; however, implants have been added as a covered benefit.

Mr. Bidwell then stated that the changes that have been calculated for the revised renewal includes a decrease in the deductible from \$1,500 to \$1,250 and the drug deductible will be reduced from \$200 to \$100. He further advised that wellness initiatives for tobacco and weight management would result in reductions in the total cost of the employees medical plan election beginning in FY 2017. The biometric results for FY 2016 would serve as a baseline for the FY 2017 wellness objectives.

Commissioners asked Mr. Bidwell to come back with cost estimates for lowering the deductible to \$1,000 and a possible \$0 deductible on prescriptions.

C. Adjournment

Motion/Second by Ray/Hawbaker to adjourn at 11:52 a.m. Motion carried unanimously by all.