

EXTRAORDINARY SESSION

The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held their Extraordinary Session in Room 108 in the Courthouse Annex, Monday, April 19, 2010, beginning at 6:06 p.m. with Commissioner Chairman Edward Goss, Jr. presiding and Commissioners Gwen Flowers-Taylor, Eddie L. Freeman, and Bob Gilreath present. David Phillips was not present. Also present were Interim County Manager Tim Whalen, Assistant to the Interim County Manager Virginia Martin, County Attorney James R. Fortune, Jr., and Executive Secretary Glinda Robertson.

- I. OPENING (CALL TO ORDER) – Chairman Edward Goss, Jr.**
- II. INVOCATION – Led by Rev. Clay Padgett, Pastor of Crown Center Church**
- III. PLEDGE TO FLAG – Led by Commissioner Jim Fortune**
- IV. PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITION**

- a. Consider approval of a Proclamation declaring April 2010 as National Donate Life Month.

Motion/second to approve by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Freeman and carried by a vote of 4-0.

Proclamation

Declaring April 2010 as National Donate Life Month

- WHEREAS,** one of the most meaningful gifts that a human being can bestow upon another is the gift of life and;
- WHEREAS,** more than 106,000 men, women, and children await life-saving or life-enhancing organ transplants, of which over 3,100 reside in Georgia; and
- WHEREAS,** the need for organ, eye, and tissue donation grows daily as a new patient is added to the national waiting list for an organ transplant every 11 minutes; and
- WHEREAS,** the critical donor shortage remains a public health crisis as an average of 18 people die daily due to the lack of available organs; and
- WHEREAS,** organ, eye, and tissue donation can provide families the comfort of knowing the gift of donated organs and tissue endows another person with renewed hope for a healthy life; and
- WHEREAS,** donating life through organ, eye, and tissue donation is the ultimate act of generosity and kindness we Spalding County citizens can perform; and
- WHEREAS,** 23,834 citizens of Spalding County have already registered their decision to Give the Gift of Life at www.donatelifegeorgia.org; and
- WHEREAS,** LifeLink of Georgia is the non-profit, community service organization dedicated to the recovery of high quality organs and tissues for transplantation therapy; and
- WHEREAS,** Spalding County supports LifeLink of Georgia's life-saving mission; and
- NOW THEREFORE,** Spalding County Georgia, does hereby proclaim April 2010 as

DONATE LIFE MONTH

In Spalding County to honor all those who made the decision to give the gift of life, to focus attention on the extreme need for organ, eye and tissue donation, to encourage all residents to take action and sign up on Georgia's Donor Registry at www.donatelifegeorgia.org, to discuss the miracle of transplantation as a family, and to make a family commitment to organ, eye, and tissue donation.

This, the 19th day of April 2010.

Edward Goss, Jr., Chairman

Timothy Whalen., County Clerk

- b. Consider approval of Proclamation declaring April 2010 as Crime Victim's Rights Month.

Motion/second to approve by Commissioners Freeman/Flowers-Taylor and carried by a vote of 4-0.

Proclamation

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF VICTIM RIGHTS ADVOCATES AND VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN SPALDING COUNTY

WHEREAS, The year 2010 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the commemoration of National Crime Victims' Rights Week instituted by Ronald Reagan's staff; and

WHEREAS, The victims' rights community in America has, for nearly four decades, dared to dream of a nation that is free from violence and an America where crime victims are consistently provided supportive services to help them cope with the trauma of crime and victimization; and

WHEREAS, Over 30,000 federal and state laws have been passed that define and protect the rights of crime victims; 32 states have passed constitutional amendments that afford victims important participatory rights throughout the criminal and juvenile justice systems; and a federal constitutional amendment is currently pending in the U. S. Congress; and

WHEREAS, Important partnerships have been formed among criminal and juvenile justice agencies, allied professionals, and victim service to ensure that crime victims are treated with dignity and respect; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Wilcox, a Spalding County resident, was instrumental in the creation and organization of the state victims witness assistance program; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Wilcox has been recognized by numerous leaders, organizations, and publications in Georgia for her founding role in developing the modern victim witness assistance program for this state; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Wilcox's efforts have been built upon by the efforts of the two victims witness assistance programs covering Spalding County, operated by the Spalding County Sheriff's Department and the Griffin Judicial Circuit District Attorney, respectively.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Board of Commissioners of Spalding County do hereby designate the month of April, 2010 to be **Crime Victims' Rights Week** in Spalding County and that our individual and collective efforts reflect the dreams we dare to have of a nation where no crime victim goes unserved and every crime victim is afforded rights and services and fair treatment by the justice system and by society.

This the 19TH day of April 2010.

Edward Goss, Jr., Chairman

Timothy Whalen, County Clerk

- c. Anthony Dukes, Spalding County Transportation Planner, was present to give an update on Transportation.

Mr. Dukes pointed out several comments in the most recent State wide Strategic Transportation Plan: The recent economic downturn facing Georgia and the United States is now widely recognized as the most severe global recession since the Great Depression. Though the exact timing and strength of economic recovery remains up for debate, Georgia should grasp the opportunity with a proactive approach to securing our future prosperity.

Rather than investing to preserve and extend our competitive advantage in transportation, Georgia has been under-investing and coasting on past success. Today, Georgia invests less than the national average as a share of its GDP and devotes fewer resources per capita to transportation than any US state except Tennessee.

Over the course of the next few years, the report's long-term SSTP and business case will be integrated within the long-range plans developed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and local counties consistent with the federal transportation planning process. The long range plan includes a balanced mix of projects over a minimum planning horizon of 20 years. The short range plan allocates funding for the highest priority projects in the near term (not less than 3 years).

There are a few areas where collaboration and partnership with local governments will be even more important than in the past. The expectation is that MPOs and metro counties interested in state and federal resources will articulate how their proposed plans improve results.

Mr. Dukes stated at some point he would like to meet with each of the commissioners to begin to look at the county and each district to see what their constituents are saying to them and what their priorities are. He added, we need to be prepared if another stimulus package comes down the pike to receive some of that money.

Mr. Freeman stated if Spalding County had things "shovel ready" with right ways, etc., we would have been in line for previous stimulus money. Mr. Dukes agreed with that and further stated at that time, we did not have a local transportation planner so we did not have a list of projects that we could begin to move through the required phases. We now need to prioritize and be prepared.

Mr. Gilreath pointed out that Mr. Freeman has three unsafe intersections in his district. He further stated we need to look at these things. Mr. Freeman says these are state routes. They both agreed the county needs to be ready for the DOT to do their part.

Mr. Dukes also stated if there are federal monies set aside and a project sits there for years, the state is moving toward you either use the funding or they are going to shift it to another project in another county.

- d. Kira Harris-Braggs, Griffin Main Street Program Manager, was present to give Griffin Main St. Program Presentation. Mr. Daa'ood Amin, current Chairman of the Main Street Advisory Board, was also present to assist Ms. Harris-Braggs.

The two were present to make a request to use the vacant lot which they are calling a pocket park at the corner of Solomon and Sixth St., across the street from the courthouse. They want to maximize this park and make it beautiful. They are also requesting funding for this project from the hotel/motel tax.

The Griffin Street Program was first established in 1985 in the City of Griffin. The Griffin Main Street Program is a certified participant in a downtown revitalization movement that is lead by the National Main Street Center.

Ms. Harris-Braggs defined a pocket park as a mini park or small green space that is accessible to the general public. These parks are frequently created on an irregular piece of land. A pocket park in the downtown Griffin area would provide the community with a location downtown for relaxation, as well as, a gathering spot for small social occasions. From a tourism perspective, this pocket park has the potential to be a revenue source with a regional draw.

Mr. Amin discussed the design of the proposed pocket park. He stated there would be a large screen for nights at the movies. There will be seating and a stage for audiences to come and enjoy special events. There will be an open green space with terraced levels. There will be greenery and trees and a place for people to bring chairs and sit on the lawn. This area is very suitable for special events.

Mr. Amin stated the pocket park would belong to the county. The city has verbally agreed to maintain the park, i.e. water plants, cut grass, etc.

Ms. Harris-Braggs' office would be administrators of this property. She gave examples of proper uses for hotel/motel tax and feels like this pocket park fits the definition of proper use. She also stated this could be done in phases if the county so desired. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$90,417.00.

Mr. Gilreath agreed this is a great idea. Ms. Flowers-Taylor stated if the park is done in stages, she would like to see the stage added earlier in the process. She is very excited about the possibility of this pocket park. Mr. Freeman supports this project as he is a big advocate of tourism. The Downtown Council is also in support of this park.

V. PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – N/A

VI. CITIZENS COMMENT

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Speakers must state their names and addresses and direct all comments to the Board only. Speakers will be allotted 5 minutes to speak on topics pertinent to the Board's jurisdiction. No speaker will be allowed to readdress the Board without express consent from a Board member. Outbursts from the audience will not be tolerated. Common courtesy and civility are expected at all times during the meeting.

John English – 4748 W. McIntosh Rd.

Mr. English was upset about the area of W. McIntosh Rd between Cheatham and Vaughn Roads. He stated, "If there is a worse road in this county, you would have to show it to me." He says there are huge pot holes that are five and six feet wide. His windshield was chipped out by a piece of flying asphalt. He is concerned these pot holes are going to cause a serious accident and the county is opening themselves up for litigation. According to Mr. English, these areas need paving as soon as possible.

Mr. Freeman states this road is on the list to be resurfaced from Hwy. 92 to the four way stop at Vaughn. He has had a lot of calls regarding this.

VIII. MINUTES

1. Consider approval of Minutes of the following: Regular Monthly Meeting of April 5, 2010.

Motion/second to approve by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Freeman and carried by a vote of 4-0.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA – N/A

X. OLD BUSINESS

1. Consider request from Georgians for Passenger Rail for funding from Hotel-Motel Tax.

Mr. Frank Harris was present to answer any questions. He gave a brief overview of their request. He stated this is a topic that has been discussed in Georgia for many years. This group, Georgians for Passenger Rail, came up with the concept of a statewide passenger rail. Locally, we have representation by Dr. Gerald Arkin from the University of Georgia.

The Brookings Institute has been hired to create a business model for this system. The total of this business model is \$180,000. This includes passenger rail from Macon to Atlanta. The local Passenger Rail group feels like Griffin should try and raise the money for the entire business model cost. They believe it shows their sincere interest in this project and would like to have the rail stop here in Griffin.

The group has raised about a third of the money. They are asking the Board of Commissioners to consider giving them a \$10,000 contribution to be paid from the hotel/motel tax fund. Mr. Harris believes this will be a wonderful investment for this community to bring in visitors.

Ms Flowers-Taylor asked what the Macon community is doing to help with this. Mr. Harris stated they are participating toward the \$3 million overall cost.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor also asked how do we know the passenger rail is going to come through Spalding County. Mr. Harris says that coming from Atlanta to Macon, the rail has to come through Griffin. He says Norfolk Southern prefers this route is used.

Mr. Gilreath asked Mr. Fortune for the definition of what we can use hotel/motel taxes for. He has concerns that later on down the road, we may be questioned and/or fined if we use the funds improperly. He wants to confirm this would be an approved use of the funds.

Mr. Fortune thinks this is a legitimate use of the funds. He feels like if we advertise at conventions in Atlanta, people will make use of the system by coming into Griffin.

Mr. Gilreath would like a more defined explanation of the use of these funds. He does not feel like this is an approved way of spending hotel/motel taxes. Mr. Fortune further stated the funds can be used for studies and marketing analysis. He again stated he thinks it is a legitimate way of using the funds.

Mr. Harris suggested he could sit down with Mr. Gilreath and go over the legal verbiage to make sure Mr. Gilreath is happy with their decision. Mr. Gilreath stated we have had several requests for using hotel/motel tax funds. He says the Board has to figure out who they are going to allocate hotel/motel taxes to and how much each will get. He feels like this project needs to get in line with the others.

Mr. Freeman says we have been working on commuter rail for a number of years and we got sidetracked by not having a study. He feels like the Board should go ahead and make a decision on the commuter rail. This will boost the county's economic development.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor read a description of the hotel motel tax that says this money is for the creation of or expansion of physical attractions which are available and open to the public and which improve destination appeal to visitors. It further states it could include helicopters, planes, buses, vans, or boats. She believes trains would fit in with this as well. She believes the county has to put forth some effort to show our intent and we need to do something. She is for approving the request.

Mr. Gilreath questioned why people would come from Atlanta or Macon to Griffin. We don't have a shopping area like Atlanta or Macon. He asked what the deadline is on when the money is due. Mr. Harris says the group is paying along on this which the Brookings Institute had agreed to allow them to do.

Mr. Harris says the group would be very appreciative if the Board would approve this funding. If they don't, there will be no hard feelings. He stated the city has pledged a contribution of \$10,000.

Mr. Goss has concerns because the money is to pay for a study from Macon to Atlanta. It has gone from a corridor project to a statewide project. He has always been under the assumption this passenger rail would stop in Griffin.

Mr. Fortune stated the \$180,000 is to pay for the Brookings Institute Study. This is the study the governor will be looking at to see if the project is feasible. If the governor is not sold on it, it's never going to happen. That's what this business plan from Brookings is designed to do.

Mr. Fortune states the law says you can use the proceeds for funding, supporting, construction, renovating, infrastructure, developing conventions and tourism. He believes helping to fund the study which might make this rail come to pass, would be a legitimate use of these funds.

Mr. Gilreath has a problem with the \$10,000 for the study. He stated that the explanation Mr. Fortune read did not tell him anything. He still has concerns this is not a legitimate way to spend these funds. Ms. Martin and Mr. Fortune advise that in their opinion, it is legal.

Motion/second to approve \$10,000 funding of hotel/motel tax by Commissioners Freeman/Flowers-Taylor and carried by a vote of 3-1 with Gilreath opposing.

2. Review and revise resolution to amend Section 2-1203 of the Spalding County Code of Ordinances by adding a new subparagraph to be denominated as subparagraph (9) reads.

Mr. Fortune stated the wrong copy of the resolution was sent over by his office so he asked the Board to table. Mr. Gilreath has concerns over some of the content. He does not want attorneys to get involved with this as there would be fees involved. The Board agreed they need to get together at a later date to discuss this resolution.

Motion/second to table by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Freeman and carried by a vote of 4-0.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consider approval of service agreement between Three Rivers Regional Commission and Spalding County to provide public transportation.

Mr. Goss stated this agreement is for the new year. The charge to currently ride is about \$2.50 one-way. Mr. Fortune pointed out that this contract requires the county to procure a

general liability insurance policy on all the assigned vehicles. The county has done this in the past.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor wants to know how we know these are our buses since they travel outside the county. She does not want to pay insurance on someone else's bus. Mr. Freeman says our buses have "Spalding County" on the side of them. Ms. Flowers-Taylor needs a clearer picture of the situation. She wants to know if we are providing liability for eight buses.

Mr. Goss requested Mr. Fortune speak with the Three Rivers representative to clear up these questions.

Motion/second to table by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Freeman and carried by a vote of 4-0.

2. Consider approval of carryover contract for the Spalding County Community Services Development Block Grant (CSBG) Program with Three Rivers Regional Commission for Fiscal Year 2010.

Mr. Goss stated this is carry-over money from the grant allocation. This money is for prescription assistance for seniors. The Department of Family and Children Services will be responsible for determining the eligibility of an applicant.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor would like to know how this is going to be administered and who is going to broker this. She will call Aronda Smith with questions. Mr. Freeman felt like there was not enough information to make a decision.

Motion/second to table by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Freeman and carried by a vote of 4-0.

3. Consider approval of 2010 new Alcohol Beverage License – Retail Package – Beer and Wine – Suleman W. Sultan, Shehzard, Inc. dba Prince Food Mart – 3425 Jackson Road.

Motion/second to approve by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Freeman and carried by a vote of 4-0.

4. Consider approval of Spalding County Employee Insurance Benefits.

Bill Gay stated the Insurance Advisory Committee recently met. The committee consists of Sylvia Hollums, Teresa Bishop, Wendy Law, Glenn Polk, Tim Whalen, Jinna Garrison, and Louis Greene.

Matt Bidwell from CSI Group Benefits was present to address the Board. He provided a booklet from Cigna with the benefits information. He stated there had been a request from Cigna for a 20% increase effective July 1st. This was as a result of claims paid out over the past year. Cigna did not make any money off the county last year.

Cigna is now offering to reduce the 20% rate increase to 17% if we can obtain 90% enrollment of our eligible members into the Cigna Wellness Plan.

Ken Munkel, Client Manager from Cigna, was at the meeting to give his presentation. Mr. Munkel discussed the renewal process. He wanted to look at how to change the behavior of participants in the plan. He stated this is the only sustainable thing that will improve the cost of the plan. This will be done through a Health Risk Assessment Program. This program will help to assess people with their healthcare needs and direct them to the proper care they need. So far, about 100 employees have signed up for this.

Natasha Sherman, Client Strategy Specialist from Cigna, was also present to assist with the presentation. Her role is to engage in the wellness activities for the employees. She will develop specific programs for Spalding County and their employees. After people complete the Health Risk Assessment, they are automatically engaged with programs specific to their needs.

Ms. Sherman went on to say that any person that gets lab work done at their doctor's office that is within the network, the information is automatically imported into the health assessment.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor believes there should be some sort of incentive for people to fill out these health care assessments. For instance, she would like to see the Board make

employees be accountable. If they don't fill out the assessment, they don't get insurance. Ms. Sherman says there are companies that do this.

Bill Gay stated you have to create a culture of wellness before you can deal with employees that do not want to fill out the assessment. The Insurance Advisory Committee has recommended that if an employee does not fill out the assessment, they should be penalized, possibly a 3 to 5% penalty added on to their premium cost. This would be up to the Board to decide.

Mr. Bidwell addressed the Board again stating the insurance committee is recommending that the county stay with Cigna. This is due to the fact there has been feedback from employees saying that the county has changed too many times over the last few years and it causes problems with changing doctors, setting up prescriptions, etc. He also stated that doctors in Thomaston are included in the Cigna plan. The Family Medical Center is also in the plan.

Mr. Bidwell stated that Aetna declined to offer a proposal; Blue Cross/Blue Shield (ACCG), initially offered a proposal of 16.75%. They have since reduced the offer to a plus 14.4%. They are putting forth a strong push for the county's business. United Healthcare also declined to offer a proposal.

In addition, Mr. Bidwell discussed dental choices, voluntary life insurance and voluntary short term disability. Mr. Bidwell stated the advisory committee recommended changing over to Hartford for voluntary life insurance and short term disability because we were getting a lower cost. According to Mr. Bidwell, open enrollment has to be completed before June 1st for the county to set the deductions as they come out of payroll checks a month in advance.

Mr. Gilreath asked Mr. Gay why there was not a representative present from Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Mr. Bidwell said he could speak for Blue Cross/Blue Shield. He further stated it is his job to negotiate the best rate for the county.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor is looking for trackable information (without violating HIPPA violations) like Cigna provides. She stated that even though Blue Cross is offering us a better rate, she knows their health and wellness program has not changed from what it was they offered the county before.

Motion/second to approve by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Goss. Motion dies with Freeman/Gilreath opposing.

After the vote, Mr. Freeman stated he did not understand why there was not a Blue Cross/Blue Shield representative present to give their proposal. It does not set well with him that they were not present. In the past, the Board has had the opportunity to hear both sides. Nor does he understand why this was not presented to the Board earlier than it was so they would have sufficient time to decide.

Mr. Freeman further stated he believes that anyone who bid on this opportunity should be present to have their say. He would like to give Blue Cross a fair shot.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor was concerned we are running out of time to make this decision. Mr. Gilreath agreed with Mr. Freeman that Blue Cross should have had the same opportunity as Cigna to give their proposal.

Ms. Martin advised the Board if they don't make a decision tonight, this puts the budget in a much bigger crunch, because the budget cannot be finalized until they have the insurance figures. Also, she heard consistently in the budget meetings with department heads, the employees do not want to change insurance companies again.

At this point, Mr. Goss said he would set up a special called meeting as quickly as possible to bring in a representative from Blue Cross/Blue Shield to share their proposal with the Board. It was suggested to have them here on Thursday, April 22nd before the Zoning Meeting.

5. Consider payment of CorrectHealth inmate medical bill.

This item was removed from the agenda by Mr. Fortune.

6. Consider authorizing Mr. Goss to execute the contract for rebanding services.

Ms. Martin stated that because of Sprint wanting to move some of their towers and frequencies, everyone is having to reband. This contract needs to be executed so the process can begin. Sprint is paying these costs.

Motion/second to approve by Commissioners Freeman/Gilreath and carried by a vote of 4-0.

XII. REPORT OF COUNTY MANAGER

Tim Whalen asked Mr. Goss to get with the other commissioners to set up a date to meet with the City of Griffin to discuss recreation items to include the swimming pool operation, golf course, city park, pocket parks, etc.

XIII. REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS

Gwen Flowers-Taylor

Would like a date set for the commissioners to have a workshop to discuss Ethics Ordinance.

Would like to see a Blue Cross/Blue Shield rep at a meeting on Thursday to settle the county insurance benefits.

Would like to see the county be more involved with recycling. She stated we should be grinding trees and limbs to make mulch like we do at Christmas time with Christmas trees and we should be generating income from recycling metal parts. Ms. Flowers-Taylor said the City of Griffin last month, just for metals, collected over \$18,000.

Ms. Flowers-Taylor believes we are spending too much money on paper a month. She would like to see the commissioners have monitors at their meeting areas allowing them to pull up the agenda.

She would also like to see us add to the next meeting agenda, discussion of designating excess SPLOST funds toward our portion of the senior citizen center.

Bob Gilreath

Thanked Kevin Barkley for his work with the Keep Griffin-Spalding Beautiful Board and said he would be meeting with him soon.

Would like to know what is happening with the Johnson Controls contract and the issue of land conservation.

Would like someone to provide the Board with a detailed explanation of the Hotel/Motel Tax and define what the tax money is allowed to be used for.

Has received complaints of certain departments in the county taking advantage of overtime. The Board needs to look at the excessive amount of overtime.

Is in touch with a sheriff in Oregon that runs an inmate "Pay to Stay" Program. He believes we can have this type of program in Spalding County and would like to see the Board pursue this.

Mr. Bobby Arnold at Griffin Tech has been moved up to Atlanta. He believes he has done a good job at Griffin Tech and hates to see him leave.

Eddie Goss

Would like to see the Board push to get something done at the old Cook Shopping Center for the senior citizens.

Would like to set up a meeting for the commissioners right away to discuss employee insurance and ethics.

XIV. CLOSED SESSION – Personnel – There was no closed session.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/second to adjourn at 9:45 p.m. by Commissioners Flowers-Taylor/Freeman and carried by a vote of 4-0.